



Mid-Term Review of **PArTNER** project

Partnership for Agroecology Transition,
Networking and Efficient Resilience
(CAMBODIA)

Final Report

12 December 2024

Project implementing team and partners



Belgium

partner in development



An internal evaluation process
accompanied and facilitated by:



Content

List of acronyms and abbreviations	iii
1. Summary of key findings and recommendations.....	1
2. Context, objectives and scope of the Mid-Term Review	4
2.1. Background of PArTNER project.....	4
2.2. PArTNER project Mid-Term Review	5
2.3. Key steps in the Mid-Term Review implementation.....	6
3. Concepts, methodological approach and sources of information of PArTNER project Mid-Term Review.....	9
3.1. Concepts / indicators and methodological approach developed	9
3.2. Summary of sources of informations mobilized	18
4. Findings	19
4.1. Key Findings from Focus Group Discussions (FGDs).....	19
4.2. Key Findings from Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)	22
5. Analysis and Conclusions.....	26
5.1. Relevance	26
5.2. Coherence	29
5.3. Effectiveness	31
5.4. Efficiency	32
5.5. Impact / Effects	33
5.6. Sustainability	36
6. Recommendations	39
6.1. Strategic recommendations on partnerships and coordination	39
6.2. Extension / promotion of AE practices and knowledge management.....	40
6.3. Development and consolidation of UACs / ACs	41
6.4. Support to the ALISEA network.....	42
6.5. Gender.....	42
7. Comments on the intervention logic / Theory of Change.....	43

List of Annexes:

Annex 1: Terms of Reference of the mid-term review of PArTNER	I
Annex 2: Relevant documentation consulted	X
Annex 3: List of persons met during the Mid-Term Review process	XII
Annex 4: Guidelines for Focus Group Discussions with UACs / ACs LEADERS	XIII

Annex 5: Guidelines for Focus Group Discussions with UACs / ACs MEMBERS / CLIENTS / BENEFICIARIES (include notably women and youth)	XIX
Annex 6: Some elements to guide the bilateral interviews / meetings with various institutions / stakeholders identified for data collection	XXIII
Annex 7: Distribution of roles for data collection	XXVI
Annex 8: Outcomes of Focus Group Discussions	XXVII
Annex 9: Outcomes of Interviews	XXVIII
Annex 10: Agenda of the Mid-Term Review Peer Workshop	XXIX

List of tables:

Table 1: Focused questions and sources of information to assess the RELEVANCE of PARtNER project .	11
Table 2: Focused questions and sources of information to assess the COHERENCE of PARtNER project	13
Table 3: Focused questions and sources of information to assess the EFFECTIVENESS of PARtNER project	14
Table 4: Focused questions and sources of information to assess the EFFICIENCY of PARtNER project..	15
Table 5: Focused questions and sources of information to assess the IMPACT / EFFECTS of PARtNER project	16
Table 6: Focused questions and sources of information to assess the SUSTAINABILITY of PARtNER project	17
Table 7: Expected changes that did not occur (reported in FGDs)	20
Table 8: Top constraints to adoption of AE practices identified by FGDs and suggestions made by FGDs	21
Table 9: Top constraints to adoption of AE practices identified by FGDs	22
Table 10: Roles of various local organisations in support to agriculture and AE practices.....	24
Table 11: Activities of various NGOs supporting agriculture and AE practices in PARtNER intervention areas.....	25
Table 12: Priority area of Joint European strategy for development cooperation with Cambodia 2021-2027 and coherence of PARtNER project activities.....	30
Table 13: Economic results (2024) of TrUAC, by activities, as presented in the workshop of 7 th November 2024.....	37

List of figures:

Figure 1: Distribution of roles in the PARtNER project Mid-Term Review process.....	5
Figure 2: Timeline of the implementation of the three phases of the Mid-Term Review	6
Figure 3: Number of responses indicating “major positive changes largely attributable to PARtNER project by topics	19
Figure 4: A basic analytical frame of farmers willingness and ability to apply agroecological practices..	26
Figure 5: Structure of PARtNER project Theory of Change	43

List of acronyms and abbreviations

AC	Agricultural Cooperative
AE	Agroecology
AFD	<i>Agence Française de Développement</i> (French Development Agency)
AIMS	Accelerating Inclusive Markets for Smallholders Project (IFAD project)
ALISEA	Agro-ecology Learning Alliance in South East Asia
ASSET	Agroecology and Safe food System Transitions in South-East Asia
BDF	Business Development Facilitator
BTG	Battambang
BUAC	Battambang Union of Agricultural Cooperatives
CACA	Cambodia Agricultural Cooperatives Alliance
CAO	Commune Agriculture Officer
CARD	Council for Agricultural and Rural Development
CC	Climate Change
CIRAD	<i>Centre International de Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement</i>
CIRD	Cambodian Institute for Research and Rural Development
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (of OECD)
DACP	Department of Agricultural Cooperatives Promotion
DCA	Dan Church Aid
DGD	Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (Belgium)
DOANRE	District Offices of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment
DPA	Development and Partnership in Action
ECOLAND	Ecosystem Services and Land Use Research Center
F2F	Farmer-to-Farmer
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FoAS	Faculty of Agricultural Sciences (of RUA)
FST	Farmer Specialist Trainer
GDA	General Directorate of Agriculture
HDDS	Household Dietary Diversity Score
HH	Household
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
Kg Thom	Kampong Thom
KM	Knowledge Management
LA	Local Authorities
LC	Louvain Cooperation
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAC	Modern Agricultural Cooperative
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
MSC	Most Significant Change
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NCD	Non-Communicable Diseases
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation

NSSF	National Social Security Fund
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PArTNER	Partnership for Agroecology Transition, Networking and Efficient Resilience
PDAFF	Provincial Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
PGS	Participatory Guarantee System
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
RUA	Royal University of Agriculture
SAD	<i>Système Alimentaire Durable</i> (= SFS)
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SFS	Sustainable Food System
SRP	Sustainable Rice Platform
TAPE	Tool for Agroecology Performances Evaluation
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
TrUAC	Tramkak Union of Agricultural Cooperatives
UAC	Union of Agricultural Cooperatives
VC	Value Chain
VHSG	Village Health Support Group

Units & Mesures:

ha	hectare
kg	kilogram
KHR	Cambodian Riel (1 US\$ is approximately 4,000 KHR)
t	tonne
US\$	United States Dollar

I. Summary of key findings and recommendations

Background

As part of UNI4COOP programme, Louvain Cooperation and Eclasio are implementing “PARTNER project”, started in 2022 and foreseen to end in 2026. The project aims at generating economic and social changes in rural farmers families and improving the food market through agroecology transition and gender equity in agriculture. Several partners are engaged in the project implementation, including farmer organisations (TrUAC, BUAC, and other ACs), academic and research actors such as ECOLAND, and other NGOs as DPA. UNI4COOP has decided to undertake a mid-term review of the PARTNER project as it was reaching the half-time of its implementation period.

Mid-Term Review process

The Mid-Term Review has been defined as a collective and transversal exercise, engaging all the project partners at its different stages: scoping of the MTR, collection of data, and collective analysis and drawing of conclusion through a peer-workshop. An external consultant (ARTE-FACT Development & Agri-Food Consulting) was commissioned to accompany the process, provide methodological support as well as an external eye in the analysis and formulation of recommendations. The mid-term review was implemented from September to December 2024.

Outcomes of the Mid-Term Review process

The analysis was based on the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, and the assessment for each of the criterion is summarized as follows:

- **Relevance:** the Mid-Term Review confirms a high level of relevance of the project objectives and approach in regard of the stakes of sustainability and resilience of agricultural production, social stakes for smallholder agriculture, and safe and sustainable local food system consolidation. Recent evolution of the policies and public services settings would deserve to be considered, in particular to develop synergies with recently established CAO (and to “educate” them regarding agroecology principles). Developing partnerships with local authorities could also be beneficial to build a long-lasting support of those authorities to ACs and UACs.
- **Coherence:** the internal coherence of PARTNER project is considered as solid. The Theory of Change elaborated is an element of structuration of this coherence but would even better play its role if it was developed with the involvement of all partners, and bridged to the broader Theory of Change “toward agroecological transition” developed by ASSET project and ALISEA network, at national and regional levels.
- **Effectiveness:** Overall, the effectiveness of the project implementation is satisfactory. Yet, one can regret the relatively long time it took to finalise the various initial assessments, with potentially a

prejudice to the integration of the lessons learnt from those assessments in the operational strategy.

The creation of the position of BDF to support to UACs/ACs development brings effective results, but could be even qualitatively improved with additional capacity building to these officers and to ACs/UACs' leaders.

- **Efficiency:** The project has chosen quite cost-efficient options for the dissemination of AE techniques, with practical and affordable system, based on farmer-to-farmer extension. It could further gain efficiency with better articulation with other players engaged locally in agricultural extension and by ensuring the required technical conditions for application of methods are fulfilled before enrolling farmers.

The choice of working at UAC level is also a good option to ensure efficiency, as well as the creation of the positions of BDS.

- **Impact/Effects:** At the mid-term of the project, it is too early to measure impact. But first trends can be observed regarding certain effects of the intervention.

Overall, and with the reserves inherent to the methodology of the Mid-Term Review, we can state that the project brings some positive contributions regarding agroecological practices adoption by a part of the farmers in the targeted areas, to be further confirmed by the mid-term TAPE assessment.

Supported farmer organisations, in particular at UAC level, are getting consolidated in their business-orientation, notably with the support of the newly created positions of BDF. BUAC in particular has considerably scaled up its activity and turn-over, in particular thanks to SRP rice. Yet, apart from the case of SRP rice, the market-recognition of the specific quality of AE products still largely remain to be built.

The project also contributes to enhancing women leaders, in particular in BUAC and in ALISEA.

- **Sustainability:** The sustainability of project achievements is still, to some extents, a challenge.

At farm level, mostly, once AE practices are adopted, the sustainability of their adoption might not be too much at risks, provided inputs (if any) remain available.

At the level of ACs or UACs, building the viability of the activities, production and services of the farmer organization still remains a work in progress (which is not abnormal at this stage). From an economic point of view, BUAC seems already on a right pathway to reach a viable scale. The journey might be longer for TrUAC and even more for the ACs in Kampong Thom.

Last, regarding ALISEA network, the process ahead is also still long but does not rely only on PARtNER project, but also on ASSET project and on the new funding to ALISEA that seems to be now secured with SDC.

Recommendations

► Crosscutting strategic recommendations:

1. Continue with the horizontal strategic coordination of PARtNER project to enhance complementarities and cooperation among the partners and components. Create opportunities and find modalities to maintain a cross-cutting horizontal reflection among project partners, also enhancing the use of knowledge produced by the project.
2. Explore possible partnerships with local authorities and test the benefits of a territorial approach

► ***Extension / promotion of AE practices and knowledge management***

3. Confront the outcomes of the qualitative approach of the MTR regarding perceived changes with the results of the on-going mid-term TAPE assessment.
4. Explore the possibility to produce other support / media for the dissemination of agroecology (video, banners, social media).
5. Break down trainings to farmers in shorter training sessions to ease participation.
6. Separate the roles of trainers and demonstration farmers and select well the demonstration farmers.
7. Associate/involve Commune Agriculture Officers in support to agroecological practices promotion.
8. Beyond the dissemination of techniques, develop, if possible, a more managerial support to farmers to adjust recommendations to their farming systems and specific distribution of resources.

► ***Development and consolidation of UACs / ACs***

9. Develop further the UACs/ACs business plans with a long-term vision and multi-annual roadmaps and continue to train BDF and ACs/UACs board on managerial skills.
10. Increase the support to UACs/ACs on Value-Chain management and differentiated market access

► ***Support to the ALISEA network***

11. Create the conditions to ensure that members' ownership is developed and not impeded by project-led decisions

► ***Gender***

12. Encourage and help ACs/UACs to elaborate their internal gender policy (and to apply it)
13. Continue to encourage and train women to engage in leadership positions in UACs/ACs and among farmer trainers.
14. Create opportunities to showcase women leaders supported by PARtNER project to be examples for women engagement.

2. Context, objectives and scope of the Mid-Term Review

2.1. Background of PArTNER project

Cambodia agricultural sector background

Although its share in GDP has declined significantly in recent decades the economic weight of the Cambodian agricultural sector remains growing in absolute value and the Royal Government of Cambodia still emphasizes this sector's role as part of the ambitious economic goal of the country to reach out the middle-income status by 2030. This focus on macro-economic indicators sometimes comes with a vision toward a more agro-industrial model of development for the sector, whereas major challenges remain in terms of food, social and environmental aspects.

On the other hand, a number of governmental and non-governmental actors, including farmer organisations, CSOs, NGOs and development partners are enhancing agroecology and smallholder farmers as desirable options to focus on for the development of the sector in order to address social and environmental concerns and to develop Sustainable Food Systems.

Trends in agricultural practices evolutions also appear to be quite variable from one area to another, depending on multiple factors such as farms' structure, agro-environmental context, connection to market or to agri-businesses, etc. This is notably shown in UNI4COOP's Preliminary Assessment of Agroecological Transitions in Battambang, Kampong Thom and Takeo provinces.

UNI4COOP's PArTNER project

As part of UNI4COOP programme, Louvain Cooperation and Eclósio are implementing a joint programme in Cambodia, which includes "PArTNER project", which aims at generating economic and social changes in rural farmers families and improving the food market through agroecology transition and gender equity in agriculture.

Several partners are engaged in the project implementation, including farmer organisations (TrUAC, BUAC, and other ACs), academic and research actors such as ECOLAND, and other NGOs as DPA. They were associated from the design stage and have jointly defined the overall outcome of PArTNER formulated as "*Generate economic and social changes of the Cambodian rural farmer families by improving Cambodian food market through agroecological transition and gender equity in agriculture*". The project is further structured based on the five following expected results:

- *R.1. Small-scale farmers and their family members improve their knowledge and capacity to ensure sustainable, healthy, diversified and culturally appropriate food production.*
- *R.2. Value-chains and market access of products from agroecological practices are upgraded.*
- *R.3. Improved governance to favour peasant rights, gender equity and democratization of decision-making space.*
- *R.4. Improved sustainable and healthier consumption patterns.*
- *R.5. Innovations derived from the experimentation by small-scale farmers in the agroecology transitions, the upgrading of value chain and the better governance are consolidated in research-actions, studies or systematizations that are co-constructed with farmers and disseminated for their internal and external valorisation, in particular to influence policies and decision-making in favour of the transition to AE.*

The PArTNER project is implemented from 2022 to 2026.

2.2. PARtNER project Mid-Term Review

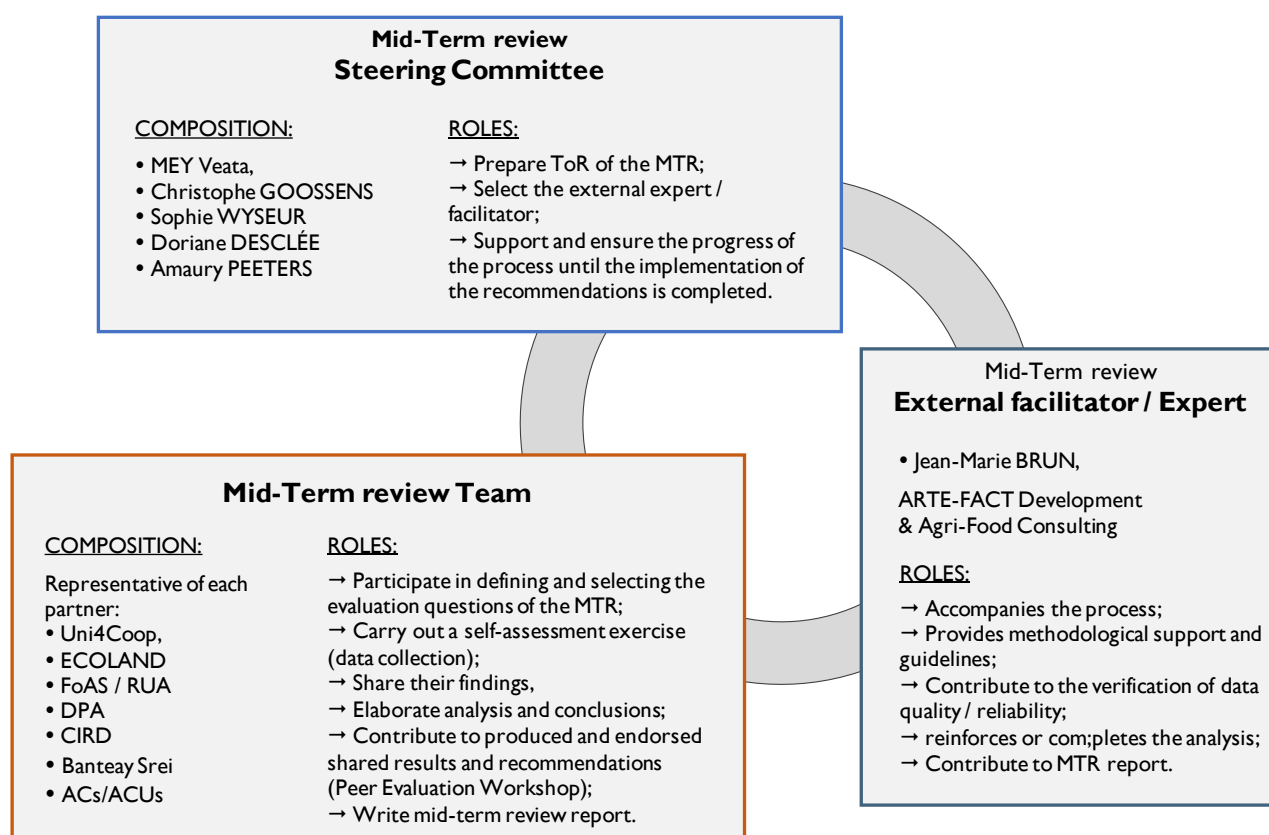
Objectives and approach

UNI4COOP has decided to undertake a mid-term review of the PARtNER project as it was reaching the half-time of its implementation period. As reflected in the Terms of Reference (See Annex 1), this is not an external mid-term evaluation that was foreseen, but a horizontal review, conducted by the project implementation team and partners themselves (constituting an “Evaluation team”, or “Mid-Term Review Team”), as a collective reflection and learning exercise and a milestone in the project strategic management. This has allowed the project team to collectively take a step aside, to reflect on the project relevance, efficiency and outcomes/effects to date and to review the strategy, confirm or adjust next years’ activities, and/or revise the methodological and operational modalities of implementation.

Organisation of the Mid-Term Review process

The Figure 1 below shows the organisational arrangement for the implementation of the Mid-Term Review process. A Steering Committee has been set-up, with the lead organisations (Louvain Développement and Eclasio, as part of Uni4Coop). As stated above, a “Mid-Term Review Team” was established, gathering all main partners of the project. Last, an external facilitator (Jean-Marie Brun, ARTE-FACT) has been commissioned by Uni4Coop to accompany the process. He was not expected to conduct the review himself and alone, but to take part in the process aside with the project implementation team and serve as a “catalyst” or “facilitator” in the process as well as a technical and methodological reference person.

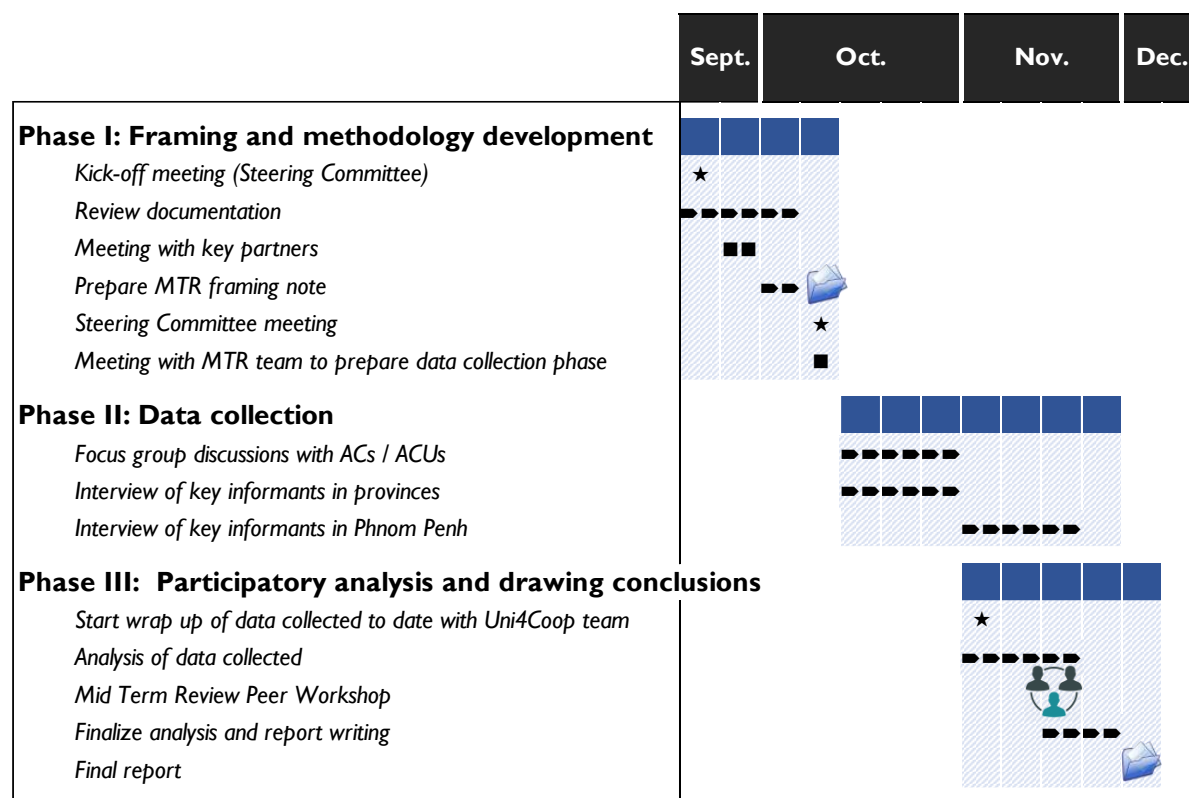
Figure 1: Distribution of roles in the PARtNER project Mid-Term Review process



2.3. Key steps in the Mid-Term Review implementation

The Figure 2 below show the three phases of the implementation of the mid-term review and the calendar of their implementation:

Figure 2: Timeline of the implementation of the three phases of the Mid-Term Review



Phase I: Framing and methodology development

After the selection of the external facilitator, a kick-off meeting took place with him and the steering committee on the 17th of September 2024.

A number of documents have been provided by Uni4Coop team (LD and Eclasio) and were reviewed by the Mid-Term review external facilitator, in order to understand better the project and its context, objectives and modalities of intervention. (See Annex 2: Relevant documentation consulted, in particular the “PaRTNER project documentation”).

As the ToR of the mid-term evaluation are underlining the need for project partners to gain ownership over the Mid-Term Review process and to take the lead. For this reason, two half-days meetings were organized with:

1. representatives of the ACs / UACs engaged in PARtNER project, on the 23rd of September, and
2. the institutional and implementing partners of the project (Uni4Coop, DPA, ECOLAND, FoAS/RUA, CIRD, Banteay Srei, GRET), on the 25th of September.

The purposes of these meetings were three-folds:

1. Get to know better the activities of the ACs / UACs, and for the project partners their respective roles in the project implementation,
2. Contribute to identify and prioritise some evaluative questions that the Mid-Term Review could integrate and address, and
3. Engage the participants in the Mid-Term Review process.



▲ Meeting with implementing partners of PARtNER project on 25th of September 2024.

After these initial stages, the MTR facilitator has worked on the information and outcomes of the meetings, in order to propose:

- Adjustments to the evaluative questions;
- Identification of data to collect;
- Guidelines for the Focus Group Discussions and interviews;
- Updated time frame.

A MTR framing note has been drafted by the consultant, including guidelines for data collection and in particular for the facilitation of Focus Group Discussions with ACs / UACs leaders and members (See Annexes 4, 5 and 6). The framing note was presented to the MTR Steering Committee on the 7th of October, leading to some adjustments. Then on the 8th of October, a second meeting with the MTR team took place in Uni4Coop office. It has reviewed the data to collect in regard of evaluative indicators and questions and has finalise the list of actions to undertake for data collection (FGD to organize, persons or institutions to interview). Then the distribution of roles for the data collection within the MTR team was discussed and agreed (See Annex 7).

Phase II: Data Collection

The data collection phase has started on the 14th of October 2024 in Takeo province, with the participation of the external facilitator for the first day, notably for Focus Group Discussion with the TrUAC leaders, some interviews and brief field visit.

The process continued with all the field work implemented by Uni4Coop and the project partners (See Annex 7: Distribution of roles for data collection) and was completed within three weeks.

Additional bilateral interviews with key informants were conducted by Uni4Coop in Phnom Penh in November.

Uni4Coop has also started to compile in summarized format (Excel sheets) the data collected on the field to ease overview and analysis (See raw data collected in Annex 8: Outcomes of Focus Group Discussions and Annex 9: Outcomes of Interviews).

Phase III: Participatory analysis and drawing conclusions

Uni4Coop team and the external consultant have started to work on the analysis of data collected from early November, and have prepared the concept, content and agenda of the Mid-Term Review Peer Workshop, the core moment of the project organized over one day and half, on 18th and 19th of November, gathering more than 20 persons, representing the key partners of PARtNER project.

The workshop was dedicated to share analysis, interpretation and conclusions and to draw recommendations for the second half of project implementation.

The agenda of the Peer Workshop is shown in Annex 10.

From then, Uni4Coop and the external consultant have jointly prepared the present report of PARtNER Mid-Term Review.

3. Concepts, methodological approach and sources of information of PArTNER project Mid-Term Review

3.1. Concepts / indicators and methodological approach developed

3.1.1. Priorities and constraints considered

The process of mid-term review uses the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria¹ as guiding elements for the analysis of the project progresses. Yet the idea was not to conduct a comprehensive mid-term evaluation, but to use this framework as an analytical guideline to initiate a collective reflection with the project implementation team and partners on the progresses and achievements to date and on the possible improvements to consider in the strategy and operational modalities for the second half of the project implementation period.

Given the limited time and resources available, it was acknowledged and agreed that the mid-term review could not cover in an exhaustive way all the project activities and all the dimensions that the concept of agroecology transition encompasses, neither all the scope of the PArTNER project.

Moreover, it was considered important to integrate the inputs and expectations expressed by the project partners at the initial stage of the mid-term review, which has led to the following reformulation of evaluative questions, taking into consideration:

- The initial expectations for the mid-term review, as exposed in the ToR;
- The additional expectations expressed by project implementing partners;
- The constraints of time and resources, including the limitations of information available from the M&E system;
- The overall strategic objective of the MTR.

3.1.2. Reformulation of evaluative questions and approach for each evaluative criterion

► Relevance

Assessing the relevance of the intervention consist in answering the question “Are we doing the right thing?”.

The ToR enhance the following question “What are the most relevant strategies or on the contrary to be avoided in view of the positive and negative changes mentioned by the beneficiaries?” and they suggest to answer it by using a matrix graph of positive and negative effects (changes) and the degree to which they are attributable to the project. This proposed tool will be used in FGD (See Annexes 4 and 5). It itself it illustrates more the criteria of impacts / effects than the relevance. But as a starting point for a discussion, it can bring participants to assess the drivers and obstacle to AE transition, that the project is addressing, or not, and by doing so, will contribute to evaluate the relevance of the action.

The relevance of project strategies as a whole is a broad scope², and after initial dialog with project stakeholders and partners, a number of more focused questions emerged, on which the MTR will concentrate. We detail them in the Table 1 next page.

¹ Relevance (+Coherence), Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability.

² Also, we will not question “is it relevant to promote agroecological transition?” as there are evidences that all the project stakeholders are fully convince this is the right thing to do. Even if formalizing arguments in favor of AE transition would probably be useful as an exercise to fuel the policy advocacy in favor of the transition.

It is also underlined that the review of the relevance criteria will also integrates assessing how the project adapts itself to possible changes of the context (notably recent evolutions of policies).

Table 1: Focused questions and sources of information to assess the RELEVANCE of PARtNER project

Evaluative questions / subquestions	Results	Sources of information and modalities of data collection
<p>Relevance of agroecological practices promoted in regard of their applicability by farmers:</p> <p>Is it adapted in regard of resources / production factors? (land, labour, capital, water...)</p> <p>(e.g. relevance of natural fertilizers)</p> <p>Is it consistent with farmers' objectives?</p> <p>Is it adequate in regard of the need to adapt to Climate change?</p>	<p>R1 (Farm level)</p> <p>R2 (VC level)</p>	<p>• 3 FGD with ACs/ UACs LEADERS. [→ See guidelines in Annex 4]</p> <p>• 3 FGD with ACs/ UACs MEMBERS / CLIENTS / BENEFICIARIES. [→ See guidelines in Annex 5]</p> <p>(Note: discussion – within these FGD) on expected changes that did not materialize can also bring information to analyse from the “relevance” angle of view.</p> <p>+ Review documentation (grey litterature)</p>
<p>How is the action adapted to the different geographical areas of intervention and their specificities?</p> <p>Notably how “industrial productions” (cassava, cashew...) are integrated or not at farming system level?</p>	<p>R1 (Farm level)</p> <p>R2 (VC level)</p>	
<p>Are recent contextual and policies evolutions taken into account?</p> <p>(e.g.: Modern Agriculture Cooperatives? Commune Agricultural Officers establishment)</p> <p>New risks / New opportunities? They represent?)</p> <p>Are PDAFF/MAFF sharing the same narrative of “desired change” (ref. to ToC)?</p>	<p>R1</p> <p>R2</p> <p>R3</p>	<p>Refer to policy documents.</p> <p>• Discussion with ACs/UACs on stakes, opportunities and risks of MAC.</p> <p>• Interviews with PDAFF (3) / MAFF/GDA on role of newly recruited CAO and on MAFF views on AE transition (Dr. Ngin Chhay?)</p> <p>• Interviews with recruited CAOs in target areas (4).</p> <p>(This may also be a subject for a focus discussion in the peer workshop in the end of process).</p>
<p>Development of social protection schemes within ACs for their members?</p> <p>Is it relevant for ACs? Is it a demand of members?</p> <p>When lack of capital is a bottleneck for ACs to develop commercial activities (see R2) is it a priority?</p> <p>Would there be other options that internalizing the function in ACs? Connecting farmers to NSSF?</p>	<p>R3</p>	<p>Contact GRET (Thibaut Hanquet) to discuss progress and perspectives of access of farmers to NSSF: question GRET on the progresses of making farmers access national social protection mechanisms.</p> <p>+ can address the question in FGD with ACs UACs leaders and members.</p>
<p>Engagement of Local Authorities</p> <p>What activities are we implementing with local authorities? Shall we engage more LA in the project and raise LA awareness on Agroecology?</p>	<p>R3</p>	<p>Interview with PDAFF / CAO.</p> <p>Interviews with 3 Commune Councils’ representatives in target communes.</p> <p>+ exchange views with GRET & Agrisud on territorial food system approach.</p> <p>Interviews with DOANRE / District Governor or Deputy</p>

► **Coherence**

The criterion of coherence is not mentioned as such in the ToR of the mid-term review, but OECD/CAD criteria for evaluation are explicitly referred to, and they include the “coherence” of development interventions.

The criterion of coherence is two-fold. It considers:

- Internal coherence: Are the strategy and the approach of the action consistent with the objectives? Is there any contradiction between the different actions implemented?
- External coherence: synergies or contradictions with other actions (beyond the project: public policies and mechanisms, other projects or interventions of development partners...)

The following questions (Table 2 below) are listed to address the coherence criterion of the evaluation of PArTNER project.

Table 2: Focused questions and sources of information to assess the COHERENCE of PARtNER project

Evaluative questions / subquestions		Results	Sources of information and modalities of data collection
Internal Coherence	How the approach of support to ALISEA is defined? Is it elaborated and endorsed by ALISEA members? Is there a contradiction with the intended objective of democratisation of decision making within this network?	R3 Support to ALISEA	Discussion with DPA, Pat Sovann, and with GRET/ASSET project regional coordinator. Read what ASSET mid-term has concluded on ALISEA.
	Can we increase synergies between components of PARtNER? e.g. research done in PARtNER that could feed ALISEA knowledge hub / ALISEA capacity building.	R3 R5	Discussion with DPA, Pat Sovann, and with GRET/ASSET project regional coordinator. (This may also be a subject for a focus discussion in the peer workshop in the end of process).
	Are the activities implemented in PARtNER project aligned with partner institutions own strategies / missions.		Self-assessment: ask the following partner institution to analyse their vision / mission and verify the coherence with their involvement in PARtNER project: • ECOLAND • UAC
External Coherence	PARtNER project could try to joint strategic framework with other organisations engaged with similar objectives? Verify coherence with ASSET / ALISEA (ToC) Others: Hellen Keller on Nutrition sensitive agri. / World Vision (Takeo) MetKasekar (BTG)		• Review ASSET / ALISEA ToC and coherence with PARtNER project ToC. • Meet MetKasekar / Swisscontact to discuss synergies in Battambang? • Meet Hellen Keller International in Takeo to discuss synergies (related to nutrition). • Meet DCA Dan Church Aid.
	Coherence of the project objectives with the ones of the donors and with national strategies / policies of government.		Based on review by PARtNER team of MAFF / RGC policies + EU ("Team Europe") strategic framework for development interventions in Cambodia.

► Effectiveness

In the ToR, two questions are asked under the "effectiveness" criterion: 1. "How big is the effectiveness or impact of the project compared to the objectives planned?" and 2. "To what extent the objectives will be achieved?". We find the first one confusing as it uses the word "impact" which is by itself an evaluative criterion.

The "effectiveness" compares the results achieved in regard of the initial objectives. This is usually done at the level of outputs and it is relatively easier to apply the criteria for infrastructure project (for examples: how many kilometers of roads have been built / how many wells have been drilled, in regard of a target objective). For "soft" interventions it requires to agree on the interpretation of the criteria. A first level is to look at the output in term of activities implemented in regard of activities planned. For instance: how many awareness raising meetings were organized, how many trainings took place, in regard of actions

planned in the project document. But we could not always find in PARtNER project document or in its logical framework the details of activities planned with target figures of direct outputs (e.g. training sessions, ...)³ but only objectives at “outcomes” level (e.g. “increased gross margin of farms”). This makes more difficult to understand the practical modalities of intervention of the project, and difficult also to measure the effective implementation of actions.

Table 3: Focused questions and sources of information to assess the EFFECTIVENESS of PARtNER project

Evaluative questions / subquestions	Results	Sources of information and modalities of data collection
Assess the effectiveness of project implementation through the existing data of M&E system:		Annual Report 2023
Number of participants in F2F knowledge exchange and trainings	R1.2.	
Increase of quality verified AE products	R1.3.	
Number of innovative /new direct marketing strategies of AE products developed	R2.1.	
Number of women designing and managing AE VC businesses	R3.1.	
Number of ACs developing social protection schemes for their members	R3.2.	
Number of consumers reached by campaigns to increase knowledge on AE products, healthy diets and NCDs prevention	R4.2.	
Cummulative number of spaces for exchanges/meetings (...)	R5.1.	
Cumulative number of products created to share and foster information and innovations among farmers	R5.2.	
Cumulative number of KM outputs shared through ALISEA platform	R5.3.	
Is the Monitoring System of PARtNER project efficient? Could it be improved? formulation of the indicators and sourcing of information.		We will propose a working session on the M&E system (as part of peer workshop or separately).

The Annual Reports 2022 and 2023 provide updated figures (after baseline) on part of the indicators. But we will mainly use this source to assess the effectiveness (See Table 3 above). It is noted that FGD with ACs/ACUs can also bring some elements to document effectiveness, including by analysing expected changes that did not occur (if any) (See in Annexes 4 and 5).

One question raised in the ToR under the effectiveness criterion consist in evaluating the project’s M&E system itself and formulate recommendations regarding “method, formulation of indicators, efficiency of the monitoring system”. This will be a main point of attention, as we believe there could be some clarification to bring regarding the definition / interpretation of indicators, and regarding the relevance of indicator used.

► *Efficiency*

Efficiency generally considers the appropriate use of project resources in regard of the objective to achieve (cost/efficiency ratio). It also looks at the timeliness of the implementation of activities and delivery of outputs.

³ Except in some cases, with an indicator of number of persons reached by an activity (without the number of activities to implement), for examples: “number of participants in F2F knowledge exchange and training” for R.1.2. or “number of consumers reached by nutrition messages”, for R.4.2.

In the case of the MTR of PARtNER project, the ToR are clarifying that the purpose is not about carrying out a detailed analysis of each expenditure, but rather to question in a broader way the allocation of resources. The ToR are suggesting to “open the discussion” by asking “and if we had to do it again” what we would change in the strategies implemented, to save resources?

In particular, the ToR are referring to the lock-ins and lever to AE transition (identified in the initial assessments conducted by the project) and recommend to question the strategy and set of actions implemented by the project and discuss if the option chosen are the most efficient to actually promote the AE transition and lift obstacles. To proceed with this assessment, we have not pre-selected lock-ins or levers, but we will use FGD with ACs/ACUs leaders and members to rank the most important ones, then discuss in the FGD what PARtNER is doing to address the constraint? If it is efficient or not? Or what could be the alternative strategies to improve efficiency. This will be a first stage of assessment at field level, and the discussion will be pursued during the peer workshop in the end of the MTR process (See Table 4 below).

Table 4: Focused questions and sources of information to assess the EFFICIENCY of PARtNER project

Evaluative questions / subquestions	Results	Sources of information and modalities of data collection
Do the actions implemented (and the corresponding allocation of resources) are the best options (or best levers) to make a difference, = to address the lock-ins or bottlenecks/obstacles identified?	R1, R2, R3	Focus group discussions with ACs, UACs (members and leaders, separately): Ranking of the most important constraints and most important levers. Then review what is done by the project for most important ones, and how resources could be allocated differently for a better efficiency to address the constraints or to activate the levers. • 3 FGD with ACs/ UACs LEADERS. [→ See guidelines in Annex 4] • 3 FGD with ACs/ UACs MEMBERS / CLIENTS / BENEFICIARIES. [→ See guidelines in Annex 5] This will then be one of the core-subject of the peer workshop in the end of process.
Is the fact that we work together with several partners has more positive impact to beneficiaries and to realize the vision of the ToC?		This can be one subject of the peer workshop in the end of process, or could possibly be the object of a separate session.

Another question that is suggested from the meeting we had with the project partners at the inception stage of the MTR is also added in the table below, is to question how the implication of several partners in the implementation of the project is an asset (or a burden?) for the project efficiency.

► **Impact / Effects**

Impact is usually a criterion that can be fully assessed ex-post, few years after the intervention and not immediately at the end of the project (even less at mid-term, after two years of implementation). At this stage, the evaluation shall be able to identify effects (intended as well as potentially unintended), but it is probably a bit early to confirm if the effects will be long-lasting (even if the assessment of sustainability will bring elements) and if the changes are “transformational” (addressing root causes and likely to have a systemic impact).

Yet the MTR team will try to document the significant changes to date and the project contributions to these changes, prefiguring the potential impact of the project.

The ToR of the Mid-Term Review were proposing to use a diagram to position effects and contribution of the project, under the “relevance” criterion. As it was already expressed in ARTE-FACT technical proposal to accompany the MTR process, such a diagram could rather be use to document the recent significant changes perceived by beneficiaries (positive or negative) and whether or not they are attributable to the project. We propose to use a similar tool as part of the facilitation process of FGD with ACs/ACUs leaders and members, with the few following adjustments:

- Add the ideas that some changes could be not even with zero contribution of the project, but even against the actions and objectives of the project.
- Ask participants a set of additional questions about expected changes that did not materialize, and question why (this will bring elements also on the effectiveness and relevance criteria).

We will also classify the changes mentioned by participants in FGD in different domains such as ACs’/UACs’ development, farmer practices, value chain / markets, soil health / environment, farmers’ income and livelihood. Details on the tools and animation process are given in Annexes 4 and 5.

Table 5: Focused questions and sources of information to assess the IMPACT / EFFECTS of PARtNER project

Evaluative questions / subquestions	Results	Sources of information and modalities of data collection
What changes are observed (positive or negative) regarding the following:		• 3 FGD with ACs/ UACs LEADERS. [→ See guidelines in Annex 4] • 3 FGD with ACs/ UACs MEMBERS / CLIENTS / BENEFICIARIES. [→ See guidelines in Annex 5]
Farmers' level of adoption of AE practices	R1	
Soil fertility / natural resources / environment	R1	
Farmers incomes / livelihood?	R1, R2	
Value chains and market for AE products? (is the quality of AE product recognized by the market?)	R2	
Governance of Farmer Organisations (ACs/UACs)?	R3	
Assess / document the evolution of the three outcomes indicators		
Farmers incomes?	O1	FGD
Women empowerment and workload	O2	FGD
Farmers’ (or FOs’) voice in policy dialog and perception as key players for SFS		We can include a quick session adapted from “MSC” method during peer workshop. FGD with ACs’ / UACs’ leaders Commune Councils / Districts
Benefits for projects PARtNERS? Consolidation, knowledge...	R5	Self-assessment by the 5 partner institutions already listed in Table 2.

A mid-term TAPE assessment is also planned to be undertaken by ECOLAND, but unfortunately, it will not be finalized before the end of the Mid-Term Review process.

► **Sustainability**

The assessment of the sustainability criterion will focus in priority on the significant positive effects observed. The MTR team will assess if the progresses made are strong or if we can identify factors or possible events / situation that could weaken them or even jeopardize the current benefits observed.

As the ACs and ACUs have a core position in the project strategy, a point of attention of the MTR team will be the viability of these organisations beyond the project duration, looking notably at the economic viability and at the level of ownership and self-support by the members. This will be the object of a sequence of reflection and brainstorming either at the end of the FGD with ACs/ACUs leaders if there is enough time, or in a separate dedicated session with them (more likely, as the agenda of FGD with ACs / ACUs leaders is already quite dense if we consider at half-day sessions). Details on the approach / questions proposed to facilitate the sequence are presented in the end of Annex 4.

Table 6: Focused questions and sources of information to assess the SUSTAINABILITY of PARtNER project

Evaluative questions / subquestions	Results	Sources of information and modalities of data collection
What is the level of economic viability of UACs and ACs supported by the project? Balance costs / own sustainable incomes? If not yet balance, vision and roadmap toward economic viability within the next // years?	R1 (Farm level) R2 (VC level)	Documentation: budget plans and financial reports of ACs / UACs. FGD with ACs/ACU leaders: dedicated sequence to sustainability / viability: [→ See guidelines in end of Annex 4]
What is the level of ownership of beneficiaries (ACs / UACs' leaders and members)? Assess the level of ownership, understanding, self-support, strategic and managerial capacities?	R1 (Farm level) R2 (VC level)	• 3 FGD with ACs/ UACs MEMBER / CLIENTS / BENEFICIARIES [→ See guidelines in Annex 5]
What is the technical and economic viability of AE practices at farm level? What does it require to continue with AE practices? → Technically (knowledge)? → Materially (inputs)? → Economically (costs, cost-benefit; market demand)?	R1 (Farm level)	
ALISEA Level of ownership and engagement of members? Recognition by government institutions? Economic viability of ALISEA network / perspectives to sustain fundings?	R3	Discussion with DPA, Pat Sovann, and with GRET/ASSET project regional coordinator. Read what ASSET mid-term has concluded on ALISEA.

At farm level, we can discuss the ability of farmers to maintain in the long term the AE practices that they have already adopted. Are there foreseen obstacles? Is there a risk that obstacles or enabling conditions were only temporarily addressed? This can be also discussed during FGD with farmers (members of ACs).

At national level, we propose to have discussions with key stakeholders in ALISEA regarding factors to consolidate the platform in the long term (level of ownership and engagement of members, recognition by government institutions, economic model and its viability...).

The assessment of the durability / sustainability of the project positive effects will also lead to a feed-back reflection on the relevance of the project strategy. This will be a topic of focus in the peer-workshop at the end of the MTR process, aiming at identifying measures / recommendations to consolidate and guarantee the sustainability of the changes.

3.2. Summary of sources of informations mobilized

► *Documentary sources*

- PARtNER project annual report 2023 + Quarterly reports of partners in 2024;
- ACs/ACUs budget plans / business plans and financial reports;
- Policies of MAFF / RGC;
- EU (or “Team Europe”) strategy for cooperation with Cambodia;
- ASSET project ToC;
- Mid-Term evaluation of ASSET project (section on ALISEA).

► *Focus Group discussions, surveys and interviews*

- 3 FGD with ACs / UACs leaders (+ a focus session on sustainability) [See guidelines in Annex 4];
- 3 FGD with ACs / UACs members / clients / beneficiaries [See guidelines in Annex 5];
- 4 interviews of Commune Agriculture Officers;
- 3 representatives of Commune Councils;
- 2 District governors / deputy governors;
- 2 DOANRE;
- 3 interviews of PDAFF;
- Interview of GDA / MAFF (suggest: H.E. Dr Ngin Chhay?);
- DACP and CACA;
- One focus discussion with ASSET regional coordinator + ALISEA coordinator and key members;
- Interview of other NGOs/projects:
 - In Battambang: Met-Kasekar, SwissContact;
 - In Takeo: Hellen Keller International;
 - DCA: in Phnom Penh.
- Discussion with Thibaut Hanquet (GRET) on access of farmers to social protection;
- Exchange with GRET and Agrisud International in Siem Reap about “Territorial Food Systems”.

► *Other specific internal working sessions*

- Internal self-assessment by five partner organisations of PARtNER project: FoAS, ECOLAND, CIRD, Banteay Srei and DPA: focus on 1) Coherence with their internal vision, mission and strategy; 2) how they are supported by Uni4Coop in their roles and how they benefit from their participation in the project in terms of knowledge, capacities, consolidation of their organisations;
- One internal session of work on PARtNER project M&E system (at least with Uni4Coop and ECOLAND + other implementing partners as judged relevant);
- Possibly a work session to reflect on the efficiency of working together with several partners (Does it bring more positive impact? Better contribute to realize ToC? Does it improve cost-efficiency?) [This could be a topic of focus in the peer workshop at the end of the MTR process, or could be the object of a dedicated session].

4. Findings

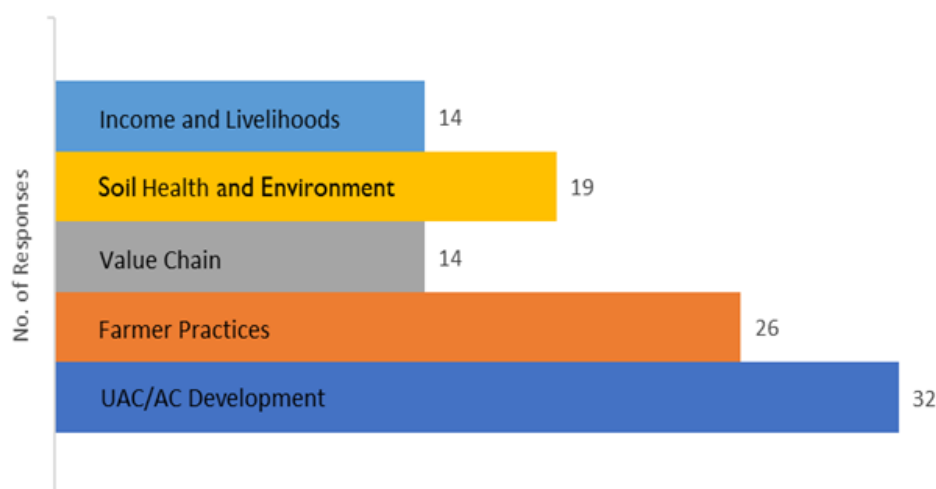
4.1. Key Findings from Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

4.1.1. Changes perceived by participants since 2021

A total of 252 responses were collected from the FGDs conducted across three provinces, with 41.7% (105 responses) highlighting significant positive changes attributed to the project, see in Figure 3. Among these, 32 responses emphasized the development of UAC/AC, including improvements in the managerial capacity of board members, enhanced technical skills, and the establishment of functional farmer-to-farmer (F2F) systems. Additionally, 26 responses focused on changes in farmer practices, particularly the adoption of agroecological practices, which included increased knowledge and skills in agroecology among members. Improvements in soil health and the environment were noted in 19 responses, citing better soil quality, reduced chemical input usage, and improved plastic waste management. Furthermore, 14 responses highlighted advancements in the value chain, such as better coordination of agroecological products, including paddy, rice seeds, milled rice, vegetables, and chicken. Lastly, 14 responses addressed improvements in income and livelihoods, reflecting increased earnings, better value chain coordination, and enhanced marketing strategies.

In addition to the positive changes highlighted above, participants also reported some challenges they have faced since 2021. A total of 15 responses identified negative changes, primarily related to issues with the value chain and marketing of AE products.

Figure 3: Number of responses indicating “major positive changes largely attributable to PArTNER project by topics



4.1.2. Changes that did not occur

Participants were asked about the anticipated changes that have yet to materialize. As shown in Table 7 (next page), a total of 13 responses were gathered during FGDs, with 4 responses from Kampong Thom, 4 from Takeo, and 5 from Battambang. The most prevalent issue across the three provinces was the underperformance of the agricultural product value chain, including rice seeds, milled rice, vegetables, and chicken. Key factors contributing to this challenge include insufficient production capacity at the AC level, a lack of clear producer groups, and inadequate inputs.

Table 7: Expected changes that did not occur (reported in FGDs)

Province	Expected change that did not happen	Actions planned	Why did the change not occur?
Kampong Thom	Creating direct markets for agricultural products.	Create direct links to potential buyers.	The production is still low at AC levels.
	Creating product collection systems.	To create production and collection groups at each AC.	There are no clear producer groups, and no year-round supply.
	Creating producer groups for Romduol rice seeds.	Creating 1 producer group per AC.	Small production areas, lack of production techniques and experience.
	Better value chain of vegetables	Creating producer groups in each AC; supporting equipment and materials for 50% contribution; direct link to vegetable buyers.	The production is still low at AC levels; no collection points and collective vegetable storages for AC members.
Takeo	TrUAC has clear producer groups and production plans for chicken and vegetables.	Support TrUAC to have clear producer groups and production plans for chicken and vegetables.	Farmers are not convinced of the selling collectively; lack of production management; marketing challenges for chicken and vegetables, climate challenges for production; lack of planning.
	TrUAC installs and operates a fully equipped rice seed production facility.	TrUAC installs and operates a rice seed facility with all necessary equipment to ensure high quality or rice seeds.	TrUAC lacks capital to invest 50% of the purchase of seed cleaning machines, leading to a less efficient supply.
	Stable market for ACs' products	Create direct links to potential buyers.	The producer groups could not produce as planned; no clear production plans; lack of materials and techniques; no buyers that really support AE products.
	More subsidies to farmers under TrUAC	PARtNER project provides material and financial support to FSTs, Master Farmers, and farmers, including irrigation systems.	Since the budget is limited, not all farmers in need have been supported.
Battambang	Stable market	Rice mill	Contribution issue
	Stable market	Support BUAC to sell products online	Have not launch the campaign properly. Most online sales are on Facebook.
	Stable market	Cabinet dryer	Contribution issue
	Buying inputs to distribute to ACs	Meetings with the input suppliers	Most of suppliers sell chemical substances
	Buying inputs to distribute to ACs	Meetings with the input suppliers	Require paying in cash

4.1.3. Lock-ins and Levers

► *Top lock-ins (constraints) to adoption of AE practices by farmers*

Participants were asked to identify the top three constraints hindering farmers' adoption of AE practices. The primary constraint highlighted was a lack of understanding of AE. To address this, the PARTNER project has implemented various initiatives, including training sessions, coaching, demonstration farms, field days through the F2F system, and exchange visits to improve farmers' and UAC/AC members' knowledge of AE practices. To further tackle this issue, participants suggested conducting additional training sessions, establishing more demonstration fields, organizing field visits, and providing incentives to encourage farmers' engagement.

The second top constraints identified were diverse, including inconsistent messaging from various extension agents (public, private, and NGOs), limited availability of natural resources, labor shortages, and inadequate technical and economic performance. To address these challenges, the project has implemented measures such as training, coaching, demonstration farms, field days using the farmer-to-farmer (F2F) system, and exchange visits. Additionally, the project has subsidized 50% of the capital needed for purchasing machinery to facilitate production. Participants suggested further addressing these issues by encouraging NGOs to collaborate on developing a standardized AE training manual for farmers, increasing machinery support by reducing farmers' financial contributions, and providing additional materials and inputs. Moreover, the project was advised to connect farmers with financial institutions to ensure better access to financial capital.

Last but not least, the third top constraint identified was climate change. To address this issue, the project has incorporated training on climate-resilient agriculture into its agroecology (AE) and vegetable production training sessions. The results from FGDs recommended further measures, including providing additional training for Farmer Specialist Trainers (FSTs) on vegetable, chicken, and rice production. Participants also emphasized the need for the project to establish on-farm irrigation systems, such as ponds and wells, to enhance resilience to climate challenges.

Table 8: Top constraints to adoption of AE practices identified by FGDs and suggestions made by FGDs

Top constraints	What PARTNER is doing to address the constraints?	What more can be done?
Top1: Lack of understanding of AE.	Training, coaching, demo. farm creating, field days using F2F system, and exchange visit...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide additional training sessions, • Establish more demonstration fields, • Organize field visits, and • Offer incentives (e.g., certificates, materials) to farmers.
Top 2: Various responses such as Inconsistent messages, lack of natural resources available, labor, technical and economic performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training, coaching, demo. farm creating, field days using F2F system, and exchange visit • Providing 50% capital to purchase machinery to ease the production. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The supporting NGOs should work together to develop a common AE training manual to train farmers. • Increase support of machineries (lower the contribution) and other materials. • Connect farmers with financial institutions.
Top 3: Climate change.	Provide training on climate-resilient agriculture, embedded in the AE and Vegetable Production training sessions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More training to Farmer Specialist Trainers (FSTs) on production of vegetable, chicken, and rice; • Construct on-farm irrigation systems (ponds and wells).

► *Top levers to adoption of AE practices by farmers*

Three key levers driving the adoption of AE practices were identified during the FGD sessions. The top 1 lever was the premium price for AE products. To support this, the project has focused on enhancing the quality of AC/UAC products, establishing direct market connections for ACs/UACs, and promoting these products through online platforms and social events. Participants suggested several additional actions to further strengthen this area, including creating more market linkages, particularly with supermarkets, providing marketing training for ACs, improving packaging standards, identifying clear selling points, developing product branding, and enhancing both the quantity and quality of products.

The top 2 lever identified was the need to make AE inputs more accessible and affordable. To address this, the project has supported one of the ACs in producing Bokashi fertilizer for local distribution and has provided training to farmers on creating and using solid and liquid fertilizers from local resources. Participants suggested additional measures, such as supporting the AC to scale up Bokashi fertilizer production, offering more training on producing botanical pesticides, and conducting training sessions and forums for farmers and ACs to enhance knowledge and collaboration.

The top 3 lever identified was enhancing farmers' knowledge and understanding of the long-term benefits of AE practices. The project has focused on building the capacity of farmers and stakeholders to recognize these benefits and on promoting AE products in the market. Participants suggested further actions, including organizing additional capacity-building sessions for AE farmers, supporting ACs in expanding their membership, and assisting ACs in increasing both the production and market presence of AE products.

Table 9: Top constraints to adoption of AE practices identified by FGDs

Top levers	What PARTNER is doing to foster the levers?	What more can be done?
Top 1: Premium price for AE products	Improve quality of the ACs/UACs products, creating direct links between ACs/UACs to markets, promote products on online platforms and social events.	Create more market linkages especially to supermarkets; train ACs on marketing, improve packaging standards; locate a clear selling point; create product identification; improve product quantity and quality.
Top 2: Make AE inputs more available and cheaper	Support one of the ACs to produce Bokashi fertilizer to be available in local areas; train farmers on how to produce and use solid and liquid fertilizers using local resources.	Support the AC to produce more Bokashi fertilizers. Provide more training on production of botanical pesticides. Provide training to farmers/ACs and organize farmer forums.
Top 3: Improved knowledge/understanding by farmers of the long-term benefits of AE practices	Capacity building to farmers and stakeholders on the benefits of AE; promote AE products on the markets	Provide more capacity building sessions on AE to farmers; support ACs to acquire more members; support ACs to increase production and markets of AE products.

4.2. Key Findings from Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

4.2.1. Responses from the Government Officials

The Table 10 (page __) highlights the roles of various organizations in supporting agriculture and AE practices in Cambodia, focusing on their policies and activities at different administrative levels and regions. In particular, each organization contributes to agriculture and AE promotion in specific ways:

- Commune Agriculture Officers (CAOs) lack clear policies to directly support AE but engage in region-specific activities, such as monitoring organic rice and supporting AE product marketing in Takeo, and promoting Integrated Pest Management (IPM), integrated farming, and cover crops in Battambang.
- In contrast, Commune Councils do not have policies or initiatives related to agriculture or AE, focusing instead on public health and nutrition.
- District Councils, operating under the guidance of the Provincial Department of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (PDAFF), facilitate agricultural activities through the District Office of Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Environment (DoANRE). Their efforts include improving irrigation systems and farm access roads, promoting ecotourism, and raising awareness about pesticide impacts.
- DoANRE further supports AE practices by forming vegetable groups, providing training, connecting farmers to markets, and raising awareness about waste and pesticide management.
- At the provincial level, PDAFF implements region-specific initiatives, including organic agriculture, safe vegetable production, and compost production in Takeo; conservation agriculture (CA), Sustainable Rice Platform (SRP), and soil fertility programs in Battambang; and organic farming and CA in Kampong Thom.
- The Department of Agricultural Land Resources Management (GDA) focuses on stabilizing agricultural product prices, promoting modern cooperatives, and recruiting Commune Agriculture Officers for all communes by 2025. It also promotes CamGAP certification and ensures quality seed production (QDS).
- The MetKasekar Project supports conservation agriculture (CA) in Battambang and Preah Vihear, facilitating farmer selection and AE practice promotion, although its efforts are constrained by limited budgets.
- Lastly, the Cambodia Agricultural Cooperative Alliance (CACA) plays a regulatory role by overseeing, auditing, and terminating agricultural cooperatives (ACs), but it does not engage in specific activities related to agriculture or AE.



▲ Focus Group Discussion with BUAC leaders in Battambang in October 2024.

Table 10: Roles of various local organisations in support to agriculture and AE practices

No	Organization	Policy	Agriculture and AE Activities
1	Commune Agriculture Officers (CAO)	No clear policies to support AE	Takeo Monitor organic Rice Support marketing for AE products Battambang Promote IPM, integrated farming, cover crops Support marketing for AE products Facilitate supports from NGOs to promote AE practices
2	Commune Councils	No policies to support agriculture or AE	No specific activities related to agriculture or AE There are activities related to public health and nutrition
3	District Councils	Based on assignment from the PDAFF	DoANRE is in charge of agriculture activities Restore and build new irrigation systems. Build roads to improve access to rice fields and farms. Promote ecotourism. Raise awareness of the impacts of pesticides. Replace alcohol billboards with those promoting good agriculture.
4	District office of Agriculture, National Resource and Environment (DoANRE)	Based on assignment from the PDAFF	Form vegetable groups in the village/commune. Provide training and find markets for farmers. Increase local awareness of environmental issues, including waste and pesticide management.
5	Provincial Department of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (PDAFF)		Takeo: Organic agriculture, safe vegetable production in net houses, solid compost production... Battambang: SRP rice, CA, soil fertility programs, contract farming with buyers... Kampong Thom: Organic farming, CA...
6	Department of Agricultural Land Resources Management of GDA	Stabilize price of agricultural products Promote Modern Agricultural Cooperatives Recruit Commune Agriculture Officer for all communes by 2025	QDS seed quality control Promote CamGAP certification
7	MetKasekar project	Promote CA in Battambang and Preah Vihear	Facilitate CA promotional activity from farmer selection to extension. Limited implementation due to budget constraints.
8	Cambodia Agricultural Cooperative Alliance (CACA)	All ACs are automatically members of CACA CACA has right to control, audit, and terminate ACs	No specific activities related to agriculture and AE

4.2.2. Responses from NGOs

The Table 11 outlines the activities of various NGOs supporting agriculture and AE practices in PARtNER intervention areas, focusing on their main activities, and potential synergies.

- The Dei Meas Project by SwissContact operates in Battambang, promoting cover crop production to improve soil health. It shares beneficiaries and AE practices with PARtNER, creating opportunities for collaboration.
- Dan Church Aid (DCA) works across multiple provinces, including Battambang, Preah Vihear, Takeo, and Kampot, and focuses on AE learning labs, organic and GAP certification, the Eco-Kasekor App, and cover crop promotion. DCA's activities align with ALiSEA network support and consumer awareness campaigns, offering potential for wider outreach and impact.
- Helen Keller International operates in Takeo and Kampong Thom, implementing nutrition-sensitive agriculture through training on integrated farming and horticulture. This initiative complements AE practices and provides opportunities to enhance nutrition outcomes through sustainable and diversified farming practices supported by PARtNER project.

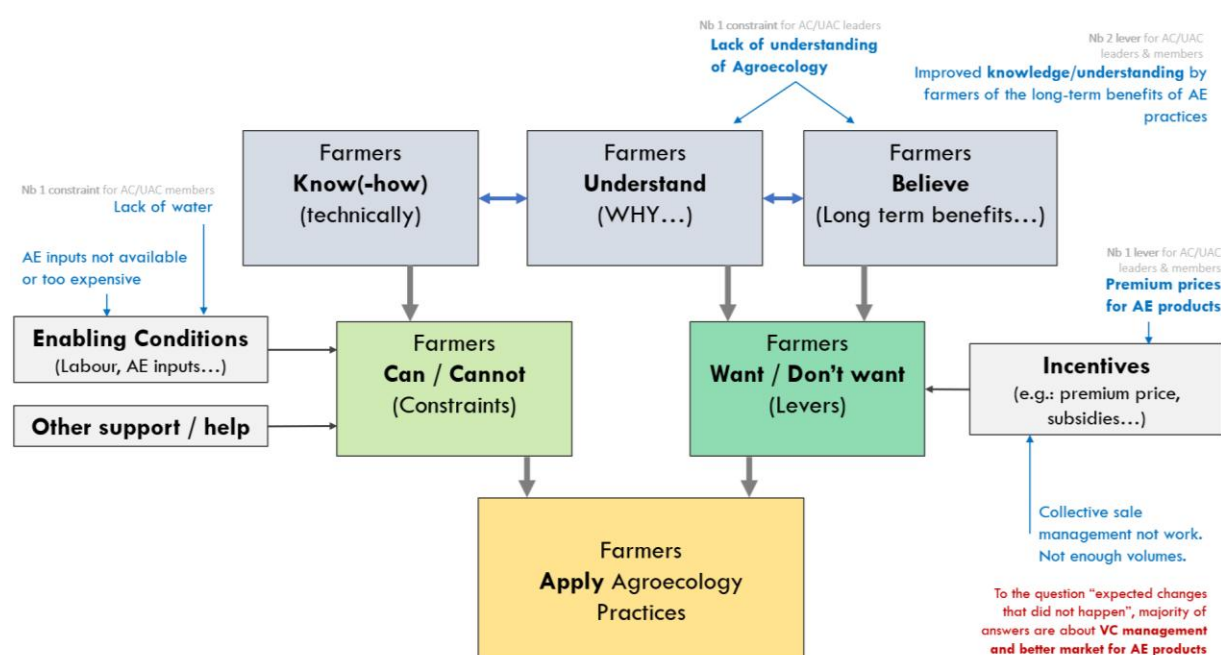
Table 11: Activities of various NGOs supporting agriculture and AE practices in PARtNER intervention areas

No	Organization	Target Area	Main Activities	Possible Synergies
1	Dei Meas project - SwissContact	Battambang	Promote cover crop production to improve soil health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overlapped beneficiaries • Similar AE practices
2	Dan Church Aid (DCA)	Battambang, Preah Vihear, Takeo, Kampot...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of AE learning lab • Organic and GAP certification • Eco-Kasekor App • Cover Crop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALiSEA network support • Campaigns to raise awareness to consumers
3	Helen Keller International	Takeo and Kampong Thom	Nutrition-Sensitive agriculture	Training on Integrated Farming and horticulture

5. Analysis and Conclusions

To structure the reflection as part of the mid-term review process and in particular in the preparation and facilitation of the peer workshop held on 18th and 19th of November 2024, the following simple diagram (Figure 4). If a central objective is that, ultimately, farmers apply agroecological practices (shown at the bottom of the diagram), it requires that farmer want to apply these techniques, and can apply them. Their willingness depends on their understanding and belief on one hand (internal, mindset factors) and possibly on incentives (external factors) that can contribute to trigger their willingness to apply. Their ability to apply depends on one hand on their technical know-how (internally) and on various enabling conditions (or absence of critical constraints).

Figure 4: A basic analytical frame of farmers willingness and ability to apply agroecological practices



Around the representation of these elements, we have positioned in Figure 4 above (in blue font) some of the key outcomes of the Focus Group discussions organized during the mid-term review process with AC or UAC leaders and members (mentioning near each point its ranking and if it comes from a FGD with leaders or with members of ACs/UACs).

The elements from the above diagram will be referred to in the following pages, regarding notably the analysis of the relevance, effectiveness and effects/impacts of the project.

5.1. Relevance

The relevance of the core focus of PARtNER project in support to agroecological transition is not questioned. It is considered there is sufficient ground to justify the relevance and desirability of a switch toward more sustainable agricultural practices, in particular in regards of major stakes such as resilience to climate change, soil health degradation, food consumption and human health, need for a reduction of dependency toward imported chemical inputs, etc.

Hence, the criteria of PARtNER project's relevance is assessed here in regard of more specific questions as detailed below (as they were identified in the Framing Note of the Mid-Term Review).

5.1.1. Relevance of agroecological practices promoted in regards of their applicability by farmers and adaptation to geographical specificities

To some extent, the agroecological practices promoted are considered applicable by farmers, yet in some cases with some limiting factors that were notably enhanced by ACs/UACs' members in the Focus Group Discussions organized along the MTR process.

The two main constraints underlined by farmers are:

- The lack of water availability,
- The fact that some agroecological inputs are either not available or too expensive.

Regarding water availability, the choice was made not to engage on irrigation infrastructure as the resources of the project are limited and as other projects are investing in irrigation infrastructures. This is notably the case for part of the area covered in Battambang and Kampong Thom. Yet there might be room to improve the synergies with irrigation projects/schemes and reflect on the sustainable use of the potential of irrigation developed.

Regarding the lack of availability and price of agroecological inputs, it is a topic on which the project is working directly and try to address, notably via the production of AE inputs by ACs or UACs (like Bokashi fertilizer in Tramkak, or cover crop seeds in Battambang). This part of the action is thereof relevant to the constraint identified.

Yet the approach of dissemination of AE techniques or practices may not integrate a systemic approach of farming systems, in order to maximize the available resources and possible synergies between productions (in terms for instance of by-products, organic matter, monetary transfer from one production to another, optimization of labour availability in different period of the year...). For instance, cassava is not considered in the strategy of AE promotion and support to farmers in Kampong Thom, despite it is an important production for many of the households there. That could be a point of attention in the approach of extension, switching to more tailored advisory services to farmers. But, indeed, this is more demanding in terms of human resources.

5.1.2. Relevance and coherence in regard of national policies / strategies and in particular recent contextual changes and policies evolutions

The Royal Government of Cambodia, and notably the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries have issued a number of policy documents enhancing the need for sustainability in agriculture in the recent years. A *"Resilient, Sustainable and Inclusive Development"* is one of the pillars of the Government's *"Pentagonal Strategy"* issued in 2023. For agriculture sector, the strategy stresses *"the roles and development of a modern, diversified and resilient agricultural sector that supports rural development in order to ensure food security and safety, increase value added, promote competitiveness, and improve the quality of rural livelihood"*. At the level of this overarching strategy document, this does not tell much about the technical model promoted. But the reduction of pesticide is for instance mentioned by MAFF Senior officers⁴, and models such as conservation agriculture have strong supporters within MAFF.

PARtNER project has a role to play, along other development interventions, to contribute to develop viable agroecological model and contribute (notably via its support to ALISEA) to an evidence-based promotion of the relevance of agroecological model. The combination of direct support to farmers, ACs and UACs at local level, with the consolidation of the ALISEA network is particularly relevant.

Yet, until its MTR, PARtNER project has not yet considered the most recent policy innovations issued by MAFF, in particular the decision (taken one year ago) of the creation of positions of Commune Agriculture

⁴ H.E. Dr Sen Sovann, Secretary of State of MAFF, for instance, was recently saying in a public event organized by CIRAD (on 18th of November 2024): *"To ensure food safety and reduction of pesticides is part of the priorities of MAFF for the sustainability of agriculture and for the environment"*.

Officers (CAO) and their recruitment (already well advanced throughout the country). The project stakeholders have collectively agreed during the Mid-Term review process that a collaboration of the project with the CAO would be relevant (at least would deserve to be explored and assess in its possible modalities). Interviews conducted as part of the MTR with recently recruited CAOs in Takeo and in Battambang rather show that there could be some compatibilities and possible synergies. CAO have notably a role in agricultural extension / technical support to farmers, and interviewed CAO have indicated to some extent that AE techniques are included in the recommendations they provide to farmers. For instance, CAO interviewed in Tramkak, Takeo, has indicated that the technical guidelines he has to promote include reduction of chemical fertilizer use and substitution by natural/organic fertilizers.

CAO are also required to support connection to market. CAO interviewed in Tramkak, Takeo has indicated that he supports a pilot contract between a small group of farmers and Khmer Food company for the production of organic rice. In Battambang, the CAO interviewed said he is involved in the facilitation of SRP rice production (collection of data on cultivation, quality control...).

Besides the payment of their salary by MAFF, CAO have very limited resources to implement activities, and partnerships with NGOs or projects are generally welcome.

5.1.3. Relevance of the approach of social protection scheme in ACs

One of the activities foreseen in the project is the support to ACs (or UACs) to develop internal social protection scheme (Indicator 2 of Result 3). One of the arguments for this mentioned by the project team was said to be a legal obligation of ACs, which have to allocate a part of their profits earned to social or community support. Reviewing the Law on Agricultural Cooperatives of 2013, we actually could not find a mention of this obligation⁵.

If the obligation is not confirmed, the relevance of developing an internal protection scheme in each cooperative (or union) could be disputed. On one hand it can be a factor of social cohesion within the AC, hence a factor of consolidation. On the other hand, the variability of resources along the time, as well as fluctuation of the needs, could create a feeling of unfairness if members facing needs are not supported equally. This could on the contrary become a factor of fragilization.

Moreover, while capital is a scarce resource for ACs and often a bottleneck for the development of their commercial activities and engagement in value chains, diverting a part of an already too limited resource could add to this financial constraint.

A discussion took place between Uni4Coop and GRET (Thibault Hanquet), who manages a programme on social protection in Cambodia, with in particular a pilot / research project to explore how to make the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) accessible to farmers / rural populations. GRET expressed an interest to hear from successful experiences of ACs implementing social protection actions to their members. The possibility to affiliate the ACs/UACs' board members to the NSSF was evoked during the meeting too. But if it does not concern all the members, this would rather be an element of remuneration or incentive for board members and could not be considered as a social protection service of the cooperative.

⁵ The law of 2013 only states the following:

“Article 57: The agricultural cooperative shall create a reserve fund by deducting at least twenty percent from the gross profit until the reserve fund is as much as five times of the total value of shares. This fund shall not be allocated to members.

Article 58: The agricultural cooperative shall create a fund for the training of members, managers and staff by deducting at least three percent from gross profit annually. This training fund shall be used exclusively for the mentioned purpose.

Article 59: The gross profit earned by the agricultural cooperative shall be allocated based on the following principles: - to retain for a reserve fund and training fund or other funds created by the agricultural cooperative; - to give patronage refund to members in proportion to the business activities done with the agricultural cooperative; and – to distribute dividend to members according to the number of shares held.”

5.1.4. Engagement of local authorities

In the first half of its implementation, PARtNER project had limited (if any) collaboration with local authorities (communes, districts). Local authorities have limited prerogatives or mandate regarding agricultural sector. But communes often have activities related to health and nutrition, and, on this ground, there could be some potential for local collaboration with farmers / ACs / UACs to promote local and safe food products. An entry point at local food system level could possibly federate stakeholders around a shared vision and project, and bring additional support from local authorities to ACs or ACUs.

Box 1: Key take-away results regarding the assessment of project's Relevance

Overall, the Mid-Term Review confirms a high level of relevance of the project objectives and approach in regard of the stakes of sustainability and resilience of agricultural production, social stakes for smallholder agriculture, and safe and sustainable local food system consolidation. Recent evolution of the policies and public services settings would deserve to be considered, in particular to develop synergies with recently established CAO (and to “educate” them regarding agroecology principles). Developing partnerships with local authorities could also be beneficial to build a long-lasting support of those authorities to ACs and UACs.

5.2. Coherence

5.2.1. Internal coherence

► *Coherence and synergies between PARtNER's components*

The internal coherence of PARtNER project is considered as solid and the Theory of Change elaborated is seen as an element of structuration of this coherence. The fact that Unions of Agricultural Cooperatives supported as well as partners of the project (notably Research Institutions (such as ECOLAND) are also members of ALISEA is also an element contributing to the coherence.

Yet the synergies could be even more consolidated between the different components, with more transversality added to the project. [This also relates to the “efficiency” criteria]. The MTR Peer Workshop has brought some recommendations on this matter that will be developed in the next section.

It is notable that the PARtNER's project Theory of Change has been developed by Louvain Cooperation and Eclasio, with no direct involvement of the other project partners in the process (yet probably taking into consideration their inputs at the stage of project design, at least to define their roles and inputs in the project).

Also, for a matter of coherence with the objective of consolidation of ALISEA network and empowerment of its members, it would be desirable to refer to the broader Theory of Change for agroecological transition developed collectively by ALISEA and ASSET project, rather than building a different ToC from scratch.

5.2.2. External coherence

► *Coherence with strategic framework of other projects and organisations (notably ASSET)*

We mention above that the development of PARtNER's project Theory of Change shall have engaged more the partners and not only Louvain Cooperation and Eclasio. Even beyond project direct partners, it would have been relevant to connect the project ToC to the broader Theory of Change for Agro-Ecological Transition developed (with the participation of several members of the ALISEA network) by the ASSET

project⁶. This would have helped to identify and position the PARtNER project as a contribution to a broader movement in support to AE transition and to consolidate the coherence with other major projects and actors acting toward AE promotion.

Regarding the support to ALISEA, GRET has confirmed its coherence with the approach of ASSET for the support to the network, with an extensive consultation at the project design phase between Uni4Coop, DPA and GRET. The regular (quarterly) participation of PARtNER project coordinator in the meetings with the Board of Members of ALISEA and GRET helps to maintain this coherence.

► **Coherence of the project with donors' strategies (EU)**

The goals and approach of the PARtNER project are consistent with the EU Cooperation strategy in Cambodia, in particular concerning the following priority areas, shown in Table 12 below:

Table 12: Priority area of Joint European strategy for development cooperation with Cambodia 2021-2027 and coherence of PARtNER project activities

Priority area of Joint European strategy for development cooperation with Cambodia 2021-2027	Related activities in PARtNER project
Foster democratic participation, respect for human rights, gender equality, and support an enabling environment for civil society in Cambodia ('demand side of governance'),	Support to civil society organisations, notably to the ALISEA network in Cambodia, including on Policy Dialogue aspects.
Support quality, accessible and inclusive services to strengthen human development that contributes to sustainable socioeconomic development, and poverty alleviation, encompassing education, skills development and TVET, health, nutrition and social protection as well as social and rural infrastructure.	Support food-safety in agri-food products via the support to ACs, and farmers on agroecological practices (reduction of pesticides) and connections to local markets.
Enhance competitiveness of Cambodia on the regional and global marketplaces through trade and private sector development, an enabling business environment and sustainable production as well as decent employment practices in line with international standards.	Enhance Cambodia competitiveness via product differentiation through international standards, notably through SRP rice production in Battambang.
Sustainable green development, including management of Cambodia's natural resources, environmental protection and conservation, disaster risk reduction and resilience to climate change, promote green energy and energy efficiency, the sustainable development of agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries, forestry and mine clearance.	Promotion of sustainable agricultural practices (agroecology).

Box 2: Key take-away results regarding the assessment of project's Coherence

The internal coherence of PARtNER project is considered as solid. The Theory of Change elaborated is an element of structuration of this coherence, but would even better play its role if it was developed with the involvement of all partners, and bridged to the broader Theory of Change "toward agroecological transition" developed by ASSET project and ALISEA network, at national and regional levels.

⁶ It is important to underline that the Theory of Change for Agro-Ecology transition developed with the support of ASSET project is not the Theory of Change of ASSET project, but of a broader desired trend toward Agroecology transition.

5.3. Effectiveness

5.3.1. Actions implementation

Cfr to project implementation monitoring indicators (Uni4Coop)

5.3.2. Outcomes

► *ACs/UACs' management*

Still some improvements are needed regarding ACs / UACs management and technico-economic reporting. The presentations made by UACs (via their Business Development Facilitators - BDS) demonstrate already some capacities, but also room for improvement: for instance, in BUAC presentation, one can find information on turnover but not on economic results (profitability), and some of the graphs presented are quite meaningless (graph bars combining in the same bars incomes in US\$ and volumes in tons). This illustrates the need to increase the capacity building and coaching to BDS and AC / UAC leaders.

► *Training of farmers to AE practices*

The system developed to disseminate agroecological practices is overall rather effective. But qualitatively, two concerns were expressed by some farmer representatives during the MTR peer-workshop regarding the promotion of agroecological techniques and the training of farmers were:

- The difficulty for farmers to spend full days in training, and the necessity to break down sessions in shorter units;
- The difficulty for farmers to combine a role of trainers with the implementation of best practices on their own farms to serve as demo farms. Some participants in the peer workshop have expressed that the time spent to train other farmers was in some cases detrimental to the quality of their own farming practices.

Also, to extend farmer outreach, additional communication tools / media could be developed, such as video, banners, and use of social media, in complementarity with F2F extension.

► *Knowledge management*

The PARtNER project has produced a number of studies, notably initial assessments (such as TAPE initial assessment, Institutional Assessment of UACs, Value Chain assessment, etc.) and integrate the production of knowledge in the project, not only as products, but also as inputs for the project strategic management. This is probably to be considered as an added-value that can be brought by Uni4Coop and its member development organisations attached with universities, and this is seen as a positive asset of the project. Yet two remarks were formulated along the MTR process on this subject:

- First: in some cases, the too long time it took to reach final versions of study reports reduces the strategic interest of these studies outcomes for the project implementation. For instance, the final version of "TAPE baseline assessment" is dated April 2024. The final version of the "Preliminary Assessment of Agroecological Transitions in Battambang, Kampong Thom and Takeo provinces" is dated July 2024. This is late for a project started in 2022.
- Second: the knowledge produced is maybe not always enough used strategically (maybe partly because of the timing of the final outcome delivery, but also because of a lack of strategic coordination space integrating all the implementing partners of the project, until this Mid-Term Review at least).

Box 3: Key take-away results regarding the assessment of project's Effectiveness

Overall, the effectiveness of the project implementation is satisfactory. Yet, one can regret the relatively long time it took to finalise the various initial assessments, with potentially a prejudice to the integration of the lessons learnt from those assessments in the operational strategy.

The creation of the position of BDF to support to UACs/ACs development brings effective results, but could be even qualitatively improved with additional capacity building to these officers and to ACs/UACs' leaders.

5.4. Efficiency

The main evaluative question regarding the efficiency criterion is formulated as "Do the actions implemented (and the corresponding allocation of resources) are the best options (or best levers) to make a difference, = to address the lock-ins or bottlenecks/obstacles identified?"

5.4.1. Regarding technical training and dissemination of AE techniques

The mechanism of extension based on Farmer Specialist Trainers (FSTs) or Master Farmers, embedded in supported cooperatives or unions is seen as a cost-efficient option, with limited costs while providing near-at-hand services to supported farmers and allowing some close follow-up.

As seen in section 4 (Table 8 page), the lack of understanding of agroecology comes out as the number 1 constraint to the adoption of AE practices according to AC leaders who took part in FGD. The efficiency of the transmission of knowledge could be improved, in particular, beyond technical know-hows, to communicate on the understanding of agroecological principles and on the long-term benefits. Suggestions were made during the peer-review workshop in the end of the MTR process, for instance to create new media to support communication such as video tools.

A limit to the efficiency of PARtNER action regarding the promotion of agroecology, raised in the FGDs, is also the inconsistency of messages received by farmers. This can indeed limit the efficiency of the intervention, and plead to two possible (complementary) ways to address this limit: i) by identifying other key actors of agriculture extension and associate them in the effort of promotion of AE techniques (notably CAOs); ii) by providing more solid evidences of the long-term benefits of AE models promoted.

Lack of water availability / irrigation system is also identified as a no-go constraint for part of the recommended practices. Of course, when this constraint is not addressed, it makes inefficient any financial resource of the project invested in technical training that cannot be applied by targeted farmers. Whenever a source of water in dry season is a necessity to implement some of the activities or techniques proposed to the farmers, the project shall make sure the constraint can be addressed for farmers who take part in trainings or extension activities.

5.4.2. Regarding the support to ACs / UACs

The consolidation of the UAC level in Battambang and Takeo is seen as an element of consolidation of the project efficiency, with economies of scale compared to the support to numerous individual cooperatives, and with strategically more chances to build viable organisations.

The creation and financing of Business Development Facilitators's (BDS) positions seems to be an efficient vehicle to boost UACs/ACs commercially-oriented activities and to better document the activities, results and financial statements. With the perspective of the possible integration of these officers in UACs (to be

confirmed) the financing of the position consists in a transitory subsidy to accompany the scaling up of the Unions (see also the “Sustainability” section).

Box 4: Key take-away results regarding the assessment of project’s Efficiency

Overall, the project has chosen quite cost-efficient options for the dissemination of AE techniques, with practical and affordable system, based on farmer-to-farmer extension. It could further gain efficiency with better articulation with other players engaged locally in agricultural extension and by ensuring the required technical conditions for application of methods are fulfilled before enrolling farmers.

The choice of working at UAC level is also a good option to ensure efficiency, as well as the creation of the positions of BDS.

5.5. Impact / Effects

The mid-term review has assessed the perception of changes by project stakeholders and beneficiaries, notably through the Focus Group Discussions with ACs / UACs’ leaders and members. No large surveys have been conducted as part of the MTR exercise, given the limited resources and time available, so it is important to keep in mind that the elements reported here can be considered as relatively subjective. A TAPE assessment is scheduled to be undertaken in the end of 2024 / early 2025, and it will be important to review the findings of this assessment in regard of the perception described here regarding the effects (at mid-term) of PARtNER project, and to see if it confirms (or contradicts) the perceptions reported here.

5.5.1. ACs / UACs management and governance

Through FGDs, the leaders (mostly) of UACs or ACs have reported important progresses regarding UACs/ACs management, that they attribute to the project. They report that they have a better understanding of their roles and observe a diversification of their organisations’ activities and in some case an extension of the number of members.

Development of economic activities and managerial capacities are more visible for the two Unions of Agricultural Cooperatives of Tramkak and Battambang, with the integration of BDF. Presentation made by UACs during the workshop held in Phnom Penh on the 7th of November 2024 shows a certain ability to monitor activities and economic indicators and evaluate their evolution.

The turnover generated by some of the activities of the Unions also testify for the development of their economic capacities, in particular for BUAC, which has reported a raw income of 1,114,200 US\$ for the sales of SRP rice in 2024 and 176,250 US\$ for vegetables sales. This represents significant growth. The turnover of TrUAC is much lower for the time being, with only 14,213 US\$ of income reported for 2024 (records presented in November).

A negative effect of the project reported (one occurrence only) in Battambang is the amount of time mobilized for UAC leaders to manage the UAC.

5.5.2. Farmers' level of adoption of AE practices

The six FGD organized in the three provinces with AC leaders and AC members is indicating a perception of adoption of more agroecological practices by part of the farmers. There is a total of 26 occurrences⁷ of

⁷ Note that some of them could rather be coded as changes in knowledge rather than practices.

answers reporting major positive changes largely attributable to PARtNER project on the topic of Farmer practices and AE adoption. Among key changes noted:

- Reduction of the use of chemical fertilizers,
- Knowledge on production of solid and liquid compost, botanical pesticides,
- Cultivation of cover crops,
- Safe vegetable production.

Again, these FDG results are telling about the perception of changes attributable to PARtNER project but are not quantified, and it will be important to confirm and weigh the changes in farmer practices through the mid-term TAPE assessment.

The same focus group discussions have also highlighted some key constraints that are still impeding the adoption of AE by part of the farmers, such as a lack of understanding of agroecology, or resources-linked constraints (lack of water, or lack of AE inputs, for instance, as some of the main lock-ins reported by farmers).

Also, it is important to note that some negative observations⁸ were also made by FGD with AC leaders and AC members regarding adoption of AE practices. They are not considered as results of the project but rather limit its impact due to the context. They reflect the reluctance of some farmers to adopt AE practices promoted by the project, and the persistence of use of chemical inputs, notably herbicides.

5.5.3. Incomes and livelihood of farmers

From the six FGD organized in the three provinces with AC leaders and AC members, 25 occurrences⁹ of positive effect largely or partly attributable to PARtNER project have been noted. Participants rather consider that farmers incomes have increased, but also, they also note improvement of the management of financial resources by farmers' households. The participants in FGD note some positive impacts on livelihoods (and in one case, the mention of reduction of migration is noted).

Only two negative evolutions (not attributed to the project) were mentioned on this subject during the FGD, which relates to the indebtedness of households toward MFI or informal money-lenders.

5.5.4. Soil health, fertility, environment

Only positive changes were mentioned in the FGDs on the topic of soil health, fertility and environment, with a total of 36 occurrences, largely considered as effects of the project. The ideas raised on this topic are two-fold:

- In a majority of contributions, the emphasis is given to the improvement of farmers' knowledge: awareness on soil health and conservation, and know-how regarding the proper use of fertilisers (in particular of organic fertilizers) or the use of cover-crops, or also about waste management.
- The other part of the contributions is on the effect level, with reported increase of soil fertility and health, in some cases supported by observation of yields or presence of earthworms.

5.5.5. Market connection and added value for AE products

Some positive changes are mentioned regarding the connection of farmers to the market, the trust of customers and the generation of added value for agroecological products, but this is a topic on which opinions are more divided. A number of positive changes were reported by participants of FGDs on this subject, partly attributed to PARtNER project: this is notably the case for vegetables, with a certain level of trust from consumers and better selling prices, according to FGDs. Some positive effects are also noted on

⁸ Six occurrences.

⁹ Few of them are actually more on ACs' / UACs' improved incomes and not about HH incomes.

rice selling, notably in Battambang with SRP which is probably the most objective and solid market-recognition of more sustainable cropping practices, materialized by an official certification.

But on the other hand, connection to the market and improved prices are by far the main topic on which farmers consulted have reported that expected changes did not occur. AC/UAC leaders are noting that objectives are not yet achieved on these aspects, with three main issues:

- The difficulty of farmers to comply with the production requirements (quality standards);
- The reluctance of some farmers to engage in collective action for the sale of their products;
- Insufficient number of producers engaged and insufficient volumes of compliant production are obstacles to enter new markets.

Indeed, it is acknowledged that it requires more time to yield results on market and prices, as transformation of production systems is a prerequisite, and building consumers' trust then take time. It is therefore normal to have mixed results on this subject.

5.5.6. Women empowerment and workload

In the Focus Group Discussion, major constraints were mentioned as impeding women to get more involved as leaders in the ACs/UACs, the two factors repeated with the more occurrences being the two following ones:

- Women have more workload than men (including domestic tasks);
- Women do not have enough opportunities to participate in social programs to express their views in agriculture.

Yet, among the key stakeholders of PARTNER project, we clearly see the emergence of women leaders who have earned skills and self-confidence and serve as powerful examples.

A good illustration is the leadership of BUAC, composed of 6 women out of 9 members of Board and Inspection Committee, in total, including women chairing both the Board and the Inspection Committee. BUAC seems to get more and more successful in its business development, which is a powerful example for other farmer organisations.

Another example is illustrated by Ms. Sok Chanraksmei, the newly recruited secretary and facilitator of ALISEA network in Cambodia which testify for women's abilities to take leading roles.

5.5.7. Farmers' (or FOs') voice in policy dialog and perception as key players for SFS

At local level (commune, districts), the aggregation of farmer organisations in UACs gives more weight to farmers. They are occasionally identified as possible partners of the local authorities. For instance, the operation of provision (by TrUAC) of litter-bins to be put in public places in Tramkak district is proving that farmer organisations can be sources of suggestions and partners in implementation of activities related to public good.

In the interviews with local authorities (communes, districts) conducted during the MTR, the importance of farmers' practices for nutrition and food safety is well identified, but the way local authorities' representatives replied questions enhances more the need to train / educate farmers, rather than considering them potentially as a driver of positive change.

At national level, the participation of Farmer Organisations (notably BUAC and TrUAC) in the ALISEA network is important to consolidate their capacities to get involved in national strategies for agroecology promotion and policy advocacy.

Box 5: Key take-away results regarding the assessment of project's Impact/Effects

At the mid-term of the project, it is too early to measure impact. But first trends can be observed regarding certain effects of the intervention.

Overall, and with the reserves inherent to the methodology of the Mid-Term Review, we can state that the project brings some positive contributions regarding agroecological practices adoption by a part of the farmers in the targeted areas, to be further confirmed by the mid-term TAPE assessment.

Supported farmer organisations, in particular at UAC level, are getting consolidated in their business-orientation, notably with the support of the newly created positions of BDF. BUAC in particular has considerably scaled up its activity and turn-over, in particular thanks to SRP rice. Yet, apart from the case of SRP rice, the market-recognition of the specific quality of AE products still largely remains to be built.

The project also contributes to enhancing women leaders, in particular in BUAC and in ALISEA.

5.6. Sustainability

5.6.1. Resilience and technical-economical viability of AE practices promoted

► Technical (knowledge) requirements

Technical and practical know-how of a large part of the agroecological practices promoted seems to be quite easily mastered by farmers once they have been trained and supported in initial implementation. In the ACs/ACUs a number of farmers are now probably familiar enough with some of the practices to be able to repeatedly implement them (seeds multiplication, natural fertilizer production, vegetable production, etc...).

The ability to push practices further, innovate, compare results (in a action-research process) is not documented by the MTR. It could be a point of further attention for the second half of project implementation.

► Material viability of AE practices

By definition, AE techniques promoted are primarily based on local resources and on circular economy principles. Hence, the AE production models are more likely to be resilient to shock and to remain viable, whereas conventional agricultural practices, based on imported inputs (notably fertilizers and pesticides) could be more exposed to shocks affecting the global economy. The strategic choice of supporting agroecological practices is in itself a factor of improvement of viability and resilience.

Even if agroecological models can be more resilient to extreme climate events (such as draught for example, if soils are in better health and richer in organic matter), exposure to climate risks is still identified as an important constraint, as it was underlined in FGD and in the peer-review workshop. The lack of reliable access to water remains a fragility for many farms.

► Economic viability of AE practices

Based on locally available resources, agro-ecological production practices can often generate lower monetary production costs (yet not systematically) but sometimes against an increase of the quantity of labour required which can be a limiting factor for the adoption or the continuous implementation of AE practices.

It has to be underlined that, excepted for Master Farmers who can receive some inputs paid by the project to implement demonstration farms, and shared investment costs (50%-50%) for bigger investments, the project does not provide subsidies to beneficiary farmers, thereof with no risks of distortion of the economic conditions and step back on the adoption of AE practices due to the removal of subsidies.

Market-incentives are not always effective as mentioned above. But in some cases they are in place and in particular for the case of SRP rice, are based on market-driven incentive (premium price) with perspectives of continuation (and probably even consolidation and scaling up) beyond project duration.

5.6.2. Economical and managerial viability of ACs / UACs

The presentations of business activities of UACs made during their workshop with Uni4Coop on the 7th of November 2024 are not yet providing enough information on their economic models:

BUAC has presented information on the volumes and turnover of its activities (vegetable, SRP rice, rice seeds), but no indication on the costs engaged (including managerial costs) and on profitability. Yet, BUAC had explained that a part of the premium for SRP paddy is allocated to ACs and to the UAC: 10,000 KHR/ton (approximately 2.50 US\$) for BUAC, and the same for ACs. A very important and positive aspect is the very significant scaling up of SRP-paddy sales: with 3,714 tons of SRP paddy delivered to buyers in 2024, this already represent an income of more than 9,200 US\$ for the Union. Costs have not been presented, but the scale (and further perspective of growth) can feed optimism for the long-term economic viability of this Union.

For Tramkak, TrUAC has presented figures on revenues, expenses and profits for each of its businesses (See Table 13 below), but we understand that figures given does not integrate managerial costs (possible remuneration of the leaders in charge...).

Table 13: Economic results (2024) of TrUAC, by activities, as presented in the workshop of 7th November 2024

Activities	Revenues	Expenses	Profit
Rice seeds	14,213.25 US\$	13,087.00 US\$	1,126.25 US\$
Fertilizer	1,050.00 US\$	990.00 US\$	60.00 US\$
Chicken feed	281.25 US\$	258.75 US\$	22.50 US\$
Chicken meat	1,592.55 US\$	1,458.20 US\$	134.35 US\$
Total profits			1,343.10 US\$

It has to be noted that the above expenses are specific to activities, and profits indicated here are gross margin. Figures above does not integrate crosscutting expenses of UAC management (office rent, stationaries, utilities, meeting costs, salary of BDF...) which are sponsored by the project, for a cost of approximately 1,000 US\$/months (or 400 US\$/month without including BDS salary).

For BUAC, we start to see perspective of economies of scale that could permit to cover managerial costs, including the possibility to take in charge staff (possibly starting with the Business Development Facilitator position, integrated in BUAC but currently still subsidized by the project.

For TrUAC, this perspective appears more distant, with not enough gross profit generated to finance the professionalization of the structure.

In Kampong Thom, the economic viability of cooperatives is even more out of reach for the time being, as they do not yet benefit from the potential economies of scale of setting up a Union of ACs.

5.6.3. Building ALISEA autonomy and viability

► *Institutional viability*

There is a relatively good level of engagement of members in the Cambodian branch of the ALISEA network, as it was illustrated for instance by a satisfactory participation of members in the General Assembly of ALISEA-Cambodia that took place on the 22nd of November 2024. A “Board of Member” is established (yet not on the basis of election by members) to take a lead role in the network. The secretary / coordinator of the network in Cambodia, Ms. Sok Chanraksme, effectively maintains a dynamic and communication within the network, notably through the active members’ group on Telegram.

The issue of the legalization / institutionalization of the network is still pending. It goes beyond PARtNER project (and beyond Cambodia, with the regional dimension of ALISEA) and this question is notably instructed with the support of the ASSET project¹⁰. It will be important to be reactive to further development on these institutionalization and governance matters, and to be able to switch to a direct partnership with ALISEA once legally established.

► *Financial sustainability*

Financially, the ALISEA network (whereas at national or regional level) depends fully on supports from projects / development partners.

As stated in ASSET project Mid-Term Evaluation: “ALiSEA is mainly expected to be a platform for knowledge management, enhance synergies and capacity building. Part of these roles could be financed (or partly financed) by beneficiaries, such as training sessions for instance. But a large part of costs of ALiSEA’s functions will be difficult to be charged to beneficiaries, for example the gathering of information, documentation and management of the repository of documents, or functions such as policy advocacy roles. A membership fee may not realistically cover significant costs.”

A full financing of the network by its members or users (through membership fees or service fees) may not be achievable. But a part of subsidies can be structurally part of the economic model of ALISEA network. It of course implies a certain fragility, that can be reduced by: i) a systemic integration of financing to the network (possibly with national public institutions)... yet with a risk of loss of independence; ii) a diversification of financial partners to limit the impact in case of withdrawal of one of the sponsors.

Box 6: Key take-away results regarding the assessment of project’s Sustainability

The sustainability of project achievements is still, to some extents, a challenge.

At farm level, mostly, once AE practices are adopted, the sustainability of their adoption might not be too much at risks, provided inputs (if any) remain available.

At the level of ACs or UACs, building the viability of the activities, production and services of the farmer organization still remains a work in progress (which is not abnormal at this stage). From an economic point of view, BUAC seems already on a right pathway to reach a viable scale. The journey might be longer for TrUAC and even more for the ACs in Kampong Thom.

Last, regarding ALISEA network, the process ahead is also still long but does not rely only on PARtNER project, but also on ASSET project and on the new funding to ALISEA that seems to be now secured with SDC.

¹⁰ Uni4Coop could ask GRET to share the report of the mid-term evaluation of ASSET project, or at list the sections related to ALISEA network, as there are more detailed reflections that would be of interest to PARtNER project.

6. Recommendations

The collective exercise of PARtNER project mid-term review has led to a number of observations (developed in previous sections). The mid-term review peer workshop was an important step in the process to share results and set the condition for a horizontal exchange and reflections with project stakeholders, with a focus on drawing recommendations for the second half of the project implementation period.

We are consolidating here a number of practical recommendations that the partners have collectively formulated, as a main outcome of the Mid-Term Review.

6.1. Strategic recommendations on partnerships and coordination

RECOMMENDATION 1: CONTINUE WITH THE HORIZONTAL STRATEGIC COORDINATION OF PARtNER PROJECT TO ENHANCE COMPLEMENTARITIES AND COOPERATION AMONG THE PARTNERS AND COMPONENTS. CREATE OPPORTUNITIES AND FIND MODALITIES TO MAINTAIN A CROSS-CUTTING HORIZONTAL REFLECTION AMONG PROJECT PARTNERS, ALSO ENHANCING THE USE OF KNOWLEDGE PRODUCED BY THE PROJECT.

In the first half of PARtNER project implementation, the different partners involved in the project mainly had bilateral relations with Uni4Coop. The Mid-Term Review has been the first occasion of an inclusive transversal reflection engaging all the partners. This has been appreciated and is likely to be useful to enhance synergies and strategic reflections.

The modalities are to be defined, but there could be at least bi-annual workshops if possible. Possibly the outcome of the mid-term TAPE assessment could give a first opportunity of such discussion, to share results and discuss the lessons learnt.

Also, a recommendation formulated in particular by Louvain Coopération is to enhance, in the strategic reflection, the use of the knowledge produced through the various studies implemented by the project. This is considered an added value of Uni4Coop members (and their institutional connections with universities) and deserves to be valued, yet with pragmatism.

RECOMMENDATION 2: EXPLORE POSSIBLE PARTNERSHIPS WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND TEST THE BENEFITS OF A TERRITORIAL APPROACH.

In interviews conducted with them during the MTR, district or communes' authorities have expressed the limited role they have over the agriculture sector. But on the other hand, they have some mandate related to health and nutrition. It could be possible to initiate a multi-actors reflection and develop a territorial vision and partnership to improve nutrition and access to quality and safe food products, while supporting farmer organisation as partners for the supply of quality food, including with a communication toward local consumers.

Tramkak district could be a right place to pilot a partnership for several reasons: i) there is one Union of ACs established, at the district scale; ii) some connections and limited partnership with local authorities were made (for instance the litter bins provided in public places) already placing TrUAC as a potential partner from LA point of view. iii) issues of health and nutrition are identified as subjects for LA, and a partnership with Hellen Keller International could help to build a coherent strategic partnership with communes and district.

Exchanges of experiences with GRET and Agrisud International in Siem Reap could provide valuable insights of the development of such partnership (possibility to consider the organisation of a study tour with Tramkak local authorities, TrUAC and Hellen Keller International?).

6.2. Extension / promotion of AE practices and knowledge management

RECOMMENDATION 3: CONFRONT THE OUTCOMES OF THE QUALITATIVE APPROACH OF THE MTR REGARDING PERCEIVED CHANGES WITH THE RESULTS OF THE MID-TERM TAPE ASSESSMENT.

It has been underlined in the present report that the Mid-Term Review, with limited resources allocated, has gathered information on perceived changes (notably through the FGDs) in farmers practices. The mid-term TAPE assessment which is currently starting will bring another source of information based on a more representative sampling of farmers to assess the evolution of their practices. It will be important to confront the outcomes of the MTR with the results of the TAPE mid-term survey to confirm or revise the findings and, if necessary, the conclusions.

RECOMMENDATION 4: EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY TO PRODUCE OTHER SUPPORT / MEDIA FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF AGROECOLOGY (VIDEO, BANNERS, SOCIAL MEDIA...).

In order to improve farmers' outreach and the efficiency of the promotion of AE methods, it has been suggested to develop, in addition to the F2F extension, additional material or media to communicate toward a larger number of farmers. As suggested during the MTR peer workshop, this could include banners, but also production of video or contents to be disseminated via social media.

This can also be an area of synergy with the ALISEA network, which has an important focus on knowledge management and dissemination.

RECOMMENDATION 5: BREAK DOWN TRAININGS TO FARMERS IN SHORTER TRAINING SESSIONS TO EASE PARTICIPATION.

A pragmatic recommendation produced by the peer workshop consists in shortening the duration of F2F training sessions (even if it requires doing more sessions) as full-day duration appears as an obstacle to the full attendance of farmers.

RECOMMENDATION 6: SEPARATE THE ROLES OF TRAINERS AND DEMONSTRATION FARMERS AND SELECT DEMONSTRATION FARMERS WELL.

Another pragmatic recommendation produced by the peer workshop is the separation of the roles of F2F trainer and of demonstration farmers, to ensure the engagement of master farmers is not too time-consuming and not detrimental to the quality of their farming practices, especially when their farm is expected to be a site for demonstration.

RECOMMENDATION 7: ASSOCIATE / INVOLVE COMMUNE AGRICULTURE OFFICERS IN THE SUPPORT TO AGROECOLOGICAL PRACTICES PROMOTION.

Partly linked with Recommendation 2 above (partnership with LA and territorial approach), a strong recommendation is to try to engage Commune Agriculture Officers in the project activities. This is important for a matter of external coherence (that could help to avoid the risk of contradictory messages passed to the farmers) and could also increase the efficiency of the project regarding AE promotion. It is also a factor of sustainability, as CAO are here to stay beyond the project duration.

This probably will require discussion with the General Directorate of Agriculture (MAFF) as the CAO are directly attached to GDA. But there is a window of opportunity for partnership, in particular because, besides their basic salary, CAO have limited means to implement their activities and are eager to receive extra support (material, financial as well as in terms of training).

RECOMMENDATION 8: BEYOND THE DISSEMINATION OF TECHNIQUES, DEVELOP, IF POSSIBLE, A MORE MANAGERIAL SUPPORT TO FARMERS TO ADJUST RECOMMENDATIONS TO THEIR FARMING SYSTEMS AND SPECIFIC DISTRIBUTION OF RESOURCES.

Agroecological practices are not about standardized technical itineraries to be implemented on a “one-size-fit-all” principle, as it has been recalled during the discussions of the peer workshop. It is a lot about optimizing the sustainable use of each farm’s resources and production factors, and for this matter it is desirable to try to tailor the technical recommendation on a case-by-case (farm by farm) basis. This is an orientation to be further explored, yet knowing that a really tailored-service would require more resources (more time by farmers) and also adequately trained human resources. There is probably a reflection to further conduct on this matter, and a balanced compromise to build in order to make a move in the direction of an adaptation of technical advice, without hampering the cost-effectiveness of the extension system.

6.3. Development and consolidation of UACs / ACs

RECOMMENDATION 9: DEVELOP FURTHER THE UACs / ACs BUSINESS PLANS WITH A LONG-TERM VISION AND MULTI-ANNUAL ROADMAPS AND CONTINUE TO TRAIN BDF AND ACs/UACs BOARD ON MANAGERIAL SKILLS.

It is necessary to further develop business plans and mid-term to long-term visions and roadmap for the consolidation of BUAC, TrUAC, and ACs (or a possible UAC) in Kampong Thom in order to better build their economic viability and accompany their development and growth toward an economically viable scale. Simple Excel tools could be developed to model scenarios and explore the way to reach breakeven with various scenarios of costs, prices, volumes for the different activities. Moreover, this can be helpful to determine the best moment / scale when investments in equipment or facilities (e.g. processing equipment) shall be made.

This will also require additional capacity building to Business Development Facilitators and to ACs/UACs Board on management skills.

RECOMMENDATION 10: INCREASE THE SUPPORT TO UACs / ACs ON VALUE CHAIN MANAGEMENT AND DIFFERENTIATED MARKET ACCESS

The MTR process has shown that the expectations of farmers / farmer leaders regarding market improvement have not materialized as desired (as reported in § 5.5.5.: “*connection to market and improved prices are by far the main topic on which farmers consulted have reported that expected changes did not occur*”).

In some cases, there is a need to create further opportunities for differentiation of AE products and connection to market (SRP rice is already a quite successful case. Other standards / labels can be explored, and in some cases dedicated selling points / market outlets could be the best solutions, as suggested for vegetable products notably in Kampong Thom, and to some extent Tramkak).

But even more necessary is to support ACs / UACs in the management of the production in compliance with defined requirements, and ensuring the engagement and loyalty of producers. These are more supply-chain management capacities that are lacking and can be improved.

6.4. Support to the ALISEA network

RECOMMENDATION 11: CREATE THE CONDITIONS TO ENSURE THAT MEMBERS' OWNERSHIP IS DEVELOPED AND NOT IMPEDED BY PROJECT-LED DECISIONS

PARtNER project is not alone to support ALISEA network consolidation and institutionalization. In particular it is a core objective of the ASSET project as well (+on the upcoming SDC project) and a close coordination needs to be emphasized to ensure coherence. It is understood that, as long as ALISEA is not yet recognized as a legal entity, support to ALISEA has to go through third party institutions, such as DPA for the case of PARtNER project (including for the working contract of ALISEA officers). Nevertheless, the MTR is drawing attention to the risk of support organizations to overpass their role and become too influential on the network's institutional and strategic evolutions. This is a point of vigilance. PARtNER project (in good intelligence with GRET and ASSET project) have to ensure that enabling conditions are set to ensure members' ownership on the evolution of the network (at national and regional level) and on the strategic decisions.

6.5. Gender

RECOMMENDATION 12: ENCOURAGE AND HELP ACs / UACs TO ELABORATE THEIR INTERNAL GENDER POLICY (AND TO APPLY IT)

A suggestion that emerged from the "gender" session of the MTR peer-workshop was to provide support to ACs / UACs to elaborate their own internal gender policy, in order to encourage women participation in the activities and management of the organisations. This shall include practical measures to address the bottlenecks or constraints for women engagements. It shall also include a mechanism for monitoring the actual implementation of ACs'/UACs' internal gender policies.

RECOMMENDATION 13: CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE AND TRAIN WOMEN TO ENGAGE IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN UACs / ACs AND AMONG FARMER TRAINERS.

Women are already quite well represented, including at key leadership positions, in the governance of supported UACs/ACs. The MTR peer-workshop has nevertheless recommended to keep attention on this matter and continue to encourage women engagement and support the development of their capacities in such roles.

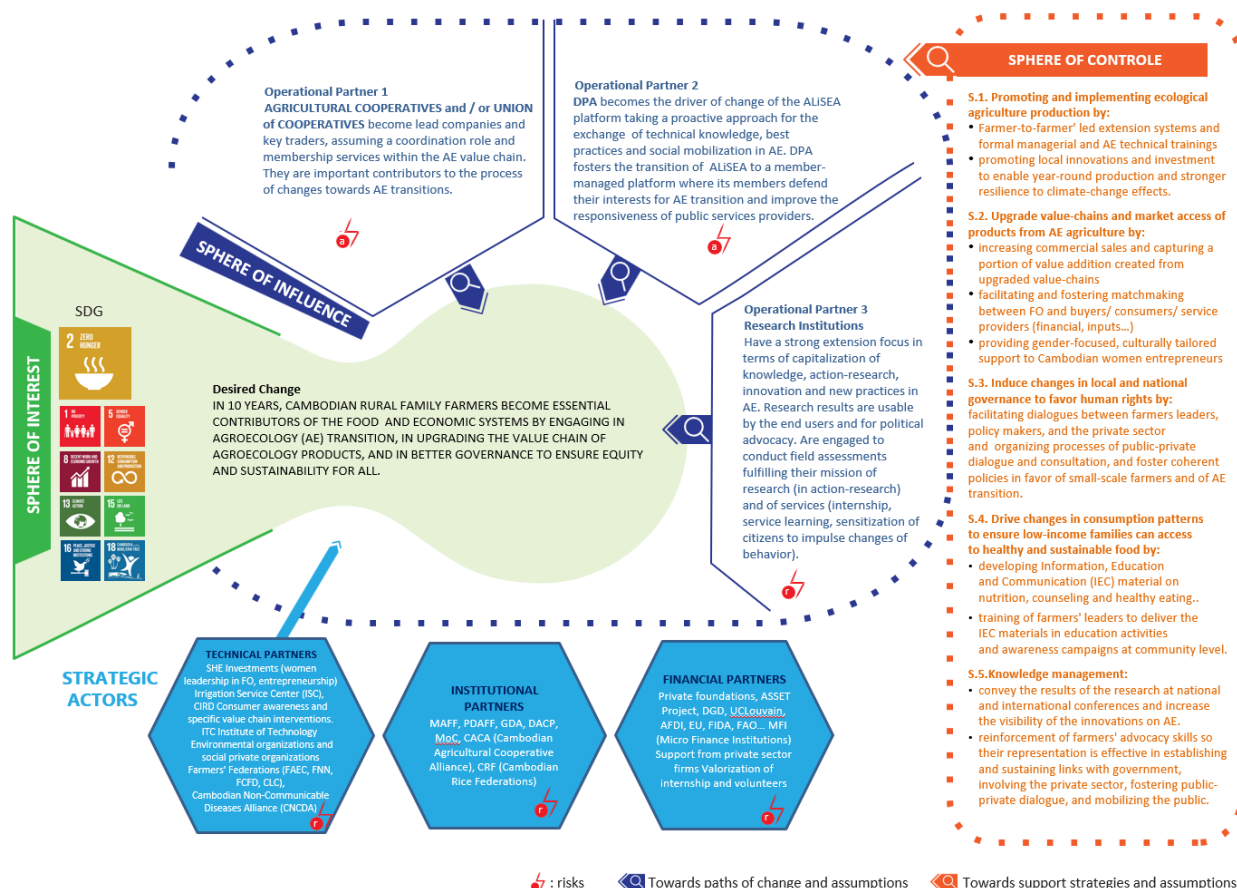
RECOMMENDATION 14: CREATE OPPORTUNITIES TO SHOWCASE WOMEN LEADERS SUPPORTED BY PARTNER PROJECT TO BE AN EXAMPLE FOR WOMEN ENGAGEMENT.

For the women engaged in UACs/ACs leadership to continue to gain confidence, and even more to encourage other women to be confident enough to take responsibilities in other ACs (even outside of the project area), it is suggested to get in touch with projects promoting women entrepreneurship and see if they would be willing to welcome women cooperative leaders (or UAC leaders) to join events destined to train and promote women entrepreneurs.

7. Comments on the intervention logic / Theory of Change

The Mid-Term Review did not re-work on the project's Theory of Change. It would possibly need a follow-up collective reflection to pursue strategic reflection with all the project partners, in line with the Recommendation 1 of the previous section. Again, the fact that the project's ToC was not developed with the project actors but only by Louvain Cooperation and Eclosio is in itself problematic (especially when two of the key objectives are: i) to increase the recognition of farmers / ACs / UACs as key actors of the sustainable food systems; ii) to consolidate ALISEA network, including its role as a driver of change through policy advocacy and mobilization of actors).

Figure 5: Structure of PARTNER project Theory of Change



Overall, the structure of the Theory of Change illustrated by Figure 5 above is not fundamentally questioned. But few aspects would deserve a bit more attention, or some details could be reviewed, taking into account the findings of the MTR:

- The graphic representation could enhance better the interactions between Operational Partners 1, 2 and 3, to show the connections and coordination (which requires to be increased, as recommended in this report).
- On the sphere of control, point S.4. regarding changes in consumption patterns is currently not much addressed by the project (with an understood constraint on financial resources available). As written in previous section, it could be an area on which partnerships could be formed at territorial level, with LA and with other projects, as Hellen Keller's one in Tramkak for instance).
- There is probably a need to increase the connection and linkages with some of the strategic actors represented at the bottom of the Figure 5, at least with some key institutional partners as MAFF/GDA, and PDAFF; as well as with local authorities which are not shown on the Figure.

► ACs/UACs

In the description of the path of change (for “Partner 1”) the partnership (of ACs/UACs) with private sector is enhanced. But in the implementation, it seems the partnerships between ACs/UACs and private sector are relatively limited, except in Battambang with notably the SRP rice. There is probably a need to invest more time and explore more the possibilities of collaboration with the private sector, which might help to materialize the expected results of increased / more stable prices or new market access. It will also help to fulfill the assumption formulated in the ToC: *“If Unions of Cooperatives have sufficient volume and commercial activities, they could effectively sustain the facilitation at project end”*.

Incidentally, we note an ambiguity in the roles of ACs/UACs in value chains, as the ToC sometimes describe them as *“external facilitators”*, sometimes as *“lead companies and key traders”*.

► DPA / ALISEA

Regarding “Partner 2”, we understand that the purpose of the project is to consolidate ALISEA and contribute to build a member-driven governance of the network. But the formulation of the objective (“ultimate change” is ambiguous and position DPA as the object of the desired change instead of the mean to achieve it. *“DPA becomes the driver of change (...)”*).

The link with ASSET project (and/or GRET) as a main supporter of ALISEA too, not only in Cambodia but at the regional level would deserve to appear clearly in the ToC. ASSET appears only on the graphic representation of the ToC (Figure 5) as a “Financial Partner”, whereas it is a technical partner as well. Coordination with ASSET and respective contributions of the two projects shall be explained.

► Research institutions

Regarding the research institutions (“Partner 3”), maybe a weak point in the chain of results is *“results are shared/published targeting a larger audience (besides the academic community) and strategically presented as evidence for policy decision making”*. This appears as unsufficiently implemented, with even a questioning on the use of the research results for PARTNER strategic management.

The assumption *“o. Research results show sufficient and appropriate components and elements that serve as an important guide for increased funding support and policies that put AE front and center for redesigning food systems”* is important, but maybe there is a missing link to maximize the influence of research results on policy making. There is probably a connection to make with ALISEA, and in particular with its “policy dialogue” component in order to increase the likeliness of this assumption to materialize.

Annexes

Annex 1: Terms of Reference of the mid-term review of PARTNER

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Mid-term review of PARTNER project

(Partnership for Agroecology Transition, Networking and Efficient Resilience)

2024-07-30

A. CONTEXT

A.1 INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT:

Since 2016, four Belgian university NGOs including ECLOSIO (the NGO of the University of Liège), Louvain Cooperation (Louvain-la-Neuve), FUCID (Namur) and ULB-Cooperation (Brussels), have decided to implement a common program financed by the Directorate-General for Development Cooperation Belgium (DGD) for a period of 10 years, from 2017 to 2026, under the name of Uni4Coop. Uni4Coop's specificity is to contribute to development by mobilizing the human and scientific resources of the university community.

For the program 2022-2026, Uni4Coop proposed a fully integrated program between Louvain Cooperation and Eclasio in Cambodia. This joint program will enable the two organizations to join forces, strengthen each other, promote exchanges and better capitalize on practices, and generate new expertise at the crossroads of research and development.

The Uni4Coop office in Cambodia is located in Phnom Penh. It coordinates a local multidisciplinary team. The thematic areas of intervention are sustainable food systems, food and economic sovereignty (support to family farming, agroecology transition, income-generating activities, rural entrepreneurship, farmer organization) and health (with a focus on non-communicable diseases and a special emphasis on mental health).

Within the outcome of Sustainable Food Systems (SFS), Uni4Coop was granted a PARTNER project (2022 – 2026) which aims at generating economic and social changes in rural farmers families and improving the food market through agroecology transition and gender equity in agriculture. Field-activities are carried out by key partners including (i) the Tramkak Union of Agricultural Cooperatives (TrUAC) in Takeo province, (ii) Battambang Union of Agricultural Cooperatives (BUAC) in Battambang province, (iii) and 3 Agricultural Cooperatives (ACs) in Kampong Thom province, (iv) the Ecosystem Services and Land Use Research Centre (ECOLAND) of the Royal University of Agriculture (RUA), and Development and Partnership in Action (DPA) organization. In addition, several other higher education institutions, NGOs, networks and consultants are collaborating to implement different interventions.

A.2 TARGETED IMPACT OF THE OUTCOME:

The SFS outcome supports family farming systems by strengthening their resilience functions as food providers for the Cambodian society. The intended approach combines the increase of agricultural productivity through agroecological practices, the increase of revenues, and the improvement of the socio-economic environment. This is to be achieved through:

- the promotion of Farmer-to-Farmer-led (F2F) extension systems, technical and managerial innovations, and co-investments in agroecological production assets;
- the creation of value-addition and the reach to remunerative markets by upgrading sustainable and inclusive value-chains of agroecological products;
- supporting farmers representatives' initiatives to address constraints and opportunities during dialogues with the private sector and the government, to promote gender-inclusive governance models, and to foster policies in favour of small-scale farmers;
- raising consumer awareness of healthy food intake and promote quality standards and control systems to improve sustainable consumption patterns, with an emphasis on the role of women as agents of change; and
- improving knowledge management to foster and disseminate innovations and results and to influence policies in favour of agroecological transition.

A.3 OBJECTIVES AND RESULTS OF THE OUTCOME:

The outcome pursued by the project PARTNER is to “Generate economic and social changes of the Cambodian rural farmer families by improving Cambodian food market through agroecological transition and gender equity in agriculture”. This outcome was jointly developed by LC and Eclasio and their Cambodian partners. It intends to contribute to SDG 2 “End hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture” (main), to SDG 1 “End poverty in all its forms everywhere” (secondary), to SDG 5 “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” (secondary) and to SDG 8 “Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all” (secondary). It is consistent with the national policy of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) and with the objectives of the Joint Strategic Framework (JSF) 2022 – 2026 developed by all Belgian Non-Governmental Cooperation Actors (NGCAs) active in Cambodia.

The project PARTNER contributes to the following five results:

- R.1. Small-scale farmers and their family members improve their knowledge and capacity to ensure sustainable, healthy, diversified and culturally appropriate food production.
- R.2. Value-chains and market access of products from agroecological practices are upgraded
- R.3. Improved governance to favour peasant rights, gender equity and democratization of decision-making space
- R.4. Improved sustainable and healthier consumption patterns
- R.5. Innovations derived from the experimentation by small-scale farmers in the agroecology transitions, the upgrading of value chain and the better governance are consolidated in research-actions, studies or systematizations that are co-constructed with farmers and disseminated for their internal and external valorisation, in particular to influence policies and decision-making in favour of the transition to AE.

The annex 1 (ANNEX 19 Outcome Description) is presenting the detailed description of the outcome.

B. OBJECTIVE, SCOPE, AND USES OF THE EVALUATION

B.1 OBJECTIVE

The DGD do not require that a mid-term review is carried by the OSC beneficiary of grants. However, Eclasio and LC are interested to carry out this evaluation in order to measure some of the CAD criteria, such as Durability, Efficiency, Relevance and to gather a set of recommendations that will be implemented for adjusting implementation of PARTNER project in 2025 and 2026. The MTR will have to be completed by November 2024 so to enable Eclasio, LC and their partners to review their future action plans 2025 and 2026 in consideration of the recommendations.

The underlying objectives relating to this evaluation exercise for UNI4COOP are to:

- Promote a better mutual knowledge of the different actions and stakeholders involved in order to gather coherence toward the same impact and objectives.
- Use a common reference framework to understand strategic choices, paths of change, and to question the effectiveness and efficiency of current monitoring systems and inform strategic decisions for the last two years of the current program.
- Provide elements for reflection in the process of formulating TOCs for the next DGD program.
- Identify or confirm existing topics relating to knowledge management and capitalization process.

B.2 MAIN USES

The main users of the recommendations issued by the MTR process are the local participants of the evaluation. They must take the lead, propose and agree upon recommendations, since their ownership over them is crucial to review and adjust the next implementation stages, if relevant. They must fully participate, learn, and contribute to the process in order to maximise their ownership of the evaluation results.

The other users are LC and Eclasio, which will use this initiative’s outputs as a learning process and to adjust their strategy of actions in Cambodia

The fact that the stakeholders involved in the implementation of the projects take ownership of the evaluation process is also part of a learning approach, aiming for greater consideration and implementation of the recommendations since they are co-produced by peers.

The MTR is an accountability exercise demonstrating LC and Eclasio good governance principles to the DGD, our main donor, the other cooperation actors, the various stakeholders and the general public.

B.3 PERIOD CONCERNED BY THE EVALUATION

The evaluation will cover the two first years of implementation of PARTNER project, 2022 and 2023 and the beginning of 2024 if relevant.

B.4 TYPE OF EVALUATION

The Mid-Term Reviews are realised for all the projects implemented by Eclasio and LC. However, for PARTNER project in Cambodia, this is a horizontal evaluation process, intending to stimulate learning among peers.

B.5 THE OVERALL APPROACH

The evaluation process, of horizontal type¹, and its results will be validated by an external expert.

To implement the exercise, different stakeholders will be involved:

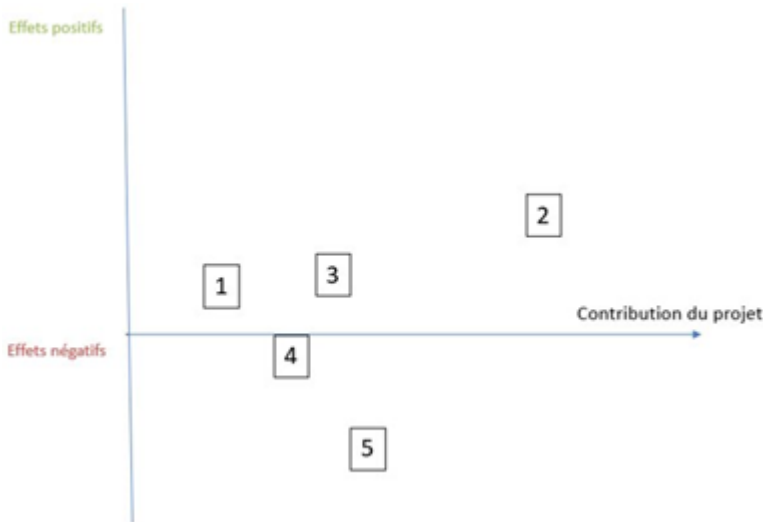
- The Evaluation Steering Committee: The process will be supported by one Steering Committee composed of Mey Veata, Christophe Goossens, Sophie Wyseur (for the COSEPRO), Doriane Desclée and Amaury Peeters. Its responsibilities are to contribute to the terms of reference and finalize them, select the external expert, support and ensure the progress of the process until the implementation of the recommendations is completed.
- The Evaluation Teams: Composed of at least one member from each partner or collaborating organization of Eclasio and LC; these teams will have varied composition and number considering the evaluation questions to be addressed. These teams participate in defining and selecting the evaluation questions that will be addressed. They will each carry out a self-assessment exercise based on verifiable factual data (documentation, field visits, interviews) and will then share their findings, analysis and conclusions with peers and the steering committee. Recommendations and a plan for their implementation will be issued from the joint analysis.
- The External Evaluator: the external evaluator accompanies the entire process. He/she validates and / or amends the process (choice of evaluation methods proposed in the TOR, information collection tools to ensure the reliability and validity of the evaluation exercise, other methodological recommendations, etc.) and submit his/her methodological proposition to the Evaluation Steering Committee. He/she ensures the triangulation of information based on the quality criteria of an evaluation. He/she supports, reinforces or completes the analysis carried out by the teams responsible for the evaluation exercise (Evaluation Teams) and gives an objective and additional opinion on the recommendations issued.
- Angles of interest: An angle of analysis could also focus on the innovative nature of the strategies, approaches, tools used within the framework of this program. Innovation must be taken in a broad sense: working on ideas to achieve an objective or solve a problem and make them viable. The co-construction of these innovations based on a dialogue of multi-actor knowledge is also an important centre of interest for the relevance, adequacy to the context and sustainability of these innovations.

Other areas of interest and key transversal issues, such as the degree of consideration of the gender approach, will also be the subject of particular attention.

C. FORMULATION OF KEY QUESTIONS

Evaluation criteria and questions	Approach
Effectiveness: How big is the effectiveness or impact of the project compared to the objectives planned? To what extent the objectives will be achieved?	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Self-assessment of the level of achievement of the objective indicators carried out based on an analysis of the documentation relating to available internal monitoring and from the different assessments made (Preliminary assessment of transitions, TAPE, Institutional assessment, value chains assessment...) and past relevant research and studies related to the programme (a).2. Peer analysis: this information from the monitoring system is cross-referenced with observations in the field, carried out by peers, possibly based on a sample of beneficiaries selected at random (b).3. Conclusions and recommendations, of all types (method, formulation of indicators, efficiency of the monitoring system, etc.).

	<p>(a) Documentation relating to OS indicators is collected during annual surveys on a sample representing +/- XX% of the XX direct beneficiaries.</p> <p>(b) In the form of focus groups or individual approaches.</p> <p>A budget for field visits carried out by peers (see point 2) is planned as part of this evaluation.</p>
<p>Impact:</p> <p>(is the ToC that prevail over log-frame; the logframe is used for the provision of some of the indicators only)</p> <p>Vision: In 10 years, Cambodian rural farmers families become formally considered and essential contributors of the food and economic systems by engaging in (i) agroecology transition (AE), (ii) upgraded value chain of AE products, and (iii) better governance to ensure equity and sustainability of all.</p> <p>To what extent this vision is realized?</p> <p>What criteria for transition to a SFS (SAD) did Uni4Coop best contribute to? How and why?</p> <p>Does the Uni4Coop intervention contribute to reaching higher-level development objectives (overall objective)? What is the impact or effect of the intervention in proportion to the overall situation of the target group or those affected or in terms of transition to a SAD?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The team members select criteria among the 10 elements of agroecology of the FAO document2, to carry out a more detailed analysis of the PARtNER project' contributions. Every criterion will be measured/estimated at each of the 4 levels if relevant: at field plots level, at farm level, at FO level, and at the system level. 2. The teams explain how and why they believe they have contributed (TOC) based on information collected in advance from focus groups made up of beneficiaries. 3. During the peer review workshops, each team is challenged by constructive critic of its presentation, particularly in relation to the processes of supporting change towards sustainable food systems based on the questions raised in point 4.1.1. of the Uni4COOP SAD guidance document (see annex 2) and the relevant results of the previously mentioned assessments. These questions will make it possible to place the observations linked to the chosen criteria in the food system. 4. Recommendations are formulated at the issue of the workshops 5. Have you seen any unexpected effects/impacts of the action (positive or negative)? <p>A budget for the organization of focus groups is planned as part of this evaluation. (see point 2)</p>
<p>Efficiency:</p> <p>What strategies do they best enable (best cost / results ratio) to remove the generic obstacles identified in the transition to SAD?</p>	<p>The teams select one to three levers and three lock-ins that are presented in the "Preliminary Assessment of Agroecology Transitions" document in Annex 3. (limited access to land, access to inputs, proof of performance, etc.) and documents, particularly from the perspective of the resources committed, the strategies used to help support or mitigate them. For each selected levers and lock-ins, quantitative elements and ratios will be defined to measure efficiency (costs and resources vs. results obtained).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. During workshops with peers, constructive criticism focuses on alternatives to consider for greater efficiency. 2. Recommendations are made. <p>N.B. This is not a question of carrying out a detailed analysis of each expenditure, but rather of questioning the allocation of resources, of opening the discussion by asking "and if we had to do it again" what we would change in the strategies implemented, to save resources.</p> <p>If possible, the Finance staff members will be asked to carry out the self-assessment exercise to be able to make the link with data from the accounting systems.</p>
<p>Relevance:</p> <p>What are the most relevant strategies or on the contrary to be avoided in view of the positive and negative changes mentioned by the beneficiaries?</p> <p>Are we doing the right thing?</p> <p>How important is the relevance or significance of the intervention regarding local</p>	<p>The self-assessment teams each use an impact grid.</p> <p>This is a participatory approach that allows front-line actors to give examples of changes in knowledge, skills, self-confidence, etc. attributable to the implementation of the program. And what is aimed to get here is the impacts of the project activities on the targeted beneficiaries and their expectations and on stakeholders and their strategies.</p>

<p>(beneficiaries) and national (institutional, government, etc.) requirements and priorities?</p>	 <p>The matrix consists of a horizontal axis which divides the vertical axis in two. The upper part is intended to receive positive examples and the lower part for negative effects.</p> <p>The positive or negative elements most related to the intervention are located furthest to the right of the horizontal axis.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The first step consists of asking the participants the question of how the project affected them by giving 2 to 4 examples on post-its, discussing them in pairs and then coming and putting them on the matrix explaining why. In order to verify the fairness of the allocation of resources and the validity of the strategies, the team will take care to collect more specifically examples from more vulnerable target groups: women, young people, people with disabilities, those without right, 2) The self-assessment team carries out an initial analysis with the participants. 3) The analysis carried out by peers will consist of identifying the cause-and-effect relationships between these changes and the strategies judged as efficient or not, in particular according to certain target groups, in relation to the lifting of certain obstacles, etc. <p>The front-line actors will be those contacted during the focus groups planned under the impact criterion in the same space-time.</p> <p>The budget included under the “impact” criterion will also be used to measure the relevance criterion.</p>
<p>Durability: To what extent will the changes judged to be the most significant be able to persist? or to what extent have the identified obstacles been lifted, and will they remain so?</p> <p>To what extent does the intervention reflect on and consider factors which, by experience, have a major influence on sustainability like e.g. economic, ecological, social and cultural aspects but also ownership of the transition process by local beneficiaries and in policies and counterparts and institutions? How self-supporting is the assisted local counterpart?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The teams analyse from the perspective of sustainability the changes judged to be essential during the focus groups (impact criterion) and completeness of the impact matrix (relevance); it is in fact these changes whose sustainability conditions should be verified and guaranteed. 2. The analysis carried out by peers and by actors in the local food system will aim to issue recommendations aimed at guaranteeing the sustainability of the changes.

D. PROCESSUS

• ToR Preparation:

The field teams and, in general, the stakeholders involved are supported by a member of the COSEPRO (Uni4Coop monitoring & evaluation committee) throughout the process so that it complies with the evaluation certification criteria. COSEPRO will ensure that the process is completed and will facilitate it (circulation of information, contacts with the DGD, etc.). These ToRs are submitted to the DGD so that it can formally agree on the proposed process as well as on the budget sections that may be allocated to it.

After agreement with the DGD, the terms of reference for the specific mission of the external evaluator within the framework of this evaluation are defined.

• Recruitment of the external evaluator:

At the end of this first stage, an external evaluator is recruited, based on a call for expressions of interest.

• Methodological validation:

The external evaluator validates or amends the choice of evaluation methods proposed in the TOR of the call for expressions of interest and the information collection tools to ensure the reliability of the evaluation exercise. This proposition is then submitted to the Evaluation Steering Committee for approval.

• Production of a technical framework note:

At the end of this critical examination by the external evaluator, a technical framework note, is produced.

• Carrying out the evaluation

From July 2024, the “evaluation teams” will organize the collection of information in the field as well as brainstorming and critical analysis workshops in order to formulate (evaluation) conclusions and recommendations.

The system described below is implemented:

- Documentary analysis of data from monitoring systems and from the different assessments made and past relevant research and studies related to the programme. The evaluation exercise will question the relevance and reliability of the information collected.
- Focus groups: their purpose is to directly collect additional information from target groups (see impact and relevance criterion).
- Self-assessment sessions: their aim is to answer the evaluation questions noted by cross-referencing information from various sources, to analyse it, to then be able to share the conclusions with a team of peers who have carried out the exercise in parallel. Estimated time required: 6 full days per self-assessment team.
- Peer evaluation workshops: During these workshops, the two evaluation teams share, using prepared materials (power point, etc.), the conclusions of their respective analysis and put them up for debate. Field visits can be planned, as well as welcoming people from outside the evaluation teams (partners, decentralized services, experts, etc.) with a view to enriching the debates.

•Support, complement and finalisation of the report by an evaluator:

All of the information collected (data), as well as the evaluation report including the conclusions and recommendations, are submitted to the external evaluator who comments, nuances, provides his personal analysis, gives an opinion on the level of reliability, validity and usability of the report and finalises the report after exchanges with the Evaluation team. The “accompanied” self-evaluation report and the contributions of the external evaluator regarding it are compiled into a single report presented to the DGD.

•Managerial response:

The managerial response essentially focuses on the implementation of the recommendations and takes a critical look at the quality of the evaluation process.

E. REQUIRED COMPETENCIES

The external expert will preferably have:

- Practice of support and/or openness to a horizontal evaluation approach
- Good knowledge of the concepts linked to sustainable food systems set out in the ToR; and
- Excellent mastery of evaluation processes in the field of development cooperation.
- Good knowledge of OECD/DAC performance criteria and their evaluation
- Good knowledge of Theory of Change concepts to link recommendations to the results chain

F. BUDGET

The budget allocated to this evaluation is about 14.000 Euros. It covers all costs relating to the organization of the events (focus groups and workshops) and the external evaluator supervising the system. The breakdown budget is as below:

No	Line of Expenditure	Estimated Budget (EUR)
1	Consultant Fee for External Evaluator	9,000
2	Organization of Focus Groups	1,500
3	Organization of Self-Assessment Sessions	1,500
4	Organization of Peer Evaluation Workshop	2,000

This cost of 9.000 € is all-inclusive maximum amount for the consultant; it includes all the costs related to the consultant fee, per diem, transport and logistics, lodging and stationaries for the sake of this assignment. The other budgets for the events will be managed by Uni4Coop but implemented with the support of the consultant.

G. EXPERT MODALITIES

G.1 DESIRED CONTENT FOR THE TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL OFFER

- A notice of understanding of the terms of reference, as well as how the context and evaluation questions were understood.
- A constructive critic of the methodological approach envisaged in the ToR to answer the questions and objectives set out in the ToR. Recommendations may relate to information collection tools, the profile of the people involved, etc.
- An indicative timeline of the mission as well as an estimate of costs in terms of man/day.
- A presentation of the references and experiences of the expert(s), highlighting the aspects that are particularly relevant for the planned evaluation. The CV and references of the evaluator(s).
- A financial offer including the detailed budget in euros including tax for the service.

G.2 DOCUMENTS TO CONSULT

For drafting the offer:

- The technical note describing sustainable food systems is included in the Annex 2.
- If s/he deems it useful, the expert may ask useful questions (see terms and conditions below) and request to consult additional documents.

After selection:

- The expert may ask to consult any project document he deems useful.

G.3 TERMS TO IMPLEMENT THE EXPERT MISSION

The support from the expert will be done remotely. S/He may, however, if s/he deems it relevant, attend meetings via a video conference system (Teams, Zoom), access some recordings if they have obtained the agreement of the participants.

S/He will be in contact with the steering committee as well as the evaluation teams.

The evaluator will plan:

- A harmonization meeting, following which s/he will write a framework and scoping note describing the ideal methods for carrying out this horizontal evaluation.
- A post-submission meeting of the evaluation report submitted at the end of the peer workshops.
- A discussion meeting following the submission of his counter-expertise report. Are the conclusions similar, can additional recommendations be made?

G.4 SELECTION AND CONTRACTUALIZATION TERMS

Restricted publication.

Date of submission of offers: At the latest on 30th of August 2024

Offers should be sent by email at the latest on 30th of August 2024, to:

Mr Veata MEY: veata.mey@uni4coop.org & Mr Christophe GOOSSENS: christophe.goossens@eclosio.org

Additional information may be obtained from these same people, and only by electronic means.

The evaluation of offers will be done according to the following grid:

Criteria	Points
Expert Profiles	50
Qualifications, experiences, and competencies	20
Experience on the theme to be evaluated	15
Knowledge of local context	15
Technical and methodological offer	30
Presentation of the theme and its understanding	15

Payment of fees will be made in three instalments: 40% upon signature of the contract, 30% upon submission of the provisional report, and 30% after approval of the final report.

Per diems will be paid at the start of the mission on the basis of a declaration of claims. Other costs will be paid on the basis of submission of the appropriate supporting documents.

G.5 EXPECTED DELIVERABLES:

The external evaluation teams and evaluator are co-responsible for:

- A summary accountability document of +/- three pages intended for the general public which presents the main conclusions and recommendations in relation to the evaluation questions asked, with illustrations (diagrams, photos, graphs, drawings, etc.)

- A complete report constructed as follows:

1. Summary of key findings, including the main learning elements gained in the process from each group of participants and recommendations.
2. Objective, scope of evaluation and context
3. Definition of the main concepts used.
4. Methodological approach and its rationale, and the constraints encountered.
5. Findings (with mention of sources);
6. The conclusions = judgment providing an answer to the evaluation questions asked. Any underlying analysis will be stated explicitly.
7. Argued, concrete, and realistic recommendations to be implemented in the continuation of the project or in future interventions, and in relation to the evaluation questions.
8. Appreciation for understanding the intervention logic / theory of change.

Annexes: Raw anonymous data.

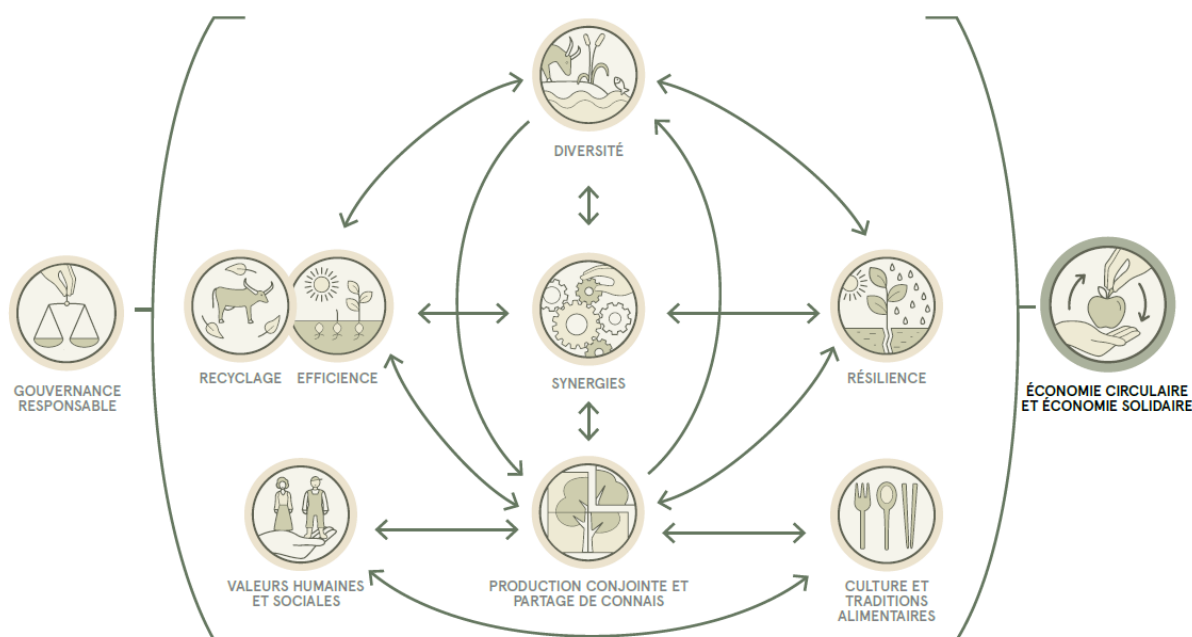
The documents will be written in English and sent in electronic format for the final version of the report.

G.6 PROPOSED SCHEDULE

Date	Description
March 2024	Validation of the draft framework note by the UNI4Coop Steering Committee
March 2024	Letter addressed to relevant stakeholders for information on the process
March to May 2024	Preparatory phase of the ToR: Constitution of the evaluation team (choice of stakeholders to involve). Familiarization with the ToR model, a quality criterion for an evaluation. Discussion on the adoption of a reference framework. Brainstorming (understanding, particularly on evaluation questions). Choice (analysis) of evaluation questions (evaluability, relevance, coherence, etc.)
July 2024	Process of ToR validation by the DGD
August 2024	Call for proposals for external evaluator
End of August 2024	Assessment and selection of the best offer
September	Information to the selected external expert and contractualization
September 2024	Preparation of the technical framework note
October 2024	Field missions
End of October 2024	Peer evaluation workshop
November 2024	Consolidation of the evaluation report and managerial response.

G.7 ANNEXES:

Annex 1: 10 Elements of FAO



Source : FAO, 2018 - <https://www.fao.org/3/i9037en/i9037en.pdf>

Annex 2: Uni4Coop SAD Guidance Document – Annex 19

Annex 3: Preliminary Assessment of Agroecological Transitions in Three Provinces of Cambodia.

Annex 2: Relevant documentation consulted

PARTNER PROJECT DOCUMENTATION:

- ECOLAND (Sorith HOU et al.), “Agricultural Products’ Value Chains analyses of Unions of Agricultural Cooperatives in Battambang, Kampong Thom and Takeo provinces, Cambodia”, PARtNER Project, Version 3, December 2023.
- ECOLAND (Sorith HOU et al.), “Institutional Assessment of Union Agricultural Cooperatives in Battambang and Takeo Provinces, Cambodia”, PARtNER Project, Revised Version, Dec. 2023.
- ECOLAND (Teara MAO, Sorith HOU et al.), “Preliminary Assessment of Agroecological Transitions in Battambang, Kampong Thom and Takeo provinces, Cambodia”, PARtNER Project, Version 3, July 2024.
- ECOLAND (Sorith HOU), “Tool for Agroecology Performance Evaluation (TAPE): Baseline study of Agroecology Performance in Battambang, Kampong Thom and Takeo provinces, Cambodia”, PARtNER Project, Version 3, April 2024.
- Mey Veata, Monitoring and Evaluation Report: the collection of additional data for PARtNER Project’s Logical Framework, PARtNER Project, January 2024, .
- PARtNER Project, BUAC programming, 2022.
- PARtNER Project Internal Report 2022.
- PARtNER Project Internal Report 2023.
- PARtNER Project, TrUAC programming, 2022.
- Uni4Coop, LC – Eclasio, ToC SAD Cambodia, Programme 2022-26.
- Uni4Coop, Programme Uni4Coop 22-26, Outcome PARtNER Cambodge, Annex 19, Dossier Complet: Sustainable Agri-food System.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT REFERENCES:

- ASSET, Report of the National foresight and theory of change workshop in Cambodia, 18 -19 October 2022, in Phnom Penh. Agroecology and Safe food System Transitions (ASSET) project, 2022.
- Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD) and the Technical Working Group for Food Security and Nutrition, « Cambodia’s Roadmap for Food Systems for Sustainable Development – 2030 », September 2021.
- Council for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD) and the Technical Working Group for Food Security and Nutrition, « The second national strategy for food security and nutrition 2019-2023 », 2019.
- IRAM, Mid-term evaluation of ASSET project, March 2024.
- MAFF, The Royal Government of Cambodia’s fifth and sixth priority policy programs of the seventh legislature of the National Assembly, MAFF, November 2023.
- Royal Government of Cambodia, « National Strategy Plan on Green Growth, 2013-2030 ».

METHODOLOGICAL REFERENCES:

- AFD, Fiches méthodologiques 2, 3 et 4 "genre", "biodiversité-climat" et "jeunesse" du guide méthodologique de l'AFD « Dispositif d'appui aux initiatives des organisations de la société civile », AFD, avril 2020.
- FAO, TAPE Tool for Agroecology Performance Evaluation 2019 – Process of development and guidelines for application - Test version, Rome, 2019.
- IRAM, « L'évaluation, un outil au service de l'action », F3E, décembre 1996.
- Neu Daniel, « Évaluer : apprécier la qualité pour faciliter la décision : six notes pour contribuer à l'efficacité des évaluations », GRET, série « Coopérer aujourd'hui n° 21, mars 2001.
- OCDE, « Applying Evaluation Criteria Thoughtfully », OCDE, 2021.
- OCDE, « Normes de qualité pour l'évaluation du développement », Lignes directrices et ouvrages de référence du CAD, OCDE, 2010.
- Thiele G., Devaux A., Horizontal evaluation: Stimulating social learning among peers, ILAC Brief 13, CGIAR, November 2006.

Annex 3: List of persons met during the Mid-Term Review process

No	Name, Surname	Gender	Position	Institution / Location
01	MEY Veata	M	Sustainable Food System Program Manager	UNI4COOP / PARtNER project
02	GOOSSENS Christophe	M	Program Officer	Eclosio
03	PEETERS Amaury	M	Program Officer	Louvain Développement
04	YAN Sreyyat	F	President	BUAC
05	SAM Chantha	F	Accountant	BUAC
06	KONG Moeurn	M	President	TrUAC
07	SEM Sarom	M	Board Member	TrUAC
08	PICH Somaly	F	BDF	TrUAC
09	CHORN Sang	F	Member	Samaki Prasat Taing Krasaing AC
10	SORN Hun	F	Member	Samaki Prasat Taing Krasaing AC
11	MEAS Samreth	F	Board Member	Brasat Samaki AC
12	VORN Vong	M	Vice President	Brasat Samaki AC
13	SETH Laem	F	Board Member	Balang Sethapi AC
14	SUOS Laon	F	Member	Balang Sethapi AC
15	HOURT Kimheat	M	BDF	Uni4Coop / PARTNER project
16	KUY Sophal	M	Program Manager	DPA
17	HOU Sorith	M	Senior Researcher	ECOLAND (RUA)
18	PRING Phakdey	M	Program Manager	CIRD
19	NHEB Boura	M	Program Manager	Banteay Srei
20	RO Sophanarith	M	Vice-Dean	FoAS (RUA)
21	PAT Sovann	M	National ALiSEA Coordinator	GRET / ASSET project
22	HENG Saran	M	Agribusiness Development Officer	Uni4Coop / PARTNER project
23	SEAN Chanmony	M	PhD Student	Uni4Coop / ASSET
24	CHAN Sokha	M	Program Manager	CIRD
25	LY Seangnam	F	Communication Intern	Uni4Coop

Annex 4: Guidelines for Focus Group Discussions with UACs / ACs LEADERS

Introduction of the background and purpose of the discussion

General considerations on the PARTNER mid-term review:

- Recall about the PARTNER project and explanation about the mid-term review process and its purpose and modalities.
- The purpose is to make the project work better, adjust its adequation to the needs and constraints of beneficiaries, and be more efficient in achieving results. So, it is the interest of participants and project implementing partner to be as transparent and sincere as it can be at all stages of evaluation process.

More specifically, the objectives of today's meeting / interviews:

- Look at what are the recent changes perceived, how important they are, positive or negative, and if they are the results of PARTNER project or of other causes.
- Assess the evolution of UACs / ACs capacities over the past two to three years.
- Rank the most important constraints (lock-ins) and levers to further promote AE practices adoption, and discuss how efficient is the project to address the constraints and use the levers, and what could be improved for higher efficiency.
- Assess perspective of economic viability of ACs / UACs.


Changes perceived by participants since 2021


We ask the participants to identify changes that have occurred since 2021 (/2022), in five different fields:


- **AC/UACs development** (it can be about vision, management, governance, AC/UACs role, perception...)
- **Farmers' practices (technical), notably regarding AE practices adoption** (or on the contrary, conventional chemical intensive practices?)
- **Value chains, connection to market** (variation of price, premium, recognition of AE products by clients/consumers...)
- **Soil health, soil fertility, environmental issues.**
- **Incomes and livelihoods** (can also include nutrition, etc...).


Participants can use different color sticky-notes (or different color-dots stickers on papers, or different pen colors, or a code on each sticky-note...).

 AC, UAC
development

 Farmer practices
(AE adoption...)

 Value chain, market
price, consumer views

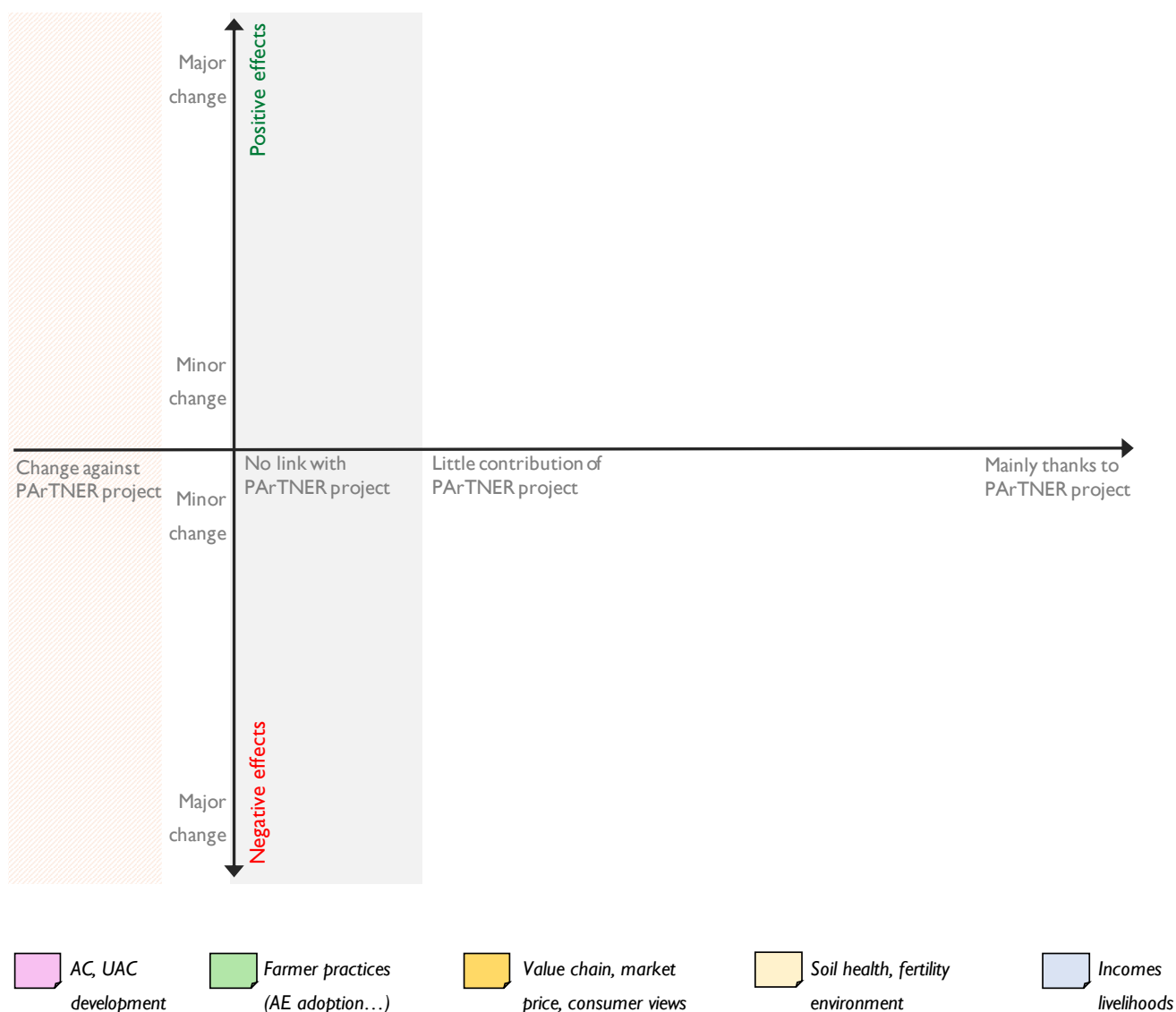
 Soil health, fertility
environment

 Incomes
livelihoods

Then they place each note on the board below. The positioning on different areas of the board is meaningful:

- Vertically:
 - On the top if the change is judged POSITIVE (the highest, the more significant / impactful the positive change is)

- On the bottom if the change is judged NEGATIVE (the lowest the more significant / impactful the negative change is)
- Horizontally:
 - Further to the right if the change is largely a result of PARtNER project.
 - Rather in the center PARtNER project had a minor contribution to the change.
 - In the grey area next to the vertical axis if the project has NO LINK with PARtNER project.
 - On the far left (orange striped area) if the change has happened AGAINST PARtNER project (i.e. if PARtNER project was rather an obstacle to the change).



Remarks and additional guidelines regarding the implementation of this sequence:

- It is not expected that each participant will have elements to contribute on all the topics.
- Participants write their idea on paper / sticky note. The animator collects and read the change that is mentioned. He/She ask the participant who bring the idea if he/she consider its positive or negative, major or minor change, mainly a result of PARtNER project or not... the answers to these questions determining where on the board the note shall be positioned. The facilitator can ask all the participants if they agree or not and the position can be adjusted accordingly.

After this exercise, we can ask a set of additional questions about expected changes that did not materialize, and we can note answers on a separate flipchart:

- Were there positive changes that we were expecting as results of PARtNER project and that did not (or not yet) occur? (if yes, list those changes)
- If these expected changes did not happen, can we determine why:
 - Because the corresponding actions were not implemented? (indicate which actions);
 - Because the change expected by the project is not the change expected by farmers?
 - Because some obstacles or constraints were not addressed? (indicate which constraints);
 - Because of other external causes / context (including possible actions of other agents)? (indicate which causes).

EFFECTIVENESS

RELEVANCE
&
COHERENCE

We can use a table as follows to report the answers:

Expected change that did not happen	What actions were planned? Were they implemented?	Why the change did not occur (obstacle, constraints, other opposite actions, etc.)

Are there other on-going projects or interventions of PDAFF / MAFF / local authorities that are also providing support or interfering with your activities?

Which ones? (name, explain, describe)

How it contributes to change? In the same or opposite direction with PARtNER project?

ADD: Questions about the holistic consideration of farms / farming models (how cassava, cashew productions are integrated for instance?) – notably for Kampong Thom and Battambang.

Focus on the evolution of UACs / ACs capacities over the past two to three years

Depending on how the subject was already covered in the above participatory exercise. If the facilitator(s) find that it was not sufficiently covered, we can come back to the subject with more specific questions, as follows:

Trainings

Did you (as leaders of AC / UAC) have received specific trainings from PARtNER project?

If yes on what topics? What was the training modalities? Were you able to implement the knowledge / skills gained? What effect does it has on the AC / UAC management?

Coaching and practical gain of experience

How PARtNER projects accompany / coach you in term of management of AC / UAC?

What has changed in the management capacities of the AC / UAC?

About the role of BDF:

What is the role of the (BDF)? What does it change for the ACs / UAC since this position has been created?

Are you willing and will you be able to maintain the position of BDF (financially, notably) beyond the PARtNER project duration?

LOCK-INS and LEVERS:

What are the most important constraints (Lock-ins) to adoption of AE practices by farmers?

Rank the following ones, from most important to less important:

- Lack of understanding of Agroecology principles (or lack of belief in AE benefits)
- Insufficient technical and economic performance of AE practices
- Lack of natural resources available (organic matter for instance, or seeds for cover crops...)
- Lack of reliable water resource available
- Lack of capital (more costly AE practices)
- Lack of labour (more time-consuming AE principles)
- Climate change
- Inconsistent messages by various extension agents (public / private sector / NGOs...)
- Other :

Compile the results of all participants

Then, for the top-3 constraints, brain storm to fill the table below (flipchart):

Top 3 constraints	What PARtNER is doing to address the constraint?	Is it efficient / sufficient? What results does it produce?	What else, what more could be done to solve the issue?
Top constraint No 1			
Top constraint No 2			
Top constraint No 3			

What do you think would be the strongest levers that would increase the adoption of agroecological practices by farmers?

Rank the following ones, from most important to less important:

- Premium price for Agroecological products.
- Improved market access
- Direct subsidies to AE practices / AE inputs
- Improve knowledge / understanding by farmers of the long-term benefits of AE practices:
 - on soil fertility?

- on health?
- on environment?
- on incomes?
- on reduced dependency to purchased (/imported) inputs?
- on increased resilience to Climate Change?
- Other : ...
- Make AE inputs more available and cheaper
- Coercive measures (ban on some chemical inputs for instance).
- Other :

Compile the results of all participants

Then, for the top-3 levers, brain storm to fill the table below (flipchart):

Top 3 levers	What PARTNER is doing to enhance this lever?	Is it efficient / sufficient? What results does it produce?	What else, what more could be done to push AE efficiently?
Top lever No 1			
Top lever No 2			
Top lever No 3			

Focus on sustainability / viability factors with ACs / UACs leaders

(in the same session or in a separate additional session)?

Economic management and viability of ACs / UACs

Re-work on the business plans of the ACs or UACs: TrUAC and BUAC programming documents (February-March 2022) are indicating gross profits for ACs and UACs for each economic activity. But they do not show the direct costs (variable costs per activity + general management costs at AC / UAC level + the expected profit per share.

Thereof the economic viability of the AC / UACs is difficult to assess.

We could focus on the two UACs for this evaluation, with at least an important stake to look at for the economic viability point of view: the capacity (and willingness) to maintain and cover the costs of the BDF positions beyond the project duration.

At least we should have a work session (with each of the UACs) on UAC functions, internal costs, and incomes (profits) generated.

Sustainability of the positive changes observed / resilience

Are there some factors or possible events / situation that could jeopardize the progresses made, at farmers level and at ACs / UACs level? (focus on the most significant positive changes identified above, notably attributable to project intervention).

Identify the factors of fragility and risks, such as:

- Economic factors: market, product prices, input prices...
- Environmental / ecological factors: climate change...
- Social and organizational factors: engagement of farmers, trust...

- Changes in policies:...

What measures could be imagined and deployed to improve the resilience in regard of those risks?

Annex 5: Guidelines for Focus Group Discussions with UACs / ACs MEMBERS / CLIENTS / BENEFICIARIES (include notably women and youth)

Introduction of the background and purpose of the discussion

General considerations on the PARtNER mid-term review:

- Recall about the PARtNER project and explanation about the mid-term review process and its purpose and modalities.
- The purpose is to make the project work better, adjust its adequation to the needs and constraints of beneficiaries, and be more efficient in achieving results. So, it is the interest of participants and project implementing partner to be as transparent and sincere as it can be at all stages of evaluation process.

More specifically, the objectives of today's meeting / interviews:

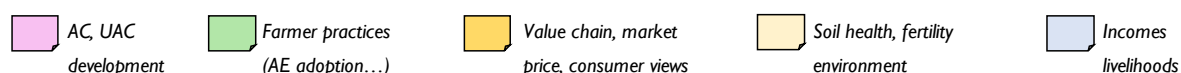
- Look at what are the recent changes perceived, how important they are, positive or negative, and if they are the results of PARtNER project or of other causes.
- Rank the most important constraints (lock-ins) and levers to further promote AE practices adoption, and discuss how efficient is the project to address the constraints and use the levers, and what could be improved for higher efficiency.

Changes perceived by participants since 2021

We ask the participants to identify changes that have occurred since 2021 (/2022), in five different fields:

- **AC/UACs development** (it can be about vision, management, governance, AC/UACs role, perception...)
- **Farmers' practices (technical), notably regarding AE practices adoption** (or on the contrary, conventional chemical intensive practices?)
- **Value chains, connection to market** (variation of price, premium, recognition of AE products by clients/consumers...)
- **Soil health, soil fertility, environmental issues.**
- **Incomes and livelihoods** (can also include nutrition, etc...).

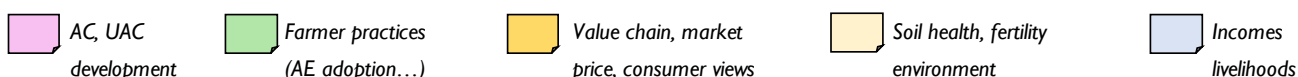
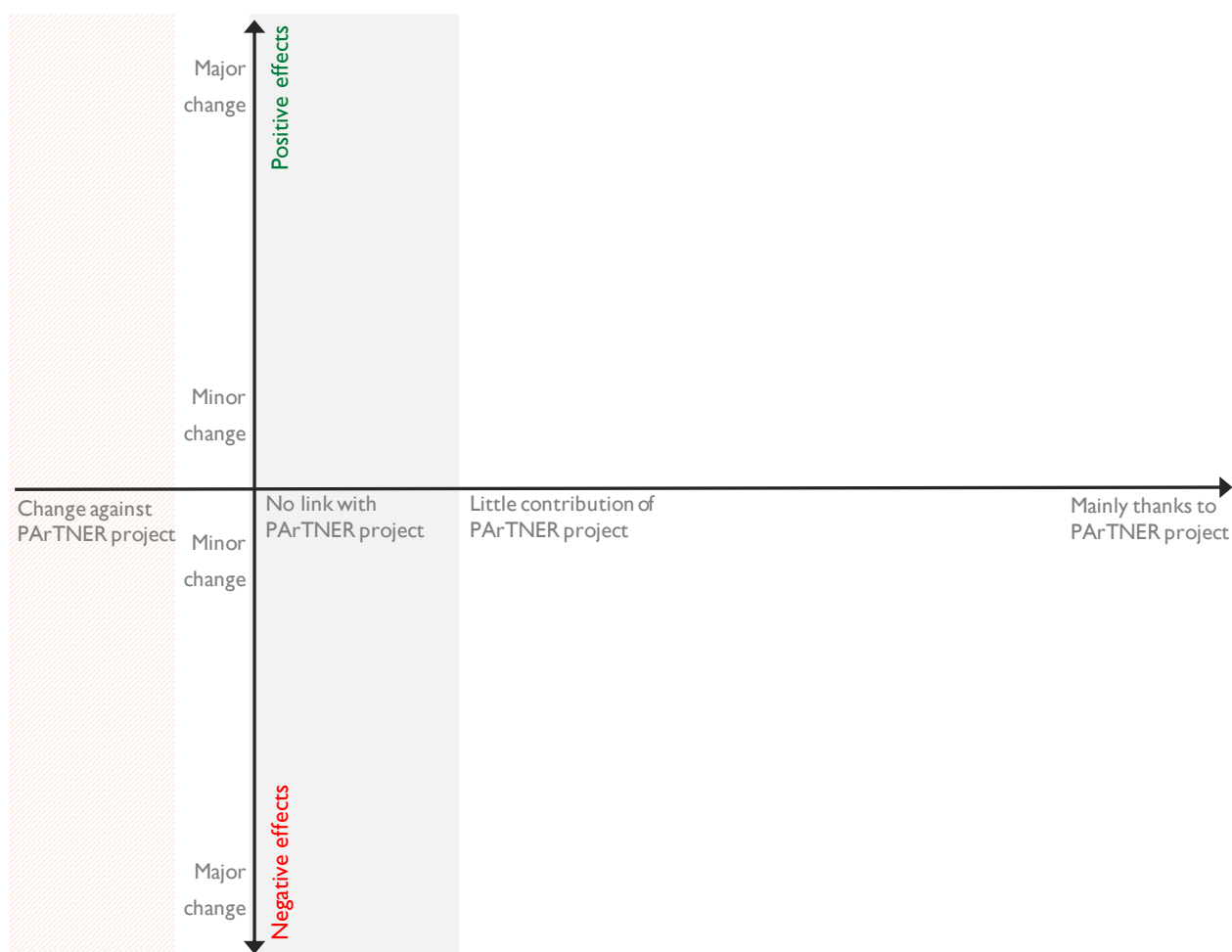
Participants can use different color sticky-notes (or different color-dots stickers on papers, or different pen colors, or a code on each sticky-note...).



Then they place each note on the board below. The positioning on different areas of the board is meaningful:

- Vertically:
 - On the top if the change is judged POSITIVE (the highest, the more significant / impactful the positive change is)

- On the bottom if the change is judged NEGATIVE (the lowest the more significant / impactful the negative change is)
- Horizontally:
 - Further to the right if the change is largely a result of PARtNER project.
 - Rather in the center PARtNER project had a minor contribution to the change.
 - In the grey area next to the vertical axis if the project has NO LINK with PARtNER project.
 - On the far left (orange striped area) if the change has happened AGAINST PARtNER project (i.e. if PARtNER project was rather an obstacle to the change).



Remarks and additional guidelines regarding the implementation of this sequence:

- It is not expected that each participant will have elements to contribute on all the topics.
- Participants write their idea on paper / sticky note. The animator collects and read the change that is mentioned. He/She ask the participant who bring the idea if he/she consider its positive or negative, major or minor change, mainly a result of PARtNER project or not... the answers to these questions determining where on the board the note shall be positioned. The facilitator can ask all the participants if they agree or not and the position can be adjusted accordingly.

After this exercise, we can ask a set of additional questions about expected changes that did not materialize, and we can note answers on a separate flipchart:

- Were there positive changes that we were expecting as results of PARtNER project and that did not (or not yet) occur? (if yes, list those changes)
- If these expected changes did not happen, can we determine why:
 - Because the corresponding actions were not implemented? (indicate which actions);
 - Because the change expected by the project is not the change expected by farmers?
 - Because some obstacles or constraints were not addressed? (indicate which constraints);
 - Because of other external causes / context (including possible actions of other agents)? (indicate which causes).

EFFECTIVENESS

RELEVANCE
&
COHERENCE

We can use a table as follows to report the answers:

Expected change that did not happen	What actions were planned? Were they implemented?	Why the change did not occur (obstacle, constraints, other opposite actions, etc.)

Are there other on-going projects or interventions of PDAFF / MAFF / local authorities that are also providing support or interfering with your activities?

Which ones? (name, explain, describe)

How it contributes to change? In the same or opposite direction with PARtNER project?

ADD: Questions about the holistic consideration of farms / farming models (how cassava, cashew productions are integrated for instance?) – notably for Kampong Thom and Battambang.

LOCK-INS and LEVERS:

What are the most important constraints (Lock-ins) to adoption of AE practices by farmers?

Rank the following ones, from most important to less important:

- Lack of understanding of Agroecology principles (or lack of belief in AE benefits)
- Insufficient technical and economic performance of AE practices
- Lack of natural resources available (organic matter for instance, or seeds for cover crops...)
- Lack of reliable water resource available
- Lack of capital (more costly AE practices)
- Lack of labour (more time-consuming AE principles)
- Climate change
- Inconsistent messages by various extension agents (public / private sector / NGOs...)
- Other :

Compile the results of all participants

Then, for the top-3 constraints, brain storm to fill the table below (flipchart):

Top 3 constraints	What PARTNER is doing to address the constraint?	Is it efficient / sufficient? What results does it produce?	What else, what more could be done to solve the issue?
Top constraint No 1			
Top constraint No 2			
Top constraint No 3			

What do you think would be the strongest levers that would increase the adoption of agroecological practices by farmers?

Rank the following ones, from most important to less important:

- Premium price for Agroecological products.
- Improved market access
- Direct subsidies to AE practices / AE inputs
- Improve knowledge / understanding by farmers of the long-term benefits of AE practices:
 - on soil fertility?
 - on health?
 - on environment?
 - on incomes?
 - on reduced dependency to purchased (/imported) inputs?
 - on increased resilience to Climate Change?
 - Other : ...
- Reduce time required for the adoption of AE practices
- Make AE inputs more available and cheaper
- Coercive measures (ban on some chemical inputs for instance).
- Other :

Compile the results of all participants

Then, for the top-3 levers, brain storm to fill the table below (flipchart):

Top 3 levers	What PARTNER is doing to enhance this lever?	Is it efficient / sufficient? What results does it produce?	What else, what more could be done to push AE efficiently?
Top lever No 1			
Top lever No 2			
Top lever No 3			

Gender mainstreaming:

Uni4Coop will mobilise Banteay Srei to prepare guidelines to assess gender mainstreaming related issues.

Annex 6: Some elements to guide the bilateral interviews / meetings with various institutions / stakeholders identified for data collection

Below are some ideas to help the MTR team to prepare guidelines for the interviews with various institutions and stakeholders:

Commune Agriculture Officers

Purpose: understand the roles of CAO and how they could be instrumental to contribute to AE promotion and support to ACs / UACs.

Questions on:

- The roles/functions of CAOs?
 - Any function(s) related to agriculture extension?
 - Any function(s) related to support to ACs?
 - Any function(s) related to product quality / quality verification?
 - Any function(s) related to connection of Farmers to market?
- What support they receive from PDAFF?
 - Technically?
 - Policy orientations?
 - Financial and resources support?
- How they are connected with Commune Councils?
- Possibly present PARTNER project and discuss the interest of CAO to collaborate.

PDAFF

Purpose: understand the positioning of PDAFF / policy orientations regarding Agroecology.

Questions on:

- The objectives assigned by MAFF to PDAFF at provincial level, and how they implement:
 - What are PDAFF objectives? How PDAFF performance are evaluated?
 - Any objective regarding volumes of production?
 - Any objective regarding food quality / food safety?
 - How is environmental impact of agriculture and impact on human health considered?
 - Role of PDAFF to support the adaptation of agriculture to Climate Change? How?
 - Role of PDAFF regarding private sector?
 - How they consider the role of ACs / UAC and how they support them?

Representatives of Commune Councils and of Districts / DOANRE

Purpose: Understand if Districts and Communes consider agriculture as an important subject and how it is part or not of their function and prerogatives? If not directly, possibly indirectly for stakes related to food security and food safety? Environment preservation?

Questions on:

- How they consider agriculture sector in their district or commune, within local development policies / strategies?
- Do they have an official mandate / role related to agriculture sector, and if yes what is(/are) their role(s)?
- Do they know Agricultural Cooperatives (+ UACs) in their district / commune: how they consider them? Do they have relation with ACs / UACs leaders? For what purpose? Do they have already any collaboration?
- What is the importance of agriculture for the local economy?
 - Livelihood / incomes?
 - Health & Nutrition?
 - Environment?

GDA / MAFF

Purpose: Understand the vision of MAFF high leaders for Cambodian agriculture future. What is MAFF leaders' vision for a desired future of agricultural sector?

Questions on:

- The foreseen / desirable evolution of production segment: evolution of the share of smallholder farming vs. larger scale farms?
- Objectives for the agriculture sector in the next 5 – 10 years?
 - Production / volumes?
 - Quality?
 - Food security / food production vs. industrial crops?
 - Resilience of the agricultural sector?
- How MAFF considers environmental stakes? Health stakes? Social stakes?
- What is MAFF position between industrialization / conventional intensive models and agroecology?
- Regarding ACs:
 - What is MAFF vision for the future of ACs?
 - How is it intended to implement the concept of Modern Agricultural Cooperatives?
 - How MAFF will further support existing ACs? UACs?

DACP: similar question on ACs.

CACA

Purpose: Understand the state of development of CACA and its role and governance

Questions on:

- How many ACs are members of CACA? (what % of total ACs registered in Cambodia it represents?)

- Is membership of ACs to CACA is voluntary or mandatory? / automatic?
- What are the role of CACA to support ACs? How those roles are implemented?
 - Support AC creation?
 - Capacity building / coaching on AC management? (finance, operations...)
 - Support development of business plans?
 - Support ACs on governance?
 - Policy advocacy?
- How CACA is articulated with MAFF / DACP? What support they receive?
- How / by whom the action plan and budget of CACA are defined? Endorsed?
- What are the resources of CACA to implement its roles?

Annex 7: Distribution of roles for data collection

	Phnom Penh	Takeo	Battambang	Kampong Thom
3 FGD with ACs / UACs leaders (+ a focus session on sustainability)		U4C + JMB / (14 Oct)	CIRD + Banteay Sei + U4C	CIRD + U4C
3 FGD with ACs / UACs members / clients / beneficiaries		FoAS+ U4C (Mony) + ECOLAND	CIRD + Banteay Sei + U4C	CIRD + U4C
4 interviews of Commune Agriculture Officers		(2) FoAS+ U4C (Mony) + ECOLAND	(2) U4C + CIRD	
3 representatives of Commune Councils		U4C + TrUAC	U4C + BUAC	U4C + AC (1)
2 District governors / deputy governors / DOANRE		U4C (Saran) + TrUAC	(Banan) CIRD + BUAC + U4C	U4C + AC (1)
3 interviews of PD AFF		U4C (Saran)	DPA (Sopha)	U4C (Kimheat)
Interview of GDA / MAFF (suggest: H.E Dr Ngin Chhay?)	U4C (Veata + Christophe)			
DACP	U4C (Veata + Christophe) + DPA			
CACA	U4C (Veata + Christophe) + DPA			
Focus discussion with ASSET regional coordinator + ALISEA coordinator and key members	U4C + DPA + GRET			
Interview of other NGOs/projects:				
o In Battambang: Met-Kasekar, SwissContact			U4C + BUAC (Met-Kasekar)	
o In Takeo: Hellen Keller International	U4C (Veata)			
o DCA: in Phnom Penh	U4C (Veata)			
Discussion with Thibaut Hanquet (GRET) on access of farmers to social protection	U4C (Veata + Christophe)			
Exchange with GRET and Agrisud International in Sem Reap about "Territorial Food Systems"	U4C (Veata + Christophe)			

Annex 8: Outcomes of Focus Group Discussions

Annex 9: Outcomes of Interviews

Annex 10: Agenda of the Mid-Term Review Peer Workshop



Uni4Coop – PARtNER Project Mid-Term Review

Peer Workshop Agenda

Phnom Penh – 18-19 November 2024

At Cambodia-Japan Cooperation Centre (CJCC), Bayon Room #6 on the Ground Floor

Time	Subject	Speaker / Facilitator	Session type
Day 1 – MONDAY 18th NOVEMBER			
08:00-08:15	Registration of participants		
Sequence 1: Opening and introductory sessions + presentation of main results from data collection			
08:15-08:30	Welcoming and introduction of the peer workshop: recall of the purpose and context of PARtNER project Mid-Term Review, presentation of the approach and implementation process, recall of the previous steps to date.	MEY Veata + Christophe Goossens	Plenary
08:30-08:40	Introduction round table (if necessary)	All participants	Plenary
08:40-09:10	Presentation of the key findings of the data collection stage	Mey Veata + Sean Chanmony	Plenary
Sequence 2: Drivers & Conditions of adoption of Agroecology practices by farmers			
09:10-09:30	Presentation of “Drivers & Conditions of adoption of Agroecology practices by farmers” and positioning of data collected on this analytical frame.	Jean-Marie BRUN	Plenary
09:30-10:15	Stage 1: mapping of what PARtNER does on the different elements, and what others are doing (positive or negative)? Include CAO, CC, PDAFF, MAFF/GDA, other projects... Include what partners are doing outside of Uni4Coop project. Flag synergies and oppositions.	MEY Veata	Plenary
10:15-10:30	Coffee / Tea break		
10:30-12:00	Stage 2: Group discussion (3 groups) → Group 1: Constraints → Group 2: Understanding/beliefs of AE → Group 3: Levers / incentives to increase willingness to apply AE transition	MEY Veata	Group session
12:00-12:10	Guidelines for after-lunch session (+group photo)	MEY Veata	Plenary
12:10-13:15	Lunch break		
13:15-13:20	Introduction to the afternoon session	MEY Veata	Plenary
13:20-14:00	Restitution of the morning group sessions	SEAN Chanmony	Plenary
14:00-14:30	Synthesis: what RECOMMENDATIONS we draw for the second half of the project?	MEY Veata	Plenary
Sequence 3: Focus on Value Chain improvement			
14:30-15:00	To the question “expected changes that did not happen”, majority of answers are about VC management and better market for AE products. Brief presentation of the situation in the three provinces:	MEY Veata	Plenary

Time	Subject	Speaker / Facilitator	Session type
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> initial objectives/vision what did happen (or not) to date why: constraints... how they foresee next steps 		
15:00-15:15	<i>Coffee / Tea break</i>		
15:15-16:25	Group session on improvement of value-chain improvement (include question of sustainability / post-project support)	MEY Veata + HENG Saran	Group session
16:25-17:05	Restitution of the group sessions	HENG Saran	Plenary
17:05-17:25	Synthesis: what RECOMMENDATIONS we draw for the second half of the project?	MEY Veata	Plenary
17:25-17:30	Wrap up and closing of Day 1	MEY Veata	Plenary
Day 2 – TUESDAY 19th NOVEMBER			
08:00-08:15	<i>Registration of participants</i>		
08:15 - 08:30	Welcoming. Wrap-up of Day 1 and introduction of Day 2	MEY Veata	Plenary
Sequence 4: Gender			
08:30 - 08:40	Presentation of the sequence and split in two groups		Plenary
08:40 - 10:00	Group Gender <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (10') Present elements / results from previous studies (Uni4Coop) (5') Present the outcomes of the FGD with ACs/UACs (Uni4Coop) (10') Additional elements on stakes and situation of gender in agri-sector (Banteay Srei) (55') What are effective driver of changes to address the issues, and how can PArTNER support? 	MEY Veata + NHEB Boura	Group session
10:00 - 10:15	Synthesis: what RECOMMENDATIONS we draw for the second half of the project?	MEY Veata	Plenary
10:15-10:30	<i>Coffee / Tea break</i>		
Sequence 5: Collaboration / synergies / advocacy... ?			
10:30 - 10:35	Introduction	MEY Veata	Plenary
10:35 - 11:05	Step 1: within PArTNER project	MEY Veata + MA Sok Heng	Plenary
11:05 - 11:45	Step 2: beyond PArTNER project	MEY Veata + MA Sok Heng	Plenary
11:45 - 12:00	Synthesis: what RECOMMENDATIONS we draw for the second half of the project?	MEY Veata	Plenary
Sequence 6: Workshop wrap-up, summary of key conclusions and closing			
12:00 - 12:30	Closing	MEY Veata + MA Sok Heng	Plenary
12:15-13:45	<i>Lunch</i>		



PARTNER Project implementing team and partners:



PARTNER project internal evaluation process is accompanied and facilitated by:



កាក-ហ្វេកតធីវឌ្ឍនភាព និង កាក-ហ្វេកត ខេត្តសៀមរាប ឯ.ក.

ARTE-FACT DEVELOPMENT & AGRI-FOOD CONSULTING Co. Ltd.

Phnom Penh - CAMBODIA • Phone: +855 (0)12 807 817 • info@artefactdev.com

www.artefactdev.com