

**CGIAR Research Program on
Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS)**

**Organisational Baseline Study:
Overview report for Pailom CSV,
LAO PDR (LA02)**

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INTRODUCTION

Savannakhet Province has a total area of 21,774 square kilometers, and in 2000 it had an estimated population of 757,950, with an average population density of 35 persons per square kilometer (DoP 2000). Agricultural production is the primary activity in the province and rice is the main crop being produce in the rural areas. Existing data suggest that Savannakhet Province has an estimated 116,809 hectares of rain-fed rice fields and approximately 19,801 hectares are irrigated rice fields. The number of livestock production has been recorded to be increasing and, at present, there are 79 pig farms, 19 poultry farms 15,924 man-made fish ponds, and 259 natural fish ponds (PAFO 2002). In terms of resources, Savannakhet is also rich in forest resources; in 2000 it still had 70 percent forest cover and included three national biodiversity conservation areas (NBCA), Phou Xang He (109,900 hectares), Dong Phou Vieng (197,000 hectares), and Xe Bang Noun (150,000 hectares). Economy wise, there are two state production forests in the province: Dong Ka Pho (9,600 hectares) and Dong Si Thounh (212,000 hectares) (MAF 2001 cited in Chanthavong, 2004). In partnership with IRRI, NAFRI and the District Agriculture and Forestry (DAFO), CCAFS has selected potential site for Climate-Smart Villages in Ban Phailom, Champone District. A 30km commute from Savannakhet town center on a poorly maintained road. Recent statistic suggests that Phailom Village has approximately 100 households. The population is mainly dominated by women about 430 and men are relatively smaller in proportion, only 269 individuals and 90% are involve in rice farming. At the village setting, rice paddy is estimated to be 222.59 hectares account for the majority of farmland landscape while only 7.82 hectares are considered irrigated land. The terrain in Phailom is classified into 2 terrain types, the Upper Phailom and Lower Phailom. Although the greater part of Ban Phailom is rain-fed rice farming, the lower area has reasonable access to irrigation but only confined to 10 households. At a glance, it is evident that access to irrigation among rice farmers is a priority to enhance cropping system and overall farming productivity. As a whole, Savannakhet Province is thought to contain rich in natural resources and immense traditional agriculture production system (rain-fed rice production, aquaculture and small livestock raising) but pressure of change in weather pattern specially prolonged dry season will have a consequential impacts in the dynamics of farming communities undermining food security and livelihoods. The establishment of a CSV pilot site in Savannakhet particularly in Phailom Village is crucial to address the looming food insecurity brought about by changing weather patterns.

Goal of Organizational Baseline Study are to:

- Distinguish entry point for potential partnership and work synergy scheme with other organizations currently operating in the selected CCAFS CSV sites.
- Provision of indicators that allows us to monitor changes in behaviors and practices of relevant local organization overtime.
- Understand of the current status of provision of information/services at the local level that informs farmers' decision making about their livelihood strategies in response to climate change.

In order to collect the necessary information, the CSV team conducted a survey focusing on organization that was recorded during the second day of Village Baseline Survey with men and women discussion group. Information collected includes agriculture-related decision making, natural resources management, food security, food crisis, climate change perception and organization service activities.

OVERVIEW OF INTERVIEWED ORGANIZATION

The Organization Baseline Study in Phailom Village was conducted in three days (21st -23rd Oct 2014). Organization selected to undergo a follow-up OBS interview was a result of a focus group discussion during the Village Baseline Survey under Topic 2 (Organizational Landscape). CSV team facilitated the discussion and divided men and women, into form 2 gender-specific core groups while performing a parallel discussion session. Discussion was mainly focus on specific themes; 1. Food Security 2. Food Crisis and, 3 Natural Resources Management. The organizations mentioned during the discussion were ranked by the villagers with regards to their importance and roles in the community while complimenting function on different themes. Unfortunately, there are currently few organizations working in Phailom Village. During the Village Baseline Survey (VBS) at least five organizations were identified that have worked in Phailom Village. Correspondence with the villagers during FGD suggests that there are 4 formal organizations operating at local-level but further interview and desktop review confirmed that 3 of the organizations extends their mandate at the provincial level. The remaining organizations are focus mainly on nutrition, health and education. Table 1 elaborates the organization main activities and their areas of work and expertise.

Main Activities of Organization

	Organization	Sphere of Operation			Main Activity
		Commune	Local	Beyond	
1	Room to Read		x	x	Increase quality of education, especially writing and reading. Promote the rights to education and gender equality. Construction of the primary school Provide IEC materials for education
2	IRRI-CCARA		x		Provide information on the onset of the rainy season and intensity of the rainy season 4 months prior to the start of the season. Promote optimal timing of sowing and fertilizer applications to reduce the risks associated with rice production in rain-fed environment. Facilitate local farmers in the optimal utilization of fertilizers and adjust cropping calendar prior to the season. Utilize finite resources of small farmers for better and stable production in rain-fed environment. Promote improved varieties for rain-fed rice production Conducting on-farm field testing in two farms in Ban Phailom with high yield TDK 8 and TDK 10.
3	UNICEF		x	x	Vaccination against chicken pox for infants and children ages 9 months up and lower than 10 years for nursery, kindergarten and primary school. Distribution and transfer of health related information to the communities.

4	JICA		x	x	Small-scale irrigation system
5	<i>Organization Unknown</i>	x			Rainwater harvesting by provision of water container for the household

The International Rice Research Institute-CCARA, Room to Read and UNICEF had been selected to be interviewed with reference to the previous FGD organizational ranking by villagers during VBS. JICA and the *Unknown organization* were skipped for interview due to the lack of information provided in the FGD. However, initial correspondent suggest that JICA and the *unknown organization* mainly help with the provision and construction of rain harvesting jar/containers to facilitate access of water supply for household and home garden use. JICA and the *Unknown organization* carried out a project in the village but ceased its support (the project was conceded more than 20 years ago) and there were no recorded follow-up project ever since. The complexity in recalling the exact name of the organization was due to the fact that the project has ended a long time ago and was short lived. There was also a difficulty in finding a resource person who can give further information about the previous projects. Therefore, it was decided that only three organizations (see list below) will be prioritized for interview.

1. IRRI Climate Change Adaptation in Rain-fed Rice Areas Project
2. Room to Read
3. UNICEF + district hospital

The International Rice Research Institute launched the Climate Change Adaptation in Rainfed Rice Areas project in Phailom Village in 2011. Project is intended to be completed in the last quarter of 2015. CSV team interviewed the selected organization to explore its mandate and general perspective of implementing a project to pragmatically explore future partnership. Interview was carried out face to face with the person responsible for project implementation (*See interviewee names at Annex*). To collect its central perspective, CSV team forwarded the OBS questionnaire to the main office and received the information via email. We carried out interview for Room to Read with the Office Manager at the Field Office situated in Southern Province. The office manager has openly given us the detailed information about their project in Phailom Village following information in the OBS questionnaire. Finally, the interview with UNICEF was prearranged at their field office in Savannakhet Province. The interview went according to plan and useful information was collected specially on the vaccination programme being implemented for children under 10 years old in Phailom.

Challenges Facing the Organization

This section provides insight to the challenges mentioned during the interview with the representative of the organization.

IRRI Climate Change Adaptation in Rain-fed Areas: Data collection through local agencies; maintaining installed equipment; Following standard methods for sampling - crucial for reliable data but mostly difficult to obtain considering local capacity.

Room to Read: No challenges recorded in the course of the interview.

United Nations Child's Fund: Carrying vaccination drive – Children and infants are having difficulty in accepting injection/jab.

For natural resources management

At provincial level, natural resources management especially forestry is designated to the Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office (PAFO), Policies are made at the national level, the Ministry of Agriculture and MoNRE oversee national issues on Agriculture and Environment well-being, the mandate is shared to DAFO and finally passed on to the village authority. Any issues arising in forestry in the community is dealt by the village chief and village elders. In Phailom Village, forestry is mainly a community lead initiative, where households shares responsibility in making sure that forest resources in the village are kept intact. Communal land allocated by the government is predominantly managed by the community e.g. designated land for NTFP collection such as community forest. Soil management is an individual task, organic and inorganic fertilizers are intermittently use in farming communities in the province, burning of straw and other crop residue is not regulated. However, there is no known soil conservation effort being carried out in Phailom Village by organization listed above. Majority of farmers use their post-harvest crop residue to feed cattle especially after rice harvest. There is undeniably a need in information dissemination on how to sustainably manage farm landscape. Water resource is scarce in certain part of village and this is exacerbated by drought. Farm owners fetch water from the pond to water their crops and ponds are typically managed by the farmers themselves. The *unknown organization* promoted rainwater harvesting scheme but was abandoned by the community due to the introduction of a water pipeline by a private company In Phailom, Huaybak organization is responsible in the maintenance and distribution of irrigation, a small fee is required to the immediate users. It is important to acknowledge that at the village level, management of existing natural resources is community-based and community-led in effort.

For preparation to withstand extreme events

Of all the organizations mentioned only IRRI CCARA project is intended to address adaptation issues for farmers to withstand extreme climate events in the future by providing farmers I important information on the onset and intensity of rainy season. It also promotes optimal timing of farming practices to reduce risks associated with rice production. It is important to note that the project itself is new and on-going and that meaningful project result is still being documented.

Reduction of Risk due to Climate Vulnerability

Main information network used by the farmers to obtain forecast is via different types of Media e.g. Television and radio but the most commonly used means of access is by individual communication i.e. Farmer-to-farmer information sharing whether personal encounter or via mobile phone. In Phailom, capacity building for farmer's organization is therefore essential in the future to reduce risk and alleviate overall climate vulnerability.

Activities in Relation to Climate Change

IRRI CCARA is the sole organization that provides specific activities in tackling climate change. In general, there is seemingly low awareness on climate change issue and limited access to CC information particularly at the village level. It is also important to mention that at the provincial level there is an organization currently being initiated by the GoL and multi-national development agency to address climate change in agriculture sector (*See Recommendation section*).

RECOMMENDATION ON POTENTIAL PARTNERS FOR CCAFS

The International Rice Research Institute CCARA project was identified as the most significant organization that easily relates to CCAFS focal areas especially in the aspect of climate change and food security. Positive feedbacks received from community members on CCARA demonstration plots introducing highly productive rice varieties (TDK 8 and TDK 10) is a prerequisite to the intended farming adaptation intervention in the future. However, there is potential partnership with UNICEF in nutrition and health focusing on food plant recommendation that will alleviate malnutrition, not only limited to the village-level but at the provincial scale as well. During FGD, organization that was not mentioned but may have been operating in Savannakhet Province conducting CC adaptation and resilience initiative is also equally important and partnership must be sought e.g. IRAS (Improving Resilience of Agriculture Sector) being implemented by NAFRI in partnership with UNDP could be a potential partner to tackle similar focal areas. IRAS lessons learned and field-tested/realistic intervention could easily be adopted for a successful community-based adaptation intervention which will be laid out in the next phase of CCAFS programme. Finally, establishing, linking and strengthening community-based organization (CBO) and potential partners at the village and provincial level is essential in building an able community that tackle climate change and food security issues in a holistic manner.

Annex: The list of the interviewees

<i>Number</i>	<i>Interviewee</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Organization</i>
1	Keiichi Hayashi	Project Coordinator	IRRI CCARA
2	Mr Bounkern Sapsiri	Field Office Manager	Room to Read
3	Phitsamaikham	Technical Officer	UNICEF