

**FSP Mobilisateur : « Valorisation de l'expérience française d'appuis aux  
organisations paysannes dans la ZSP » - (FSP 2000 – 125)**

## **Support to Cambodian Farmers' Organisation Task Force**

### **Aide memoire**

**Mission from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> of November 2005**

**Cirad - Ciepac**

JF Le Coq  
MJ Dugue  
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# Content

Context of the mission.....	3
Objectives of the mission: .....	3
Content of the mission.....	3
Main Results of the mission .....	3
Follow Up activities .....	6
Conclusion.....	6
References .....	7
 Appendix 1: Detailed program of the mission .....	 7

## ***Context of the mission***

The mission was carried out by JF Le Coq from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> of November 2005 in Cambodia. It takes place within the agenda of the FSP “Appui aux politiques sectorielles agricoles”(Component 2 : Farmers’ Organizations). This mission consisted in the second step of the support to the Cambodian FOs’ Task Force. It focussed on the widening of the scope of knowledge on FOs’ situation and evolution through the implementation of a second training workshop dedicated to the presentation of selected worldwide case studies.

## ***Objectives of the mission:***

The general objectives of the mission were the following:

- For the experts, to test the presentation of the selected case studies specifically prepared to strengthen the capacities of the members of the Cambodian FO TF regarding their contents and their forms in the perspective of the building of an “FO Training Tool Kit”;
- For the FO TF, to enlarge their references on FOs possible role in the agricultural development through the presentation of worldwide case studies.

To achieve these goals, the following activities have been implemented:

- A Workshop entitled “Lessons learned from worldwide experiences”;
- Debriefings with project coordinators to design the follow up activities (the workshops scheduled in January 2006 and beyond).

## ***Content of the mission***

The mission then focussed on the implementation of the 4 days training workshop “Lessons learned from worldwide experiences” (see Appendix 1).

## ***Main Results of the mission***

### **• Institutional support to Coordination team**

The team in charge of implementation of the Cambodian FOs’ inventory has almost completed the final report. A second presentation<sup>1</sup> of the inventory results will be scheduled in early January 2006 to broadcast the results to ministries and NGO officers.

As Julie Couturier, actually in charge of the FOs’ project component, will leave Cambodia in late November 2005, no further demand in term of methodology has been addressed to the Cirad-Ciepac team regarding methodological support.

### **• The Workshop “lessons learned from worldwide experiences”**

(For the presentations made during the workshop and the products of collective work, see the specific detailed report - (Le Coq, 2005b))

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<sup>1</sup> A first presentation of the preliminary results was done during the workshop « collective assessment of FOs situation and support to FOs in Cambodia” held in Phnom Penh in September 2005 (MJ Dugue, JF Le Coq, 2005b)

To summarize, the workshop enabled:

- ⇒ To enlarge knowledge of the participants on FOs' situation and role in agricultural development. Especially, the case studies illustrated:
  - the wide range of possible ways for an FOs to provide technical and economical services to their members in order to help them facing their technical and marketing problems,
  - the diversity of the dynamics that FOs can develop to play diverse functions (technical and economical services to their members, representation of Farmers' interests, local development, and others...)
  - the issues regarding FOs' organisation and functioning as well as autonomy and sustainability of FOs
  - the diverse ways to support FOs including the possible strategy and institutional settings, the roles played by other stakeholders and the relationships between FOs and support agencies (especially the State)
- ⇒ To test the heuristic content of the selected case studies and their form of presentation. It enables to raise lessons to improve the pedagogical process of such a strengthening capacities process to build better a "tailored pedagogical tool kit".
- ⇒ To plan the following activities and design the terms of reference for the selection of the participants to the following workshops. It enables also to raise questions for the following steps beyond the scheduled Cirad-Ciepac support to make the training materials and the FO TF dynamics going on (see following paragraphs).

### • The following steps of the support to FOs TF

The design and content of the following steps have been designed and agreed with the participants as follow:

- **a 3 days national training workshop** will be held in Phnom Penh with the FO-TF from the Wednesday the 11<sup>th</sup> to Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> January 2006. This workshop will aim at preparing the 2 pilot workshops. It will consist in the presentation of the training material prepared by Cirad-Ciepac team (including training files or modules on the diverse topics introduced and discussed during previous steps of the process : diversity of FOs, functions played by FOs, organisation and functioning of FOs, tools to evaluate FOs situation and strengthen their capacities,...). On this basis, participants will prepare, under the guidance of Cirad-Ciepac experts, the materials in Khmer language to be used during the pilot training workshops.
- **2 provincial pilot training workshops (2 days long)** will be held simultaneously in Batambang and Konpong Cham province from Monday the 16<sup>th</sup> to Tuesday the 17<sup>th</sup> January 2006. These workshops will be implemented by the members of the Cambodian FO Task Force (participants to the 3 previous workshops) with the support of the international experts. The local participants will be chosen by the members of FO TF. They will be provincial and district staff of MAFF and other ministries as well as staff of NGOs involved in FOs strengthening at local level (province, district).
- A one day meeting in Phnom Penh will be done – half a day for debriefing on the training (Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> January afternoon), and half a day to design action plan for following activities of the FO TF (Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2006 morning).

- **Beyond the support process initiated by cirad-ciepac team**

Beyond the support process initiated by cirad-ciepac team, some questions need to be addressed.

Following the presentation of the case studies, several participants asked for the organization of a study tour in Vietnam because the cases presented in south and north of Vietnam fit well to the issues the Cambodian FOs and support agencies are actually facing<sup>2</sup>.

Yet participants of the workshops show a strong will to replicate the training they received to their colleagues and other practitioners: thus the “demultiplication” of the pilot training should be scheduled and means to develop it have to be found since there structures’ lack of means.

Some participants also asked for the development of specific training dedicated to different types of FOs such as Cooperatives,...

More over, the process focussed on the strengthening of a task force composed mainly by national staff (from Ministries or NGOs), some participants ask for the development and support to develop training materials and training session dedicated to FOs leaders.

To answer to this new impetus of the participants, several pathes for follow up activities (beyond current initial Cirad-Ciepac support process) has yet to be discussed:

- Focus on training and capacity building

The FO TF as a groups of trainers on FOs support: This path puts the emphasis on the broadcast of the training materials with the overall objective of increasing the number of staff (Ministries and NGOs) trained: this calls for the elaboration of an action plan for new training including preparation of specific training dedicated to diverse types of FOs (cooperative, ...) as well as a support to a “multiplication” phase.

This strategy focusing on the capacity strengthening of human resources involved in FO support could also be developed through the creation of perennial training module in association with education and training institutions such as URA or Preak Leap.

- Focus on policy and strategic document design

The FO TF as a group of officers involved in policy and strategic document design: this path puts the emphasis on the FO-TF as a multi-institutional body, a place of exchange and dialogue that can contribute to design better coordinated interventions towards FOs development: this calls for definition of clear objectives and evaluation of the existing opportunities and of the legitimacy of such an institution. Diverse opportunities exist yet for the involvement of this group in such process as the design of the strategic document on water and agriculture strategy.

For both of this strategies, FO TF could also be a starting point or a task force to prepare a wider scope specialized projects on FOs strengthening and extension. A project that may provide means to develop capacities building for staff, means to support FOs directly (strengthening capacities through mid term institutional support,...), means to monitor and evaluate in a perennial ways the development of FOs and their role in rural development. This asks for the exploring of funding agencies involved in FOs development in Cambodia.

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<sup>2</sup> Such a study tour will be complementary to the first one done in 2004 in Thailand as the situation in Thailand seems to be far from that the participants are facing.

## ***Follow Up activities***

Coordination team and Ciepac- Cirad team agreed on the following tasks:

- **Activities of Coordination Team:**

As Julie Couturier will left Cambodia, the preparation of the following activities including preparation of the training workshop in Pnhom Penh and the 2 pilot Provincial will be made under the supervision of Mr Savun Sam Ol with the support of Mr Ham Phalla (MAFF – DAE) and JM Bouvard (SCAC – chief of the project); Miss Julie Couturier, should nevertheless come back in January to finalize the preparation of the following workshops with MM Savun Sam Ol and Ham Phalla.

- ⇒ Finalization of the report on the National Cambodian FOs Inventory
- ⇒ Preparation of the workshops (in Phnom Penh and in the provinces) invitation, venue, translation of the English materials,...

- **Activities of Cirad-Ciepac Team:**

- ⇒ Detailed program proposal for the 3<sup>rd</sup> mission and the Workshops scheduled in January 2006
- ⇒ Preparation of the training materials

## ***Conclusion***

This third mission confirmed the relevancy of a methodology based on the presentation of worldwide FOs experiences, since the translation in Khmer of some conceptual words is still an impediment; examples presented as comprehensive case studies provided a better basis for the understanding of concepts as well as to grasp the diversity of possible roles of FOs and the diversity of way to support FOs. It enables then to increase the capacity of the participants to raise questions.

Nevertheless, some limits at this step can be underline: (1) the assimilation of an important flow of information on realities somehow far from the context of the participants was difficult for most of them; (2) the ability of the participant to raise lessons (general and applied lessons) from the external references remains still low at this step.

Those limits, that were expectable, will be over passed in the scheduled following steps. The presentation of the training materials during the following workshop scheduled in January will be the occasion to focus on the lessons to be learned from the experiences and will propose a comprehensive framework to deal FOs situation and problems based on the case studies presented.

This third mission confirmed also the interest of the current process, especially regarding the interest of the building of an arena to exchange experiences between Cambodian practitioners and to raise questions about roles that stakeholders have to play in supporting FOs.

If the support process initiated by Cirad-Ciepac team through the implementation of the training workshops set the foundation of a multi-institutional Farmers Organisation Task Force sharing some common references, the sustainability of this FO-TF will depend on the ability of this group to design further collective objectives beyond the support and on the support provided to this group to fuel its reflexion. Thus the recruitment of a FOs expert at the edge of 2006 (to follow up activities of Julie Couturier) is of tremendous importance as well as the design of an action plan for this group (scheduled at the end of the process). At this

step, it asks for an initiation of a local reflexion between FSP project leader and Department of Agricultural extension of MAFF to define the possible future role of this FO-TF in relation with the current opportunities and to set up a shared strategy.

## **References**

JF Le Coq, 2005b – report of the Workshop “Lessons learned from worldwide experiences”, Cirad-Ciepac.

MJ Dugue, JF Le Coq, 2005b – report of the Workshop “Collective assessment of FO’s situation and Support to FO’s in Cambodia”., Cirad-Ciepac, 28 p.

MJ Dugue, JF Le Coq, 2005a – report of the mission from the 13<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>th</sup> September -, Cirad-Ciepac, 8 p.

JF Le Coq, 2005a – report of the mission from the 01 to the 02 july 2005, Cirad-Ciepac, 15 p.

## **Appendix 1: Detailed program of the mission**

Sunday, Nov., 6 <sup>th</sup> Phnom Penh	- preparation of the Workshop (Julie Couturier / Savun Sam Ol)
Monday and Tuesday, Nov., 7 – 8 <sup>th</sup>	Workshop “lessons learned from worldwide case studies” held in Phnom Penh – MAFF
Wednesday, Nov., 9 <sup>th</sup> Phnom Penh	“National day” Preparation of synthesis and materials
Thursday and Friday, Nov., 10 – 11 <sup>th</sup>	Workshop “lessons learned from worldwide case studies” held in Phnom Penh – MAFF
Saturday - sunday, Nov., 12 – 13 <sup>th</sup>	Preparation of mission report and workshop report
Monday, Nov., 14 <sup>th</sup>	Debriefing with JM Bouvard
Tuesday, Nov., 15 <sup>th</sup>	Day off
Wednesday, nov., 21 <sup>st</sup>	Debriefing with J Couturier