

Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)

Report: **Independent Completion Report**

Date: 07 April 2008

Version: Draft

Initiative: **Quang Ngai Rural Development
Programme (RUDEP)**

Country: Vietnam

AidWorks ID: 007K0R

Contracting

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND CERTIFICATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND CERTIFICATION	ii
ACRONYMS	iii
BASIC ACTIVITY DATA	vii
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	x
INTRODUCTION	1
METHODOLOGY	3
CONTEXT	4
PROGRAMME RELEVANCE	5
PROGRAMME EFFECTIVENESS	9
DIVERSIFYING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION	9
FOREST LAND ALLOCATION	14
COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE	16
CAPACITY BUILDING	17
PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT	19
OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS	23
PROGRAMME EFFICIENCY	25
PROGRAMME IMPACT	26
SUSTAINABILITY	28
OVERALL QUALITY	30
LESSONS LEARNED	32
OVERALL CONCLUSIONS	37
RECOMMENDATIONS	40
ANNEXES	41

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND CERTIFICATION

The Independent Completion Report (ICR) Team would like to express their thanks and appreciation to all the people that helped the team to get a grounded understanding of the programme, its processes and achievements. In particular we would like to thank Mr. Nhi, Vice-Chairman of the Provincial People's Committee, Mr. Hieu, former Chairman of the PPC, Ms. Hoa, Co-Director of the Programme and Deputy Director of the Department for Planning and Investment and Mr. Trevor Ole, Australian Co-Director. Moreover, our thanks go to the staff of the various agencies on provincial, district and commune levels, and to programme participants.

The present report reflects the viewpoints of the members of the Independent Completion Report team and does not necessarily represent the views and opinions of the Government of Australia, nor of the Vietnamese Authorities on provincial, district and commune levels or any of the agencies and individuals consulted during the ICR Mission.

ACRONYMS

ACIAR Australian Council for International Agricultural Research
AG Activity Group
AMC Australian Managing Contractor
AP Annual Plan
APD Australian Program Director
ASAS Australian Small Activities Scheme
ATL Australian Team Leader
AusAID Australian Agency for International Development
BSP Bank of Social Policy
CBBCRDP Cao Bang Bac Can Rural Development Project
CBFM Community Based Forest Management
CBRIP Community Based Rural Infrastructure Project (World Bank)
CBO Capacity Building Officer
CCG Commune Contact Group
CCO Commune Cadastral Officer
CCPSC Commune Communist Party Standing Committee
CDF Commune Development Fund
CDP Commune Development Planning
CEM Committee for Ethnic Minorities and Mountainous Areas
CFAW Committee for the Advancement of Women
CLAC Commune Land Advisory Council
CPC Commune People's Committee
CPMB Commune Project Management Board (Infrastructure)
CPRGS Comprehensive Poverty Reduction & Growth Strategy
DARD Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DCG District Contact Group
DDO District Development Officer
DEC District Extension Centre
DOET Department of Education and Training
DOFA Department of Foreign Affairs
DOFin Department of Finance
DOF Department of Fisheries
DOH Department of Health
DOHA Department of Home Affairs
DOI Department of Industry
DOLISA Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
DNRE Department of Natural Resources and Environment
DPC District People's Committee
DPI Department of Planning and Investment
EIA Environmental Impact Assessment
EMG Environmental Management Guidelines
ESIA Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
FCO Finance and Credit Officer
FDSD Forest Development Sub-Department
FLA Forest Land Allocation
FMB Forest Management Board
FPD Forest Protection Department
FPS Forest Protection Station
FU Farmers Union

GAD Gender and Development
 GAS
 GOA
 Goal Attainment Scaling
 Government of Australia
 GOV Government of Viet Nam
 GPS Global Positioning System
 GTZ German Development Cooperation
 Ha Hectare
 HH Household
 HUAF Hue University of Agriculture and Forestry
 ICDP Integrated Commune Development Plans
 IEO Infrastructure and Environment Officer
 IRR Internal Rate of Return
 ISP Implementation Support Programme to Program 135 Phase 2 in Quang
 Ngai Province (phase 3 of the Quang Ngai Rural Development
 Program)
 JBIC Japanese Bank for International Cooperation
 KfW Kreditanstalt fur Wiederaufbau
 KRA Key Result Area
 LOC Land Ownership Certificate
 MARD Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
 M&E Monitoring and Evaluation
 MEO Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
 MFI Micro-Finance Institution
 MIS Management Information System
 MONRE Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
 MPI Ministry of Planning and Investment
 MTR Mid Term Review
 NGO Non-Government Organisation
 NRED Natural Resources and Environment Division
 NTFP Non Timber Forest Product
 ODA Official Development Assistance
 O&M Operation and Maintenance
 Program135/2 Socio-Economic Development Program for Extremely Difficult
 Communes in Ethnic Minority and Mountainous Areas (a
 Government of Viet Nam national target program for poverty
 reduction)
 PAEC Provincial Agricultural Extension Centre
 PAEM Participatory Agricultural Extension Methods
 PAP Projected affected Peoples
 PAR Public Administration Reform
 PC People's Council
 PCC Program Coordination Committee
 PCEM Provincial Committee for Ethnic Minorities and Mountainous Areas
 PDA Participatory Development Adviser
 PDD Program Design Document
 PEMM Program Environmental Management Manual
 PFLAP Participatory Forest Land Allocation Process
 PG Provincial Government

PM Prime Minister
 PMU Program Management Unit
 PPC Provincial People's Committee
 PPP Participatory Planning Process
 PPWG People's Participation Working Group
 PRA Participatory Rural Appraisal
 PSO Provincial Statistics Office
 QN Quang Ngai
 RMA Rapid Market Appraisal
 RUDEP Quang Ngai Rural Development Programme
 SARS Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
 SBV State Bank of Viet Nam
 SC Steering Committee
 SDAH Sub Department of Animal Health
 SEDP Socio Economic Development plan
 SEMLA Strengthening Environmental Management and Land Administration Project
 SEPP Socio Economic Planning Process
 SLGP Strengthening Local Government Project
 SOFE State Owned Forest Enterprise
 SP Service Provider
 STA Short Term Adviser
 TA Technical Assistance
 TAG Technical Advisory Group
 TBA To Be Advised
 TCNRE Technical Centre of Natural Resources and Environment
 TNA Training Needs Analysis
 TOR Terms of Reference
 TOT Training of Trainers
 USAID United States Agency for International Development
 VBARD Vietnamese Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development
 VDP Village Development Planning
 VILIS Vietnam Land Information System
 VND Vietnamese Dong (approximately A\$1 = VND12,000)
 VN 2000 Vietnam Cadastral Mapping Computer Program
 VPD Vietnamese Programme Director
 VPM Village Planning Meeting
 VSCF Village Saving and Credit Facility
 VSO Village Saving and Credit Facility Support Officer
 WB World Bank
 WB FSDP 3 World Bank Forest Sector Development Project 3
 WG Working Group
 WU Women's Union
 WV World Vision

Currency Conversion

Exchange Rates

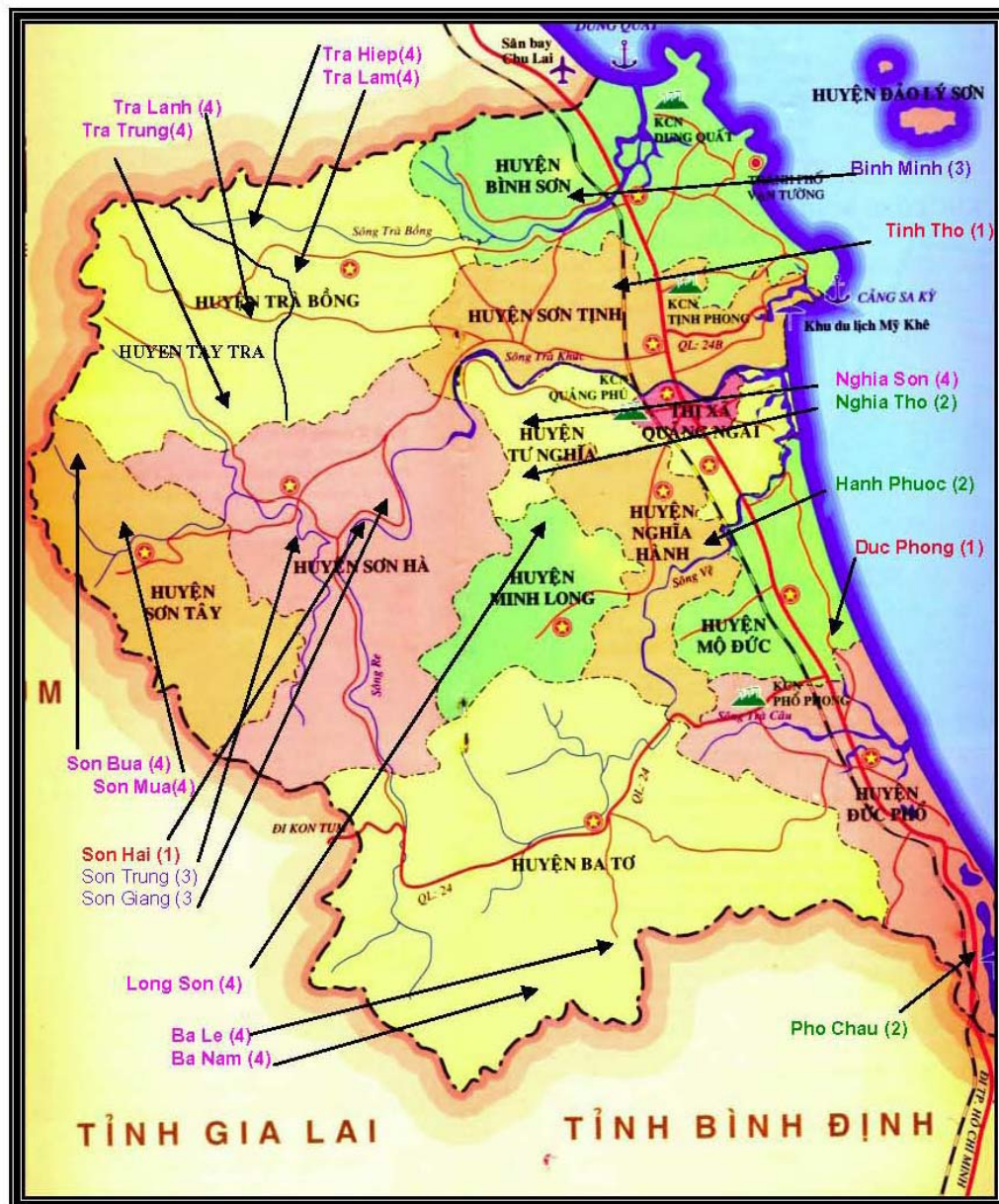
Year	1 USD= AUD	1 AUD = USD	1 AUD = VND	1 USD = VND
02/03	1.74	0.58	8,889.82	15,373.00
03/04	1.41	0.71	11,125.00	15,619.33
04/05	1.34	0.75	11,806.33	15,755.67
05/06	1.34	0.75	11,853.08	15,886.58
06/07	1.28	0.78	12,577.51	16,067.33
07/08*	1.22	0.82	13,192.82	16,113.29

*

preliminary figures

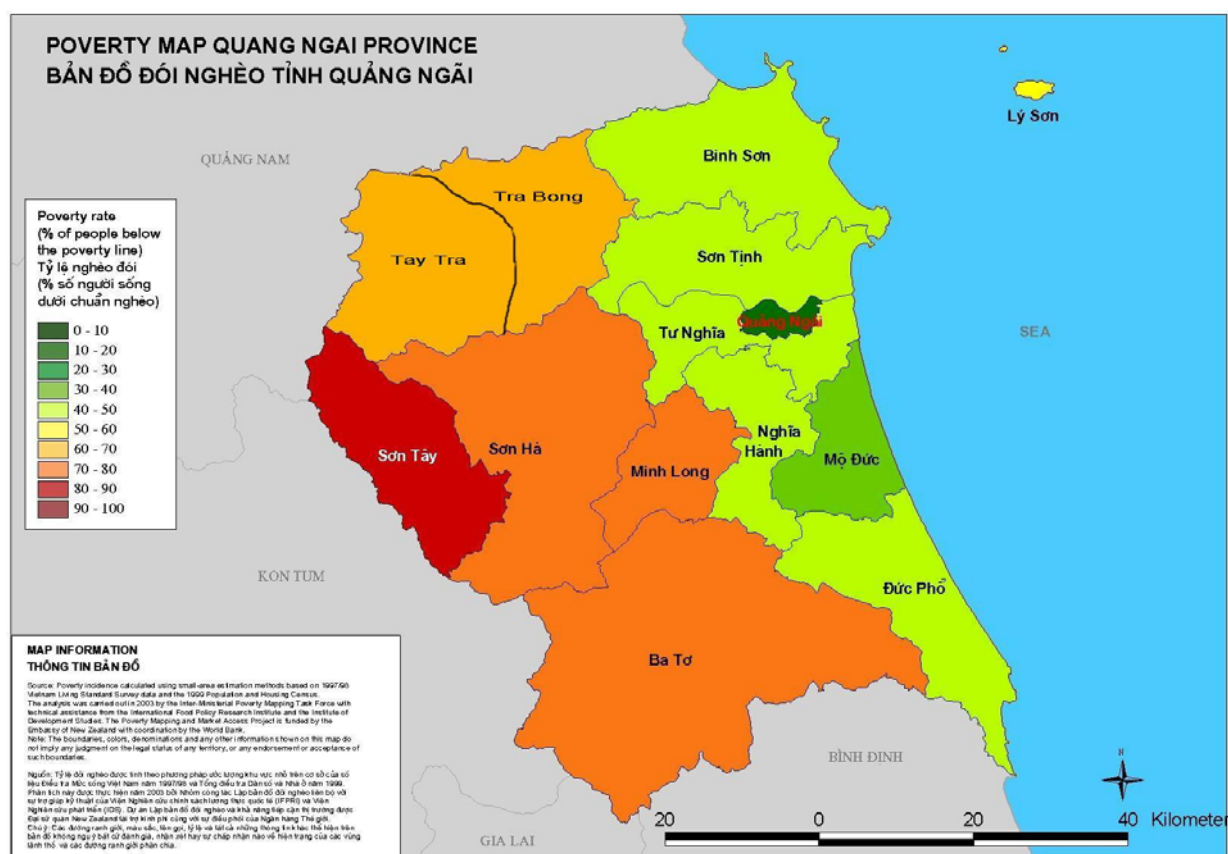
BASIC ACTIVITY DATA

Map of Quang Ngai Province and RUDEP Districts and Communes



Indicates name of commune and bracketed number indicates entry cycle into Program.

Poverty Map Quang Ngai Province



Note: The division between Tay Tra and Tra Bong does not represent the actual boundary between the districts, but is meant to indicate the separate districts.

The poverty rate in Tay Tra is higher than in Tra Bong and is in the 80-90 range.

Key Events related to RUDEP

Year	Month	Event
1997		
		Government of Viet Nam (GOV) requests Government of Australia (GOA) to assist with rural infrastructure in Central Region.
1998		
		High Level Consultation agreement between GOV and GOA for a rural infrastructure project in Quang Nam/Quang Ngai provinces.
1999		
		AusAID commissions three identification and pre-feasibility missions in water, rural infrastructure and agricultural sectors and the infrastructure and agriculture missions recommend a focus on Quang Ngai Province.
2000		
	June	AusAID Design Mission prepares the Quang Ngai Rural Infrastructure and Services Project.
	September	Project changes to the Quang Ngai Rural Income Generation Project (incorporating three sectors: rural infrastructure, vocational training and agricultural development).
2001		
	April	AusAID Bidding Process to select Australian Managing Contractor and project had changed to a rural development program.
	July	Subsidiary Arrangement signed between AusAID and Quang Ngai Provincial People's Committee (PPC).
	August	RUDEP Phase 1 commences with mobilisation of Technical Assistance (TA) to Quang Ngai.
2002		
	January	RUDEP operates in 3 communes (2 lowland and 1 upland).
	January	Technical Advisory Group (TAG) 1.
	April	TAG 2.
	September	Program Design Document submitted and approved.
	October	RUDEP Phase 2 commences.
2003		
	January	RUDEP operates in 6 communes (4 lowland and 2 upland).
	January	Infrastructure Operational Procedures approved.
	February	Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan approved.
	February	SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) outbreak begins in Viet Nam
	March	Program Management Unit (PMU) Operational Procedures approved.
	April	Village Savings and Credit Facility (VSCF) Operational Procedures approved.
	April	Communication Strategy approved.
	April	TAG 3.
	September	Capacity Building Procedures developed.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rural Development Programme (RUDEP): AidWorks ID: 007K0R		
Country/region and if province/district applicable		Vietnam, Central Coast region, Quang Ngai Province
Primary sector of initiative		Agriculture and Rural Development, Governance
Main Country Strategy Objective contributed to		Contributes to Vietnam Australia Development cooperation Strategy 2003-2007, SO 2.1: Increase Rural Productivity, SO 2.4: Reduce Vulnerability to environmental and economic shocks and SO 2.5: Strengthen the accountability of provincial and local governments and participation of the poor in their governance
Date initiative commenced		RUDEP I commenced in August 2001 while RUDEP II started in October 2002
Date initiative complete		December 2007
Initiative cost to Australia		A\$ 14,391,838 (RUDEP II)
Counterpart organisation		Department of Planning and Investment 96 Nguyen Nghiem Street, Quang Ngai City, Vietnam
Delivery organisation		URS Australia Pty Ltd Level 4, 70 Light Square Adelaide SA 5000 Australia
Final initiative quality rating		4 (4 / 3 / 4 / 4 / 5 / 4)
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The Independent Completion Report (ICR) Mission for the Quang Ngai Rural Development Programme (RUDEP) marks the end of the second phase of a ten year programme commitment. The objective of the mission is to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the RUDEP, and to make recommendations on viable options for enhancing the sustainability of the project outcomes. The mission will also serve to inform the refinement of the third phase of the programme.

RUDEP consists of five components in which diversification of agricultural production through a credit scheme, development of models of production and forest land allocation was combined with community infrastructure and training of the government staff and participants involved. RUDEP used a participatory process of planning at village level to inform commune development plans and provide the basis for programme interventions.

RUDEP aims to empower poor households to improve their livelihoods sustainably and to contribute to rural development, governance and poverty reduction in Quang Ngai province. Implemented from 2001-2007, the second phase of the programme limited itself to selected communes of each of the districts.

The programme goals and objectives appear relevant from the perspective of programme participants and their needs within the changing context of Quang Ngai and Vietnam at large. Moreover, when comparing with the Vietnam Australia Development Cooperation Program Strategy (2003-2007) and with the Provincial Development Strategy (2006-2010) goals substantially overlap. The programme proved very effective on the level of outputs, the direct deliverables for which the management can be held responsible. Effectiveness of the level of results and intermediate outcomes is less clear as many changes on the intermediate level have not been monitored, including: changed organisational capacities of service providers, amount and quality of services provided. Results are quite clear at the commune level, the level that the programme has mostly engaged with, changes are less clear at district and province level, where the programme has been less prominent in implementing activities. Changes are clearest in the lowland communes and less pronounced in the upland communes where the programme engagement has been substantially shorter. In terms of efficiency the programme does not perform that well given that half the budget is absorbed by technical support, which could have been obtained in other, more efficient ways.

RUDEP has contributed to poverty reduction – as one of a number of GOV and donor funded programmes actively engaged with this provincial key objective. Lack of information of intermediate outcomes makes it difficult to determine the significance of the RUDEP's contribution. RUDEP support to the various initiatives of the programme was relatively resource intensive which likely decreases options for replicability.

RUDEPs participatory approach has made a difference in commune planning processes, in the forest land allocation process and in extension staff training. Regarding the planning process, the linkage with planning processes on district and provincial level has not been sufficiently completed. The programme applies the same approach in all the areas that it works in and has not developed specific approaches for lowland and upland areas or for particular ethnic minority groups.

The mission recommends:

- For the programme to become more explicitly poverty focused
- For AusAID to engage in outcome based monitoring with the province, looking at all programming (of which ISP will be a part)
- For the programme to tailor approaches to specific minority groups and to engage with picture oriented learning approaches.

INTRODUCTION

(1) The Independent Completion Report (ICR) Mission for the Quang Ngai Rural Development Programme (RUDEP) marks the end of the second phase - characterised by implementation on a limited scale across selected communes of each of the districts in the province - of a ten year programme commitment.

(2) The objectives of the ICR mission are:

1. To appraise the ACR prepared by AMC
2. To assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the RUDEP, and to draw lessons learnt from this intervention
3. To make recommendations on viable options for enhancing the sustainability of the project outcomes

The mission will also serve to inform the refinement of the third phase of the programme - the Implementation Support Programme to Programme 135 Phase 2 in Quang Ngai Province (ISP) in upland communities - in which successful activities are planned to be further expanded in the province.

(3) The Rural Development Programme (RUDEP) consisted of five components:

1. **Diversification of agricultural production**, aims to provide working capital for the provision of rotating credit funds for the development of economic agricultural and off-farm activities in order to diversify the resource base of households.
2. **Participatory Forest Land Allocation**¹ was introduced. This included the acceleration of the allocation of forest land resources to local households in the mountainous areas of the province.
3. **Community infrastructure**, investing in locally prioritized infrastructure in order to support the local economic development process
4. **Focused capacity building**, including assessment of competencies, training of trainers and building of individual government staff capacities on multiple levels; building of competencies of programme participants on aspects of a variety of economic activities
5. **Programme management and monitoring and evaluation**
Establishment of programme management system including operational procedures, cost norms, which were approved by PPC and including a M&E system to information management

Structure of the Independent Completion Report

(4) This report commences with the methodology of the mission and key contextual aspects over the lifespan of the programme. Then the programme is assessed making use of the DAC criteria: Relevance, Effectiveness, Impact, Efficiency and Sustainability. Specific attention has been given to the

¹ Forest land allocation was added during the life of the programme in 2005

effectiveness of the programme. The programme has been rated making use of the AusAID rating methodology in the section on Overall Quality. Finally Lessons Learned, Overall Conclusions and Recommendations are presented.

METHODOLOGY

(5) The mission included:

1. A desk review during which key materials of RUDEP and other key resources were reviewed.
2. A two week visit to Vietnam when discussions were held with key stakeholders of the programme including: AusAID, the Provincial People's Committee, Provincial Departments and agencies.
3. Meetings with peer programmes and organisations in Hanoi in order to compare the programme with other initiatives in Vietnam, both in terms of their design, as well as in terms of implementation and results obtained.
4. Field visits were made to selected districts and communes in the lowland, mid-upland and remote upland areas. These visits provided the team with an exposure to the reality of the programme and an opportunity to discuss with local stakeholders and participants at the district, commune and village levels. During field visits, use was made of semi-structured interviews with selected key informants, focus group discussions and SWOT analysis. Triangulation of findings was practiced across the team and across methodologies used.²
5. A stakeholder workshop was conducted at the end of the mission in which findings, analysis and preliminary conclusions were validated.

(6) This ICR focuses on the second phase of RUDEP. Nonetheless, the ICR mission also assessed the design phase and the design document of the programme in order to understand the origins of the second phase of the programme.

² Further methodological details are presented in the Issues Paper in Annex 2

CONTEXT

(7) Key Contextual Issues in terms of Quang Ngai province and AusAID

- Vietnam is not an aid dependant country. Also in Quang Ngai the RUDEP funds are a small percentage of total GOV investments.
- RUDEP is the only programme of its kind in AusAID's programming. AusAID committed to a 10 year rural development project with the GOV in a period when projects came to be seen as too limited vehicles for aid delivery.
- RUDEP was the first international development programme to work in Quang Ngai it took time to establish good working relationships with the various levels in the province.
- The context in which RUDEP was implemented in Quang Ngai province changed significantly during the life of the programme, with a focus of economic development by GOV on both industrial development (industrial zones and first Oil Refinery of Vietnam to be in Quang Ngai) and increased agricultural productivity.
- Within AusAID there have also been important changes within the organisation, with the Hanoi office taking on some of the responsibilities regarding programme implementation and in-country policy engagement, that were previously reserved for AusAID's head office in Canberra .
- In July 2005 the Government of Vietnam and development partners agreed on the Hanoi Core Statement on Aid Effectiveness, which is a localisation of the "Paris Declaration" and which includes a set of indicative targets for 2010 in terms of ownership, alignment, harmonisation, managing for results and mutual accountability.
- Other donors to Quang Ngai include WB, ADB and Japan. INGOs working in the province include Plan International, World Vision and East Meets West.
- As follow-up on the RUDEP phase II programme, the *Implementation Support Program* has been developed, which supports the Government of Vietnam's *National Target Program on Socio-Economic Development for Extremely Difficult Communes in Ethnic Minority and Mountainous Areas* (also know as Program 135-II) in Quang Ngai Province. ISP aims to reduce poverty in ethnic minority areas of Quang Ngai Province.

PROGRAMME RELEVANCE

(8) In order to assess the relevance of the programme the goals and objectives are compared to the needs of programme participants as well as the changing context in the province. Moreover, they are compared to the provincial Economic Development Strategy and the AusAID Country Strategy. The relevance of the approach adopted by RUDEP is also assessed as is the financial significance of RUDEP.

(9) Needs of programme participants and the changing context in the province

The programme goal focuses on rural development, governance and poverty reduction in Quang Ngai Province. Key subjects in terms of outcomes include: empowered households, sustainable improved livelihoods and increased incomes. The programme started with a focus on selected districts across lowland and upland areas of the province³. These subjects and the approach fitted the overall situation in the province in 2001 relatively well, with poverty prevalent in upland as well as lowland areas. Given the socio-economic situation of many households in Quang Ngai in the early 2000's and the prevalence of poverty in the province, these goals and objectives appear to be relevant.

(10) With the changes occurring during the life of the programme in the poverty context of the province and partly due to programme implementation, the situation changed and incomes improved, especially in lowland areas where economic growth overall is faster and where programmes worked more intensely. Incomes appear to have increased in areas where RUDEP was working as well as in selected areas where RUDEP had not been working. With these changes, most pronounced in the lowland areas, there was an increased rationale to focus on remote upland communes and the programme has gradually made this shift during the life of the programme. With the formulation and implementation of the ISP, this shift is even more pronounced, with a sole focus on ethnic minority and mountainous areas in the province.

Though the programme did respond to the changing context, it did so relatively slowly. On the one hand this can be understood given that the programme was the first International support programme to the province. After agreeing and signing a programme contract, it is often more difficult in these situations to make a case for changing aspects of a programme and its implementation. Moreover, contractual obligations and responsibilities of the AMC did not change significantly, which also enhanced implementation as agreed in the Final Programme Design Document, rather than seeking adaptations to the changing context.

³ Lowland areas of the province include the districts Binh Son, Son Tinh, Tu Nghia, Nghia Hanh, Mo Duc and Duc Pho while upland areas include Son Tay, Tay Tra, Tra Bong, Son Ha, Minh Long and Ba To.

(11) One of the programme outcomes includes 'empowerment'. This is useful as it enables and promotes a view on poverty beyond its economic limits and makes use of the capacities of poor people, enhancing them at the same time. The way the programme works on empowerment though is limited. Organisations like VSCF and Activity Groups are primarily 'utility' oriented and the 'empowerment' effects seem secondary.

(12) Provincial Economic Development Strategy and wider National Policies

The goals of the programme fit well with the provincial development strategy and wider GOV policies. The goals of rural development, governance and poverty reduction are reflected in the provincial 5 year plan and the wider development policy of the GOV. Aspects of Governance and local participation are reflected in the national Grass Roots Democracy Decree, issued in 2003. Also, as regards the programme components, the programme fits well with the 5 year plan: both focus on diversification of agriculture, increasing productivity and enhancing livestock rearing as part of the household economy. Furthermore, the forest land allocation activities respond to GOV targets of forest land allocation.

(14) What is less clear from the 5 Year Plan for the period 2006 – 2010 is how poverty alleviation in upland areas is to be realised. Though there is mention of mountainous areas and of continued poverty reduction in mountainous areas, it is not specified how this need to be done. The plan acknowledges that even when poverty reduction will be achieved, the remaining rate of poverty will be much higher in mountainous areas compared to other parts of the province.

Vietnam Australia Development Cooperation Programme Strategy (2003-2007)

(15) The programme corresponds well with the overall goal of the AusAID Country Strategy which includes: "... *assisting Vietnam to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development*". RUDEP resorts under Strategic Objective (SO) Two, which focuses on "*Improved productivity and links to market for the rural poor in the Mekong Delta and Central Coast Regions*". The programme relates in particular to SO 2.1: Increase rural productivity, SO 2.4: Reduce vulnerability to environmental and economic shocks and SO 2.5; Strengthen the accountability of provincial and local governments and participation of the poor in their governance.

Relevance of RUDEP's Approach

(16) In addition to the goals and objectives one can look at the approach that the programme adopted and assess its relevance. A drawback with this is that it is not very clear what the RUDEP approach was exactly, as is illustrated in box 1 below.

Box 1: So What was RUDEP, was it...

1. *Targeted support to tackle poverty of poor households in selected areas? That means a programme developed to tackle poverty in a number of specific locations.*
2. *Aimed to provide replicable models for poverty alleviation in Quang Ngai? This option means that it specifically focused on models that could be replicated in other areas of Vietnam.*
3. *Targeted organisation development of provincial and local government to improve effectiveness of poverty alleviation? For this approach one would look at the existing organisational capacities on various levels within the province and build those that have key functions in poverty alleviation.*

(17) Though the options are not necessarily mutually exclusive in their optimal form, they are neither necessarily compatible with one another. These approaches are based on different sets of assumptions and have different consequences for various aspects of programming. For example geographical areas that one would select to work in. In the first case of targeted support to tackle poverty in selected areas one would work in the most poverty stricken areas of the province. In the second case of producing replicable models one would select a variety of geographical areas with a variety of social and economic aspects of poor populations in order to be able to build models that could be used in a variety of geographical and socio-economic poverty settings in the province and in Vietnam. In the third option of targeted organisational development; one would not so much work in a specific area, but with the provincial authorities and agencies as well as with local agencies of selected districts and communes.

(18) These options represent the dilemma of a strategic choice. In RUDEP the three approaches were used to a certain extent at certain moments in time. In the workshop at the end of the mission, commune level staff members selected option 1. District level staff prioritized option 2, developing models for replication, while provincial level staff opted for a combination of options. This shows, that within the programme not all stakeholders necessarily agree on what RUDEP actually was. In practice the programme did not explicitly choose one of these options, or take the decision to consciously develop one of them. This meant that the programme missed an opportunity to become more strategically focused.

Financial Significance of RUDEP Funds

(19) For assessing the significance of the RUDEP funds, one can look at the relative amount of the resources provided by RUDEP compared to those of the GOV. This differs substantially on various levels: on a provincial level the amount is relatively small. When looking at the PFLAP component, RUDEP resources of 4.7 billion VND amounted to about 14 % of the total funds spent, through the GOV budget for forest land allocation. Looking at the level of a district, the situation is quite different. RUDEP investment amounted to about

10 % of total GOV investment in one of the districts. This figure would shrink to a mere 3 % if also recurrent district funds were included.

(20) Significance of RUDEP resources is highest at the commune level, where the investment of RUDEP compared to other GOV investments varied from 20 – 50 %

PROGRAMME EFFECTIVENESS

DIVERSIFYING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

Findings

(21) In order to enhance the household economy of households in selected poor communes in the province, the programme set up Activity Groups (AG), Village Savings and Credit Funds (VSCF). The VSCFs were targeted to have 50 % of their members being poor households⁴ in the communes while the AGs were open to all commune members.

(22) The VSCFs and Activity Groups supported by the programme have often been successful in providing enhanced economic opportunities for households and their members and to diversify the local household economy. Default rates remained well under target. The combination of credit with technical support (for credit and savings) and models regarding selected economic opportunities proved especially useful. In many cases the Activity Groups were conducive in increasing the incomes of their members. The fact that the members get ownership over their funds after graduation and further manage their funds creates a very positive dynamic that includes wider benefits beyond increased economic opportunities.

(23) A relatively high proportion of the members of the VSCFs have been women and women appear to have benefited from the economic opportunities created. This is not limited to economic gains but also includes for example aspects of self-esteem, women are more confident now that they have had to put their own signature in various documents.

(24) The idea of the AGs was not so much to introduce “new technology” but to introduce technology used elsewhere in Vietnam to the participating households in order to expand the household economic base and to raise productivity. Cross visits were therefore an important means of supporting Activity Groups in learning on technologies that were “new” to them, but were applied already in other parts of Vietnam.

(25) The VSCFs were implemented through the Women’s Union (WU) which has a presence at provincial, district and commune levels. The local WUs embedded the VSCFs within their own programming, linking VSCF meetings with their regular programmes. This proves beneficial in the longer term as in various cases the WU was in practice still supporting groups that had actually graduated and no longer received any programme support.

(26) Though VSCF households were reported to be meant for poor households within selected communes, when looking at the results in the

⁴ As a poverty criterion for membership of a VSCF the MOLISA poverty benchmark was used. In 2001 this was set at an income of \leq VND 100,000 per head of the household per month (i.e. VND 4,800,000 per household with 4 members per year) for plain areas. In 2005 this was raised to VND 200,000 per head of a household per month (i.e. VND 9,600,000 per household per month). In getting their poverty records, communes obtain information from their villages. Poverty data are updated once a year.

ACR it appears that incomes of almost 80 % of the households participating in VSCFs in 2003 were above 5 million VND per year: i.e. above the poverty line of MOLISA at that time.⁵ About 22 % of households with less than 5 million VND per year were reduced by over 50 % between 2003 and 2006, which is substantial.⁶ Moreover, the cluster of households with incomes from 5 – 10 million VND per year was also almost halved in the same period. This group of households was included as poor from 2005 onwards, based on the adapted criteria from MOLISA. As the table does not adapt household income for the size of the household, issues of size might distort some of the findings. It is not clear who the households are that remain below 5 million VND/year throughout the period indicated. From 2005 to 2006 there seems to be a slight increase even in this group. Again here household size could distort the picture. The proportion of participating households in the VSCFs increased over time and amounted to about 60 % in 2006/07.

(27) Prior to RUDEP, households, particularly in lowland areas did have access to credit including the Bank for Social Policy (BSP). Participants indicated that at the start they were hesitant to participate in the RUDEP VSCFs as the interest rate charged was almost twice as high as that of the BSP. Moreover, the running period of loans from the BSP was longer, up to three years. Plus the ceiling for BSP loans was higher, above the 6 million VND ceiling at RUDEP. The decision to participate was taken on the basis of the technical support provided, which is not included when borrowing from BSP. What is more; the ownership of funds by participating households after VSCF graduation proved an incentive for local participation.

(28) In the remote upland areas, access to credit has been limited in the past. This is in contrast to the lowlands, where people have had access to various sources of credit. Also, at present, lowland participants find that the resources provided through RUDEP, in many cases is not enough and have borrowed from multiple sources only possible if repayment is regular and on time.

(29) Success of the VSCFs and Activity Groups proved less in remote upland areas. While most of the groups formed included a mix of poor as well as less poor households, in upland areas groups that consisted only of poor households appeared to perform less well. This was also the case with households of ethnic minorities in the remote upland areas. They proved also less in terms of adapting to the regular group meetings and other modalities of the VSCFs and Activity Groups.

(30) Participatory Programme Planning (PPP), the process of which is also referred to as Socio-Economic Participatory Planning (SEPP), is a means that has been developed and promoted by the project. This process merges household priorities with available projects, programmes and funding sources operating in a commune. It involves commune members in the yearly planning process, on a village basis, which results in yearly RUDEP commune plans. These plans combine aspects of income generation, social and livelihoods

⁵ Poverty line MOLISA

⁶ Data presented in the Program Completion Report, main report p. 6

issues and small scale rural infrastructure. The process was endorsed by the PPC and will be applied throughout the province for 2008. Attempts to link the PPP with the World Bank implemented CBRIP (which experienced real difficulties in implementing a reformed planning approach), were not successful.

(31) Planning at the local level needs to meet with 5 year strategies and yearly plans on Provincial and District levels. Funds are distributed top-down, while demands come from the bottom-up. The planning process was described by Provincial Government officials as “two down one up”. The province would send the requirements of plans to the districts after which the district formulates its plan and sends it to the province for approval, of which the district is informed in due course. This process is replicated on district and commune level where the district sends its requirements to the commune; it informs their planning, and can be applied to a participatory approach. The commune sends its plans, based on village plans, to the district for approval. Participatory village plans are consolidated on the level of the commune. There are no processes in place to consolidate plans on district and provincial levels.

(32) Participation in planning is not completely new and when GOV programmes involve community funds there would normally be a process of consultation. Moreover, other donor funded programmes have worked with participatory planning approaches. RUDEP however is the first more systematic initiative that integrates planning for programme support with planning for regular GOV programming.

In order to enhance the income generating component of the programme a broad range of extension activities was carried out. Most of these activities were identified as part of the participatory planning process at village level. Provincial and district level extension agencies were contracted to carry out these extension services. This included a substantial animal health training program. Moreover, enterprise focused extension initiatives were taken (including beekeeping) and capacities of Provincial and District level extension agency staff were enhanced, focusing on knowledge and skills but also devoting attention to attitudes in particular regarding farming households as producers with certain needs and participatory approaches.

(33) The approach of the programme is not on the whole different in the remote upland compared to the mid upland and lowland areas. It is based on the combination of Activity Groups and access to credit. Although some of the available options for diversification may differ, the methods for programme implementation and extension are basically the same. Nonetheless, local authorities and extension staff members do normally acknowledge that they need to spend more time in remote upland areas to implement the same kind of activities as in the other areas. Resource limitations though often prove a constraint in this respect.

(34) The main ethnic minority groups in upland areas of the province include Hre, Co and Xo-dang. According to the 1999 Household Census, Hre

numbered 100,067, while Co numbered 22,067 and Xo-dang 11,633. The Hre, Co and Xo-dang minority groups are different from the Kinh to varying degrees. The Hre, who often live in the mid-upland areas, have taken up irrigated rice cultivation and often speak Vietnamese with a high rate of literacy. This goes much less for the Co, who live in the remote upland areas and depend more on forest resources for their livelihood. Literacy rates are much lower for members of this group.

(35) Part of the household economy in both lowland and upland areas is subsistence oriented. In the lowlands this includes rice cultivation which is largely used for own consumption. Rice production has increased from about 6 to about 7 to 8 ton per ha. The work of the extension department, supported by RUDEP has been focused on reducing production costs especially by using less fertilizer and less pesticides. This reduction in production costs did not necessarily offset rises in prices of total production inputs.

(36) Household income depends not only on increased productivity but is also affected by prices for inputs, market prices for produce and prices for food items and daily necessities. Especially prices for food have gone up recently. Increases in prices can easily off-set gains from increased productivity. Prices for food and daily items are in general 20 – 50 % higher in remote upland areas. Production inputs are also more costly. Prices for livestock, including cows, pigs and chickens, have recently gone up substantially. This may be an advantage for households raising these animals, but means increased costs of consumption. Moreover, all these changes have increased the market dependency of households in general.

(37) Broom making is another activity supported by the RUDEP Programme. A group of people were trained in broom making and now run a workshop. Support to off-farm opportunities within the overall programme has however been limited. Yet in the HLSS survey it is shown that wages and forestry/hunting are also very significant sources of income, especially in upland areas given the generally limited amount of agricultural land available as well as the limited quality of the land for agricultural production purposes.

Analysis

(38) The programme made use of a highly concentrated and resource intensive 'package' including funds, extension services, and not in the least people's time. Overall costs are even higher if you include the opportunity costs of households during participatory processes, i.e. the economic activities they could have implemented and the returns obtained. Given this high level of resources used one can question the replicability of the initiative. This is likely to be more acute for poor households, who would be constrained by the relatively high opportunity costs.

(39) The focus on poverty of the VSCF proves weak at the start of the programme, but increases over time. With half or more of the VSCF households above the poverty line from the start, the VSCF would still

contribute to the objective of increasing agricultural productivity⁷, but less so to the reduction of poverty. Though the combination of poor and better off households seems a better approach to success than having VSCF groups consisting of poor households only, investing in non-poor households is not necessarily the best approach to reach and affect the poor. This approach seems in particular not focused enough in order to tackle poverty in remote upland areas, where the standard models used in the lowland areas are less applicable and where large part of the population consists of households with specific socio-economic and cultural characteristics that need to be taken into account.

(40) At the start of the programme the activity groups were organised around a single economic activity. This had not only the advantage that members could learn from one another, but it also enabled them to ask for services from local authorities as a group, something they would not have been able to do individually. With some members taking up other economic activities over time there is a diversification of activities of the various groups. This affects the ability of groups to 'demand' for services from local and other service providers.

(41) The main focus of the programme has been on diversifying agricultural production. Although this is suitable for lowland areas, this is much less the case in the upland areas, especially in the more remote upland areas. In the upland areas, attention to off-farm activities and to forestry and NTFP oriented activities seems warranted.

(42) While village level plans are compiled and integrated on the level of the commune and feed into district planning, it is not clear how this affects district planning and the planning process on provincial level. As the programme has primarily worked on commune level there are some missing links on these higher levels. Moreover, it is not clear how the programme works to influence the reform of planning on the district and provincial levels and how the integration of the planning process on these various levels is perceived.

(43) In terms of the results achieved through the PPP, the M&E system focuses on the increasing number of households participating in the process, the GOV staff members meeting competency requirements and participant perceptions on sustainability. Furthermore, there is attention to expansion of the planning approach beyond RUDEP and Quang Ngai province. What is not included is attention to increased quality of plans, extent to which they meet with household, local as well as district and provincial expectations and requirements, and whether plans have lead to improved services and practices.

(44) The programme uses in general one approach in all areas of the province and does not specifically tailor its programming to the requirements of ethnic minorities in remote upland areas. As ethnic groups differ in varying degrees

⁷ Increasing agricultural productivity is an important objective in both the Quang Ngai Provincial Strategy for 2006-2010 as well as in the Vietnam Australia Development Cooperation Programme 2003-2007.

from the majority population, the approach to reach them needs to be tailored to the specific socio-economic and other characteristics of each group rather than to ethnic minorities in general. For groups that have relatively high rates of illiteracy, like the Co minority group in Tay Tra district, picture based approaches which are non-dependant on written materials need to be used.

FOREST LAND ALLOCATION

Findings

(45) As part of the diversification of agricultural production the accelerated allocation of forest land was taken up under RUDEP in 2005. Making use of a seven step⁸ process (see box 2 below for details on each of the seven steps) land certificates are provided to households in the districts and communes that RUDEP is working in. Department of Natural Resources and Environment (DONRE) is the agency responsible for forest land allocation, and the programme worked with the Department in this respect. A participatory process was applied, with meetings conducted on village levels with households concerned; land use was discussed and land boundaries proposed.

(46) The process included improved technical elements of land measurement and mapping. As part of the process of land allocation, consideration is given to the actual use of land, assessment of individual household needs and household capacity to use land. After land has been allocated to them, households can agree for arrangements in which others actually use their land. In return for the use of the land, users often need to provide half the produce to the land owner. Use of the land is up to the households themselves. There is no other option than forestry, like trees for paper production and cinnamon trees. General rule of thumb for land distribution is a maximum of 30 ha per household. Most households get access to significantly less than 30 ha of forest land. There has been no mention of any sales of land certificates. Sale of land certificates is recognised as a risk of forest land allocation in the Programme Design Document.

(46) The methodology applied is well grounded and inclusive and was endorsed by the Province of Quang Ngai for application on a province wide scale. The province thus responded to a new national target for forest land allocation in 2007. In many instances RUDEP has financed the participatory part of the process, i.e. steps two, three and four.

(47) All forest land allocation is to individuals. There has been no mention of any occurrence of management of forest resources by a group of local people, with shared management responsibility and sharing of forest produce obtained.

⁸ The initial process contained eight steps with the last step focusing on evaluation. Once the model was developed the last step was left out of the process, leaving a total of seven steps to be concluded.

Box 2: Steps in the process of Forest Land Allocation in RUDEP

1. Establishment of District Working Groups and Implementation Arrangements
 2. Preparation of documents, technical materials and maps for PFLAP implementation
 3. Village meetings and land use surveys
 4. Village forest land use planning meetings, preparation of forest land allocation plan
 5. Mapping of household forest land plots
 6. Prepare and appraise land ownership certificates
 7. Approve, print and distribute land ownership certificates to households
- Evaluate the process – a step discarded after the process was established

(48) Despite the fact that the top-down approach in land allocation is recognised by the provincial authorities to work faster the results of a participatory approach are considered as more sustainable and resulting in less conflict. Forest land allocation was practiced in the province in the past, but the issue was not one of high priority. Within RUDEP the issue has been provided higher importance. The technical support from the programme played an important role in getting the issue on the province's agenda and to include it as part of the programme.

Analysis

(49) The process of forest land allocation is relatively resource intensive and it is not clear how resources will be made available after the completion of RUDEP II in order for DONRE to deliver on an ambitious target. Moreover, the way of financing of RUDEP, separately funding the participatory part of the process, could easily lead to a shortcut when less resources would be available, leaving out participatory steps two to four.

(50) The forest land allocation part of the programme seems to have been an add-on rather than becoming an integrated part of the programme. Little evidence was observed in linking agricultural diversification with forest land use options. This would principally be an opportunity in the upland areas, given the significance of forest land as an asset to poor households in that part of the province.

(51) Given the importance of access to forest land resources in upland areas and the work on this to date in Vietnam it is difficult to understand why this issue was not included in the programme design from the start, rather than being an add-on to the programme. That could also have reinforced the relationship of forest land allocation with the work on diversification of the local household economy.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Findings

(52) The programme developed an active component of infrastructure works, involving a participatory approach in prioritization of community infrastructure as part of the PPP process. In addition, a participatory approach was applied in operations and maintenance of small scale infrastructure constructed as part of the programme. The process of community based prioritization meant a closer link to actual community felt needs. The commune is moreover the 'investment owner' and RUDEP funding flows directly to the commune account; the commune sets up a committee to guide and supervise the process. The available budget is fixed, village members express their priorities, the results of which are then consolidated in a commune level plan.

(53) In RUDEP a total of Aus \$ 1.7 million was spent on 129 infrastructure projects in 23 communes, which represents 11.8 % of the total RUDEP funds spent⁹. The aim of the infrastructural investments was to enhance livelihoods and facilitate income generation. Environmental Impact Assessments were conducted for each of the projects and communes were trained to operate and maintain the infrastructure in a sustainable way. As part of the process commune members were trained in supervision and beneficiaries were involved in aspects of quality control.

(54) The provincial government has 'encouraged' districts to apply the participatory planning process modelled by RUDEP across all communes for the 2008 planning cycle. There has been some coordination but no active cooperation with CBRIP and no leveraging of additional funds has occurred as was planned for.

(55) Participants felt that infrastructure development in RUDEP was more likely to meet local needs. This had been an issue with the infrastructure planning before RUDEP at which time no use was made of local participation.

(56) Commune ownership of infrastructure through the commune development fund was at times disliked by district authorities, who reluctantly approved plans not because of the contents of the plans but because of the ownership directly by the commune. This seemed to happen more often in upland communes.

(57) When infrastructure is built using GOV funds people would be involved in decision-making as long as they would contribute to the cost of infrastructure. Otherwise the process would be arranged in a top-down manner. Recently a new regulation has been approved in which infrastructure development under 1 billion VND needs to be checked by the local commune. In RUDEP there is no requirement for a local contribution.

⁹ It is unclear what the 21 % mentioned in the CR is based upon.

Analysis

(58) The provincial endorsement of the planning process for the entire province for the 2008 planning round highlights the perceived success of the participatory planning process. This endorsement moreover, is in alignment with GOV policy on Grass roots democracy, which was launched in 2003. The PPP approach provides a way for the provincial government to implement the GOV decree.

(59) The planning process on commune level concerning infrastructure is informed by planning on district and provincial levels relating to options and funds available. Therefore the participatory process is much more a form of prioritization rather than identification of needs. Given these limitations on commune level it would have been useful for the programme to give more attention to addressing participatory aspects of planning on higher levels.

(60) Participation is only useful when participants are sufficiently informed both in terms of the process as well as in terms of the contents of discussions. Participants need to be aware of the issues and related costs involved in the various infrastructural choices. Selecting a road could imply that some households need to be relocated and their land purchased. In remote upland communities there is a relative higher need for building capacities before starting participation as more people tend to be unfamiliar with the processes involved.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Findings

(61) As part of the programme a variety of training programmes were provided to service providers and participating households. This included training for staff of the Women's Union, extension staff, staff members of DONRE and trainers of the Quang Ngai Political School. It supported the development of a curriculum on local administration. In turn service provider staff gave training to household members as part of the various components of the programme.

(62) As a result of the training, capacities of individual staff members of various organisations on commune, district and provincial levels were built. Moreover, the capacities of various organisations were built through training of trainers. Capacities of household members were reinforced in terms of technical as well as managerial aspects of agricultural production and credit and savings.

(63) The programme has made use of competency assessments in order to assess individual capacities before and after training, in this way informing its training programme as well as monitoring its immediate effects on trainees.

(64) The programme provided training that was new to the province, both in terms of its content as well as in the approaches used, focusing on trainees and their participation and making use of experience based learning. In particular the participatory, client and quality of service oriented aspects of the

training were seen as new to many of the department staff and the various stakeholders involved. As part of the training, trainees from various departments and agencies learned to focus more on households as clients with specific needs, rather than at the Department and what it can provide. As part of the capacity development component, field extension workers were equipped with toolkits and various departments and agencies were provided with computers and other equipment for the efficient implementation of their tasks. Training of individual staff was considered appropriate as it was expected to enable and facilitate the implementation of RUDEP, the first foreign funded programme in Quang Ngai province.

(65) Effects of the training were expected to reach beyond RUDEP as the trainees were expected to use the methods learned when working with GOV funds and in other ODA sponsored projects. Moreover, the best performing trainees were included in further extension work of the Department.

(66) The change that the training focused on was on the level of knowledge and skills. It did not necessarily mean that trainees could put what they learned into practice and that they changed their behaviour. Actually the project completion report observes the following for extension staff:

“...even though there was an improvement in knowledge and skills of the extension staff, in most cases there was little change in behaviour in the way extension work was done in the field. Even though staff knew about participatory methods, they still reverted to formal teaching methods and use of inappropriate ‘models’ of technology, which affected the adoption rates of agricultural practices.” (RUEDP Program Completion Report: 9).

(67) The Completion Report omits to provide an explanation as to the observation made above. Even though within some departments and agencies informal monitoring of changes appears to have taken place, there was no formalized M&E system to capture behavioural and systemic changes based on capacity building activities.

(68) The same training methods and contents are used over the whole programme area. No substantial adaptation was found when dealing with ethnic minorities in remote upland areas beyond the recognition that one would need more time to deliver the same programme compared to the lowland areas.

Analysis

(69) Although enhancing the competency levels of individual staff members can be useful, it is unclear to what extent that has led to a difference in the capability of the various organisations in which they work to deliver more and better services. As observed above, trainees do not necessarily apply their knowledge and skills. This is especially so when other organisational aspects have not changed including management and reward systems and organisational culture. Without these aspects being addressed it is often difficult to expect individual staff to change their behaviour as it could imply

risks for their own position. This shows the weakness of a capacity development approach that focuses solely on development of individual staff capacities and does not include sufficient explicit attention to wider organisational capacity issues including organisational structure, organisational culture, and performance systems. These aspects were identified as important issues to address as part of the MTR¹⁰. There appears to have been no follow-up on this and the RUDEP team and advisers decided to focus on the most feasible and urgent approach: individual staff capacity building. This focus though had its consequences for the depth of the changes affected in organisational terms.

(70) Monitoring and evaluation as part of the capacity building component of the programme focused on individual staff competencies and on the level of sourcing of Activity Group and Community Plans outside of RUDEP funding. Changes in the organisational capacities of service providers and in the levels and quality of services that they actually provide has not been a part of the M&E system of the programme. These kind of organisational and systemic changes are a missing facet.

(71) Assessments on capacities before training have been limited to individual competencies. Organisational capacities have not been assessed neither before nor after training programmes. This has limited both the design of capacity building activities as well as the programme's ability to monitor changes in capacities.

(72) 'One approach fits all' seems to miss the opportunities to impact on ethnic minorities in remote upland areas, where household economics as well as social and cultural characteristics are different and where high literacy rates rule out the use of written training materials .

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Findings

(73) Close to half the total amount of resources of the programme went to the technical support from the AMC regarding staffing and related costs. The programme had a difficult start up period of a year, with the programme as one of the first international development programmes implemented in the province. This came on top of a year spent on various assessments and planning of the programme. This meant a very slow start to the programme. The programme was managed by a Programme Management Unit. The PMU was located in a physically separate building, at a short distance from DPI.

¹⁰ In section 4.1.4 it reads: "...RUDEP and GOV should acknowledge that sustainable reform as proposed by the Program involves changing institutional cultures – the values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviour of organisations ...". Steps mentioned in the paragraph below the above include: *detailed analysis; development of a broad strategic plan; institutional cultural change; institutional restructuring and reorganisation and effective monitoring and evaluation.* (Quang Ngai, RUDEP MTR, page 26).

(74) An important intermediate position was that of the District Development Officers who work with commune contact groups and act as an interface between the commune and the district. Though this position got quite some criticism during the mid-term review, in practice there appeared to be recognition for the role of the DDO and the technical support that they provided, especially in the early stages of the programme. After the MTR the role of the DDO was adapted and changed from an implementation into a facilitation role. In lowland communes DDO positions were moreover phased out once capacities of local commune representatives had been enhanced.

(75) The context in Quang Ngai and Vietnam at large has been changing rapidly over the period of the review from 2001 – 2007. The programme did adapt to a certain extent to the changing context. One of the issues concerns the shift in geographical focus from mainly working in lowland areas to focusing project activities much more in mid and later also remote upland areas. The TAG seems to have played a constructive and reinforcing role in this respect. Moreover, while the programme started working on village/commune and provincial level activities moved to include the district level as an important intermediate level of operation.

(76) In 2005 the Hanoi core statement was issued as an agreement between major donors (including AusAID) and the GOV. An important aspect of the core statement concerns the ownership of development programmes and a leadership role for the GOV. Also in the MTR of the programme in 2006, issues of ownership of the programme were highlighted. At the start of RUDEP the position of the AMC was lopsided in terms of decision-making. This was changed shortly before the MTR when a dual signature was introduced for key programme decisions. This brought a better balance to the programme in terms of ownership of the key stakeholders.

Some of the programmatic aspects of RUDEP were taken up by the provincial and local authorities and mainstreamed into GOV programming in the province. This includes the Forest Land allocation as well as the local planning processes, combining various GOV and other resources available.

(77) RUDEP set up a relatively sophisticated M&E system which included a Management Information System. This system was set up as a stand alone system, not connected to DPI or other GOV agencies. There was a dedicated M&E expert who ran the system and who was directly hired by the AMC. The system was very output oriented, focusing on the deliverables that programme management was responsible for and on few selected impact indicators. Assessment of outcome of systemic and behavioural changes was largely missing from the system. Even though there were 'baseline' data in terms of competencies and other output level changes, there was no systematic baseline data on the level of the outcomes of the programme. A wide range of reports was produced during the life of the programme, most of which were translated into Vietnamese.

One of the constraints faced in developing the M&E system was the weak capacity on provincial and local level in terms of monitoring and evaluation,

with GOV systems focusing on disbursement only. Therefore an integration with the GOV system was not necessarily feasible. The stand alone M&E system, based partly on the idea that RUDEP was a separate programme, further reinforced this idea. The main responsibility for M&E remained with the AMC during the life of the programme.

Analysis

(78) Even if the programme was not supposed to set-up a mirror management structure, this is what in practice happened to a certain degree. Location of the PMU in a separate building has certainly not enhanced the integration of the programme in the Department of Planning and Investment.

(79) Adapting to changes over time, including paying more attention beyond the commune level and working more in upland areas seems to be a management process of adaptation based on the AMC team that established itself more and more as a reputable and respected partner in the districts it worked in and the province at large. It does not seem to be part of an overall consistent strategy and despite some of the changes, many aspects of implementation remained the same. The M&E system of the programme was not revised substantially either.

(80) In terms of ownership the adaptations made over the life of the programme have been limited. The co-signature arrangement did mean a substantial improvement in terms of ownership from AMC to shared management and responsibility. This seems however, to have had little effect on the direction of the programme and the way in which it was implemented, as those did not change significantly over the life of the programme. This in turn relates to the contractual arrangements between AusAID and the AMC, based on the Programme Design Document and with little flexibility to adapt to a changing context and to changes in internal management structures and arrangements.

(81) The programme monitoring and evaluation system was planned to be an important management tool for the programme. With the system missing out on the systemic and organisational capacity changes that happen in between outputs and wider impact, they missed the opportunity to guide the programme activities, based on whether changes required for reaching impact actually occurred, and if not, to develop a management response on how to adapt the programme in order for these changes to occur. Therefore RUDEP was, in practice, not able to assess and monitor the “*RUDEP Effect*” and compare changes in the RUDEP communes. They were actually not in a position to monitor what RUDEP achieved in the communes in which it worked, compared to the rest of the province, and thus what difference RUDEP actually made. Though the perception surveys conducted provide useful indications of change, they need to be combined with other M&E methods in order to triangulate findings.

(82) The relatively long period of programme formulation and start up reflects the time that RUDEP needed to identify ways in which it could work as a

donor funded programme within Quang Ngai Province. This illustrates the extent to which all stakeholders during the design sought the best fit of the programme within the government system rather than the programme emerging from a diagnostic of gaps in the system and a more organic approach to where and how an externally aided project could add value to a province led approach to system reform.

(83) The programme made use of long term Technical Assistance, which absorbed a substantial part of the budget. Nevertheless this does not appear to have led to a profound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the GOV systems and procedures as regards poverty alleviation, which could have informed the further development of the programme.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

(84) Overall results of the various components against the indicators of the Programme Logical Framework is presented in Annex 1 below.

(85) The implementation of the programme in line with the Programme Design Document has been strong, as has the management related to it. Technical assistance is acknowledged as a valued source of new ideas and effective ways of tackling issues, dealing with the realisation at commune level of government reforms (e.g. Forest land allocation, commune development planning)

(86) The programme has been able to reach and in some cases even surpass outputs of the various programme components. Several of the intermediate changes are considered to relate to RUDEP: the allocation of forest land and the diversification of the household economy of programme participants and increase in their income. Most of these outcome level changes have not been monitored, especially not in their relationship to livelihood improvements of programme participants.

(87) When looking at targeting, RUDEP focused on poor communes though not necessarily on the poorest communes and included poor as well as other households in those selected communes. Selection criteria which included accessibility and existing capacity plus a likeliness of selecting less poor communes would most probably result. Moreover, data from Chart 2¹¹ suggests that most of the people included in the VSCFs (>80%) were actually not poor in terms of MOLISA criteria.

(88) The programme ensured that women were included in many parts of the programme. This included training as well as VSCF and AG membership. VSCF membership was particularly successful in providing benefits for women. The programme also supported the province in implementing its five year gender strategy and worked with DPI on an action plan. Thus, gender appears to have been a cross cutting concern in the programme resulting in women's engagement in the programme and benefits coming from it.

(89) Most obvious results of the programme can be observed at the level of the participating households and the selected communes, where people have been engaged in VSCFs and Activity Groups trying to diversify their household economy, making use of the technical support provided from district and provincial agencies.

(90) The results at the district and province level are less clear. On the one hand it is not clear, as discussed above, to what extent organisational capacities of the various participating department and agencies on district and provincial levels have been improved. Also the extent to which additional and better quality services have been provided has not been assessed systematically. Capacity building was largely limited to development of

¹¹ Program Completion Report, p. 6

individual staff competencies, not looking at wider aspects of organisational development. The participatory approach to planning is restricted to the commune level and is not linked to changes in planning on district and provincial levels. According to senior department staff formal requirements would need to be put in place in order to adapt these planning systems.

(91) Regarding AusAID, the programme has provided a way to be involved at the provincial, district and local level in Quang Ngai with possibilities of informing wider policy and strategy at a national level. Given the limited scope of RUDEP regarding specifically targeting ethnic minorities in remote upland areas and adapting their approach to the characteristics of minority groups, the use of RUDEP in this respect has its own limitations. RUDEP has started work in the lowland areas and has been implementing the programme in the remote upland communes in the last 2 to 3 years of its operation only.

(92) What is less clear is the innovativeness that the programme claims. The participatory approach itself was far from new and known even to communes in Quang Ngai. They had experienced some level of participation in some of the GOV programmes for which they provided funding themselves and in other donor sponsored development projects that have started since 2001. What was new was the application of a participatory approach to the whole planning process in a commune, with village level planning feeding into the preparation of commune level development plans. Efforts to include funds from other development programmes in the province did not succeed.

(93) Though it was expected that RUDEP would be able to leverage additional funds from GOV and other ODA sources, no indication of successful leveraging by the Provincial Authorities of significant additional funds for commune based development was found. Leverage of additional funds was an important indicator in the M&E system regarding capacities built. Contacts developed by the AMC were successful in accessing additional external funding for an innovative rural communications pilot.

PROGRAMME EFFICIENCY

(94) Overall aspects of efficiency of the programme

With half the programme budget spent on the staffing costs of the AMC, the technical support to the programme was relatively resource intensive. This reflects a 'model' of externally assisted programmes working on community development planning which was prevalent in the 1990's. On the other hand the AMC has had specific contributions including bringing new ideas to the province. The support was highly appreciated and it is realised that several of the results could not have been realised without technical support from outside. This is regarded as a benefit for the programme by the provincial authorities. Costs of the AMC have been reduced from 50 % in RUDEP II to about 26 % of the budget in the ISP follow-up programme

(95) Another way to look at the issue of efficiency is to compare the efficiency of the generation of incomes in communes in which RUDEP worked with the control communes in which they had not been working. Given a similar kind of rise in income, the efficiency in non-participating communes has been a lot higher given the lower level of inputs used compared with RUDEP communes.

(96) In order to assess efficiency one can also raise the question whether the same results could have been obtained in other, more cost efficient ways. One other option for implementation of RUDEP might have included making use of an INGO in programme implementation. On the one hand INGOs are experienced in working on a commune level and developing relationships in local settings that enable them to do that. On the other hand, various INGOs have experience with the implementation of projects and programmes focusing on empowerment of programme participants. As INGOs normally work with lower rates than consultancy firms this could have meant a more efficient programme.

(97) Increased Vietnamese ownership could also have reduced costs during the life of the programme. It is especially the continued direct management of the AMC throughout the life of the programme, which has enhanced costs.

PROGRAMME IMPACT

Findings

(98) The indicator used in the programme to assess impact is the poverty rate in the various parts of the province, making use of the commune level data using the MOLISA poverty criteria. The changes in poverty level on a provincial basis are substantial, decreasing from 25 % when the programme started to 9 % in 2005¹². Impact in lowland communes is more obvious than the impact in the remote upland areas although it is recognized that this is not all attributable to RUDEP, the programme is regarded to have contributed to this significant change. Though in the logical framework nutritional data are mentioned as a means to assess impact level changes, no such data were used in practice.

(99) The main outcome level change that has been assessed as part of the programme is the changing level of income of households in participating communes and those in non-participating communes. In 2007 the Statistics Office conducted a Household Income and Living Standards Survey for the programme, using the Vietnam Household Living Standards survey format. The study assessed and compared household income and other key indicators for participating as well as non-participating households in lowland and upland communes of Quang Ngai. The study found significant rises in incomes in the participating communes. However, increase in income could also be observed in communes that did not participate in the programme. Changes on other outcome levels are less clear, like for example institutional capacities to deliver an increased amount of quality services in the various organisations that RUDEP worked with as well as an increase in amount and quality of services provided. No indicators were included in the logframe for these kinds of changes and neither were these added at a later stage. Therefore, the significance of the contribution of RUDEP to the changes observed is difficult to assess.

Analysis

(100) It can be said that RUDEP has contributed to poverty reduction – as one of a number of GOV and donor funded programmes actively engaged with this provincial key objective. Lack of information of intermediate outcomes makes it difficult to determine the significance of the contribution that RUDEP made to poverty alleviation in Quang Ngai province. In order to assess the significance of investment in RUDEP (in impact terms) to reducing poverty in the Province (2001-2007) additional rigorous data would be needed. This also goes for RUDEP's effects on institutional change processes and the practices of delivery organisations, these changes have to date not been systematically measured as part of RUDEP.

(101) What remains are the changes in income levels that were found in the study mentioned above. The finding of income rises in the control group of communes does not necessarily invalidate the changes achieved in the communes that RUDEP worked in. Changes in the wider socio-economic

¹² Information from PPC Quang Ngai

context in the province and Vietnam at large were conducive to economic growth¹³. As poverty was an important criterion for selection of communes, it is likely that the households in the communes that RUDEP worked in, were less well off than the ones in the 'control communes'. Therefore it cannot be presumed that income levels in RUDEP communes would have risen to the same levels as those in the 'control communes' without RUDEP interventions. The level of change therefore seems to be a gradual one, making it likely that RUDEP contributed to a rise in income which would not have occurred to the same level without its support. Income gains without RUDEP would probably have been spread differently within the households of the commune, given the targeting of the programme. One can though ask the question whether these changes were then very efficient, given the relatively high cost of programme implementation.

(102) In addition to rises in income it is important to consider two other aspects, costs of production and costs for living. With prices of inputs as well as daily necessities rising in Vietnam the question is whether the income rises off-set the rises in production and consumption costs.

¹³ This especially given the considerable changes in the economic opportunities in the province and Vietnam at large in the period 2001-2007

SUSTAINABILITY

(103) For sustainability, four aspects will be considered: the financial sustainability of programme interventions, the institutional sustainability, the environmental sustainability and aspects of sustainability related to processes.

(104) In order to promote diversification of agriculture, the programme used a relatively resource intensive package. The same holds true for the forest land allocation process. Though the province has committed to the Participatory Planning Process and to the participatory approach of PFLAP that does not necessarily guarantee that they will be able to apply their resources to the extent that these activities can be replicated. In the longer term the economic development in the province can enhance the provincial budget and there could potentially be increased investment in more resource intensive extension approaches, but there is no evidence of this shift occurring to the extent that a province wide scale of RUDEP approaches would require.

(105) In financial terms there is also the issue whether the changes that have occurred on the level of the individual households can be sustained. Partly this will depend on extension and other services being available beyond the life of the programme in order to sustain the economic activities started. This largely depends on the increased capacity of service providers in the province. Moreover, it also is related to the economic 'climate'. Overall in lowland areas, economic development is on-going, which provides a favourable context for sustaining the changes. In the upland areas the situation is less pronounced and it will be more difficult to sustain the changes realised. In those areas however, ISP could still play a role of providing support to households as part of support to the 135 programme.

(106) Institutional sustainability much depends on the organisational capacities of the various agencies to implement and further develop the methods and processes promoted during the life of the programme. In terms of the willingness of the various organisations to do so, the commitments made by the provincial government concerning the 2008 budget are encouraging. Moreover, institutional sustainability depends on the increased organisational capacities of the various provincial, district and commune level organisations and service providers involved. It is these changes however, that have not been included in the M&E plan of the programme. Monitoring of capacities was limited to looking at the increased individual competencies of staff members concerned. Therefore this aspect of institutional sustainability is difficult to assess.

(107) A third aspect concerns the environmental sustainability of the programme and its results and outcomes. For each of the community infrastructural works an Environmental Impact Assessment has been made within the programme in order to assess the environmental impact and propose remedial measures when and where needed.

(108) Looking at processes and their relation to sustainability one can look at several levels. The first is the level of the households involved in the programme. Through their participation, they appear to have an increased their ability to affect their own livelihoods via increased productivity and income as well as community planning processes. Through their participation, this increased 'ownership' can be expected to support the sustainability of these processes.

(109) Another level to look at is the ownership of the programme. Concerning ownership and processes the MTR was quite outspoken and the following was recommended:

"...for a sustainable Government program of participatory rural development in Quang Ngai immediate attention needs to be focused on the assumption of ownership by the Provincial Government (PG) and the localisation of processes and procedures."

and

"..major responsibility for implementation needs to transfer to local authorities and line agencies with support from the PMU and its field staff"

(110) Some of the management procedures in the programme have been adapted since the MTR while others, like the requirement of co-signatures in key decision-making, were in place before the MTR. The province has taken ownership of some of the programme's ideas. This adds to the prospects of sustainability. Overall the direction being taken by the ISP increases the prospects for (end of programme) sustainability of some of the gains made by RUDEP II; physically in relation to the upland areas and institutionally through the engagement with programme 135. The challenge will be to maintain a sharper more strategic focus to the ISP than was achieved within RUDEP II and to align the intensity of resource use with evolving provincial realities. In the lowlands the natural dynamic for change is stronger and we would expect gains made in this environment to be more readily sustained.

OVERALL QUALITY

Definitions of Rating Scale

Satisfactory (4, 5 and 6, above the line)

6 Very high quality

5 Good quality initiative; could have improved in some areas with minor work

4 Adequate quality initiative; could have improved with some work

Less than satisfactory (1, 2 and 3, below the line)

3 Less than adequate quality initiative; needed improvements in core areas

2 Poor quality initiative; needed major improvements in core areas

1 Very poor quality initiative; needed a major overhaul

Overall Rating: 4 - Adequate Quality Initiative

- 1. To what degree did the initiative achieve its objectives, and how well did they contribute to higher level objectives in the programme strategy?**

Rating: 4

(111) The objective of RUDEP is to empower poor households in selected communes in Quang Ngai Province and to improve livelihoods sustainably, through increased incomes within the risk framework of poor people. The various components of the programme were relatively successful in contributing to reaching the programme objectives and contributing to the higher programme objective, i.e. to contribute to rural development, governance and poverty reduction in Quang Ngai Province. The last is shown by the steadily reducing numbers of poor households in the province as shown by the DOLISA poverty data. In the communes in which the programme was implemented a substantial improvement of the income of programme participants could be realised. Use of a participatory approach to planning reinforced capacities of local people and stakeholders in the process, while activity funds provide sustained means to further develop initiatives for reducing poverty amongst the members of these funds. Distribution of forest land enhances the asset base of poor households and enhances their economic opportunities. The significance of RUDEPs contribution conversely, is difficult to assess, because outcome level changes have not been assessed systematically.

- 2. How robust was the system to measure ongoing achievement of objectives and results?**

Rating: 3

(112) The project staff set up an extensive MIS data base and monitoring and reporting system which produced a lot of data on the level of activities performed and outputs realised. The system was much less developed on the level of outcomes and impact. Though sets of data were monitored,

baseline data on the higher level indicators were not collected. The perception surveys conducted provide useful indications of change, but they need to be combined with other M&E methods in order to triangulate findings.

3. How effectively was the initiative managed? To what degree did it provide good value for money?

Overall Rating of this criterion: **4**

How effectively was the initiative managed?

Rating: **5**

(113) Management was relatively good. Even though it took a considerable amount of time, a working relationship with the province was established in quite a difficult context. The project was implemented in line with the expectations and at various moments in time outperformed the targets set. Management systems worked relatively well.

To what degree did it provide good value for money?

Rating: **3**

(114) Objectives and contribution to programme goals were achieved at a relatively high price, given the relatively high cost of the programme. This is especially so as the same kind of income increase as in the RUDEP communities could be realised in non-RUDEP areas. Moreover, there seem to have been other more cost effective ways to achieve the same results, including working with INGOs.

4. How appropriate is the sustainability of the initiatives outcomes?

Rating: **4**

(115) From an environmental perspective sustainability appears quite adequate. Looking at financial and institutional capacities, the issue is less straightforward. In terms of ownership of planning processes by participants, local participation can be expected to reinforce and sustain participatory planning. The province taking up some of the RUDEP ideas adds to the prospect of sustainability.

5. Was the initiative of the highest technical quality, based on sound analysis and learning?

Rating: **5**

(116) Technical quality of the various components and of the overall programme is quite high. Staff have proved very capable in implementing the programme

6. Taking those five factors into account, what was the overall quality of the initiative?

Rating: **4**

LESSONS LEARNED

1. **Programme design needs to reflect anticipated changes in context.** RUDEP Phase II has been strongly oriented towards implementing the plan that was detailed in the Programme Design Document and developed in the early phases of the programme. Room for change proved limited, from various parties concerned: the Vietnamese authorities on various levels, the AMC and AusAID. All were focused primarily on executing what had been designed. The M&E system with its focus on outputs, was very much geared towards this mind-set. The context in which the programme was implemented however, was one of rapid socio-economic change, to which the programme likely contributed itself. The incidence of poverty itself changed, with poverty becoming more concentrated in upland areas among minority groups. Since the changing context was anticipated (given development trends pre 2001) a more process oriented approach would have been useful rather than keeping the design as a blueprint throughout the programme. The M&E system would have needed to be more strongly oriented to outcomes (rather than focused on outputs) in order to support and inform such a process oriented approach.
2. **In order for a project to be strategic, a clear and agreed upon choice on what the project is about (its prime purpose) needs to be established amongst key stakeholders in the early stages of a programme.** The review of RUDEP exposed a lack of clarity (and different views amongst various stakeholders) on what the single over-riding purpose of the programme was. Was RUDEP about;
 - Facilitating change in a certain geographic area, focusing on certain groups?
 - Developing models of change that could be replicated elsewhere? or
 - Building organisational capacities at strategic levels within the province to facilitate change?The focus of each of these options has its own consequences in terms of project areas to select as well as in terms of possibilities for scaling up and replication.
3. **The importance of clearly articulating from the start what approach the programme will follow and the rationale for this selection in terms of participatory planning.** The programme was innovative in the sense that it applied a participatory approach to planning and land allocation in a province where this had not been done before. In Quang Ngai province this approach was new and the approach and its advantages were well appreciated by programme stakeholders and participants. The programme did not make a clear decision on its approach to participatory planning. Replication of participatory planning focused very much on promoting the issue of participatory commune level planning to inform district and provincial planning processes. What the programme was less well set up for was to look at the specifics of participatory processes and what ways of involvement would work for which groups in which kind of contexts and ways in which participation could be maximized. Though the project obtained experience with Kinh population in lowland areas, this was much less the case with minority groups in upland communes. The design of the project did not include selection of different social groups in order to develop 'models' of participation. With its implementation in one province, RUDEP was not necessarily very well equipped for the development of an approach to be implemented nation wide. What works for the Kinh in the lowlands, does not necessarily work in the same way for ethnic minority groups in the upland areas. Moreover, what works in Quang Ngai does not automatically work elsewhere in Vietnam.

4. **Contractual arrangements need to reflect the context in which they are implemented: in a rapidly changing context there need to be room for sufficient flexibility for adaptations and changes to be made to the programme and its implementation with contractual arrangements that enable this.** The implementation of the RUDEP programme was guided by the Programme Design Document. Key aspects of programme governance, management and implementation were defined by the contract between AusAID and the AMC. The contract assigns ultimate responsibility for the implementation of the programme to the AMC. The contract was, moreover, delivery oriented with the AMC delivering services to the province of Quang Ngai on provincial, district and commune levels, which were expected to have certain defined outcomes in terms of local productivity, income generation and development as well as poverty alleviation. The contractual arrangements hampered programme implementation in a variety of ways. The contractual arrangements meant final responsibility rested with the AMC rather than the Provincial Government, though the dual signature arrangement introduced shortly before the MTR did enhance provincial ownership of decision-making and the programme at large. The delivery orientedness of the contract meant that the AMC was likely to focus on implementation of the programme as formulated in the Programme Design Document and less likely to adapt the programme to the changing context in Quang Ngai Province and Vietnam at large. As the fact that the programme would be implemented in a relatively fast changing context, was as such known at the start of the programme, the inflexibility of the type of contract between AusAID and the AMC has in various ways proved counterproductive to allow for sufficient adaptation and changes in programme implementation. Though the specific context in Quang Ngai made it difficult to have a more process oriented approach accepted at the time of the start of RUDEP, there would certainly be options at present to introduce such an approach.
5. **When developing capacities through training, part of the Monitoring and Evaluation system needs to focus on the changes in the organisation and its performance in order to go beyond assessing changes on individual levels.** Within RUDEP capacity building focused on developing individual capacities and competencies. This included staff of government agencies on commune, district and provincial level as well as household members of Activity Groups established as part of the programme. Competency assessments were made before the training, in order to inform the training programme. The same was done after the programme in order to assess the changes achieved. Though this did enable the programme to guide the training programme and assess outputs on an individual level, it did not show whether and how the organisations involved changed and enhanced their capacities. Thus it remained unclear whether organisational capacities for service delivery were actually being built and whether organisations were developing and demonstrating a capability to provide more and/or improved services at the end of the programme through as well as beyond RUDEP.
6. **The Monitoring and Evaluation system of a programme needs to align with the GOV M&E system and contribute to building required GOV capacities. The aim should often go beyond enabling implementation of a specific programme, to include enhancing the management and governance of public organisations in order to provide more and better services to poor people and in particular to the most vulnerable groups amongst them.** The Monitoring and Evaluation system of RUDEP was developed as a stand alone system. This was at the request of DPI after the programme did put substantial effort in trying to link with GOV systems. Partly this was the result of a lack of

existing M&E capacity beyond financial monitoring at the provincial level. A stand alone system however, also provided some opportunities: one of which was to show what could be gained from M&E in terms of management, on-going program learning and accountability towards stakeholders. Within the wider development of Managing for Development Results, it could have shown how one could manage for Results in a concrete example. The M&E system of RUDEP, however focused very much on outputs of the programme, in terms of both 'leading' as well as 'lagging' indicators and missed out on essential aspects of capacity development and improved service delivery. Therefore it could not show the benefits of results based management and how it could reinforce decision-making. Part of this seems to be related with the focus of the M&E system on the project and the implementation itself. Therefore, for such a model function of an M&E system in terms of the application of Results Based Management to succeed, it should serve a wider capacity development purpose.

- 7. Place programme learning within a wider appreciation of peer programmes and projects at the core of the approach to monitoring and evaluation.** As analysed below, the lessons learned presented in the completion report are quite generic. The lack of more detailed and more original lessons relates with the focus on implementation of the programme design and the M&E focus on outputs. For learning to occur in a programme, one needs a more dynamic and analytical approach, with an M&E system that concentrates on the realisation of results and outcomes, the extent to which these are realised and the reasons behind 'successes' and 'failures' within the programme. Learning can in this way be cumulative and generate knowledge which in turn informs the programme and adds something specific to the peer group working on similar challenges in rural development.

Review of Lessons Learned in the Completion Report

Several Lessons learned¹⁴ have been identified as part of the Completion Report. Lessons focus on four key areas: Upland commune development, Institutional Arrangements, Capacity Building and Management. See the box below for an overview of lessons identified in the completion report.

The lessons learned identified in the Completion Report are quite generic, often could do with a more thorough analysis and most of them are, in the general way in which they are formulated, not new to Vietnam. It is well known for example that secured land tenure will change the way farming households manage their land, and that increasing access to land resources is a useful way to tackle poverty. Actually one can assume that the incorporation of the Participatory Forest Land Allocation Component was based on the recognition of this relationship. What one thus would expect from the lesson learned would be additional details regarding the process of forest land allocation and the specific participatory methodology applied by the programme in this respect.

Also some of the other lessons identified are formulated in a generic way and were as such known around the design of the RUDEP programme in 2000 in Vietnam.

¹⁴ Lessons Learned are understood as *"Generalisations based on evaluation experiences with projects, programmes, or policies that abstract from the specific circumstances to broader situations. Frequently lessons highlight strengths or weaknesses in preparation, design, and implementation that affect performance, outcome, and impact."* OECD-DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management. Paris, 2002.

That upland communes for example, require different approaches was recognised at that time. The learning had even gone further, as there was a growing realisation that ethnic minorities can have their own specific characteristics which need to be included in the way that programmes approach them and address poverty issues.

Lessons Learned in Completion Report

1. Upland Commune Development

- 1.1. Secure land tenure is a foundation for poverty reduction for poor households in upland communes
- 1.2. Development programs in upland areas need to move away from welfare approaches so as to change the attitude to function in a commercial environment
- 1.3. Successful microfinance requires strict adherence to procedures, prompt action and technical support to accompany credit
- 1.4. Upland communes require different approaches to enable ethnic minority people to participate in development activities

2. Institutional Arrangements

- 2.1. Communes can manage projects given appropriate training and support
- 2.2. The continuation of participatory planning at commune level requires the devolution of financial resources to communes
- 2.3. Continue to mainstream gender in development as gender and poverty are related
- 2.4. Computerised systems minimise errors in land allocation

3. Capacity Building

- 3.1. Training alone is not sufficient to change behaviour

4. Management

- 4.1. Long term relationships are essential for effective co-management
- 4.2. Mixed experience of using national consultants
- 4.3. Opportunities for networking

This also goes for some of the learning on capacity building and management. It is realised in organisational development that training alone often does not change people's behaviour, but that other changes including organisational ones are usually needed to reach that effect. Also the difficulties of working on provincial and district levels in terms of programme management were experienced beforehand in multiple organisations in Vietnam by the time of the design of the programme. When these issues are used as lessons learned one would expect more details based on a thorough analysis.

As some of the lessons learned were known from other contexts at the start of the programme, one wonders why some of these were not applied more consistently in the design of the programme. The design could have been improved if these lessons were taken into account throughout the formulation of the programme.

Some lessons that one would expect to see, are actually missing. As the development of models of economic diversification was an important part of the programme, one would expect some of the lessons to focus on these models developed by RUDEP, and the extent to which they proved useful and are expected to be replicable elsewhere.

Regarding the participatory community planning process the lesson learned focuses on the need to devolve funds to the local level. This is an important aspect of the process and a precondition for its extended implementation. On the other hand, community planning does not happen in a vacuum. It would have been useful for part of the learning to focus on the relationship of community level planning with higher level strategies and planning on provincial and national levels.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

Relevance

(117) The programme goals and objectives appear relevant from various perspectives: from the perspective of programme participants and their needs within the changing context of Quang Ngai and Vietnam at large. Furthermore, when comparing with the Vietnam Australia Development Cooperation Program Strategy (2003-2007) and with the provincial development strategy (2006-2010) goals substantially overlap. When looking at the viewpoint of the approach that RUDEP applied¹⁵ it becomes clear that it is not very explicit and RUDEP never actually made a conscious strategic choice in this respect, missing an opportunity to become more strategically focused.

Programme Effectiveness

(118) The programme proved very effective on the level of outputs, the direct deliverables for which the management can be held responsible. In various instances the programme even outperformed the set targets for the various output indicators. Effectiveness on the level of results and intermediate outcomes is less clear as most of those changes have not been monitored including changed organisational capacities of service providers, amount and quality of services provided, quality of commune development plans and their implementation.

(119) Results are quite clear on the level of the commune, which is the level that the programme has mostly engaged with. Changes are less clear on the levels of the district and the province; the levels the programme has been less prominent in implementing activities. Changes are clearest in the lowland communes and less pronounced in the upland communes where the time of programme engagement has been substantially shorter.

Efficiency

(120) In terms of efficiency the programmes does not perform that well given that half the budget is absorbed by technical support. Though the importance of the TA is acknowledged, the same results might have been obtained in different ways, making use of the services of an INGO or through increased Vietnamese ownership.

Impact

(121) RUDEP has contributed to poverty reduction – as one of a number of GOV and donor funded programmes actively engaged with this provincial key objective. Lack of information of intermediate outcomes makes it difficult to determine the significance of the contribution that RUDEP made to poverty alleviation in Quang Ngai province. In order to assess the significance of

¹⁵ The three options identified earlier included targeted support to tackle poverty of poor households in selected areas; providing replicable models for poverty alleviation; and targeted organisation development of provincial and local government, to improve effectiveness of poverty alleviation.

investment in RUDEP (in impact terms) to reducing poverty in the Province, (2001-2007) additional rigorous data would be needed.

(122) Income rises in the areas where RUDEP worked have been established and measured. Even with the same kind of income increases outside of RUDEP areas it does not disqualify this outcome, as RUDEP communes are likely to be poorer than other communes¹⁶.

Sustainability

(123) RUDEP support to the various initiatives of the programme was relatively resource intensive. Even with the province indicating that they want to invest in sustaining and replicating these initiatives, they might not necessarily be able to replicate them in the same way or across all areas. Economic development could increase provincial government budget and could increase investment in more resource intensive extension practices.

(124) In terms of institutional sustainability the willingness to sustain the results reached is encouraging. On the other hand whether the organisational capacities were built sufficiently to support the various initiatives in the future was not assessed as part of the M&E system. Environmental sustainability on the other hand seems likely.

(125) Given aspects of empowerment of households and participation in planning, households have increased their capability to enhance their own livelihoods which can be expected to enhance participatory processes in the future. The same cannot be said of Vietnamese ownership of the programme and not much seems to have changed since the MTR in which several of these issues were raised and recommendations made.

Poverty Focus

(126) The poverty focus of the programme is ambiguous. On the one hand the programme tries to target poor households and to reduce poverty. On the other hand it tries to stimulate agricultural productivity and economic growth and seems to subscribe to the assumption that based on economic growth, effects will 'trickle down' to poor households.

Participatory Planning Approach

(127) RUDEP's participatory approach has made a difference in commune planning processes as well as in the forest land allocation process and in extension staff training. In terms of the planning process, the linkage with planning processes on district and provincial levels have not been sufficiently made since the programme has not worked as intensively on these levels as it has on the level of the communes.

¹⁶ It does raise the question of efficiency as the process in non-programme communes was obviously more efficient without making use of resource intensive RUDEP support.

Tailoring Approaches

(128) The programme applies the same kind of approach in all the areas that it works in and has not developed specific approaches for lowland and upland areas or for particular ethnic minority groups. Though there is an understanding amongst programme and departmental staff that working with ethnic minorities takes more time compared to working in the lowlands, there is no tailored approach. Given the low levels of literacy amongst some of the ethnic minority groups in the province, methods making use of written materials are unlikely to be applicable to these groups. They need an approach making use of pictures and images and verbal information exchange.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. With poverty decreasing and increasingly being located in specific areas, including remote upland areas: there is a need to become more poverty oriented. Reducing poverty given the changing nature of poverty in Vietnam is becoming an increasingly difficult task. Focused approaches are required, they need to be tailored to the specific conditions and characteristics of groups concerned.
2. It is recommended for AusAID and the Province of Quang Ngai to engage in outcome based monitoring. This would include working on aspects of a results based approach to all of the programming within the province (of which ISP will be one component). This would also include support to organisational development in the province and relevant departments. The aim would be for results based programming to become embedded in the province.
3. In order to be able to tailor approaches to the requirement of specific ethnic groups, in particular those with low levels of literacy, the programme needs to engage with experiences obtained in picture oriented extension and other image based learning approaches.
4. To make use of a value chain model in agricultural extension, as a direction taken in the ISP
5. Programme approaches need to be more in tune with available resources and with resource limitations of GOV and other key stakeholders concerned.

ANNEXES

Annex 1 Programme Logical Framework

Code	Narrative Summary	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
	GOAL: To contribute to rural development, governance and poverty reduction in Quang Ngai (QN) Province.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •That macroeconomic conditions enable continued growth in Viet Nam. •That political and social conditions enable attainment of the Goal.
	PURPOSE: To empower poor households (HHs) in selected communes in QN Province to improve livelihoods sustainably through increased incomes within the risk framework of poor people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Proportion of participating HH within Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (DOLISA) definition of "poor households". •Cumulative no. HH participating in repeat planning cycles. •Trends in participant perception of their empowerment and livelihood. •Proportion of HH adopting demonstrated technical packages. •Trend in reported real HH income in participating Communes. •Trends in child malnutrition indicators. •Proportion of Activity Plan implementation budgets sourced outside Program funds. •Proportion of HH groups graduating to prepare annual plans independently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •DOLISA data and initial HH surveys in program databases. •Program HH and activity databases. •Perception surveys conducted as part of planning process. •Program HH and activity database and selected field verification. •HH surveys conducted as part of planning process and annual Government of Viet Nam (GOV) statistics. •Program activity and local GOV databases. •Program HH and activity database and GOV records. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •That DOLISA data is objectively and consistently interpreted. •That empowerment results from participation in Program. •That there is a desire by stakeholders for empowerment. •That participants accurately report trends in change of HH income, even if the actual amount is inaccurate. •That GOV allows more than one source of funds in a commune. •That GOV supports participatory planning process to plan development investments.

Code	Narrative Summary	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
C1	Household Initiated Rural Income Generation			
	Component Objective: To assist HHs improve existing, and adopt new, income generating activities both on and off farm within the resources they are prepared to commit, in order to: – use assets more productively; – adopt modern technology and techniques; – diversify their income base; and – support the opportunistic development of micro enterprises.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Trend in reported real HH income in participating Communes. •Change in size of Activity Funds managed by Program participants. •Proportion of HH groups graduating to prepare annual plans independently. •Proportion of secondary-school aged youth attending secondary school. •Proportion of HH adopting demonstrated technical packages. •Cumulative no. HH participating in repeat planning cycles. •Proportion of commune HH participating in planning processes. •No. demonstrations implemented by type and location. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Program HH and activity databases and records. •DOLISA data from census and other statistical collections. •GOV data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •That there is timely and ongoing access to HHs and relevant GOV data. •That participants accurately report trends in change of HH income, even if the actual amount is inaccurate.
Outputs:				
1.1	Stakeholders' have the capacity to actively participate in activity planning processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Cumulative no. HH participating in repeat planning cycles. •Trends in participant perception of sustainability. •No. GOV staff meeting capacity criteria to support participatory planning processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Program HH and activity databases and records. •Perception surveys conducted as part of planning process. •Training/Capacity Building database. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •That stakeholders perceive benefits in developing capacity to participate. •That service providers are prepared and able to become actively involved in the Participatory Planning Process (PPP).
Indicative activities:				
1.1.1	Stakeholder seminars/workshops to build capacity for participatory processes.			
1.1.2	PPP meetings with HH and HH Groups.			

Code	Narrative Summary	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
Outputs:				
1.2	Stakeholders with capacity to plan appropriate income generating activities considering technical, gender, and environmental issues; as well as off-farm income generating options and identify sources of funding for financial shortfalls.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Proportion of commune HH participating in planning processes. •Proportion of HH groups graduating to prepare annual plans independently. •No. activity plans prepared and funded. •No. GOV staff meeting capacity criteria to support participatory planning processes. •Proportion of participating HH graduating to institutional credit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Program databases and records of PPP meetings. •Activity plans prepared with HH and recorded at Program Management Unit (PMU) and Commune. •Activity database. •Training database. •HH and activity databases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •That stakeholders perceive benefits in developing activity plans. •That economic environment continues to provide opportunities for development.
Indicative activities:				
1.2.1	Annual planning, scheduling and conduct of PPP process with commune, district and provincial staff and HH participants.			
1.2.2	Integrate lessons learned (including sources of support and credit identified) from previous iterations of PPP process into planning and management of evolving income generating activities.			
Outputs:				
1.3	Stakeholders with capacity to implement income generating and remunerative activities that add to livelihood diversity, stimulate the service sector, and make use of appropriate technology, financial management and sources of credit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. of demonstrations implemented by type and location. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program HH and activity databases and records of demonstrations with selected field verification. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •That funded activities are environmentally sustainable, & gender neutral. •That Commune People's Committees (CPCs) will assist in the formation of activity funds. •That funds built up are fully used for eligible program activities and not misappropriated.

Code	Narrative Summary	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Proportion of HH adopting demonstrated technical packages. •Location and extent of adopted technical packages. •No. of women's health models implemented. •Trend in reported real HH income in participating Communes. •Proportion of participating HH defaulting on Activity Fund repayments. •No. of people in participating HH migrating seasonally for work and duration of absence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Implementation records of activity plans prepared with HH and recorded at PMU and Commune. •HH surveys conducted as part of planning process and annual GOV statistics. •Activity fund records and HH surveys conducted as part of planning process. •HH database. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •That the market and prices for commodities supported under the Program, is not over supplied and severe fluctuations in price are avoided. •That HH Groups with Activity Funds are cohesive with a common purpose.
Indicative activities:				
1.3.1	Implementing demonstrations from the menu of options that may include agro-forestry, livestock and crop production, and off farm services highlighting the need for associated services/providers to assist with adoption of income generating activities and expansion.			
1.3.2	The formation of support groups related to activities that enhance marketing, disease and pest management knowledge & services, appropriate technology and credit services.			
1.3.3	Identifying and facilitating the supply of appropriate sources of credit including the development of self-managed activity funds.			
1.3.4	Focused training of service providers where required.			
1.3.5	Farmer field days and study tours.			
1.3.6	Guide groups to assume more financial and technical responsibility for on-going activities and move towards graduation.			

Code	Narrative Summary	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
Outputs:				
1.4	Stakeholders learn lessons from implementation and reflect these in subsequent annual activity plans prepared by them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Cumulative no. HH participating in repeat planning cycles. •Trend in reported real HH income in participating Communes. •Trends in participant perception of their HH income. •No. of people in participating HH migrating seasonally for work and duration of absence. •Trends in child malnutrition indicators. •Proportion of HH groups graduating to prepare annual plans independently. •No. non-program communes adopting participatory planning process for development investment. •Activity Fund default rate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Program HH and activity database, reports and case studies. •HH surveys conducted as part of planning process and annual GOV statistics. •Perception and social surveys conducted as part of planning process. •GOV statistics and HH database. •Program HH and activity database, reports and case studies. •GOV records. •Activity fund records and HH surveys conducted as part of planning process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •That participants accurately report trends in change of HH income, even if the actual amount is inaccurate. •That past planning and management experiences do not unduly restrain the pace of absorption of PPP principles and techniques.
Indicative activities:				
1.4.1	Assist groups to develop annual planning process based on PPP, review of progress with existing plan, altered circumstances and new opportunities.			
1.4.2	Develop Program database and analyses of data, monitor activities and activity funds.			
1.4.3	Establishment and use of activity funds or other mechanisms, and sources of pro-poor credit.			

Code	Narrative Summary	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
1.4.4	Conduct surveys as part of annual PPP of activity group HHs to assess perceptions of the benefits of the PPP for income generation and livelihood enhancement.			
1.4.5	Guide groups to progressively merge into village oriented development groups with annual village development plans based on self help from the capital accrued in the activity fund or other source.			
1.4.6	Detailed plans based on demand, lessons learned and the communications strategy prepared for acceptable activities and submitted to relevant funding agencies.			
1.4.7	Development and review of operational manual and activity criteria and guidelines.			
C2	Commune Based Rural Infrastructure Construction			
	Component Objective: To contribute to the identification, funding, construction and maintenance of small scale community driven commune level infrastructure that enhances livelihood and facilitates income generation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Location and extent of commune infrastructure constructed. •Proportion of Commune Infrastructure Plan implementation budgets sourced outside Program funds. •Trends in participant perception of their livelihood. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Program records (mapping & activity databases). •Program records (activity database). •Records received from other funders of infrastructure. •Perception surveys conducted as part of planning process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •That GOV allows more than one source of funds in a commune. •That there is community participation and resource contribution. •That other investors will be attracted and able to fund commune infrastructure. •That there is an enabling bureaucratic framework.
Outputs:				
2.1	Small scale commune infrastructure planned and implemented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Location and extent of commune infrastructure constructed. •No. of women's health models implemented. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Program records (mapping & activity databases). •HH and GOV databases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That communities honour their commitments to provide inputs to implement the approved structures.

Code	Narrative Summary	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
Indicative activities:				
2.1.1	Items of rural infrastructure identified by the commune HHs.			
2.1.2	Items of rural infrastructure designed and justified in accordance with Government of Australia (GoA) & GOV procurement guidelines.			
2.1.3	Items of rural infrastructure constructed with Operation and Maintenance (O& M) plan.			
2.1.4	Participatory evaluation of infrastructure by beneficiary households and the process by the province, district and commune authorities.			
2.1.5	Seek and attract non-program resources to assist construction and O&M of infrastructure in Program approved activity plans.			
2.1.6	Rural infrastructure inspected by authorities and handed over.			
2.1.7	Training in participatory infrastructure proposal and activity design.			
Outputs:				
2.2	Small scale commune infrastructure operated and maintained.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Proportion of commune infrastructure supported by Program reported operable & maintained. •Proportion of Commune Infrastructure Plan implementation budgets sourced outside Program funds. •Proportion of Activity Plan implementation budgets sourced from participants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Program records (PMU submissions and approval process). •Commune and Activity databases and funder records. •Activity, HH & Commune databases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •That communities will honour their commitments to on-going O&M. •That other investors will be attracted and able to fund commune infrastructure plans & O&M. •That there is an enabling bureaucratic framework.

Code	Narrative Summary	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
Indicative activities:				
2.2.1	Commune staff trained in participatory O&M for activities supported under the Program.			
2.2.2	Approved maintenance plans and operational arrangements for small scale commune infrastructure supported by the Program.			
2.2.3	Monitoring of O & M, no. of HHs using the infrastructure, indicative HH benefits, overlap of HHs benefiting and HHs providing, the O&M.			
Outputs:				
2.3	Stakeholders learn lessons from implementation, operation and maintenance of small scale infrastructure and reflect them in subsequent infrastructure plans.	•Trends in participant perception of their livelihood. •Proportion of Commune Infrastructure Plan implementation budgets sourced outside Program funds. •Proportion of Activity Plan implementation budgets sourced from participants. •Proportion of Activity Plan implementation budgets sourced outside Program funds.	•Perception surveys conducted as part of planning process. •Program records (activity database). •Activity and HH database. •Records received from other funders of infrastructure.	•That Program databases are accurately maintained. •That there is an enabling bureaucratic framework. •That commune infrastructure contributes to improved livelihoods for participants.
Indicative activities:				
2.3.1	Participatory revision of strategies using lessons learned from evaluation of infrastructure by beneficiary households and the process by the province, district and commune authorities.			
2.3.2	Use lessons learned to improve access to non-program resources to assist financing of Program approved activity plans.			

Code	Narrative Summary	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
C3	Commune, District and Province Capacity Building			
	Component Objective: To increase the capacity of Government staff and other potential service providers to contribute to meeting the Program planning and implementation needs articulated in participatory plans by poor rural communities at provincial, district and commune levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Cumulative no. HH participating in repeat planning cycles. •No. GOV staff meeting capacity criteria to support participatory planning processes. •Proportion of Activity Plan implementation budgets sourced outside Program funds. •Proportion of Commune Infrastructure Plan implementation budgets sourced outside Program funds. •No. non-program communes adopting participatory planning process for development investment. •Change in size of Activity Funds managed by Program participants. •Proportion of Activity Plan implementation budgets sourced from participants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Perception surveys conducted as part of planning process. •GOV records and training program results held by PMU. •Program records (activity database). •Activity fund records and HH surveys conducted as part of planning process. •GOV information. •Activity and HH database. •Activity and HH database. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •That community stakeholders actively participate. •That other investors will be attracted and able to fund commune infrastructure. •That there is an enabling bureaucratic framework. •That Program capacity building is focused on Program delivery.
Outputs:				
3.1	Government staff and other potential service providers with the capacity and motivation to actively support Program participatory planning and activity implementation by HH Groups and Communes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Cumulative no. HH participating in repeat planning cycles. •Proportion of commune HH participating in planning processes. •No. GOV staff meeting capacity criteria to support participatory planning processes. •No. non-program communes adopting participatory planning process for development investment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Program records and activity and HH databases. •HH database and GOV statistics •GOV records and training program results held by PMU. •GOV records. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •That other investors will be attracted and able to fund commune infrastructure. •That there is an enabling bureaucratic framework.

Code	Narrative Summary	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
Indicative activities				
3.1.1	Collaboratively develop/adapt and communicate operational process to support PPP by HH groups and communes. Review and agree changes to GOV staff participants' job descriptions if required. Identify criteria against which support capacity can be evaluated.			
3.1.2	Facilitate the formation of provincial, district and commune contact groups and build their capacity so that they can actively participate in Program activities as support providers and champions.			
3.1.3	Help support providers/champions to define their training needs for responding to requests for support from Program participants.			
3.1.4	Train support providers/champions in defined needs and operational processes.			
3.1.5	Evaluate support provider/champion performance in the field against criteria agreed in 3.1.1 and identify improvement opportunities for next iteration of training.			
Outputs:				
3.2	Government staff and other service providers participating in the Program have the capacity to identify and attract non-Program funding and other resources to respond to demands in activity plans prepared with poor rural communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Proportion of Activity Plan implementation budgets sourced outside Program funds. •Proportion of Commune Infrastructure Plan implementation budgets sourced outside Program funds. •Proportion of Capacity Building budgets sourced outside Program funds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •GOV records, Program records (activity and training databases). •GOV records, Activity fund records and HH surveys conducted as part of planning process. •GOV records held by PMU. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •That there is an enabling bureaucratic framework. •That other investors will be attracted and able to fund activities in participatory action plans developed through the Program.

Code	Narrative Summary	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Change in size of Activity Funds managed by Program participants. •No. non-program communes adopting participatory planning process for development investment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Activity and HH databases. •GOV records. 	
Indicative activities:				
3.2.1	Undertake institutional analysis of organisations that can support participatory preparation and fund implementation of annual activity plans.			
3.2.2	Help Program stakeholders prepare applications for funding and other resources to support implementation of annual activity plans.			
3.2.3	Follow up applications with identified investor partners and report progress to participating communes and HH Groups.			
C4	Program Management, Monitoring and Evaluation			
	Component Objective: To manage, monitor and evaluate implementation of the Program efficiently and effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program implemented in accordance with schedule of contracted milestones. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Program contractual records maintained by Australia Agency of International Development (AusAID) & Australian Managing Contractor (AMC). •AMC progress reports & annual plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •That there is an enabling bureaucratic framework. •That other investors will be attracted and able to fund activities in participatory action plans developed through the Program. •That consultants' with appropriate

Code	Narrative Summary	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Trend in reported real HH income in participating Communes. •Trends in participant perception of their HH income. •Proportion of participating HH within DOLISA definition of "poor households". •Proportion of Activity Plan implementation budgets sourced outside Program funds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Program records (household and commune databases). •Perception surveys conducted as part of planning process. •GOV records held by PMU. •Program records (activity database). •Activity database. 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Trends in participant perception of their livelihood. •Trends in participant perception of their empowerment to improve their livelihoods. •Trends in participant perception of sustainability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception surveys conducted as part of planning process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Provincial People's Committee (PPC) appoints and supports full time counterpart staff as the GOV contribution to the PMU.
Outputs:				
4.1	Program delivered successfully on schedule within budget.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Program implemented in accordance with schedule of contracted milestones. •Proportion of participating HH within DOLISA definition of "poor households". •Proportion of Activity Plan implementation budgets sourced outside Program funds. •Trends in participant perception of their livelihood. •Trends in participant perception of their empowerment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program reports and databases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •That there is an enabling bureaucratic framework. •That other investors will be attracted and able to fund activities in participatory action plans developed through the Program. •That the PPC appoints and supports full time counterpart staff as the GOV contribution to the PMU.

Code	Narrative Summary	Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
Indicative activities:				
4.1.1	Operational PMU.			
4.1.2	Documented Procedures.			
4.1.3	Approved Annual Plans.			
4.1.4	Communication strategy implemented.			
4.1.5	Monitoring and evaluation systems established and operating effectively.			
4.1.6	Exit strategy and hand over successfully implemented.			
Outputs:				
4.2	GOV counterparts at National, Provincial, District and Commune scales have ownership in the Program and actively co-direct implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Program implemented in accordance with schedule of contracted milestones. •Change in size of Activity Funds managed by Program participants. •No. non-program communes adopting participatory planning process for development investment. •Proportion of Activity Plan implementation budgets sourced outside Program funds. •Trends in participant perception of their empowerment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •GOV records held by PMU. •Program records (activity database). •Activity database. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •That there is an enabling bureaucratic framework. •That other investors will be attracted and able to fund activities in participatory action plans developed through the Program. •That the PPC appoints and supports full time counterpart staff as the GOV contribution to the PMU.
Indicative activities:				
4.2.1	ATL and other team members actively communicate and engage with GOV counterparts.			
4.2.2	Counterparts actively implement their roles and responsibilities.			
4.2.3	Regular PCC meetings planned and held.			

Annex 2

Independent Completion Report Mission Quang Ngai Rural Development Programme



ISSUES PAPER

The PARC

Julian Gayfer, Team Leader

Frank Noij, Team Member

The purpose of this Issues Paper is to present an approach and specific implementation details for the Independent Completion Report Mission of the Quang Ngai Rural Development programme, funded by AusAID in Vietnam. It covers the purpose, and objectives of the mission, and looks at key questions that need to be focused on. Moreover, it presents aspects of methodology to be used during the mission and includes a work plan and time table.

1. Context

The present Independent Completion Report Mission is carried out at the end of the second phase of the programme in which it has been implemented on a limited scale. The purpose of the mission is to inform the Quang Ngai Rural Development Project's third phase, in which successful program activities are planned to be further expanded in the province.

2. Objectives of the Independent Completion Report Mission

The objectives of the mission include:

4. To appraise the ACR prepared by AMC
5. To assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability for the RUDEP, and to draw lessons learnt from this intervention
6. To make recommendations on viable options for enhancing the sustainability of the project outcomes

3. Approach and Methodology

The mission started with a desk review of the key materials available, including the Final Programme Design Document, the Programme Logical Framework, the Mid Term Review Report, the Programme Completion Report (with its various annexes), the Programme Progress Reports, the Vietnam Australia Development Cooperation Programme strategy 2003-2007 and the Programme M&E plan.

4. Key Questions for the Mission

Key questions that have been distilled from the Programme Documentation include:

1. To what extent were programme participants able to increase their incomes in the various parts of the province in which the programme operates (i.e. lowland, coastal and highland areas). What supporting factors and constraints can be identified in terms of income generation in these various contexts. For households that were able to actually increase their incomes, what were the effects for these household and the livelihood conditions of their members
2. To what extent has the programme become owned by local stakeholders and how has this changed inter- programme stakeholders dynamics and how has this changed the ways in which participants relate to the programme.
3. Ways in which results-based management been applied in the programme and how this has helped the programme in achieving its outcomes. To what extent have capacities for results-based management been built? To what extent have other aspects of programme management reinforced or constrained programme implementation.
4. What capacities have been built of local stakeholders, including local government agencies, in order to enhance their ability to provide effective support and demand led services to householders and communes
5. How sustainable have the outcomes of the programme been so far in environmental, economic as well as organisational terms (including organisational capacities) and how can sustainability of the programme be further enhances?

Methods and Tools

During field visits, use will be made of a variety of methods and tools. This will allow for use of multiple methods and cross triangulation of findings. Methods proposed include the following:

- ❖ Desk review of key documents and reports
- ❖ Semi-structured interviews with selected key informants
- ❖ Focus group discussions with selected stakeholders including program participants
- ❖ SWOT analysis

Selection of Field Visits

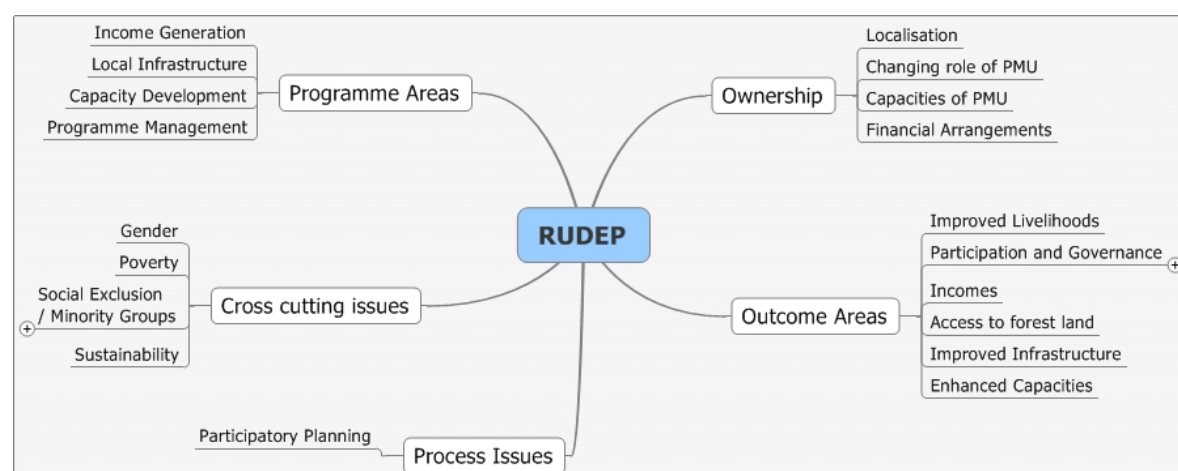
Important part of discussions will be on the level of key stakeholders and executive and management committees. This will include discussions with AusAID, members of the Provincial Steering Committee and of the Programme Management Unit.

Another important part of discussions will be on the level of the province, with meetings with selected provincial authorities and departments including: Chairman of the PPC, DPI, DARD, DONRE, Extension Center, Sub Department of Plant Protection, Sub De partment of Animal Health, and Political School. It will be important to meet with representatives of other selected key projects in the province that work on related issues including The World Bank Community Based Rural Infrastructure Project, the Agricultural Diversification Project and the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund as well as with Government Programmes 133, 135 and 120. Moreover, it will be useful to meet with representatives of other organisations working in Quang Ngai province, including Oxfam and Plan.

Moreover, it will be important to arrange visits to selected districts and communes / hamlets in order to discuss with project participants and other stakeholders in concrete project settings. For these field visits the selection of sites will be important. Selection will need to be purposeful. Given that the programme plans to focus more on upland communities in the third phase, field visits will need to focus on upland districts of the programme paying more limited attention to lowland and coastal districts. Moreover, an option would be to look at a district / commune that is considered the most as well as a district / commune that is considered the least effective in order of results obtained through the programme. In this way and understanding can be obtained regarding factors that affect success as well as the constraints faced in terms of programme process of implementation and achievement of results.

Within the districts/communes to be visited it will be important to include the various key economic activities that the programme is promoting. Moreover, it will be important to meet with the key actors including representatives of the district and commune People's Committees, of local representatives of DARD and other key Departments and the Women's Union. Important part of these visits will include meeting with selected participants of the programme in the communes and hamlets to be visited.

Overview of Mission Aspects



Outline Mission Report

Subject to discussions with AusAID and GOV the report is proposed to contain the following parts:

- Introduction
- Methodology
- Findings – making use of the evaluation criteria relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability
- Quality Assessment
- Conclusions
- Recommendations
- Annexes

Timetable for Mission and Deliverables

Task	Deliverable	Time-frame	Deadline
Prepare for Mission, desk review and write Methodology and Issues paper	Issues Paper	Till 05/03/08	05/03/08
Field Visit	Aid Memoir	06-17//03/08	17/03/08
Appraisal Note	Appraisal Note	18-24/03/08	24/03/08
Draft report	Draft Report	24–31 /03/07	31/03/07
Submission of Final Report	Final Evaluation Report	14-18/04/07	18/04/07

Plan for field visits based on spread in coastal, low- and upland areas:

Date	District	Commune	Location	Years with RUDEP
08-03-08	Son Tinh	Tinh Tho	Lowland	5
09-03-08	Duc Phong	Mo Duc	Lowland	5
11-03-08	Minh Long	Long Son	Mid-upland	3
12-03-08	Tay Tra	Tra Lanh	Remote Upland	3

District level meetings

- ❖ District People's Committee
- ❖ District Planning and Finance
- ❖ District Extension Centre
- ❖ Women's Union
- ❖ Land Administration
- ❖ Member(s) of District Contact Group

Commune level meetings

- ❖ Commune People's Committee
- ❖ VSCF/Activity Group
- ❖ Member(s) of Commune Contact Group

Annex 3: RUDEP GOA Expenditure: Phase 2 (October 2002 to December 2007) (AUD)

Item	GOA Expenditure							Phase 2 Budget	
	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08*	Total	Total	% of budget
Long Term Personnel	941,482	1,256,263	1,339,584	1,213,291	1,185,192	561,828	6,497,640	6,497,640	100%
DDOs	40,653	101,070	139,020	132,912	101,530	21,044	536,230	539,553	99%
STAs	234,132	276,540	210,124	36,424	24,848	16,825	798,894	799,400	100%
Procurement	91,101	36,969	60,937	30,862	50,960	220	271,050	275,483	98%
Training	13,854	53,146	63,648	89,733	86,293	16,613	323,287	323,745	100%
Travel	18,916	13,417	20,187	4,148	4,544	3,183	64,395	66,216	97%
Activities	49,130	605,061	1,046,661	1,193,182	2,106,072	900,238	5,900,344	6,417,387	92%
Total GOA	1,389,268	2,342,467	2,880,161	2,700,552	3,559,438	1,519,952	14,391,838	14,919,424	96%

* 07/08 Expenditure covers the period July 2007 to December 2007

Annex 4: RUDEP GOA Activities Budget and Expenditure: by Year

Item	Expenditure (2002 – 2007)							Phase 2 Budget	
	02/03	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08*	Total	Budget	% of budget
Income Generation									
- Commune materials	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,355	0%
- Activity Service Contracts	21,949	66,836	142,545	217,243	584,328	123,613	1,156,514	580,000	199%
- Farmer visits/training	2,187	25,197	34,426	32,557	138,491	134,250	367,107	297,647	123%
- Training materials	1,345	6,465	7,543	10,712	0	0	26,065	47,060	55%
- Income Generating Activity Inputs	11,646	247,107	544,951	807,888	614,107	24,461	2,250,159	3,232,135	70%
Subtotal Income	37,127	345,605	729,465	1,068,399	1,336,927	282,324	3,799,846	4,159,197	91%
Infrastructure	12,003	259,456	317,196	90,638	595,128	427,307	1,701,728	1,260,000	135%
Additional funds				34,144	174,017	190,608	398,769	998,190	40%
Total Activities	49,130	605,061	1,046,661	1,193,182	2,106,072	900,238	5,900,343	6,417,387	92%

* 07/08 covers the period July 2007 to December 2007. Note: Activity Service Contracts included: PFLAP, Extension contracts, VSCF Women's Union contracts and marketing. Note: Farmer Visits/training included: Animal health activities, Integrated CDP/SEPP. Note: Training Materials included: start up materials for VSCFs. Note: Income generating Activity Inputs included: VSCF seed capital and Commune Development Funds. Note: Additional Funds: these funds came from three sources: i) funds, not included in the PDD, were added into the URS contract in 2002, but were not defined for any particular Activity; ii) A\$200,000 added to the RUDEP budget in 2005, for the 4 additional communes in Minh Long District; and iii) A\$75,626 was carried forward from Phase 1 activities. Expenditure under this category includes RUDEP

Annex 5

Adoption rates for agricultural technology (% of HHs)

Activity	2006		2007			
	AG	Outside AG	AG		Outside AG	
			Lowland	Upland	Lowland	Upland
Cattle finishing	54	6	85	65	16	0
Lean Pigs	47	0	100	100	41	47
Aquaculture	20	16	99		52	
Rice IPM	72	71	100	56	50	13
Vegetables	30	7				
Forage/fodder	31	26				
Acacia	36	17				
Goats	21	20				

From: Quang Ngai Rural Development Program (RUDEP) - Phase 2 Program Completion Report

Annex 6

Percentage of poor HHs receiving help of getting benefits

Unit: %

	Percentage of poor HHs in 2006
Total	62.77
<i>In which:- Rudep communes *</i>	60.79
Breakdown of the Total	
1. Lowland	11.25
<i>In which:</i>	
- Rudep communes	15.00
- Rudep control communes	7.50
2. Upland	74.22
<i>In which:</i>	
- Rudep communes	77.14
- Rudep control communes	74.11
* P 135/2 communes	73.84

From: Quang Ngai Rural Development Program (RUDEP) - Phase 2 Program Completion Report

Annex 7: Purpose and achievement for verifiable indicators of the RUDEP Programme

Purpose	Verifiable Indicators	Achievement/Progress
To empower poor HHs in selected communes in Quang Ngai province to improve livelihoods sustainably through increased incomes within the risk framework of poor people.	Cumulative no. Households (HH) participating in repeat planning cycles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •In 2004, 23% of those HHs in 6 Cycle 1 & 2 communes who participated in the first round of Village Planning Meetings, participated in the second round of Meetings •In 2005, 9% of those HHs in 9 Cycle 1, 2 & 3 communes, repeated participation in village planning meetings. •In 2006, Village Planning Meetings were held in 76 communes in 7 districts as part of the Provincial Governments adoption of Commune Development Planning. •In 2007, Village Planning Meetings were held in 186 communes in 14 districts as part of the Provincial Government rollout of the Socio-Economic Planning Process
	Trends in participant perception of their empowerment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •05/06: Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS) data collection on empowerment was completed for a sample of 160 members of VSCFs formed in 03/04. For questions on empowerment: 6% said that their situation was moderately better, 20% said that their situation was slightly better, 66% said that their situation had not changed, and 8% said that their situation had worsened. •06/07: GAS data on empowerment for the same sample as used in 05/06 gave the following results: 7% said that their situation was hugely better, 34% said that their situation was moderately better 39% said that their situation was slightly better, 18% said that their situation had not changed, and 2% said that their situation had worsened.
	Proportion of HH groups graduating to prepare annual plans independently.	No progress with this indicator, as there has been no other source of funds allocated to groups in communes (other than RUDEP funds). However, P135/2 funds have been included in the resource plans for each Commune and projects will be determined from participatory planning processes.
	No. non-Program Communes adopting participatory planning process for development investment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •2006: Integrated Commune Development Planning conducted in 76 communes in 7 districts (included 17 RUDEP communes and 59 non-RUDEP communes). •2007: Socio-Economic Planning Process (new name for integrated commune development planning process as Quang Ngai provincial government wished to have a name closer to the socio economic development plan which will be prepared using this process) conducted in 186 communes in 14 districts (including 23 RUDEP communes and 165 non-RUDEP communes).
	Proportion of participating HH within Department of Labour, Invalids and social affairs (DOLISA) definition of "poor households."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •02/03: 27% of participating HHs were poor according to the DOLISA criteria. •03/04: 25% of participating HHs were poor according to the DOLISA criteria (41% of participating HHs were poor according to wealth ranking criteria). •04/05: 33% of participating HHs were poor according to DOLISA criteria (56% of participating HHs are poor according to wealth ranking criteria). •05/06: 65% of participating HHs were poor according to DOLISA criteria (the DOLISA criteria changed in July 2005 to be VND 200,000 per person per month in rural communes) (66% of participating HHs are poor according to wealth ranking criteria). •06/07: 60% of participating HHs were poor according to DOLISA criteria (63% of participating HHs are poor according to wealth ranking criteria).

Purpose	Verifiable Indicators	Achievement/Progress
	No. of people in participating HH migrating seasonally for work and duration of absence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •02/03: 27% of activity group (AG) HHs had member(s) who migrated seasonally for an average of 220 days per household. •03/04: 33% of AG HHs had member(s) who migrated for an average of 252 days per household. •04/05: 26% of AG HHs had members who migrated for an average of 251 days per household (ranging from 36% of HHs in Tinh Tho to 3% of HHs in Son Hai). For upland communes, the average figure is 7% and for lowland communes, the average figure is 31%. •05/06: 16% of AG HHs had members who migrated for an average of 212 days per household (ranging from 47% of HHs in Pho Chau to 0% of HHs in several of the new remote upland communes). For upland communes, the average figure is 5% and for lowland communes, the average figure is 29%.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •06/07: 20% of AG HHs had members who migrated for an average of 233 days per household (ranging from 50% of HHs in Hanh Phuoc to 0% of HHs in several of the new remote upland communes). For upland communes, the average figure is 2% and for lowland communes, the average figure is 32%.
	Trends in participant perception of their livelihood.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •05/06: Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS) data collection on livelihood was completed for a sample of 160 members of VSCFs formed in 03/04. For questions on livelihood: 1% said that their situation was hugely better, 28% said that their situation was moderately better, 66% said that their situation was slightly better, 4% said that their situation had not changed and 1% said that their situation had worsened. •06/07: GAS data on livelihood was completed for same sample HHs as used in 05/06. For questions on livelihood: 10% said that their situation was hugely better, 54% said that their situation was moderately better and 36% said that their situation was slightly better.
	Trends in child malnutrition indicators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •2002: the average percentage of wasted children in the RUDEP communes was 33%. •2003: the average percentage of wasted children in the RUDEP communes was 31%. •2004: the average percentage of wasted children in RUDEP communes was 34%, ranging from 20% to 44%. •2005: the average percentage of wasted children in RUDEP communes was 34%, ranging from 20% to 49% •2006: the average percentage of wasted children in RUDEP communes is 32%.
	Proportion of secondary-school aged youth attending secondary school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •2004: The percentage of children attending junior secondary school in RUDEP communes increased from 73% in 2001 to 92% in 2004. For lowland communes the change was 75% to 94% and in
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> upland communes the change was 68% to 80%. •2005: 92% of children attended junior secondary school. The % was 82% in upland communes and 96% in lowland communes. •2006: 92% of children in RUDEP communes attended junior secondary school.

Purpose	Verifiable Indicators	Achievement/Progress
	Proportion of HH adopting demonstrated technical packages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •03/04: 23% of HHs adopted some aspect of RUDEP technology. •04/05: 20% of HHs adopted some aspect of RUDEP technology. •05/06: 28% of HHs adopted some aspect of RUDEP technology (excluding new upland communes in their first year). The relatively small commune of Nghia Tho has 72% adoption and the biggest commune of Duc Phong has 42% adoption. •06/07: 45% of HHs adopted some aspect of RUDEP technology comprising 71% in lowland communes and 32% in upland communes.
	Location and extent of adopted technical packages.	Adoption rates within and outside the Activity Groups were found to be as follows: lean pigs -100% of lowland and 100% of upland AG members adopted all or part of the technology and 41% of lowland and 47% of upland farmers outside the AGs adopted all or part; cattle finishing -85% of lowland and 65% of upland AG members adopted all or part of the technology and 16% of lowland and 0% of upland farmers outside the AGs adopted all or part; IPM rice – 100% of lowland and 56% of upland AG members adopted all or part of the technology and 50% of lowland and 13% of upland farmers outside the AGs adopted all or part; pond aquaculture - 99% % of AG members adopted all or part of the technology and 52% of farmers outside the AGs adopted all or part of the technology. (Source: RUDEP adoption study – June 2007).
	Change in size of VSCF funds managed by Program participants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Dec 03: 19 VSCFs with VND 1,371m assets and VND 44m savings. •Dec 04: 64 VSCFs with VND 3,753m assets and VND 272m. •Dec 05: 96 VSCFs with VND 8,318 m assets and VND 612 m savings. •Dec 06: 169 VSCFs with VND 14,927 m assets and VND 1,113 m savings. •Aug 07: 166 VSCFs with VND 15,294 m assets and VND 1,231 m savings.
	Trends in participant perception of their HH income.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •05/06: Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS) data collection on income has been completed for a sample of 160 members of VSCFs formed in 03/04. People were asked to determine what increase in income they had received as a result of participation in RUDEP activities: 2% said that their income had increased by more than VND 5m; 4% said that their income had increased by between VND 4m and 5m; 17% said that their income had increased by between VND 3m and 4m; 64% said that their income had increased by between VND 2m and 3m; and 13% said that their income had increased by less than VND 2m. •06/07: GAS data on HH income for the same sample as used in 05/06 gave the following results: People were asked to determine what increase in income they had received as a result of participation in RUDEP activities: 18% said that their income had increased by more than VND 5m; 22% said that their income had increased by between VND 4m and 5m; 24% said that their income had increased by between VND 3m and 4m; 30% said that their income had increased by between VND 2m and 3m; and 6% said that their income had increased by less than VND 2m.

Purpose	Verifiable Indicators	Achievement/Progress
	Trend in reported real HH income in participating Communes.	•02/03: VND 6.8 m (ranging from VND 3.4m in Son Hai to VND 10.2m in Tinh Tho). •03/04: VND 6.2m (ranging from VND 2.7m in Son Trung to VND 10m in Duc Phong). •04/05: VND 6.1m (ranging from VND 2.6m in Son Trung to 9.2 m in Tinh Tho).
		•05/06: VND 6.4m (ranging from VND 2.4m in Son Bua to 10.2 m in Duc Phong). •06/07: VND 7.5m with average lowland HH income of VND 12.5m and upland HH income of VND 6.1m.
	Proportion of Activity Plan implementation budgets sourced outside Program funds.	Integrated Commune Development Planning/ Socio Economic Planning Process has been conducted in 186 communes in all 14 districts and this process develops a plan for all available funding for each commune including funds from donors/NGO /Government of Vietnam (GOV) programs etc.
	Proportion of Commune Infrastructure Plan implementation budgets sourced outside Program funds.	Integrated Commune Development Planning/ Socio Economic Planning Process has been conducted for 186 communes in 14 districts and the resulting plans identify all funding sources including funding suitable for infrastructure projects identified through the village planning meetings.
	Proportion of Capacity Building budgets sourced outside Program funds.	P135/2 now has an allocation for commune capacity building and RUDEP has worked with PCEM and Political School to use the approaches developed by RUDEP to implement an effective capacity building program for P135/2 communes.
	Proportion of participating HHs graduating to institutional credit.	•04/05 28% of all participating HHs were using institutional credit. •05/06: 18% of all participating HHs were using institutional credit. •06/07: 23% of all participating HHs were using institutional credit.
	Trends in participant perception of sustainability.	•05/06: Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS) data collection on sustainability has been completed for a sample of 160 members of VSCFs formed in 03/04. For questions on sustainability: 1% said that their situation was hugely better, 9% said that their situation was moderately better 68% said that their situation was slightly better, 22% said that their situation had not changed, and. 0% said that their situation had worsened. •06/07: GAS data on sustainability for the same sample as used in 05/06 gave the following results: 17% said that their situation was hugely better, 43% said that their situation was moderately better 36% said that their situation was slightly better and 4% said that their situation had not changed.

Annex 8: Program Reports and Documents

Reports and documents prepared in Phase 2 of the Program to date include:

- 1 STA Report: Livestock Systems Specialist (Report #1) (Oct 02)
- 2 PMU Report RUDEP Phase 1 Completion Report (Nov 02)
- 3 STA Report Livestock Systems Specialist (Report #2) (Dec 02)
- 4 STA Report Livestock Systems Specialist (Report #3) (Dec 02)
- 5 STA Report Marketing Specialist (Report #1) (Dec 02)
- 6 Milestone Report Annual Plan (Oct 2002 to June 2003) (Jan 03)
- 7 STA Report Livestock and Crop Economist (First Mission Report) (Jan 03)
- 8 PMU Report QNRDP Infrastructure Operational Procedures (Jan 03)
- 9 Milestone Report Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (Feb 03)
- 10 STA Report Microfinance Specialist – Supplementary Report (Feb 03)
- 11 STA Report Infrastructure Report (Infrastructure Specialist Report #1) (Feb 03)
- 12 STA Report Monitoring and Evaluation Adviser Report #1 (Feb 03)
- 13 STA Report Agro Forestry/Land Use Planning Specialist (Report #1) (Mar 03)
- 14 PMU Report Operational Procedures for VSCFs (Mar 03)
- 15 PMU Report Organisational Structure for QNRDP and Operational Regulations for the PMU (Mar 03)
- 16 Milestone Report Final Annual Plan July 03-June 04 (Mar 03)
- 17 STA Report Database Specialist (Report #1) (Apr 03)
- 18 STA Report Environmental Specialist Report (Report #1) (Apr 03)
- 19 Milestone Report Communications Strategy (Apr 03)
- 20 STA Report Marketing Specialist 2nd Report (May 03)
- 21 Evaluation Report Report on Women's Health Campaign in Duc Phong (Jun 03)
- 22 Milestone Report Progress Report (October 2002 to March 2003) (Jun 03)
- 23 PMU Report Report to PCC: Progress Report-Year 1 (Jun 03)
- 24 STA Report Potential of Aquaculture Development to Support Income Generation of the Poor in Quang Ngai Province (Aquaculture Specialist) (Jun 03)
- 25 PMU Report Income Generation: Livelihood Activities and the Preparation of Livelihoods Proposals-a Set of Guidelines for RUDEP Staff (Jul 03)
- 26 STA Report Training Activities on Animal Health (Animal Health Specialist Report #1) (Aug 03)
- 27 STA Report RUDEP Monitoring and Evaluation Manual for DDOs (M&E Advisor) (Aug 03)
- 28 PMU Report Commune Wealth Ranking in Quang Ngai Province (Sep 03)
- 29 STA Report Capacity Building Adviser Exit Report (Capacity Building Report #1)

- (Sep 03)
- 30 STA Report Capacity Building Guidelines and Procedures Manual (Sep 03)
- 31 PMU Report Health and Safety Plan (Oct 03)
- 32 STA Report Agro-Processing and Post Harvest Technology (Agricultural Processing and Post Harvesting Specialist Report #1)(Nov 03)
- 33. STA Report Report on Training Activities on Animal Health in Quang Ngai (Animal Health Specialist (Report #2) (Nov 03)
- 34. PMU Report Security Plan (Dec 03)
- 35. STA Report Gender and Development (GAD Specialist Report #1) (Dec 03)
- 36. PMU Report Risk Management Report (Dec 03)
- 37. PMU Report Six Month Review of 5 RUDEP VSCFs-December 2003 (Dec 03)
- 38. Milestone Report Handover Plan (Feb 04)
- 39. PMU Report TNA Report 03-04 (Feb 04)
- 40. PMU Report Guideline on the Identification, Preparation, Implementation of Livelihood Projects (Mar 04)
- 41. PMU Report Guidelines for Activity Group Implemented Trials (Mar 04)
- 42. Evaluation Report Infrastructure – Mang Hien Road in Son Hai Commune (Mar 04)
- 43. STA Report Environmental Specialist Report (Report #2) (Mar 04)
- 44. STA Report Home Garden Report (Mar 04)
- 45. PMU Report Review of Village Savings and Credits Funds Component (Microfinance Specialist) (Mar 04)
- 46. Evaluation Report Evaluation on VSCFs in 3 Communes (Apr 04)
- 47. STA Report Marketing Specialist-Third Report (Apr 04)
- 48. Evaluation Report Evaluation VSCF Awareness and Knowledge (Apr 04)
- 49. STA Report Farming Systems Study in RUDEP communes (Apr 04)
- 50. STA Report Baseline Investigation of Off-Farm Activities in Quang Ngai (May 04)
- 51. Milestone Report Progress Report 3 (October 2003 to March 2004) (May 04)
- 52. Milestone Report Annual Plan Year 3 (July 2004-June 2005) (Jun 04)
- 53. STA Report O&M Training Manual for Commune Infrastructure (Jun 04)
- 54. STA Report O&M Manual for Commune Infrastructure (Jun 04)
- 55. Evaluation Report Evaluation on Tinh Tho Electricity (Jun 04)
- 56. STA Report RUDEP Management Information System Manual (Jun 04)
- 57. PMU Report Problem Census - Cycle 2 Commune (Jun 04)
- 58. PMU Report RUDEP MIS Manual Vn (Jul 04)
- 59. Evaluation Report Evaluation on Kindergarten in Son Hai Commune (Jul 04)
- 60. PMU Report Participatory Planning Process 2004 (Jul 04)
- 61. PMU Report RUDEP PRA Report 2004 for all Communes (Jul 04)
- 62. TAG Report TAG 4 Report 18-25 April 2004 (Jul 04)
- 63. PMU Report Capacity Building Report 03-04 (Aug 04)
- 64. STA Report Environment Impact Assessment Checklist (EIA) (Sep 04)

65. PMU Report Cattle Finishing, Pig Raising and Chicken Raising Livestock Demonstration Review Report (Sep 04)
66. STA Report Microfinance Specialist -VSCF Support Mission Report (Sep 04)
67. PMU Report Assessing GOV Staff Competency 03-04 (Sep 04)
68. PMU Report Training Evaluation System Report 03-04 (Sep 04)
69. PMU Report TNA Report 04-05 (Sep 04)
70. STA Report Environmental Specialist Report-Third Output (Oct 04)
71. STA Report Forestry Land Use Planning and Land Allocation (FLUPLA) in Quang Ngai, Vietnam (Oct 04)
72. STA Report Monitoring & Evaluation/Database Specialist End of Assignment Report (Oct 04)
73. Evaluation Report Evaluation on Thach Thang-Van Ha Road Duc Phong Commune (Oct 04)
74. Evaluation Report Bathroom and Toilet Evaluation in Duc Phong Commune (Oct 04)
75. Evaluation Report Water Filter in Duc Phong Commune Evaluation (Oct 04)
76. Evaluation Report Evaluation on VSCFs 2004 (Oct 04)
77. PMU Report RUDEP Infrastructure 03-04 (Oct 04)
78. Evaluation Report 2003 Livestock Demo Evaluation in RUDEP Communes (Oct 04)
79. STA Report Program Environmental Management Manual (Oct 04)
80. Evaluation Report Adoption of Demo Techniques (Oct 04)
81. STA Report Capacity Building Adviser Exit Report (25 Oct-07 Nov 2004) (Nov 04)
82. Evaluation Report Demo Quality 2004 Report (Nov 04)
83. PMU Report MIS Manual Version 2 – Vietnamese (Nov 04)
84. Evaluation Report Impact of VSCFs 2004 (Dec 04)
85. Evaluation Report Low Loan Disbursement in VSCFs 2004 (Dec 04)
86. PMU Report FLUPLA Pilot Implementation Proposal (Dec 04)
87. STA Report Pre & Post Course Competency Assessment, VSCF Animal Health Training (Dec 04)
88. STA Report Survey Report on Extension Training in Quang Ngai (Dec 04)
89. Evaluation Report Quality of Agricultural Demonstrations 2004 (Jan 05)
90. PMU Report Vietnam State Planning Process Report (Jan 05)
91. Milestone Report Six Month Progress Report #4 (April 04 to Dec 04) (Jan 05)
92. PMU Report VSCF 6 monthly review Report Jul to Dec 2004 (Jan 05)
93. STA Report Animal Health Specialist - Paravet competency (Jan 05)
94. STA Report Home Garden Report # 2 (Feb 05)
95. STA Report Post-Harvest Technology Processing and Storage of Agro-Products Report (Feb 05)
96. Evaluation Report An Chi Dong Kindergarten in Hanh Phuoc Commune (Feb 05)
97. STA Report Institutional Research Specialist Report #1 (Feb 05)
98. STA Report Main Causes of Harvest Loss Report (Feb 05)
99. PMU Report Gender Analysis Report (Feb 05)
100. Other RUDEP VSCF Audit Report 2004 (Feb 05)

101. STA Report Institutional Research Specialist Report #2 (Apr 05)
102. Evaluation Report Evaluation of Cau Phen Canal in Nghia Tho Commune (Apr 05)
103. STA Report Marketing Specialist Report #4 (May 05)
104. STA Report VSCF Support Mission (May 05)
105. STA Report Animal Health Specialist - Consultancy Report (May 05)
106. PMU Report TNA Report 05-06 (May 05)
107. PMU Report GOV Competency Assessment (May 05)
108. Milestone Report RUDEP Final Annual Plan 05-06 (June 05)
109. STA Report GAD Specialist report (June 05)
110. STA Report GAD Strategy (June 05)
111. PMU Report Activity Groups: Empowerment and Service Delivery, Hue Seminar (Jun 05)
112. PMU Report Implications of Lessons Learnt for Pro-Poor Extension Systems & Methods, Hue Seminar (Jun 05)
113. TAG Report RUDEP MTR Report Final (Jun 05)
114. PMU Report RUDEP MTR Recommendations and Comments (Jun 05)
115. PMU Report Capacity Building Annual Report 04-05 (Jun 05)
116. Evaluation Report Hanh Phuoc ACD-ACTay Road Report (Jun 05)
117. Evaluation Report Chau Me Kindergarten in Duc Phong Commune (Jun 05)
118. Evaluation Report Da Den Road (Jun 05)
119. Evaluation Report Van Ha Market in Duc Phong Commune (Jun 05)
120. PMU Report Development of Pro-Poor Sustainable Farming Systems with H're Households (Jun 05)
121. PMU Report Poverty Targeting and Impact Monitoring in VSCFs: the RUDEP Experience – CEP Conference (Jun 05)
122. STA Report Animal Health Specialist - Consultancy Report (July 05)
123. PMU Report Capacity Building Ex-post Evaluation Report (July 05)
124. PMU Report Infrastructure Annual Report 2004/2005 (July 05)
125. Evaluation Report Technical Adoption from Demonstrations: 2005 (Jul 04)
126. PMU Report VSCF Annual Review Report 2004/2005 (July 05)
127. PMU Report M&E Manual for Communes (Jul 05)
128. PMU Report ESIA/EMP – PFLAP Final (Aug 05)
129. STA Report Forestry and Extension Specialist Mission Report (Aug 05)
130. PMU Report Integrated CDP Proposal (Aug 05)
131. PMU Report RUDEP Transfer Strategy (Sept 05)
132. Evaluation Report Hoa Me Kindergarten Hanh Phuoc Commune (Sept 05)
133. PMU Report Marketing Proposal (Sept 05)
134. PMU Report PFLAP EMP Action Plan (Sept 05)
135. PMU Report RUDEP Pro-Poor Strategy (Sept 05)
136. Evaluation Report Lam Thuong Kindergarten Report (Sep 05)
137. Evaluation Report Evaluation of Wells in Chau Me Village, Duc Phong (Oct 05)
138. PMU Report Integrated CDP Guidelines Final PPC Approved (Oct 05)
139. PMU Report Paravet Competency Assessment Report (Oct 05)
140. PMU AG and VSCF Planning Guide (Nov 05)

- Report
141. PMU CDF Guidelines (Nov 05)
 - Report
 142. PMU Extension Service Provider Report (Nov 05)
 - Report
 143. PMU Village Planning Meeting Guidelines (Nov 05)
 - Report
 144. PMU Competency Assessment Report Jul-Dec 05 (Dec 05)
 - Report
 145. PMU Report on CDF Training (Dec 05)
 - Report
 146. PMU RUDEP Integrated CDP - MPI Workshop Paper (Dec 05)
 - Report
 147. PMU RUDEP Capacity Building – MPI Workshop Paper (Dec 05)
 - Report
 148. PMU RUDEP M&E - MPI Workshop Paper (Dec 05)
 - Report
 149. Evaluation Report Evaluation of Vinh Tho KG in Hanh Phuoc (Jan 06)
 150. Evaluation Report Impact Evaluation of VSCF Members (Jan 06)
 151. PMU Report RUDEP Progress Report #5 (Jan to Dec 2005) (Jan 06)
 152. Other RUDEP VSCF Audit Report 2005 (Feb 06) draft
 153. PMU Report RUDEP Agricultural Marketing Strategy (Feb 06)
 154. STA Report Bee Keeping Feasibility Report (Mar 06)
 155. Evaluation Report Activity Group Planning Report (Mar 06)
 156. Evaluation Report Adoption of Demonstrated Technologies Report (Mar 06)
 157. PMU Report MTR Recommendations and Progress (Mar 06)
 158. PMU Report RUDEP Summary of Progress (Mar 06)
 159. PMU Report RUDEP Summary of Impact (Mar 06)
 160. Evaluation Report Adoption of Technology (Mar 06)
 161. PMU Report VSCF Six Month Review Jul-Dec 2005 (Mar 06)
 162. STA Report Bee Keeping #1 (Apr 06)
 163. Evaluation Report Demonstration Quality (May 06)
 164. Evaluation Report Hoa Son Kindergarten, Hanh Phuoc (May 06)
 165. Evaluation Report Lang Trum Kindergarten, Son Trung (May 06)
 166. STA Report Animal Health Coaching Report (May 06)
 167. STA Report Microfinance Specialist Mission Report (May 06)
 168. PMU Report Ex-Post Training Report (Jun 06)
 169. PMU Report GOV Competency Assessment 05-06 (Jun 06)
 170. PMU Report PFLAP ESIA Report (Jun 06)
 171. PMU Report Integrated CDP Guidelines (Jun 06)
 172. STA Report Gender Workshop Report (Jun 06)
 173. STA Report Gender TOT training Report (Jun 06)
 174. Evaluation Report An Chi Tay Road Hanh Phuoc (Jul 06)
 175. TAG Report TAG Report (revised and final) (Jul 06)
 176. PMU Report Capacity Building Annual Report 05-06 (Jul 06)
 177. PMU Report RUDEP Annual Plan 06-07 Final (Aug 06)
 178. STA Report Bee Keeping Report #3 (Aug 06)
 179. PMU Report VSCF Annual Report 05-06 (Aug 06)
 180. Evaluation Report Women's RTI Report (Sep 06)

181. STA Report PFLAP Support (Sep 06)
182. Evaluation Report De An Canal, Hanh Phuoc (Sep 06)
183. Evaluation Report Lam Thuong Market, Duc Phong (Sep 06)
184. Evaluation Report Ta Gan-Ba Reo Road, Son Hai (Sep 06)
185. PMU Report Infrastructure Annual Report 05-06 (Oct 06)
186. PMU Report Integrated CDP Manuals (Oct 06)
187. STA Report Bee Keeping Report #4 (Oct 06)
188. STA Report PFLAP Institutional Study (Oct 06)
189. STA Report PAEM TOT for extension staff (Oct 06)
190. Evaluation Report VSCF Loan Effectiveness and Equality (Nov 06)
191. PMU Report Gender Analysis Study – Upland Communes (Nov 06)
192. STA Report Bee Keeping Report #5 (Nov 06)
193. STA Report Farming Systems #1 (Jan 07)
194. PMU Report RUDEP Progress Report #6 (Jan to Dec 2006) (Feb 07)
195. STA Report Bee Keeping Report #6 (Feb 07)
196. STA Report Bee Keeping Report #7 (Feb 07)
197. STA Report Bee Keeping Report #8 (Mar 07)
198. STA Report Farming Systems Report #2 (Mar 07)
199. PMU Report An Analysis of Farming Systems in RUDEP Communes (Mar 07)
200. PMU Report RUDEP Annual Plan 0607 (revised) (Apr 07)
201. Evaluation Report GAS Report 2006 & 2007 (Apr 07)
202. PMU Report RUDEP Annual Plan (July to Dec 2007) (May 07)
203. PMU Report RUDEP VSCF Paper (CEP Conference, HCMC) (May 07)
204. STA Report Gender Action Plan 2006 & 2007 (May 07)
205. Evaluation Report Adoption Report 2005/2006 (Jun 07)
206. Evaluation Report Basic Business Skills Program (Jun 07)
207. STA Report Animal Health Specialist Report (Jul 07)
208. PMU Report PFLAP Formal Guidelines (Jul 07)
209. PMU Report Socio Economic Planning Process Manuals (Aug 07)
210. PMU Report RUDEP Capacity Building Annual Report 06/07 (Aug 07)
211. PMU Report RUDEP Infrastructure Annual Report 06/07 (Aug 07)
212. PMU Report RUDEP VSCF Annual Report 06/07 (Aug 07)
213. STA Report Bee Keeping Report #9 (Aug 07)
214. Evaluation Report RUDEP Household Income and Living Standards Survey (Aug 07)
215. PMU Report RUDEP: Rural Development Experience in Quang Ngai (paper for MARD/ISG Dialogue on Rural Development, Da Nang) (Sep 07)
216. Evaluation Report RUDEP Training Impact Evaluation Report (BPSC) (Sep 07)
217. Evaluation Report RUDEP Extension Training Evaluation ((Sep 07)
218. Evaluation Report RUDEP Cost Benefit Analysis Report (Sep 07)
219. Evaluation Report VSCF Impact Assessment (Sep 07)
220. STA Farming Systems Report (Final) (Sep 07)
Report
221. PMU Briefing Paper – VSCF Graduation (Sep 07)
Report
222. STA Bee Keeping Report #10 (Final) (Sep 07)
Report

- 223. STA Animal Health Specialist Report (Final) (Oct
 Report 07)
- 224. STA PFLAP Support (Final) (Nov 07)
 Report
- 225. PMU VSCF Graduation Report (Nov 07)
 Report

Annex 9: Persons Met in Quang Ngai Province

Date	Person met	Agency / Designation
06-03-08	Mr. Simon Cramp	AusAID, First Secretary
	Ms. Nguyen Tu Uyen	AusAID, Programme
07-03-08	Mr. Vo Xuan Tan	DONRE, Vice Director
	Mr. Pham Dinh Phong	DONRE, Head of Land Mapping Div.
	Ms. Nguyen Thi Hoa	PMU, RUDEP Co-Director / Vice Dir DPI
	Mr. Nguyen Vuong	PMU, RUDEP Vice Dir/ DPI Section Head
	Mr. Trevor Ole	PMU, RUDEP Co-Director AMC
08-03-08	Mr. Dao Minh Huong	DARD, Vice-Director
	Mr. Ngo Huu Ha	DARD, Director Provincial Extension Centre
	Mr. Nguyen Van Viet	DARD, Vice-Director Provincial Extension Centre
	Ms. Pham Thi Le Quyen	DARD, Head Technical Div. Provincial Ext Centre
	Mr. Vo Duy Loan	Sub-Dept. Plant Protection, Director
	Mr. Pham Ba	Sub-Dept. Plant Protection, Vice-Director
	Mr. Tran Duc Binh	District Son Tinh, Vice Chair DPC
	Mr. Nguyen Duc Hung	District Son Tinh, Officer
	Mr. Nguyen Van Thong	Commune Tinh Tho, Chairman CPC
	Mr. Nguyen Hung Cuong	Commune Tinh Tho, Contact Group
	Ms. Pham Thi Hoa	Commune Tinh Tho, Contact Group
09-03-08	Mr. Dinh Van Be	Commune Duc Phong, Vice Chair CPC
	Ms. Le Thi Kim Sang	Commune Duc Phong, Vice Chair WU
	Ms. Pham Thi Dung	Commune Duc Phong, Admin Manager
	Ms. Do Thi Thu	Commune Duc Phong, Planning / Finance
10-03-08	Ms. Pham Thi Thu Trang	Women's Union, Vice-Director
	Mr. Tran Dinh Tam	Political School, Vice-Director
	Mr. Nguyen Van Tam	Political School, Vice-Director
	Mr. Ng. Dinh Tuan	Sub Dept. Animal Health, Director
	Mr. Duong Van Hai	Sub Dept. Animal Health, Deputy Chief, Technical Div.
	Mr. Nguyen Kim Hieu	Former Chairman PPC
11-03-08	Mr. Pham Thanh Hien	PCEM, Director
	Mr. Nguyen Thai Ngan	PCEM, Office Manager
	Mr. Ly Duc	District Minh Long, Chairman DPC
	Mr. Nguyen Binh	District Minh Long, Planning / Finance DPC
	Mr. Dinh Cong Lac	District Minh Long, Ethnic Minority/ Religion DPC
	Ms. Nguyen Thi Thu Phuong	District Minh Long, WU
	Ms. Nguyen Thi Thanh Tram	District Minh Long, WU
	Ms. Nguyen Thi Sang	District Minh Long, Extension
	Mr. Nguyen Xuan Hoang	District Minh Long, DONRE
	Mr. Vo Van Cu	Commune Long Son, Chairman CPC
	Mr. Huynh Cau	Commune Long Son, Contact Group
	Mr. Dinh Phuong Duy	Commune Long Son, Accountant
	Ms. Vo Thi Ngoc Thach	Commune Long Son, WU

Persons Met in Quang Ngai Province (continued)

Date	Person met	Agency / Designation
12-03-08	Mr. Nguyen Van Duc	District Tay Tra, Planning / finance
	Mr. Dang Ba Lien	District Tay Tra, Planning / finance
	Mr. Phan Duy Hieu	District Tay Tra, Econ. Division
	Mr. Huynh Tan Phuoc	District Tay Tra, Extension Centre
	Mr. Dao Khac Dung	District Tay Tra, Animal Health
	Ms. Nguyen Thi Lieu	District Tay Tra, Health
	Mr. Pham Quang Huy	Commune Tra Lanh, Contact Group
	Mr. Ho Xuan Thang	Commune Tra Lanh, Chairman CPC
	Ms. Mai Thi Xinh	Commune Tra Lanh, WU
	Mr. Ho Van Phat	Commune Tra Lanh, Commune member
13-03-08	Ms. Dinh Thi Loan	PPC, Vice Chairman
	Mr. Truong Ngoc Nhi	PPC, Vice Chairman

Persons met Hanoi

Date	Person met	Agency / Designation
06-03-08	Mr. Simon Cramp	AusAID, First Secretary
	Ms. Nguyen Tu Uyen	AusAID, Programme Officer
11-03-08	Ms Le Thu Huong	Embassy Finland, Programme Coordinator
	Mr. Max von Bonsdorff	Embassy Finland, Counsellor
	Mr. Edwin Shanks	Independent Consultant (previous advisor to MPI, Design of ISP)
12-03-08	Mr. Tom Connor	Quang Ngai Disaster Mitigation Project, Team Leader
	Mr. Pham Hai	MPI – UNDP, Deputy National Project Director, Strengthening Local Government Project & former Director CBIRP programme
	Mr. Vu Thanh Son	World Bank Vietnam, Rural Division

PPC Meeting – March 14, 2007, Afternoon

Participants	Agency / Designation
Mr. Truong Ngoc Nhi	PPC Chairman
Mr. Tran Van The	PPC Office Manager
Mr. Nguyen Minh Tri	DOFA, Vice Director
Mr. Pham Ngoc Truc	DOFA, Officer
Mr. Pham Tang Binh	DONRE, Director
Ms. Pham Thi Thu Trang	Women's Union, Vice-Director
Ms. Nguyen Thi Hoa	DPI, Vice Director
Mr. Nguyen Vuong	DPI, Chief of External Economic Div.
Mr. Le Van Duong	DARD, Deputy Office Manager
Mr. Dang Xuan Dong	DoFinance, Manager of Div. of Investment Funds
Mr. Trevor Ole	PMU, RUDEP Co-Director AMC
Mr. John Wightman	Technical Adviser

Participants Stakeholder Workshop March 14, 2007, Morning

Participants	Agency / Designation
Mr. Nguyen Minh Thong	Commune Tinh Tho, CPC Chairman
Mr. Dinh Van Be	Commune Duc Phong, CPC Vice Chairman
Mr. Dinh Van Chi	Commune Son Giang, CPC Vice Chairman
Mr. Dinh Cong Bon	Commune Son Trung, CPC Chairman
Mr. Bui Duc Chanh	District Tra Bong, DPC Vice Chairman
Mr. Dang Thai Son	District Tra Bong, Finance/ Planning DPC
Mr. Nguyen Van Thuan	District Minh Long, DPC Vice Chairman
Mr. Nguyen Binh	District Minh Long, Finance/ Planning DPC
Mr. Dang Ngoc Dung	District Son Ha, DPC Vice Chairman
Ms. Pham Thi Le Quyen	DARD, Head Technical Div. Prov Ext Centre
Mr. Duong Van Hai	Sub Dept. Animal Health, Deputy Chief of Technical Div.
Mr. Pham Ba	Sub-Dept. Plant Protection, Vice-Director
Ms. Pham Thi Thu Huong	Dept. of Finance, Investment Div.
Mr. Truong Cong Ly	Provincial State Treasury, Deputy Chief of Planning
Mr. Nguyen Thi Hoa	DPI, Vice Director
Mr. Nguyen Vuong	DPI, Chief of External Economic Div.
Mr. Huynh Minh	DPI, Chief of Economy Div.
Ms. Ho Minh Hoa	DPI, Deputy Chief of External Economic Div.
Ms. Vo Thi Thanh Thu	DPI, Officer
Mr. Nguyen Thai Ngan	PCEM, Office Manager
Mr. Pham Dinh Phong	DONRE, Head of Land Mapping Div.
Mr. Ngo Huu Phuoc	ISP PMU, Officer
Mr. Truong Duc Hai	ISP PMU, Officer
Ms. Truong Thi Xuan Lieu	ISP PMU, CDO
Mr. Than Trong Thuy	ISP PMU, CDO
Mr. Le Thanh Ha	ISP PMU, CDO
Mr. Ngo Tan Vi	ISP PMU, CDO
Ms. Phan Thi Tau	ISP PMU, CDO
Mr. Trevor Ole	PMU, RUDEP Co-Director AMC
Mr. John Wightman	Technical Adviser

Annex 10

Key resource docs (non specific to RUDEP) which have been drawn on in completing the ICR include:

Understanding pro-poor political change: the policy process, ODI Working Paper April 2004, Shanks, Luttrell, Conway, Vu Manh Loi & Ladinsky.

Ensuring Good Governance for Poverty reduction, (June 2002) Poverty task Force Working Paper for series 'Localising MDGs for Poverty reduction in Viet Nam'.

Indicators in Governance and Public Management, (Sept 2001), Paper prepared for the Poverty Task Force, Governance sub-group supported by ADB, VRM.

Promoting ethnic minority development (June 2002) Poverty task Force Working Paper for series 'Localising MDGs for Poverty reduction in Viet Nam'.

Rebuilding Authority relations: Public administration reform in the era of Doi Moi (May 2002), Thaveeporn Vasavakul, paper prepared as an input into evaluation of the achievements of the PAR.

Master programme on Public Administration Reform for the period 2001 – 2010 (attachment to the Prime Minister's approval decision No. 136/2001 – 17th Sept 2001)... includes current status of public administration in Vietnam and lessons learned from recent PAR activities, opportunities and challenges ahead, specific objectives and contents of the PAR master programme 2001-2010.

The Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (CPRGS), GOV, November 2003