Closure Stage Quality Assurance Report

Project Date :	01-Oct-2012
Project Title :	Poverty-Environment Initiative Phase 2 Lao PDR, Environment and Social Impact Assessment Component
Project Number :	00068328
Overall Project Rating:	Needs Improvement

Strategic

Quality Rating: Needs Improvement

1. Did the project pro-actively take advantage of new opportunities and adapt its theory of change to respond to changes in the development context, including changing national priorities? (select the option from 1-3 which best reflects this project)

3: The project team regularly completed and documented a comprehensive horizon scanning exercise to identify new opportunities and changes in the development context that required adjustments in the theory of change. There is clear evidence that the project board considered the scanning and its implications, and documented changes to the project's RRF, partnerships, etc. made in response, as appropriate. (both must be true to select this option)

2: The project team has undertaken some horizon scanning over the life of the project to identify new opportunities and changes in the development context. The project board discussed the scanning and its implications for the project, as reflected in the board minutes. There is some evidence that the project took action as a result, but changes may not have been fully integrated in the project's theory of change, RRF, partnerships, etc. (all must be true to select this option)

I: The project team may have considered new opportunities and changes in the development context since implementation began, but this has not been discussed in the project board. There is limited to no evidence that the project team has considered changes to the project as a result. This option should also be selected if no horizon scanning took place during project implementation.

Evidence

Note

that the project was closed in Dec 2015. The project closely monitored the development context during its implementation. However no substantial changes in national priorities, policies or development need were observed throughout the project cycle.

2. Was the project aligned with the thematic focus of the Strategic Plan? (select the option from 1-3 that best reflects the project)

3: The project responded to one of the three areas of development work as specified in the Strategic Plan. It addressed at least one of the proposed new and emerging areas and implementation was consistent with the issues-based analysis incorporated into the project. The project's RRF included all the relevant SP output indicators. (all must be true to select this option)

2: The project responded to one of the three areas of development work as specified in the Strategic Plan. The project's RRF included at least one SP output indicator, if relevant. (both must be true to select this option)

1: While the project may have responded to one of the three areas of development work as specified in the Strategic Plan, it was based on a sectoral approach without addressing the complexity of the development issue. None of the relevant SP indicators were included in the project's RRF. This option is also selected if the project did not respond to any of the three SP areas of development work.

Evidence

The

project is linked to SP Outcome 1, indicator: 131A11

3. Evidence generated through the project was explicitly used to confirm or adjust the programme/CPD's theory of change during implementation.

O Yes

No

Evidence

Since

Theory of Change is not explicitly mentioned in the current CPD 2012-2016, it is difficult to validate if the CPD's ToC has been confirmed or adjusted based on the evidence generated by the project.

List of Uploaded Documents

File Name	Modified By	Modified
CPD_2012-2015_Lao_PDR_FINAL.pdf	chitlatda.keomuongchanh@undp.org	1/15/2017 5:38:54 AM
2016 Exec Board Doc CPD Extensions.pdf	chitlatda.keomuongchanh@undp.org	1/15/2017 5:39:43 AM

Relevant

Quality Rating: Needs Improvement

4. Were the project's targeted groups systematically identified and engaged, with a priority focus on the excluded and marginalized, to ensure the project remained relevant for them? (select the option from 1-3 that best reflects the project)

3: Systematic and structured feedback was collected regularly from a representative sample of beneficiaries, with a priority focus on the excluded and marginalized, as part of the project's monitoring system. Representatives from the targeted group were active members of the project's governance mechanism (i.e., project board or equivalent) and there is credible evidence that their feedback informed decision making. (all must be true to select this option)

2: Targeted groups were engaged in implementation and monitoring, with a priority focus on the excluded and marginalized. Beneficiary feedback, which may be anecdotal, was collected regularly to ensure the project addressed local priorities. This information was used to inform project decision making. (all must be true to select this option)

1: Some beneficiary feedback may have been collected, but this information did not inform project decision making. This option should also be selected if no beneficiary feedback was collected.

O Not Applicable

Evidence

According

to the results from the project mid-term review, the project is highly relevant to Lao PDR (page 3). The direct beneficially for this project is the government counterparts at the national and central level. The target groups were engaged in the implementation and monitoring of the project activities for example, lead in the development of all technical guideline, joint investment monitoring and serve as resource person for several trainings as part of the project training programme. Beneficiary feedback on usefulness and application of the PEI tools developed under PEI-DESIA were collected and assessed to ensure that DESIA staff benefited from the project results/outputs (see project terminal report, page 10).

List of Uploaded Documents

File Name	Modified By	Modified
Terminal Report text Annex 1 2 3.pdf	chitlatda.keomuongchanh@undp.org	1/15/2017 6:18:07 AM
Lao_Country_Evaluation_Report_Final_Draft_PEI_Phase2.pdf	chitlatda.keomuongchanh@undp.org	1/15/2017 6:20:13 AM

5. Did the project generate knowledge, particularly lessons learned (i.e., what has worked and what has not) – and has this knowledge informed management decisions and changes/course corrections to ensure the continued relevance of the project towards its stated objectives, the quality of its outputs and the management of risk? (select the option from 1-3 that best reflects the project)

3: Knowledge and lessons learned (gained, for example, from Peer Assists, After Action Reviews or Lessons Learned Workshops) backed by credible evidence from evaluation, analysis and monitoring were regularly discussed in project board meetings and reflected in the minutes. There is clear evidence that the project's theory of change was adjusted, as needed, and changes were made to the project to ensure its continued relevance. (both must be true to select this option)

2: Knowledge and lessons learned backed by relatively limited evidence, drawn mainly from within the project, were considered by the project team. There is some evidence that changes were made to the project as a result to ensure its continued relevance. (both must be true to select this option)

1: There is limited or no evidence that knowledge and lessons learned were collected by the project team. There is little or no evidence that this informed project decision making.

Evidence

According

to the results from the project mid-term review, the project is highly relevant to Lao PDR (page 3, uploaded in question 4). The direct beneficially for this project is the government counterparts at the national and central level and local level. The project developed technical guideline for environmental and social impact assessments and deliver training on application of tool through on-the-job training. The terminal report (page17, uploaded in question 4) document lesson learnt that coordination between IPD and DESIA should be improved. As a result the project help to set up the roundtable meeting mechanism to provide a platform for dialogue on joint monitoring. These measures appear to be work and their cooperation improved.

6. Were the project's special measures (through outputs, activities, indicators) to address gender inequalities and empower women relevant and produce the intended effect? If not, were evidence-based adjustments and changes made? (select the option from 1-3 that best reflects the project)

3: The project team systematically gathered data and evidence on the relevance of the special measures in addressing gender inequalities and empowering women. Analysis of data and evidence were used to inform adjustments and changes, as appropriate. (both must be true to select this option)

2: The project team had some data and evidence on the relevance of the special measures in addressing gender inequalities and empowering women. There is evidence that at least some adjustments made, as appropriate. (both must be true to select this option)

• 1: The project team had limited or no evidence on the relevance of the special measures in addressing gender inequalities and empowering women. No evidence that adjustments and/or changes were made, as appropriate. This option should also be selected if the project had no special measures in addressing gender inequalities and empowering women relevant to project results and activities.

Evidence

The

project doesn't have specific gender disaggregated indicators in the RRF. However we do consider gender issues when implementing project activities and we report number of women participated in training programme that conducted by the project (see PEI 2015 joint Annual report, page 16-17).

List of Uploaded Documents

File Name	Modified By	Modified
PEI_Lao_Annual_Report_2015_to_SDC-1_Final_Singed.pdf	chitlatda.keomuongchanh@undp.org	1/15/2017 6:39:17 AM

7. Was the project sufficiently at scale, or is there potential to scale up in the future, to meaningfully contribute to development change? (select the option from 1-3 that best reflects the project)

3: There is credible evidence that the project reached a sufficient number of beneficiaries (either directly through significant coverage of target groups, or indirectly, through policy change) to meaningfully contribute to development change.

2: While the project was not considered at scale, there are explicit plans in place to scale up the initiative in the future (e.g. by extending its coverage in a second phase or using project results to advocate for policy change).

1: The project was not at scale, and there are no plans currently to scale up the initiative in the future.

Evidence

The

government counterpart scaled up the project activities and results into other provinces. According to the discussion with DESIA at the end of the project in 2015, DESIA is currently receiving financial support from Environmental Protection Fund, which activities on capacity building to apply ESIA and Public Involvement has been included in their project activities.

8. Did the project seek to further the realization of human rights using a human rights-based approach? (select the option from 1-3 that best reflects the project)

3: There is credible evidence that the project aimed to further the realization of human rights, on the basis of applying a human rights based approach. Any potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights were actively identified, managed and mitigated through the project's management of risks. (all must be true to select this option)

2: There is some evidence that the project aimed to further the realization of human rights. Potential adverse impacts on the enjoyment of human rights were identified and adequately mitigated through the project's management of risks. (both must be true to select this option)

1: There is no evidence that the project aimed to further the realization of human rights. There is limited to no evidence that potential adverse impacts on the enjoyment of human rights were managed.

Evidence

The

project has taken into account the importance of human rights, for example right of individual staff to access to information and strengthen their capacity to implement environmental and social safeguards in order to successfully perform their duties and mandate of the institute. The project facilitated participation and transparency in the decision making process for the ESIA preparation and investment approval process, as evidence by the project mid-term review report in page 41 (uploaded in question 4).

9. Were social and environmental impacts and risks (including those related to human rights, gender and environment) successfully managed and monitored in accordance with the project document and relevant action plans? (for projects that have no social and environmental risks the answer is "Yes")

• Yes	
○ No	
Evidence	
The project had risks	d no social and environmental
	y unanticipated social and environmental issues or grievances that arose during implementation assessed and adequately managed, with nagement plans updated? (for projects that did not experience unanticipated social and environmental risks or grievances the answer is "Yes")

• Yes		
○ No		
Evidence		
The project did not encounter unanticipated social and environmental risks or grievances during its implementation.		

Management & Monitoring

Quality Rating: Satisfactory

11. Was the project's M&E Plan adequately implemented? (select the option from 1-3 that best reflects the project)

3: Progress data against indicators in the project's RRF was reported regularly using highly credible data sources and collected according to the frequency stated in the project's M&E plan, including sex disaggregated data as relevant. Evaluations, if conducted, fully met decentralized evaluation standards, including gender UNEG standards, and management responses were fully implemented. Lessons learned, including during evaluations, were used to take corrective actions when necessary. (all must be true to select this option)

2: Progress data against indicators in the project's RRF was collected on a regular basis, although there may have been some slippage in following the frequency stated in the project's M&E plan and data sources were not always reliable. Any evaluations conducted meet most decentralized evaluation standards; management responses were fully implemented to the extent possible. Lessons learned have been captured but not used to take collective actions. (all must be true to select this option)

1: Progress data either was not collected against the indicators in the project's RRF, or limited data was collected but not regularly; evaluations did not meet decentralized evaluation standards; and/or lessons learned were rarely captured and used.

Evidence

The

project has a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (see ProDoc p. 23) and implement it through Monitoring and Communication Log, attached as Annex 2 in each Quarterly Progress Report (see example, Q3 progress report). But the M&E plan was not costed. As an example, the 2015 annual progress report has been reported against the project indicators, baseline, and target per indicated in the RRF (page 69-81, uploaded in question 4). The challenges/lessons learn also capture in the progress report his report in page 34-35.

List of Uploaded Documents

File Name	Modified By	
Draft PEI-ESIA Q3 2015 Progress Report NL.pdf	chitlatda.keomuongchanh@undp.org	1/15/2017 7:43:41 AM
PEI_Phase_2_Framework_Final_July_30.pdf.pdf	chitlatda.keomuongchanh@undp.org	1/15/2017 6:58:58 AM

12. Did the project's governance mechanism (i.e., the project board or equivalent) function as intended? (select the option from 1-3 that best reflects the project)

The project's governance mechanism operated very well, and is a model for other projects. It met in the agreed frequency stated in the project document and the minutes of the meetings are all on file. There was regular (at least annual) progress reporting to the project board or equivalent on results, risks and opportunities. It is clear that the project board explicitly reviewed and used evidence, including progress data, knowledge, lessons and evaluations, as the basis for informing management decisions (e.g., change in strategy, approach, work plan.) (all must be true to select this option)

The project's governance mechanism met in the agreed frequency and minutes of the meeting are on file. A project progress report was submitted to the project board or equivalent at least once per year, covering results, risks and opportunities. (both must be true to select this option)

O The project's governance mechanism did not met in the frequency stated in the project document, and/or the project board or equivalent did not function as a decision making body for the project as intended.

Evidence

The

Project Steering Committee Meeting ad the Annual Review Meeting are organized once a year. Minutes of meeting were filed properly. The ARM and PSC Meetings are usually attended also by UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub Technical Advisors. The ad-hoc meetings were also organized as needed and reported on the progress to the board. The results of the meetings were used by the Project Steering Committee to guide the priorities of the project activities as appropriate. Minutes of ARM/Board Meeting is

attached.

List of Uploaded Documents

File Name	Modified By	Modified
Annual_Review_Meeting_12_NOV_2014pdf	chitlatda.keomuongchanh@undp.org	1/15/2017 7:03:46 AM
Annual_Review_Meeting_20160001.pdf	chitlatda.keomuongchanh@undp.org	1/15/2017 7:04:32 AM
Minute_of_PEI_Board_Meeting_July_2013.pdf	chitlatda.keomuongchanh@undp.org	1/15/2017 7:03:12 AM

13. Were risks to the project adequately monitored and managed? (select the option from 1-3 that best reflects the project)

3: The project actively monitored risks every quarter including consulting with key stakeholders at least annually to identify continuing and emerging risks to project implementation and to assess if the main assumptions remain valid. There is clear evidence that relevant management plans and mitigating measures were fully implemented to address each key project risk, and some evidence that risk mitigation has benefitted performance. (all must be true to select this option)

• 2: The project monitored risks every quarter, as evidenced by a regularly updated risk log. Some updates were made to management plans and mitigation measures. (both must be true to select this option)

1: The risk log was not updated every quarter as required. There may be some evidence that the project monitored risks that could have affected the project's achievement of results, but there is no explicit evidence that management actions were taken to mitigate risks. The project's performance was disrupted by factors that could have been anticipated or managed.

Evidence

Progress

report has identified project issues, risk and lessons learned logs and updated them regularly and the last update of these logs were attached as annex to the project terminal report page 28-29, upload under question

4.

Efficient

Quality Rating: Satisfactory

14. Adequate resources were mobilized to achieve intended results. If not, management decisions were taken to adjust expected results in the project's results framework.

• Yes

O No

Evidence

The project has no funding gap.

15. Were project inputs procured and delivered on time to efficiently contribute to results? (select the option from 1-3 that best reflects the project)

3: The project had a procurement plan and kept it updated. Implementation of the plan was generally on or ahead of schedule. On a quarterly basis, the project reviewed operational bottlenecks to procuring inputs in a timely manner and addressed them through appropriate management actions. (all must be true to select this option)

• 2: The project had a procurement plan and kept it updated. The project annually reviewed operational bottlenecks to procuring inputs in a timely manner and addressed them through appropriate management actions. (all must be true to select this option)

1: The project did not have an updated procurement plan. The project team may have reviewed operational bottlenecks to procuring inputs regularly, however management actions were not taken to address them. This option is also selected if operational bottlenecks were not reviewed during the project in a timely manner.

Evidence

Project monthly meetings have been organized regularly. The issues on the project inputs, issues/challenges have been addressed to ensure deliver of the project outputs/products, which immediate actions have been identified, coordinated and implemented on timely manner (see Annual procurement plan 2015 as example)			
List of Uploaded Documents			
File Name	Modified By	Modified	
Procurement Plan DESIA2015.pdf	chitlatda.keomuongchanh@undp.org	2/3/2017 3:57:50 AM	

16. Was there regular monitoring and recording of cost efficiencies, taking into account the expected quality of results? (select the option from 1-3 that best reflects the project)

3: There is evidence that the project regularly reviewed costs against relevant comparators (e.g., other projects or country offices) or industry benchmarks to ensure the project maximized results delivered with given resources. The project actively coordinated with other relevant ongoing projects and initiatives (UNDP or other) to ensure complementarity and sought efficiencies wherever possible (e.g. joint activities.) (both must be true to select this option)

۲ 2: The project monitored its own costs and gave anecdotal examples of cost efficiencies (e.g., spending less to get the same result,) but there was no systematic analysis of costs and no link to the expected quality of results delivered. The project communicated with a few other projects to coordinate activities. (both must be true to select this option)

1: There is little or no evidence that the project monitored its own costs and considered ways to save money beyond following standard procurement rules. It is not clear that the link between cost savings and quality of results was made.

Evidence

The

Effective

result of the project-mid term review indicated that the programme has generally managed funds and expertise economically to deliver high quality of products and service (page 4). The project implemented all procurement following UNDP NIM SOP procedures. In addition, the progress report also capture the expenditure v.s the approved project budget (see 2015 progress report, page 68-81, uploaded in question 4). The project saved cost and improved efficiencies by jointly organizing the Annual Board Meeting and Annual Review Meeting with other PEI components. In addition, the project created a new mechanism on joint monitoring and jointly shared the cost for the investment monitoring mission.

Quality Rating: Satisfactory 17. Is there evidence that project outputs contributed to the achievement of programme outcomes?

YesNo			
Evidence			
Quarterly progress report has been reported on how contributing to the achievement of program progress report as example, page 2).			
List of Uploaded Documents			
File Name	Modified By	Modified	
Q4 Progress REport DESIA2015.pdf	chitlatda.keomuongchanh@undp.org	2/3/2017 4:15:49 AM	

18. The project delivered its expected outputs.

Yes

O No

Evidence

The

project delivered its expected outputs (see project terminal report, page 4, uploaded in question 4).

19. Were there regular reviews of the work plan to ensure that the project was on track to achieve the desired results, and to inform course corrections if needed? (select the option from 1-3 that best reflects the project)

3: Quarterly progress data informed regular reviews of the project work plan to ensure that the activities implemented were most likely to achieve the desired results. There is evidence that data and lessons learned (including from evaluations) were used to inform course corrections, as needed. (both must be true to select this option)

• 2: There was at least one review of the work plan each year with a view to assessing if project activities were on track to achieving the desired development results (i.e., outputs.) There is no evidence that data or lessons learned were used to inform the review(s).

1: While the project team may have reviewed the work plan at least once per year to ensure outputs were delivered on time, no link was made to the delivery of desired development results. Select this option also if no regular review of the work plan by management took place.

Evidence

Quarterly progress reports and quarterly workplans have been prepared and reviewed to ensure that the project is on track to deliver the expected results. Any change to the workplan/activities/budget have been discussed in the monthly meetings and minutes were prepared and filed. The results were used to inform the adjustment to the workplan/budget revision.

20. Were the intended targeted groups systematically identified and engaged, prioritizing the marginalized and excluded, to ensure results were achieved as expected? (select the option from 1-3 that best reflects the project)

3: Targeted groups were systematically identified using credible data sources on their capacity needs, deprivation and/or exclusion from development opportunities relevant to the project's area of work. There is clear evidence to confirm that targeted groups were reached as intended. The project engaged regularly with targeted groups to assess whether they benefitted as expected and adjustments were made if necessary to refine targeting. (all must be true to select this option)

2: The project targeted specific groups and/or geographic areas, based on some evidence of their capacity needs, deprivation and/or exclusion from development opportunities relevant to the project's area of work. Some evidence is provided to confirm that project beneficiaries were members of the targeted groups. There was some engagement with beneficiaries to assess whether they benefited as expected. (all must be true to select this option)

1: The project did not report on specific targeted groups, or there is no evidence to confirm that project beneficiaries have capacity needs or are populations deprived and/or excluded from development opportunities relevant to the project's area of work. There may have been some engagement with beneficiaries to assess whether they benefitted as expected, but not regularly.

O Not Applicable

Evidence

In

PEI Phase I, the project target group and geographical area were identified based on the findings of consultations on poverty-environment linkage in two Northern provinces and two Southern provinces (PEI Phase I ProDoc, p.11). PEI Phase II continues to work in the four provinces and expands to two more provinces. Government staffs and institutiosl are the main target groups for the this project. The project mid-term review report confirmed that the project is highly relevant to Lao PDR, as evidence by the mid-term review report page 3.

21. Were at least 40 per cent of the personnel hired by the project, regardless of contract type, female?

Yes

O No

Evidence

The project has 3 NIM project staff (2 female = 67%).

Sustainability & National Ownership

Quality Rating: Satisfactory

22. Were stakeholders and partners fully engaged in the decision-making, implementation and monitoring of the project? (select the option from 1-3 that best reflects the project)

3: Only national systems (i.e., procurement, monitoring, evaluation, etc.) were to fully implement and monitor the project. All relevant stakeholders and partners were fully and actively engaged in the process, playing a lead role in project decision-making, implementation and monitoring. (all must be true to select this option)

• 2: National systems (i.e., procurement, monitoring, evaluation, etc.) were used in combination with other support (such as country office support or project systems) to implement and monitor the project, as needed. All relevant stakeholders and partners were actively engaged in the process, playing an active role in project decision-making, implementation and monitoring. (both must be true to select this option)

1: There was relatively limited or no engagement with national stakeholders and partners in the decision-making, implementation and/or monitoring of the project.

O Not Applicable

Evidence

The

government at national and provincial level are fully engaged and take the lead role in planning, implementation and monitoring of the project activities. The project operates under NIM SOP, which is developed based on national systems especially national procurement system.

23. Were there regular monitoring of changes in capacities and performance of institutions and systems, and were the implementation arrangements adjusted according to changes in partner capacities? (select the option from 1-3 that best reflects the project)

3: Changes in capacities and performance of national institutions and systems were regularly and comprehensively assessed/monitored using clear indicators, rigorous methods of data collection and credible data sources. There is clear evidence that capacities and performance of national institutions and systems improved by the end of the project, if applicable. Implementation arrangements were formally reviewed and adjusted, if needed, in agreement with partners according to changes in partner capacities. (all must be true to select this option)

• 2: Aspects of changes in capacities and performance of relevant national institutions and systems were monitored by the project using indicators and reasonably credible data sources. There is limited evidence that capacities and performance of national institutions and systems improved by the end of the project, if applicable. Some adjustment was made to implementation arrangements if needed to reflect changes in partner capacities. (all must be true to select this option)

1: Some aspects of changes in capacities and performance of relevant national institutions and systems may have been monitored by the project, however changes to implementation arrangements were not considered. Also select this option if changes in capacities and performance of relevant national institutions and systems were not monitored by the project.

O Not Applicable

Evidence

HACT

assessment was conducted in 2015 and there hasn't been any substantial changes in capacities of government counterparts. However, regular monitoring of changes in capacities relevant to the project have been conducted through observation and regular monthly meeting. Immediate actions are usually identified and implemented in line with UNDP Policy and Donor Policy.

24. Were the transition and phase-out arrangements implemented as planned by the end of the project, taking into account any adjustments made to the plan during implementation? (select the option from 1-3 that best reflects the project)

• 3: The project's governance mechanism regularly reviewed the project's sustainability plan, including arrangements for transition and phase-out, to ensure the project remained on track in meeting the requirements set out by the plan. The plan was implemented as planned by the end of the project, taking into account any adjustments made during implementation. (both must be true to select this option)

2: There was a review of the project's sustainability plan, including arrangements for transition and phase-out, to ensure the project remained on track in meeting the requirements set out by the plan. The plan was implemented by the end of the project, taking into account any adjustments made during implementation. (both must be true to select this option)

1: The project may have had a sustainability plan that specified arrangements for transition and phase-out, but there was no review of this strategy after it was developed. Also select this option if the project did not have a sustainability strategy.

Evidence

During 2015 the government staff and project teams participated in

several South-South Cooperation Missions and exchanges. Mission reports included identification of particular best practices and identified the need for institutionalization of some of these practices. Project exit strategy and sustainability plans have been developed and presented at the project annual review meeting.

List of Uploaded Documents

File Name	Modified By	Modified
PEI_Lao_PDR_Exit_Strategy_DRAFT.pdf	chitlatda.keomuongchanh@undp.org	1/15/2017 7:49:24 AM
PEI Lao PDR Sustainability Strategy draft.pdf	chitlatda.keomuongchanh@undp.org	1/15/2017 7:49:36 AM

25. Please upload the final lessons learned report that was produced for this project.

List of Uploaded Documents

File Name	Modified By	Modified
Terminal_Report_text_Annex_1_2_3_lesson_learned_page_17pdf	chitlatda.keomuongchanh@undp.org	1/15/2017 7:47:45 AM

Summary/Final Project Board Comments: