

# How Rural Advisory Services can increase the voice of farmers in agriculture value chains & policy discussions related to agriculture

Date: 1/12/2021

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### Background

- ➤ Established in 2014 from farmer's conference backed in 2012-13
- The network has 92 farmer organizations with over 30,000 farmers (59 groups in 2020)
- The objective of the network is to improve cooperation among small holder farmers to:
- 1. Strengthening organization
- Promote sustainable agriculture (including climate resilience)
- Generate more incomes through agri-business development
- 4. Influence policies

### Governance of LFN

### **Management committee**

Mr. Khammoun Xaymany- President

Mr. Neung Sombounkhan- Vice president

Mr. Bouan Euern Silaphet- Committee member

Mr. Bounthah – Committee member/head of vegetable network

Ms. Bouachanh- Committee member/head of women committee

Ms. Bounma- Committee member

Ms. Phoutthasone- Committee member/ head of youth committee

### Secretariat

Mr. Phoutthasinh- Director (CLICK)

Mr. Tom Louangsakha- M&E officer (CLICK)

Ms. Phonepasueth- Policy officer (CLICK)

Ms. Chanapha- Accountant (CLICK)

Ms. Phitsamai- Finance (CLICK)

Ms. Malayvanh- KM officer (CLICK)

Ms. Maikham- Agriculture officer (CLICK)

Ms. Phonekeo- Agri-business officer (Direct contract with LFN)

### **Advisory committee**

Mr. Somxay Sisanonh- Director General of Department of Technical Extension and Agro-Processing (DTEAP)

Mr. Souvanthong Namvong- Deputy Head of Extension Division, DTEAP

Advisory line

Management line

# Services on farmer organization

- Capacity assessment and strategic planning at FO level
- > FO profiling
- Commodity network set up
- > Use of mobile phone and social media
- > Basic financial management
- > Leadership development

# Services on sustainable production

- > Participatory action research by expert farmers
- > Farmer to farmer learning
- Directory of farmer experts
- ➤ Videos shared on social medias on agriculture production and processing

# Economic services to priority groups

- > Market access and partnership arrangement with buyers
- ➤ Business planning (Eg. ARISE sub-grant agreement, LFN economic analysis tool)
- Grants for start up revolving fund at FO level
- ➤ Matching grant to individual farmers to start agri-business (Youth promotion scheme funded by LURAS)
- ➤ Loan (through ARISE fund)
- ➤ Advise on productions

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### Economic services to influence policies

- Capture farmer's voice
- > Share farmer's voice on social media
- > Participate technical working groups
- ➤ Organize policy dialogues at local and national levels. For example:
- 1. Farmer indebtedness
- 2. Impact of pesticides
- 3. Agriculture cooperative
- 4. Youth in agriculture
- 5. Impact of COVID19

### Youth in agri-business scheme in Laos



- ➤ Support up to 1,000\$ per business plan (grant)
- ➤ Process: submit application (2 pages)
- Selected applicants will be trained to develop detail business plan and be trained on related production/processing topics.

### Asparagus project





### Native chicken production





### Jasmine rice project



### Bitter quash project





### Jhai Coffee Cooperative: Green Bean processing and marketing project

1,000 beneficiaries (273 women, 349 youth) from March to July 2021





### Jaeng Agriculture Cooperative: Rice project

69 Beneficiaries (19 women, 28 youth) from April to June 2021







### Nongxong vegetable group: Spring onion seed project

100 beneficiaries from April to August 2021







### Dongkha pig production group





### Seed project with Oxfam





### FAW army worm research project



### We are watching campaign





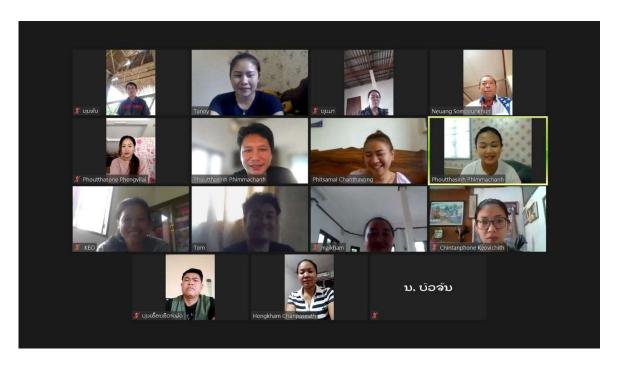








### Organizational management



4 management meetings conducted



2 steering committee meeting conducted

# Strength and weakness

- Powerful and recognized voice of farmers
- Simple extension services by farmer experts
- Private sectors want to work with

- Financial sustainability to operate the network and to provide services to members
- Not yet official registered
- ➤ Have limited financial services to members

# Ways forward

- Continue to expand members with a strategy to set up through commodity network
- Register the network once the Government have a framework
- Continue economic services to members based on market access
- Focus policy work on impact of COVID19 (transport cost) and policies in regard to commercial agriculture development (access to low interest credit)