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PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION MANUAL



PALD

POVERTY ALLEVIATION THROUGH LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT IN THE NORTHERN UPLANDS OF VIETNAM

December 2014

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FOREWORD

To improve the implementation performance and sustainability of similar development projects and programs in Vietnam and other countries in the region, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) have developed this Project Implementation Manual (PIM) for the Poverty Alleviation through Livestock Development in the Northern Uplands of Vietnam (PALD), which has been implemented by Agronomes et Vétérinaires Sans Frontières (AVSF) since 2005.

The manual will serve as a reference guide for various related stakeholders, staff of implementing agencies, local government departments and project management units as well as donors. It should assist in the planning, management and implementation of projects similar to PALD.

The information provided is intended to show the practical approaches that have been used for various phases of the project cycle, from project preparation and planning to implementation and hand-over to partners and beneficiaries.

The objective is to assist related stakeholders to establish good management and implementation practices at program and project levels so that all activities are fully and accurately planned, implemented and managed with readily available supporting information.

The Project Implementation Manual is burnt on to CD with soft copies of all supporting documents for the manual, which can be shared easily with all interested stakeholders. It is also available electronically from the SDC website (www.eda.admin.ch/vietnam) and the AVSF website (www.avsfvietnam.org).

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ABBREVIATIONS

AVSF	Agronomes et Vétérinaires Sans Frontières
CHF	Swiss Franc
CSF	Classical Swine Fever (or Hog Cholera)
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
DAES	District Agricultural Extension Station
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DFM	Disease Free Model
DLP	Department of Livestock Production under MARD
DLDP	District Livestock Development Plan
DOC	Day Old Chicken
DSLDP	District Small Livestock Development Plan
DPDP	District Pig Development Plan
DPC	District People's Committee
DVS	District Veterinary Station
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
FIG	Farmer Interest Group
HEC	Household Economic Calculations
HHs	Households
ICD	International Cooperation Department (under MARD)
LVN	Local veterinary network
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTR	Mid-term Review
NIAS	National Institute of Animal Sciences
PALD	Poverty Alleviation through Livestock Development in the Northern Uplands of Vietnam
PIM	Project Implementation Manual
PSC	Project Steering Committee
SEDP	Socio-economic Development Plan
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
TOT	Training of Trainer
VBSP	Vietnam Bank of Social Policies
VND	Vietnam Dong
WU	Women's Union

1. INTRODUCTION

Background

SDC in Vietnam has supported poverty reduction in remote upland rural areas through small-scale, small livestock production since 2005. The project is named PALD (Poverty Alleviation through Livestock Development) and was implemented by Agronomes et Vétérinaires Sans Frontières (AVSF). It has evolved through different phases along several stages of development. In Early 2011, SDC decided to support a third phase of the project; to scale up the most successful income raising models in 64 communes of four districts, through local partners involved in small livestock development, capacity building and strengthening of market linkages.

This document outlines the key approaches and strategies that have evolved over this period and represents a successful model that is believed to have wide ranging national and regional potential for poverty relief and replication.

Problem Identification

The following issues are noted as challenges that PALD has been designed to address in the implementation of its project, as well as limiting factors that the project is designed to overcome.

National level

- Current livestock development approaches in Vietnam are focused on support to large-scale production to the detriment of small-scale producers.
- There is a lack of supporting policy on small livestock production in Vietnam.
- Livestock promotion policies focus mainly on inputs and have little support to capacity building for producers.
- Top-down policy at national level has created a “one size fits all” approach to livestock expansion at local levels.
- Unregulated imports of low quality livestock products are seriously affecting local markets.
- Lack of stability in national food commodities has caused a great instability in feed price for livestock, reducing the sustainability of production and profit.
- There is a lack of guidance on implementation of animal health policies.

Local institutions

- Limitations on funding make it difficult for supporting institutes to function effectively and retain staff with sufficient capacity in extension departments and animal health services.
- Top down policy from a national level has created difficulties in local institutions that lack the flexibility to adapt to the local context.
- High pressure on local institutions to meet goals for socio-economic targets has left over-stretched and under-resourced departments
- Inflexible budget lines do not allow a strong focus on capacity building and “soft-ware” interventions.

Village level and farmers

- High levels of poverty and low education outcomes in remote, rural, ethnic minority areas.
- There is a lack of technical knowledge on:
 - Production
 - Animal protection
 - Market: Access, negotiations, price setting, business management

- Disease outbreaks are common, so there is a high risk to production investments.
- There is limited access to market information so producers are vulnerable to unstable and unrealistic prices set by traders.
- There is a lack of coordinated action, so small scale producers are unable to maximize economies of scale for input supplies, or profits from collective sale.
- There is limited space for bottom-up inputs on planning, policy and investment and support services are not responsive to farmers' needs.
- Farmers have difficulty in accessing credit.

Strategic Framework

In response to the above mentioned problem analysis, the following framework outlines SDC's strategic agenda for its project from 2011 to 2015.

Vision

SDC in Vietnam believes that it can, through partners, efficiently support household farmers to sustainably produce small livestock that will effectively contribute to poverty alleviation and food security.

Goal

PALD will work towards creating significant improvements in the sustainability and scale of small livestock production, with an aim to reduce poverty, in 9 districts of 3 provinces by 2015, as well as contributing to a more enabling environment for small scale producers in at a national level in Vietnam.

Core Values and Principles

Target beneficiaries

- PALD works with women as primary beneficiaries because they are the family members that are traditionally responsible for small livestock
- PALD promotes small livestock development rather than large livestock as it is more suitable to the target group of poor, ethnic minority, remote communities.
- PALD believes in respecting the cultures and traditions of indigenous communities

Approach/ Way of working

- PALD believes that small livestock development does not require subsidized inputs when sufficient credit access is available
- PALD believes in market driven development – there must be a market for products before any promotion of production begins. Therefore market analysis will drive further promotion actions.
- Beneficiary needs and choices will be analyzed together with environmental suitability to direct species choice for PALD support.
- PALD believes in hands on training as the best mechanism for capacity building of both farmers and institutions.
- Collective action of farmers is essential to:
 - Increase their power within the value chain
 - Reduce costs and increase efficiencies in accessing input supplies
 - Empower their voices, opinions and opportunities in planning and access to services
- All project actions should have a clear mainstreaming mechanism to ensure replication of good practice

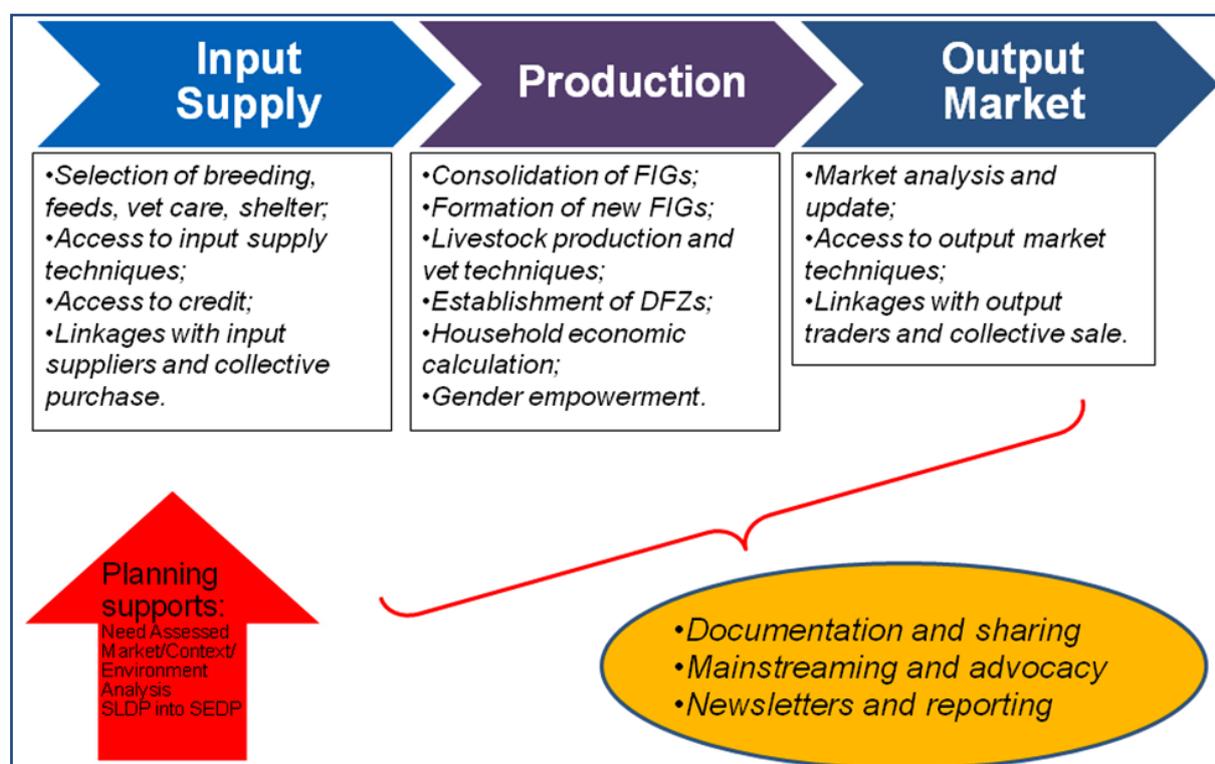
- PALD strives to integrate its project principles into mainstream actions without diffusing its minimum standards

Partnerships

- PALD will work through partners in order to:
 - Leverage our resources,
 - Build motivation and
 - Positively influence policy and practice.
- It is essential that PALD actions are integrated into Small Livestock Development Plans (SLDPs) under Socio Economic Development Plans (SEDPs) of implementing districts and provinces.

Core Components

PALD should be viewed as a value chain intervention and can be represented as follows:



Therefore the most logical focus of the 3 core sectors is:

- Component 1: Livestock protection and production
- Component 2: Market development
- Component 3: Sharing, learning and replication

Components 1 and 2 are action implementation focused, and operate in close coordination, dividing their roles clearly between the technical staff. Component 3 will direct M&E from the 2 implementing components and extract relevant data and information for documentation, sharing and advocacy.

Objectives of the Core Components

- Component 1: To assist farmers to adopt skills and knowledge on small livestock production techniques and benefit from better access to livestock related services, which are consolidated through supporting local partners' capacity building.

- Component 2: To assist farmers to maximize incomes from small livestock production by strengthening house-based economic calculations and building and consolidating reliable market linkages.
- Component 3: To capitalize on experience and share findings between all related stakeholders in order to scale up at provincial and national levels.

Implementation Action Plan

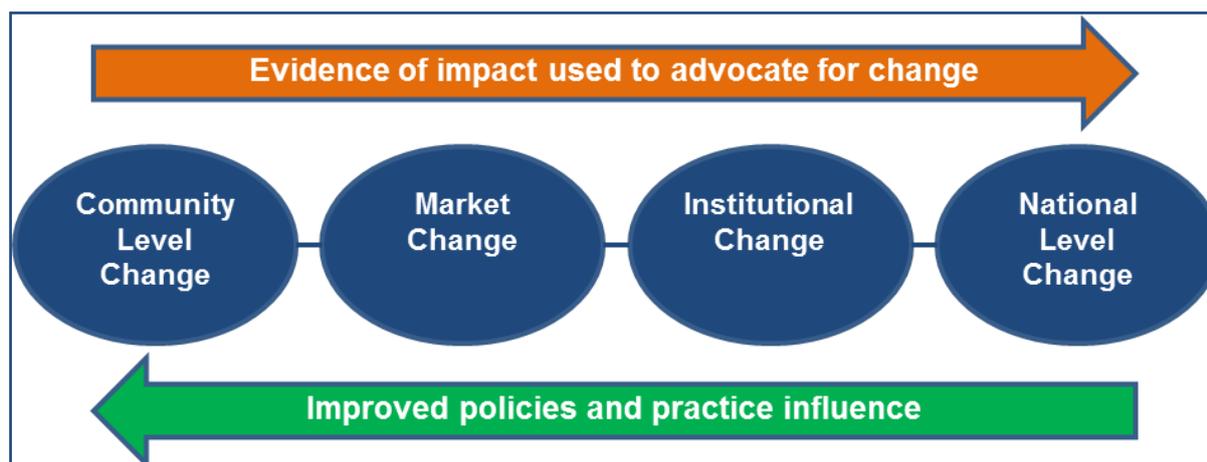
The PALD project implementation requires that actions are implemented in a specific sequence to ensure there is a logical flow of actions that build on strong foundations, as well as meet the requirements of the guiding principles.

The key stages for implementation are as follows:

- Sign preliminary agreements for with partner institutions (Provincial and district government, WU, district extension department, Animal health department, credit providers)
- Complete market assessments, needs assessments and suitability analysis for various small livestock models
- Share assessments and analysis with partners and beneficiary groups
- TOT training on FIG formation and operation
- FIG formation in target districts
- FIG selection of livestock models
- Support to District government to develop district small livestock plans (SLDPs)
- TOT for various technical models of small livestock production and disease control
- Roll-out training to FIGs on production models and disease control
- TOT training in market access and linkage
- Roll-out training in market access and linkage
- TOT in household economic calculation (HEC)
- Roll-out training to FIGs on household economic calculations (HEC)
- Credit access support and training to FIGs
- TOT training in TOT gender equality and gender roles in market-oriented livestock
- Roll-out training in gender equality and gender roles in market-oriented livestock
- Review of FIG needs to feed into district SLDPs
- Establishment of disease free zones as pilots (1 in each district)
- Support FIG collective action in buying inputs
- Develop market linkages for FIG producers
- Develop marketing information for sharing with buyers
- Support FIG collective action in selling outputs
- Monitor market prices and update producers with newsletters and leaflets
- Monitor FIG status and project implementation.
- Develop project technical documentation for sharing and replication
- Implement study tour program between FIGs

Model of Change

PALD will build effective models and tools for best practice small livestock development. Partner with and mentor key institutions to implement these models to bring about local level change and influence methodology, practice and policies, aiming towards adoption and replication. Use evidence created at local levels to advocate for change at a national level.



Project Budget

This phase of PALD was planned for the period from Feb 2011 till December 2014, with a total budget of CHF 3,367,598, of which SDC's contribution is CHF 1,734,858. The project started its expansion to 5 new districts from December 2012 with an additional budget of CHF 2,604,844, of which SDC's contribution is CHF 1,343,631. The rest is contributed by the farmers themselves with a small part from the government.

Project Impact

PALD was started in 2005 and by December 2014 it had established 532 Farmer Interest Groups (FIGs). With refined methodology, in its final 2 years there are the creation of 106 more FIGs (approximately 2,000 households) and the consolidation for all existing ones, reaching 6,869 direct beneficiary households. PALD coverage will be 9 districts across 3 provinces in North West Vietnam.

The total impact is estimated as 12,031 direct beneficiary households in all three phases (exceeding the set target by 4.6%), of which 97.36% are women and 88.15% are ethnic minorities. Furthermore, there are about 68,000 households benefiting indirectly (through improved services and support capacity). Increased knowledge and skills for better livelihood through adoption of improved small livestock production methods and technologies and better access to livestock related services and markets is expected to: reduce poverty levels between 10-40% for beneficiaries (poverty rate among FIG member households drops significantly from 48.05% in 2011 to 17.25% in 2014), reduce livestock mortality rates to between 5 and 10% (survival rate of livestock is over 95%, higher than the set target of 90%), and provide a significant additional income for households (FIG members earn more from livestock production by 25 to 50 USD/month/household).

A recent Cost Benefit Analysis of PALD project shows a good result of the project with a satisfactory Net Present Value (NPV) of over 5 million USD at discount rate of 10% and a very high Internal Rate of Return (IRR) of 343% over the investment period of 5 years under the given assumptions. Furthermore, the Benefit/Cost ratios of about 1.51 calculated in the CBA model reflects the actual benefit from small livestock production observed in the project districts.

1.1 The Project Overview [in English](#) and [in Vietnamese](#).

2. STRATEGIC PLAN

The Strategic Plan outlines PALD's Phase 3 strategic agenda for its program from 2013 to 2014. It aims to bring greater coherence to and increase the impact of PALD's work in its three provinces of the Northern Mountainous region of Vietnam, through identifying key drivers of change, sharpening its focus, defining goals and objectives, articulating a common model of change, mobilizing human and financial resources and identifying mechanisms for improving program quality.

The five key areas that the Strategic Plan elaborates on are:

- The core principles and values of the PALD approach.
- The model of change that PALD hopes use to create local impact as well as affect both national and local change in policy and practice.
- The operational resources that PALD will use over the next 2 years to support its aims for improved quality and consolidation of actions in existing working areas as well as expansion into 5 new districts.
- The logical sequencing of actions required for consolidation and expansion of PALD before 2015.
- How PALD will responsibly manage its exit strategy following SDC's withdrawal from the program after 7 years of funding.

This document will be a useful reference for all development workers, from both donors, executing agencies as well as government departments, in brainstorming, designing and implementing strategically and systematically a new program or project. Furthermore, a brief summary of the Strategic Plan is also available for their quick reference.

2.1 The Full Version of Strategic Plan [in English](#) and [in Vietnamese](#).

2.2 The Summary of Strategic Plan [in English](#) and [in Vietnamese](#).

3. FIG FORMATION AND OPERATION

The farmer interest group (FIG) Formation and Operation toolkit consists of two training agendas on FIG formation and operation, one of which should be used when conducting the TOT training for master trainers, while the other is for the roll-out training for the target beneficiaries in the villages.

The toolkit is designed in a practical and easy-to-use manner, which enables the staff of executing agencies to grasp key concepts, criteria and activities for formation and operation of FIGs, then to deliver the hands-on training to the FIG members who will be operate and maintain their FIGs.

3.1 *The TOT Training on FIG Formation and Operation [in English](#) and [in Vietnamese](#).*

3.2 *The Roll-out Training on FIG Formation and Operation [in English](#) and [in Vietnamese](#).*

4. MARKET SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The Market Survey Methodology contains the participatory market assessment tool and the market information system. The market assessment collects concrete information on the demand for livestock products and the supply sources of livestock production inputs, which are then reviewed in detail and analyzed to provide advice and direct support to improve the linkage between producers and traders/ collectors, while the market information system releases monthly market newsletters to provide periodic updates of market information to the target beneficiaries.

The participatory market survey methodology is a good reference for staff of executing agencies to design and undertake the rapid market assessment to have updated information and analysis, which will help to elaborate the newsletters to be publicly shared with the target farmers for their better understanding of the livestock market situation and emerging market trends.

4.1 *The Handbook on Participatory Market Assessment* [in English](#) and [in Vietnamese](#).

4.2 *The Questionnaire for Household Economic Survey* [in English](#) and [in Vietnamese](#).

4.3 *The Template of Market Newsletter* [in English](#) and [in Vietnamese](#).

5. LIVESTOCK BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The Livestock Business Development toolkit is a set of training materials for TOT training and roll-out training, including the lecture notes and practical exercises. Furthermore, a handbook on economic calculation for farming households is designed to record their production costs as well as their income from their livestock production.

The lecture notes, which should be used in combination with the training exercises, present the basic concepts of household business development and are used as a guide for the staff of executing agencies who deliver TOT training to the master trainers in the districts during their TOT courses, who later can provide training to the target farming households in the roll-out training. The training exercise is a series of practical exercises, which can assist in analyzing business components and will be used to complete the business plan of the households at the end of training course.

5.1 The TOT Training on Household Business Development [in English](#) and [in Vietnamese](#).

5.2 The Roll-out Training on Household Business Development [in English](#) and [in Vietnamese](#).

5.3 The Handbook on Household Economic Calculation [in English](#) and [in Vietnamese](#).

6. LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION TECHNIQUES

The Livestock Production Techniques toolkit is a compilation of handbooks on raising techniques of sow, finishing pig, chicken, rabbit and goat. In addition, the picture handbooks are designed with many illustrative pictures and minimize words to target the illiterate farmers, particularly the ethnic minorities constrained with language barrier.

The toolkit is a hands-on and easy-to-apply document for technical extension workers who can deliver training and give hands-on advice to the farmers and local communities, who raise livestock in their households.

In addition, a manual on training and certification of veterinary practice license for para-veterinarians is included in the toolkit as well.

6.1 *The Handbook on Sow Raising Techniques* [in English](#) and [in Vietnamese](#).

6.2 *The Handbook on Finishing Pig Raising Techniques* [in English](#) and [in Vietnamese](#).

6.3 *The Handbook on Backyard Chicken Raising Techniques* [in English](#) and [in Vietnamese](#).

6.4 *The Handbook on Training and Certification of Practice License for Paravet* [in English](#) and [in Vietnamese](#).

6.5 *The Picture Handbook on Sow Raising Techniques* [in English](#) and [in Vietnamese](#).

6.6 *The Picture Handbook on Backyard Chicken Raising Techniques* [in English](#) and [in Vietnamese](#).

6.7 *The Picture Handbook on Rabbit Raising Techniques* [in English](#) and [in Vietnamese](#).

6.8 *The Picture Handbook on Goat Raising Techniques* [in English](#) and [in Vietnamese](#).

7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Monitoring and Evaluation system aims not only to achieve scheduled objectives in accordance with the project document but it also plays an important role in ensuring the quality of implementation of the Cooperative Agreement among donors, executing agencies as well as project partners to achieve the common development objectives.

The M&E project framework is constituted with three pillars:

- The steps of project monitoring and evaluation.
- Contents that need to be monitored and evaluated.
- Tools for the M&E.

The monitoring and evaluation document is targeted to staff of donors and executing agencies, who need to frequently monitor the progress to make any timely changes during the project implementation and to evaluate the effectiveness, impact, sustainability and replicability at the end of the project phase or end of the project.

7.1 *The Monitoring and Evaluation System* [in English](#) and [in Vietnamese](#).

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