



**Ministry of Agriculture
and Rural Development**

**United Nations
Development Programme**



**The Project “Support to Public Administration Reform in the Ministry of
Agriculture and Rural development” - VIE/02/016**

PROJECT TERMINATION REPORT

Hanoi, January 2007

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Project Number: VIE/02/016 Project Title: Support to Public Administration Reform Programme of Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development – Phase 2 Project Short Title: PAR in MARD Phase 2 Starting Date: 01 July 2003 Estimated End Date: 30 June 2006 Revised End Date: 31 December 2006 Executing Modality: NEX Executing Agency: The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development UNDP Programme Officer: Trinh Tien Dung Programme Unit: Governance LPAC Date: 13 May 2003	Budget in US\$- VIE/02/016				
	Donors	Total	Year 2003-2005	Year 2006	Year 2007
	UNDP and The Royal Government of Netherlands	2,330,000	1,769,064	550,000	10,936
	Total	2,330,000	1,769,064	550,000	10,936
Sub-Component: Pilot Rural Telecenter Planned Starting Date: 9 March 2006 Estimated End Date: 31 December 2008 LPAC Date: 15 September 2005	Budget in US\$- Telecenter Sub-Component				
	Donors	Total	Year 2006	Year 2007	Year 2008
	UNDP	400,000	120,000	140,000	140,000
	Vietnam Government	100,000	33,000	34,000	33,000
	Total	500,000	153,000	173,000	174,000

Main UNDP Focus Area Linkage with Strategic Results Framework Goal: Public Administration Reform	Government Inputs (in US\$): 257,800 Actual Inputs (in US\$): 2003-2006 : 338,735
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Summary of Result Targets

Objective 1:	Strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to rationalise the organisational structure at central and local level to reflect public service delivery requirements of the sector.
Objective 2:	Strengthen institutional and Human Resource Capacities of key departments in the implementation of the Ministry PAR Action Plan 2005.
Objective 3:	Support to the implementation of the “Information Technology Development and Application Strategy to support State Administration Management” to improve effectiveness and efficiency of the sector.
Objective 4:	Contribute to the strengthening of PAR management capacity by sharing information on methods and tools to other key PAR agents.
Objective 5:	Pilot 13 Rural Telecenters.

Abbreviations

ACAP	Anti Corruption Action Plan
ADB	Asian Development Bank
APR	Annual Project Review
ARD	Agricultural and rural development sector
AWP	Annual work plan
CFAW	Committee for Advancement of Women
CGAP	Country Programme Action Plan (UNDP)
CMARD	MARD College of Management
CP	Country Programme (UNDP)
CPD	Country Programme Document (UNDP)
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DOP	Department of Personnel
GACA	Government coordinating agencies
GoV	Government of Vietnam
HRM	Human Resources Management
ICD	International Co-operation Department
ICT	Information and communication technology
ISO	International Standard Organisation
IT	Information Technology
LAN	Local area network
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPI	Ministry of Planning and Investment
NAEC	National Agricultural Extension Centre
NAPA	National Academy of Public Administration
NEX	National execution modality
NPD	National Project Director
NPM	National Project Manager
OMARD	Office of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
OoG	Office of the Government
OSS	One Stop Shop
PAR	Public Administrative Reform
PAR SC	Project Steering Committee
PD	Project Document
PMIS	Personnel Management Information System
PSP	Public Service Provider
PSU	Project Support Unit
Q&A	Questions and answers
OMS	Quality management system
OWP	Quarterly work plan
RTA	Resident Technical Adviser
The Project	VIE/02/016 Support to PARD in MARD project
TNA	Training Needs Assessment
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VCD	Video compact disk
WB	World Bank
WWP	Weekly work plan

Executive Summary

MARD hereby presents the Project Termination Report for the Support to PAR in MARD, second phase. Due to strong international support by UNDP and the Royal Government of the Netherlands, positive support from the Government of Vietnam and commitment towards the PAR reform process by MARD leadership the Project is now at project end able to present a fundamentally positive project termination report.

A termination report differs from regular annual reports by focussing strongly on lessons learned and recommending perspectives for the future.

The Project has been implemented from June 2003 until December 2006 as a second phase PAR support project in MARD. Both phases have been supported by UNDP and the Royal Dutch Government and implemented under the UNDP NEX modality. The Project termination report covers and reports achievements, constraints and lessons learned regarding the second phase.

The Project is regarded successful, based on the following three key observations:

- Forming an integral part of the MARD PAR Action Plan 2005, where the Project has supported attainment of 16 outputs of a total of 44, the Project is regarded highly relevant to Government priorities. The Project has developed one new sub-component regarding Rural Telecenters, directly oriented towards poverty reduction and thus further enhancing practical and strategic relevance of the Project.
- The Project has in most cases operated through pilots to develop and test new approaches. In departments and for topics, where pilots have been undertaken, achievements are showing signs of solid impact. Using a pilot approach naturally implies less impact in units outside the pilot and less impact for the sector. Mostly, the pilots have been successful and replication is planned for the next PAR phase, where more widespread impact is anticipated.
- Project achievements are regarded technically and financially sustainable as they are generally fully integrated into administrative structures and procedures without significant demand for technical support and increased recurrent budgets. Where achievements depend on staff increase, MARD has ensured budget for this.

The project termination report provides information and observations underpinning the above evaluation in more detail as follows:

Chapter one summarises briefly the objectives as per the original Project Document. During project life time fundamental changes to the Project document have not been requested. The Project has proposed a Rural Telecenters Pilot be singled out from the original component three (the IT component). This was based on lessons learned and emerging needs to strengthen approaches aiming directly at

poverty reduction for farming households. The Rural Telecenters Pilot is consequently reported as an additional sub-component five, added to the original four components, dealing with organisational restructuring, human resources, IT upgrading and strengthening PAR leadership and management.

Chapter two summarises project results. The Project has contributed positively to realising UNDP's country programme 2005 for Vietnam, attaining three specific targets (of 11 in total) allocated to MARD; (i) piloting PMIS, OSS and ISO; (ii) Conducting an external evaluation of the MARD PAR Action Plan 2005; and (iii) mainstreaming gender issues into PAR activities in MARD.

The Project has consistently supported MARD orienting services more directly towards the needs of the ultimate beneficiaries – the farming households. Three landmark studies – the Farmer Needs Survey, supported during phase one, the Public Service Providers study and the Legal Impact Assessment – have mapped the expectations and needs regarding public service delivery by MARD and consequently offered substantial input to the organisational restructuring process under component one. Establishment of seven pilot OSS is a practical expression of the enhanced user orientation in MARD.

Under component two, dealing with human resources, MARD has during project implementation embarked on the first steps towards developing modern human resources management and development systems. HR management and administrative systems have been strengthened, using the PMIS and piloting use of systematic job descriptions. HR development has been strengthened by analysing training needs, formulating training plans and upgrading the two CMARDs. The established cooperation with the Singapore Civil Service College is regarded as a significant and very promising result under this component.

The pilot implementation of ISO in OMARD has demonstrated how ISO can be used internally to streamline the organisation and externally to ensure documented quality service delivery. The pilot has been very successful and paves the way for replication and expansion during the next PAR phase.

Component three has ensured fully operational e-MARD structures, linking 38 DARDs to the network at MARD level. This has resulted in improved two-way communication, enhanced productivity and better case handling. Tailor-made training for different functional levels regarding the use of ICT tools, combined with the IT co-ordinators' practice network are highly efficient solutions, having demonstrated their value already. The OMARD website has been upgraded and now offers a user-friendly Q&A service in addition to the huge number of documents, made available for the public and for civil servants in the ARD sector.

The Rural Telecenters Pilot has been launched early 2006. Funding has been ensured to implement the pilot until 2008. Early results are promising, cooperation

with localities good and the Project will have established the telecenters physically by the end of 2006.

In addition to stipulated outputs the Project has supported the MARD Inspectorate to develop the Anti-corruption Action Plan, making MARD the first ministry to present a consequent plan to combat corruption, thrift practice and waste of public funds.

Gender mainstreaming has been supported under the Project. General gender awareness has increased as a consequence, and gender balance in MARD is – although still not satisfactory – not worse than other ministries. Gender balance in the ARD sector is acceptable, although still leaving room for improvement.

The OSS pilot has demonstrated the relevance of using this mechanism also at the level of ministry. 2,700 requests were received during a 10 month pilot period, of which 98.5% were processed and returned within the stipulated deadline. The pilot will form basis for full scale application of the OSS mechanism within MARD agencies during the next phase.

Chapter three summarises approaches and issues relating to project planning and management. Planning has applied participatory approaches, involving project stakeholders to the extent possible in the planning process to develop AWP, which were subsequently specified into weekly work plans. Resource mobilisation has been a focus point for the PSU, promoting the use of Task Forces, which has proven very successful. Project management has fully adhered to the stipulations in the NEX guidelines and GoV regulations, which was also recognised in the annual external audits, which came out without major critical observations. Recommendations were expediently incorporated into work plans and procedures. The Project has coordinated effectively with Government agencies and donors during implementation, sharing progress reports and annual review reports with concerned agencies. The Project has applied log frame approaches aiming at establishing a result-based monitoring system.

A summary of strengths and weaknesses in project implementation is presented at the end of chapter three. MARD leadership has consistently demonstrated strong commitment towards the Project and the PAR Action Plan. Among shortcomings some delays occurred due to market shortage regarding specialists and consultants, promulgation of legal documents, changes in key personnel and the absence of specific national budget lines for PAR implementation. Constraints regarding lack of incentives and allowances for seconded staff and less attractive salary levels have exerted influence primarily on time schedules for project implementation, being in many cases overcome by high level of dedication and commitment.

Chapter four reflects on lessons learned during implementation. Success factors comprise leadership commitment, ownership and partnership with stakeholders.

Tangible results appear better realised when project support fully matches perceived needs and when the support has a well designed balance between hard and soft elements as seen in the IT component. Tailor-made and demand-driven training has demonstrated value for money as has the ICT-network based information sharing. It is anticipated that improved project design would further enhance ownership; consistency in staffing and need-based training would also further enhance implementation. Gender balance in MARD could be further enhanced, and here consequent leadership commitment at all levels apparently constitutes the driving force for changes.

It is anticipated that the results obtained during this phase could serve as a stepping stone for stronger orientation towards beneficiaries needs during subsequent PAR reform phases.

Chapter five summarises the recommendations. Four basic recommendations are presented:

- 1 - MARD kindly requests government agencies, UNDP and Royal Dutch Embassy to consider the continuous support for the implementation of MARD PAR Action Plan 2007-2010 via a new project (see Detailed Outlines in Annex I);
- 2 –Sub-component Rural Telecentres Pilot continues to be implemented under the framework of a new project when it is formulated;
- 3 – MARD to carry out necessary procedures to liquidate and/or transfer some project assets procured before 2005 to the national agencies where appropriate and finalise the project balance and auditing;
- 4 – To maintain the operation of the necessary Project Support Unit until a new project is officially launched (approximately 4-5 months). MARD and UNDP to discuss and agree on the detailed work plan for this period.

This first recommendation is fully within the prevailing policy framework formulated by UNDP and the GoV and – if granted – would ensure that the momentum in the PAR reform process, built during the previous phases, is not lost while finalising the support modalities for the programmatic multi-donor support.

1 Project Objectives and Outputs

1.1 Outcome and Components

The Support to PAR in MARD project (UNDP VIE/02/016) is the second phase of a previous PAR project which was successfully completed in June 2003. The GoV requested a second phase is support of the overall outcome target¹ “*Strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of MARD to realize its state management function in the sector and to improve the sectoral administrative system in order to boost the socio-economic development in the rural areas in Vietnam*” of the MAR PAR Action Plan 2005. The UNDP and the Government of the Netherlands jointly agreed to support the request with the total budget of 2,330,000 USD. The Project PAR in MARD Phase II was designed under a project-level objective stating ‘*Effective and efficient MARD administration*’.

From project start, the Project had four objectives, each structured as components:

1. Strengthen the capacity of the MARD to rationalise the organisational structure at central and local level to reflect public service delivery requirements of the sector;
2. Strengthen institutional and human resources capacities of key departments in the implementation of the Ministry PAR Action Plan 2005;
3. Support to the implementation of ‘Information Technology Development and Application Strategy to Support State Administration Management’ to improve effectiveness and efficiency of the sector; and
4. Contribute to the strengthening of PAR management capacity by sharing information on methods and tools to other key PAR agents.

Based on the success of the IT Application in MARD in component three, the Project has now formulated a new sub-component to pilot 13 rural telecenters to serve rural communities and farming households. This sub-component was initiated during first half of 2006. The rural telecenters component aims at supporting poverty reduction in rural communities by enhancing income generating capacity:

5. Piloting 13 telecenters in farming communes to identify appropriate and financially sustainable telecenters model/s that can best provide information to enhance income generating capacity of farmers.

¹ Standard logframe terminology has changed since the Project was formulated. The classic distinction between development objectives and immediate objectives has in UNDP terminology been substituted by outcome and outcome target. In this report we use the classic term ‘objective’, signifying immediate objective and use outcome target to reflect a long-term development objective, which in this project context mainly would refer to targets defined either in UNDP’s country programme or in the overall PAR Master Programme.

The four original project objectives reflect objectives and targets in the overall MARD PAR Action Plan 2005, and as such the Project is fully integrated into the Action Plan, supporting 16 out of 44 outputs. The fifth component – rural telecenters – is new and shall be understood as a lessons learned development and add-on to component three.

Stakeholders and Beneficiaries

Stakeholders and beneficiaries are for the original four components senior and middle management staff of MARD and DARDs, male as well as female. Component five – rural telecenters – is directly oriented towards the farming households, being stakeholders and direct beneficiary.

1.2 The Project Logframe

The logframe of the Project provides an overview of relations to overall targets (long term outcomes) as well as the four project specific objectives and outputs under these and presented in [Figure 1-1: Objectives and outputs of the Project](#) below.

Figure 1-1: Objectives and outputs of the Project

Outcome target:	Improved service delivery to farms in MARD sectors
Outcome:	Effective and efficient MARD administration
Objectives and outputs:	
Objective 1:	Strengthening the capacity of MARD to rationalise organisational structure at central and local level to reflect public service delivery requirement of the sector
Outputs:	
1.1	Capacity of key staff is strengthened in terms of organisational restructuring, use of analytical tools and organisational development methods
1.2	New work regulations which clearly identify the authority and reporting structures are drafted, issued and piloted in support of new Decree replacing decree 73
1.3	Support to setting up of New Legal Department
1.4	Capacity of the National Extension Agency is improved with the orientation of public services delivery and will be used as benchmark for other agencies in MARD
Additional outputs	
	An Anti-corruption Action Plan for MARD developed and approved.
	One-Stop-Shop offices established and in operation in six departments of MARD.
	Responses to the Avian Flue pandemics in Vietnam explored and assessed.
Objective 2:	Strengthen institutional and Human Resource capacities of key departments in the implementation of the Ministry's PAR Action Plan 2005
Outputs:	
2.1	The capacity in management, organisation for implementation, monitoring and evaluation the PAR Action Plans are strengthened in MARD and selected DARDs
2.2	A quality control system (ISO 9001/2000) is established and piloted in OMARD
2.3	To support DOP to improve the qualification of MARD's civil servants
2.4	The capacity of MARD Agriculture Management Schools is strengthened in critical administrative reform related and competence based training
Objective 3:	Support to the implementation of the 'Information Technology Development and Application Strategy to Support State Administration Management' to improve effectiveness and efficiency of the sector
Outputs:	
3.1	An Informatics Division for public administration management under OMARD is strengthened and operated with the support of the project
3.2	IT resources for extended pilot to all MARD departments and DARDs implementation are developed (IR p 80)
3.3	IT related administrative processes and work procedures are redesigned and piloted following MARD PAR Action Plan 2005
3.4	The state administration management information communication with local levels via intranet, internet and email is standardised
3.5	Support to the development of rural pilot telecenters for farming households
Objective 4:	Contribute to the strengthening of PAR management capacity in MARD and sharing information on results and tools to other PAR projects, MoHA, NAPA and donors
Outputs:	
4.1	A M&E mechanism for the management of PAR activities in MARD is established in support of the PAR Steering Committee and its secretariat
4.2	Systematic dissemination of experiences in PAR activities and PAR tools and methodologies to PAR focal ministries and public agencies in co-operation with MoHA
4.3	Systematic dissemination of project management tools to PAR focal ministries and public agencies in co-operation with MoHA

Under component one *Strengthen the capacity of the MARD to rationalise the organisational structure at central and local level to reflect public service delivery requirements of the sector* three additional results have been integrated under this component as cross-cutting issues during implementation and registered as additional outputs in the figure above.

Component two *Strengthen institutional and human resources capacities of key departments in the implementation of the Ministry PAR Action Plan 2005* include output 2.2 regarding the ISO system. This output would logically relate more directly to organisational restructuring, it was decided not to amend the project logic as designed in the PD.

Component three is implementation support to the IT strategy, formulated with project support during the first phase under VIE/98/004. The IT strategy is linked to National Programme 112. Piloting rural telecenters was enabled under this component. The rural telecenters pilot did, however, not start effectively until 2006 and having a three year implementation period will end later than the main project. Consequently it was decided to formulate the pilot as a specific component, listed below as component five.

Component Five: Rural Telecenters Component

The rural telecenters pilot has been singled out from component three with the formulated goal to *Pilot 13 telecenters in farming communes to identify appropriate and financially sustainable telecenters model/s that can best provide information to enhance the income generation capacity of farmers*. Under this objective the pilot has four planned outputs in the pilot:

- 1 13 telecenters established and operational including capable local staff;
- 2 Information regarding agricultural production and markets accessible;
- 3 Information and data sharing systems for rural communities established;
- 4 Systems and procedures to ensure assistance of concerned levels in provision of information and knowledge established.

Implementation of the pilot started effectively from March 2006 and is planned to end by December 2008.

2 Project Results

2.1 Contribution to UNDP Country Programme

In line with the critical importance of democratic governance, highlighted at the Millennium Summit in 2000 UNDP has in Vietnam supported three core areas in democratic governance: (1) Public administrative reform, emphasising mechanisms to increase people's participation and improve accountability and services to the poor; (2) Rule of law and access to justice; and (3) parliamentary development. One major outcome of the UNDP Country Programme for Vietnam is promotion of accountable, transparent and participatory governance, and here implementation of the national PAR Master Programme combined with a more

coherent framework for sustainable financing of development are the fundamental building blocks.

11 targets are included in the first UNDP CP for Vietnam, which was formulated in 2005. Here three targets were assigned to MARD:

- A. PMIS, OSS and ISO 9001:2000 pilots to be conducted;
- B. Conducting an External Evaluation of MARD PAR Action Plan 2005; and
- C. Mainstreaming gender issues into PAR activities in MARD.

The Project has achieved these targets:

- The PMIS has been developed and is in operation at DOP in MARD;
- OSS has been successfully piloted in six departments;
- ISO 9001:2000 has been piloted in OMARD and ISO certification has been obtained at the end of December 2005;
- An external evaluation of MARD PAR Action Plan 2005 has been conducted and preliminary results presented to GoV and UNDP in 2005;
- Gender mainstreaming has resulted in improved gender balance in training courses; gender-aggregated data incorporated in national surveys (Public Service Providers); and close co-operation has been established with CFAW and the Gender Task Force, CGAP and NAPA.

2.2 Results and Impact of Project Implementation by Component²

2.2.1 Component One – Organisational Restructuring

Key results under this component include:

- Decree 86 has been implemented. 23 legal documents have been promulgated, resulting in a comprehensive restructuring of the Ministry.
 - Functional analysis enabling clarifications of functions regarding state management and service delivery.
 - Structural separation of service delivery from state management has been established in a number of units.
 - Workshops on Decree 86 and training on organisational development have been delivered.
- Newly established units under Decree 86 have been streamlined with respect to organisation and staff;

² Details are presented in M&E Project Implementation as per Logical Framework from July 2003 to December 2006 in Annex A.

- Functional decentralisation within MARD and between MARD and local governments has been initiated and completed for for example construction investment management;
- The survey to assess quality of Public Service Providers has been completed and disseminated;
- New work regulations have been issued, reflecting reforms in allocation of responsibilities and case handling;
- Study tour to neighbouring countries regarding combat and prevention of Avian Flu conducted and reported;
- The first Anti-corruption Action Plan has been prepared and approved, enforcing the Law on Anti-corruption and the Law on Thrift Practice and Waste Combat;
 - MARD Inspectorate strengthened.
- The Legal Department has been established, equipment procured and installed and training workshops on legal drafting conducted.
 - Drafting skills regarding regulations enhanced in OMARD and other units;
 - Legal normative documents posted on OMARD web-site;
 - A Legal Impact Assessment has been conducted, assessing the impact of three most significant legal normative documents for farming households.
- The NAEC has been established as a service provider under a new statute, separated from state management functions, remaining in the Department for Cultivation, Animal Husbandry, Forestry and Rural Industry;
 - Mandate and staff levels of NEAC and local Agricultural extension system defined;
 - It equipment installed and in operation;
 - A comprehensive study of the Vietnam Agricultural Extension system during the last 10 years has been carried out, offering a range of recommendations for the future development.
- OSS has been established and in operation for six professional and one functional department.
- Gender focal points have been established and supported.
 - A Gender Mainstreaming report has been produced and disseminated.

Impact has not been monitored and assessed systematically by the Project. The following observations may, however, illustrate likely impact of the Project and the MARD PAR Action Plan 2005:

A. Three landmark studies – the Farmer Needs Survey (supported by VIE/98/004), the Public Service Providers Study and the Legal Impact Assessment – represent and express changes in the orientation within MARD towards the

farming households. The farmers and the farming households have gradually come more into focus as beneficiaries and clients for MARD. This change is an ongoing process, establishing the prerequisites for improved service delivery towards the poor, and tailoring services consequently to balance the needs of beneficiaries. The farming household forms by far the majority of the rural poor and the shift in orientation could consequently impact poverty reduction. It is assumed that the changed orientation will have long lasting effects in MARD and the ARD sector.

B. Implementation of Decree 86 and the clarification of mandates and functions of units form part of a process to enhance administrative efficiency. The Decree has been implemented in a period, where MARD as a consequence of staff reduction programmes has reduced staff, but by establishing OSS, by streamlining the structure and by initiating the separation between state management and service delivery functions MARD has been able to offer the same or possibly in some aspects even an increased service level to the ARD sector. Although MARD at project end is still a huge ministry with 114 units, it is assumed that project support has had some impact on the administrative efficiency. There could be synergy effects stemming from the reforms of the public financial mechanisms in MARD, which forms part of the MARD PAR Action Plan 2005, but not of the Project portfolio.

C. The Project has on a very practical level aimed at obtaining a reasonable gender balance in for example training activities and combined with other gender mainstreaming activities and establishment of gender focal points it is assumed that this will have impact in the longer perspective on gender equality. The Project has not quantified the impact on gender equality; the gender analysis conducted in MARD, points to gender awareness among the leadership as the main driver of change regarding establishment of gender equality.

D. The Anti-corruption Action Plan for MARD, which was the very first for any ministry in Vietnam, is regarded as a significant step towards enhancing accountability and transparency. The early signs of impact relate to the mere fact that the plan exists and has been approved by the Minister. Full impact with respect to accountability and transparency is assumed when the plan has been implemented over the coming PAR phase.

2.2.2 Component Two – Human Resources and Institutional Capacity

Key results relating to the human resources and support to the DOP includes:

- Implementation of an IT-based Personnel Management Information System (PMIS);
 - Gender disaggregated data incorporated into the PMIS;

- Pilot of gender-sensitive systematic job description;
- Training needs assessment conducted for around 2,000 civil servants and public servants;
 - Drafting a training plan;
- Training workshops regarding PAR for among others PAR Standing Office and PAR Focal Points;
- Development of new, more professional and transparent recruitment procedures;
- Revision and reduction of staff codes.

With respect to institutional capacity:

- Successful pilot of ISO as quality management system in OMARD; official certification obtained December 2005;
 - QMS for 17 processes developed;
 - Follow-up training of staff regarding ISO;
 - Lessons learned and experience sharing regarding ISO;
- Qualitative gender study conducted, reported and disseminated;
 - Gender Task Force and Gender Focal Points supported;
- Comprehensive assessment of two CMARDs;
 - Upgrading classroom equipment (teaching aids) at two CMARDs;
 - Capacity building for CMARD with respect to teaching methodology, using a training-of-trainers approach;
 - Long-term cooperation with Singapore Civil Service College agreed and MoU signed and specific budget line for international co-operation granted.

The following observations can indicate where early signs of impact may be found:

A. Regarding human resources most significant impact relates to the strengthened human resource management systems, where the Project has supported development of a more effective HRM system in embryonic form. The PMIS constitutes the backbone of this, and the pilots regarding use of systematic and gender-sensitive job descriptions is a supporting element. Many resources have been allocated to conduct a comprehensive TNA, implemented as a gap analysis by comparing actual data to position-based requirements. It is believed that the impact may be observed in a more long-term perspective if the HRM tools are better integrated into consistent performance-oriented HRM approaches. The first initial steps have been taken with support by the Project.

B. Regarding human resources development, capacity building has been initiated, but not come very far as the TNA and the training plan were somewhat

delayed. Sequencing and linking under this component has not been fully effective as capacity development for the main training provider to build the capacity for civil servants has been undertaken in parallel to development of the TNA and the training plan. Results of the support to the CMARDs as main training service providers to MARD / DOP are still to be fully integrated into the training plan. At project end both the DOP and the CMARD are, however, much better equipped to plan, manage and implement training plans and it consequently is anticipated that results and impact of the Project support will be visible after project end.

C. Implementation of the ISO as quality management system in OMARD is showing promising signs of early impact. The ISO pilot has resulted in clarification of functional responsibilities of the units within OMARD, which now after analysis have been documented. Job descriptions are used to allocate clear responsibilities to individuals. There are signs of enhanced administrative efficiency and transparency and within OMARD this is considered a step towards improving service delivery. The target formulated in the quality policy is “no written complaints against OMARD services”, and the pilot has made significant contributions to this.

D. The CMARDs have introduced the learner-centred teaching approach for a number of training courses, reduced the number of participants per course and utilized the improved classroom teaching equipment. This will inevitably result in improved learning and consequently also in long-term impact, if trained staff are able to utilize the new skills and knowledge in their daily work. The new co-operation model with Singapore Civil Service College represents a further step to enhance learning efficiency, giving the CMARDs access to high calibre regional experience. This cooperation model is considered sustainable as the CMARDs have been given a separate budget line for international co-operation.

2.2.3 Component Three – IT

Key results under the IT component include:

- The IT Division under OMARD strengthened:
 - Three additional staff recruited;
 - Documentation management software installed and in operation;
 - OMARD state management web-site upgraded.
- IT infrastructure procured and in operation in departments of MARD;
- IT infrastructure procured and in operation in 38 DARDs across Vietnam; remaining to be upgraded through Programme 112;
 - Two-way communication in the sector significantly improved;
- Training needs assessment conducted for DARD staff;
 - Functionally specific training for three different staff functions (managers, IT coordinator and end-user) implemented;

- ICT Practice Network established and in operation;
- Office software installed and in operation resulting in:
 - Increased use of e-mail and internet;
 - Increased use of IT-based reporting;
 - Improved follow-up on work plans and weekly schedules.
- Feasibility study for 13 rural telecenters conducted; implementation transferred to component five.

Signs of impact are very clear and all point towards significant enhancement of administrative efficiency, improved two-way communication and information sharing; and consequently also towards improved accountability and transparency.

A. There are significant changes regarding modernization of the information processing, handling and sharing as a consequence of the support to IT infrastructure. For the participating units the average number of staff per computer has been reduced to 2.5. Electronic reporting and internal communication are gradually shifting from being an exception to becoming the rule. The introduction of e-office software and tailor-made staff training are indicating improvements of efficiency and productivity.

B. MARD has applied three different, but mutually supportive approaches to overcome human resource constraints: (i) the tailor-made IT training for three functional staff levels is an approach, demonstrating good value for money as more than 1,000 DARD staff have participated under relatively limited funds allocation by the Project. Although additional capacity development would be relevant, this approach has resulted in a fast-track approach to enhancing work place productivity. (ii) The ICT Practice Network, used by local IT-coordinators, implies that practical and effective solutions to common implementation problems are quickly shared. Reduced downtime in LAN systems is clearly anticipated, resulting again in enhanced administrative efficiency. (iii) Finally the standardization of case handling routines, embedded in the e-office software, implies better and speedier information handling, communication and reporting. Both short-term and long-term efficiency gains are anticipated.

C. External communication has been improved. The OMARD web-site is significantly improved, making access to information easier, strengthening accountability and transparency. The Q&A system implies enhanced two-way communication and enables enhanced responsiveness to beneficiaries' needs. This aspect is further strengthened by the pilot rural telecenters.

D. All in all, project support to implement the IT strategy shows promising signs of early impact. This will be further strengthened, when all DARDs have been incorporated into the networks, funded under the national Programme 112.

2.2.4 Component Four – PAR Management / Information Sharing

Key results include:

- Systematic monthly progress reporting system in operation, based on the PAR Action Plan format, constituting an element in the M&E system;
- Comprehensive external review of the implementation of MARD PAR Action Plan 2005 completed and reported through workshops;
- Support to PSC to develop the MARD PAR Action Plan 2010;
- A documentary film, disseminating results of the Farmer Needs Survey, has been produced and screened on VTV1; VCD version distributed to MARD agencies and other PAR projects.
- PAR awareness contest conducted with over 700 participants;
- IEC regarding PAR SC, Secretariat and focal points conducted, using workshops;
- Results, issues and lessons learned regarding gender mainstreaming in MARD and gender equality reported, disseminated and shared with other PAR projects and MARD agencies;
- PAR in MARD Practice Note drafted. Will be disseminated before project end date;
- Full project documentation including results and reports in progress. To be disseminated in printed and VCD version to other PAR projects, GoV agencies, MARD agencies etc.

Observations relating to signs of impact include:

A. The PAR process, results, experiences and constraints over the period 2001 – 2006 has been reviewed and assessed. Recommendations have been incorporated into the MARD PAR Action Plan 2010, ensuring the PAR process in MARD continues with a widened scope and increased pace towards developing MARD into a modern macro-ministry. The MARD PAR Action Plan 2010, building on lessons learned and experiences, is significantly more coherent and consistent, making systematic result-based monitoring and evaluation possible for the second phase of the PAR MP. The Action Plan has been approved by the Minister of MARD in November 2006.

B. Gender mainstreaming and gender balance is considered reasonable when comparing MARD to other Ministries, but is still considerably below targets set out in the Gender Action Plan. Some impact especially on general awareness most likely could be demonstrated, if baseline information existed. The key results report, finalized in November 2006, takes stock of results and constraints and provides recommendations to MARD leadership regarding improvements in the gender balance.

2.2.5 Component Five – Rural Telecenters

Preliminary results of this ongoing and recently started component include:

- A feasibility study to establish 13 commune-based rural telecenters across Vietnam prepared;
- A project implementation plan prepared and approved;
- Funding agreement between UNDP and GoV signed in December 2005;
- Pilot has started February 2006;
 - Baseline studies for each of the 13 communes prepared;
 - Regulations promulgated regarding local implementation organisations;
 - Local units have been trained;
 - Equipment procurement process initiated;
- First telecenters to become operational before end of December 2006.

Being in the early phase of implementation implies that it is premature to report early signs of impact.

2.3 Additional Outputs of the Project

2.3.1 Anti-Corruption Action Plan

The flexibility under the NEX guidelines allows for unforeseen and consequently unplanned activities to be incorporated into the Annual Work Plan. This was the case when the Minister of MARD wanted to push anti-corruption initiatives within MARD, and the Project was able to respond effectively to support strengthening the MARD Inspectorate and the development of an overall Anti-corruption Action Plan – the first for any ministry in Vietnam.

2.3.2 Combating Avian Flu

The Avian Flu (Bird Flu) appeared during project implementation as a serious threat to human life for consumers as well as producers and also to the income of the farming households. Coordinated emergency responses were developed and effectively implemented by the GoV, and as of today the alarming situation appears to be under control.

The flexibility in the Project enabled support to conduct a study tour to Thailand to learn from experiences with respect to animal disease control regarding Avian Flu and to apply these in Vietnam. Based on lessons learned, study tour members immediately on return to Vietnam for example advised the city authorities in Ho Chi Minh City to no longer keep poultry within the city, trade live poultry and poultry-based products without veterinary quarantine certification or recognised origin.

The study team summarised experiences and formulated a range of recommendations regarding pertinent issues with respect to (i) organisation and coordination, (ii) border control and quarantine, (iii) promotion and education, (iv) financial policy and (v) inspection.

2.3.3 One-Stop-Shops at Ministry Level

Starting from February 2005 MARD has as the first ministry piloted the OSS mechanism at central management level. By June 2006 six MARD agencies had established OSS, receiving and returning requests from citizens and organisations: The Department of Plant Protection, Department of Animal Health, Department of Agriculture, Department of Irrigation, Department of Construction Management, and Department of Cooperatives and Rural Development. Project support was offered to equip and train staff at the OSS.

After 10 months applying the one-stop-shop mechanism in four MARD agencies 2,663 out of 2,703 requests were processed and returned within the deadline (equivalent to 98,5%) which means only 1,5% of the requests were delayed. Meanwhile, the result of the customer survey undertaken in four agencies has shown client satisfaction up to 90%-100% in terms of the progress, quality of the result as well as the attitude of the one-stop-shop staff in those agencies.

Results to date are promising and it is foreseen in the MARD PAR Action Plan 2010 that all departments will apply the OSS mechanism during this period.

2.3.4 Cross-cutting Results

Gender Equality

As a cross-cutting issues support has been offered to gender mainstreaming in MARD to enhance the role of women in public administration. Practicing gender equality in MARD is a sensitive and difficult task, which requires collective efforts of all MARD agencies and their staff, especially those in the Gender Equality Promotion System (GEPS) of the Ministry. The Project has supported a number of gender mainstreaming activities in MARD, but it is believed that the achievements, lessons and experiences learned in MARD may go beyond the areas of concerns of the Project itself.

The commitment to offer equal opportunities was institutionalized in October 2003 when MARD, with the technical and financial assistance of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), developed and promulgated its *Gender Strategy in Agriculture and Rural Development to the Year 2010* accompanied by *Gender Action Plan in Agriculture and Rural Development to the Year 2005*. In April 2006, the Ministry issued its *Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women in MARD from 2006 to 2010*. These documents aiming at mainstreaming different

measures for increasing gender equality in the policies, programmes, projects as well as agriculture and rural services have formed the basis for supported activities under this project.

In close cooperation with the CFAW the Project has supported a number of gender sensitising initiatives like gender partnership meetings, gender contest and in cooperation with DOP supported development and piloting of gender sensitive job descriptions.

Although the gender balance has not been significantly improved it is assumed that general gender awareness has increased as a consequence of the initiatives. It has been difficult for the Project to realise arbitrarily set figures for female participation in training activities, especially for training targeting middle level leaders, as women are underrepresented here and tangible changes depend on GoV personnel policies, retirement etc.

The Project is publishing a thematic report on gender mainstreaming before project end date.³ A significant observation made here relates the gender equality to leadership awareness and priority, observing that leadership awareness and commitment appears the most important driver of change.

Participation

The Project has applied participatory approaches for planning, involving units and Task Forces in developing activity-based implementation plans and further allocating responsibility for implementation to the Task Forces. This approach has proven effective with respect to delivery of results and also to create commitment and responsibility. The approach was most recently applied to prepare the MARD PAR Action Plan 2010 and is in use for the implementation of the Rural Telecenters component, where local level implementation units are direct project partners.

Participation has been enhanced internally using information, contests and other advocacy tools to enhance understanding and acceptance of the PAR process. This process could be further enhanced if systematic PAR information was directly available for example via the OMARD website.

2.4 General Evaluation of Project Achievements

2.4.1 Uncompleted activities

1. Under component one output 1.4 the activity to pilot appropriate agriculture production development models at commune level has not been attained. A

³ Commitment and Capacity Building: The Key for Promoting Gender Equality. MARD 2006

number of meetings were organized with NAEC and Department of Cooperatives & Rural Development regarding this output. These units are operating many agriculture extension models at commune level and the programme for best commune and new village development. The related stakeholders could not fully agree on the content and the implementation methodology, and consequently the PSU proposed to combine this activity with 13 Rural Telecenters Pilot developments at the APR Meeting 2005.

2. Under component two, output 2.3 relating to formulation of a human resource management & development (HRM&D) handbook has not been fully attained. Project support included many HRM&D-related activities. A gender mainstreaming good practice handbook in HRM&D was completed in coordination with the ADB-funded Gender TA. However, the legal framework and regulations of the Government and MoHA concerning HRM&D are being reviewed and amended, and consequently this specific activity could not be realized. It is anticipated to be completed during the new cooperation programme 2007-2010 in accordance with MARD management areas.
3. The 2nd Farmer Needs Survey was agreed to be added into the AWP 2006 at the APR Meeting 2005. TOR and survey questionnaires were developed in 2006. The sub-contractor for conducting this survey was selected. The survey has a wide scale and larger scope and unfortunately could not be realized before project end due to time constraints and budget restrictions. The PSU has negotiated with the sub-contractor to temporarily delay this study for implementation in 2007 within the new cooperation programme.

2.4.2 Achievements

A summary of achievements is presented in [Figure 2-1: Key achievement](#)~~Figure 2-1: Key achievement~~s. Here the achievements are summary rated as fully, partly or not achieved. After the figure more elaborate comments are presented to explain the achievement rating.

Figure 2-1: Key achievements

Support to PAR in MARD		Achievements
Outcome target:	Improved service delivery to farmers in MARD sectors	Partly
Outcome:	Effective and efficient MARD administration	Partly
Objectives and outputs:		
Objective 1:	Strengthening the capacity of MARD to rationalise organisational structure at central and local level to reflect public service delivery requirement of the sector	Fully
Outputs:		
1.1	Capacity of key staff is strengthened in terms of organisational restructuring, use of analytical tools and organisational development methods	Fully
1.2	New work regulations which clearly identify the authority and reporting structures are drafted, issued and piloted in support of new Decree replacing decree 73	Fully
1.3	Support to setting up of New Legal Department	Fully
1.4	Capacity of the National Extension Agency is improved with the orientation of public services delivery and will be used as benchmark for other agencies in MARD	Partly
Additional outputs		
	An Anti-corruption Action Plan for MARD developed and approved.	Fully
	One-Stop-Shop offices established and in operation in six departments of MARD.	Fully
	Responses to the Avian Flu pandemics in Vietnam explored and assessed.	Fully
Objective 2:	Strengthen institutional and Human Resource capacities of key departments in the implementation of the Ministry's PAR Action Plan 2005	Partly
Outputs:		
2.1	The capacity in management, organisation for implementation, monitoring and evaluation the PAR Action Plans are strengthened in MARD and selected DARDs	Partly
2.2	A quality control system (ISO 9001/2000) is established and piloted in OMARD	Fully
2.3	To support DOP to improve the qualification of MARD's civil servants	Partly
2.4	The capacity of MARD Agriculture Management Schools is strengthened in critical administrative reform related and competence based training	Fully
Objective 3:	Support to the implementation of the 'Information Technology Development and Application Strategy to Support State Administration Management' to improve effectiveness and efficiency of the sector	Fully
Outputs:		
3.1	An Informatics Division for public administration management under OMARD is strengthened and operated with the support of the project	Fully
3.2	IT resources for extended pilot to all MARD departments and DARDs implementation are developed (IR p 80)	Fully
3.3	IT related administrative processes and work procedures are redesigned and piloted following MARD PAR Action Plan 2005	Fully
3.4	The state administration management information communication with local levels via intranet, internet and email is standardised	Fully
3.5	Support to the development of rural pilot telecenters for farming households	Fully
Objective 4:	Contribute to the strengthening of PAR management capacity in MARD and sharing information on results and tools to other PAR projects, MoHA, NAPA and donors	Partly
Outputs:		
4.1	A M&E mechanism for the management of PAR activities in MARD is established in support of the PAR Steering Committee and its secretariat	Fully
4.2	Systematic dissemination of experiences in PAR activities and PAR tools and methodologies to PAR focal ministries and public agencies in co-operation with MoHA	Partly
4.3	Systematic dissemination of project management tools to PAR focal ministries and public agencies in co-operation with MoHA	Partly

Output achievement

Under objective one *Strengthen the capacity of the MARD to rationalise the organisational structure at central and local level to reflect public service delivery requirements of the sector* four planned outputs comprised: (i) Implementation of Decree 86, revising structures and functions of organisational units within MARD; (ii) new work regulations have been piloted; (iii) a Legal Department has been established and staffing level increased, and project support has resulted in improved equipment and some legal training; (iv) the National Agricultural Extension Centre has been established with project support in the early phase.

The planned outputs have been realised:

- 1 To implement Decree 86 23 legal documents have been prepared and promulgated and new work regulations have been piloted. At project end, MARD is still a huge ministry, comprising 114 organisational units, and there still are functional overlaps among some of these units. Implementing Decree 86 appears to have had only minor effects on provincial levels.
- 2 The Legal Department is functioning. Office equipment is in operation and staff has increased substantially. However, the number of trained lawyers is still limited and capacity building activities under the Project have been limited.
- 3 Output attainment with respect to NAEC is relatively modest as tangible results with respect to capacity development and new funding mechanisms have not been realised. Project support to prepare the statute for the NAEC has, however, been one of the factors enabling ADB to provide significant funding aiming at more intensified capacity building.
- 4 Additional results under objective one include (i) the Anti-corruption Action Plan for MARD; (ii) establishment of OSS for departments in MARD and (iii) avian flu study tour. The importance of these unplanned results for the PAR process is considerable. Project support resulted in MARD being the first Ministry to develop the Anti-corruption Action Plan and also be the first Ministry to pilot OSS at ministry level.

The planned outputs under objective two *Strengthen institutional and human resources capacities of key departments in the implementation of the Ministry PAR Action Plan 2005* have been realised.

- 1 Capacity development for MARD and selected DARDs to implement the PAR Action Plan has been implemented, mainly by undertaking a Training Needs Assessment, which has subsequently been developed into a training plan in September 2005. Implementation under this output has been protracted and consequently actual training (capacity development) has not taken place in significant volume. The Project end evaluation notes “that the TNA is of limited value relative to functional training as it is oriented towards job classification structures rather than functional job requirements”.
- 2 The ISO 9001:2000 system has been implemented as a pilot in OMARD. The task has been huge, but the implementation has been very successful and the ISO system has served as a tool for a complete reorganisation and documentation of a large number of administrative processes. Implementing

ISO is demanding, but lessons learned from the pilot indicate that the ISO can be used as a tool to streamline administrative processes in other departments and consequently enhance administrative effectiveness and efficiency. Based on this pilot MARD will in the next PAR phase implement quality management systems on a more comprehensive scale.

- 3 DOP has been supported with the aim to improve the qualifications of the civil servants in MARD's sector. Under the Project a PMIS has been installed, comprising a database for up to 12,000 staff, and some initiatives have implemented to develop systematic job description comprising also a gender sensitive approach. Both results are useful element in HRM systems. HRM systems may be regarded prerequisites for capacity building, but there still are several steps to be taken before the output is fully met. A weakness is the insignificant results with respect to actual qualification improvement under the output.
- 4 Regarding capacity strengthening of the CMARDs the Project has supported key initiatives to apply learner-centred teaching approaches and to apply comprehensive training management systems. The output has been fully and successfully realised; seen in conjunction with the limitation regarding the TNA the CMARDs are, however, constrained as a training service provider to MARD. Project support has laid the foundation for developing the CMARDs into Centres of Excellence for the ARD sector in the future. The international co-operation with the Singapore Civil Servant College is an important step in this future direction.

The planned outputs under objective three *Support to the implementation of 'Information Technology Development and Application Strategy to Support State Administration Management' to improve effectiveness and efficiency of the sector* have been realised successfully.

- 1 The Project has supported strengthening the Informatics Division, IT upgrade of 38 DARDs combined with a comprehensive tailor-made training programme for different functional levels as well as significant improvement of some administrative procedures (for example reporting and communication) as solid and significant results under this objective. The information sharing systems and establishment of networking IT-coordinators are considered creative and having significant impact.
- 2 The Project end evaluation noted that although there is notable impact of the IT upgrade for the 38 DARDs under project support, sector-wise impact for MARD is reduced by the fact that all DARDs are not included. IT upgrade for

the remaining 26 DARDs is envisioned under National Programme 112, and will be realised over the coming years.

Outputs under objective four *Contribute to the strengthening of PAR management capacity by sharing information on methods and tools to other key PAR agents* have been realised.

- 1 The Project has supported the MARD PAR SC to develop and apply a progress monitoring and evaluation system, which has been instrumental for the work of the PAR SC and the Secretariat. It is gradually being realised that – although more complex – the M&E system should be further developed for the next PAR phase, moving towards more result-based monitoring. Result-based monitoring will link to piloting performance management systems for key units and both elements are incorporated into the MARD PAR Action Plan 2010 as important and necessary steps to enhance accountability and transparency.
- 2 Dissemination of best practices, sharing information and other IEC activities have been carried out in different modalities, being intensified during the last quarter of the Project. Internally in MARD and in the ARD sector information sharing, especially the IT-based information sharing, has been successful and highly appreciated by the different sector units. Practice sharing with other PAR project and units outside MARD has also been carried out. The Practice Note for PAR in MARD will be disseminated and uploaded to the PAR website under MoHA. Impact could be somewhat more uncertain as sharing best practices gives no guarantee that a best practice is applied by the recipients of information.

The new additional component five *Pilot 13 telecenters in farming communes to identify appropriate and financially sustainable telecenters model/s that can best provide information to enhance the income generation capacity of farmers* started early 2006 and evaluating outputs is premature. Implementation is progressing in accordance with the three year plan, focussing at this point on attaining output one (13 telecenters established and operational including capable local staff). The component has been highly appreciated and well received in the selected communes.

The end of project evaluation recommended the pilot to be designed also to allow for systematic information flow from the farming households to the state management units, thus enhancing participation. This aspect is being included in the pilot design.

Objective and outcome achievement

Administrative reforms in a sector ministry like MARD is a process. It introduces incremental changes in line with UNDP's overall framework to promote accountable, transparent and participatory governance, the national PAR Master Plan to 2010, and MARD's specific Action Plan 2005 aiming to realise a project-specific outcome target formulated as 'Effective and Efficient MARD Administration'.

This outcome target specifies the direction for the incremental changes, but does not directly defines how much shall be attained for the administration to be rated effective and efficient and consequently does not directly specify operational success criteria for the Project.

Project results have, however, undoubtedly incurred changes toward enhancing effectiveness and efficiency. MARD today is organisationally more streamlined and responsibilities have been decentralised downwards in the ARD sector. Separation of state management functions from service delivery functions have been initiated and implemented in a number of units. Functions have been clarified and documented in for example the ISO pilot. Foundations for improved human resources management and development have been laid. Modernisation of the state management administrative system has taken major steps ahead, using significantly improved ICT-based tools. Gender awareness has been stimulated and strong interventions towards enhanced accountability and transparency formulated in the ACAP. And notably the orientation towards the farming household as beneficiary and client for MARD as state management unit has changed significantly, directly expressed in the rural telecenters' component and the landmark studies.

The Project has been instrumental in a number of these incremental changes, having significant impact towards enhancing effectiveness and efficiency. Project results are in general regarded relevant related to the overall policy framework, and are by and large technically and financially sustainable, forming part of general work routines and practices without significant demand for additional recurrent budgets. The internal implementation modality, using MARD-based Task Forces has ensured a very high degree of ownership.

Value-added and Sustainability

The international support has given MARD access to resources, knowledge and experiences which would not have been available under normal budgets. Significant value has consequently been added in areas like: (i) use of proven international planning and design approaches, using logframe methodology; (ii) studies of international quality regarding for example the agricultural extension

service system; (iii) consistent gender mainstreaming into activities and support to improving the gender balance; and (iv) international and regional experience and good practice regarding for example rural telecenters and avian flu. In this way the value added by the project support undoubtedly has resulted in qualitative improvement of approaches and procedures within MARD.

A project is considered sustainable if benefits of the project will continue after project end. Sustainability assessment includes three aspects: (i) financial, (ii) technical and (iii) environmental sustainability. Environmental sustainability is not relevant for this project, which has insignificant environmental consequences.

Technical sustainability is good. The achievements obtained by the project include institutional and organisational elements, structurally fully integrated into MARD and consequently technically sustainable. No technical results or solutions request any significant outside technical support after project end. The IT solutions in the DARDs and the Rural Telecenters have been accompanied by capacity building and network solutions, offering full access to technical know-how. The use of Task Forces has increased technical sustainability considerably. The Task Forces have not only performed their duties and functions under the Project, but have been further capacitated, been exposed to international experiences and at project end constitute important resources in many units for the future PAR process and for daily operational activities of MARD. The ISO Task Force is now able to support ISO implementation widely within MARD and the IT Task Force is able to operate MARD's ICT systems with minimal external support to mention just some examples.

Financial sustainability was rated medium and acceptable by the end of project evaluation. Operational expenses regarding ISO, PMIS and most of the institutional results will be financed under the recurrent budget and there are no excessive additional costs after project end for this type of project results. The Rural Telecenters sub-component will pilot financially sustainable models including income-generating activities to support sustainability.

Sustainability is influenced by the degree of local ownership. Local ownership is high as demonstrated by the incidents where MARD has been able to become 'first among equals' with respect to PAR activities. In some areas there has been some resentment towards the PAR changes. The Project has here supported awareness raising activities as well as IEC activities.

The Project has like all projects faced obstacles and constraints during implementation. Strong leadership support, good integration between the Project and MARD's PAR Action Plan 2005 and well applied project management procedures have been able to overcome the constraints keeping implementation on

schedule, target and budget with no more than anticipated adjustments formulated in the AWP.

Understanding the outcome as a stepping stone towards developing MARD into a modern macro-ministry the Project has achieved what could reasonably be expected, given the time horizon and budget. A lot remains to be done in the process to consolidate, expand and widen the reform process, and consequently the Project has also supported development of the MARD PAR Action Plan 2010 based on MARD's policy targets, lessons learned and the external evaluations.

The MARD PAR Action Plan 2010 aims to consolidate and expand results obtained under this project, and to widen the scope of the administrative reforms among others by enforcing the orientation towards the farming household. Under this action plan, approved by the Minister in November 2006, key result areas have been selected and a brief proposal prepared as background for requesting international support to realise MARD PAR Action Plan 2010.

3 Issues in Project Management and Implementation

3.1 *Planning*

Project planning was carried out in accordance with UNDP NEX guidelines and provisional guidelines. After the Project Document was signed, PSU cooperated with project partners to formulate the Project Inception Report - a master plan for the whole project life. The Inception Report developed a Monitoring & Evaluation logframe, monitoring by objectives and key outputs (see Annex A) and specified gender integration in key project activities.

The Annual Work Plan (AWP) was participatory developed with project stakeholders and completed by year end during preparation of Annual Project Review (APR) Report. Based on AWP, quarterly work plans (QWP) were drafted, and together with budget estimates presented to UNDP on schedule. AWP and QWP were prepared in Microsoft Project, reflecting expected outputs, timeframe, input and responsibilities of related partners.

Besides, the Project generally applied two additional planning methods, the PSU weekly work plan (WWP) and activity-based planning. These WWPs served as the foundation for the PSU's day-to-day management, resulting in well organized and disciplined project planning and management. However, due to the huge number of objectives and outputs, the large-scale operation and time constraint, project work plans were regarded as quite ambitious.

3.2 Resource Mobilization for Project Implementation

The PSU has paid much attention to resource mobilisation for project implementation, seeing this as one of the success factors.

Personnel

At decision-making level, the Project was regularly directed by MARD PAR SC, the Minister /Chairman and the Vice Minister / Vice Chairman during project implementation. Strategic issues, AWP and key activities were discussed with and approved by MARD leadership.

Regarding project stakeholders, the Project mobilised high participation of leaders at Cục, Vụ, MARD units and DARDs in assigning their staff as members of the Project Task Forces, giving comments on technical reports and conducting field trips. Although there was no allowance for part-time jobs, the Task Force members were in general strongly committed and mobilised to participate in preparing key project outputs. This is seen as a reflection of strong leadership commitment as well as ensured participatory principles, having positively affected sustainability of project results.

In spite of the difficulties in recruitment of consultants as mentioned above, most PSU staffs and selected specialists, paid by the corresponding fund or donor fund, have enhanced their capabilities after a working period in the Project, creating a good resource base for the general outcome. The Project team has demonstrated solid commitment and determination while working in a PAR-related development projects, and has gradually developed modern and professionalized work habits. (Details on project personnel are presented in Annex C).

However, the Project also faced general challenges regarding human resources mobilisation for project implementation due to lack of incentives. The seconded staff (Government contribution) is not entitled to allowance; the UNDP salary level for National and International Consultants is in the low end of the market for professional technical assistance in Vietnam; and support staff is not considered for annual salary increase.

Finance and facilities

The Project has interacted and closely coordinated with donors and concerned agencies to ensure mobilization of sufficient financial resources for scheduled project activities. Regarding donor funding, all quarterly advance proposals were approved and provided timely by UNDP. The disbursement of corresponding funds compensating recurrent costs like petrol, electricity and communication were received as planned.

In spite of facility constraints MARD arranged PSU offices as a priority.

High attention of UNDP and government agencies favoured the allocation of additional funds at the level of USD500,000 towards development of 13 Rural Telecenters Pilot project. To implement this sub-component the localities arranged facilities and work locations and some initial equipment for Telecenters (See details on project budget resources in Annex B).

3.3 Management of Project Personnel, Finance and Assets

Applying the practice developed during phase one ensured effective management of the Project's personnel, finance and assets during phase two. The Project issued new work regulations with key focus on updated personnel, finance and assets' management.

Personnel management

Job description for every project staff is available, reflecting mandate, responsibility, coordination in case handling, expected outputs (evaluation criteria) and qualification requirements. Staff recruitment was organized actively, transparently and early planned. Regular and ad-hoc (task-completing) staff performance evaluation was done strictly and openly as regulated.

Financial management

Project financial resources were managed in accordance with regulations of Vietnamese Government and donors, ensuring transparency. Aid verification and tax duties of the State were strictly observed, payments on schedule and timely balance. Disbursement rate is 100% for the donor fund as of 31 Dec 2006 and 131.4% for the counterpart fund. The Project has completed the balance of project funds up to the end of 2005. Selection, monitoring and payment for the consultants and equipment suppliers were followed as stipulated in NEX guidelines.

Asset management

All project assets of phase one were utilized in phase two. The number of project assets was quite big, serving project implementation of over 50 partners at central and local level. The Project assets were strictly managed as regulated by UNDP. Equipment procurement has been open and transparent; all equipment items labelled and delivered with an acceptance note between the Project and partners. Equipment inventory and evaluation was conducted annually.

The Project is preparing a general report of equipment conditions submitted to the APR Meeting for follow-up actions. (See details on project assets in Annex E).

3.4 *Audit Results and Follow-up Activities*

Auditing results

The annual external audits, conducted by the certified auditing companies KPMG and STT, have documented that the Project strictly observed the current regulations of the Government and UNDP regarding project implementation and financial expenditure. The Project was highly appreciated in the audit reports in the following areas: clear and timely planning, updated weekly project performance logs, implementation organization in conformity with formalities, archives, sub-contract performance and equipment management as regulated; correct and transparent financial expenditures and reporting workflow.

Follow-up activities based on the auditing recommendations

Besides the positive remarks mentioned above, the international auditors also noted and recommended several points relating to the feasibility of QWPs; careful check of equipment configuration at delivery. As follow-up activities of the above recommendations, PSU prepared more feasible QWPs (risks-considering); carefully checked configuration of IT equipments at delivery.

3.5 *Coordination with Government Agencies and Donors during Project Implementation*

In addition to close coordination with partners, the Project implemented regular information sharing and reporting to GACAs, PAR direction bodies and donors during project implementation.

The Project was usually directed, monitored and supported by GACAs: Ministry of Planning (MPI), Office of the Government (OoG), Ministry of Finance (MoF), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) regarding implementation issues. The APR meetings and troubleshooting discussions were instrumental. The government agencies provided strong support to arrange additional budget for Rural Telecenters Pilot development under a cost-sharing modality.

The Project continuously received attention, guidance and assistance from the National PAR SC Secretariat, and the PAR departments of OoG and MoHA regarding orientation of PAR priorities and the pilot schemes such as the review of PAR implementation 2001-2005 and the pilots of ISO and OSS.

Reports regarding progress and key outputs achievement were periodically shared with the Royal Dutch Embassy in Hanoi through UNDP. The representative of the Embassy attended workshops, meetings related to the formulation of the MARD Anti-corruption Action Plan, and the Gender Action Partnership and gave

comments on the external review report of MARD PAR implementation 2001-2005 and the Project External Evaluation.

The International Cooperation Department of MARD was regularly informed about project results and progress, serving as input to evaluate the general cooperation in various areas between MARD and the Netherlands. The Project supported preparation of the content of the co-operation between the Minister of MARD and the Cooperation Minister of the Royal Dutch Government.

Through ICD-MoHA and the Project Support PAR Master Programme VIE/01/024, the Project has strengthened coordination in sharing PAR best practices with government agencies, donors, projects and localities.

3.6 Project Monitoring & Evaluation and reporting

Several project management and monitoring mechanisms have been applied to ensure the timely completion of the Project within budget and to ensure compliance with the regulations of the NEX modality. The mechanisms comprise: PSU Weekly Meeting, Project Manager Monthly Briefing (to OMARD), MARD Monthly Report (to the Government Office), Quarterly Progress Report, Half-yearly National PAR Meeting (chaired by MoHA), Annual Project Review, and Annual Audit conducted by external international firms.

Result-based monitoring and evaluation was applied. The Project used an M&E logframe comprising the success factors identified in the Project Document and the Project Inception Report. Quarterly and annual progress reports submitted to donors and government agencies were drafted under the NEX guidelines' template on schedule and with good quality. The Project has submitted quarterly, semi-annual and annual progress reports serving different management purposes as required by MARD and MoHA.

The Project has shared experiences in project implementation and M&E under NEX modality with foreign missions from Netherlands, Laos, Bangladesh, and the PAR projects in Cần Thơ, Ninh Bình provinces, as well as the Ministry of Health.

In general, project management and implementation has consequently observed the regulations of the Government and donors: good mobilisation of financial resources, active participation of project partners; transparency and responsibility in personnel, finance and asset management as regulated and demonstrated capabilities in planning, M&E and reporting.

3.7 *Strengths and Weaknesses in Project Implementation*

3.7.1 Strengths

The Project was designed with the purpose to support the priorities in the MARD PAR Action Plan 2001-2005; consequently project status and orientation was clear from the very beginning.

Strong commitment of MARD leadership and the PAR Steering Committee (SC) ensured support and created the necessary conditions for project operation. The PSU office was located in Office of MARD (OMARD) and headed by the Director of OMARD /Vice Chairman of PAR SC serving as the National Project Director (NPD), ensuring regular and smooth direction, information sharing and reporting workflow.

Strong commitment of key project stakeholders has continuously improved project implementation, especially the operational use of Task Forces. Lessons learned from project implementation during Phase 1 also have enhanced the performance during phase 2.

Thank to special attention, direction and instructions by Government Aid Coordination Agencies (GACA), PAR direction bodies and supervision of donors, the Project's activities always were in right direction and focused on PAR priorities.

Project staff is qualified, experienced, enthusiastic and responsible.

3.7.2 Weaknesses

Shortage of specialists and consultants

The Project has experienced difficulties identifying consultants, possessing documented experience in the combined areas of PAR and agriculture & rural development. Recruitment of specialist/institutions and staff, both international and national, usually took longer time than expected, thus delaying project activities. Another important point is that recruited consultants mainly were short-term; the Project did not have a permanent National Consultant. To overcome this constraint the NPM took responsibility of both project management and technical assistance in almost all subject matter aspects of the Project.

Administrative procedures

The Project was designed within a fixed period and fixed timeframes whereas a lot of project activities depend on promulgation of legal normative documents. Delays in promulgation of some documents and long administrative procedures have influenced project progress. This was the case with Inspection of Agriculture &

Rural Development (ARD) sector; MARD work regulations; and the cost-sharing modality for Rural Telecenters Pilot development.

Change of key personnel

The NPD, the Senior Technical Advisor (STA) and the UNDP Programme Officer (PO) were substituted three times for each position during project implementation. This has influenced project approaches, knowledge and skills transfer, thus causing some constraints in project direction, management and monitoring.

Operational scope

The Project was executed on a large scale, with over 50 project partners at both central and local levels. Limited understanding of the PAR Project in MARD and MARD PAR Action Plan by the partners, especially local partners, resulted in low and unequal participation of project performers.

Huge demand for support by project partners

The Project partners required additional budget for PAR implementation. There is no separate state budget line for PAR. Consequently the pressure for assistance was directed to the Project while project resources and scope of assistance was limited.

4 Lessons Learned

- 1 PAR is of political nature. The project operates through technical activities of which many inflict on interests of groups, persons and units. The key driver of change in this project is leadership – the Minister and the PAR SC. Strong leadership commitment from top leadership in MARD is essential and has undoubtedly contributed to the success of this project.
- 2 Ownership is essential for successful implementation and for attainment of targets, making the best possible use of sometimes small budget allocations from the Project. The participatory process for action planning and the use of Task Forces has stimulated ownership and resulted in effective and efficient changes, of which many have good potential for replication outside pilot units within MARD.
- 3 The Project has established partnerships with many departments and units and operated within a number of PAR reform areas. Consequently project funds have been dispersed over a wide range of activities and in some cases probably been too thinly spread. Stronger focus on selected and prioritised key result areas could probably increase the pace of change and impact significantly.

- 4 Best results and most far-reaching achievements have been obtained in units, where project support fully matches perceived needs and where project partners within MARD have demonstrated ownership, commitment as well as the ability to initiate and manage a change process. The end of project evaluation points to OMARD and CMARD as most significant examples of this.
- 5 Tangible results are realistic when project support is based on a well designed balance between 'hard' and 'soft' elements. The combination of 'hard' and 'soft' elements in the IT component has for example produced significant tangible results. Attainment of results in components, operating with 'soft' elements only, where benefits for project partners are more vaguely determined, is more difficult to realise and to document.
- 6 Improved project design, consequently based on application of the logframe approach, setting clear targets (outputs) and quantifiable indicators for these, would support ownership, clarify from the beginning which way to go and offer a solid base for effective project implementation as well as more result-oriented monitoring and evaluation systems.
- 7 Tailor-made and demand-driven training, combined with improved training management, based on internationally accepted training cycle approaches, have proven highly effective, resulting in significant capacity enhancement.
- 8 Staff changes have impeded project implementation, not dramatically as the National Project Manager has served during full project implementation. A higher degree of staff consistency in the PSU as well as in the PAR SC, combined with consequent need-based qualification development, would probably improve project implementation and attainment of results and consequently offer benefits in the short run and the longer term as well.
- 9 During this first phase of the PAR Master Programme the Project has in accordance with the specific target for the support to PAR in MARD, focussing on efficiency improvement. Project results are forming a solid base, which in combination with the gradual shift in orientation towards farming household could enable a much stronger orientation towards end beneficiaries' needs during subsequent PAR phases for MARD.
- 10 Gender mainstreaming under the Project can report positive results relative to Project activities, where targets for female participation by and large have been met. For MARD, however, gender equality is still unsatisfactory compared to targets in the MARD Gender Action Plan.

- 11 ICT-based information sharing has proven effective. Enhanced understanding and awareness regarding orientation, targets, content and benefits of MARD's PAR process could probably be realised, if PAR information was made more available on MARD websites.

5 Recommendations

The Project Support Public Administration Reform in MARD co-funded by UNDP and Royal Dutch Government from 2000 up to now has nearly completed two phases. Key achievements have been obtained by the Project, contributing to the implementation of the PAR in MARD in particular and the National PAR Master Program in general. As mentioned in the Project Document and as conclusion at APR Meeting 2005, the Project will complete its key objectives and outputs at the end of this year. At this point, MARD propose 4 recommendations to be discussed and agreed upon at the PTR meeting as follows:

- 1 - MARD kindly requests government agencies, UNDP and Royal Dutch Embassy to consider the continuous support for the implementation of MARD PAR Action Plan 2007-2010 via a new project (see Detailed Outlines in Annex I);
- 2 –Sub-component Rural Telecentres Pilot continues to be implemented under the framework of a new project when it is formulated;
- 3 – MARD to carry out necessary procedures to liquidate and/or transfer some project assets procured before 2005 to the national agencies where appropriate and finalise the project balance and auditing;
- 4 – To maintain the operation of the necessary Project Support Unit until a new project is officially launched (approximately 4-5 months). MARD and UNDP to discuss and agree on the detailed work plan for this period.

5.1 Policy Framework

The recommendation presented above is based on the following crucial observations:

1. The outcome targets in UNDP's CP 2006 – 2010 and the status of the programme preparation for the international support to second phase of the PAR MP;
2. The critical tasks formulated by GoV with respect to second phase of the PAR MP; and
3. The priorities stated in MARD PAR Action Plan 2010.

The UNDP Country Programme 2006 – 2010

UNDP's actual country programme 2006 - 2010 supports UNDAF outcome three, relating to promoting governance that effectively supports right-based development to realize the values and goals of the Millennium Declaration. CP outcome is a system of governance based on key principles of accountability, transparency, participation and equity (including gender equality), and consistent with democracy and the rule of law.

UNDP's support to promoting democratic governance aims at producing six critical outputs, of which output (i) is formulated on the basis of experiences and contributions among others from the Project:

'More effective implementation of the second phase of the PAR Master Programme and the continued piloting and scaling up of local-level PAR initiatives, including ongoing assistance to the PAR Master Programme, PAR in Ho Chi Minh City, PAR in MARD.'

Significant elements in the country programme output are described in the CGAP: (a) Strengthening PAR steering and institutionalising tools for learning; (b) Developing alternative mechanisms for public service delivery including testing new tools for e-governance and exploring opportunities for public-private partnership; (c) Developing strategic management systems and quality standards including ISO and piloting public feedback.

The MARD PAR Action Plan 2010 is oriented towards all CGAP outputs and consequently constitutes one important building block in the roadmap for improved democratic governance as defined in the CP up to 2010.

Critical Tasks for Second Phase of the PAR MP

Together with the international development partners UNDP is presently formulating a comprehensive programme for multi-donor support to implement second phase of the GoV PAR MP. The programme shall balance GoV priorities and donor policies. Originally it was anticipated that the programme could be initiated from January 2007, but delays in preparation has postponed finalisation of the new programme and as of today earliest starting date is 3rd quarter of 2007. Although not finalised it is anticipated that the national PAR SC will serve as executing agency for the new international support programme.

Priorities and critical tasks have been defined by the GoV as:⁴

⁴ Presented by Dr. Thang Van Phuc, Vice Minister of MoHA and Secretary General of the national PAR SC at the international workshop 24-25 November 2006 in Hanoi.

- Ensuring PAR consistency with the renovation of the political system and legal and judiciary reform;
- Identifying the position and justifying the function of the Government and administrative agencies;
- To ensure the unity and smoothness of the State's administrative system;
- To renovate operational methods and strengthen the openness and transparency of the State's administrative agencies;
- To properly handle the stewardship-based relationship between administrative agencies and the citizens;
- Continue to reform the statute on civil service and civil servants;
- Step up reform of organisation and operation of public service delivery agencies with focus on areas of education, healthcare, science & research, sports and games according to Resolution no. 8 of the GoV;
- Encourage the participation of people and society in the State management and public administration reform activities;
- Strengthen the advocacy campaigns on public administrative reforms for civil servants, Party members, and enhance responsibility and awareness of each cadre and Party member in public administrative reform;
- Strengthen Steering Committees on Public Administrative Reform of the GoV, Ministries, central sector agencies and local government.

There are indications that these priorities could be detailed into comprehensive national reforms comprising a reform of Government structure and functions, a civil service reform and additional strong focus on further development of e-government.

MARD has prepared its PAR Action Plan 2010 in line with the mentioned priorities, but also reflecting the specific reform needs for a line ministry being sector responsible for services to improve the livelihood of approximately 70% of the population of Vietnam. This Action Plan 2010 has further been developed into a specific project, concerted with the anticipated overall support programme, but tailored to the needs for reform of a line ministry. The proposed project is consequently not incorporating the comprehensive national reforms for example a possible civil service reform, which is not a task for a line ministry. The Project reflects a reform of MARD to gradually develop into a modern macro-ministry, focussing on effective state management and ensuring service delivery to enhance poverty reduction, improvement of rural life and encouraging public participation.

5.2 *MARD PAR Action Plan 2010 and Priorities for International Support*

Within the policy framework, mentioned above, MARD has based on the external evaluation of MARD PAR Action Plan 2005 and the end of project evaluation of

the Project prepared the PAR Action Plan 2010. Here the outcome target is defined as:

MARD becomes a modern ‘macro-ministry’, a state management agency, responsible for policy formulation, development of quality control standards for service delivery to farmers, thus contributing to stable, sustainable development of Vietnam’s agriculture and rural sector.

To attain the outcome target in the long run the Action Plan 2010 includes six specific action areas, all having well defined objectives: (A) Institutional reform ensuring that the legal system in ARD sector sustains growth within international integration (WTO), enables prevention of corruption and ensures simple and transparent regulations towards citizens and businesses; (B) Organisational reform ensuring that the management system of MARD is streamlined and effective; (C) Human resources development aiming at reforming the civil service management system to enhance efficiency and performance; (D) Public financial reform comprising a reform of state budget estimates, allocation and balances to ensure transparency and effectiveness; (E) Administrative modernization to establish a modernised and professionalised administrative system incorporating participation and two-way communication; and (F) Reform in PAR leadership to ensure timely and effective direction of PAR SC in MARD, Heads of units for PAR activities and mobilising all resources for PAR implementation. Under each of the mentioned objectives for the action areas, MARD’s Action Plan 2010 is designed with well prepared outputs and indicators for these.

MARD has identified some critical elements of the Action Plan 2010 for which international support is deemed necessary to ensure successful implementation. These important and critical areas have been formulated in a specific project, comprising four components. A Project Outline has been drafted, forming the link between MARD’s specific Action plan and the overall multi-donor support programme for the PAR MP.

The project outline comprises four components: (i) Organisational component; (ii) Human resources component; (iii) piloting effective need-based service delivery models; and (iv) PAR leadership.

In summary the components includes the following outputs and salient approaches:

Outputs under the organisational component	
1.1	Mandate, tasks and responsibilities of state management agencies in the ARD sector with respect to formulation of policy and quality standards of public service delivery implementation and natural disaster prevention has

	been decentralised to better reflect beneficiaries' needs.
1.2	Public service units and public service providers within the ARD sector are reorganised as autonomous and more self-financing entities.
1.3	A Performance Management System (PMS), ensuring coherence between strategic policy direction and operational implementation, is piloted and implemented for a majority of MARD's agencies and units.
1.4	Quality standards for public service delivery by MARD units and autonomous entities developed, piloted and applied widely within the ARD sector.

The organisational component applies the following significant approaches:

- Vertical decentralisation and devolution of powers under output 1.1;
- Horizontal devolution of power and significant reduction of units under direct MARD management under output 1.2;
- Enhancing administrative efficiency, transparency and operational transformation of policy targets, using a PMS as an important tool under output 1.3; and
- Development of mechanisms, enabling MARD to fulfil its role as overseeing and monitoring ministry with respect to public service delivery by external units. Quality standards and detailed specifications for public services is the core tool under output 1.4.

Outputs under the human resources component	
2.1	Systematic and gender-sensitised job descriptions developed for all pertinent positions and applied as foundation for recruitment, performance evaluation and training.
2.2	The Personnel Management Information System (PMIS) is completed and fully implemented, serving as a tool for staff management and as background for performance enhancing training needs assessment.
2.3	Job performance enhancing training plan on administrative and professional skills for civil servants is developed and implemented.

The HR component 2 is based on the following salient approaches:

- Application of more efficient personnel management tools, ensuring transparent and effective allocation of resources under result area 2.1 and 2.2;
- Supporting a better gender balance and gender equality in continuation of the results obtained during the previous phase. This is included in result area 2.1 and 2.3.

- Enhancing the professional and administrative capacity of MARD’s contingent of civil servants by applying systematic, performance-oriented TNAs and performance enhancing training. This is incorporated into result area 2.3.

Outputs under component three: new service delivery models	
3.1	Two-way information and communication between farmers and sector management units and PSPs successfully tested and implemented;
3.2	Two-way e-information vertical exchange covering the different management levels in the ARD sector piloted and gradually implemented.
3.3	New models piloted for legal knowledge dissemination, agricultural extension and public service delivery, responsive towards farmers’ needs and respecting specific needs of poor, female and ethnic minority farmers.

The significant approaches under these result areas include:

- Result area 3.1 includes finalisation of the Rural Telecenters pilot for 13 communes and nationwide replication, based on lessons learned and impact assessment;
- Further development and implementation of e-government approaches, ensuring digital access to information and digital exchange between the management sectors from ministry down to communes and visa-versa. This is included in result area 3.2.
- Conducting 2nd Farmer Need Study
- Different models and paradigms for public service delivery will be piloted and tested under result area 3.3. It is envisioned that the result area will include testing service delivery through one or more organisational models, for example NGOs, co-operatives, private sector units, autonomous agencies with full or partly public ownership, public-private partnership and others. Models will be identified based on consolidated information obtained during the ongoing project like the legal impact assessment and the farmer needs survey II.

Outputs under component four PAR leadership	
4.1	Strengthened planning and monitoring capacity regarding PAR implementation;
4.2	Strengthening IEC (Information, Education and Communication) regarding PAR in MARD.

The two key result areas focus on:

- Developing the capacity of PAR implementation units – the SC, the PAR focal point and others – to plan, implement and monitor results of the PAR Action

Plan. The latter part shall be based on development and implementation of a coherent, simple and effective result-based monitoring system to be implemented as part of a general management information system, which also will track financial aspects of the implementation. This is envisioned under result area 4.1;

- IEC activities shall ensure better dissemination and sharing of best practices among ARD units and other government agencies; the IEC activities will also improve external communication and information to the public and beneficiaries about challenges and results of the PAR process. If feasible, report card systems and internet-based systems will be used as feed-back channels, enabling a more participatory approach under key result area 4.2.

(See detail outline of the new project / programme component proposal supporting PAR in MARD in Annex I)

**PROJECT SUPPORT UNIT
PAR PROJECT IN MARD**