

PROPOSAL FOR USE OF LIFT's DELTA 1 EVALUATION REPORT

Background

The evaluation consisted of a qualitative and quantitative study, carried out in November 2011. Sixty-four focus groups and at least two key informant interviews per village were conducted in 16 villages in the Delta area, selected to provide a spread of activities and IPs. The quantitative survey took place in 100 randomly selected villages, and consisted of 100 key informant interviews and 800 household interviews.

Following the discussion of the draft Delta 1 evaluation at the FB meeting in March 2012, it was agreed that the "FMO will develop a plan for using the Delta 1 Evaluation Report and its findings."

There are some specific challenges and opportunities.

Among the opportunities

- Build links with the MoAI and Department of Fisheries.
- Identify LIFT's partners who can provide opportunities for disseminating short messages particularly around lessons learned.
- Utilize civil society working groups more effectively. The Food Security Working Group (FSWG) has more than 94 local and international organisations. Additional groups such as GEN and FSATG can be used.
- Encourage journalists that are interested in covering livelihood issues to report on Delta 1 Evaluation.
- Build relations with Myanmar research organisations

Communication Strategy Proposal

Objective: *Promote a greater understanding of measures and procedures that have worked particularly well in the Delta 1 LIFT funded projects.*

Key Audiences

- All LIFT IPs
- FMO and LIFT donors
- MPG Group (meeting chaired by the RC for development actors in Myanmar)
- UN Habitat, FAO and Pyoe Pin (due to land issues and fisheries issues identified by report)
- FSWG, FSATG and GEN members
- Journalists working in national media – focusing on MRTV, national radio stations, and local language newspapers.
- Dept of Fisheries and MoAI, Dept of Land records and Settlement, and MoL extension workers
- Private sector associations

Approach

There are three aspects that need to be considered:

- The dissemination of the Delta 1 Evaluation
- Internal use of the Delta 1 Evaluation by LIFT – FMO, IPs and FB
- External access to the Delta 1 Evaluation

Dissemination of the Delta 1 Evaluation

The following steps should be taken to ensure dissemination of the Delta 1 Evaluation to key stakeholders including:

- Develop a brief on main findings of the report in English and Myanmar
- Launching the brief and report on the LIFT website
- Highlight findings in new section in the 2011 annual report
- Organizing a press trip for journalists to Delta to highlight issues on fishing and land rights.
- Share the report with MDRI, ADRI, MDR, FAO, UN Habitat, UNDP, MoIA, MoF, MoL,

Internal Use of the Delta 1 Evaluation

The overarching purpose of this evaluation is to learn from the experiences of implementing projects under the Delta-1 phase so that they can be used to inform future LIFT-funded programming.

- Develop a checklist for proposal selection and monitoring projects using the measures and procedures that have helped recipients increase their incomes and food availability. For example, Farmer Exchange Groups should not be included in proposals unless it is strongly justified
- Using the key messages in the **Table**, hold meetings with IPs to discuss what kind of changes would be required to improve the IPs impact and longer term sustainability.
- Meeting with UN Habitat and FSWG on land use in the Delta.
- Meeting with FAO, Pyoe Pin and Department of Fisheries on licenses.
- Ensure that partners working in Delta 2 and groups such as IRRI, FSWG, and GEN receive evaluation.

External Access to the Delta 1 Evaluation

Increase awareness among key stakeholders about livelihood needs, trends and results in the country.

- Launch of evaluation targeting LIFT donors and the wider aid community at a MPG meeting
- Encourage networks (FSWG, FSTG, Paung Ku and GEN) to share findings from report
- Provide a condensed version of the evaluation report in Burmese to MoAI and to all IPs field staff.

Activities	Message	Target audience	Tactics and tools	Monitoring results
Agri-Training	<p>Training was more likely to be successful when it was very practical; frequent and interactive (building trust), e.g. weekly training; tailored to local conditions and linked to economic training, and took into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local labour markets; • local access to input and product markets; • use of visual aids. 	Training organizations such as LRC, CBI, FSWG, GEN, and selected IPs.	Hold review workshops and share information on training.	<p><u>Process indicator</u> Level of participation</p> <p><u>Impact indicators</u> Level of better targeted training interventions with impact on livelihoods of participants</p>
FFS and other agriculture training	<p>Training was more likely to be successful when it was:</p> <p>Practical; There was time to go into depth and apply, build trust; Participants as role models, ripple effects; Allows for coordination with MAS; Linked to a demonstration plot (proving effectiveness); linked with MAS and other government agricultural extension activities; Continued use of visual aids and of demonstration plots; If existed: physical place for meetings (wider benefits); Comparing practical constraints and advantages of similar techniques; Discussing how to maximise outcomes of a given technique in light of farmers' actual financial and non-financial constraints; Tailored to local conditions and when agronomic training was linked to economic training, and took into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local labour markets; • soil conditions; • land ownership and land types; • local access to markets and agri-inputs, etc. <p>Systematic in spreading of knowledge (i.e. FFS); Conducted in a dedicated building (e.g. FFS school) in a village, which helped ongoing interaction and meetings, and was a place to put posters, etc.</p>	IPs and networks	<p>Targeted training activities</p> <p>Encourage networks to have information sharing activities (FMO with partners under guidance of IRRI to improve the curricula)</p>	<p><u>Process indicator</u> Level of participation</p> <p><u>Impact indicators</u> Level of knowledge and acceptance of LIFT's lessons</p>
MAS Extens workers	Exploring future and more institutionalised partnerships with the MAS would have the double advantage of: (1) Helping to sustain MAS' under-financed extension activities in the Delta area; and (2) Creating longer-term and sustainable relationships, while tapping into local knowledge resources.	MoAI and IPs	Awareness raising presentations for the IPs on the importance of linking with government extension services	<u>Impact indicators</u> Impact on sustainability by involving more government extension services
Organic fertiliser	<p>In order to develop organic fertilizer one needs to provide the necessary inputs, therefore there is a case for creating an easily accessible market for agri-inputs (e.g. make the 'Effective Microorganism' liquid more easily available).</p> <p>It will also be useful to include in training: How much effort (e.g. time, sourcing inputs) it will take to produce organic fertilizer in a particular village context. For example, this may depend on animal husbandry (whether animals are roaming free); and the relative advantages and disadvantages of organic versus inorganic fertilizer (cost benefit analysis).</p>	IPs	Assessment in the field and experience sharing in the use of organic fertilizer.	<u>Impact indicators</u> Area managed with farmer made organic fertilizer.

Seed treatment	It is simple, cheap and easy to learn. It increased yields and reduced costs. Seed treatment method was successful and changed behavior.	IPs and networks	method is already widely used and trained	<u>Impact indicators</u>
Pest management	The pest-management training was most effective when farmers had a 'contact point' in the village (which the training helped to provide). In addition, it would be useful if there were a contact point in a nearby town (e.g. MAS), who could be asked to identify pests that the village contact point cannot. Villagers regularly check pest-management posters in the FFS.	IPs and MAS	Awareness raising presentations for IPs on importance of linking with MAS and providing visual aids that stay in villages.	<u>Impact indicators</u> Level of knowledge and acceptance of LIFT's lessons
Inorganic fertiliser	The training needs to take local knowledge, affordability, and soil conditions into account, e.g. if farmers can only afford X amount of fertilizer, then the question is "what is the best fertilizer to use, when is it best to apply it, and how?"	FMO	Change of project setup to include inception phase	<u>Impact indicators</u> All projects have an inception phase to inform the final project planning process
Inception phase	The only 'unsuccessful' inputs were those that were not relevant locally or not targeted appropriately. This is an extremely important factor to be considered in future phases of LIFT planning, highlighting the need for a structured and in-depth inception phase to inform future planning and involve communities in decision-making processes.	FMO and IPs	Refresher training on improved targeting including spending more time on analysis to sufficiently understand the local conditions	<u>Impact indicators</u> Level of knowledge and acceptance of LIFT's lessons
Targeting	Targeting households based on their abilities/capacity as well as needs/requests (or at least facilitating the process of gaining that capacity). Spending more time and effort on the organisation of the initial targeting meeting, making sure all village members are adequately represented (or at least have a chance to be included in the targeting at a later stage). In particular, attempts should be made not to exclude: Women (by inviting only one member per household, usually male), disabled persons, and the elderly; Giving more thought on how to avoid the exclusion of households with no local registration card, including households who recently moved to the area, households in remote locations and new households that split off from the family home; Giving more thought to the exclusion of those who have been targeted by previous interventions in the area.	FMO and IPs	Encouraging use of cash	<u>Impact indicators</u> No of IPs using cash versus vouchers or direct procurement
Cash vs vouchers	The provision of cash to purchase inputs was overall preferred to vouchers (which were inflexible and felt to lead to lower quality) or direct provision (which was only considered efficient for inputs with economies of scale and certified quality).	IPs and IRRI	Make post-harvest processes and tools a topic for an assessment and follow up workshop (under guidance of IRRI)	<u>Impact indicators</u> Level of knowledge and acceptance improved post-harvest techniques by farmers

Post-harvest equip.	Post-harvest equipment that could not be used because of household requirements to immediately repay debts upon harvest. Respondents stressed that the only way to solve this would be to provide loans at affordable rates and with timeframes appropriate to the agricultural cycle	IPs and IRRI	Make post-harvest processes and tools a topic for an assessment and follow up workshop (under guidance of IRRI)	<u>Impact indicators</u> Level of knowledge and acceptance improved post-harvest techniques by farmers
Ducks	The villages where duck breeding was most successful were those where: a) the ducks provided were 'old' enough; b) enough ducks were provided (at least 50); c) some training was provided alongside the ducks; d) beneficiaries were granted some access to land in order to tend the ducks; and e) beneficiaries were provided with a certain amount of months' duck feed.	IPs	Workshops on lessons learned and successful case studies	<u>Impact indicators</u> Increase of duck population in targeted villages and increase duck related income of targeted households
Drum seeder	Drum seeders are particularly useful on certain types of terrain (drier solid and higher grounds). In some cases, any problems can be solved through small adjustments (e.g. wheel type or different, lighter models of seeder). ¹ Adoption rates remain low partly because drum seeders are perceived to take a longer time and their effects on yield are still unclear to respondents.	IPs	Targeted training activities	<u>Impact indicators</u> Level of knowledge and acceptance of LIFT's lessons
Post-harvest equip.	Post-harvest equipment that could not be used because of household requirements to immediately repay debts upon harvest. Respondents stressed that the only way to solve this would be to provide loans at affordable rates and with timeframes appropriate to the agricultural cycle	IPs and microfinance institutions	Targeted training activities	<u>Impact indicators</u> Level of knowledge and acceptance of LIFT's lessons
Seeds and seed bank	Seed distribution was effective however in some cases paddy seeds were distributed that were of a variety that was not consumed (and therefore not planted) locally;	IPs	Targeted training activities	<u>Impact indicators</u> Level of knowledge and acceptance of LIFT's lessons
Fertiliser	Farmers appreciated the increase in paddy yield. However, one of the benefits of fertiliser provision (apart from paddy growth) was to enable farmers to reduce their debt. The same effect could be achieved through other mechanisms, such as provision of micro credits or revolving funds.	IPs and Microfinance	Targeted training activities	<u>Impact indicators</u> Level of knowledge and acceptance of LIFT's lessons
Ducks	The villages where duck breeding was most successful were those where: a) the ducks provided were 'old' enough; b) enough ducks were provided (at least 50); c) some training was provided alongside the ducks; d) beneficiaries were granted some access to land in order to tend the ducks; and e) beneficiaries were provided with a certain amount of months' duck feed.	IPs	Targeted training activities	<u>Impact indicators</u> Level of knowledge and acceptance of LIFT's lessons

¹ For example, subsequent discussion of the results brought up the point that plastic drum seeders with hollow plastic wheels do not face such problems in very wet, soft soils, but like seed broadcasting run the risk of heavy rain displacing seed before it takes root.

Pigs	In terms of targeting, pigs were considered too much of a risk for the poorest and most vulnerable households, especially when these were provided through a revolving fund (whereby beneficiaries felt they were liable in the event of the animal's death or disease). In order to solve this issue, there appear to be two main solutions: a) lowering the cost burden of the investment (by providing feed, veterinary help, etc.); and b) providing guarantees that if the pig dies for reasons beyond the beneficiary's control, they are not liable for its cost. The distribution of very young pigs increased the chances of pig mortality. The breed of pigs ("white rather than black"). A more flexible approach to procurement, where communities are primarily involved in the provision. Provide training on livestock tending and – most importantly – links with MAS or trained livestock extension workers.	IPs	Targeted training activities	<u>Impact indicators</u> Level of knowledge and acceptance of LIFT's lessons
Boats and nets	Possibly the most important issue to be addressed through wider consultations with relevant government authorities is the leasing of fishing grounds through leases and tenders ² that was reported in most of the study areas. Boats and nets provided to people who were not fishermen without adequate training and support.	Dept of Fisheries and IPs	Meetings	<u>Impact indicators</u> Provision of licenses from DoF
Home gardening	Home gardening inputs and training provided to landless households, with no access to land. One IP, for example, encouraged farmers to lend land to landless households, a practise that could be taken up by IPs. Create an easily accessible market for gardening inputs (most importantly seeds). One potentially successful idea that is currently being considered by one IP is the creation of agricultural shops for clusters of villages. Need local markets if it is used as a source of income rather than just a large contribution to self-sustenance.	Private sector Associations and land section in GoUM and IPs	Meetings	<u>Impact indicator</u> Market for seeds and local markets
Snack making	Making snacks: Demand too low for high cost snacks that are not relevant to local context	IPs	Targeted training activities	<u>Impact indicators</u> Level of knowledge and acceptance of LIFT's lessons
CEW	The CEWs (livestock extension workers) were well received however, the retention of trained CEWs within communities should also be considered (including the recruitment of older trainees rather than young enthusiasts with not much experience and more incentives to leave the village).	IPs	Targeted training activities	<u>Impact indicators</u> Level of knowledge and acceptance of LIFT's lessons
SHGs	Evidence from key informants especially stressed that smaller and more homogenous groups were more likely to be successful.	IPs	Targeted training activities	<u>Impact indicators</u> Level of knowledge and acceptance of LIFT's lessons
Rice Banks	Perceived as very useful safety net measure for poorest	IPs	Targeted training activities	<u>Impact indicators</u> Level of knowledge and acceptance of LIFT's lessons

² Subsequent discussion of the results brought up the following additional information, namely that leases and tenders tie up fishing grounds and are very expensive to acquire (managed by Regional Governments). Licenses, on the other hand, are relatively cheap and are required for certain types of nets and other equipment and administered by the Department of Fisheries.

CfW	Main problem with the provision of CfW was its timing. CfW activities were not appropriately planned to coincide with the annual periods of low labour demand and high food insecurity. Redirection of CfW budgets. Specifically, a lot of the money destined to CfW ended up being used “to buy further construction material”	IPs and FMO	Targeted training activities	<u>Impact indicators</u> Level of knowledge and acceptance of LIFT’s lessons
Seed Banks	Training in warehouse management may be useful. Further learning is needed on silos, as they appear not to have been used (farmers preferred to store their paddy in separate bags).	IPs	Targeted training activities	<u>Impact indicators</u> Level of knowledge and acceptance of LIFT’s lessons