



**Knowledge Management Harmonizing Research Output  
in the Northern Uplands of Laos PDR**

(IRRI Ref. No.: DPPC2007-63)

Proposal

submitted to the

**Information and Communications Technology-  
Knowledge Management Initiative  
(ICT-KM)**

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**Improving CGIAR Effectiveness through Knowledge Sharing (KS)  
A project of the ICT-KM Program of the CGIAR**

**Contact Information—Project Leader**

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**Project Details**

Title of proposal	Knowledge Management Harmonizing Research Output in the Northern Uplands of Laos PDR
Area	Institutional Knowledge Sharing [Institutional KS]
List of staff/partners and expertise working on the project	IRRI—Benjamin Samson, IRRI agronomist for Laos; Mr. Kouang, director, Rice Research, NAFRI, Laos; Gary Jahn, IRRI, Mekong regional coordinator; Noel Magor, IRRI, head, Training Center; David Shires, education & training/e-learning consultant; and NARES developers and projects from northern uplands
Project duration	12 months
Country	Laos PDR

## PROBLEM DEFINITION

Laos is a country for which the agricultural sector is an important component of the national economy. Therefore, human resource development in agriculture is vital to the economic and social well-being of the Lao people. Because rice is a major component of the agricultural sector, the capacity to grow good-quality rice in greater quantities is important. The quality and quantity of rice produced directly affect the livelihoods of the Lao people, particularly the rural poor—the small landowners and landless agricultural workers. The International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) during the Laos-IRRI project introduced a mechanism, the Rice Knowledge Bank (RKB), to bring the results of local research to farmers through the Government Extension Service, the National Rice Research Program, NGOs, the private sector, and the agricultural colleges. Already, some of these agencies have staff able to use the RKB and these officers are using it to locate up-to-date and validated knowledge to meet the needs of farmers. The RKB will become part of the wider Cereal Knowledge Bank (CKB) supported by the IRRI-CIMMYT Alliance.

To improve the effectiveness of this resource, strengthening the link between research activities and the extension service is needed. This will be achieved by increasing the base of locally relevant validated technologies in the local language. In the northern uplands, several research projects are under way funded from different sources. At a recent meeting of the people working in the northern uplands, the Lao representatives expressed a desire to harmonize the conduct of these projects and to ensure that the results are coordinated and distributed for maximum impact.

## OBJECTIVES

The project will achieve three outcomes:

- 1) *Validated technologies.* Ecologically sound, integrated technology options from the various Lao northern uplands projects will be identified from participatory on-farm trials.
- 2) *Knowledge collection.* Scientists, technicians, and extension officers involved in the trials will add this knowledge to the Lao Rice Knowledge Bank (LRKB) in a form appropriate for wide dissemination to other farmers.
- 3) *Technology dissemination.* A community of practice of potential users of this knowledge will be identified and trained to use the LRKB for access to knowledge.

## PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

This project proposes to work with local partners from a variety of research and development projects in the northern uplands of Laos. Specifically, the project will concentrate on capturing the transferable technologies from that region and making them available more widely across the country in response to the need identified at the recent “harmonization” workshop.

Working with the National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute (NAFRI) and Northern Agriculture and Forestry Research Center (NAFReC), the project will construct an additional section of the LRKB to contain these technologies. The additional information will reinforce the local authority to control the LRKB. Under this authority, the project will develop fact sheets and other materials to support dissemination of northern uplands research outputs.

The proposed northern uplands project builds on the capacities already developed in local institutions and extends the influence of the work in two ways: further institutionalizing the collection and recording of Laos' research results within a single credible source and, second, encouraging extension agencies to access and use this information. The project outcomes will ensure that validated research results that support Laos' priorities are made available through extension agencies to farmers.

A US\$20,000 grant is required for the development of materials and inclusion in the LRKB. The budget is attached as appendix A.

The project will be completed in 12 months: 2 months for identification of knowledge and design of LRKB space; 6 months for collection of knowledge and creation of fact sheets and other materials; and 4 months for building and training of a community of practice of users. The potential projects from which knowledge will be captured are listed in Appendix B.

## **EXPECTED RESULTS**

The ecologically sound, integrated technology options from the various Lao northern uplands projects will exist within the LRKB in a form suitable for immediate use by extension agents. A group of scientists, technicians, and extension officers involved in the trials will have been trained in developing materials from research results for use with farmers. A community of practice of potential users of this knowledge will be using the LRKB for access to knowledge.

## **INNOVATION**

The project is locally innovative in that it will operate across a range of research activities funded by different donors bringing together results into a consistent, single source available for all users.

## **REPLICABILITY**

As detailed in the Innovation section, the information will be within the Cereal Knowledge Bank, which ensures an environment for scaling-up. The process used will illustrate how a well-structured knowledge management process can harmonize the dissemination of knowledge between different projects and different donors for the benefit of the country.

## **Appendix B. Projects included in knowledge capture**

- 1) Inventories of community resources, indigenous knowledge (IRRI-IFAD-CPWF)
- 2) Develop rice technologies for paddies (IRRI-IFAD)
- 3) Develop technologies for rice-based systems in sloping uplands (IRRI-IFAD-CIRAD)
- 4) More effective strategies for rapid dissemination of technologies (IRRI-IFAD-CPWF)
- 5) Improved capacity of NARES to plan and implement integrative research and development (IRRI-IFAD-CPWF)
- 6) Improving the productivity of rotational upland systems (IRRI-CURE)
- 7) Increasing rice production and productivity in paddies (IRRI-CURE)
- 8) Conducting policy analyses and dialogues for policy reforms (IRRI-CURE)
- 9) Improved rice-based cropping systems for uplands for raising farm productivity (IRRI-CPWF-DMC-CIRAD-CIAT)
- 10) Managing land and water resources of communities in a sustainable manner (IRRI-CPWF)
- 11) Improved rice varieties and crop and water management practices to raise water productivity (IRRI-CPWF)
- 12) Spatial analysis to understand upland farming systems (CIAT-JIRCAS)
- 13) Identify the relative importance of tillage erosion (MSEC-IWMI/IRD)
- 14) Catchment studies (IWMI/IRD)
- 15) Identify problems in slash and burn with short fallow (IWMI/IRD)
- 16) Developing stable permanent land-use systems in uplands (IRRI-CURE-SIDA-CIRAD-IWMI/IRD)
- 17) Aerobic rice for stable permanent land-use systems in uplands (IRRI-STAR)