



QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT

Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Management
Modernization and Agriculture Trade Promotion to
support SEARECC Sub-Component 3.1

July-September 2025

Ref. Ginger SOFRECO. A2658

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary: Quarterly Progress Report (July-September 2025)

This Executive Summary outlines the progress and performance of the Technical Assistance (TA) project, "Sanitary & Phytosanitary (SPS) Modernization & Agriculture Trade Promotion," supporting Sub-Component 3.1 of the Southeast Asia Regional Economic Corridor and Connectivity (SEARECC) project during the third quarter of 2025 (July through September). The TA aims to enhance transport connectivity, logistics services, trade facilitation, and agricultural trade along the NR2 corridor, covering five target provinces: Phongsaly, Luangnamtha, Oudomxay, Xayabouli, and Luang Prabang. The overall project implementation commenced following the approval of the Inception Report in March 2025, and the TA implementation phase is currently ongoing.

During this quarter, the TA team focused intensely on advancing digital infrastructure, finalizing crucial regulatory documentation, and institutional capacity building across implementing agencies, including the Department of Agriculture (DOA), Department of Livestock and Fisheries (DLF), Department of Agricultural Extension and Cooperatives (DAEC), and the Food and Drug Department (FDD).

1. Legal and Regulatory Framework Development (Component 1)

Significant foundational work was undertaken to modernize the legal and regulatory framework necessary for SPS compliance and trade promotion.

Key Achievements:

- **Gap Analysis and Recommendations:** A comprehensive **legal gap analysis** was completed across phytosanitary, veterinary, and food safety legislation. This included finalizing the *Gap analysis report on certification and inspection in relation to Food Products*.
- **Regional Alignment:** A key analytical activity involved conducting a **regional comparison** of SPS frameworks and legal documents in China, Vietnam, and Thailand, culminating in the *Draft legal report on Regional Comparison and Development Recommendations for Laos* (Annex 1).
- **Drafting Critical Instruments:** Numerous critical legal and procedural documents were drafted, including the *Draft Regulation on Non-Compliance Handling and Enforcement* (Annex 2).
- **Risk-Based Inspections:** Regulatory development progressed with the creation of the *Model Draft Risk Based Inspection Procedures Regulation* (Annex 3) and the *Draft SoP on Risk-Based Inspections for Phytosanitary Products* (Annex 4).
- **E-Phyto Legal Readiness:** The *Preconditions for Setting Up a Functional e-Phyto System* (Annex 7) were developed and revised, establishing the legal instruments necessary for digital implementation.
- **SOPs:** The team developed the *Draft Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the Issuance of Phytosanitary Certificates* (Annex 5) and Protocols for Phytosanitary Sampling and Inspection (Technical Template) (Annex 6).

2. E-Phyto System Development and Single Window Alignment (Component 3)

The project made major strides toward launching the e-Phyto certification system (Task 4), focusing on system architecture, development, and national integration.

Key Achievements:

- **System Hosting and Architecture:** Private cloud hosting for the web application (ephyto.info) was set up and configured, and the fundamental database structures and programming files were uploaded.
- **User Interface (UI) Development:** User Interfaces were developed for user profiles, export entities, and core modules, including Application, Inspection, Certificate, and Printing modules.
- **Integration Planning:** Coordination efforts with government agencies (MoF, MOIC) were initiated to ensure the web application aligns with the **National Single Window System (LNSW)**. Work began on an Annex for the *integration of export Phytosanitary Certificates to the LAO Single Window (LNSW)*.
- **International Alignment:** The team participated in a workshop on the **IPPC Hub** to clarify prerequisites and processes for data exchange with the international system.
- **Technical Recommendations:** Key technical recommendations included using open-source technologies (Python/PostgreSQL) to minimize costs and maintaining the existing style and content of phytosanitary certificates during the digital transition.

3. Animals and Animal Products Certification (Components 1 and 3)

Work in this domain centered on developing the e-Health Certificate system and assessing regulatory gaps in certification processes.

Key Achievements:

- **E-Certificate Development:** Comprehensive templates and supporting documents (templates, databases, forms, and SOPs) were developed for four key electronic certificates: *Electronic Health Certificate (EHC)* for live animals and animal products, *Electronic Farm Registration Certificate (EFR)*, and *Electronic Animal Registration Certificate (EAR)*.
- **SOP Drafting:** Draft SOPs were developed for requesting and issuing these electronic certificates, including a comprehensive draft report on the SOP for the *Electronic Health Certificate of Export Live Animal of the Lao PDR*. The design aligns the health e-Certificate (HCA) template with OIE standard formats to ensure international consistency and recognition.
- **Gap Assessment:** The **Gap Assessment Report: Import and Export of Animals and Animal Products in Laos PDR** was completed and validated. This report identified systemic weaknesses, including a lack of standardized clinical examination protocols, poor cold chain management for vaccines, and inadequate infrastructure for quarantine.
- **SOP Standardization:** Building on the gap assessment, draft SOPs were initiated for five certificate types to standardize procedures, clarify roles (DLF, PAFO, DAFO), introduce digital traceability, and align with international

standards (WOAH, Codex, WTO-SPS): Animal Health, Vaccination, Quarantine, Farm Inspection, and Primary Animal Product Inspection Certificates.

4. Crop Products, Market Access, and IPM (Components 1, 4, and 5)

Efforts focused on capacity building, market access mechanisms, and pest management documentation.

Key Achievements:

- **Contract Farming SOP:** The SOP for Market Access Negotiation (D.1.3) was strategically repositioned as a country-owned, field-operational **Contract Farming (CF) SOP**, designed to embed SPS compliance (including QR code traceability, chemical logs, and food safety documentation) into actual buyer–seller arrangements. The finalized SOP was submitted for DAEC endorsement.
 - **Capacity Building:** Multiple batches of capacity-building training sessions (2nd, 3rd, and 4th) were conducted for extension workers on groups, cooperatives, and the SOP for Contract Farming in Xayabouly, Oudomsay, and Luangnamtha provinces.
 - **Pest Database and Taxonomy:** The first draft of the **basic insect taxonomy manual** (including an insect glossary) was finalized. The first draft of the **pest list for chilli and tea** was also finalized, containing information on pest distribution, biology, ecology, damage symptoms, and management.
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5. Food Safety Streamlining (Component 6)

Activities supported Task 3 (registration streamlining) and Task 8 (GHP, GMP, HACCP analysis).

Key Achievements:

- **Gap Assessment Report:** The 36-page gap assessment report of the Lao PDR inspection and certification system for food safety was **translated into Lao** and submitted to FDD.
 - **SOP Development:** Draft SOPs were developed for streamlining processes, including the *SOP for Decentralization of Responsibilities for Issuance of Permits Between National and Provincial Authorities* (D.4.3) and the *SOP for Export Inspection at Border* (D.4.4).
 - **GHP/GMP/HACCP:** Training curricula and materials on food safety management systems (GHP, GMP, and HACCP) were drafted and translated into Lao. Planning was initiated for field training sessions scheduled for November 2025 in Luang Namtha and Luang Prabang.
 - **Enterprise Registration:** Review commenced on the first draft of the SOP for registration of food processing enterprises under FDD.
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6. Gender Empowerment (Component 4)

Cross-cutting efforts focused on identifying barriers and establishing mechanisms to empower women agro-entrepreneurs.

Key Achievements:

- **Gender Assessment and Action Plan:** The draft of the **Gender Assessment Report** was completed, including findings from the consultation workshop and gender desk study. The **Gender Action Plan** was finalized in both English and Lao versions.
- **Barriers Identified:** A consultation workshop identified major barriers for women agro-entrepreneurs, including **limited collateral** (due to lack of land ownership), **complex loan procedures**, **bureaucratic hurdles in business registration**, a lack of financial literacy, and **limited access to information on SPS and trade rules**.

7. Proposed Activities for Next Period (October–December 2025)

The next quarter will prioritize the implementation of finalized documents, continuation of digitalization efforts, and intensive training. Key tasks include:

Activity Focus	Priority Actions (October–December 2025)
E-Phyto System	Initiate migration of the existing database to a web-based application. Finalize the Beta Version with modules for e-inspections and laboratory results. Prepare the plan for the pilot project.
Legal Framework	Begin drafting specific legal issuances/regulations based on recommendations. Organize stakeholder consultations to validate legal proposals.
Animal Health SOPs	Finalize Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Animal Health Certificates. Develop and conduct training courses on SOPs for application, issuance, and reporting of e-Health Certification, including computer-based practical sessions. Propose the final draft of the e-Health Certification Systems.
Food Safety Training/Manuals	Conduct theoretical and practical field training sessions on GHP, GMP, and HACCP in Luang Namtha and Luang Prabang. Draft the <i>Manual to conduct GMP certification of food processing enterprises</i> to meet requirements of China, Vietnam, and Thailand.
Project Management	Revisit action plans to establish specific timelines and develop measurable sub-indicators. Ensure compliance of e-certification plans with national regulatory requirements.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFD	Agence Française de Développement
ATC	(Northern) Agri Tech Centre
DAEC	Dept of Agricultural Extension and Cooperatives
DAFO	District Agriculture and Forestry Office
DLF	Dept of Livestock and Fisheries (DOLF)
ESMF	Environment and Social Management Plan
FAMEWS	Fall Army Worm Monitoring and Early Warning System
FDD	Food and Drug Department
GAHP	Good Animal Health Practice
GAP	Good Agricultural Practice
GHP	Good Hygiene Practices
GMP	Good Manufacturing Practices
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Paths
IPPC	International Plant Protection Convention
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
ISPM	International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures
LWU	Lao Women Union
MAA	Market Access Agreement
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MOAF)
MOH	Ministry of Health
NCAW	National Commission for Advancement of Women
PAFO	Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office
PEQ	Post-Entry Quarantine
PRA	Pest Risk Analysis
SEARECC	Southeast Asia Regional Economic Corridor and Connectivity Project
SPS	Sanitary (animal, human health) and Phytosanitary (plant health)
SSOP	Sanitary Standards Operation Procedure
STDF	Standard Trade and Development Facility
WTO	World Trade Organization

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Basic project data

This report is the second activity report of the Technical Assistance called “Sanitary & Phytosanitary (SPS) Modernisation & Agriculture Trade Promotion” for the Sub-Component 3.1: Support on Agricultural Trade and Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Management of the Southeast Asia Regional Economic Corridor and Connectivity (SEARECC) project. The Technical Assistance was launched on 4 July 2024 and will terminate on 27 June 2028. An updated project implementation plan is provided in Annex 1. The SEARECC project’s scope includes the enhancement of transport connectivity and logistics services in Laos, trade facilitation, border crossing control management, and agricultural trade along the NR2 corridor. It covers five provinces in the corridor catchment area: Phongsaly, Luangnamtha, Oudomxay, Xayabouli, and Luang Prabang. For the SEARECC project, the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank has provided a credit financing of US\$131.9 million to the GOL with US\$86.90 million on National PBA and US\$45 million on Regional PBA. For Sub-Component 3.1, IDA has allocated US\$ 9 million.

The components of the Technical Assistance assignment are listed below.

1.1.1 **Component 1 - Regulatory Framework & SPS requirements, Market Access of China, Thailand and Vietnam &, and export/import permit processes**

Task 1: Review, analyse and develop regulatory framework, guidelines and/or standard operational procedures in line with international market access and with the SPS requirement of China, Vietnam, Thailand for Plant Health, Animal Health and Food Safety.

The regulatory review aims to align Laos' import and export requirements for plants, animals, and food products with those of China, Thailand, and Vietnam by focusing on four key areas: (1) **Harmonization of Regulations:** updating and standardizing legal documents to close regulatory gaps and ensure consistent terminology and procedures for easier compliance with neighboring countries' standards; (2) **Phytosanitary and Animal Health Measures:** strengthening quarantine systems, pest and disease surveillance, and implementing risk-based inspections tailored to specific regional threats; (3) **Food Safety Standards:** adopting food safety regulations and management systems, such as HACCP, to meet hygiene, labeling, and contaminant standards, supported by a national regulatory authority; and (4) **Certification and Traceability Systems:** introducing electronic certification and robust traceability frameworks to enhance product monitoring and compliance with China, Thailand, and Vietnam's traceability and certification requirements.

Task 2: Review, analyse and streamline the current national export/import business processes (permits/licenses) for the plants and plant products, animal and animal products as well as food products requirement of China, Vietnam, Thailand.

This involves a comprehensive review and analysis of Laos' current national processes for exporting and importing plants, plant products, animals, animal products, and food products to align with the specific requirements of China, Vietnam, and Thailand. This task requires identifying and addressing any procedural inefficiencies or redundancies in the issuance of permits and licenses, ensuring these processes are streamlined for clarity, consistency, and compliance with the regulations of neighboring countries. Steps may include evaluating each stage of the permit and license approval process, from application submission to document issuance, and assessing any existing bottlenecks that could delay trade activities. Special attention will be given to simplifying administrative requirements, consolidating overlapping processes, and reducing unnecessary steps to foster smoother, faster transactions while ensuring that regulatory standards for health, safety, and quality are rigorously upheld. The goal is to develop a streamlined, transparent system that facilitates cross-border trade by meeting the import/export standards of China, Vietnam, and Thailand efficiently and effectively.

1.1.2 Component 2 – Farm Registration

Task-3: Streamline registration of production areas, farms and critical inputs for the crop and livestock farms.

Registration of production areas and farms usually requires specific legislation dedicated to farm registration, outlining the legal requirements and procedures for registering farms (production areas, food processing enterprises, etc.). The term "farm" within the legal framework should encompass various agricultural activities, including crop production, livestock raising, aquaculture, and other relevant farming practices. Such legal act should establish a standardized and transparent process for farm registration, detailing the required information, documents, and procedures to be followed by farmers or farm owners. Important to incorporate provisions within the legal framework to safeguard the privacy and security of the data collected during the farm registration process, ensuring compliance with data protection regulations. In addition, to define the responsibilities of relevant authorities, such as the Department of Agriculture or equivalent regulatory bodies, in overseeing the compliance of registered farms with applicable laws, regulations, and standards. Specify sanctions for non-compliance or fraudulent registration, aiming to deter any improper registration practices and maintain the integrity of the system. The legal provisions may require periodic renewal or updates of farm registration to ensure accurate and up-to-date information on registered farms.

1.1.3 Component 3 – e-Phyto & e-Certification for crops, food, animal and animal products

Task 4: Initiate the e-Phyto certification system and develop generic system to link DOA and AgriTech Centre with 5 target provinces and border checkpoints

To implement the e-Phyto certification system in Laos, several pre-conditions need to be met. These pre-conditions typically include revision of the legal framework, availability of technical infrastructure, stakeholders' engagement. Establishing a legal framework involves amending or enacting relevant legislation to recognize and accept electronic certificates as legally valid documents for trade. Designating or strengthening the NPPO as the responsible authority for overseeing and managing the e-Phyto certification system in Laos, as this authority will be responsible for coordinating with international bodies, implementing the necessary infrastructure, and ensuring compliance with international phytosanitary standards. Developing or

upgrading the technical infrastructure required for implementing the e-Phyto certification system.

1.1.4 Component 4 – Market Access Promotion and Information Platform for Women

Task-5: Develop information platform for women empowerment and information access on agricultural trade

The information platform for women empowerment and information access on agricultural trade in Laos is crucial for promoting gender equality, empowering women in the agricultural sector, improving productivity, facilitating market access, fostering entrepreneurship, and supporting sustainable agriculture. By addressing the specific needs and challenges faced by women, the platform contributes to inclusive and equitable economic development in Laos.

1.1.5 Component 5 – Digitalised Pest Database Management & IPM

Task-6: Develop manual for the FAMEWs digitised pest database management application and provide training to ATC and 5 PAFOs staffs for outbreak management.

This entails creating a comprehensive manual for the FAMEWs digitized pest database management application and delivering targeted training for Agricultural Technical Center (ATC) staff and personnel across five Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Offices (PAFOs) to improve outbreak management capabilities. This manual should serve as a detailed, user-friendly guide to all functionalities within the FAMEWs system, covering aspects such as data entry, updating records, retrieving information, and generating reports on pest occurrences. It should also outline best practices for data accuracy, tips for troubleshooting, and security protocols to safeguard the database. The training sessions will focus on hands-on practice with the application, equipping ATC and PAFO staff with essential skills to monitor and manage pest outbreaks effectively. Participants will learn to utilize the FAMEWs system for early detection, reporting, and response coordination, ensuring a swift and organized approach to managing pest-related issues across provinces. The end goal is to ensure all relevant staff are proficient in using the FAMEWs platform for consistent, reliable outbreak data management.

Task-7: Develop manual for IPM, PEQ, greenhouse testing protocol and provide training for ATC/PAFOs staffs, including proposed digitised process and software to facilitate the related data management and analysis

Developing a manual for IPM (Integrated Pest Management), PEQ (Pesticide Equivalence), greenhouse testing protocol, and providing training for ATC/PAFOs staffs is of important importance for Laos. Such manual would provide standardized guidelines and protocols for implementing IPM, PEQ, and greenhouse testing. It would ensure that ATC/PAFOs staff follow consistent and effective practices, leading to reliable and comparable results across different locations and projects

1.1.6 Component 6 – Food Safety - GHP, SSOP, GMP, and HACCP

Task-8: Analyse the existing guidelines and legal documents on GHP, GMP, HACCP for food safety, develop SOPs for the application of GHP, GMP, HACCP to improve trade and make both existing legal documents and new SOP available to the public on a website.

Recognizing the importance of GHP, GMP & HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points), the work to be done within a period of 6 to 14 months is significant and involves several crucial steps. This involves a thorough analysis of existing guidelines and legal documents related to GHP, GMP, and Hazard Analysis and HACCP to bolster food safety standards and enhance trade. This task includes the development of SOPs tailored to the application of GHP, GMP, and HACCP, aiming to create a clear, structured approach that aligns with both domestic and international food safety requirements. By establishing these SOPs, the project seeks to support consistent implementation of hygiene, manufacturing, and safety protocols across the food production and processing sectors. Additionally, the task entails updating and consolidating existing legal documents, along with making both the revised regulations and the new SOPs accessible to the public. This availability is intended to foster transparency, improve awareness of food safety standards, and facilitate easier access for businesses and the public.

1.1.7 Purpose of the report

This quarterly report reports on Technical Assistance project activities from **July to September 2025**. The methodology proposed by Ginger SOFRECO/APAARI was based on a workplan in three stages: an inception period of two months, culminating in the Inception Workshop, an implementation phase, and a closure phase. The Inception Workshop was designed to lay the groundwork for the implementation phase where the tasks, activities, outputs, training plan, consultant mobilization schedule are fine-tuned. The Inception Workshop held in November 2024 led to a revision of the Work Plan, followed by initiation of the implementation phase which is now ongoing.

1.1.8 Status of the project

Following project kick-off, a 5-day mission was conducted by Ginger SOFRECO and APAARI in Lao PDR. The mission addressed the specific criteria in the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Support to Sub-Component (S.C.) 3.1, based on the TECH-4 submitted for the tender process. The mission was conducted from 8 to 12 July 2024, culminating in a draft Inception Report submitted to DOA on 2 August 2024. All the S.C 3.1. Implementing Agencies, as well as the World Bank review the document, which was returned to Ginger SOFRECO/APAARI for revision on 3 September 2024.

Implementation nevertheless commenced with missions by KE-3 and KE-4 during October-November 2024 to launch collaboration with Implementing Agencies.

After the Inception Workshop, the Inception Report required substantial revision. This was undertaken by KE-3, working together with the Project Director of Ginger SOFRECO and submitted to the Client on 22 November 2024. The Report was approved in March 2025.

In February 2025 a new Team Leader/KE-1 (Dr Wyn Ellis) was appointed and he participated in the World Bank's Mid-Term Review Workshop for the project held from 4-7 March 2025 in Vientiane. At the same time the TL paid courtesy visits and conducted bilateral meetings with the expert team, IAs, PMU and the World Bank team to improve alignment and clarify working processes.

A parallel discussion was held with DOA and MPWT on establishment of a project management platform using MS Project. A framework was established and the system is now fully populated, allowing transparent access to updated project

information documentation. This allows automated calibration of project progress via the project dashboard.

Further missions by the TL and members of the expert team have since been conducted in connection with project activities (reported in detail in this report). Monthly meetings have also been conducted to report progress and coordinate among the international and national experts, IAs, PMU and the World Bank team.

2 REVIEW OF PROGRESS AND PERFORMANCE TO DATE

2.1 Activities undertaken to date

2.1.1 Overall view

Activities under the SC3.1 Sub-component began on August 4, 2024 and are scheduled to close on May 31, 2028. The ongoing implementation phase was mobilized on approval of the Inception Report in March 2025.

The third quarter of 2025 (July through September) saw focused efforts on advancing digital infrastructure, finalizing crucial regulatory documentation, and institutional capacity building across implementing agencies (DOA, DLF, DAEC, FDD). The TA team prioritized addressing drafting and completion of contractual deliverables across the key domains (legal, crops, livestock, food).

These primarily revolved around (a) project personnel; (b) coordination among international experts, national experts and Implementation Agencies; and (c) expediting contractual deliverables. Key milestones are as follows:

- **Project Team:** International expert KE-4 (Mr Franck Boccas) resigned due to a new appointment with another agency. A replacement is currently being recruited on an urgent basis and will be formally requested and justified as part of a request for amendment of the firm's overall contract.
- **Mission by TL to Vientiane** 13-16 August 2025 including participation in a monthly meeting with DoA and technical progress briefings for WB on e-Phyto and legal processes as well as meetings with MOIC, MOF and PMC.
- **E-Phyto Mission:** In support of Task 4 (Deliverables D1.4, 1.5, 5.6) KE-13 conducted a second mission to Lao PDR from 16-21 September together with KE-5, working with KE-14 to further assess progress to migrate the existing desktop software to a national web-based system under the Lao National Single Window for phytosanitary certificates for export produce, that allows data exchange with the IPPC HUB, online verification of phytosanitary certificates and, by extension, further assessment of related inspections, laboratory results, pests, etc.

- **For the E-PHYTOSANITARY CERTIFICATION SYSTEM**, significant progress was made toward launching the e-Phyto certification system (**Task 4**). In regard to **ANIMALS AND ANIMAL PRODUCTS**, the focus was on developing templates and documentation for the e-Health Certificate system. Progress was also made in regard to **CROPS, MARKET ACCESS, AND FOOD SAFETY**, where the **finalized SOP for Market Access Negotiations (Task 1)**, including integration of legal consistency (Decree 107) and the SPS Compliance Framework, were **submitted for DAEC endorsement**. Training and consultation activities associated with this SOP were also completed.
- Working with DOA, draft **SOP and instructions for seed businesses and seeds registration** were **submitted to DOA for review**, together with draft SOPs for production areas registration/certification and phytosanitary inspection/certification for exports.
- In regard to **Food Safety (FDD)**, training curricula and materials (GHP, GMP, SSOP, HACCP) were drafted. Planned field training sessions were rescheduled to November 2025 pending translation of training materials.
- As a cross-cutting issue, **Gender Empowerment** is a common theme requiring broad-based action. An **analysis was conducted to assess women's unequal access to information**, finance and resources in five target provinces (Phongsaly, Luangnamtha, Oudomxay, Luangprabang and Xayaboury) and identify barriers to business registration, credit, technology, and market access. A Gender Action Plan was also drafted to empower women agro-entrepreneurs in Laos through improved access to information, credit, and trade facilitation. Finally, a capacity-building plan for women's participation in IT was developed, and planning began for an **IT platform for women users**.
- In addition to the overall thematic programme of work, continuing efforts were made to address feedback relating to coordination among international experts, national experts and IAs. Other priorities for project management included revisiting action plans and timelines, further efforts to enhance the utility of, and access to, the Microsoft Project (now MS Planner) portal, ensure that the e-certification plan is in full compliance with national regulatory requirements and ensure regional integration with key trading partners (China, Thailand and Vietnam).

Additional detail on activities and deliverables during the reporting period is provided in the following sections of this Chapter.

Status of Activities and Deliverables

As of October 1, 2025, activities under the SC3.1 Sub-Component are **45% complete**. An overview of the status of firm activities as of 30 September 2025 is provided below.



The third quarter of 2025 (July-September) saw focused efforts on advancing digital infrastructure, finalizing regulatory documents and building institutional capacity. The following tables summarize the status of key deliverables based on the project's original work plan, indicating completed, on-track and overdue deliverables.

Annex 1 shows the status of 60 deliverables and sub-deliverables drafted since mobilization, and which are at various stages of development/approval. Among these, numerous key deliverables were initiated ahead of their original schedule and are making significant progress towards submission.

In total, 22 deliverables are currently under formatting in preparation for submission during October 2025. These are listed separately in Annex 2.

Nevertheless, a number of deliverables have been subject to delay, caused by logistic, resourcing or dependency delays. These are listed in Table 1 below, together with reasons for the delay.

Deliverable	% Completion	Scheduled Completion	Reason for Delay
D.1.1 - Guidelines for Phytosanitary Certificates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Guideline Consultation Workshop Submission of Guideline 	90% 0% 0%	Aug 29, 2025 Aug 29, 2025 Aug 29, 2025	Dependency Delay: Workshop and final submission are pending completion of the prerequisite draft guideline. Consultation workshop to finalize content scheduled for 31 Oct 2025.
D.1.3 - SOP for Market Access Negotiation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cross-border regulatory brief Integration of grading & packaging Technical note & submissions 	81% 25% 0%	Aug 29, 2025 Oct 31, 2025 Varies	Strategic Prioritization: The team strategically repositioned this deliverable as a field-operational Contract Farming (CF) SOP. Due to resource limitations the focus on drafting, validating and training for this core CF SOP during Q3 2025 resulted in delay in completion of related sub-tasks (e.g. integrating grading and packaging standards), now to be completed during Q4/25.

<p>D.1.4 / D.1.5 - e-Phyto System</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Database migration to web-app • Submission of guideline • Upgrade to Version 1 	<p>50% 0% 30%</p>	<p>Aug 20, 2025 Sep 30, 2025 Nov 28, 2025</p>	<p>Technical Complexity & Coordination: The migration of the existing database is complex from technical and compliance perspectives. Finalization of the IT system is dependent on final approval of SOPs from various IAs. Full integration with the Lao National Single Window (LNSW) requires high-level coordination with other ministries.</p>
<p>D.2.4. Pre-conditions for e-CVI and updated forms</p>	<p>45%</p>	<p>Dec 31, 2025</p>	<p>Pre-conditions document completed; updated forms still pending</p>
<p>D4.4. SOP for inspection technique for inspectors and border checkpoints to meet SPS requirements of PRC, VN, TH</p>	<p>71%</p>	<p>Dec 31, 2025</p>	<p>Gap Assessment completed, SOPs drafted and revised to conform with standard SOP template</p>
<p>D.4.6 Training manual to conduct GMP certification</p>	<p>57%</p>	<p>July 2025</p>	<p>Compiled latest official Guidelines from EU, FAO, ASEAN, now under translation to support this deliverable.</p>
<p>D.4.7 - Food Safety (GHP/GMP/HACCP) Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct training for FDD staff 	<p>70%</p>	<p>Sep 30, 2025</p>	<p>Logistical Delay: Planned field training sessions rescheduled from July to 1 November 2025 to allow time for translation of training curricula and materials into Lao.</p>

2.1.2 Legal and Regulatory

Led by KE-3 and NKE-1 the legal work conducted between July and September focused on foundational analysis, drafting critical regulatory instruments, and preparing the legal groundwork necessary for the implementation of modernized SPS systems, particularly the e-Phyto certification system.

I. Foundational Analysis and Planning

The initial phase involved completing a **legal gap analysis** across phytosanitary, veterinary, and food safety legislation. This analysis led to the finalization of the **Gap analysis report** on certification and inspection in relation to Food Products, which included **actionable recommendations** and a comprehensive analysis and assessment of controls.

A key analytical activity was conducting a **regional comparison** of SPS frameworks and legal documents in China, Vietnam, and Thailand, culminating in the development of recommendations tailored for Laos. This comparison was delivered as the **Draft legal report on Regional Comparison and Development Recommendations for Laos (Annex 1)**.

II. Phytosanitary and E-Phyto System Support

Extensive work was dedicated to creating the legal and procedural documents required to modernize plant health certification:

- **Risk Management:** Drafting work included the **Model Draft Risk Based Inspection Procedures Regulation (Annex 3.z)** and the **Draft SoP on Risk-Based Inspections for Phytosanitary Products (Annex 4)**.

- **Certification Procedures:** Critical legal and procedural documents were drafted related to **protocols for phytosanitary sampling and inspection**. The team also developed the **Draft Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the Issuance of Phytosanitary Certificates (Annex 5)** and detailed the **Protocols for Phytosanitary Sampling and Inspection (Technical Template) (Annex 6)**.
- **Digital Readiness:** Significant effort went into developing and revising the **Preconditions for Setting Up a Functional e-Phyto System (Annex 7)**, including a comprehensive analysis and assessment of controls. This directly provided **Legal support for e-Phyto Implementation**, focusing on the development of necessary legal instruments and the implementation of recommendations outlined in the preconditions report.

III. Cross-Sectoral and Food Safety Regulations

Regulatory development spanned multiple sectors:

- **Enforcement:** Work progressed on the **Draft Regulation on Non-Compliance Handling and Enforcement (Annex 2)**.
- **Food Safety:** Legal Comments & Suggestions were provided for the revision of various **Food Safety SOPs** (specifically D.4.3A, D.4.3B, D.4.3C, D.4.4, and D.5.1).
- **Legal Workshops:** Planning continued for an upcoming legal workshop to be held during a mission by KE-3 to Vientiane. This workshop will cover phytosanitary, veterinary, and food safety issues and facilitate stakeholder discussion on legal recommendations and implementation strategies. The foundational documents established during this period paved the way for this upcoming legal workshop and stakeholder engagement.

Deliverables

By the end of the period, feedback from experts had been consolidated into final document versions, demonstrating continuing collaboration across domains and across the expert team. In total, the following **major deliverables** were completed:

Legal Review and Commentary

Legal analysis and recommendations were provided for the following food safety deliverables:

- **Annex 1 to the Monthly Report:** SOP on Decentralization of Food Permissions (D.4.3A)
- **Annex 2:** SOP for Export Permits – Processed Food (D.4.3B)
- **Annex 3:** SOP for Import Permits – Processed Food (D.4.3C)
- **Annex 4:** SOP for Export Inspection at the Border (D.4.4)
- **Annex 5:** SOP for Registration of Processed Food with FDD (D.5.1)
- **Annex 6:** Gap Analysis Report (D.4.1). Includes assessment of domestic, export, and import controls; legal and practical recommendations; and coordinated sectoral approach.
- **Annex 7:** Revision of e-Phyto Preconditions (D.1.5)

Animal Health Certification Procedures

- **D.2.1:** Situation Report and Gap Assessment Summary (veterinary). Restructuring and redrafting of procedures and capacities related to:
 - Animal health certificates

- Vaccination certificates
- Quarantine certificates
- Farm inspection certificates
- Primary animal product inspection certificates

2.1.3 Crop and Crop Products

Activities

In support of Task 2 (Review, analyse and streamline the current national export/import business process (permit/licenses) for the plants and plant products, animal and animal products as well as food products requirement of China, Vietnam, Thailand. KE-11 and NKE-5, working in close collaboration with DOA, were responsible for the following activities and deliverables.

I. Background and Strategic Alignment

Deliverable D.1.3 (SOP for Market Access Negotiation for Crops and Crop Products) aims to strengthen market access for crops and crop products by translating high-level SPS and trade facilitation policies into practical, field-level tools for farmers groups, cooperatives, and government officers.

While the original design of D.1.3 referred broadly to a “Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Market Access Negotiation,” field consultations and institutional dialogues clarified that Contract Farming (CF)—already a key mechanism used by the Department of Agricultural Extension and Cooperatives (DAEC)—is the most strategic and implementable entry point for embedding SPS compliance into Lao PDR’s crop commercialization and export readiness systems.

To this end, the CF SOP has been repositioned not as a generic negotiation manual, but as a country-owned, field-operational SOP that integrates SPS requirements into actual buyer–seller arrangements—providing a scalable model for replication across districts and for potential regional rollouts.

II. Previous Progress (January–June 2025)

Key achievements leading up to the current quarter include:

- Legal and policy reviews to assess alignment of DAEC’s CF framework (anchored in PM decree 606) with Lao Civil Code, Investment Law, and related SPS/trade regulations.
- Comparative regulatory brief benchmarking CF governance in China, Viet Nam, Thailand, and Lao PDR, drawing insights from ASEAN and bilateral practices.
- Stakeholder consultations with DAEC, DOA, district officials, cooperatives, and exporters to prioritize key crops (e.g., maize, banana, cassava, tea, coffee) and identify challenges in CF enforcement and SPS integration.
- Drafting of the CF SOP, with model clauses on pricing, grading, and dispute resolution, and a dedicated Annex 3 on SPS compliance (QR code traceability, chemical logs, food safety documentation).
- National consultation workshop in Oudomxay (12–13 May 2025), where participants validated the SOP. Feedback led to key revisions (e.g., removal of Articles 2.4, 2.5, 4.7, 4.8), reducing the document to 27 pages and repositioning it as a reference tool for DAEC and development partners.

- Capacity-building workshops in Luang Prabang (June) and Xayabouly, Oudomxay (July), Luangnamtha (August) to train provincial and district extension staff on CF implementation, farmer group formation, and SPS enforcement.

The CF SOP also complements the SPS Compliance Framework being developed by KE-3, reinforcing critical pillars such as traceability, risk mitigation, and access to accredited laboratory services. Coordination with DOA and the World Bank has been maintained through the SEARECC management team to ensure alignment with broader technical assistance efforts.

III. Strategic Relevance in Q3

During the current quarter, KE-11 and NKE-5 continued efforts to prepare the CF SOP for rollout and final validation. Activities focused on: Aligning the CF SOP with ongoing SOPs for farmer groups and cooperatives (D.3.2), Developing gender-responsive training tools for inclusive SOP implementation; and ensuring full consistency with Lao legal frameworks and DAEC’s institutional mandates.

This work also complements and reinforces ongoing regional initiatives, including: The ASEAN Sustainable Agrifood Systems (SAS) initiative, which aims to integrate smallholders into SPS-compliant value chains; The GMS Working Group on Agriculture (WGA) strategic agenda for harmonizing SPS documentation and procedures across member states; The Lancang-Mekong Cooperation traceability pilots and GS1-supported electronic certification platforms. By embedding these regional and technical frameworks into a usable national SOP, Deliverable D.1.3 contributes to a practical, systems-level transformation in how SPS compliance and market access are managed in Lao PDR.

2. Activities and Progress

A. SOP Finalization and Rollout Preparations

- **Editing and Refinement:** Continued improvements to the CF SOP based on feedback from earlier consultations and trainings. Edits focused on clarifying institutional roles (DAEC–DOA), simplifying model clauses, and aligning the SOP with national traceability and SPS documentation protocols.
- **Briefing Materials:** Drafted stakeholder presentation packages and talking points to support rollout and validation meetings.

B. Training and Capacity Building

- **Xayabouly Training (July 2025):** A 4-day session was conducted for extension officers. The training emphasized **contract literacy, traceability, enforcement protocols, and inclusive group formation.**
- **Phongsaly Training Preparations:** Preparation of updated training modules for the final workshop scheduled in **Phongsaly Province**, with a focus on local implementation. However, this training may not be implemented in 2025, as it is not included in the workplan and budget funded by SEARECC. Therefore, it could be implemented at the beginning of 2026.

C. SOP Linkages with Farmer Groups and Cooperatives

- **SOP Review and Harmonization:** NKE-5 led the review of draft SOPs for farmer groups and cooperatives, comparing them against international standards and aligning them with DAEC's institutional framework.
- **Preliminary Recommendations:** Developed structured recommendations for SOP integration, emphasizing **inclusive participation, cooperative governance**, and field-level implementation tools.

D. Coordination and Stakeholder Engagement

- **August Coordination Meeting (Vientiane/online):** Joint progress updates were presented to DAEC, DOA, and project stakeholders, during the August monthly collaboration meetings.

3. Deliverables

- Revised **draft SOP for CF**, incorporating post-training feedback.
 - **Stakeholder presentation package** for upcoming validation workshops.
 - **Draft outline** for the final SOP validation meeting.
 - Training materials for **Phongsaly Province** on CF, groups, and cooperatives.
 - **SOP alignment memo** outlining linkages between CF SOP and group/cooperative SOPs.
 - **Coordination slide decks** presented at the August monthly coordination meeting.

Recommendations and Next Steps

1. Validate SOPs for Contract Farming

- Schedule and conduct stakeholder validation meeting.
- Submit finalized CF SOP package to DAEC leadership.

2. Finalize SOPs for Groups and Cooperatives

- Review and finalize SOP drafts.
- Package with operational manuals and visual training tools.

3. Conduct Final Training Round in Phongsaly

- Deliver final extension officer training.
- Include participatory modules on enforcement and inclusive contracting.

4. Support SOP Operationalization

- Develop a full **implementation roadmap, illustrated ToT materials, and monitoring checklists**.
- Align with DAEC **budget planning** and provincial workplans.

5. Continue Collaboration with KE-3 and DOA

- Cross-check SOP on Contract Farming with the **national SPS compliance framework**.
- Address gaps in **traceability, lab access, and legal harmonization**.

2.1.4 Animals and Animal Products

Activities

During the current reporting period, KE8, KE9, KE10, NKE3, NKE4, working in close collaboration with DLF, were responsible for a number of foundational activities and deliverables in support of Task 2- Review, analyse and streamline the current national export/import business processes (permits/licenses) for the plants and plant products, animal and animal products as well as food products requirement of China, Vietnam, Thailand under this project.

KE-9 led the development of an e-certification system for export of animals and animal products in Lao PDR. This work required collaboration with both national and international experts (KE-2, KE-8, KE-10, NKE-2, NKE-3, NKE-4 and the Department of Livestock and Fisheries (DLF) as the Implementation Agency.

This work is integral to modernizing SPS management and promoting agricultural trade within the broader project. The team's efforts during this quarter focused on designing the core elements of the e-Health Certificate system, building upon previous collaborative work that identified the need for such SOPs for veterinary health certification.

KE-9 focused on the foundational development of templates, documents, and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the e-Health Certificate system. Specifically, he undertook the following activities:

- **July 2025:** KE-9 developed **templates and relevant documents for issuing "e-Health Certificates for export of live animals"** from Lao PDR. This included creating e-Application Forms, a standard Animal Health Certificate (HCP) template aligned with OIE standards, and various data management tools such as data entry forms, database tables, data recording, storage, query, search tools, and reporting systems (both manual and computer-based). A specific SOP for requesting and issuing these e-Health Certificates for live animals and animal products was also developed.
- **August 2025:** The activities shifted to developing **templates, datasets, and documents to support the issuance of "e-Health Certificates for export of animal products (HCP)"** of the Lao PDR. This work mirrored July's, incorporating e-Application Forms, the OIE-standard Animal Health Certificate (HCP) template, and comprehensive data management systems, along with an SOP for requesting and issuing e-Health Certificates for animal products.
- **September 2025:** KE-9 synthesized these efforts by developing a **draft SOP for the "e-Health Certificate of Export Live Animals and Animal Products of the Lao PDR"**. This draft SOP provides a detailed framework, summarizing situation analysis and gap assessment, outlining methodology, certificate development requirements, system components, data/information requirements, e-Data entry forms, the e-Health Certificate template, data record systems, and the e-Health Certificate issuing process, along with references and annexes.

Key deliverables produced by KE-9 during this period contributed to **Deliverable 2.2: SOP for issue of relevant animal health certificate, vaccination certificate, quarantine certificate, farm inspection certificate, primary animal product**

inspection certificate. **These contributions provided** an essential foundation and prerequisite as components of the planned e-certification system:

- **e-Application Forms** for requesting e-Health Certificates for both live animals and animal products.
- **Standard templates of the Animal Health Certificate (HCP)**, in line with OIE standards, for both live animals and animal products.
- **Standard data entry forms, database tables, data recording, data storage, data query, data search tools, and reporting systems** (manual and computer-based) for both live animals and animal products.
- **SOP for requesting and issuing e-Health Certificates** for the export of live animals and animal products.
- **SOP of “e-Health Certificate of Export Live Animals and Animal Products of the Lao PDR”**, outlining the system's comprehensive requirements and processes.

Technical Findings and Recommendations

Key findings that also serve as recommendations for the design and implementation of the e-certification system:

- **Documentation is key:** The animal health certificate is identified as a critical document confirming product safety, issued by veterinary and government health agencies.
- **Comprehensive Data Capture:** The e-certificate system is designed to capture a wide array of crucial details, including animal species, country of origin/destination, packaging type, weights, slaughterhouse, exporter/consignee information, transportation details, and certificate numbers.
- **Export Streamlining:** The e-Health Certification System is seen as essential for **streamlining the export potential** of live animals and animal products from Lao PDR.
- **Modular System Design:** The system is structured to include **8 distinct subsystems**, indicating a robust and modular approach to its development.
- **OIE Standard Alignment:** The development of a template for the health e-Certificate (HCA) for live animals and animal products explicitly **follows OIE standard formats**, ensuring international consistency and recognition. This is a crucial technical recommendation for broad acceptance of Lao PDR's animal product exports.

At the same time KE-8 (working with KE-3) continued and finalized development of a structured gap assessment on the certification processes for the following:

1. Animal Health Certificates
2. Vaccination Certificates
3. Quarantine Certificates
4. Farm Inspection Certificates
5. Primary Animal Product Inspection Certificates

The analysis included review of existing procedures, institutional roles (DLF, PAFO, DAFO, private sector), and compliance with international benchmarks (WOAH, Codex, WTO-SPS).

The work was synthesized in the **Situation and Gap Assessment Summary Report of the Prevailing Procedures and Capacities Related to Issuance of Relevant Animal Health Certificates, Vaccination Certificate, Quarantine Certificates, Farm Inspection Certificate, and Primary Animal Product Inspection Certificate (Deliverable 2.1)**, which highlighted systemic weaknesses and provided an analytical framework for improvement.

2. Identified Gaps

Based in this analysis, the following key gaps were identified:

Animal Health Certificates

- Lack of standardized clinical examination protocols and checklists.
- Certificates issued without physical examination of animals in some cases.
- Weak document verification (photocopies accepted without validation).
- Absence of digital traceability; accountability of field staff unclear.

Vaccination Certificates

- Fragmented responsibilities and poor coordination between authorities.
- No official SOPs or harmonized vaccination protocols.
- Cold chain interruptions during transport and storage.
- Data integrity gaps: missing batch numbers, incomplete coverage reporting.

Quarantine Certificates

- Inadequate infrastructure: lack of isolation areas, labs, and biosecurity facilities.
- No standardized testing protocols; procedures vary by importer requirements.
- Absence of mandatory treatment records and digital traceability.
- Resource and staffing constraints reduce inspection reliability.

Farm Inspection Certificates

- No national requirement for veterinary treatment logs (withdrawal periods not recorded).
- Inconsistent residue surveillance (limited to pigs, poultry, and fish).
- Paper-based certification with partial, fragmented digitization.
- Movement of animals allowed without verified treatment history.

Primary Animal Product Inspection Certificates

- Absence of systematic drug residue monitoring at slaughterhouses.
- Certificates issued without proof of withdrawal compliance.
- Manual record-keeping without centralized or digital integration.
- Limited training and SOPs for ante- and post-mortem inspection.

3. Development of SOPs

Building on these findings, the current phase focused on the drafting of SOPs for each of the five certificate types, providing a strategic opportunity to:

- Standardize procedures across the country.
- Clarify roles and responsibilities between DLF, PAFO, DAFO, and private actors.
- Introduce digital traceability to improve accountability and transparency.
- Strengthen public health safeguards by documenting pharmacological history and enforcing withdrawal periods.
- Reinforce trade credibility by aligning with WOH, Codex, and WTO-SPS requirements.

These SOPs are designed as practical, enforceable tools to address operational shortcomings and to guide both public officials and authorized private actors in implementing harmonized and verifiable certification processes. Using a common template developed by the TL and DTL, in consultation with key experts, the SOPs will serve as the operational backbone for credible, verifiable, and internationally recognized certification in Lao PDR, ultimately supporting both public health protection and the country's market access ambitions.

4. Recommendations

The following corrective measures are being operationalized and codified via the draft SOPs developed:

- *Animal Health Certificates*: Introduce standardized clinical checklists; empower DAFO staff and contracted veterinarians to perform examinations under PAFO supervision; digitalize data recording; require inspector name/signature for accountability.
- *Vaccination Certificates*: Strengthen cold chain infrastructure at DAFO; mandate administration by trained personnel; adopt harmonized vaccination protocols; digitize batch number tracking; promote combined vaccination sessions (e.g., FMD, LSD, HS).
- *Quarantine Certificates*: Designate isolation facilities; harmonize testing and sampling protocols; require drug treatment declarations; introduce rapid testing and residue detection; digitize quarantine records linked to DLF database.
- *Farm Inspection Certificates*: Make treatment record-keeping mandatory; link pharmacological history to animal movement and health certificates; standardize protocols across provinces; shift toward preventive documentation to reduce reliance on costly full surveillance.
- *Primary Animal Product Inspection Certificates*: Require treatment history at slaughter entry; implement risk-based residue monitoring; establish a centralized digital archive integrating certificates, inspections, and lab results; develop species-specific SOPs and illustrated post-mortem guides; strengthen inspector training with mandatory refreshers.

2.1.5 Food Safety

Activities

Activities relating to food safety are covered under Tasks 3 and 8, as summarized below.

Task 3. Streamline registration of production areas, farms, and critical inputs for the crop and livestock farms

In support of this Task, KE-15 led the development of SOPs for streamlining of registration of food processing enterprises and relevant critical inputs required for compliance with export requirements (Deliverable 5.1).

This SOP aims to simplify and harmonize the procedures for registering food products in the Lao PDR while ensuring compliance with the technical, health, and safety requirements of China, Vietnam, and Thailand. The SOP includes:

- **SOP for Registration of Food Products:** The SOP cover process includes the submission of documents, technical review with risk-based classification in line with Codex. Approved products will be issued with certificates within clearly defined timelines. Requirements for composition, labeling, and testing parameters are harmonized with Codex standards and the regulations of key trade partners.
- **SOP for issuance of Export Permit:** The SOP focuses on ensuring that Lao food exporters can meet the requirements of major destination markets. Applications are submitted and verified against product registration records and accredited laboratory certificates, and are subject to risk-based inspection. The export permit process is consolidated under FDD as a single authority, and the permit format is aligned with China's regulations, Vietnam's Food Authority rules, and Thai FDA procedures.
- **SOP for issuance of Import Permit:** This SOP emphasizes digitized submission, risk-based review, and integration between FDD, customs, and other relevant agencies to eliminate overlap. Imported products must comply with requirements for accredited laboratory testing and certification from exporting countries, recognized under Codex. The issuance process is bound by clear timelines,

Task 8: Analysis of existing guidelines and legal documents on Good Hygiene Practices (GHP), Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) for Food Safety

Task 8 is supported by several Key and Non-Key Experts:

- **Key Experts (KEs):** KE-1 (Team Leader), KE-3 (International Legal Specialist), **KE-15 (International Specialist for food products processes)**, **KE-16 (International Specialist/trainer in GHP, GMP, HACCP)**, and **KE-17 (National Consultant for Technical Support for GHP, GMP, HACCP)**. KE-13 (International IT Specialist) is also involved as part of the IT Working Group responsible for Task 8.

The goal of Task 8 is to develop SOPs for the application of GHP, GMP, and HACCP to improve trade. Furthermore, Task 8 requires that both existing legal documents and the new SOPs be made publicly available.

In support of this task KE-15, KE-16, KE-17 and NKE-8 conducted the following activities:

1. Reviewed existing guidelines and legal documents on GHP, GMP, HACCP for food safety for food businesses, restaurants and hotels.
2. Reviewed SOPs of Good Hygiene Practice regulation from the Food and Drug Department
3. Reviewed Good Manufacturing Practices audit checklist and adapted to English version.
4. Translated the following training materials on food safety management systems (GMP, GHP, and HACCP) into Lao language:

Module1:

- Steps on food inspections
- Alternative methods (examples)
- Box1. Control of environmental sources of contamination
- Box2. Personal health policy

Module2:

- Hand and clothing hygiene
 - Cleaning and sanitation plan
 - Cold technologies
 - Hot technologies
5. Review guidelines on good importation practices and SOPs
 - SOP for centralization of food permits
 - SOP for issuance of export permits
 - SOP for registration of processed foods
 6. Supported the FDD expert team to develop a proposal for food safety management training (GMP, GHP and HACCP), submitted to the SPS office at Department of Agriculture for approval. With translation of training materials (coordinated by KE-17) now almost complete, the first training (GMP, GHP and HACCP) will take place in Luang Namtha Province from 3-7 November 2025, with the second in Luang Prabang Province from 10-14 November 2025. The international and national food safety experts (KE-16 and KE-17) will be mobilized to lead this training.
 7. Training on SOPs for food industries, SMEs and restaurants is scheduled for 2026.

The following SOPs were developed during the reporting period:

- **Deliverable D.4.3: SOP for Decentralization of Responsibilities for Issuance of Permits Between National and Provincial Authorities.**

This SOP clarifies the division of roles and responsibilities between national and provincial FDD offices to avoid duplication and streamline workflows. It defines which permits are issued centrally versus those that can be processed locally, the required communication protocols, and the timeline commitments for each authority. The goal is to ensure consistency, avoid bureaucratic overlaps, and improve service delivery for businesses seeking timely approval of food-related permits.

- **Deliverable D.4.4: SOP for Export Inspection at Border**

This SOP establishes risk-based procedures for border inspection of food exports, ensuring compliance with GHP, GMP, and HACCP requirements. It includes verification steps and sets clear timelines for inspections to prevent bottlenecks at border checkpoints while maintaining compliance with importing country requirements.

2.1.6 E-Phyto (KE 6, KE 13, KE14)

Activities

The e-Phyto certification system is primarily connected with **Task 4: Initiate the e-Phyto certification system and develop generic system to link DOA and AgriTech Centre with 5 target provinces and border checkpoints.**

Task 4 is a major component of the project, with the objective to initiate development of an electronic phytosanitary (e-Phyto) certification system and develop a generic digital system to connect the Department of Agriculture (DOA) and the Northern AgriTech Centre (ATC) with five target provinces and border checkpoints.

To implement the e-Phyto system, several pre-conditions need to be met, including revision of the legal framework, availability of technical infrastructure, and stakeholder engagement. The task involves multiple activities aimed at digital transformation, integration, and capacity building, and involves specialists from both the IT and SPS sectors:

- KE-5 (International Specialist to initiate e-Phyto certification system).
- KE-6 (National consultant to initiate e-Phyto certification system).
- KE-13 (International IT Specialist).
- KE-14 (National IT Specialist).

During the reporting period the team worked in close collaboration with DOA, DLF and relevant government agencies to implement the following activities and deliverables.

Work continued on the advancement of the e-Phyto certification system and development of a generic digital system to connect the Department of Agriculture (DOA) and the Northern AgriTech Centre with the five target provinces and border checkpoints. This work is central to supporting Deliverable 1.1, which concerns guidelines for preparation and issuance of phytosanitary certificates, including a gap assessment report.

The team's primary focus was the **initiation and development of the e-Phyto certification system and its integration components.**

Key activities included:

- **System Development and Migration:** KE-13 initiated the design of a **migration of the existing database from a standalone system to a web-based application.** Concurrently, KE-6 and KE-14 were extensively involved in **User Interface (UI) development**, designing and developing the main interfaces such as **Dashboard, Application, Inspection, and Certificate modules**, complete with core functions (Add, Edit, Delete), and supporting sub-UIs like product details and export entities. All developed interfaces and sub-UIs underwent rigorous **programming, testing, and debugging** to ensure functionality and reliability.
- **Integration Efforts:** KE-13 specifically worked on an **Annex for the "integration of export Phytosanitary Certificates to the LAO Single Window (LNSW)".** Both KE-13 and KE-6/KE-14 participated in activities related to **integration with the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) / Hub.** This included KE-13's joint mission with KE-5 (International Specialist to

initiate e-Phyto certification system) from 14 to 19 September 2025, aimed at facilitating data exchange. KE-6 and KE-14 also attended workshops on the IPPC Hub, focusing on data preparation and organization. Coordination meetings with DOA and other key government agencies (Department of IT, Ministry of Customs, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Industry and Commerce) were held to discuss the web-based application's development and its integration with the Single Window System.

- **Technical Consultation and Documentation:** KE-13 participated in consultation meetings regarding technical issues, support, and ongoing implementation for the national phytosanitary system towards the IPPC system. The team worked towards finalising the Beta Version with modules for e-inspections, pest and disease sampling (laboratory results) related to the DOA e-phytosanitary certificates. KE-6 and KE-14 also reviewed legal documents to ensure compliance with national regulations and international standards, analyzing existing frameworks to identify requirements and gaps, thereby establishing a legally sound foundation for the system.

Deliverables (July-September 2025)

- An **Annex for the "integration of export Phytosanitary Certificates to the LAO Single Window (LNSW)"** was worked on by KE-13.
- **Initiation of database migration** from a standalone to a web-based application (under D1.4 and D1.5) by KE-14.
- **Main User Interfaces (Dashboard, Application, Inspection, and Certificate modules)** were designed, developed, programmed, tested, and debugged by KE-6 and KE-14.
- **Supporting Sub-UIs** for elements like product details and export entities were also developed by KE-6 and KE-14.
- A logical and systematic **testing of the web-based application** with sample datasets has been conducted to validate workflows and data handling, ensuring that all components of the software function cohesively
- **Regular coordination, consultation, and discussions with DOA** on the development of the web-based application—particularly regarding input data, data structure, and UI design—have been held through both online communication channels and in-person meetings.

Technical Findings and Recommendations

Key technical recommendations that shaped the work include:

- **Open-Source Technologies:** It was recommended to use **open-source technologies based on Python and PostgreSQL, specifically PHP/PostgreSQL**, for developing a tailor-made national web-based system. This approach aims to minimize costs and facilitate system maintenance.
- **SOPs Finalisation:** It was deemed imperative that **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) be finalised in cooperation with DOA, Department of Livestock and Fisheries (DLF), and Food and Drug Department (FDD) before finalising the IT system**, with a target completion of mid-2025. This ensures the selection of appropriate SPS business processes for digitization.

- **Consistency in Design:** System design and implementation should **maintain the existing style and content of phytosanitary certificates** currently in use. This minimizes operational disruption and optimizes the digital transition from a desktop to a web-based system.
- **Phased Implementation:** The web-based system should be **internally operational, nationally, and fully implemented before any further stages of data exchange with the IPPC / HUB or to implement some "self-services" and/or integration with the National Single-Window.**

Challenges

Overarching challenges for development and operationalization were identified early in the development phase, and are listed as follows:

- **Inter-Agency Coordination:** The project generally requires "close and intensive coordination with Implementation Agencies" such as DOA, DLF, DAEC, ATC, and FDD. Inadequate coordination among different stakeholders (public and private sector) is a noted risk for the project.
- **Regulatory Alignment:** Activities involved regularly reviewing legal documents to ensure compliance with national regulations and international standards and analyzing existing frameworks to identify requirements and gaps. This implies challenges in aligning diverse legal and regulatory frameworks.
- **Technical Infrastructure and Digitalization Gaps:** The project's summary highlights a need for substantial improvements in technological infrastructure and addressing limited digitalization in trade and health certification. The migration of existing databases from standalone to web-based applications is a complex task.

2.1.7 FAMEW Digitized Pest Database and IPM Manual

Activities

NKE-6 (Dr. Pheophanh Soysouvanh) led activities in support of two main project tasks:

- **Task 6: Develop manual for the FAMEWs digitized pest database management application and provide training to ATC and 5 PAFOs staff for outbreak management**
- **Task 7: Develop manual for IPM, PEQ, greenhouse testing protocol and provide training for ATC/PAFOs staff, including proposed digitized process and software for data management and analysis**

During the current reporting period, work continued to support development of a Basic Insect Taxonomy Manual and Pest List. The following specific activities were conducted:

- Finalized **first draft of the basic insect taxonomy manual**.
- Finalized **first draft of the pest list of chilli and tea**, which contains information on pest distribution, biology, ecology, damage symptoms, and management.
- Develop/update pest list for crops subject to export (beans, watermelon, maize).
- Improve the manual of basic insect taxonomy (for training ATC and PAFO staff).
- Draft a manual for insect survey (for training ATC and PAFO staff).
- Planned for training on surveillance, identification of pests for updating the pest list and their database of pests to share information with neighboring countries (expected to conduct in early of November)

Deliverables

First drafts of the following were produced:

- **Insect Glossary** (Annex 1), as part of the basic insect taxonomy manual.
- **Pest List Manual** (Annex 2) containing pest list, distribution, biology, ecology, damage symptoms, and management for chilli and tea.
- **Basic Insect Taxonomy Manual** (Annex 3)
- List of pests of beans, watermelon and maize

2.1.8 Gender Empowerment

Activities

In support of Task 5 (Develop information platform for women empowerment and information access, **Deliverable D-5.10**), KE-12 led a consultation workshop held in Luang Namtha from 27-28 May 2025 on Empowering Women Agro-Entrepreneurs in Laos through Improved Access to Information, Credit, and Trade Facilitation. The workshop was organized in close collaboration with DAEC and its experts.

The purpose of the Workshop was to discuss key challenges and needs of women agro-entrepreneurs in target provinces, focusing on their access to:

- Business registration services
- Legal and trade-related information (including SPS and export/import)
- Credit and financial services
- Training and technology transfer programs

The stakeholder consultation workshop was conducted on the topic of Empowering Women Agro-Entrepreneurs in Laos through Improved Access to Information, Credit, and Trade Facilitation.

The participants are from main stakeholders of the project targeted provinces attended to the workshop. Following is the list of the participants and their origin:

- Three (3) Women Agro-Entrepreneurs from Luangnamtha province
- Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office (PAFO), Lao Women's Union (LWU), and Sub-CAW focal points from 5 provinces
- 5 Provincial Chamber of Commerce Representatives from 5 provinces.

The objective of the workshop is to discuss the challenges and needs of women agro-entrepreneurs in Laos, particularly in the target provinces of Phongsaly, Luangnamtha, Oudomxay, Luangprabang, and Xayaboury. Following is the main objectives of the workshop that should be obtained:

- Identify challenges in business registration, understanding legal/trade information, and credit access.
- Assess women's participation in training programs and technology transfer activities.
- Gather insights to enhance financial inclusion and market access for women agro-entrepreneurs.

Key findings from this workshop contributed to the development of a Gender Action Plan and a Digital Information Platform to improve women's access to services in agricultural trade.

Agro-Business Context in the Province

- **Main Crops/Products in the province:** corn, Job's tears, cassava, para rubber, lemon, tobacco, paddy, ginger, sugarcane, sweet potatoes, watermelon, beans, pumpkins, and other crops.

- **Involvement of Women in agribusiness:** Approximately 70% of women in Luangnamtha are engaged in agribusiness, while in the other four provinces, the involvement ranges are from 10-20%.
- **Role of Women in agribusiness:** Women predominantly focus on production, and sometimes they process crops for their families and the local market. Additional information is needed from LPB.
- **Production Focus:** In the five northern provinces, focusing production on cash crops for export to Thailand and China. The government and other donors supported farmers to form the farmer production groups for producing cash crop, also cultivate organic vegetables for local consumption and sale.

1. Women Entrepreneurs – Profiles

- **Agribusiness Entities:** There are only one to two agribusiness entities per province, except for Luangnamtha province (additional information needed). Women agribusiness are from Lao, Thai Dam, Hor, and Phou Noi ethnic groups. Most are aged 30-45 and reside in urban areas.
- **Types of Agro-Enterprises:** Common women-led agro-business include exporting cash crops to Thailand and China. These businesses are formally registered, although many women engage in family-based agro-business activities.

2. Opportunities for Women in Agribusiness

- Government and donor-supported programs are currently available to promote agriculture. These include established farmer production groups, irrigation system support, nutrition programs, and gender mainstreaming activities. However, there are currently no programs specifically supporting business development and marketing.

3. High-Potential Value Chain or Market

- **Strategic Locations:** High-potential markets include Phongsaly, Luangnamtha, and Udomxay, which border with China, offering access to high-value markets. Additionally, Xayaboury, bordering Thailand, presents further opportunities.
- **Training Initiatives:** Women in agribusiness have participated in training sessions focused on exporting products to China and Vietnam, enhancing their capabilities in international trade.

4. Barriers and Constraints

◆ Access to Credit:

1. **Limited collateral:** Many women lack land ownership, making it difficult to secure loans.
2. **Complex loan procedures:** Financial institutions often require with extensive documentation, which can be a barrier.
3. **Limited financial literacy:** Women entrepreneurs may struggle with navigating loan applications and financial management.

◆ Business Registration:

1. **Bureaucratic Hurdles:** The process of registering a business is often lengthy and complicated, which can be a significant obstacle for women entrepreneurs attempting to formalize their business.
2. **Lack of Awareness:** Many women lack awareness regarding the legal requirements necessary for business formalization, hindering their ability to effectively establish and operate their businesses.

◆ **Training and Technology:**

1. **Limited Access to Training Programs:** Women lack opportunities to participate in business training, including financial management and accounting. This gap hinders their ability to effectively manage and grow their businesses.
2. **Technology Gap:** Many women do not have access to digital tools that could enhance their productivity and expand their market reach, particularly in terms of utilizing technology for business operations and marketing.

◆ **Market Access:**

1. **Lack of Information on SPS and Trade Rules:** Women face challenges in understanding sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) regulations required for exports. This lack of information can hinder their ability to comply with international trade standards.
2. **Weak Links to Buyers:** Limited networking opportunities create difficulties for women entrepreneurs in connecting with larger markets, restricting their business growth and expansion potential.
3. **Dependence on Middlemen:** Many women rely on intermediaries, which often reduces their profit margins due to the costs associated with using these intermediaries for market access.

◆ **Social/Cultural Barriers:**

1. **Gender norms:** Traditional expectations limit women's ability to expand their businesses, as societal and familial pressures often prioritize domestic roles over entrepreneurial pursuits.
2. **Domestic burdens:** Balancing household responsibilities with business operations can be challenging for women, affecting their ability to dedicate time and resources to their business.
3. **Mobility restrictions:** Women in rural areas may face challenges traveling to markets or training sessions, hindering their access to opportunities for business growth and skill development.

2.2 Progress towards objectives

The following table (Table 1) summarises the accomplishments during the period as reported to the MTR.

Table 1: Progress Towards Objectives July-September 2025

Theme	Activity	Deliverables	Output
Legal and Regulatory	Activity 1.1: Review and Analyses of Lao SPS Legal & Regulatory Frameworks	D1.1 D1.3 D2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Drafted and circulated Situation Report and Gap Assessment Summary Report - Awaiting feedback from Technical Experts on final drafts, particularly in the veterinary and food safety sectors, in order to integrate and refine the final documents ▪ Conducted meetings with relevant stakeholders and legal analyses initiated by KE-3 ▪ Sent draft of Gap Analysis Report to client / reviewed and feedback received ▪ Drafted 6 SOPs model commentary to Gap Analysis and drafted relevant documents including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ D1.1a Model Non-Compliance Handling And Enforcement Regulation (for phytosanitary requirements ○ D1.1b Model Risk-Based Inspection Procedures Regulation ○ D1.1c SOP for Risk Based Phytosanitary Inspection Procedures ○ D1.1d SOP for Issuance of Phytosanitary Certificate ○ D1.1e Model Ministerial Order on Phytosanitary Sampling and Inspection Protocols for Laos, including Technical Template for Plant Health Inspection and Quarantine ○ D1.5 Pre-conditions for Setting Up the Functional e-Phyto System ○
Crops	Activity 1.2: SWOT Analysis	D2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continued legal support for e-Phyto Implementation, including development of legal instruments and implementation of recommendations outlined in preconditions report ▪ Drafted Model Ministerial Order on Phytosanitary Sampling and Inspection Protocols for Laos, including Technical Template for Plant Health Inspection and Quarantine ▪ Initiated planning for Stakeholder Engagement and Legal Workshop to be held during the upcoming mission of KE-3 to Vientiane, covering phytosanitary, veterinary, and food safety, to facilitate stakeholder discussion on legal recommendations and implementation strategies ▪ Consolidated stakeholder feedback into final document versions ▪ Continued sector-specific legal development support ▪ Identified regulatory gaps and proposed improvements aligned with international standards ▪ Completed preliminary analyses for existing exports and potential future exports
Animals and Animal Products	Activity 1.3: Legal Recommendations	D2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Refined legal documents for veterinary and food safety sectors ▪ Drafted legal instruments for the e-Certification system ▪ Plan for Legal Workshop ▪ Final document versions incorporating stakeholder feedback ▪ Drafted Regional Comparison and Development Recommendations for Laos - Comparative analysis of SPS

			<p>frameworks and legal documents in China, Vietnam, and Thailand related to plant and plant product trade.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Drafted Regulation on Non-Compliance Handling and Enforcement ▪ Draft Model Regulation on Risk-Based Inspection Procedures ▪ Developed and shared comprehensive legal review & Gap Analyses with recommendations drafted for comment ▪ Developed new draft legal decision on fresh meat and cattle export requirements from Lao PDR and sent to DOA for review and comment ▪ Annex 1 to the Monthly Report: SOP on Decentralization of Food Permissions (D.4.3A) ▪ Annex 2: SOP for Export Permits – Processed Food (D.4.3B) ▪ Annex 3: SOP for Import Permits – Processed Food (D.4.3C) ▪ Annex 4: SOP for Export Inspection at the Border (D.4.4) ▪ Annex 5: SOP for Registration of Processed Food with FDD (D.5.1) ▪ Annex 6: Gap Analysis Report (D.4.1) ▪ Includes assessment of domestic, export, and import controls; legal and practical recommendations; and coordinated sectoral approach. ▪ Annex 7: Revision of e-Phyto Preconditions (D.1.5) – carried forward from July
Food Safety	Activity 1.4: Regulatory Document Development Drafted key documents	D5.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Drafted Report on Food Safety Certification and Inspection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Current Status, ○ Regulatory Gaps, and ○ Recommendations for Framework Improvement, and ○ shared for comment ▪ Drafted Food Safety Legal Assessment Framework for Laos and shared for comment ▪ Developed Gap Assessment of the Lao PDR Inspection and Certification System for Food Safety and Quality System and sent to DOA for review and comment ▪ Conducted Stakeholder Consultation Workshop, and prepared report (27-28 May 2025)
e-Phyto	Activity 4.2 Review the e-Phyto hub and E-certification technical documents of IPPC, WOH	D1.5. D1.1. D1.4. D5.6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reviewed technical documents including IPPC Guide implementing GeNS and Service Requirements Specifications IPPC ePhyto HUB ▪ Completed two assessments of existing procedures, process and database to support improvement in phytosanitary management ▪ Initiated migration of existing database to web-based application ▪ Initiated future planning for maintenance and sustainability of the proposed web-based application (Budget plan and web domain and hosting) ▪ Drafted Lao-language Interim Report on 'Initiate e-Phyto certification system and develop generic system to link DOA and AgriTech Centre with 5 target provinces and border checkpoints and shared for review and comment ▪ The meeting has been organized to discussed on the Institutional and technical issue to link e-Phyto system to LNSW between concerned departments e.g. DoC, DIT of MOF and system developer, the BIVAC.
Gender Empowerment	Activity 5.1 Analyse difficulties faced by women agro-entrepreneurs Activity 5.2 Analyse specific barriers for women	D.5.10 D.5.11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gap Assessment and Situation Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Finalized Gap Assessment and draft Gender Action Plan ○ Completed Concept Note for stakeholder interviews for gender survey

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	<p>entrepreneurs in credit processing</p> <p>Activity 5.3 Assess women's participation in technology transfer and capacity-building programs</p> <p>Activity 5.5 Develop Gender Action Plan</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reviewed existing policies and regulations on barriers for registering businesses, financial access, technology and market ▪ Business Registration Barriers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conducted focus group discussions (FGDs) with women agro-entrepreneurs in 5 provinces to map registration steps and challenges. ○ Analyzed legal and procedural requirements for business registration. ○ Identified language, cost, and mobility-related challenges ○ Developed simplified business registration guides (visual, in local language) ○ Tested guide usability with women in 2 pilot locations.
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2.3 Resources used

Table 2 below provides an overview of the TA's mobilization from January to August 2025, including time remaining under existing allocations.

Table 2: Resources Used January - August 2025

ID	Position	YEAR 1 (2025)									Total used 2024	Total used 2025	Total used	Total Allocation	Time Input	
		Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep					Rem	Unit
Key Experts																
KE1	International Specialist Streamlining Plants and Plant Products export/import business processes (permits/licenses) and Team Leader	3,25	10	7	8,25	11	14	13	11,5	17,5		95,5	95,5	198	102,5	days
KE2	National Specialist Streamlining Plants and Plant Products export/import business processes (permits/licenses) and deputy team leader	11	13	8	4,5	9,5	14	16	17	12	24,75	105	129,75	198	68,25	days
KE3	International Specialist to analyse legal framework and develop guidelines to comply market access and the SPS requirement compliance of China, Vietnam, Thailand				6	5		6	6	4	31	27	58	99	41	days
KE4	International Specialist for streamlining registration of production areas, farms and critical inputs						12	2	4		32,5	18	50,5	99	48,5	days
KE5	International Specialist to initiate e-Phyto certification system											0	0	132	132	days
KE6	National consultant to initiate e-Phyto certification system		3	7	10	12	15	16	14	14		91	91	132	41	days
KE7	National IT specialist and programmer, for troubleshooting in all department, i.e. DOA, DLF, DAEC, ATC, FDD and assisting all digitization and web-based operation	4,5	4								5	8,5	13,5	77	63,5	days
KE8	International Specialist to streamlining for animal and animal products export/import business processes (permits/licenses)		3	8	2,5	4,5	9		8,25	10	26,5	45,25	71,75	88	16,25	days
KE9	International Specialist to develop of e-certification for export of animal and animal products		3	5	2	2	3	2	3	3	20	23	43	44	1	days
KE10	National consultant to initiate e-certification system for export of animal and animal products.			5,5	6	5					16,5	16,5	33	44	11	days
KE11	International Specialist for Market Access Promotion (grading, product storage, processing, packaging, labelling) and agribusiness development		8	10	6	7	2					33	33	33	0	days
KE12	National Specialist to develop (with IT specialist) an information platform for women empowerment and information access on agricultural trade.				5	6,5	1	4	9			25,5	25,5	88	62,5	days
KE13	International IT Specialist to initiate generic system (e-certification and e-inspection) to link DOA and Northern AgriTech Centre with 5 target provinces		2	10	3	9,5	0,5	0,5	2,5	6		34	34	44	10	days
KE14	National IT Specialist to develop generic system (e-inspection, e-certification) to link DOA and Northern Agri-Tech Centre with 5 target provinces			4,5	9	9	6	7	7	8		50,5	50,5	132	81,5	days
KE15	International Specialist to Streamlining for food products export/import business processes and compliance of SPS requirement (permits/licenses)			10		8	12		6		7	36	43	99	56	days
KE16	International Specialist, trainer in GHP, GMP, HACCP (to train the Nat. specialist to take over the tasks)			10								10	10	44	34	days
KE17	National consultant for Technical Support for GHP, GMP, HACCP	9	5	13	10							37	37	132	95	days

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Non Key Experts																
NKE1	National Specialist to analyse Legal framework and develop guidelines to comply market access and the SPS requirement compliance of China, Vietnam, Thailand	2		0,5	1,5	6			9			19	19	110	91	days
NKE2	National Specialist to streamlining registration of production areas, farms and critical inputs	6,5	4	13	0,5	8,5	4	3,5			26,25	40	66,25	110	43,75	days
NKE3	National Specialist to streamlining for animal and animal products export/import business processes (permits/licenses)	1,2		5,5	12,5	5	5	6	5,5	5	7,5	45,7	53,2	110	56,8	days
NKE4	National Specialist on regulations to comply with the SPS requirement of China, Vietnam, Thailand and develop SOPs for animal & products border clearance	5,5		11		5,5		5,5	11	5,5	27,5	44	71,5	121	49,5	days
NKE5	National Specialist for Market Access Promotion (grading, product storage, processing, packaging, labelling) and agribusiness development	5	3	6,5	2	3,5	6	8	5	3	2	42	44	44	0	days
NKE6	National Specialist to develop FAMEWS in local language, Pest surveillance, Pest database for export crops, outbreak forecast and rapid response system	2,5	4	1,5	4	11		15,5		10,5	1,5	49	50,5	132	81,5	days
NKE7	National Specialist to develop IPM guideline for specific crops subject to export (TOT/FFS training and Exchange technical information.									10		10	10	110	100	days
NKE8	National Specialist to Streamlining for food products export/import business processes and compliance of SPS requirement (permits/licenses)			9	2,5			2,5	6,5			20,5	20,5	44	23,5	days

2.4 Additional Resourcing Required

During mobilization it became clear that original resource allocations were in some cases insufficient to address the complexity of the tasks, including the need for protracted consultation among experts and across IAs. Gaps were also identified requiring further expert inputs beyond the scope originally envisaged.

Additional resourcing is therefore required for the remainder of the mobilization period, driven primarily by the need to complete critical pending deliverables, facilitate required consultation workshops for regulatory finalization, and address essential tasks that require continuous strategic leadership and system rollout support.

Experts require additional person-months primarily to transition from drafting reports (Situation/Gap Assessments) to finalizing, validating (via workshops), and submitting SOPs and legal instruments.

These resources will be critical particularly in order to support the subsequent capacity building and IT system deployment phase. The needs as identified also reflects expanded efforts in market access, including monitoring and reviewing guidelines, which were not fully scoped or budgeted in the initial plan.

The additional resources required are listed in Table 2 below.

Table 3: Additional Resources Required for Expert Inputs

Category	Experts Requiring Amendment Days	Days Requested (Home/Field)	Core Justification & Key Activities
I. Regulatory Finalization & Validation	KE3 (Intl Legal Specialist) NKE1 (National Legal Specialist)	10 H / 10 F (each)	Need time to finalize D.1.1 Guidelines (Phyto Certificates), D.5.5 Comparative Analysis Report , and D.5.6 Draft Legal Documents through consultation workshops and final submission. Required for D.1.4 (e-Phyto initiation) and SOP for market access negotiations (D2.3/D1.3).
II. E-Certification & SOP Deployment	KE9 (Intl Animal E-Cert) KE10 (National Animal E-Cert)	KE9: 5 H / 15 F KE10: 10 H / 10 F	Dedicated time is needed to develop and rollout D2.2 SOPs for animal health certification and establish the e-Certification process at quarantine stations. Also required for submission of D2.1 Gap Assessment Report.
III. Digital Systems & Integration	KE13 (Intl IT Specialist) KE14 (National IT Specialist)	10 H / 10 F (each)	Required for finalizing the e-Phyto system (D1.5) , including <i>Upgrade #3 Beta Version to Version 1</i> , adding features to exchange certificates with the IPPC Hub , and planning for potential integration with the Lao National Single Window (LNSW) . Also includes D.5.7 (FAMEWs Manual and Training).

<p>IV. Farm Registration & Auditing SOPs</p>	<p>KE4 (Intl Registration) NKE2 (National Registration)</p>	<p>10 H / 10 F (each)</p>	<p>Required for drafting, consultation, and submission of D.5.1 SOPs for streamlining registration (Crop, Livestock farms, food enterprises) and developing the digital registration system. Also covers D.5.3 (SOP for audit procedure).</p>
<p>V. Market Access & Scope Expansion</p>	<p>KE11 (Intl Market Access) NKE5 (National Market Access)</p>	<p>KE11: 10 H / 10 F NKE5: 26 H / 10 F</p>	<p>Insufficient prior days prevented completion of deliverables like SOP operationalization roadmap/manual and integration of grading/packaging/labeling into CF SOP. NKE5 requires an additional 22 working days for tasks not currently in the 2025 work plan/budget, including monitoring/coaching for contract farming in 5 provinces and reviewing guidelines for packaging/processing.</p>
<p>VI. Project Leadership & Management</p>	<p>KE1 (Team Leader) KE2 (Deputy Team Leader)</p>	<p>35 H / 37 F (each)</p>	<p>Required to maintain consistent strategic direction, conduct performance monitoring and evaluation of consultants, review/submit all deliverables, and ensure required Quarterly (QPR) and ad hoc reporting, liaison with the PMU, World Bank (WB), and Implementing Agencies (IAs).</p>

3 PROPOSED ACTIVITIES AND TASKS FOR NEXT PERIOD (OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2025)

3.1 Workplan for the next period

3.1.1 Workplan

Over the coming periods (October-December 2025, and January – March 2026) the TA team will initiate multiple activities and deliverables that are due within months of project launch. The deliverables are prioritized as shown in the table below,

Table 4: Work Plan October-December 2025 and January – March 2026

IA	Deliverables		Oct-Dec 2025			Jan-Mar 2026		
			Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Deliverable 1 – Crop and crop products								
DOA	D.1.1	Guidelines for preparation and issuance of phytosanitary certificates incl. gap assessment report						
DOA	D.1.2	Training manual to meet SPS requirements of potential export countries						
DOA	D.1.4	Manual for phytosanitary export inspection & updated SOPs for export inspection/certification of crops -Initiate the e-Phyto Solution system						
DOA	D.1.5	Pre-condition for setting up the functional e-Phyto system for DOA / EXPORT translated into Lao)						
DOA	D.5.4	Guidelines for farmers to apply standard principles for post-harvest-handling, transportation & logistics mgt						
DOA	D.5.9	Fee-based testing services and customer service standards guidelines						
Deliverable 2 – Animal and animal products								
DLF	D.2.1	Situation report and gap assessment summary report relevant animal related certifications						
DLF	D.2.2	SOP for issuing relevant animal related certifications						
DLF	D.2.3	SOP for market access negotiations for animal and animal products						
DLF	D.2.4	Updated import and export forms and link to e-certification system of LNSW						
Deliverable 3 – Food products								
FDD	D.4.1	Gap assessment report concerning the prevailing practices and procedure related to food safety inspection and certification						
FDD	D.4.2	Manual to conduct GMP certification of food processing enterprises to meet the requirements of China, Vietnam, and Thailand						

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FDD	D.4.3	SOPs for the decentralization for the issuance of the import and export permission							
FDD	D.4.4	SOPs of inspection technique for food and drug inspector at the border checkpoints to meet the SPS requirement of China, Vietnam, Thailand							
FDD	D.4.5	Standard guidelines GHP, SSOP, GMP and HACCP							
FDD	D.4.6	Training manual on GMP, GHP, SSOP, HACCP certification for food processing enterprises							
FDD	D.4.7	GMP, GHP, SSOP and HACCP training curriculum and training materials and conduct training for FDD staffs							
Deliverable 4 – Common for plant health, animal health and food safety									
DAEC	D3.1	Situation report on the farmers producers' groups, farmers cooperatives and contract farming							
DAEC	D3.2	SOPs for the development of farmers' producer groups, cooperatives, and contract farming.							
DOA, DLF	D3.3	Standards and criteria for maintaining organic farming, GAP, Good Animal Husbandry Practice (GAHP), GMP							
DOA, DLF, FDD	D5.6	Draft legal documents for change in legal framework on crop, livestock and food							
DOA, DLF, FDD	D5.1	SOPs for the streamlining of the registration of: Crop, Livestock farms and food enterprises							
DOA, DLF	D5.2	SOP for registering traders and processors as national exporter of agricultural products for export. (Including criteria of eligibility)							
DOA, DLF	D5.3	SOP for audit procedure of individual farm entities to ensure that farms maintain OA, GAP, GHAP							
DOA/ATC	D5.7	Manual for the FAMEWs application, pest database management and training to ATC and PAFOs on outbreak management							
DOA, DLF, FDD	D5.5	Report on comparative analysis of SPS and legal documents for Crops, livestock and food products in China							
DOA, DLF, FDD	D5.10	Analysis report on access to information for women, barriers for registering businesses, financial access, technology and market							
DOA, DAEC	D5.11	Gender Action Plan							

Remarks

Working Draft/Drafted	
Internal Consultation / Consultation Workshop	
Submission for Approval	
Establish e-Certification process	
Roll out/Integrated / Training for staff	

3.1.2 Project Management

The Technical Assistance (TA) activities require close and intensive coordination with Implementation Agencies, the Department of Agriculture (DOA), the Joint Venture (JV), and its backstopping facilities. While the submission of the deliverables is scheduled further along the timeline, the preparatory activities necessary for their development must commence immediately.

The TL continues to engage remotely and in face-to-face meetings in Lao PDR with the IAs to align the mandates of the experts within each thematic area, under each Task.

Following discussions between the TL/DTL and the World Bank, the following measures will be prioritized in October-December in order to enhance the project's focus and facilitate assessment of its final impact post-closure.

1. Participate in World Bank Mission 15-16 October, Vientiane
2. **Revisit action plans** to establish specific timelines and develop tangible, measurable sub-indicators aimed at delivering outputs and impacts.

3. **Review Gap Analysis Reports** to ensure the needs of trading partners are accurately captured.
4. **Ensure compliance** of e-certification plans, tools and hosting domain with the relevant national regulatory requirements.
5. **Explore participation in bilateral meetings** and study visits conducted by government agencies to China, Thailand, and Vietnam.

During the same meeting with DOA and the World Bank (28 and 29 September 2025) during which those 5 measures pertaining the technical aspects were formulated, the financial performance of the project was also discussed.

The World Bank, the DOA team, as well as the TA team shared the same concern regarding the need to strengthen the financial performance and accelerate the project's disbursement rate.

6. **Disbursements and Projections**

- **Disbursement to Date (Consultant Firm):** The **first advance payment** to the SPS Consultant firm was successfully processed (as reported in December 2024). Q1 is expected in early October 2025.
- **Projected Disbursement/Payment Requests (Next 9 Months: April 2025 – December 2025):** Payment requests are projected to increase in line with the intensified implementation phase (Q4 2025 / Q1 2026), driven primarily by:
 - **Field Mobilisation:** Missions for international and national experts (e.g., TL missions, KE16/KE17 field training in Nov 2025).
 - **Digital Development:** Resources allocated to finalize IT system development and prepare for pilot testing (e-Phyto/e-Health).
 - **Training & Workshops:** Costs associated with organizing validation workshops and intensive capacity building sessions (e.g., D1.1 workshop Oct 2025).

It has been agreed that by DOA and the TA team that invoices will be submitted on a quarterly basis, in conformance with the contract. Q2 (April – June) and Q3 (July – September) invoices will be submitted by the firm at the same time in October, and Q4 (October – December) will be submitted in December 2025.

It is important to note that in terms of time input, up to end of September, the Technical Assistance team has spent **47% of the time** allocated to the overall time-based contract (please see section 2.3). In other words, **47% of the contract amount is the disbursement rate achieved by the sub-component to date** – provided that the firm submits the Q2 and Q3 invoices in a timely manner, and that the payments are issued seamlessly by DOA. At this rate, it is fair to project that by the end of Q4 2025 (December), the team will have spent more than 50% of the overall time input allocated in the contract.

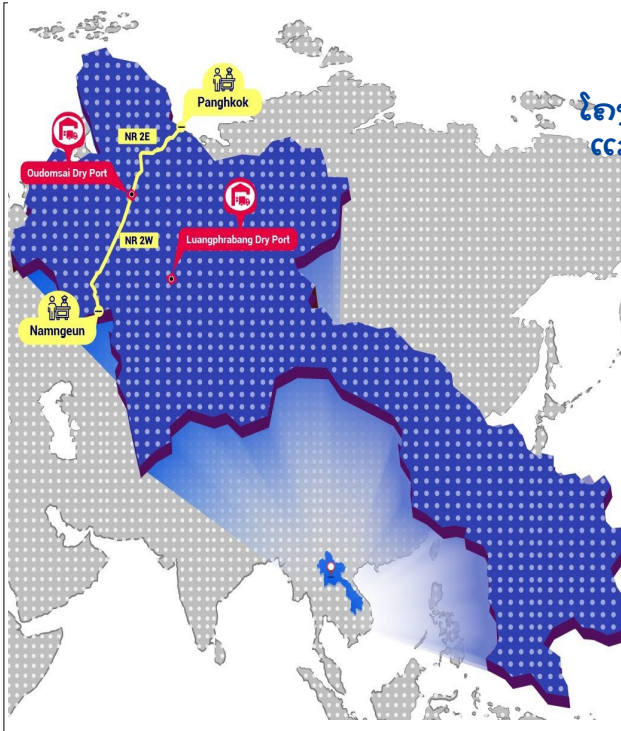
Key Request to the World Bank / DOA / IAs:

To ensure sustained project performance and timely delivery of outputs, the Technical Assistance team strongly calls for (i) **more efficient financial review and approval processes**, as the prolonged delay in the Q1 invoice has significantly constrained the payment schedule, and (ii) **additional resourcing for expert time inputs**, as outlined in Section 2.4, to address the growing technical demands linked to regulatory and IT system development milestones.

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4 ANNEXES

Annex 1: High-Level Progress Update (Technical Assistance)



ໂຄງການຍ່ອຍ 3.1: ສະໜັບສະໜູນການຄ້າກະສິກໍາ ແລະ ການຄຸ້ມຄອງດ້ານສຸຂານາໄມ ແລະ ສຸຂານາໄມ ພືດ (ສຸຂະພາບຄົນ, ສັດ ແລະ ພືດ)

Sub-Component 3.1
Support Agricultural Trade and Sanitary and
Phytosanitary Management

High-Level Progress Update

World Bank Mission
15 October 2025



Annex 2: Full list of ongoing deliverables

(Status 2 October 2025)

Deliverable		Document Title	Lead Expert(s)	Drafted	Pending Formatting	
1.	D1.1	Model Regulation on Handling and Enforcement of Non-Compliance v 2.0	KE-3 Irina Kireeva	✓	✓	
1.	D1.1	Legal Gap Analysis Report – Phytosanitary Certification and Inspection	KE-3 Irina Kireeva	✓		
2.	D1.1a	Model Non-Compliance Handling And Enforcement Regulation (for phytosanitary requirements)		Working draft		
3.	D1.1b	Model Risk-Based Inspection Procedures Regulation		Working draft		
4.	D1.1c	SOP for Risk Based Phytosanitary Inspection Procedures		✓		
5.	D1.1d	SOP for Issuance of Phytosanitary Certificate		✓	✓	
6.	D1.4	Model Ministerial Order on Phytosanitary Sampling and Inspection Protocols for Laos, including Technical Template for Plant Health Inspection and Quarantine		✓		
7.	D1.5	Pre-conditions for Setting Up the Functional e-Phyto System		✓		
8.	D1.5	Interim Report on e-Phyto System Development 31/3/25		KE-13 Jean-Baptiste Mounier	✓	
9.	D2.1	Situation report and gap assessment summary report of the prevailing procedures and capacities related to issuance of relevant animal health certificates, vaccination certificate, quarantine certificates, farm inspection certificate, primary animal product inspection certificate.	KE-8 Nicola Magnaghi NKE-4 Dr Phachone Bounma	✓	✓ (Sent for translation)	
10.	D2.1a	Methodology for Situation Analysis and Gap Assessment	KE-9 Dr. Thumromsakd Phonbumrung	✓		
11.	D2.1b	SPS Management of Livestock Sector of Lao PDR Situation analysis: SPS Management of Livestock Sector of Lao PDR		✓		
12.	D2.1c	Livestock Production Profile Situation analysis: Livestock production profile, development strategies, trading and marketing		✓		
13.	D2.1d	Situation and Gap Assessment On Registration of Animal Farms Establishment, Farms and Critical Inputs Inspection and Certification Report	KE2-Douangchanh Sirivongsa	✓	✓	
14.	D2.1e	Gap Assessment for Registration of Production Areas and Critical Inputs	KE4-Franck Boccas	✓	✓	
15.	D2.1, D2.2 D2.4	(Contribution to D2.1, D2.2 & D2.4): SPS Certificates Systems (e-Certificate for Animal and Animal Products) System Analysis Report	KE-10 Dr. Amkha Viyaphat	✓	✓	
16.	D2.2	SOP for Issuance of a Health Certificate for Cattle or Buffaloes Intended for Export	KE-3 Irina Kireeva	✓	✓ (Sent for translation)	
17.		SOP Farm Inspection Certificate		✓	✓	
18.		SOP Animal Health Certificate		✓	✓	
19.		SOP Vaccination Certificate		✓	✓	
20.		SOP Quarantine Certificate		✓	✓	
21.		SOP Primary Animal Production Inspection Certificate		✓	✓	
22.	D2.3	Draft Decision of the MoA - Export of Fresh Meat to China			✓	
23.	D2.3	SOP for Market Access Negotiations for Animal and Animal Products			✓	
24.	D3.2	SOP for Contract Farming 11 April 2025 (Eng-Revised)	KE-11 Vichelle Roaring NKE-5 Wanna Lassamee	Working		
25.		SOP for Contract farming (Lao-Revised)		✓		
26.	D4.1	Gap Assessment Report concerning prevailing practices and procedure related to food safety inspection and certification	KE15 - Amir Syarifudin	✓	✓	
27.	D4.3	SOP for Registration of Processed Food Products		✓	✓	
28.		SOP for Decentralization of Responsibilities between FDD at the National, Provincial and District Levels Related to Issuance of Distribution Permits, Import Permits, and Export Permits for Processed Food		✓	✓	
29.		SOP for Application for Export Permit for Processed Food		✓	✓	
30.		SOP for Application for Import Permit for Processed Food		✓	✓	
31.		SOP for Export Inspection at Border (China, Thailand and Vietnam)		✓	✓	

Deliverable		Document Title	Lead Expert(s)	Drafted	Pending Formatting
32.	D4.5	Standard Guidelines GHP, SSOP, GMP and HACCP (Guidelines on the Application and Audit of GMP, GHP and HACCP- 3 volumes)	KE-16 Dr. Richard Bonne KE-17 Dr. Sayvisene Boulom	Under translation	
33.	D4.5a	Developing a GMP Programme to Manage Food Safety		✓	
34.	D4.5b	Guidelines on HACCP, GMP and GHP for ASEAN Food SMEs		✓	
35.	D4.5c	GHP and HACCP Guidelines Laos V 2025 16 Feb		✓	
36.	D4.5d	Evaluation Questionnaire on GHP and HACCP training policy		Working draft	
37.	D4.6	Training Manual on GMP, GHP, SSOP, HACCP Certification for Food Processing Enterprises (15 volumes)		Under translation	
38.	D4.6a	Food Safety Principles - Introduction			
39.	D4.7	GMP, GHP, SSOP and HACCP Training Curriculum and Training Materials for FDD		Under translation	
40.	D4.7a	Specific Rules for the Organization of Controls on Products of Animal Origin		Under translation	
41.	D4.7b	Examples of Application of the Alternative Method to the Codex Alimentarius Decision Tree		Under translation	
42.	D4.7c	BOX 1 Control of Environmental Sources of Contamination V2		Under translation	
43.	D4.7d	BOX 2 Personnel Health Policy V2 Laos		Under translation	
44.	D4.7e	BOX 3.1 Hand & Clothing Hygiene V2 Laos		Under translation	
45.	D4.7f	BOX 3.2 Cleaning and Sanitation Plan V2 Laos		Under translation	
46.	D4.7g	BOX 4.1 Cold Technologies V2 Laos		Under translation	
47.	D4.7h	BOX 4.2 Hot Technologies V2 Laos		Under translation	
48.	D4.7i	BOX 4.3 Foodstuffs Formulation V2 Laos		Under translation	
49.	D4.7j	BOX 5 CHMM Finished Products Analysis		Under translation	
50.	D5.1	SOP for Registration of Animal Farm Production Areas, Farms and Critical Inputs for Animal and Animal Products		KE-2 & NKE2 Douangchanh Sirivongsa KE-4 Franck Boccas	Working draft
51.		Application for Registration of Animal Farm Establishment (Form 1)	KE-2 & NKE2 Douangchanh Sirivongsa KE-4 Franck Boccas	✓	✓
52.		Permit for Registration of Animal farm Establishment (Form 2)	KE-2 & NKE2 Douangchanh Sirivongsa KE-4 Franck Boccas	✓	✓
53.		General Procedure for Seed Business Registration	KE-4 Franck Boccas KE-2/NKE2 Douangchanh Sirivongsa	✓	✓
54.	D5.5	Comparative Analysis of SPS Framework and Relevant Legal Documents in China, Vietnam and Thailand concerning Imports, Exports, and International Trade of Plants and Plant Products	KE-3 Irina Kireeva	✓	
55.	D5.10 D.11	Gender Assessment and Action Plan	KE-12 Viengvilay Sirimoungkhoun	✓	✓
56.	D5.7	Insect Glossary (First draft, Lao)	NKE-6 Dr. Pheophanh Soysouvanh	✓	
57.	D5.7	Key to the Orders of Common Insects (First draft)		✓	
58.	D5.7	List of Pests (Watermelon, Beans)		✓	
60.	D5.7	Pest List Manual (Chilli & Tea, Lao)		✓	

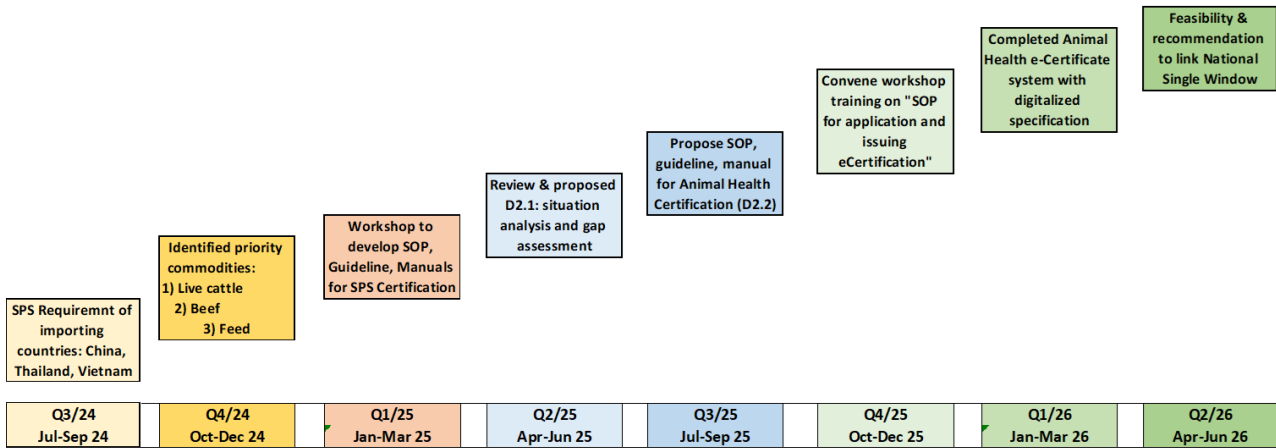
Annex 3: List of draft deliverables pending formatting ahead of submission

(Status 2 Oct 2025)

Deliverable		Document Title	Lead expert(s)
1.	D1.1	Model Regulation on Handling and Enforcement of Non-Compliance v 2.0	KE-3 Irina Kireeva
2.	D1.4	Draft Ministerial Order on Phytosanitary Sampling and Inspection Protocols v 2.0	
3.	D2.1	Situation report and gap assessment summary report of the prevailing procedures and capacities related to issuance of relevant animal health certificates, vaccination certificate, quarantine certificates, farm inspection certificate, primary animal product inspection certificate.	KE-8 Nicola Magnaghi NKE-4 Dr Phachone Bounma
4.	D2.1d	Situation and Gap Assessment on Registration of Animal Farms Establishment, Farms and Critical Inputs Inspection and Certification Report	KE2-Douangchanh Sirivongsa KE4-Franck Boccas
5.	D2.1e	Gap Assessment for Registration of Production Areas and Critical Inputs	KE2-Douangchanh Sirivongsa KE4-Franck Boccas
6.	D2.1, D2.2, D2.4	(Contribution to D2.1, D2.2 & D2.4): SPS Certificates Systems (e-Certificate for Animal and Animal Products) System Analysis Report	KE-10 Dr. Amkha Viyaphat
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8.		SOP Farm Inspection Certificate	
9.		SOP Animal Health Certificate	
10.		SOP Vaccination Certificate	
11.		SOP Quarantine Certificate	
12.		SOP Primary Animal Production Inspection Certificate	
13.	D4.1	Gap Assessment Report concerning prevailing practices and procedure related to food safety inspection and certification	KE15 - Amir Syarifudin
14.	D4.3	SOP for Registration of Processed Food Products	
15.		SOP for Decentralization of Responsibilities between FDD at the National, Provincial and District Levels, Related to Issuance of Distribution Permits, Import Permits, and Export Permits for Processed Food	
16.		SOP for Application for Export Permit for Processed Food	
17.		SOP for Application for Import Permit for Processed Food	
18.		SOP for Export Inspection at Border (China, Thailand, and Vietnam)	
19.	D5.1	Application for Registration of Animal Farm Establishment (Form 1)	KE-2/NKE2 Douangchanh Sirivongsa KE-4 Franck Boccas
20.		Permit for Registration of Animal farm Establishment (Form 2)	KE-2/NKE2 Douangchanh Sirivongsa KE-4 Franck Boccas
21.		General Procedure for Seed Business Registration	KE-4 Franck Boccas KE-2/NKE2 Douangchanh Sirivongsa
22.	D5.10 / D.11	Gender Assessment and Action Plan	KE-12 Viengvilay Sirimoungkhoun


Annex 4: Timeline for animal health e-Certification system

Timline of developing the Animal Health e-Certificating System (proposed by KE9)




Annex 5: Presentation for Project Steering Committee (1 Oct 2025)

SC.3.1 **Content**



- I. Objective of SC3.1 and Management arrangements
- II. Progress achieved
- III. Progress on deliverables of the SPS Consultant Firm
- IV. Progress on PDOs and Intermediate Results Indicators
- V. Financial Progress
- VI. Financial Projections
- VII. Work Plan of Implementing Agencies June to December 2025
- VIII. Work Plan of SPS Consultant Firm June to December 2025
- IX. Requirement of additional financing
- X. Lessons learned

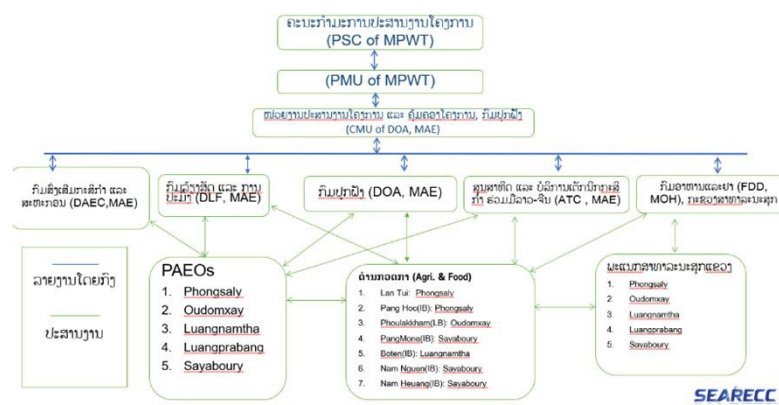



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SC.3.1 **Objectives of SC**


- **To enhance agricultural trade efficiency and SPS management by:**
 - Streamlining export/import permits,
 - Improving compliance with SPS requirements,
 - Simplifying farm input registration,
 - Strengthening the capacity of MAF, PAFOs, DAFOs, and
 - Addressing gender gaps.
- **It also aims to:**
 - Upgrade SPS certification systems,
 - Strengthen institutional capacity and

Managem






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 SC.3.1 Progress achieved						
Output 3.1.1: Capacity Development to Improve the Efficiency of Agricultural Trade:			Output 3.1.2: Capacity Building for Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Management			Output 3.1.3: Project management
3.1.1.1 Streamlining Cross-Border Agricultural Trade Processes and Regulatory Compliance	3.1.1.2 Training and Institutional Strengthening for Agricultural Trade Promotion	3.1.1.3 Promoting Gender Equity and Inclusion in Agricultural Trade	3.1.2.1 – Enhancing SPS Institutional and Operational Capacity Across Agencies and Checkpoints	3.1.2.2 – SPS Legislation Reform and Digitalization of Certification Systems	3.1.2.3 – Upgrading Laboratory Infrastructure, Equipment, and Accreditation for SPS Compliance	3.1.3.1 Project Management and Coordination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of Certification Process Tools and Result Chains 	DOA-Led Trainings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training on SPS Compliance Training on Crop Investment Monitoring and Database Training of Border Inspector Training on Rapid Test Kit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ATC's Gender-Sensitive SPS Training 	Development of Regulations and SOPs for Border Clearance	Agricultural Law: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revision of Agriculture Law Stakeholder consultations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laboratory Equipment Procurement and Upgrades 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting Midterm Review (MTR) Mission Consultant Staff Handover Office Renovation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring of Agro-Processing Export Infrastructure Mapping (DOA) 	DLF-Led Trainings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Livestock Export Training for Cattle Entrepreneurs. GAHP and Export Procedure Training for Cattle Exporters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DAEC's Consultation on Gender Empowerment 	Food Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training of ATC and PAFO/DAFO Staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a Generic Automated SPS Certification System 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation workshop on SOPs for Farmer Groups and Contract Farming 	DAEC-Led Training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmer Organization and Contract Farming Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DAEC-Led Training Needs Assessment and Coordination Consultation 	DLF: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training on GAHP Legal workshops. Public awareness campaigns 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study Visit and Exchange of Experiences 	FDD-Led Training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Border Food Safety Inspector Training 					
	ATC-Led Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated SPS Training for PAFO/DAFO Staff 					

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 SC.3.1 Progress achieved	
<p>Output 3.1.1: Capacity Development to Improve the Efficiency of Agricultural Trade:</p> <p>A. 3.1.1.1 Streamlining Cross-Border Agricultural Trade Processes and Regulatory Compliance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of Certification Process Tools and Result Chains (Led by DOA): Developed the procedural tools including flow diagrams, and a results chain SPS consulting firm GINGER SOFRECO and APAARI Mobilized and consultants are onboard. Monitoring of Agro-Processing Export Infrastructure Mapping (DOA): DOA conducted a field survey in May in Oudomxay, Luang Prabang and Xayabouly to identify and profile processing plants, packaging houses, and cold storage centers. Consultation workshop on SOPs for Farmer Groups and Contract Farming: Organized by DAEC in May 2025 to gathered feedback from stakeholders, including farmers, to finalize SOPs for establishing farmer producer groups, cooperatives, and contract farming systems. Study Visit and Exchange of Experiences with Food Safety Management Agencies in Kunming City, Yunnan Province, China: Exchange information on food safety system and technical cooperation for better understanding and seek for technical assistance on Food safety as well as promote food export to China. 	

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SC.3.1 Progress achieved

Output 3.1.1: Capacity Development to Improve the Efficiency of Agricultural Trade:

B. 3.1.1.2 Training and Institutional Strengthening for Agricultural Trade Promotion.

I. DOA-Led Trainings:

- **Training on SPS Compliance for Agri-Traders** organized in Xayabouly in May 2025, focused on SPS requirements for exports to China, Vietnam, and Thailand. Traders were trained in product-specific standards, documentation, and inspection procedures.
- **Training on Crop Investment Monitoring and Database** organized in March 2025 at Vientiane Capital for provincial staff to evaluate commodity investments, enhancing their ability to supervise commercial crop initiatives, ensure that SPS-related risks are identified and mitigated from the planning stage.
- **Training of Border Inspector Deployment and Teamwork** organized in May 2025 at Vangvieng for teamwork among border SPS officers and standardized protocols for inspections, documentation checks, and certification.
- **Training on Rapid Test Kit Application for Border Plant Health Staff** organized in March-April 2025 at ATC for using rapid kits.

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SC 3.1

Output 3.1.1: Capacity Development to Improve the Efficiency of Agricultural Trade:

II. DLF-Led Trainings:

- **Livestock Export Training for Cattle Entrepreneurs** organized in May–June 2025 emphasized compliance with Decree 644/B on animal movement, veterinary care, and traceability requirements. Participants were guided in adopting GAHP principles.
- **GAHP and Export Procedure Training for Cattle Exporters** organized in May 2025 at DLF for bridged gaps between private exporters and government SPS protocols. Exporters gained knowledge on health certification, feed hygiene, and biosecurity—all critical for meeting the SPS requirements of trading partners.

III. DAEC-Led Training:

- **Farmer Organization and Contract Farming Development** organized at Luangprabang, for extension officers on supporting farmer groups and developing sustainable contract farming

IV. FDD-Led Training:

- **Border Food Safety Inspector Training** organized at Oudomxay in June 2025 for food inspectors in risk-based inspection methods, food traceability, and certification

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SC.3.1 Progress achieved

Output 3.1.1: Capacity Development to Improve the Efficiency of Agricultural Trade:


V. ATC-Led Training:

- **Integrated SPS Training for PAFO/DAFO Staff** organized at ATC in May-June 2025 focused on pest surveillance, laboratory sampling procedures, and IPM techniques.


C. 3.1.1.3 Promoting Gender Equity and Inclusion in Agricultural Trade

i. ATC's Gender-Sensitive SPS Training (24 May–1 June): Integrated gender balance into capacity building for DAFO/PAFO officers.

ii. DAEC's Consultation on Gender Empowerment organized at Luang Namtha in May 2025 targeting women entrepreneurs and the Lao Women's Union. It addressed gender-specific barriers in agribusiness such as access to land, capital, training, and SPS information.

iii. DAEC-Led Training Needs Assessment and Coordination Consultation organized at 

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SC.3.1 Progress achieved

2. Output 3.1.2: Capacity Building for Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Management:


A. 3.1.2.1 – Enhancing SPS Institutional and Operational Capacity Across Agencies and Checkpoints

i. Development of Regulations and SOPs for Border Clearance: Multi-stakeholder consultations, involving DOA, DLF, FDD, MOH, customs, and border authorities, emphasized transitioning to a risk-based inspection model.

ii. Institutional and Operational Capacity Building for Quarantine and Food Safety

- **Training of ATC and PAFO/DAFO Staff:** Capacity-building efforts focused on laboratory accreditation, field surveillance protocols, and interagency coordination. Staff were trained to implement SPS inspections, pest risk assessments, and surveillance programs.
- **Department of Livestock and Fisheries (DLF):** DLF led a comprehensive institutional strengthening effort that included:
 - **Training on Good Animal Husbandry Practices (GAHP)** for private livestock entrepreneurs to ensure that practices such as biosecurity, animal health monitoring, and traceability align with export standards.
 - **Legal education workshops** on Decree No. 558 and newly issued legislation (e.g., Decree No. 644/LB on animal transport and aquatic animal management). 

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SC.3.1 Progress achieved

2. Output 3.1.2: Capacity Building for Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Management:


B. 3.1.2.2 – SPS Legislation Reform and Digitalization of Certification Systems

I. Legislative Reforms:


- **Crop Law:** On 25 June 2025, the National People’s Assembly approved the revised Crop Law, which expanded from 85 to 113 articles to ensure closer alignment with the WTO-SPS Agreement.
- **Stakeholder consultations** The revision process was guided by **extensive stakeholder consultations** with the Ministry of Justice, National Assembly, and other key institutions to guarantee legal consistency and political backing.

II. SWOT Analysis of Key Export Commodities

- **Development of a Generic Automated SPS Certification System**
Preliminary planning for an automated certification system was initiated. This digital platform will consolidate plant health, animal health, and food safety certification procedures into a unified portal, ensuring:
 - Increased transparency
 - Enhanced traceability
 - Reduced transaction times
 - Stronger data analytics for risk-based inspections



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SC.3.1 Progress achieved


C. 3.1.2.3 – Upgrading Laboratory Infrastructure, Equipment, and Accreditation for SPS Compliance

I. Laboratory Equipment Procurement and Upgrades

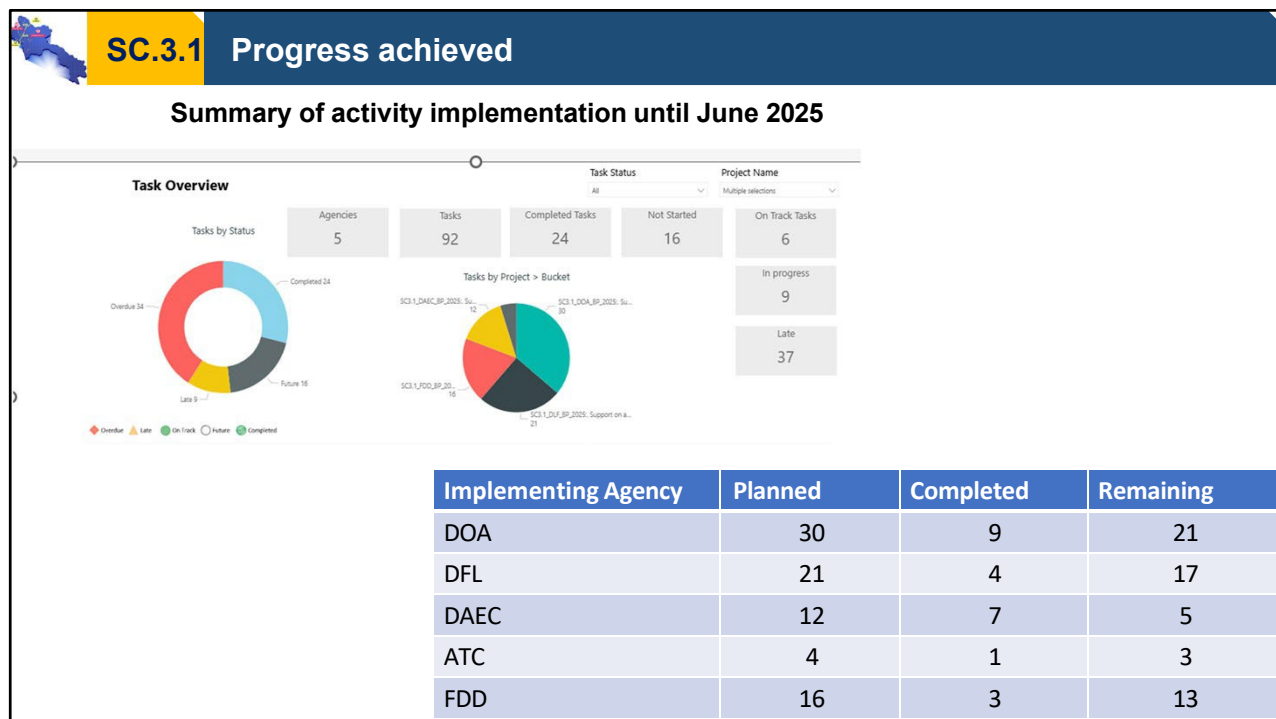
- Technical specifications were updated for essential equipment and consumables across both FDD and ATC laboratories.
- Developed Technical Specifications for the Laboratory Equipment for the Food Safety Lab of Luang Prabang
- Developed the Technical Specifications for the Mobile Food Safety Lab
- Contract for the procurement of equipment for ATC lab signed on **8 August 2025**

3. Output 3.1.3: Effective project management and coordination

- **Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meeting:** The annual Project Steering Committee Meeting for Subcomponent 3.1 was successfully convened on 13 February 2025 at the Lao Plaza Hotel.
- **Midterm Review (MTR) Mission** was conducted from 24 February to 7 March 2025, with the objective of assessing the overall performance of SC 3.1 against its intended outputs and indicators.
- **Consultant Staff Handover** in February 2025, the SPS consultants mobilized by the consulting



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SC.3.1 Progress on deliverables of the SPS Consultant Firm

- Objective of the SPS Consultant Firm Assignment:**
 Enhance the capacity of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF), Provincial & District Agriculture and Forestry Offices (PAFOs & DAFOs), border checkpoints, and the Ministry of Health (MOH) in managing cross-border agricultural and food product trade and Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) management.

Consultants: Total 25 consultants (10 International Key Experts and 15 National of which 7 key and 8 non key experts).



Total: 7 Major Tasks, 65 Subtasks

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SC 3.1 Progress on deliverables of

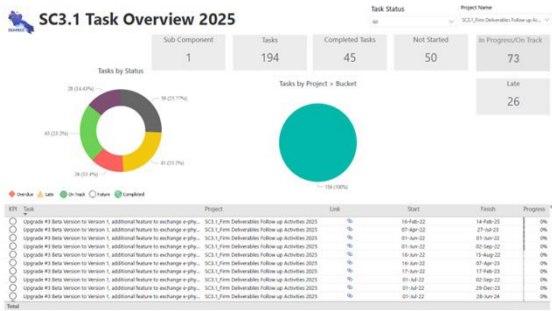
- ❖ **Crop SPS Certification**
 - Gap assessment completed; draft guideline prepared for issuance of phytosanitary certificates
- ❖ **Animal Health Certification**
 - Gap assessment on animal certification delivered
 - SOPs drafted for:
 - Issuance of Health Certificate
 - Farm Inspection
 - Health Certificate format
 - Primary Animal Food Production Inspection
 - Quarantine Certificate
- ❖ **e-Phyto Readiness**
 - Pre-condition paper for functional e-Phyto system drafted.
 - Stakeholder & requirements assessment completed
- ❖ **Gender Mainstreaming**
 - Gender Gap Assessment & Action Plan drafted


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SC.3.1 Progress on deliverables of the SPS Consultant Firm

- ❖ **Food Safety Certification (FDD)**
 - SOPs drafted for:
 - Registration of food products
 - Decentralization of food permits
 - Export permit for FDD
 - Import permit for FDD
 - Export inspection at border
 - Sent to Paris for formatting (18 Sept); Lao translation ongoing.
 - Training manual, curriculum & materials drafted (D.4.1; D.4.3–D.4.7).
- ❖ **Cross-cutting Reforms**
 - Draft legal documents to update SPS frameworks prepared (D.5.6).
 - Comparative analysis of SPS & legal documents drafted (D.5.5).
 - Gender Action Plan & barriers analysis completed (D.5.10–D.5.11).



Sub Component	Tasks	Completed Tasks	Not Started	In Progress/On Track	Late
1	194	45	50	73	26



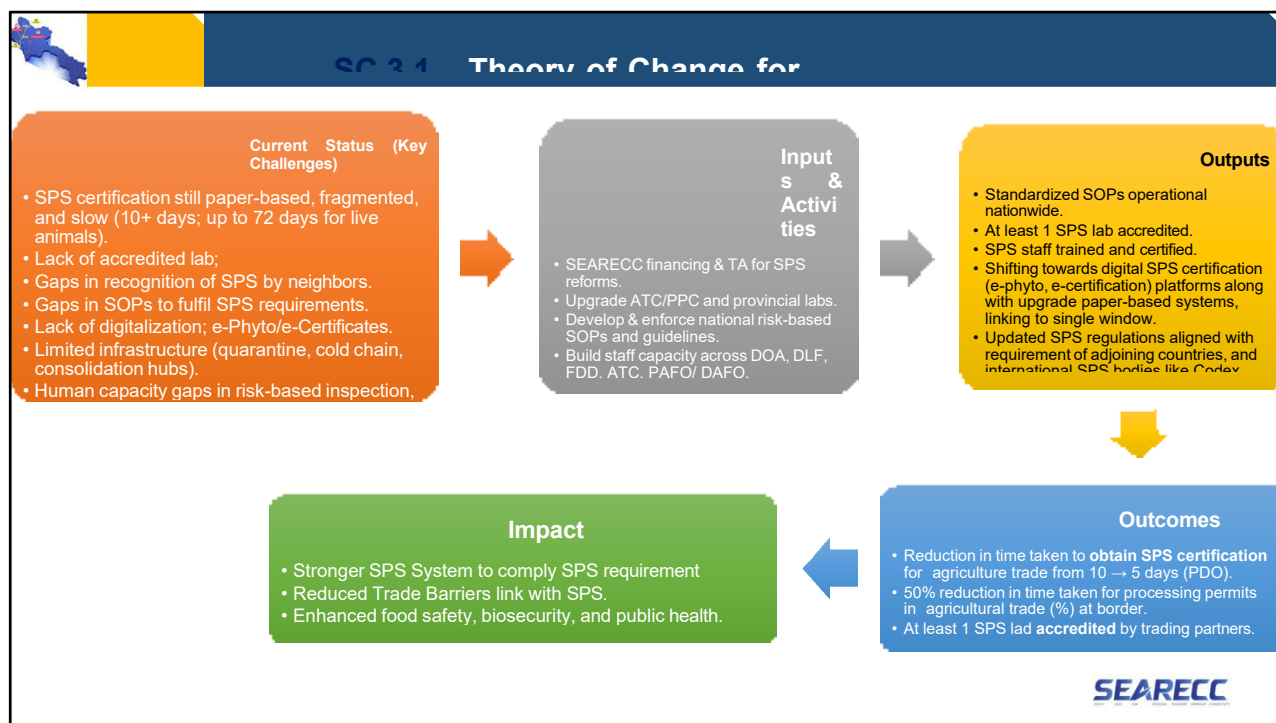
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SC 3.1 Progress on Result				
Indicators	Baselines	Targets	Progress against the target	Progress to date
PDO Level				
Time taken to obtain SPS certification for agriculture trade (Days)	10	5	20%	Bilateral engagements, laboratory capacity building, government and private sector training, and regulatory streamlining, have contributed to achieving 20% progress toward the PDO by enhancing efficiency, reducing delays, and improving cross-border trade processes
Intermediate Level				
Reduction in time taken for processing permits in agricultural trade (%)	0	50	15%	Including inter-agency coordination, regulatory streamlining, capacity building, risk-based permit issuance, and private sector engagement, contributed to a 15% progress in reducing permit processing time for agricultural trade.
Accredited labs for SPS for export of agricultural products (number)	0	1	20%	Gap analysis, lab renovation finalization, equipment assessment, and development of technical specifications contributed to a 20% progress. It is expected that the project will be able to report on this indicator in early 2027, after the completion of the laboratory equipment and capacity building.

- Confirm the commitment that the project will be able to achieve the project targets for remaining period of the project by mid-2028.
- No restructuring of project activities will be required. However, agreement on the update the definition of indicators



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SC.3.1 Work Plan of Implementing Agencies June to December 2025

#	Output 1: Efficiency for agricultural trade Improved (MAE: DOA, DLF, ATC, DAEC, PAFOs; MOH: FDD, PFDD; Border Checkpoints in 5 provinces: PSL, LPB, ODX, LNT, XYB)	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
1.1	Consultation on streamlining export/import business processes (permits/licenses), guidelines				DOA, DLF, FDD/TA		
1.2	Training of staff on application of SPS measures as per the requirement of China, Vietnam and Thailand			DOA, DLF, FDD/TA			
1.3	Streamlined SOP of the registration of production areas, farms, and critical inputs and traders for the animal			DOA/TA			
1.4	Streamlined SOP of the registration of food processing enterprises and relevant critical inputs			FDD/TA			
1.5	Streamlined SOP of the registration of production of critical farm inputs, farms, traders for plant and plant product			DOA/TA			
1.6	Streamlined SOP for audit procedure of the plant (GAP/OA) and animal farms			DLF, DOA/TA			
1.7	Update the GMP certification of FBO to meet the requirements of China, Vietnam, Thailand			FDD/TA			
1.8	Update guidelines on GAP and OA for compliance with the requirements of China, Thailand, and Vietnam for selected crops. Consultation and training			DAEC, DOA/TA/PAFO			
1.9	Develop GAP, women Consultation, Training on information access on agricultural trade			DAEC/TA/PAFO/ATC			
	Output 2: Capacity (institutional and operational) for SPS management strengthened						
2.1	Prepare manual for SPS clearance of the borders in compliance SPS requirements with China, Vietnam, Thailand			DOA, DLF, FDD/TA			
2.2	Develop manual and SOP on practices, and procedures related to food safety inspection and certification, training			FDD/TA/FDOP/DOA/DLF			
2.3	Training for animal health quarantine, risk assessment of import and export of livestock and livestock products for 5 provinces			DLF/PAFO			
2.4	SPS Laboratory management assessment, guideline management manual, SOP, Development of accreditation protocols and training			ATC/TA			
2.5	Consultation on the draft technical and legal regulations for allowing the private sector to issues the GMP, GHP, HACCP certification			FDD/TA			
2.6	Design, development, setup and user manual of e-certification and e-inspection system for plant and training				DOA/ATC/		
2.7	Review the existing processes of advise to develop online systems for issues of e-sanitary certificates and implement e-certificate system, e-CVT				DLF/TA		
2.8	Inter-agency coordination meetings	DOA					
2.9	Follow up meetings with 5 agencies	DOA					
2.10	Bilateral meetings with China, Thailand, VN			DOA/DLF, FDD, ATC, Border/PAFO			
2.11	Annual workplan/budget/Annual procurement plan development/revision development/revision			DOA			
2.12	Annual monitoring and evaluation plan development/revision						DOA
2.13	Regular monitoring and evaluation data collection and reports						
2.14	Preparation and participation in the regular implementation support missions (ISMs)			DOA			
2.15	Overall administration activities and financial management			DOA			
2.16	Annual audit					DOA	


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SC.3.1 Work Plan of SPS Consultant Firm (July to December 2025)

	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
DOA						
Pre-condition for setting up the functional e-Phyto system for DOA						
Guidelines for preparing market access proposals for crops and crop						
SOPs for the decentralization for the issuance of the import and export						
SOPs for the streamlining of the registration of Critical Inputs						
Training manual to meet the SPS requirements of potential export countries						
DLF						
SOP for Livestock farm and input registration						
SOP for animal registration						
SOP for the process of import/export						
SOP for animal quarantine and border clearance						
SOP for SPS e-Certification						
SOP for Animal Health Certificates in Laos						
SOP for market access negotiations for animal and animal products						
DAEC						
SOPs for the development of farmers producers' groups, farmers						
SOP for market access negotiation for crops and crop products						
Standards and criteria for maintaining organic farming, GAP						
Guidelines for the farmers to apply standard principles for the post-harvest-handling, transportation and logistics management.						
ATC						
Manual for the FAMEWs digitized pest database management						
Manual and SOP for the IPM and PEQ Testing						
FDD						
Gap assessment on food safety inspection and certification						
Manual to conduct GMP certifi for food companies to meet China, Vietnam,						
SOPs for the decentralization of the issuance of export/import certifi						
SOPs for inspection techniques for inspectors to meet SPS requirements of China, ...						
Standard guidelines on GHP, SSOP, GMP, HACCP appl.						
Training manual on GMP, GHP, SSOP, HACCP						
GMP, GHP, SSOP, HACCP training curriculum and training of FDD staff						

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SC.3.1 Requirement of additional financing


- Given the vast scope of work under Subcomponent 3.1, additional financing will be essential to fully achieve project objectives.
- This includes:
 - Installation of water supply system for PEQ Greenhouse and ATC Labs
 - Provision of mobile laboratories for ATC and FDD
 - Addressing of Environmental Safeguard for ATC Lab
 - Procurement of additional laboratory equipment (ATC, DOA, FDD)
 - Proficiency testing and accreditation support (ATC, DOA, FDD)
 - International laboratory specialist support (ATC, FDD)
 - Regional coordination for laboratory accreditation (ATC, DOA, FDD)
 - Awareness campaigns and training of service providers for SPS (DOA)
 - Strengthening of cattle quarantine facilities and disease monitoring (DLF)
 - Capacity building of private sector and producer groups (DAEC)

Total requirement of additional funds is US\$ 2.15 million

- Additional funds will ensure that these critical components are adequately addressed, supporting the project's overarching goal of improving agricultural trade and SPS management in




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SC 3.1

1. Alignment with National Priorities and Realities	The project's strong alignment with national priorities and policies, such as the 9 th National Socio-Economic Development Plan and the Trade Facilitation Roadmap, has been critical to its success.
2. Inclusive and Participatory Approach	Engaging diverse stakeholders, including smallholder farmers, women, ethnic minorities, and private sector partners, fostered ownership and accountability.
3. Capacity Building as a Cornerstone	Training programs on SPS standards, laboratory operations, and digital certification systems have significantly enhanced the technical capacities of implementing agencies and local stakeholders.
4. Strengthened Partnerships and Linkages	Collaboration with academic institutions, private sector stakeholders, and international organizations has supported knowledge transfer, capacity building, and resource mobilization.
5. Sustainability Planning	While the project has laid a solid foundation for financial, institutional, and environmental sustainability, challenges such as funding constraints and capacity gaps remain.



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SC.3.1 Recommendations

1. **Ensure Financial Sustainability:** Seek Additional Financing of **US\$ 2.05 million** to address critical gaps
2. **Strengthen Partnerships and Outreach:** Expand collaborations with academic institutions, private sector entities, and international organizations, Private Sectors
3. **Improve Data Integration and Monitoring:** real-time data collection and establish a centralized dashboard, integrate monitoring tools across financial, operational, and impact metrics.
4. **Increase Public Awareness and Stakeholder Engagement:** tailored communication materials for various stakeholder groups, including farmers, traders, and local government
5. **Institutionalize Risk Management Practices:** IPM and biosecurity protocols into institutional frameworks for long-term resilience, SOP for risk mitigation
6. **Encourage Gender-Specific Initiatives:** women's leadership roles in SPS management and agricultural trade facilitation
7. **Empower Local Stakeholders:** Equip government staff with knowledge and tools, foster local ownership

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