

The Mid-term Evaluation Report of “Long Chuan Sustainable Livelihood Project”



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Abstract

Before 2012, the project entered the community using free aid and relief work, which was repaid by the community with their full trust and understanding. Via a series of trainings, visits and publicity campaigns, the project had built a firm foundation in terms of motivating the public, organizing the community and building the community residents' confidence. Since 2012, the project has been putting more emphasis on sustainable life skill building, and has provided systematic activities in order to increase the income of the people in the community. The evaluation team, with their on-site evaluation, has found: 1. Although people's livelihood is still a singular income and unchanged, the project, by introducing new activities, has altered the direction and increased the tendency for variety, such as planting nuts and Chinese bayberries, and farming livestock, etc.

2. The villagers' eco-environmental awareness has also been hugely increased – they have profoundly realized the hazard on eco-environment caused by chemical fertilisers and pesticides, and strongly agreed with the project to plant leguminous crops.

3. The project has helped organize the community and has raised the confidence of the community members, especially amongst the women.

4. The managing staff of the project have a great relationship with the community – its' operation is widely acknowledged at county level.

At present, there are few problems regarding the operational process:

1. In regards to the livelihood project content, there has not been enough technical support and market development.

2. The participation of the poor households within the project has decreased.

3. The project has not been fully integrated with relevant projects in the area.

Suggestions for the future to deepen the development:

1. To analyze, compact and focus on the project strategic direction – “choose what to do and what not to do.”

2. To enhance the connections with relevant industry development in the area, and to share technical support and market building.
3. To find new agriculture business entities that would provide a nurturing environment that would stimulate development, and to explore how to relate those entities to poor households, promoting interaction that is caring.
4. To explore different project content, for development in respective communities.
5. To advocate for policy change based on the project experiences, and to push for policy improvement in favour of the grassroots communities.

I. Evaluation Background

Since 2009, BUER Consult AS has been cooperating with Long Chuan Foreign Aid Office on providing aid for community development work in Mo Shui and Lv Liang village. The assistance project has two phases – Phase One was from 2009 to 2011, mainly doing some relief work and giving free aids to build infrastructure, like building country roads and environmental friendly toilets, and installing solar-power showers, and so on.

Phase Two is from 2012 to 2016, with a focus on sustainable livelihood of the local farmers. The work of Phase One has made the project staff realize that the main problem of the local community is their livelihood is unsustainable due to the singular agricultural production structure. The specific example is their livelihood has severely depended on sugarcane plantation, which relentlessly relied on the increasing employment of chemical pesticides and fertilizers. This then consequently lead to unsustainability of the eco-environment. At the same time, the sugarcane industry is deemed as a “governmental financial support industry”, which means farmers have no voice in deciding the purchasing prices of the sugarcane. As the labour and planting costs have grown, the unsustainability of the sugarcane industry has become more and more obvious. The highest priority for the local community development that has emerged is .to change the singular agriculture production structure and to create diversified means of living. In responding to this need, the project has organized the following activities, which all led to the corresponding results.

Project Activities		Results
Time	Content	
2012	1. Work meetings with the county government	The total investment was 10,000 RMB. The meetings specified the overall objective and the implementing strategies of the project; the project agreement was also signed during the meeting, which helped expand the cooperation scales between Buer and Longchuan county level government. These meetings not only paved a smooth path for future development, but also established a firm foundation for the project.
	2. Work meetings with the education department	The total investment was 5,000 RMB. Decisions were made to integrate environment education curriculum into teachers' trainings, sequentially passing the environmental knowledge onto the students.
	3. Work meetings with the Agriculture Department	The meetings decided to give four trainings to the project villagers on planting technology and practical knowledge about sustainable agriculture. This included how to use chemical and green fertilizers according to the soil tests (this was mainly about cross planting technology).

<p>4. Building environmentally friendly toilets in the two project villages.</p>	<p>The total investment was 229,000 RMB with a local contribution of 79,000 RMB. Forty-five households of Lvliang village and fifty-five households of Moshui village received environmentally friendly toilets.</p>
<p>5. Solar power shower installment for two project villages.</p>	<p>The total investment was 127,000 RMB, with a local contribution of 75,000 RMB. In Lvliang and Moshui village, 26 impoverished women had solar power showers installed in their homes.</p>
<p>6. Chinese trainings for Burmese wives in Lvliang village</p>	<p>The total investment was 15,000 RMB. It helped improve the Burmese wives' communication abilities, involvement in public life, and built up their confidence in participating in public affairs.</p>
<p>7. Family financial planning trainings for the two project villages</p>	<p>The total investment was 10,000 RMB. It raised the awareness on financial planning among the 34 Lvliang ladies and the 34 Moshui ladies. It also helped them realize the risks involved in single cropping.</p>
<p>8. Summer camps for the children of two project villages</p>	<p>The total investment was 20,000 RMB. Moshui and Lvliang primary schools had respectively sent 20 students to receive the environmental education.</p>

<p>9. Surveys on current status of animal husbandry and forestry in Lvliang</p>	<p>The total investment was 5000 RMB. Between the 23rd and 24th of April, 2012, Longchuan Foreign Aid Office had conducted visits and surveys on the current status of animal husbandry and forestry in 12 households of Lvliang.</p>
<p>10. An organised study trip to Lijiang and provided funds (seed money) to start a women's business group</p>	<p>The total investment was 70,000 RMB, including 20,000 for a study trip and 50,000 for seed money. These activities widened the ladies' horizon, increased their abilities to communicate with the external world, improved their employability, and added to their singular income resource.</p>
<p>11. Lvliang's study trip to Yao An, Chu Xiong, visiting Fuhua goat farms and funded the first pilot group of villagers (seed money)</p>	<p>The total investment was 70,000 RMB, including 25,000 RMB for a study trip and 35,000 RMB as supporting funds. In 2012, the first group consisted of 2 – 3 goat farmers from Lvliang village. The project took them on a study trip and provided technical guidance about disease control and prevention knowledge from goatfarming experts.</p>

	1. Supported goat farming in the two project villages.	The number of goat farmers had increased to 9 households, with an increasing rate of 450%, compared to only 2 families in the previous year. The breeding stock also had a 420% increase, growing from 45 goats by the end of 2012 to 189 goats by the end of the year (including 154 in Lvliang and 35 in Moshui)
	2.A study trip of the two villages to goat farms in Fumin, Kunming	Communicated with experienced goat farmers, solved real problems in practice, and built confidence in the future prosperity amongst the farmers.
2013	3.Improved farming conditions for breeding sows in Bangbin group, Moshui	In total, 15 breeding sows were purchased and distributed to 7 households from the project area.
	4.Used winter soy beans, cross planted with sugar cane and provided Moshui village with cross planting technology trainings.	Between Lvliang and Moshui, there were 166 households joined the soy bean cross planting project; the size of coverage was 650 Chinese mu. In the previous year, there were 80 houses and 350 Chinese mu more.
	5.Supported a fruit tree plantation in LVlang (seed money to Chinese bayberries)	The total investment was 42,000 RMB and planted 60 Chinese mu of fruit trees. At the moment, the Chinese bayberry planting is undergoing and in good order.

<p>6.Chinese language trainings to Burmese wives in Lvliang</p>	<p>This improved the ladies' language ability and helped them get involved in public life and built their confidence during the participation of the trainings.</p>
<p>7.Marketing and sales trainings in Moshui</p>	<p>As a supporting activity for the women's business group to seek more ways to increase their livelihood. It helped them design a more suitable plan to follow the market, thereby assisting them to earn more money and make a better living.</p>
<p>8. Supported the women's business group to have more social gatherings.</p>	<p>To build the women's group as a team, 140 sets of tables and chairs were purchased for every group of Moshui (including 30 for Mangbang, 40 for Mangmao, 30 for Mangguang and 40 for Nongnong)</p>
<p>9.Work meetings with the education department</p>	<p>These meetings set a firm foundation for later work, like "Trainings of Environmental Education for Local Teachers" and "Environmental Care Themed School Activities". It was agreed that in 2014, environmental education activities would be done in the form of painting and calligraphy contests.</p>

<p>10. Trainings for teachers on environmental education methods</p>	<p>Worked with the county education department. The two days training (18th and 19th of May, 2013) had 5 lessons (lesson one to five). Twenty-eight teachers consisting of 14 primary schools joined in the training. It helped improve the teachers' teaching methods within environmental education, which then consequently raised the awareness of environmental protection amongst students.</p>
<p>11. School activities about caring for the environment</p>	<p>Written competition on "My Environment, My Hometown". The size of the prize money was 19,800 RMB. Students from year 4,5 and 6 from Twelve Centralised Primary School in Longchuan joined this competition. In this way, they became more aware of environmental protection</p>
<p>12. The construction of drinking water projects for people and animals in Lvliang</p>	<p>The capacity building funds of 35,000 RMB were used on this project. The project solved water drinking and irrigation problems for 17 households in Lvlong. This included 85 people, 60 animals and a land size of 100 Chinese mu.</p>

	13.Enhanced the road for the Nongnong group , Moshui	The capacity building funds of 45,000 RMB were used on this project. The project built a road consisting of 4800 meters long, including the main part of 1600 meters long and the alleyways of 3200-meters long. The total estimation was 650,000 RMB (with 200,000 RMB from the Development and Reform Department, 350,000 RMB from the Poverty Relief Office and 50,000 RMB from the local villagers). It was a great achievement for resource integration and community participation.
2014	1.The third term of goat farming seed money to the two project villages	The total amount of money was 200,000 RMB.
	2.The second term of Chinese bayberry seed money to Lvliang	With Consideration to local conditions, the Chinese bayberry planting project was only implemented in Lvliang with an investment of 11,070RMB.
	3. The first term of Macadamia nuts seed money to the two project villages.	The total investment was 63,700RMB.
	4.Women's business group in Lvliang (community social gathering services)	The investment was 49,000 RMB.

5.Chinese language trainings to Burmese wives in Lvliang	The investment was 25,000 RMB.
6. Environmental education teaching methods to teachers.	The investment was 40,000 RMB with 2 two-day training (10 th and 11 th of May, 2014) of five lessons (lesson 5 - 10).
7.Summer camp	The investment was 40,000 RMB. This let students learn about the importance of the environment to people, taught within a fun environment during their holiday time. Simultaneously they learned to protect the environment of their hometown.
8.A study trip on cross planting for the two project villages to Luxi	The investment was 25,000 RMB. This let 56 villagers take good advantage of every inch of their land in order to increase their income.
9. Trainings on rational application of fertilizers.	The investment was 20,000 RMB. To improve the crop productivity and efficiency of fertilizer usage.
10 . Environment painting competition.	The investment was 80,000 RMB.
11. Trainings for veterinarians.	To improve medical knowledge of the local veterinarians and to reduce the damage caused by unnatural death to animals being farmed.

II. The objectives and goals of the evaluation

This evaluation is the mid-term evaluation for the 2012-2016 term project, which main objective is to assess the current status of the operation of the project in terms of reaching the initial goals which were set in the beginning; furthermore, to give specific suggestions for further adjustment and implementation.

The detailed mid-term evaluation goals are as follows:

1. Based on project design framework and baseline survey, to find out the real status of the project operation in terms of project results and products.
2. To evaluate the results, relevance, impact and sustainability of the project; to find the deviation, inappropriate project design (including project management), and unexpected project results.
3. To give suggestions on project design and management, and advice on how to increase the farmers' income/add to their income resources.

III、 Evaluation process

Under the arrangement and coordination of the project managing party, an evaluation team was summoned and the goals of the evaluation were decided upon; evaluation work was, consequently, started following the process outlined:

- * Communicate with the entrusting parties
- * Read through the second hand documents
- * Make the evaluation plan
- * Prepare the evaluation documents
- * On-site evaluation
 - The basic situation of the project village (village committee leaders)
 - The current status of project village livelihood (village committee leaders and representing villagers)
 - Project activities, activity results, the results impact, development suggestions

(different shareholders)

- Evaluation feedback and cross validation
- Interviews with relevant organisations
- Future project activities and methodology discussion
- * Evaluation of internal discussion
- * Writing the draft report
- * Editing the draft report
- * Handing in the draft report to the entrusting party (special report)
- * Evaluation team finalizing the evaluation report
- * Handing in the finalized evaluation report

IV、 Evaluation Method

1. Analysing Second-hand Documents

Following each evaluations emphasis point respectively, the evaluation team members read and studied two parts of the second-hand documents: A. The documents were prepared by the Kunming project office, including the baseline survey report, project annual report and the project introduction documents, etc.; B. Any relevant rural developmental documents about Longchuan on the internet.

2. Interviewing Key Informants

Two kinds of informants were interviewed: A. Some people related to the project, like the project supporting party, the Kunming project office managing staff, the Longchuan project managing staff and the Longchuan project local partners; B. Different shareholders in the community including village committee leaders, group leaders, village project managing staff, women representatives, beneficiaries, and non-beneficiaries, and so on.

3. Focus Group Discussion

A series of group discussions were organized separately in the village, involving village group leaders, village project managing staff, beneficiaries, women and villagers who were not in the project, and so on.

4. On-site Participatory Visit

This was aimed at different content. The evaluation team members visited the specific sites accordingly. For example, goat pens, sugar cane fields and village activity centres, etc.

5. Information Cross Validation

Through on-site report back and immediate feedback, the evaluation communicated with the staff of the county level project office and the Kunming project office was in order to validate the information from the community. Through immediate feedback within the evaluation team, the information from different community groups was confirmed.

V、 The Findings of the Evaluation

1. The Impact of the Project Activities

1.1 Impact on Economics

(1) The project community has started to work on finding multiple livelihoods.

The main problem for the local community is the unsustainable status of the livelihoods caused by the singular agriculture production structure. A concrete representation is their livelihood heavily relies on the plantation of sugar cane, which troublingly depends on the growing usage of chemical pesticides and fertilisers. This then leads to the unsustainability of the eco-environment. Through another term of project activities, the singular livelihood status of the project villages still remains the same, but a new direction and tendency of the community to have multiple livelihoods has been initiated, like planting nuts, Chinese bayberry planting and livestock farming, etc. The project is still in its launching phase; therefore, we were not able to calculate the exact increasing amount of specific project activities when the evaluation started, let alone the change to the current livelihood structure. However, the direction and tendency of the community multiple livelihoods are clear.



(2) The farmers that participated in the project have started wealth accumulation

Lvliang village has received community development relief work since 2007 while, Moshui started a year later. In the beginning of second phase of the project, some free aid was given to do relief work and infrastructure construction, such as building environmentally friendly toilets, trainings on family financial planning and language trainings for Burmese wives. The project gradually invested money to help the community have sustainable livelihood activities, such as soy bean cross planting, Chinese bayberry, planting nuts and livestock farming, and so on. Through trainings like rational application of fertiliser and organized study trips, the soy bean cross planting project and fruit tree and Chinese bayberry planting project have shown an obvious increase in the number of farmers signing up to join the project; simultaneously an increase in their planting areas and their income. The livestock project has not yet showed a remarkable effect due to the long payback time. However, the fruit trees and livestock of the participants have already become a new kind of wealth accumulation.



(3) The possibility of weakening the non-participants

As the project progresses even more and the investment gradually increases, the disadvantaged in the community might lose confidence to become part of the project, and slowly the aiding project starts to focus on a few activists. The non-participants are under the risk of further marginalization in the long term. This is because the income growth projects often require the participants to have the standards of being “inputting, skilful, market sensitive, capable, confident”, which are qualities that the poor farmers in the community do not have.

1.2 Social Impact

(1) Increased cohesion in the community

The project has built up the community party women’s team, their horizons have been widened and their communication ability with outside world increased. It also improved the language ability of the Burmese wives, so they can join in with the public affairs and build their confidence as they to do so. At the same time, villagers are invited to communicate more often, to discuss technology, to learn from each other and to become prosperous together within the projects. These kinds of activities not only help raise their income, but also increase the community cohesion.



(2) The confidence of the ladies in the community has grown rapidly.

One of the outstanding impacts of the project is all ethnic ladies in the project area have demonstrated their activeness, optimism and joyfulness. The detailed analysis is in “Project Activities and Women’s Development”

(3) The project’s local staff have a good relationship with the project’s community.

The participatory working method has penetrated the county level project staff from the bottom to the top. They respect the needs and wills of the people, they also entrust the people to execute and manage the project. They have built an intimate and friendly relationship with the community. The detailed analysis is in “Project Management”.

One of the evaluators: the county level partner is very cooperative. They are the best; they are very professional and dedicated. The management of A Kai is very effective. His experience is: “No one will turn you down without a reason because what you are doing is good. Communicate more and reduce misunderstanding as much as possible. Genuinely be friends with the villagers (this might also be because the area is an ethnical place – people value your true affection), then work becomes easier. The same principle applies to the county level officials and Buer workers.” Yang Da Fen from the Foreign Aid Office works well and shares mutual support.

4. The project management has received a wide recognition at the county level.

The project aims to solve real problems in community life, to think like the villagers and to worry like the villagers. It starts from the small areas and moves into larger areas, impacting reality. To a great extent, it fills up the leftover gaps of the big projects. During the implementation process, it held timely work meetings with local county government, the educational system, agriculture department and other relevant bureaus. In this way, the general project goals and implementing strategies are clearly communicated. Hence, the project is widely recognized and this helps pave the road and set a firm foundation for the project.



1.3 Environmental Impact

(1) Community members have a profound realization on the harm which chemical fertilizers and pesticides bring to the environment

The local community has deeply relied on growing sugar cane for a living; at the same time, sugar cane productivity depends on the increasing application of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. This has created the unsustainable environment and dropping yield per Chinese mu. The project has hugely raised their awareness on eco-environment; they have deeply realized the damage which chemical fertilizers and pesticides bring to the environment.

2. Project villagers highly compliment the eco-function of the leguminous crop.

3. After few training seminars on cross planting, the planting technology and practical knowledge about sustainable agriculture, like how to use chemical and green fertilizer according to the soil test, have shown a remarkable progress within the land usage. The villagers have taken rational use of every inch of land to improve productivity, land fertilizer efficiency and income. The project participants have highly complimented the eco- function of the leguminous crop. From 2012 to 2013, two villages which joined the sugar cane and winter soy bean cross planting project, have shown noticeable increases in terms of the number of participating households, inter-planting acreage and income.



(3) Community members worry greatly about the change in water resources.

Since the long term planting of sugar cane, as well as the growing usage of pesticides and fertilisers, the water has been severely contaminated. This concern is on top of the serious water shortages, thus, the irrigation needs cannot be satisfied during the busy seasons.

A middle aged male of Moshui village: using pesticides and fertiliser to plant sugar cane, drinking water is contaminated. In recent years, Irrigating water is less and less.



2. Project Activities and Women's Development (Promoting Gender Equality)

2.1 Current Status

Women participate in every activity of the project through which their mindset and behavior have changed tremendously and they become a positive leading force at the community level. Looking from the implementation of every sub-goal, the main findings are listed as follow:

Sub-goal 1 – the family as a unit; some ladies from the project villages actively

followed the project activity - cross planting with sugar cane and soy bean and they benefited from it.

A lady (Jin Ma Dao) from Moshui was deeply impressed “Cross planting is good! When I ploughed the land in the past, the soil was hard; but now when my hoe hits the land, it feels soft and loose.” When talking, we could sense her satisfactory tone and see her content smile. She also emphasised the purpose of the compost training: “Initially we thought that composting was so easy, that everybody knew about it. What is the point of learning it again? After the practice, we learned that it produced different kinds of compost by using the method from the trainer. And it really helped the plants grow!”

Seeing their neighbours benefiting from the project, the ladies (Dao Guo Bian, Yue Beng Nu, Bao Ma Dao) who did not use cross planting before said they would do it in the following year. Other ladies (Ma Le Nong and her peers of Lvliang) who were cross planting with corn, started to think or ask in private: what were the differences of cross planting with soy beans and corn? It was that a clear feeling that the idea and knowledge of cross planting had been promoted in the community. Moreover, the “word of mouth” promotion was happening in the daily chitchatting amongst the ladies. “Using organic fertilizer and reducing chemical fertilizer” was becoming a voluntary choice for some ladies. It was because of this that they had mentioned : it seemed like there was a lack of livestock manure. This was needed for composting and biogas. Thereafter they required to farm livestock; it also confirmed their positive understanding about sustainable livelihood.

Sub-goal 2 – restricted by the growing period of fruit trees and livestock, it is unclear to see the change, if only using income increase as indicator; but the project villagers have benefited from the study of relevant technologies. The ladies seem to benefit from fewer advantages than the men. For example, male

villagers of Lvliang can talk about the key points of walnuts and nuts planting, they know where they could find technology to support them, and “get connections” and so on; but the ladies mostly remain silent when asked, or fail to give a clear answer. It feels like they were merely treated or self-deemed as labourers when participating in these kinds of activities. In the goat farming activity, funded by seed money, there were only a few ladies that signed up with their own names and quitted in the middle of the activity by giving a technical reason “I cannot do it well” (like Wang Xian Yan from Mangxi of Lvliang village) . This shows that most of them are still marginalized in terms of relevant farm skill training and opportunities.

Wang Xian Yan said: of course, to go out and see will widen my horizon, this is good. But even after the study (can enumerate bunch of new planting and farming products and related methods), I still could not do it in reality.”

On mastering the technology, they appeared to be much less confident than the men. Ladies on the project sites (including the Burmese wives like Yue Ma Jie, Chen Hui Xiang, etc) have a common need of developing traditional farming, like pig farming. But, because of villagers’ (meaning the heads of the house and leaders of village committee, mostly men) collective discussions, pig farming was not included in the seed money. The other explanation was that: the pig price was unstable, so that it was ruled out. But some ladies (Jin Ma Dao of Moshui village) insisted that: growing sows and selling piglets, product cycle was short, therefore, there would always be buyers.

Sub-goal 3 – support non-agricultural activities to raise income. This helped the ladies find alternatives and raised their group capacity and developed their influence to care for their communities. Take 3 examples: firstly, ladies of Moshui using their groups as units (Mangmeng, Mangbang and Nongnong) received

seed money support, purchased 20 – 40 sets of different tables and chairs (1 table with 4 chairs) to rent to people who wanted to hold parties. Rentals were cheaper for internal residents and more expensive for outsiders. Profits from this were used for self-decided activities of the women's group. The books of Nongnong showed 5 entries from March to May of 2014 (with 30RMB as maximum and 15 RMB as minimum). Since the income was immediate, the effect was faster and clearer than Sub-goal 2. Three elected people (group leader/accountant/manager) were in charge of the collective assets. Any rent paired out is to be recorded and checked on return. Any damages would be reimbursed and repaid. The group members have to discuss and decide on the principles of related management and usage. Secondly, the women's group of Mangmeng, Moshui, not only used tables and chairs for income generation. Someone lobbied the Animal Husbandry Department in De Hong (the poverty alleviation department giving direct support to this village), and raised 3000 RMB from them to buy tableware.

When asked how they did it, they said: "We just told them that we had tables and chairs, just needed the tableware; if we could have the sets, it would be easier to rent out to people. Please give us some money for this. And then they did."

It is clear that the "Seed Funds" in the hands of the ladies has really become "seed". Thirdly, the women's group in Mangxian of Lvliang used the money to buy the longing minority costumes for dancing. They became "professional" after getting the clothes. They were often invited to sing and dance at weddings and funerals. The hosts would pay them for their services, thus this increased their income. Besides doing it as a business, they were also willing to do it for charity purposes when people could not afford to pay them – to help the poor have a "decent" celebration (it means a lot to the locals). "That family is poor. It is not easy for them to pull this off. It does not matter if they cannot pay. We are not

going to ask.” Sun Lan Ying from Mangxian, Lvliang village explained why they only had three payments when they did four activities. The Burmese wives can easily join in the singing and dancing. Apart from the entertainment, they also learned everyday Chinese terms. The “teachers” were from the women’s group members. These examples demonstrated that activities like these would increase their income and enhance community cohesion and the women’s confidence. In their (He Qiao Chu, He Nuan Fang and Wang Xian Yan) own words “as long as we are of one mind, we will become attractive and people will start to care for us.”

Sub-goal 4 – for the environment the ladies affirmed that most of the relevant activities from the previous project terms were building home toilets, biogas and paving the courtyard and so on. They (Cao Zhao Mei and Jin Ma Dao of Moshui) reported that with biogas, they did not have to spend a lot of time to search for firewood, thus this cut down the dependency on trees and branches – it was good for the environment; it also cut down the cooking time. They could do more things and had more time (like increasing income and participating in community affairs). Because biogas needed human and animal manures – “bad toilet hygiene means no fertilizer” – they thereafter raised the need of increasing livestock farming which would bring in more animal manure and income. They (housewives, same people as above) said with pride: now they have the conditions to provide “hygienic environment” for the families, to enjoy a “good life” and “cut down the cases of sicknesses”. From the surface, these relevant feedbacks did not belong to this term’s project activities. But when listening more carefully, it was clear that this kind of speech proved that they had accepted the environmental education. Furthermore, for them to have so many specific and practical explanations showed they shared more housework responsibilities. This made them more actively join in with relevant activities, have more practices and receive more benefits compared to men. On top of this, this project term used trickle down training method. They could really identify with it and voluntarily started to apply the environment values to their daily life and work, in order to

explore a suitable sustainable livelihood model.

Supporting activities – all kinds of capacity building training were most welcomed by the ladies. Besides the agriculture technology training mentioned above, they also liked trainings on financial planning, health knowledge, counselling and team building trainings, etc. They believed that through trainings, (quoting from Pai Zha Dui of Moshui), they “dare to speak, dare to tell, know how to express” and (quoting from Wang Xian Yan of Lvliang), they “know how to think, to calculate risks”.

Pai Zha Dui gave an example: “The most impressive was training on market development from Sun De. (The knowledge) not only can this be used in business, but in every aspect of life. He taught us to imagine how to sale “honey”, to introduce ourselves and our products in a simple and clear way. We learned through the training (participatory activity), to say what we were thinking. We did it step by step. It was so ‘clear’. Our ‘organic’ products (including soft rice, honey, dried bamboo shoots, rice wine and dried pickled vegetables) could be marketable, but we failed. The reason was we did not know about the markets and sales. We were blind. To think back, this still makes me sad.”

Her story showed two parts: on one hand, the knowledge they learned was practical for their future development; on the other, it triggered her to reflect on her experience and learn from it. She absorbed and understood the key knowledge in her lesson and upgraded to another level. Another reason why this was so beneficial was the training method used – participatory teaching and trickle down permeation. It was more suitable for their way of thinking and helped them to remember all the knowledge taught. Apart from benefiting themselves, the ladies were more willing to spread what they had learned. For instance, on

March the 8th of 2014, the Women's Day, Moshui village on behalf of the Women's Federation, they organized a goat farming technology training for the whole village and invited other ladies from the near villages. It received a good local recognition.

The change of Burmese wives – the “stupid” women from Burma became smart and active. The Burmese wives in Menggong of Lvliang, like Yue Ma Jie, Chen Tu Xiang (they are mother and daughter in-laws), Li Mu Rui, Jin Ma San and Jin Ma Jie did not know the local dialect, let alone understand and read Han Chinese when they had just got married. This made life and work difficult. During the interviews of the evaluation, they could now understand some Chinese, but still could not speak it. They could communicate in their local dialect – the older ones were more fluent than the younger ones. They could write down their names and ages. Signing their names was the most practical skill for them (they had to sign their name to get sugar cane money). Chen Tu Xiang, 19 year-old, (a mother of a 3 year-old boy) showed us her exercise book. Her hand writing was as beautiful as herself; she could read out aloud as well. The language was taught by primary school teachers (Yang Qing Gang and He). They were using Year 2 bilingual textbooks. The Burmese ladies were interested in the project and participated in it as well, including: applying for Chinese bayberry or nuts planting and joining in women's group activities in the community house of the village. They often had 1 – 2 close friends in the village and would “dance, sing, drink and work” with them. Sometimes they could receive free gynecology checks, just like other ladies in the village. Currently, the biggest problem is they cannot get legal identification and this has restricted their scope of travel. Chang Zhong Kai of the Foreign Aid Office said: “We would like to give the Burmese ladies opportunity to go on study trips, but they would have troubles even to check-in into a hotel.”

2.2 Impact

The project aims to explore sustainable livelihood rather than purely or only focusing on women's development. The project added the sensitivity of gender

equality at an appropriate time; therefore, it has a clear push on women's development and produced related results, and brought unexpected social, environmental and economic benefits. Buer's project officer (Layn Liu) shared his perspective: "To support the women's business group was like us aiming for the goose and hitting the gander." This is the most valuable experience – providing the ladies with a little bit of resources and opportunities that would benefit the whole community including the women and men. The impact has been maximized and the potential it carries is very important. Based on the evaluation, there are some specific impacts:

1. To lift the "women" up from the outside, it helped the female group increase their confidence and participation

The gender division of labour in the project village is still the traditional idea that men work outside the house, while women look after the home. Within this framework, it is easy to overlook the role of the ladies in community affairs. It is common for their needs and thoughts to be ignored. Interestingly, thanks to the mindset of "worshiping every foreign thing", when "the foreigners and outside experts came in to ask after the ladies; they really felt respected. This really touched me." (said Pai Zha Dui of Moshui). In other words, the emphasis on gender equality as an external idea worked effectively to a certain extent. When the ladies felt respected, they had the possibility to build up confidence and proactively use their potential to become the main part and vital human resource of the project.

2. Let key ladies in the community lead more women to join in with the project activities.

The project intentionally finds key ladies from the villager groups to be human resources; their job is to care for the corners beyond the reach of the project office or to give attention to and help complete some activities which need special help (like training Burmese wives). The effect was as good as experts, with better social impact. This requires a two-way interactive process; that is to say, the project office gives them timely support and clear rights and

responsibilities, actively communicates with them and provides necessary consultation and supervision.

3. Understand the needs or hopes of the ladies, fulfilling those and letting them try.

To do this well needs project managing staff of all levels, in their mind, to challenge the fixed bias, that is village women have low quality. They have to believe in the ladies' creativity, potential and sense of responsibility. In terms of resource allocation, they have to be equal and provide the same, even more resources and opportunities to the ladies. The women would be more caring, more committed, and more cooperating with real actions and would follow the relevant principles more strictly because they have less chance and resources compared to that of the men.

4. Let the ladies assemble. It is good for their self-empowerment. Once they become a group, it is possible for them to lead the community project activities.

On the usage of seed money, a few ladies tend to come in and apply and use it under the name of village groups; while men apply and use it based for their households. It seems that the ladies of the project villages realize how small their power is as an individual and how weak their decision-making power is in their family. Therefore, they are more willingly to join the project as a group. Another possibility is that the ladies like to be in groups, which is a local tradition. It is proven to be an effective empowering way that working in a group satisfies the needs of helping oneself and helping each other. Because the organized ladies need to maintain their group dynamics, they then would have to focus on improving their team capacity, abilities in decision-making and managing, abilities in negotiation and handling things with fairness and being just. Once they grow enough in certain aspects, they would become the engine to push for community development.

(5) It is essential for finishing project activities and reaching the general goal of community comprehensive administration to create an environment that supports the ladies.

The leaders of the Foreign Aid Office and the project village managing group have reached a good agreement, that is to consider the active participation of the ladies at every stage of the project operation, like advocating meetings, money supports and providing opportunities. It is because of this kind of realization and action, the project has a lot of fruit, even if it did not invest that much on women's development. Moreover, it has such diversity and connects with the minority traditional cultures.

2.3 Existing Problems

From the perspective of social gender, the project at the moment is advocating and motivating ladies to participate and provides "appropriate" chances and resources; for this, it has positive impacts. It, however, has not actively or timely dealt with the existing unequal awareness and relationships based on the genders, which would turn up as discriminations in a subtle way. It would rely on the "traditional" and rational gender relations to separate the developing spaces for women and lead to situations like disparity and inequality, which sometimes can be seen and sometimes is hidden away. Some of these situations would become potential barriers from the development of sustainable livelihood. For example:

* The function and influence of the women group in the project activities could be questioned or denied by the local community.

In the group discussion with male villagers (Qu Sheng Bao, Yang Xin Qi, Ma Ying Ding, Yang Wen Xiu, and Jin Ru Dong, etc) in Lvliang, Qu believed: "Women are still inferior (to men). Of course, they can do work, do manual labour; they can drink and sing (the others agreed with laughter). But they don't want to seek progression, they always do things in the same way. The Burmese wives were even worse." These people had applied to attend some project activities, like fruit

trees planting. But they could not care less about the other related affairs, “Sometimes, meetings were held in community rooms (meaning some things related to the project), if we were too busy, then would ask the wives to go. If the children were at home, we would sometimes send them as well.” Jin (in charge of village church affairs) also complimented the minority song and dance performed by the Mangxian ladies in the village. He believed it was good to have fun and have entertainment, but “just for the wives/women, men would never joined in.” He Yuan Zhuang, the head of Lvliang, said: they have no female members in their village committee. There are 6 villager groups in the village and all the group leaders are men. But they have included 2-3 female activists in their village project leadership group. Hence, the worry is that it is common sense in the project villages that “women” are just related to the project. When we put “women” back into the local society, would they still be seen or would they mean something else? When the project finishes, would “women development” also finish accordingly? To look at the sustainability, this could be a potential concern.

* Relatively speaking, the ladies still take fewer advantages of resources and opportunities.

The reasons could be: because the project is not aiming to solve the problem of gender equality; the statements above are based on the stereotypes of the gender impression and unequal gender relationships in the current family and social systems. Randomly checking the trace records (like signatures...) of project money distribution and training participation, and judging by the amount of money and the number of times, the initial impression is men received more benefits than women. Yang Qing Gang, primary school teacher in Lvliang (male, has a good reputation and public interests, knowledgeable) counted quietly and said: “the time of (participating in trainings organized by the project) is more than ten times. Take last year as an example, there was a mental health training, a study trip to Mangshi, a bull farming study trip to Baoshan, a visit to see greenhouse vegetables and environmental protection training.” He has learned a lot and spread out what he had learned as a teacher and led an experimental

farming activity – which is also what the project expected from him as a leader. These are all good and positive, but it is still a double edged sword. Under the situation of limited resources, who would be the most suitable can be answered with different standards. If we don't look at this from the perspective of gender equality, it should not be a problem. Looking from the angle of social equality, many resources are concentrated at some people; in this way, it still could be a problem. But it is not a problem that can be easily handled. On one hand, based on reality (producing by households means collective activities are almost paralysed and lack of warm-hearted leaders), the project needs to encourage and support capable leaders who have the ability to earn income (most of the time, they are men); on the other hand, the project has to consider and push the community to establish the equal and fair social relations (including gender equality), to guide the embodiment of gender equality, economic equality and mutual supports between the strong and the weak, since all of these are still included in the consideration of sustainable livelihood. It would be a big challenge for the project's goals, project activity design and project management to find out how to face this double-edged sword and reach a win-win situation.

* Women and women's development are still staying at the surface, and so on. The project encourages women groups to participate, and supports their activities. Although the opportunities and resources the ladies have received were quite limited, they really helped the project to reach its goals. But, whatever the project was able to push, it was still restricted by the fixed mindsets – since the “foreigners” asked for women specifically; then to just simply include the “women” would be enough. All the activities done by the women were considered to be “colourful and rich”. The true contributions of the “womenish” stuff were not recognized, (as a matter of fact, those achievements could be more important than simple economic growth); therefore, the local people were still misjudging the existence and influences of the ladies, based on this kind of stereotype. On top of this, the ladies expressed a lot about being emotional touched, but appealed much less on their participation and decision-making rights. From this

to the others: there were two of the project goals using income increase as indicators. It might have set the women on a losing start from the choices. To use every household as the project supporting unit was good for effective management. But, still it is necessary to point out that a household does not represent the woman. Their developing needs could be covered by the “household”.

2.4 Suggestions

Based on the experiences of the women’s development and related gender problems above, the suggestions are:

1. To share current experiences with the project village, to study and make progress together.

Based on the achieved results so far, especially using the activities and the potential impact it has for the ladies, the purposes can be listed as follows: A. When carrying on to advocate the meaning of “sustainable livelihood”, it would be more realistic, and easier to be understood by a greater population – why women’s participation is a necessity for the sustainable livelihood model. It should be outlined, why they did what they did, like care for the weak and why their ideas and actions that serve the weak is good for creating a harmonious community, a stable borderland. B. Furthermore it would help guide males, especially the ones with rigid gender discrimination or who feel superior to women, to face the objective achievement in the project, and consequently to be positive about the creativity and potential of the ladies. C. It would nurture an environment for women to improve their social status and increase their confidence. In brief, it is hopeful to see “women development”, gender equality and so on also become the “seeds” of the project to keep growing continuously, rather than an imported product.

2. To provide more resources and opportunities for the ladies under the current circumstances.

To innovate new systems and to encourage more ladies to join and renew project activities in order to take a maximum use of the limited resources. To be the bridge from the organised village women's groups and to link them up with governmental departments, such as Women's Federation, Poverty Alleviation Office, the Culture Sector, the Agricultural Technology Department, and Civil Affairs Department, in order to bring in more human, financial, material and technical support. All of these would then immediately bring in another suggestion: project managing staff at every level could strategically advocate the ideas and goals of the project, without violating the principle of "keeping a low profile". Adding to this, because the ladies like doing things in "groups", it is proposed to provide more team building or team capacity building trainings to help widen their mindset and improve their competitive force. It would also be good to provide them with skill trainings which can help break the fixed traditional gender position such as leadership training, trainings on using modern media (like cell phone or computer – the existing platform "village informatization" would be the best condition) to acquire information and to do online sales.

3. The Current Situation, Experiences, Problems of the Project and Suggestions.

In terms of project management, the evaluation team mainly used personal interview to understand the opinions and suggestion of the project managing staff and project participants on current project management. There were 17 people that joined in the project management personal interview, including two workers from Buer Consult As. Ltd. Kunming Representative Office (hereinafter referred to as Buer), 3 workers from the Foreign Aid Project Office in Longchuan (hereinafter referred to as FAO), 4 project partner representatives, 3 project technical support representatives, and 5 village committee and villagers representatives from Lvliang and Moshui. Based on the information from the 17 interviewees and observation, consideration, analysis and summary from the evaluation team on project management, the evaluation team listed out and discussed the current status, experiences and problems of the project

management and gave suggestions for future improvement.

3.1 Current Status of Project Management

(1) The Process of Project Design

The evaluation has found that there were four key steps in the designing process of the project:

* Baseline survey

Before the project start, Buer and FAO had conducted a baseline survey from the 19th of August to the 1st of September, 2010 in Lvliang and Moshui village, Longchuan. The purpose was to understand the basic situation, needs, problem and potential solutions on livelihood matter in the two villages. According to the results, Buer and FAO discussed and reached an initial agreement on the project goals and main activities.

* Project Strategic Planning Meeting

At the end of 2011, Buer and FAO held a project strategic planning meeting in Longchuan inviting leaders of Lvliang and Moshui and other related county and town level leaders to attend. In the meeting, participants further discussed and confirmed the general goal, Sub-goals and main activities of the project (mentioned above). The managing party and implementing party respectively are: provincial level – Buer, county level – FAO, village level – Lvliang and Moshui village committee.

* Introducing Project Partners and Technical Support Parties.

From 2012 to 2014 , in order to satisfy the needs of project development, the project gradually brought in two technical support parties at the provincial level and 3 project partners at the county level. The two provincial technical support parties are: THE HUB Consulting Company and Bless China International. The three county level partners are: Longchuan Education Department, the Agriculture Department and the Animal Husbandry Department.

From these steps above, it could be seen that the project design has two features - from the bottom to the top and multiple parties' participation. Initially it applied baseline survey, from a wide angle, to collect and understand what the beneficial groups (villagers of the two villages) of the project need on livelihood development and how they look at this issue. Then with multi-parties' participation (Buer, FAO and two village committees), matters like the project goals, content and managing parties were confirmed – the confirmation has set an important foundation for the project implementation.

(2) Work Allocation and Cooperation

In a multiple participation project, work allocation and cooperation is vital. Because only until the participating parties all understand their respective responsibilities and are able to carry them out in the project implementation, the project then has the possibility to develop towards the predetermined direction and finally reach the goals.

Like mentioned before, the managing party and implementing party at the provincial, county and village levels are: Buer, FAO and the village committees of Lvliang and Moshui. They all have different roles in the project and share different responsibilities. See the table below for details:

Project managing party at every level	Main responsibilities
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<p>Provincial —Buer Consult As. Ltd. Kunming Representative Office</p>	<p>Representing project donor – Norway Mission Alliance to fully participate in project management and implementation, and play the role of being a “bridge”, coordinating and promoting the communication between the donor and the project managing parties at county and village levels</p> <p>Regularly sending written reports, emails to donors reporting the progress of the project.</p> <p>Regularly visit the project sites and participate in project activities to understand and keep a track on the implementation of the project at each site.</p> <p>Set up and implement project monitoring and evaluating plans.</p> <p>Provide technical support to county and village project managing parties and implementing parties, such as: provide trainings, set up project logic frameworks, and so on.</p> <p>According to the needs of the project development, look for and confirm the technical support parties, for example: invite Bless China International to provide goat farming technology trainings for the project site, invite THE HUB to provide teachers trainings for the project primary schools.</p>
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<p>County level —Foreign Aids Project Office in Longchuan</p>	<p>Fully responsible for the project management and implementation in Lvliang and Moshui.</p> <p>Set up the project annual budget and implementation plan and conduct activities accordingly.</p> <p>Provide technological support to village committees in Lvliang and Moshui.</p> <p>Coordinate the participation of the project partners and technical support parties.</p> <p>Regularly hand in written reports, emails and make phone calls to report the project process to Buer; hand in quarterly financial reports.</p> <p>Help Buer and Mission Alliance to visit, inspect, monitor and evaluate activities on the project.</p>
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<p>County level— village committees of Lvliang and Moshui villages</p>	<p>Promote the project ideas and contents in the village in order to improve the understanding and recognition of the project among the villagers.</p> <p>Motivate and organize villagers to join in the project activities and provide technical support to the project participants.</p> <p>Manage and monitor the project participants including signing a contract with them, and supervising them to follow through what is in the contract. For example: supervise the goat farmers to follow through the contract - raise the goats in the pen.</p> <p>Regularly report to the FAO about the progress of the project including the difficulties, challenges and experiences during the implementation process.</p> <p>Participate in the discussion and set-ups of the project annual implementation plan.</p>
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The evaluation finds that the three-level managing structure has helped the respective parties to understand their responsibilities clearly. This is good for them to do their job well in the implementation process, allocation and cooperation. Buer signs a contract with FAO annually to make sure the project activities and budget for that year, and the responsibilities of the two parties in the activities are adhered to. Besides this, in the beginning of the year, FAO would set up the project plans for the year, after discussing separately with Lvliang and Moshui village committees, so that the activities and responsibilities are cleared for the year.

The evaluation also finds that the managing staff at every level has a high

recognition of the project goals – they were able to use their own words to correctly and comprehensively describe the general goal and sub-goals of the project. For example: a county level project managing staff said in the interview: “I think this is an eco-livelihood building project, hoping to gradually increase the villagers’ income through expanding agriculture and non-agriculture channels. The reason it was called an eco-project is because we hope to bring up the villagers’ income without damaging the local environment and resources. In this way, the project can last.”

(3) Communication and Coordination

As a fundamental function of the project management, communication and coordination is the lubricant of the project’s implementation and is carried throughout the whole process of the project management. The communication skill of the project managers is also one of the key factors that decides the success of the project. The evaluation has found that 16 out of the 17 interviewees gave high praise to the communication and coordination skills of the project managing parties – Buer and FAO. They were considered to be able to, in their daily work, effectively communicate and pass on project information, duly handle the relationship with the different partners and stir up work enthusiasm of every part of the project. For example:

Before every training I would have three communications with Buer which is very important for my preparation. Buer would provide me with some training background and suggestions on the training content. I have found that they have an accurate understanding about the needs of the participants, which would help me “customize” the training for their specific needs.

- A trainer who provides technical supports

We have no problems communicating with FAO. Their communication ways made us feel comfortable. We have a good cooperation relationship and good work efficiency. If I have to give a score for their communication ability, I would give them 9 – 10.

- A project partner in Longchuan

In terms of the means of communication, apart from daily face to face meetings, emails and telephone calls; the project held multiple- party meetings twice a year – the meetings were at the beginning and the end of the year. The former meeting was held in February or March every year aiming to make sure the managing party, implementing party and partners understood the specific goals and activities for the year, and their respective work and requirements. The later one was often held in every December wanting to review the implementation of the year, discuss and analyse the results, experiences and shortcomings of the project; additionally to understand the needs of the project participants and set up work plans for the following year accordingly. The interviewees widely believed that the two meetings played a vital role in project communication and coordination. They not only effectively promoting the communication between partners, but also making sure the project's information has been passed on to partners in a timely, transparent and open way.

(4) Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation is an important component of the project management. Only through monitoring the project's process and evaluating the results, the project staff can then more accurately and objectively understand the project process and make necessary adjustments. In this project, Buer carried out the main monitoring and evaluation responsibility. Before the project started, Buer and FAO used a baseline survey in Lvliang and Moshui. The general goal and sub-goals of the project were set based on the results from the survey, which

sequentially provided references and basis for the monitoring and evaluation of work from the project.

During monitoring, Buer mostly used regular visits to the project sites to understand the project's progress. Within the first two years (2012 and 2013) of the project, Buer would pay a monthly visit to the project site. Since the 3rd year (2014), the project implementation had moved into the designed track. Buer thereafter cut back the times of their visit to once every two months. Apart from the visits, Buer also followed the progress with the regular written reports (twice a year) and financial reports (quarterly) by the FAO.

For the evaluation, Buer conducted third party evaluation to maintain objectivity. This evaluation was the mid-term project evaluation with the main purpose of checking the implementation of the first phase at a result and productive level, using the project design framework and baseline survey data. When the project finishes in 2014, Buer will organize another third party evaluation – the final project evaluation is to give a more comprehensive assessment on the project implementation and goal-reaching situation.

3.2 Project Management Performance

The evaluation has found that the project has performed well in some aspects:

(1) Human Resource Management

The FAO has carried out more responsibility by managing the people. They are fully in charge of the management and implementation of the project in the two villages, coordinating the participation of every partner and technologically supporting the parties, and also they have to organize and conduct some project activities. To ensure the human resource investment is satisfactory within the project, it employed a full time worker for the FAO working specifically on this project. After more than two years, the decision has proven to be wise and necessary.

(2) Team Capacity Building

Like mentioned above, the project holds annual meetings around December with participating parties and partners. To enhance the communication and cooperation among the participating parties, the annual conference has added team building training as part of the meetings content since 2012. The training uses a participatory method, through games and other interactive activities, to enhance the partakers experience and encourage their personal relationship reflection with the team. The evaluation has found that the two team building trainings in 2012 and 2013, had strengthened the identification of the participants within the team, and had improved the communication between them. An interviewee from the village committee said: “The team building training really impressed me. It makes me realize that the strength of one person is always limited, no matter how capable this person is. Only when we’re working as a team, can we finish a task well. It is like this at home, and it is even more so within the village.” Another interviewee said: “After the team building training in 2012, I have found that the communication between the FAO and the two project villages is more positive and more effective. This means the trainings have reached its expectation and it also means they should continue.”

(3) Financial Management

The evaluation has found that the interviewees are highly satisfied with the current financial managing system, because:

- * The flexibility of the financial management.

Based on the current financial management system, when the FAO is using the project money, every expense has a margin range of 10%. Besides, the FAO can adjust the budget in the middle of the year (July) according to the project’s progress in the first half of the year, so that the financial management can be more in line with the needs of the project implementation.

- * Using unified forms.

Buer uses unified forms (Excel forms) in Longchuan and other project sites.

The FAO needs only to fill it in once every three months and hand it in to Buer. Since the formulas in the forms are all set, the FAO only needs to fill in the project expenditures in that quarter. Other information includes total expenditures, total margins, margin percentage can be generated automatically by the software. The FAO has saved a lot of work time, at the same time, shares an accurate, comprehensive financial expenditures situation with Buer. A FAO worker said in the interview: “Buer asks for a lot of financial forms. They look very complicated, but when they reached me, it had already been simplified to the bare minimum. I only need to fill in the exact amount of every expense; other information would be auto-generated. Buer has already done what they could do beforehand.”

* Financial trainings.

Buer has provided a comprehensive, systematic financial training to the FAO at the beginning of the project. After that, it also provides an add-on training every year to make sure the financial managing system is understood and relevant software and forms are well handled.

3.3 Problems and Suggestions.

The goat farming seed fund for Lvliang and Moshui is one of the sub-projects. Through providing seed money, it attempts to help some farmers raise goats to increase their income. The goat farming project started in 2012. There are 14 households that joined in by October, 2014 – 4 from Lvliang, 10 from Moshui. In order to conform to the project’s requirements of being “organic” and “sustainable”, they were asked to be raised in the pen so that the damage and contamination to the local environment could be reduced. In terms of the project management, the FAO has signed “The Project Agreement with Goat Farmers in Moshui” with Moshui village. It is clearly stated that Party B (Moshui Village Committee) has to guarantee that goats are raised in the pens. However, the evaluation team has visited 5 goat farmers (2 in Lvliang, 3 in Moshui) and found that free range is very common. The goat farmers only let the goats out around

12 pm at noon so they could find grass freely, then about 5 or 6 pm, the goats would be chased back to the pen. The evaluation team got similar information when they talked to other villagers. For example, a Moshui villager said: “Goats are very active. We are afraid that it would be hard to keep them in the pen, so that they would often be let go free. At the moment, we have 10 goat farmers – it is not obvious to see the damage to the environment. If later on the number reaches 50, the consequence would be beyond imagining.

In order to avoid or cut down the negative environmental effects, the evaluation team suggests:

1) to give more organic farming technology trainings to the farmers so that they could have a further understanding on the necessity and importance of why the goats should be kept in the pen; 2) to add a clause in the goat farming agreement that if the terms are breached, there would be certain punishment accordingly; 3) to just keep the same number of goat farmers as now, no more expansion.

VI、 The Existing Problems in Project Activity Implementation

1. Not Enough Technology Support on Livelihood Content

The livelihood project in Lvliang and Moshui – mainly talking about planting nuts, Chinese bayberry planting and livestock farming and so on – opens up a direction and tendency for multiple livelihoods in the community. It is very important to improve the current status of livelihood in the villages. But, during the implementation process, there was not enough technological support given to the nuts and Chinese bayberry planting – support is needed from the seedling nursery, planting skill training and follow-up management, to cross planting with other crops – especially with sugar cane planting. All those aspects mentioned before can be followed through and refined. For the goat farming, further assistance can be given on something like how to avoid/cut back on deaths in the process, how to acquire more feed, and what the damage and influence on

the environment is. This can help secure the technological support.

2. In Terms of the Livelihood Content, the Market Development and Capacity Improvement was Insufficient

The livelihood project has a strong impact on the sustainability of the project and community; this shows that it can improve the lives of the residents, the conditions of the environment, and raise other relevant market development awareness. In the process of the project implementation, the people should not be only content with self-sufficiency, but want to build a strong connection with the market. The community has not put enough effort into developing the market for the related project. More reinforcement can also be done on product trade, market promotion and brand building for the livelihood project.

3. The Participation of the Poor Households has Dropped

During the survey, we found that the main participants were the village officials, village group leaders and capable people. It is understandable why they were chosen, because these kinds of people have the ability for using money well – for example, for the seed money, they have their portion of money to put together with the project money and development their livelihood, such as the big sugar cane planting families: they have a stronger will to change their livelihood. Most people who have not joined in the projects were the poorest and the most difficult, although they have the desire to be part of the project, they could not afford to pay their part and they were more worried that they could not pay back the loan; therefore, they decided not to join in. The more capable the people are, the more able they also are to provide their part of the money. The real poor would not be able to pay for their part; and hence, they would get fewer benefits from the project. As a result, the project is still working with relatively well-off farmers.

4. The Project has a Insufficient Link with Related Projects in the Area

The survey showed that at the moment, the project has not got enough

connection with government projects and other foreign aid projects. The communication needs to be enhanced. The livelihood project needs more participation. Different projects can have their respective goals, policy advocacy and value products, but in terms of promoting sustainable development on the livelihood, raising and improving their living ability, and protecting the environment and ecosystem, they should be similar to some extent, so that it is possible to have a tighter link with some related projects in the area.

5. The Work on Advocating for the Project Experience Needs More Effort

During the implementation, the project has collected some very valuable experiences on livelihood development, trainings for Burmese wives and how to help them integrate into local community, how to live with Burmese workers who cut down sugar cane. These experiences are so worth promoting for – they are good for keeping peace around the border areas and setting a good national image for the project sites, and even can be upgraded to be used for other managing aspects around further border areas. But, at this time, the relevant experiences (like the harmony of the border areas, the maintenances of the international relationships and so on) have not been effectively advocated; also they have not been properly summarized. The governing departments of the higher levels (like the nation and Yunnan province or even Dehong State) have not been informed about these good and precious experiences which deserve to be promoted at a wider level.

VII. Suggestions to Future Project Activities

1. Concentrate the Project on Strategic Planning

On the basis of the content, experiences and lessons of the previous project stages and the review of the cooperation mechanism, effects and future directions at every level, the project needs to make more strategic choices. As a NGO project, the choices have to be clear on “what to do and what not to do” and “what can be the most cost-effective”. Buer, FAO and villagers in Longchuan should internalize and form some project consensuses and ideas. On the choices

of livelihood project, the usage of seed money, the marketing capacity building among the community residents and the advocacy successful experiences; the three parties should pay more attention, set it up as programs or systems for long term promotion. The outstanding ideas should be promoted and the communication and coordination with the governmental projects should be extended. The common understanding of the strategies should be embodied to promote further and profound cooperation. The project should also be kept on the ground in order to make sure the cooperative idea is follows through the implementation of strategic planning. At the same time, backing and securing system should be in place to channel all the forces to push through the difficult situations.

2. Through Building Connection with Other Relevant Industries in the Area to Reinforce Market Development and Technological Support

There is a changing process in the project area regarding to industry development: in the beginning the sugar cane plantation took the lead; then cow and goat farming started using sugar cane leaves; thereafter, the animal manures became organic compost during biogas process, which then was used to improve sugar productivity and cut down the damage to the soil environment. Gradually, the process became a diversified industry model, with livestock husbandry, sugar cane plantation plus other services. For the livelihood project, it is a step-by-step process. In the future, the project should reinforce the internal connection with other relevant industries in the area, in order to extend and expand the product chain for the livelihood project. The emphasis could be gradually placed on market building. Under the support of modernised agriculture technology, the project could find a new position to build an organic brand and sales channel. It should be more proactive to work with the related projects in Dehong State and share technology trainings and market development resources.

3. Pay More Attention to Develop New Agricultural Business Entities and Strengthen Their Relationship with Poor Households.

The participation of the project should be gradually changed. The original structure with the village officials, group leaders and able bodies can be added with new agricultural business entities like poor support groups, specialized cooperatives, village community cooperative associations and small corporate governance structure (such as some companies, if possible). Together they can develop sustainable livelihood projects and face market challenges. These new agricultural business entities should also extend their relations with poor farmers; they should guide the poor to play a more important role in the sustainable livelihood project.

4. Based on the Project Experiences, Do More Policy Advocacy.

The project activities, such as Burmese wives trainings, financial planning trainings and trainings on how to live with Burmese workers who cut down sugar cane, have collected some unique experiences on aspects like building a harmonious relationship between the two countries and reflecting a positive national image, and so on. That is why it needs to have policy advocacy. Using all possible channels, to advocate and attract more attention to policy making at national and provincial levels, and on policy extension at prefecture and county levels.

5. Pay Attention to Project Design That Should Reflect the Differentiation in Different Areas.

Lvliang and Moshui have different characteristics as project sites. In the future, project design should reflect more of their differences, such as, geographic condition (mountain or valley), anthropologic background (Jin Po minority or Die minority or others), and geographic location (border area or inland). Take Lvliang as an example, more attention should be paid to the border line and the national image; while in Moshui, it should be how to industrialise the sugar cane plantation, what substitution industries could be introduced and how to develop

more industries.

Appendix A: Livelihood activity evaluation framework

Project activities		Results
Time	Content	
2012		
2013		
2014		

Activity results	Impacts	
	Positive	Negative
Unexpected results		
Involved groups and the extent of their involvement		

Project activity results	Impacts
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	Environmental	Economic	Social

Unexpected results			
Involved groups and the extent of their involvement			

Project activities		Suggestions for development
Time	Content	
2012		

2013			
2014			
New project activities			
Evaluation content		Proposed questions	Interviewees
<p>Project goals:</p> <p>Multiple livelihoods, environment awareness, sustainability of natural resources for agriculture, local participation, sustainable livelihood models</p>			
<p>Product 1 :</p> <p>Various agriculture activities cut down the influence of only planting sugar cane</p>			
<p>Product 2 :</p> <p>More income channels cut down the risks of planting sugar cane alone</p>			

<p>Product 3 :</p> <p>Non-agricultural activities cut down the risks of planting sugar cane alone</p>		
<p>Product 4 :</p> <p>Locals have the awareness and knowledge on sustainable development</p>		

Appendix B :

The Mid-term Evaluation on “Long Chuan Sustainable Livelihood Project”

—Project Management

Interviewee name list

No.	Organisation	Name	Gender	Position	Remarks
1	Mission Alliance	Thomas	M	XXXX	Donor
2	Buer Kunming Representative Office	Liu Pei Lin (Layn)	M	Project manager	Project managing party (Kunming)
3	Buer Kunming Representative Office	Dong Xiao Xia	F	Financial Officer	
4	THE HUB Consulting Company	Raewyn	F	Manager	Cooperating partner (Kunming)
5		Luo Jing	F	Translator	
6	Longchuan county government	Zhang XX	F	Deputy chief	Deputy chief for this sector
7	Longchuang Foreign Aid Office	Yang Da Fen	F	Director	Local manager and coordinator
8		Chang Zhong Kai	M	Project Officer	
9	Longchuan agriculture bureau land and fertilizer station	Wang XX	M	Head	Local technology support party

10	Longchuan education bureau sponsorship centre	Huang Zong Bang	M	Chairman	Local technology support party
11	Lvliang village, Longchuan	He XX	M	Village committee director	Local project implementing party
12		Wang Xiu Wen	F	Village group leader	
13		Wang Xian Yan	F	Village women director	
14		Yang Qing Gang	M	Village primary school principle	
15	Moshui village, Longchuan	Shang Ming Feng	M	Village director and party secretary	Local project implementing party
16		Tan XX	M	Village deputy director	
17		He XX	M	Village accountant	
18		Pai Zha Dui	F	XXX	
19		Dao Guo Bian	F	XXX	

Interview outline (based on different characteristics of interviewees, the questions can be added or cut back during interview)

Basic situation of the interviewee

1.1 When did you join the project? What was your role? What did you do specifically?

1.2 Do you know the main project goals? If yes, please introduce them briefly

2 . The basic situation of the project management

2.1 What kind of managing mechanism did the project use to achieve its goals?

2.2 How did the mechanism set up? (When, where, how and how design it) What is the specific content?

2.3 How many participating partners were involved in the current managing mechanism? What were their roles, responsibilities and obligations?

2.4 What were the responsibilities and obligations of you and your organization under the current managing mechanism?

2.5 Were there specific ways to promote and make sure the communication and cooperation among the project participating parties were under the current managing mechanism? If yes, please explain briefly. Examples are welcome.

2.6 Did the current managing mechanism set up clear requirements for project monitoring and evaluation? If yes, please explain briefly.

2.7 Did the current managing mechanism set up clear requirements or financial management? If yes, please explain briefly.

3 Comments and suggestions

3.1 How would you evaluate the current managing mechanism? (Is it suitable for the project implementation? Is it helpful for achieving the project goals? How effective is it?)

3.2 Under the current managing mechanism, what is good? And why? Please give some examples. What is not so good? Why? Examples?

3.3 What do you think can improve the not so good parts?

Appendix C :

BUER Project Mid-term Evaluation

Work list of Zhao Jie : — : Areas, questions and target groups, etc

Categories	Evaluation areas	Evaluation questions	Evaluation objects	Evaluation methods	Remarks
General goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual changes of the participants (awareness/life/production/other aspects), participation • community changes: culture/economic structure/personal relationship and so on • General evaluation on the project and possible problems and hope 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most impressive activity (the best, or the worst)? Why? Which activity related to you the most? Why? • Since 2012, what changes have you seen? (life /livelihood /awareness /relationship and so on) why would you say this? • Under the same capacities and conditions, what can be done to make it better? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General population of the project sites (anyone from the project village or at least?) • Main target groups: activists o key people (5 men and 5 women) • 1-2 Burmese wives with less participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home visits and interview; look for small gathering and group interview • Target group interview (diagrams for comparing) • Home visit and interview • Other participatory tools if necessary 	

Categories	Evaluation areas	Evaluation questions	Evaluation objects	Evaluation methods	Remarks
Sub-goal 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The completion and effects of the agriculture supportive activities: Trainings Initiating launching meeting Study trips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities : How did you get the chance? How many times? Achievements (the most useful contents)? Impact (awareness and behavior change)? How could it be better ? More hopes on? • Organised relevant activities: How to consider needs? Sensitivities on gender/culture? How many times? The number of people? Effect evaluation? Important discoveries? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 participants respectively from different activities (gender/ age multiple variables) Frequent participants People wanting to come but could not? Burmese wives • organisers trainers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group interview (once – three times) Individual interview Individual interview Other participatory tools if necessary • Individual interview Read through training materials Read through records and documents Check through relevant video and audio records 	

Categories	Evaluation areas	Evaluation questions	Evaluation objects	Evaluation methods	Remarks
Sub-goal 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The completion and effect of supportive activities for livestock farming and forestry development: Seed funds Training Study trips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities : How did you get the chance/sponsorship ? How many times? What benefits (the most helpful?) influences (changes on awareness and behaviour)? How could it be better ? More hopes on? Seed funds – how did you get? Operating and profiting process? • Organised relevant activities: How to consider needs? Sensitivities on gender/culture? How many times? The number of people? Effect evaluation? Important discoveries? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 participants respectively from different activities (gender/ age multiple variables) Frequent participants People wanting to come but could not? Burmese wives • organisers trainers technology supporters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group interview (once – three times) Individual interview Individual interview Individual interview (3-5 people) Other participatory tools if necessary • Individual interview Read through training materials Read through records and documents Check through relevant video and audio records 	

Categories	Evaluation areas	Evaluation questions	Evaluation objects	Evaluation methods	Remarks
Sub-goal 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The completion and effects on multiple livelihoods development Seed funds Study trips Bilingual training Gender sensitivity trainings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in relevant activities Participate in relevant activities : Group activities – receive funds? Organize activities? Management? Effects? Sustainability? Potential opportunities and challenges? How did you get the chance/sponsorship ? How many times? What benefits (the most helpful?) influences (changes on awareness and behaviour)? How could it be better ? More hopes on? • Organised relevant activities: How to consider needs? Sensitivities on gender/culture? How many times? The number of people? Effect evaluation? Important discoveries? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 participants respectively from different activities (gender/ age multiple variables) Frequent participants People wanting to come but could not? Burmese wives • organisers trainers technology supervisors (group funds) ? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • talks group interview Individual interview Other participatory tools if necessary • Individual interview Read through training materials Read through records and documents Check through relevant video and audio records 	

Categories	Evaluation areas	Evaluation questions	Evaluation objects	Evaluation methods	Remarks
Sub-goal 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The completion and effect of raising awareness on value-based sustainable development: Teaching material development TOT training Summer camp Other supportive activities (contests) Public education Policy advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consideration of text book development? Main content? Effect? TOT training content? Methods? Follow-up technology support? How did you get the chance ? Effects? What benefits (the most helpful?) influences (changes on awareness and behaviour)? General comments on related activities (contests/public education): community motivation? Villagers' recognition? Influence and its range? How to do policy advocacy? Influence and its range? Case 1 what are the changes when self- realization become community behavior? How many people are involved? Range? Influence? More hopes on? How to make it happen? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organisers participants and trainers participants project villagers (including Burmese ladies, (gender/ age multiple variables) Conductor and advocating objects ? Biggest shareholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read through training material Design 3-5 specific questions to test key knowledge Individual interview Other participatory tools if necessary Read through records and documents Check through relevant video and audio records Listen and collect relevant stories or event 	
Others					