

LOAF 6 Group discussion for session 6: The sustainability of LOAF (the possibility of moving forward from LOAF to LOMA)

Questions	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
<p>LOAF sustainability – what mechanisms were needed and how to ensure continuation of LOAF and was the Lao Organic Movement Association (LOMA) needed to play a (facilitation) role in the future after LOAF.</p>	<p>The presence of LOMA is necessary. It would act as mediator for farmer organizations. It could help access the market and exchange the market information, it would help contribute to policies on organic agriculture promotion and protect the interests of farmers, it could represent the country and region, it could act as a coordinator for concerned stakeholders and provide information, it would have a role in development and providing understanding about value chain of organic products, it should have clear labor division to deal with crops for instance.</p>	<p>Establishing LOMA was a good idea as it would be a focal point to gather stakeholders (producers, traders, entrepreneurs), coordinate with the public and private sectors, exchange the information, and represent at an international arena, and protect the right of the private sector.</p>	<p>LOMA is required. (if agreed to establish) it needs to follow rules and regulations on registration (regardless of being an association or enterprise), it needs to have a charter and be independent, it needs to have expertise in local and international standards, the government needs to support and strengthen its institution, help it access funding sources, it needs to be a training service provider to different producer groups, and it needs to have a sound M&E system.</p>
<p>What are the production costs and items that drives the costs, and what solutions should be taken for the government to consider</p>	<p>The cost of organic production included seeds, equipment for making clean house, difficult to find raw materials (in case of mass production) to make composts, strengthening capacity of farmers were costly, international certification was expensive, the government should help promote (organic products) and information about organic production, electricity fees (organic production) were expensive. The government should help access the funding resources with low interest rates and a longer period of repayment.</p>	<p>The cost of certification should be lowered, OA procedures should be simplified</p>	<p>The high cost of organic production included: <i>Production</i> included labor cost, organic seeds, loans with a too short period of repayment and high interest rates, agricultural machineries were imported with high tariffs, and fees of irrigated water and electricity were expensive. <i>Local and international transportation/export</i> costs were expensive (expensive fuel...) and paper work was so slow and faced red tapes or too many procedures. <i>Processing</i> and packaging equipment were not cheap and all was imported. The certification cost was expensive.</p>