

Data Sheet

USAID Mission:	Laos
Program Title:	Economic Development
Pillar:	Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade
Strategic Objective:	439-004
Proposed FY 2004 Obligation:	\$0
Prior Year Unobligated:	\$994,000 DA
Proposed FY 2005 Obligation:	\$0
Year of Initial Obligation:	FY 1999
Year of Final Obligation:	FY 2006

Summary: The Laos Economic Acceleration Program for the Silk Sector (LEAPSS) program provides assistance to expand the production of raw and processed silk as a viable economic alternative to opium production in Xieng Khouang and Huaphan provinces. The program builds on and expands activities initially developed under the Lao-American Crop Control Program.

Inputs, Outputs, Activities:

FY 2004 Program:

LEAPSS (\$994,000 DA Prior Year Unobligated). Current LEAPSS activities are expected to continue in FY 2004 using existing resources. The program will provide technical assistance to improve the volume and quality of silkworm eggs, maintain mulberry plantations, and introduce training in hand-powered reeling to increase the production of silk threads and the consistency and quality of the silk thread and degumming. The program will continue work on expanding access to silk and handicraft markets, both nationally and internationally, and strengthening coordination among silk production groups. Given a recent much higher leaf yield in the districts of Kham, Sop Bao, and Xam Tai which resulted in greater than anticipated progress in achieving LEAPSS objectives, the Consortium is now in a position to begin handing over some project activities to the Lao government, the private sector, and the beneficiaries. This transition will take longer in the areas where the yield is lower due to less than optimal climate and soil conditions. Principal Contractors, Grantees, or Agencies include World Education, Inc./World Learning Consortium.

FY 2005 Program:

No new activities are planned at this time.

Performance and Results: The mid-term evaluation in March 2002 concluded that the program has met targets and has provided significant benefits to participating households. To date, the LEAPSS Program has helped over 355 families initiate silk production micro-enterprises. This comes in addition to the 156 families who have received additional assistance from the project to improve their existing silk production activities. Project beneficiaries have realized a 30% increase in income from the sale of silk and silk products. The Consortium attributes this rise to a general increase in activity and interest in the silk sector by the beneficiaries themselves. In the next two years, silk producers presently participating in the LEAPSS Program can expect to see more direct benefits and as much as a 100 percent increase in income arising from silk sector activities. In addition to the directly target beneficiaries above, LEAPSS has also strengthened the technical and managerial capacity of government program coordinators at the local and national levels to support private silk sector activities. The program has established local nurseries for mulberry saplings and, through a micro-credit program, made fencing available to project families to protect mulberry fields. Construction of media centers in villages facilitates information dissemination to expand and improve silk production and income. The training and program activities are aimed at enhancing the role of women in all components of the silk sector. By the end of this objective, this program will have helped to develop a viable economic alternative to opium production in two provinces by improving the quality, quantity, and yield of cocoons and silk yarn production.

US Financing in Thousands of Dollars

Laos

439-004 Economic Development	DA
Through September 30, 2002	
Obligations	2,491
Expenditures	1,356
Unliquidated	1,135
Fiscal Year 2003	
Obligations	0
Expenditures	349
Through September 30, 2003	
Obligations	2,491
Expenditures	1,705
Unliquidated	786
Prior Year Unobligated Funds	
Obligations	994
Planned Fiscal Year 2004 NOA	
Obligations	0
Total Planned Fiscal Year 2004	
Obligations	994
Proposed Fiscal Year 2005 NOA	
Obligations	0
Future Obligations	1,000
Est. Total Cost	4,485