



Mr Kazuyuki Shimazaki (left) shakes hands with Mr Anousack Khattiyarath at the signing of the MOU in Luang Prabang province.

SRI project helps improve farming systems in Luang Prabang

Times Reporters

The Pro-net 21, a Japanese Non-Government Organisation, is continuing to support the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) in Laos, aiming to update farming methods so that people get better yields and produce commercially viable crops.

The project will focus on SRI farmers in 12 villages of five districts of Luang Prabang province, namely Nane, Xiengnguen, Luang Prabang, Nambak and Ngoy.

A memorandum of understanding for Phase III of the SRI project was signed on Friday between the provincial Agriculture and Forestry Department Deputy Director, Mr Anousack Khattiyarath and a representative of Pro-

net 21 in Laos, Mr Kazuyuki Shimazaki.

The project is aiming to introduce improved and diversified farming technology to farmers who have traditionally thought only about self-sufficiency rather than commercial production.

It will be implemented by the provincial Agriculture and Forestry Department, supported by Pro-net 21, and funded by the JICA Partnership Programme.

"We have been implementing the SRI extension project since 2007. More than 600 farmers of 21 villages of seven districts of Luang Prabang province have continuously applied SRI on 300 hectares in the wet season and 200 ha in the dry season," Mr Anousack said.

The farmers are very happy to have achieved the increase of rice production through SRI technology. The new Phase III puts further focus on the improvement of farmers' livelihoods by introducing new diversified farming systems including the breeding of chickens or pigs.

Mr Kazuyuki Shimazaki, a representative of Pro-net 21 in Lao PDR said "The provincial agriculture and forestry office implemented the previous SRI Extension Project (Phase II) very successfully."

"We, Pro-net 21 are now planning to challenge farmers with more new activities through Phase III, aiming at achieving more valuable outcomes for farmers in Luang Prabang."