

Summary Notes, Conclusions and Recommendations

SDG Pre-consultations to the Round Table Implementation Meeting

10 November, 9:00 – 12:00, Don Chan Palace, Vientiane

Objectives of the Pre-Consultation

- Provide a forum for dialogue on SDG acceleration and achievement.
- Offer insight into needs assessment, financing and costing, institutional arrangements, partnerships and other elements of an SDG Road Map.
- Develop key messages to guide the discussion on SDGs at the RTIM 2016.

Mainstreaming, Planning, Implementing and Monitoring

Current status: Some 60 percent of the indicators in the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework of the Eighth NSEDP are linked to the SDGs, including those linked to LDC graduation. Lao PDR's sectoral plans and strategies incorporate additional SDG indicators. Overall, Lao PDR has successfully mainstreamed and localized a significant proportion of the SDG indicators into its national planning. The remaining SDG indicators are in the process of being considered.

- **Establish sound institutional arrangements for SDG implementation.** The Government plans to set up a National Steering Committee, a National Secretariat and focal points in relevant ministries and institutions, based on the arrangement for MDGs.
- **Develop a Strategic Road Map for achieving SDGs.** This should include the following elements:
 - Clear definition of roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for each SDG target and indicators
 - Institutional strengthening and capacity building for measuring progress
 - Needs assessment and costing to determine the volume of public investment required for SDG achievement, together with a financing plan
 - Partnerships
 - Timing
- **Strengthen statistical systems for monitoring progress towards NSEDP goals and SDGs.**
 - Legal and policy frameworks for statistics should form an enabling environment for SDG monitoring and assessment. These include the Statistics Law, Five Year Statistical Development Plans, National Statistical Development Strategy 2010-2020.
 - Lao Statistics Bureau's priorities for strengthening national statistical systems are (i) an Action Plan for tracking the SDGs, (ii) capacity building, and (iii) assessment and improvement of data quality. The Lao Statistics Bureau will develop a focused and costed plan for monitoring the SDGs. While surveys and censuses provide important indicators, administrative data should be strengthened.
 - SDGs need to be integrated comprehensively into the work of the Lao Statistics Bureau including its budgeting and institutional setup. A dedicated technical working group on SDG indicators will be established under the SDG steering committee
- **Integrate SDGs into both medium- and long-term national planning instruments and frameworks.** The Eighth NSEDP (2016-2020) has already integrated SDGs into about 60% of its indicators. In addition, the SDGs are integrated into longer-term frameworks, such as the Ten-year Socio-Economic Development Strategy (2016-2025) and Vision 2030 to provide continuity. The frameworks should be broken down in annual plans.

- Sequence and prioritize SDG indicators appropriately.
 - Prioritize the SDG indicators that are linked to LDC graduation. These have already been integrated into the NSEDP process.
 - Mainstream SDGs into all relevant sectoral strategies.
- **While the SDGs form an integrated package, including Lao PDR's SDG 18 on UXOs, indicators need to be selected as relevant and adapted to the national context.** A limited number of indicators and targets will be selected (with focus on Tier 1 indicators and to some extent Tier 2), prioritized and sequenced further to those already embedded in the 8th NSEDP. Currently, around half of SDG indicators in Laos can be monitored. For many of those indicators the quality of data is low.
 - **Form or strengthen issue-based coalitions to address critical issues affecting a number of SDGs.** Examples are:
 - Food and nutrition security (SDG 2), which will accelerate the SDGs on poverty, health and education, and help to achieve LDC graduation.
 - Adolescent girls: addressing early marriages, adolescent girls' education, health and nutrition will contribute towards many SDGs.

Partnerships, Citizens and Civil Society

- **Strengthen and expand partnerships for SDG implementation and resource mobilization.**
- **Translate SDGs into province, district, and local context, and ensure convergence on the same districts and villages through effective horizontal and vertical coordination.** Build capacity at province, district and village level to understand and implement SDGs. Engagement of Lao citizens and civil society will ensure no one is left behind.
- **Promote participation at the village level and actively involve people** in the SDG mobilization process. People need to be engaged as partners. Rather than being done to people, or for people, development needs to take place with people, involving people at every stage. The Lao citizens have the best sense of what their needs are, have resources to help achieve the SDGs, and can help monitor progress.
- **Revitalize and empower Village Development Committees** by providing them with financial and technical resources to translate the SDGs to the village level.
- **Include civil society representatives in institutional arrangements for SDG implementation and monitoring.** Given civil society's important role as convenor, facilitator and communicator, it is recommended for civil society to be included in SDG structures.

Financing

- **Prioritize domestic resource mobilization, including tax revenue,** which will be essential to mobilize the USD 27 billion required to achieve the NSEDP, as well as make significant progress towards the SDGs. A stable macro-economic environment and strengthening of Public Financial Management, with credible budgets that can be executed, are important prerequisites.
- **Develop and adapt SDG financing strategies to the country context,** following recommendations in Lao PDR's Development Finance and Aid Assessment (DFAA). The DFAA provides useful evidence and analysis about types and sources of finance in, and to, Lao PDR. It should be used to develop strategies and make decisions about which types of finance are best suited for which type of investments in the context of the SDGs. The Government and its partners will need to tap into new forms of finance, and use existing financial flows as effectively as possible. Transparency on financing and revenues should be increased.

- **Anchor financing strategies to the results and develop an Integrated National Financing Framework for Lao PDR.** It is not just about what kind of finance, and how much finance may be available, but about how it can be used most effectively to achieve development results. External public financing (e.g., ODA, South-South Cooperation, Climate Change Financing) should be used in a complementary way. The use of expenditure and financial frameworks needs to be enhanced to ensure best planning of resources against results.
- **Make financing for SDGs/ NSEDP a regular part of the Round Table dialogue.** It is important to have strong links between discussion on different types of partnerships, and discussions on different types of finance. Having an overview of the overall resource envelope and the characteristics of different flows is crucial for formulating long-term strategies on the best and most catalytic use of ODA and other types of international public finance.

Private Sector

Related to the above, the private sector plays a crucial role in achieving the SDGs, for instance by ensuring decent work and reducing poverty; by increasing domestic revenues; by enhancing environmental sustainability; and by promoting education and skills development.

- **Prioritize measures that ensure macroeconomic stability.** The NSEDP has a financing gap that is expected to be filled by investments and loans. This will only happen if Lao PDR has macroeconomic stability and offers a safe place for investment.
- **Improve the business environment in line with WTO and ASEAN.** The draft investment promotion law, currently under discussion at the National Assembly, will be important to strengthen private sector participation. Improving the business environment needs to be based on rule or law and international commitments, including the ILO conventions. Stability of Lao PDR is major asset to attract investments.
- **Accelerate measures to market Lao PDR as a place for investment and actively search for investors from abroad.** These could use Lao PDR and its Special Economic Zones as hubs to access ASEAN markets. The Lao Chambers of Commerce, the Ministry of Planning and Investment, and the Ministry of Industry and Commerce should cooperate in marketing Lao PDR to potential investors.
- **Link the Round Table Process and the Trade Sector Working Group to the Lao Business Forum.**

Indonesia's Experience

A national coordinating committee provides oversight at the national level. The SDGs are integrated into Indonesia's Medium-Term Development Plan 2015-2019, based on a mapping of national targets and SDGs. This plan includes an indicative budget over the five years - the financing aspect is thus embedded. Since Indonesia is decentralized to district level, with each district having its own budget and parliament, SDGs also are incorporated to district level. Thus, District Governments formulate District Action Plans, and SDG implementation takes place at the national, provincial and district level. Provinces play a supporting role to the districts as well as a coordination role for issues that extend beyond individual districts.

Indonesia's SDG Roadmap covers 15 years of implementing the SDGs, i.e. three five-year cycles of the Medium-Term Development Plan. This ensures SDG integration into successive Medium Term Development Plans. Moreover, the SDG Roadmap serves as an important bridge between Indonesia's long-term development plans, the current one covering the period 2005-2025.

Indonesia clusters actors for SDGs implementation by platforms. Parliament, civil society and universities for instance are actively involved in SDG localisation, and advise local governments. The national plan has a priority area on reinforcing the role of civil society, which is considered an active partner in achievement of

SDGs. Mapping is ongoing to see which partners cover which SDGs. Loans and investments from private sector and philanthropists are important sources of funding.

Recommendations for the RTIM

Mainstreaming, Planning, Implementing and Monitoring

- Establish sound institutional arrangements for SDG implementation with mechanisms for decentralization down to district level.
- Develop a Strategic Road Map for Lao PDR to measure and achieve the SDGs
- Develop and implement a costed action plan to strengthen statistical systems and improve data quality for NSEDP and SDGs.
- Integrate SDGs into medium- and long-term national planning instruments and frameworks.
- Select indicators as relevant and adapt them to the national context.
- Form or strengthen issue-based coalitions to address critical issues affecting a number of SDGs.

Partnerships, Citizens and Civil Society

- Strengthen and expand partnerships for SDG implementation and resource mobilization.
- Translate SDGs into province, district, and local context, and ensure convergence on the same districts and villages through effective horizontal and vertical coordination.
- Promote participation at the village level and actively involve people in the SDG mobilization process.
- Revitalize and empower Village Development Committees by providing them with financial and technical resources to translate SDGs to the village level.
- Include civil society representatives in institutional arrangements for SDG implementation and monitoring.

Financing

- Prioritize domestic resource mobilization, including tax revenue, for SDG and NSEDP achievement.
- Develop and adapt SDG financing strategies to the country context.
- Anchor financing strategies to the results and develop an Integrated National Financing Framework for Lao PDR.
- Make financing for SDGs/ NSEDP a regular part of the Round Table dialogue.

Private sector participation

- Prioritize measures that ensure macroeconomic stability.
- Improve the business environment in line with WTO and ASEAN.
- Accelerate measures to market Lao PDR as a place for investment and actively search for investors from abroad.

- Link the Round Table Process and the Trade Sector Working Group to the Lao Business Forum.