



# **Lao People's Democratic Republic**

*Peace, Independence, Democracy, Unity, Prosperity*

## **Report**

### **The Round Table Implementation Meeting**

**November 2014**

Department of International Cooperation

Ministry of Planning and Investment

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## I. Executive summary

The 2014 Round Table Implementation Meeting (RTIM) was successfully organized on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2014, which was chaired by His Excellency Somdy Douangdy, Minister of Planning and Investment and co-chaired by Ms. Kaarina Immonen, United Nations Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative. The meeting was also honored of having His Excellency Thongloun Sisoulith, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs to deliver the opening address. Development Partners (DPs) commended the Government for the excellent preparation for the 2014 RTIM, the quality of documents prepared, and presentations highlighting significant progress made. All of these demonstrate the Government leadership of the development agenda and the coordination mechanism in supporting the implementation of NSEDP in each period.

The RTIM was preceded under the constructive and open manner which paves the way for mutual understanding among all development stakeholders. Importantly, there was an opportunity for both Government and Development Partners to have quality dialogue and exchange views and opinions on various development issues, as well as provide clarifications on issues raised at the meeting. Development Partners reiterated their full commitment and support for the mobilization of appropriate resources for the implementation of the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP and the next one. Development Partners also acknowledged and congratulated the Government on progress made in several key areas which can be categorized into four key headings as follow:

### 1.1 Macro-economic/fiscal management and growth

- Development Partners expressed their strong commitment to continue supporting Lao PDR, specifically the preparation of the 8<sup>th</sup> National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDP 2016-2020). There is a shared opinion among the RTIM participants that the next plan will reflect actual development progress and challenges. It will need to have a strong link with fiscal framework where financial strategy with proper costing is developed. Particularly, the next NSEDP will adopt an outcome-based approach.
- The RTIM participants congratulated and applauded the Government of Lao PDR for continued high levels of economic growth with low inflation. The participants (the Government, DPs, and other stakeholder such as private sector, national non-profit associations 'NPAs' and INGOs) shared a common understanding that the pace of growth needs to be balanced with macro-economic stability and addressing issues of sustainable and equitable growth.
- With the face of vulnerabilities and the challenges that Lao PDR is currently experiencing, the participants suggested that special attention be made towards having a coordinated management of macro-economic parameters especially to ensure an effective fiscal management and appropriate sectoral budget allocation, especially to MDG off track areas.
- Greater involvement of private sector and pro-business climate for both domestic and foreign direct investments are important for further stable growth and development of Lao PDR. In particular, there is a need to have quality foreign direct investment that creates sustainable jobs, preserves the environment, contributes to poverty reduction and fosters economic-activity diversification and knowledge/technology transfer. Furthermore, infrastructure development and maintenance play a necessary role to enhance pro-business climate and create economic opportunity for the poor.

## **1.2 Off-track MDGs and measures**

- The RTIM participants highlighted that continued, coordinated and strong efforts are important for the acceleration of the MDGs specially the off-track targets such as food and nutrition security, universal primary education, child and maternal mortality, and UXO contaminated land and victim assistance.
- On food and nutrition security, a good progress was made so far in the multisectoral (convergence) action plan and the positive outcomes of the Round Table provincial consultation in Saravane have been greatly appreciated. To ensure further progress of the implementation of this convergence plan, appropriate budget allocation and enhancing a multi-stakeholder approach play an important role. In this regard, development partners including other stakeholder such as private sector and CSOs are committed to continue supports and scale up as necessary.
- The Development Partners expressed their appreciation for the progress made in the Health sector on immunization and free mother and child health package. The meeting also acknowledged the need for greater efforts in dealing with the drop out and survival rates, as well as the appropriate deployment of human resources of both Education and Health sectors, especially to the rural communities.
- The most daunting challenge remains the magnitude of the UXO problem in Lao PDR. Effective action in this area will contribute significantly to the achievement of most MDGs as well. Overall, meeting that national UXO targets will require a significant scaling up of resources and capacities. The application of the evidence based survey approach for clearing UXO contaminated land needs further investigation within the Lao context. Also, the RTIM participants stated that multi-stakeholder approach is needed to ensure effective responses to UXO problems in Lao PDR.
- A number of matters relating to land management are highlighted under the national land policy which is expected to be presented to the Government for approval by the end of 2015.

## **1.3 Governance**

- The Government of Lao PDR is committed to the rule of law and other strategic governance matters as they necessary enabling factors for the development of all sectors (economic and social). The involvement of wider range of stakeholders in the process will play an important role to ensure the realization of this goal.
- The implementation of the Sam Sang policy is the right direction and appropriate policy of the Government to ensure strengthened capacity of local authorities and further improving national-local relation in galvanizing efforts for poverty reduction. The development partners also express their continued support to the government in achieving the Sam Sang expansion in the coming years.

## **1.4 Effective development cooperation and further actions**

- The preparation of the VDCAP revision and monitoring survey was highly appreciated by the participants as it shows the government's strong leadership in ensuring the effectiveness of the development cooperation.
- The RTIM participants highlight that to ensure proper tacking development progress, high quality analysis is needed and it should be based on a practical approach of data collection, analysis and dissemination.
- The chair concluded at the end of the meeting that it is important that all discussions during the RTIM will be considered and translated into appropriate actions. Therefore, line ministries, provinces and development partners play an

important role to consider and take further actions needed to address the issues and recommendations based on key discussions today.

- The Government will therefore ensure macro-economic stability and sustain progress through continued coordinated management of macro-economic parameters, in particular, further improvements in the efficiency of the budget and planning process, strengthening capacities of private sector and business to be ready for the AEC integration by 2015 and creating enabling environment for regional and global integration.
- The main focus for both the Government and development partners will also be on accelerating the attainment of off-track MDGs' targets.
- Ensuring a transparency and proper management of development process is the key for effectiveness of development cooperation. This will require constructive participation of various stakeholders and common understanding of the Government development policy including national plan, strategy and programmes and projects. Therefore, it is important that there is a proper advocacy tool and communication across sectors.
- For the Round Table Process, the High Level Round Table Meeting should be organized every five years to synchronize with the NSEDP cycle. This means 2015 will be a year that the Government will organize a High Level Round Table Meeting to present the 8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP. In this regard, there will be a Round Table Meeting to review the mid-term implementation of the NSEDP. The annual Round Table Implementation Meeting mechanism will then be based and driven by SWG mechanism and the provincial consultation.
- With the progress made, development cooperation between the Government and development partners faces some challenges that need to be addressed for the development of Lao PDR. For many issues raised by development partners, the Government line ministries and other relevant authorities have already responded with clear explanations. Therefore, the Government believes that future development cooperation through the Round Table Process is a forward looking one, in particular focusing on development issues that need measures and concrete actions based on mutual accountability. These will help the Lao PDR to address key national priorities articulated in the next NSEDP including the MDGs and the post 2015 development agenda (SDGs).
- The National Secretariat of the Round Table Process is tasked to ensure that all RTIM discussions are reported to the Government for further guidance and advice on the follow up.

All key discussion points highlighted above contribute directly to the development of Lao PDR. Therefore, the Government expects that the Round Table Process continue to be a forum to discuss relevant development issues under common and mutual understanding and strong partnerships among various national and international stakeholders. For other issues, it is recommended to discuss at other appropriate platforms.

## II. 2014 RTIM Background

The annual Round Table Implementation Meeting (RTIM) was held in Vientiane, the capital of Lao PDR, on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2014 to review progress and achievements, since the last High Level Round Table Meeting (2013 HL RTM), in the implementation of the 7<sup>th</sup> National Socio-Economic Development Plan (7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP) and discuss the further priorities/targets of the remaining period of the current plan. This year RTIM is also a forum for both the Government and development partners at all levels to take stock the progress of the preparation of the next five year plan (8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP 2016-2020) which coincides with the country transition period for the LDC graduation by 2020 (*please refer to **Annex 1** for the agenda of the 2014 RTIM*).

The 2014 RTIM was opened by H.E. Mr. Thongloun Sisoulith, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, and it was chaired by H.E. Mr. Somdy Douangdy, Minister of Planning and Investment, and co-chaired by Ms. Kaarina Immonen, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative.

More than 300 participants attended this year RTIM which include Ministers, Vice Ministers, high ranked government officials, representatives from provinces (vice-Governor and high ranked provincial officials), representatives from mass organizations, Ambassadors, heads of missions, high level representative of development partners, national non-profit associations (NPAs), INGOs and private sector representatives (*please refer to **Annex 10** for the list of participants*).

Prior to the RTIM, the Government of Lao PDR prepared a number of key documentations to serve as reference to stimulate actual discussions and dialogues. These documents include the main RTIM Background Document and presentations are based on sectoral progress reports prepared through an extensive preparatory process and inputs from various pre-meeting consultations (The Round Table provincial consultation in Saravane province on the progress of the food and nutrition security is one of the highlights).

### III. Proceedings of the meeting

#### 3.1 Opening Ceremony

To guide the RTIM discussion, H.E. Mr. Thongloun Sisoulith, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, delivered his opening address and highlighted achievements made by the Government of Lao PDR in various domains. The Deputy Prime Minister stated that the fiscal year 2013-2014 has shown sign of continuing progress (GDP growth of 7.6%) and promising perspectives and peace despite challenges that Lao PDR is currently facing. Key areas that the Deputy Prime Ministers stated include:

- The maintenance of stability including ensuring the continued economic growth in sustainable manner. In particular, the GDP growth for the coming years should not be less than 7.5%
- The creation of a sound environment for national development and livelihood of the people, especially enabling a reduction to the proposed poverty rate of 10% by 2015
- The promotion of meaningful participation of all economic and social sectors including private sector and business to foster economic growth with sustainability. This is important within the context of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) by 2015 and the WTO. This also requires a promotion of foreign policy of peace, friendship and cooperation while broadening external cooperative relations through improving mechanisms and regulations for the integration of the national economy with the region and the world at large.
- To accelerate the achievement of MDGs particularly the off-track targets, it needs a multi-stakeholder approach under a common framework. This requires participation of wider stakeholder such as private sector and others to ensure proper strategies and actions. This includes the specific MDG 9 – reduce the impact of UXO is an urgent task that we need to work together to clear contaminated land and reduce UXO casualties by 2020.

The Deputy Prime Minister also highlighted that the achievements made so far are the result of effective cooperation among various stakeholders including the official development assistance (ODA) and support from friendly nations, international organizations, UN agencies and other partners such as private sector, NPAs and INGOs.

To conclude the opening address, the Deputy Prime Minister mentioned that the Government would be pleased to listen and take note of different views into careful consideration in order to improve and strengthen the national development process in light of the upcoming 8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP (*please refer to **Annex 2** for the opening address of the Deputy Prime Minister*).

H.E. Mr. Somdy Douangdy made a welcome remark by extending a warm and cordial welcome to all participants. He gave an overview of the Round Table Meeting Implementation Meeting which is a key level forum for constructive policy dialogues between the Government of Lao PDR and development partners to review progress made in the implementation key policies, strategies and programmes as highlighted in the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP, discuss the challenges ahead including resources required and exchange views on corrective action and future plan. This year RTIM marks an important milestone as it is only a year left to conclude the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP including MDGs. Therefore, the pre-consultations such as the Round Table provincial consultation in Saravane province and SWG mechanism play an important role for not only information sharing, but most importantly the coordination of sectoral activities, policies and resources in order to ensure appropriate implementation of policies, programmes and projects under the frame of the

current NSEDP. H.E Mr. Somdy Douangdy further stated that the Government of Lao PDR is committed to strengthen partnership for effective development cooperation and for better development results. This requires mutual understanding among various stakeholders and we need to work together under common understanding on various development issues (*please refer to **Annex 3** for the welcome remarks of the Minister of Planning and Investment*).

Ms. Kaarina Immonen delivered a remark as co-chair of the RTIM in which she stated that the RTIM is taking place amid various challenges at country, regional and global levels. For the meeting to function as an annual RTIM, Ms. Immonen stated that the focus should be on reviewing development progress in the context of the country's socio-economic framework. The focus on implementation is important also as this is the last year of the current NSEDP, and of the campaign worldwide to achieve the MDG targets by 2015. Accelerating progress in reaching off-track MDG targets has been a focus for the last few RTIM meetings and warrants our continuing intensive commitment over the next year. Mrs. Immonen also stated that this year RTIM is an important forum to collectively in tackling the challenges faced in implementation of the 16 agreed points in four focus areas from last year's High Level meeting. Thus, the Background Documentation and RTIM's agenda have been focused on the follow-up of the 16 discussion points from the last year High Level RTM (*please refer to **Annex 4** for the remarks of the UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative*).

### **3.2 Presentation and discussions – achievement of the implementation of the annual National Socio-Economic Development Plan for the fiscal year 2013-2014, the priorities and targets for 2014-2015 and the preparation of the 8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP (2016-2020)**

- Presentation by H.E. Dr. Bounthavy Sisouphanthong, Vice Minister of Planning and Investment (*Please refer to **Annex 5***)

#### **Discussions**

##### **European Union (EU)**

The EU congratulates the Government on achieving lower middle-income country status during the implementation of the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP and turning its focus on LDC graduation by prioritising actions that address the three main LDC criteria – income, human development and economic vulnerability.

EU also congratulates Lao PDR for being on track to meet an important number of the MDGs but notes that the focus towards the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP implementation period needs to be placed on various MDGs' targets which are still off-track. While poverty has been decreasing, there are still those who still live in poverty and a large proportion of the population is living precariously close to the poverty line. Growth alone does not automatically lead to better lives for the majority of people and development can result in social and geographical inequalities that need to be mitigated.

In term of the preparation of the 8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP and long-term development strategy, EU welcomes the Lao government's preparation for the drafting of the 8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP and enabling a fully consultative drafting process, with a view to achieving a high-quality final document with a well-designed and outcome-based monitoring framework.

EU supports the proposed focus on graduation from LDC status with the commitment to achieve inclusive economic growth and sustainable development. At the same time attention to the 'affordability' of the 8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP is essential. Current indications that a large part of 8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP financing would be sought from the private and the banking sectors are a reason for concern. As it is acknowledged in the RTIM background document there are 'risks associated with the current Financing Plan which could constrain the achievement of the outcome and overall goal'.

Going forward EU encourages the Government of Lao PDR to consider shifting to a growth model that is more quality-based and in line with a sustainable management of natural resources, reducing the negative effects of climate change and ensuring food security. "Green growth" does have enormous potential in Lao PDR if the right incentives and regularly frameworks are put in place. This would also support social inclusion including for the growing number of young people that enter the labour market.

### **United State of America (USA)**

USA recognizes the hard work by Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) and UNDP for organizing this year RTIM. USA also congratulates the Government for the progress and achievements during the implementation of the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP including MDGs.

In addition to the current existing programmes, USA has currently extended its bilateral cooperation to support Lao PDR in other key areas such as combating diseases, protecting environment, creating a rule of law state, capacity building for Lao government officials etc. Health sector, in particular, is a key highlight. USA is working closely with Ministry of Public Health for reducing incidences of health affected diseases and protection against future possible pandemic.

On economic front, USA has been providing assistance to Lao PDR to integrate itself into the global market and being a member of the WTO. USA reaffirms its support to the economic reform of Lao PDR for further access to US-ASEAN and other global markets.

USA also provides capacity building assistance to Lao PDR to ensure the sustainability of the hydropower development. In this regard, USA congratulates the Government for planning to host the next year meeting among lower Mekong countries on the sustainable hydropower management.

### **Asian Development Bank (ADB)**

ADB congratulates the Government on the progress made in many areas and the most recent achievements under the annual NSEDP. Despite the difficult macroeconomic situation, Lao PDR has maintained macro-economic stability. However, significant risks remain and the economy is vulnerable to external shocks. This poses a challenge on country fiscal and monetary frameworks.

On the fiscal side, the deficit situation has contained. However, fiscal arrears have impacted the business sector, with knock-on effects on banking sector. Therefore, effectiveness and efficiency in budgetary spending need to be addressed and restored. In particular, oversight and scrutiny of public investment projects need to be strengthened and measured against broader development benefits. Effective and efficient public financial management is a core foundation for national development. On monetary side, ADB states that international reserves remain insufficient and need to be further strengthened. It is important to rebuild fiscal and monetary reserve for further future shocks.

Last but not least, ADB ends its interventions by stating its appreciation and welcoming the decision of the Government to move towards more outcome based approach in light of the preparation of the next NSEDP.

### **United Nations (the UN)**

The UN congratulates the Government of Lao PDR on maintaining consistent economic growth while taking measures to minimize fiscal constraints. The UN states its commitment to support Lao PDR during the remaining period of the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP and the post 2015 development agenda (SDGs), in particular the graduation from the Least Developed Country status by the 2020s.

The UN stresses that maintaining the economy growth needs to be coordinating with the fact that social development also needs to be increased and sustained. To ensure sustainable and inclusive growth, actual economic development leads to poverty reduction and improvement of the well-being of Lao people. The UN applauds the Government for further strengthening policies and service delivery modalities that take into account gender differentials and promote equal opportunities and outcomes for men, women and children, particularly the most vulnerable groups.

Lao PDR has a number of opportunities at the global and regional levels from its involvement in the WTO and its ASEAN integration. To have a well-established position in this global and regional debate and integration process, the UN encourages the Government to undertake a thorough cost-benefit analysis and examine possible impacts on various groups of people in different areas such as trade facilitation and the potential threats to prosperity and security from Transnational Organised Crime activities in the region. The UN would, therefore, like to recognize the continued coordination efforts of the Government of Lao PDR to address illicit drugs and the threat of transnational crime in the country while encouraging it to do even more in an effort to curb these disturbing trends.

Linked to the coming into force of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), the UN urges the Government to continue working on clearly identify Lao PDR's country comparative advantage, know its strength and develop policy and measures to leverage that. This needs to take into consideration Lao labour market and the potential that exists with a significantly young population structure as well as local employment promotion in rural areas. At the same time, the UN stresses that it is essential to emphasize the notion of Corporate Social Responsibility/Value and to encourage the private sector to make more meaningful contributions to the country's development as partners in sustainable development. Investments will continue to drive economic growth, so greater transparency, and environmental accountability in practices should therefore be prioritized.

### **Japan**

Japan appreciates the efforts made to date by the Government for socio-economic development and Japan has always been willing to support the Government efforts. Japan comments on development model that the Government could consider in formulating the next five year plan and the long term vision and the medium term 10<sup>th</sup> year strategy. Currently, the resource-related sectors have been a driving force of the Lao economy, however for the medium- to long-term perspective, Japan stated that it is important to initiate industrial development to diversity economic structure, particularly focusing on sectors where Lao PDR has a comparative advantage.

Japan recommends two key potential areas for industrial development policy which should be a priority and be incorporated in the next five year plan. The first are those industries

that add value to the resources abundant and export value-added products to earn hard currency. The second are export-oriented industries that take advantage of low production costs. It is important to identify carefully several key sectors that can take advantage of available resources and low production costs and help development manufacturing and processing industries through policy instruments such as selective tax incentives and regulations.

Japan also stresses that foreign direct investment plays an important role at the early stage of industrialization. While FDI brings capital from outside, management skills and production technologies are shared and gradually transferred to local partners if managed carefully. Also, FDI can help in term of employment created and conducive to addressing underemployment in rural areas and capacity-building of the labour force. To ensure these benefits, Japan urges the Government to put more efforts to improve the business environment in order to keep attracting FDI in manufacturing. Infrastructure development, industrial human resource development and improving the legal framework are some of the key elements, and Japan will continue to extend its support in these areas.

### **Australia**

The Australia Government thanks MPI and UNDP for organizing the RTIM and congratulates the Government of all achievements made. Looking ahead within the context of the 8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP, Australia welcomes inclusive and sustainable growth and efforts to increase funding for the education and health sectors. This can be achieved through sufficient budget allocation for education and health sectors. This also includes re-prioritisation of expenditure from less productive areas elsewhere in the budget. Australia urges the Lao Government to focus on improving the quality of all development expenditure.

Australia also proposes the inclusion in the 8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP of a specific objective on gender equality and women's empowerment. This should include women's economic empowerment particular at the local level and local economy and unlocking the potential for more women and girls to access education, employment and leadership roles. Lao PDR should be congratulated for the increasingly positive trend of women's leadership in the central executive and legislative (National Assembly) arms of the government, as well as in the private sector. Australia encourages the Government to promote women's participation and leadership in all aspects of the country's socio-economic development. This includes areas where there is lower female participation, such as at the village and district levels - and rural areas, in particular.

Australia further stresses that attention should also be made towards the affordability of the 8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP. The relatively low government budget contribution (10 per cent) and dependence on credit will have a detrimental effect and risks on the Lao budget and economy over the medium and long term.

For the 8<sup>th</sup> plan, attracting quality foreign investment should be a feature particular in the resource sector. The main task for the Government will be the effective management and utilization of the resource sector. Quality foreign investment from diverse sources remains vital to bring in new ideas and technologies, drive innovation and provide access to capital to sustain high levels of growth. Lao PDR's ability to compete with its ASEAN neighbours will be vital in attracting new high-quality investments and maintaining existing quality businesses over the long term. Therefore, an improved business-enabling environment will be crucial for Lao PDR to reap the benefits of an increasingly integrated, competitive region. Investors will prioritise markets that offer greater efficiency, consistency and transparency in their regulatory regimes.

Last but not least, Australia raises questions over what measures are in place to address the corruption issues and the revenue collection from the tax reform and what development partners can do to help making further progress in this area.

### **International Monetary Fund (IMF)**

IMF's interventions have been based on its close engagement that the IMF has with Lao PDR through the annual Article IV Consultation discussions since October this year. IMF states that despite the progress made in term of the high economic growth, the achievements on MDGs and the NSEDP and macroeconomic management in the face of vulnerabilities over the second half of the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP period, the country remains vulnerable to external and domestic shocks. Many issues are in line with ADB's comments. With the achievements made in the 7<sup>th</sup> plan, there are also lessons to be learnt. One of the lessons learnt to take forward is macro-economic stability is key to growth. Therefore, for the 8<sup>th</sup> plan, it is important that macro-economic stability is built on what have been learnt from the 7<sup>th</sup> plan. Another issue would be the high growth and sustainability that the 8<sup>th</sup> plan needs to address. The risks associated with the dependence of the plan on external and private sources of financing also needs to be address and the plan targets should be linked to realistic budgets. Another area for improvement is consistency in data sets and application of international standards when it comes to fiscal and monetary management. These need to be looked at carefully by relevant Government Ministries particularly, Ministry of Planning and Investment and Ministry of Finance.

### **Republic of Korea**

Korea joins other speakers in congratulating the Government on the progress and achievements made so far. Korea is committed to support Lao PDR in many areas particularly in the social sector (health, education and rural development areas). As Lao PDR has now become a lower middle-income country, it is important to diversity the engine of growth.

Hydropower and mining are important for economic growth. However, we need to think about sustainable development. The role of private sector is a must, particularly the role of foreign direct investment. Korean investment in Lao PDR has been increasing and the key challenges are those relating to human resource development and high transportation costs. These have direct implications for the investment. Another issue that Korea highlighted is a matter relating to stock exchange. Currently, two companies have been listed in the market since 2011. However, the progress of Lao stock exchange is still slow. With all of these, it is important that an improved business-enabling environment need to be made to ensure that Lao PDR gain the benefits from an increasingly integrated and competitive region.

## **Responses and comments from the Government**

### **Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MOIC)**

MOIC provides a general comment on the contribution of trade and private sector to the development process in Lao PDR. The Government is committed to addressing domestic and foreign investment barriers that continue to inhibit sustainable and inclusive economic growth. The private sector is an important engine for growth, and the main source of tax revenue, employment and income generation.

The Trade and Private Sector Development Sector Working Group is the main forum that both the Government and development partners jointly discuss all important matters relating to the involvement and contribution of trade and private sector in the development

process. The trade facility has been supported by development partners. The key objective of the SWG is to strengthen trade and private sector as an important and sustainable engine of growth.

To contribute constructively to the development of Lao PDR, we need to focus on various issues relating to private and business sector. MOIC highlights that we need to focus on quality business and skilled labour market which need to be competitive in the local and global markets. Therefore, support from all stakeholders is important to help Lao PDR in these areas. Apart from these, it is also important that local business particular small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have gained an access to different sources of funding.

Within the framework of the next NSEDP, our focus will be on planning for improved productivity and multi-sectoral approach to development. While improvement in the enabling environment for the private sector is important, it is also necessary that capacity and transparency of private sector and business needs to be strengthened to make further contribution to the development of Lao PDR.

#### **Lao National Chamber of Commerce - Representative from private sector**

As a representative from private sector national wide, LNCC has been working closely with the Government to ensure the readiness and preparation of the domestic business and private sector to be part of the AEC and the WTO. LNCC works extensively with its members to contribute to rural development and employment creation particularly among the youth. Building skilled labour is a key focus to ensure that Lao PDR can compete nationally, regionally and globally. LNCC has also been working at the village level to encourage the product of local products which can be traded locally and nationally. With these, private sector has gradually invested in the infrastructure development at the local level to stimulate local economic activities.

To attract more quality foreign direct investment, LNCC is looking forward to working with the Government and development partners to address domestic and foreign investment barriers and create positive enabling-business environment. With its members, LNCC will provide inputs for the preparation of the 8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP and urge further supports from the Government and development partners to build capacity of private sector in Lao PDR. The linkage between the private sector and the Round Table Process will be further strengthened through the close cooperation between the Lao Business forum and the Round Table Meetings. What discussed today can inform the upcoming 9<sup>th</sup> Lao Business Forum which will be organized at the end of November 2014.

### **3.3 Presentation and discussions – MDG implementation – addressing the off-track targets and acceleration measures**

- Presentation by H.E. Mr. Saleumxay Kommasith, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs (*Please refer to **Annex 6** for the presentation*).
- A remark by H.E. Mr. Sisouvanh Vongchomsy, Vice Governor of Saravane Province on the outcomes of the Round Table provincial consultation.

Key highlights of the Vice-Governor's remarks include:

- The Saravane Round Table provincial consultation has helped relevant stakeholders particularly those at the local level to understand the convergence approach better and work together to find better implementing actions. All recommendations, suggestions and comments are useful not for the Government at national but also provincial, district and

village levels to address food and nutrition security and its implications for the off-track MDGs.

- There is a consensus that the convergence approach is the right approach to help Lao PDR address food and nutrition security issues. The arrangements for the implementation are on the right track and need strong efforts (both financially and technically) from all stakeholders to work together for better results. EU, UN agencies and other development partners stress their commitments to continue supporting this important work.
- The convergence approach will be successfully implemented if there is an involvement of other stakeholders such as private sector and CSOs. More importantly than this, local communities need to be in charge and take a leadership role to ensure the implementation.
- The provincial committee on food and nutrition security needs to be operationalized making sure a linkage between food and nutrition security action plan and planning process at provincial, district and village levels. This will only happen if our work on food and nutrition security is based on the existing provincial, district and village committees such as mother and child committee, etc. Therefore, we need to work together to enhance the role of existing provincial committees to ensure effective utilization of mechanism and maximize the results.
- We need to understand that the convergence approach is not a new approach. We have been already working on this topic based on each individual sector strategy. What we need now is to adjust the ways that we work and integrate and coordinate our activities in the same direction and the same targeted groups, for instance.
- To implement the convergence approach, there will not require massive amount of funding but it will need our coordinated efforts to ensure that all sectors have practical and specific plans which will need to complement each other well for better outcomes.
- There is also an urgent need for relevant sectors to make interventions to address food and nutrition security more specific and practical. Climate change will also need to be incorporated into the food and nutrition security action plan.
- There is also a need to integrate the role of women at family level into food and nutrition security as they play critical role in promoting and taking this important work forward.
- On the off-track MDG session, consolidated efforts and involvement of other stakeholders such as private sector and CSOs/NGOs are much needed to ensure that we work together in an effective manner under the leadership of relevant government counterparts. As resources are limited, we will need to find creative ways to realize 'value for money' of our investment – specifically we should aim to reduce transaction and overhead costs.
- More technical and financial supports are much needed to realize the MDG 9 which is the localized MDG for Lao PDR.
- It is clear that to ensure the success of the convergence approach, we need to invest more on building capacity of local officials and communities to have necessary skills for better planning, implementing and monitoring. France and other development partners have given an indication to support this effort.

- As the coordination mechanism at provincial and district levels does exist, it is vital that what we are doing are actually contributing to the enrichment of the current structure. We need to accept that utilizing the current government systems will help improve them in a long run.

## **Discussion**

### **European Union (EU)**

On off-track MDGs, EU welcomes the encouraging progress in the implementation of the Multi-sectoral (convergence) Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan including the establishment of the National Nutrition Committee and the successful outcomes from the Saravane consultation on food and nutrition security. While we all agree that the multi-stakeholder approach to address the malnutrition issues is the key, it is important that there is a clear, sufficient and predictable resource on the national budget for addressing malnutrition issues. We need to keep in mind that resources for addressing food and nutrition security should not entirely depend on ODA. What we need is the effective and appropriate budget allocation and planning at all levels. Also, cross-sectoral linkages have to be fully recognised and inform effective and well-coordinated policy responses.

Saravane consultation also highlights a number of important lessons from the early stages of implementation including the key role that civil society has to play and the need to put local communities and villages at the centre of action. For example, some NGOs have worked on FN corporately with the government plan on the Scale Up Nutrition (SUN) at the district level. Another lesson learnt is gender equality and the role of women in helping address food and nutrition security.

EU is committed to address this issue and EU support has to be matched with political commitment to allocate sufficient budget. In fact, it is not a matter of fund and budget, it is a matter of working together under a strong political leadership of the Government.

On the implementation of the last year RTM, EU would like to ask about the progress of the issue of the disappearance of Mr Sombath Somphone. While there are progresses made for all other action points from the last year RTIM, there has no documentation on the progress relating to this matter.

### **Germany**

Germany reiterates the importance of addressing the food and nutrition security. This matter needs to be linked to sustainable land management. Germany has been providing support in this area for a number of years. Germany looks forward to a conclusion of the national land policy through approval by the National assembly. It is important that the Government allows expropriations only for public purposes, to ensure affected parties receive full, fair and prior compensation both in cases of individually and communally held land. Germany would like to encourage the Government to acknowledge and protect customary rights in order to secure the livelihoods especially of rural and vulnerable groups.

Germany also endorsed the EU statement on the action point 13 of the last year High Level Round Table Meeting.

### **Switzerland**

Switzerland states its agreement with Germany's highlight on the importance of the link between accessing to land (land management) and nutrition and food security which should

be fully recognized particularly within the context of right to food. It is important that communities particular those in rural areas are involved for any aspects of land tenure and policy. Switzerland recommended the Government invite the UN rapporteur on the right to food to review this matter.

On MDG 9, Switzerland welcomes recent efforts to address technical and capacity constraints to improve performance and encourage early approval by the National Regulatory Authority (NRA) Board of new survey and clearance methodology (evidenced based approach). Also, new funding window for civil society has been identified. However, this fund has not been activated. Therefore, Switzerland would like to hear how soon the Government would allow this fund to be activated.

### **Japan**

Currently, Japan has been co-chairing three SWGs (infrastructure, health, and illicit drug control). On the infrastructure, it is an important area as it has an implication for industrial development. Infrastructure also relates to other important social sectors for instance, accessing to education and others. Therefore, it is important that the Lao PDR's development plans have consistently supported the expansion of the road network and proper road maintenance at all levels (national, provincial and rural areas) but have also recognized the limitations imposed by funding constraints and other challenges. On health sector, the delivery of high-quality health services, particular in rural areas is important for the development of Lao PDR. Japan welcomes the successes in immunization coverage and in establishing a free mother and child health programme. However, a number of health related issues such as quality and numbers of health workers and budget allocation need to be strengthened for addressing the off-track MDGs. On illicit drug control is needs special attention and there needs to a proper mechanism for resource mobilization for this sector. For all mentioned sectors, to address financial resource constraints, Japan recommends that revenue tax and value-added tax on certain products may need to be reviewed.

### **Australia**

With the recent progress on the MDGs, Australia highlights that to better inform policy formulation, it is important that we ask ourselves why and how we have made progress and achievements and why and how we are not able to make progress. We need to know what works and what does not work to enhance our cooperation.

### **United States of America (USA)**

USA points out two key areas relating to the off-track MDGs. On MDG 1 – food and nutrition security, USA continues to support the Government to implement the multi-sectoral food and nutrition (convergence) action plan through working with various agencies such as USAID and World Food Programme in recent years. On MDG 9, USA will continue to support the UXO sector by increasing funding. USA highlights that there is a need to ensure the effectiveness and transparency of the UXO trust fund. USA agrees with other development partners to urge the Government to adopt the evidence-based approach to UXO clearance.

Another issue that USA stated is about the disappearance of Mr. Sombath. USA joins other EU members to urge the Government to report back on the progress of this matter.

### **INGOs network**

INGOs network highlights the importance of involvement of civil society in the implementation of the multi-sectoral food and nutrition security (convergence) action plan. INGOs network also states the need to put local communities and their village institutions

including the role of women at the heart of policy making. With highlighting experience from other countries and local knowledge, the INGOs network and NPAs state their commitment to support the Government for the realization of the convergence approach. This Multisectoral Plan needs to be fully supported by adequate policies addressing issues such as land tenure and management, accessibility and affordability of food, gender and inclusion of the most vulnerable.

### **United Nations (the UN)**

The UN commends the Government on the advancements made toward achieving the MDGs. The UN will work with development partners and encourages the Government of Lao PDR to put collective efforts toward accelerating the progress made in the unattained MDGs, particularly those that address the cross-cutting issues of gender and the environment, acknowledging the need for building resilience to climate related impacts.

The UN stresses that the fundamental human rights of all persons are respected and defended. Further, collecting gender-disaggregated data is a must to better serve gender equality and women's empowerment goals.

The UN also recognizes the unique challenge of Lao PDR with regards to UXOs, and encourages more support to reduce the impact of UXO contamination and to guide this particular area toward its MDG targets. The UN also welcomes and further supports recent efforts led by national authorities in embracing new approaches and techniques to enhance the efficiency of UXO clearance work and to engage civil society as key partners.

On MDG 1, the Government has demonstrated increased political commitment to the issue of Food and Nutrition Security and in relation to the Right to Adequate Food. The results from the recent Saravane RT provincial consultation in September, the establishment of the National Nutrition Committee and the support and hard work provided by the secretariat of this Committee have demonstrated a strong commitment by the Government to addressing this critically off-track MDG target. The initial success of the Multisectoral Plan on Food and Nutrition Security is expected to be further strengthened by the combined efforts of the UN and World Bank in their discussions with the Chief Executives Board in Washington D.C. next week as part of the MDG Acceleration Framework Review on nutrition in Lao PDR. This Multisectoral Plan needs to be fully supported by adequate policies addressing issues such as land tenure and management, accessibility and affordability of food, gender and inclusion of the most vulnerable. The UN continues to encourage stronger coordination among all stakeholders, alignment to the Multisectoral Plan and the engagement of multi-sectoral actors in dealing with these issues.

Reviewing the other MDGs, the health sector remains at risk of missing the national and international targets set under the MDGs unless allocations to the health sector receive significant increases. The UN acknowledged that the Government has made persistent efforts and demonstrated the highest political commitment in efforts to raise immunization rates and in 2014 Lao PDR celebrated the milestone of eliminating Maternal and Neo national Tetanus. Sustaining these efforts will have an impact on further reducing child mortality rates.

The UN also encourages the national health system to further integrate nutrition interventions into the next Health Sector Development Plan 2016-2020 in order to ensure a universal access to all direct nutrition actions as well as those impacting on nutrition, such as water and sanitation.

The UN then notes Lao PDR's impressive and rapid progress towards Universal Primary Education, but low primary school completion rates will result in the MDG2 target not being met. The UN encourages a continued emphasis within the upcoming Education Sector Development Plan (2016-20) and its' associated budget towards improved results within basic education, which will continue to be a critical area in the post-MDG environment.

Finally, the UN commends the efforts made in facilitating dialogue between the Government and Civil Society in 2014, including areas such as INGO decree implementation guidelines as well as NPA decree revision. Some of these consultations have resulted in positive developments, and the UN hopes that the spirit of these open consultations will continue to be a progressive influence on the relationship between the Government and Civil Society, resulting in an expanded space for civil society engagement.

### **United Kingdom (UK)**

The UK reaffirms its commitment to support the realization of MDG 9 – reducing the UXO impact by working with other development partners on the way forward and contributing financial support to the sector. The UK has also supported EU colleagues to ask the Government to report back on the progress of the disappearance case of Mr. Sombath.

## **Responses and comments from the Government**

### **Ministry of Health (MOH)**

MOH thanks the Government for increased budget for health sector and development partners for their contribution. Health sector relates to many MDGs and MOH is working closely both national and international stakeholders to ensure the realization of MDGs. Particularly on the food and nutrition security, MOH is committed to work with other line Ministries and other development partners to ensure the implementation of the convergence action plan. On child and maternal mortality, it is a major challenge for MOH. Although the rates are on decline, they are still high compared to other countries in the region. Apart from these, Lao PDR also faces other health affected diseases and many challenges. To address various matters, health sector reform is under way and MOH is looking forward for further comments and cooperation on this matter.

### **Ministry of Public Works and Transport**

Transport infrastructure in Lao PDR is at an early stage of development and it needs to have further supports. Infrastructure SWG was conducted prior to this RTIM to review the recent progress and challenges of the sector. The meeting purposed various recommendations as highlighted by various development partners during this meeting. The Ministry will discuss about these recommendations and report back at the later stage. Key recommendations include:

- Funding and investment for rehabilitation and maintenance
- Vehicle overloading (logging trucks and international traffic on some road sections continue to be main sources of overloading).
- National standards for road construction need to be further strengthened in accordance to ASEAN standards
- Prioritization for road network and upgrading.
- The damage as a result from disaster.

### **Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA)**

MOFA thanks all development partners for comments and commitment to support the implementation of the NSEDP. To ensure accurate monitoring and reporting on the progress of the NSEDP including MDGs, MOFA stated that the role of statistic and data collection are important for all analytical assessments and studies. Therefore, there is a need for continued support from development partners in this area.

On the UXO sector relating to the evidence based approach, the Government is in the process of consideration whether it will be applicable for all provinces in Lao PDR. The Government takes note of the approach (both positive and challenges). Therefore, we need to consider how the approach can be adopted. At the end of November, there will be a government meeting to discuss about this matter and it will be reported back to our stakeholders in due course. On the effectiveness and transparency of the UXO trust fund, the Government is currently discussing with UNDP on this matter. At the end of this year, there will be a board meeting about this fund and the Government expects to come up with some measures. MOFA also took note of the recommendation from Australia on how and why on the off-track MDGs.

On INGOs, MOFA announces to the meeting that there was a national conference on NGOs. The Government is committed to strengthen partnership with NGOs and appreciates the contribution that NGOs have made for the development of Lao PDR.

On the issue of Mr. Sombath – point 13 of the last Round Table Meeting, the Government continues to work on this matter. This needs time and the Government is highly committed to resolve the case. The President last year already explained about the case during the debriefing session after the High Level Round Table Meeting. The Government continues to investigate the case and will provide any necessary information on the progress when available. In the meantime, MOFA encourages all stakeholders to focus more on development issues which need urgent actions particular those off-track MDGs in accordance with the main objective of the RTP and development priorities of the country.

### **Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment (MONRE)**

MONRE shares with the meeting on the implementation progress of the NSEDP including the MDGs that related to the Ministry focusing on land registration and issuing land title to reach more than seven hundred thousand pieces throughout country. On the land management policy, MoNRE is finalizing the national land policy in accordance with the instruction from the government and the national assembly. The draft has been in place and it is expected to be reviewed by the Government at the end of 2015. Once the national land policy is adopted the laws on land, forest and water resources will collectively submit to the government and the national assembly for updating.

## **3.4 Presentations and discussions – Fiscal performance for the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP for 2013-2014 and the priorities and targets for 2014-2015 and beyond and the progress of implementation of governance framework for achieving the NSEDP/MDGs**

- Presentation by H.E. Mr. Santiphab Phomvihane, Vice Minister of Finance  
(Please refer to **Annex 7** for the presentation).
- Presentation by H.E. Dr. Thongchanh Manixay, Vice Minister of Home Affairs  
(Please refer to **Annex 8** for the presentation).

## **Discussion**

### **INGOs network**

INGOs network appreciates and congratulates the Government for regular consultations with members of the network on various key development issues. On the content of NGO guideline and the Decree, they provide clarity and explanations. However, how they will be effective depends on the implementation at local levels as well as by line Ministries.

INGOs network welcomes the consultation organized by MOFA and the plan to review the implementation sometimes in 2015. INGOs network appreciates the recognition that the Government has extended to its members at all levels (national, sectoral and provincial levels). The INGOs network has been recognized in the development of the donor profile. All the support extended to INGOs network will ensure the members to contribute effectively to the development process based on the existing expertise. INGOs network recommends the Government to have a proper mechanism to ensure the participation of children. INGOs network also urges the Government to maintain the dialogues and continue to create enabling environment for constructive participation.

### **United States of America (USA)**

USA states that good governance/human right is a factor to ensure long term growth and sustainability. USA continues to work with the Government to create a fully rule of law state by 2020. On human rights, USA congratulates the Government on the participation of the universal periodic review on human rights, security, and promotion of rule of law. USA welcomed the comment made by MOFA on the disappearance of Mr. Sombath. On civil society, in light of the INGO guideline and the NPA Decree, it is good to see that INGOs, NPAs are now recognized as a contributor to the development process. The recognition has also been extended to the private sector.

### **France**

France appreciates the follow up of the 16 action points from the last High Level Round Table Meeting. On the action point 13, France thanks the Government for clarity and looks forward to further information. France encourages the Government and all stakeholders in recognition the contributions made by INGOs and NPAs for the development of Lao PDR. France looks forward to the implementation of the INGO guideline and the NPA Decree. France welcomes a sub-SWG on people participation as this will help regular dialogues on this matter. France also acknowledged the recent progress on the legal sector reform.

### **Internal Monetary Fund (IMF)**

IMF delivers its comments on fiscal issues and acknowledges a good relation with Ministry of Finance and other Government Ministries. On fiscal performance and a plan for the future, IMF takes note of tighten fiscal position. Going forward, there is a need for an ambitious medium-term fiscal consolidation to put government finances on a sustainable footing and reduce external vulnerabilities. IMF states some areas that need further actions include revenue projection, public debt, public financial management and transparency.

### **Germany**

Germany asks the Government in term of increasing the revenue base and measures to address illegal logging. It is important that natural exploitation contributes to the development of the country.

### **Republic of Korea**

Korea states that governance is a cross cutting matter. Korea welcomes the Government effort to improve governance as whole. Korea would like to ask the Government on how legislative procedures such Decree, Laws etc are known by public. Also, Korea would like to know how Lao PDR would be participating in the human right council. It will be encouraging to see more human right conventions to be signed by the Government.

### **Switzerland**

Switzerland would like to seek for an update from the Government on the progress and lessons learnt from the implementation of the Sam Sang policy and its expansion. On the ethnic affairs, MOHA is in the progress of drafting the Decree. Switzerland fully supports this. This will help all stakeholders to contribute to the implementation of this policy in the future. On the contribution of civil society, Switzerland welcomes the Government's effort on the INGO guideline and the NPA Decree. The next step is the implementation.

## **Responses and comments from the Government**

### **National Assembly (NA)**

Responding to Korea's comment on how the Government disseminates legislative procedures, the National Assembly states that it has been done through meetings with their consistencies. This includes explanations and making sure common understanding. NA members are not only discussing about Decrees and Laws, but also ensuring common understanding among Lao people about the Government national development goals and priorities as well. The National Assembly is working closely with Ministry of Justice and local authorities for disseminating Decrees and Laws in Lao PDR.

### **Ministry of Finance (MOF)**

MOF thanks all development partners on comments relating fiscal performance and other related matters in light of the current national, regional and global situations. MOF takes note of all suggestions and will work with other Ministries on key measure to ensure macro-economic stability. These will include improving revenue administration and fiscal discipline. MOF will try its best to ensure proper communication across stakeholders on various key measures on the matter.

### **Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA)**

MOHA responds to Switzerland on lessons learnt and progress on the implementation of Sam Sang policy. By the end of this year, there will be a meeting to review the progress and lessons learnt on this Sam Sang policy. The outcomes of this meeting will then be shared with relevant stakeholders in due course. On the ethnic Decree, MOHA is working closely with other line Ministries and local communities to ensure a proper formulation of this Decree to reflect various ethnic issues

## **Discussion (continued)**

### **Norway**

Norway understands that the Government takes note of the recommendation to prioritize the potential of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). From the RTIM Background Document, the Government is in the process of studying how the EITI can be applied within Lao context. Norway, would like to receive an update on this if possible. Norway also congratulated the Government in welcoming civil society as active and constructive development partners. Both INGOs and NPAs have had local experience and they contribute directly to the development of local communities. Therefore, Norway is

pleased to see the positive dialogue between the Government and civil society. In term of UXO, Norway supports the comments made by various development partners on the application of the evidence based approach for UXO clearance.

### **World Bank**

World Bank comments on the long-term action plan to improve public financial management. It is important to have proper public finance system. Particularly, it has multiple benefits for the Government as a whole, specially other Ministries (health and education) to know about the efficiency of public finance to implement their projects and programmes. This will also allow development partners to actively contribute to overall government programmes. It is not only a matter of transparency but also a matter for effective management of government budget. The World Bank is committed to help the Government on this important area.

## **3.5 Presentation and discussions – Enhancing partnership for effective development cooperation and better development results**

- Presentation by H.E. Dr. Kikeo Chanthaboury, Vice Minister of Planning and Investment (*Please refer to **Annex 9** for the presentation*)

## **Discussion**

### **Australia**

Australia has a question on the Government's expectations on donor community, particular donor behaviours - what does the Government expect donors to do more and to do less at the same time?

## **Responses and comments from the Government**

### **Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI)**

MPI states that what the Government expects from donor community is actually in accordance to the achievement of the NSEDP including the MDGs and the post 2015 development agenda (SDGs). For effective implementation of the national projects and programmes, the Government focuses on capacity development. Therefore, support from development partners is important in this regard.

## **3.6 Closing Ceremony**

His Excellency Mr. Somdy Douangdy, Minister of Planning and Investment as a Chair of the 2014 RTIM summarized the discussion for further actions as per section I of this report.

Prior to the summary made by His Excellency Mr. Somdy Douangdy, Ms. Kaarina Immonen, UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative made a statement in which she states her observations over some key points arising from the RTIM discussions.

In term of macro-economic management, continued coordinated management of macro-economic parameters is essential to sustain progress and build buffers to cope with shocks including management of public debts and the level of reserves. Development partners suggested innovations for raising tax resources, including consistent application of policy to FDI projects. Budget transparency should be improved especially to track expenditures on the MDG related sectors. Further improvements in the budget management are encouraged.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> plan preparation, development partners welcomed the adoption of an outcome based approach based on the criteria for LDC graduation. They also welcomed the opportunity to engage in consultations during the formulation of the plan. Industrial diversification, prioritizing sustainability considerations throughout the plan, including promoting green growth, and addressing inequalities and vulnerabilities are critical considerations for the formulation of the plan. The risks associated with the dependence of the plan on external or private sources of financing also need to be addressed. Another area for improvement is consistency in data sets and application of international standards.

In term of off-track MDGs, Ms. Immonen provided a summary as follow:

- On food and nutrition security, development partners congratulates the Government on the progress made so far in the convergence approach and based on the consultations help in Saravane encourages the Government to ensure adequate funding of village level interventions, enhanced budgets to finance a multi-stakeholder approach to nutrition at the local level, and the importance of expanding the role of civil society in addressing this very serious off track MDGs.
- On education, development partners welcome overall the progress being made through the SWG, but MDG2 targets for enrolment will likely not be met, so further investments are required in dealing with first year drop outs and repeaters, as well as the deployment of teachers from over served to under-served communities.
- On health, development partners welcome successes in immunization coverage and in establishing a free mother and child health programme. More resources are required to fully implement core health programmes including more staff to work in under-served areas.
- On environment, development partners commend the Government with DPs' support to carry out a forest cover assessment in 2015 and biodiversity assessments in national protected areas. Development partners encourage the Government to set a more realistic target for MDG 7 and to prioritize qualitative growth and sustainable management of natural resources in the 8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP including illegal logging and export.
- On land tenure, development partners look forward to a conclusion of the national land policy through approval by the National Assembly. Development partners encourage the Government of Lao PDR to allow expropriations only for public purposes, to ensure affected parties receive full, fair and prior compensation both in cases of individually and communally held land, and to define policies and laws that recognize customary rights. The importance of the link between access to land for nutrition and food security should be recognized.
- On UXO, development partners welcome recent efforts to address technical and capacity constraints to improved performance and encouraged early approval by the NRA Board of new survey and clearance methodology, new funding window for civil society, and structural and capacity enhancements that implement recommendations from the capacity self-assessment exercises held earlier this year.

Turning to governance reforms, Ms. Immonen highlighted three common areas raised by development partners.

- On civil society role in development, application of the new guidelines should be reviewed in a year to assess the improvements in INGO results, and the SWGs should host a regular forum between representatives of civil society, the Government and development partners to advance application of the new guidelines and deal with other outstanding issues. In the case of Mr. Sombath, the issue raised by some DPs, the Government stressed its continuing efforts and desires to resolve the case. Further information will be provided to family and others when it is available.

- The SWG should establish a mechanism for continuous review of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) recommendations and support their implementation, including accession to remaining human right conventions, and invitations to UN special rapporteurs.
- Governance and legal reforms should continue to receive support in line with various master plans, and be regularly monitored. In respect of Sam Sang expansion, development partners welcome the opportunity to review Government's proposals and how best to provide collective support to this important initiative.

On development cooperation for results,

- The VDCAP survey completed this year should be reviewed and recommendations considered for implementation while preparing also for the 2015 global survey.
- Statistical capacities and access to updated information is a significant aspect of our work together and would benefit from more concerted support to enhance the capacity to generate and share statistics.

#### **IV. Summary of post-RTIM debriefing with the Prime Minister of Lao PDR**

Right after the Round Table Implementation Meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2014, a delegation of development partners met with H.E Mr. Thongsing Thammavong, the Prime Minister of Lao PDR in order to brief him on the discussions and outcomes of the 2014 RTIM.

##### **His Excellency Thongsing Thammavong, Prime Minister of Lao PDR**

The Prime Minister thanked development partners for their support and their contribution to the development of Lao PDR. In particular, on-going support from development partners has helped greatly with the advancement of the current 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP including MDGs. Suggestion and advice from development partners will be taken on board and will be incorporated into national strategies and policies, especially in light of the formulation of the 8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP.

##### **Ms. Kaarina Immonen, UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative**

On behalf of development partners, the UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative thanks the Prime Minister of Lao PDR for the opportunity for the meeting. She praised the Government for all the progress and achievements made under the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP including MDGs despite all the challenges. Development partners reaffirm their commitments and support for the remaining 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP and the MDGs and look forward to contributing to the formulation and implementation of the next NSEDP. Ms Immonen highlights key discussion points based on her closing statement as stated under the previous session of this report.

## **Annex 1 – Agenda of the 2014 RTIM**

**Round Table Implementation Meeting 2014**  
**“Accelerating the achievement of the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP/ MDGs and LDC**  
**Graduation”**

**14<sup>th</sup> November 2014**  
**Don Chan Palace Hotel**  
**Vientiane, Lao PDR**

**AGENDA**

08:00 – 08:30                    **Registration**

**Meeting Chair:**                H.E. Mr. Somdy Douangdy, Minister of Planning and Investment

**Meeting Co-chair:**            Ms. Kaarina Immonen, UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative

**Opening**

08:30 – 08:35                    **Introduction**  
By Master of Ceremony – Department of International Cooperation,  
Ministry of Planning and Investment

08:35 - 08:45                    **Welcome Remarks**  
By H.E. Mr. Somdy Douangdy, Minister of Planning and Investment

08:45 - 08:55                    **Remarks**  
By Ms. Kaarina Immonen, UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative

08:55 – 09:10                    **Opening Address**  
By H.E. Mr. Thongloun Sisoulith, Deputy Prime Minister/Minister of Foreign Affairs

09:10 – 09:15                    **Group Photo Sessions**

09:15 - 09:30                    **Coffee Break**

**Session 1 – The implementation of the 7<sup>th</sup> National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDP) and medium-term Socio-Economic Development Plan**

*[This session provides an overview of the implementation progress of the annual NSEDP 2013-14 which includes achievements, challenges as well as key initiatives taken to address the challenges, especially in re-establishing and maintaining macroeconomic stability and ensuring a sustainable growth, as well as an update on the formulation of national strategy and its next five years national socio-economic development plan]*

09:30 – 10:00                    **Achievement of the implementation of the annual National Socio-Economic Development Plan for the fiscal year 2013-2014; the priorities and targets for 2014-2015; and the preparation of the 8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP (2016-2020)**

By H.E. Dr. Bounthavy Sisouphanthong, Vice Minister of Planning and Investment

10:00 – 11:00                    **Discussions**

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| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Session 2 – Progress of the implementation of the action points from the 11<sup>th</sup> High Level Round Table Meeting in 2013</b></p> |
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*[This session outlines progress of implementation of the key points highlighted at the High Level Round Table Meeting in 2013, namely the action plans to accelerate progress of off track MDG targets, public finance management and measures taken to address fiscal constraints, and update on key governance reforming initiatives, as well as a review of partnerships between the government and development partners to achieve the effective development cooperation results]*

11:00 – 11:20                    **MDG implementation - addressing the off-track targets and acceleration measures**

By H.E. Mr. Saleumxay Kommasith, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs

11:20 – 11:30                    **Key results of the Round Table Provincial Consultation on “Provincial perspectives on the Multisectoral (Convergence) Approaches to address Food and Nutrition Security and the Implications for the Off-Track MDGs” in Saravane province**

By H.E. Mr. Sisouvanh Vongchomsy, Vice Governor of Saravane Province

11:30 – 12:30                    **Discussions**

12:30 – 13:30                    **Lunch at the first floor**

13:30 – 13:45                    **Fiscal performance for the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP for 2013-2014 and the priorities and targets for 2014-2015 and beyond**

By H.E. Mr. Santiphab Phomvihane, Vice Minister of Finance

13:45 - 14:00                    **The progress of implementation of governance framework for achieving the NSEDP/MDGs**

By H.E. Dr. Thongchanh Manixay, Vice Minister of Home Affairs

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| 14:00 - 15:20 | <b>Discussions</b>  |
| 15:20 – 15:35 | <b>Coffee Break</b>   |
| 15:35 – 15:50 | <b>Enhancing partnership for effective development cooperation and better development results</b><br><br>By H.E. Dr. Kikeo Chanthaboury, Vice Minister of Planning and Investment |
| 15:50 – 16:30 | <b>Discussions</b>  |

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| <b>Closing</b> |
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|---------------|--|
| 16:30 – 16:45 | <b>Remarks</b><br>By Ms. Kaarina Immonen, UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative                     |
| 16:45 – 17:00 | <b>Summary of Key Points and Closing Speech</b><br>By H.E. Mr. Somdy Douangdy, Minister of Planning and Investment |

*The 2014 Round Table Implementation Meeting is officially closed*

## **Annex 2 – Opening Address of the Deputy Prime Minister**

**Opening Address**

**by H.E. Mr. Thongloun Sisoulith, Deputy Prime Minister/Minister of Foreign Affairs,**

**At the Round Table Implementation Meeting**

**Vientiane, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

**Minister/Vice Minister**

**Vice-Governors**

**Ambassadors and representatives from international organizations and development partners**

**Distinguished Guests,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

On behalf of the Government of the Lao PDR, I would like to extend my warm welcome to all distinguished guests to the 2014 Round Table Implementation Meeting entitled: “Accelerating the achievement of the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP/MDGs and 2020 LDC Graduation”.

I would like to commend and express my sincere appreciation to UNDP as well as to all UN agencies and Development Partners for your strong support and close cooperation extended to the concerned sectors of the Lao Government in preparing for and organizing this year RTIM.

**Distinguished Guests,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

This 2014 RTIM is being convened based on constructive consultations among various sectors under the leadership of Sector Working Groups throughout the year. This year RTIM is a platform for the Government to review the implementation of the 7<sup>th</sup> five-year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDP 2013-2014), and priorities for the NSEDP 2014-2015. The RTIM also aims to highlight the direction and key priorities for the development of the next five year plan (8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP) which are based on what have been achieved and progresses made under the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP, in particularly the poverty reduction.

As you have already known, the Government has been highly committed and put great efforts for the realization of the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP (2013-2014). Continuing GDP growth rate on the average of 7.6% annually has been recorded. Also, GDP per capital has increased from \$1,534 (2012-2013) to \$1,692 (2013-2014).

In addition, social development has been making great progress where regular implementation of the Government strategy has been put in place. This includes the implementation of the MDGs. During the past year, the Government has put its utmost efforts to strengthen capacities of local authorities by building the provinces as strategic units, the districts with comprehensive strengths in all aspects, the villages as development units. This directive has been piloted in 51 districts and 109 villages. At the end of this year, there will be a national meeting to review the implementation of this Sam Sang Directive. Most importantly, significant progress

and achievements have been recorded in various areas, which include ensuring firm political stability, durable peace and social order, attaining a steady and stable economic growth rate.

The achievements made is a testimony of unwavering determination, diligence, and increased sense of ownership and accountability of all Lao people coupled with the policy on promoting equal and active role of all economic sectors in the national development cause. Moreover, the aforesaid achievements are also due to the continued financial and technical supports extended to us by all friendly countries, international organizations and development partners on the whole. On behalf of the Government and people of the Lao PDR, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my profound gratitude and sincere thanks to all development partners for the valuable support and assistance given.

### **Distinguished Guests,**

Despite the afore-mentioned achievements, the Lao Government has continued to encounter numerous constraints and challenges amidst the emerging regional and international economic situation combined with specific domestic development conditions including the macro-economic situation and the impact of climate change which have led to frequent occurrence of natural disasters. These have led to some difficulties in meeting some development targets.

To address the said challenges, the Government of the Lao PDR has continued and encourage the RTIM discussion to find appropriate ways and means by focusing on enhancing a steady economic growth especially to ensure macro-economic stability and to advance national advantage in particular put more efforts to increase national revenues, build national capacities to address various challenges that the country is facing. Towards this end, greater attention must be given to restructuring the economy from primitive agriculture-forestry production towards industrialization and modernization to integrate the country into regional and global markets. The aim is to achieve the MDGs by 2015 and be able to graduate from the LDC status by 2020.

### **Distinguished Guests,**

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

For the priorities in the coming years, the Government will focus on:

- The maintenance of stability including ensuring the continued economic growth in sustainable manner. In particular, the GDP growth for the coming years should not be less than 7.5%
- The creation of a sound environment for national development and livelihood of the people, especially enabling a reduction to the proposed poverty rate of 10% by 2015
- The promotion of meaningful participation of all economic and social sectors including private sector and business to foster economic growth with sustainability. This is important within the context of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) by 2015 and the WTO. This also requires a promotion of foreign policy of peace, friendship and cooperation while broadening external cooperative relations through improving mechanisms and regulations for the integration of the national economy with the region and the world at large.
- To accelerate the achievement of MDGs particularly the off-track targets, a multi-stakeholder approach under a common framework is needed. This requires participation of wider stakeholder such as private sector and others to ensure proper strategies and actions. This includes the specific MDG 9 – reduce the impact of UXO is an urgent task that we need to work together to clear contaminated land and reduce UXO casualties by 2020.

As for future direction of the Lao PDR and to achieve these challenging goals, sufficient and continuous funding is required to support the implementation of the national priorities and

plans. This needs development projects to be well defined and reflect what is actually needed for better results and sustainability. These will enable all stakeholders including development partners to exercise their roles and responsibilities in effective manners. This requires us to reaffirm our strong commitment, ownership and accountability in implementing ODA projects in a transparent, effective, sustainable manner and reaching out to meet people's need.

In the spirit of long-lasting friendship and good cooperation between the Lao PDR and all friendly countries, international organizations and development partners, I believe that this Round Table Implementation Meeting will be conducted in a constructive atmosphere and achieve successful outcomes.

May I take this opportunity to wish, all distinguished participants, Ladies and Gentlemen a very good health and prosperity.

I now declare the Meeting officially opened. Thank You.

## **Annex 3 – Welcome Remarks of the Minister of Planning and Investment**

**Welcome Remarks**

**by H.E. Mr. Somdy Douangdy, Minister of Planning and Investment**

**At the Round Table Implementation Meeting**

**Vientiane, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

**H.E. Mr. Thongloun Sisoulith, Deputy Prime Minister/Minster of Foreign Affairs,**

**Ms. Kaarina Immonen, UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative,**

**Ministers and Vice-Ministers, Vice-Governors**

**Ambassadors and representatives from International Organizations and Development Partners,**

**Distinguished Guests,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I would like to extend a warm and cordial welcome to our Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, His Excellency, Mr. Thongloun Sisoulith for honoring us with his participation and for attaching great importance to this year Round Table Implementation Meeting, being held here in Vientiane. I also like to express my warm welcome to Ms. Kaarina Immonen, the UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative, Minister and Vice-Minister, Ambassadors and representatives from international organizations and development partners, and other distinguished guests for being with us today in the occasion of the Round Table Implementation Meeting as invited by Ministry of Planning and Investment.

**Distinguished Guests,**

For the past years, the Government of Lao PDR and its Development Partners have jointly carried various important activities such as, to name a few, meetings of technical and executive levels of Sector Working Groups, the organization of the Round Table provincial consultation in Saravane concentrating on food and nutrition security, strengthening capacities of local authorities, monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the Vientiane Declaration and Country Action Plan, and the operationalization of the Aid Management Platform. These are a few examples that show on-going cooperation between the Government of Lao PDR and its development partners in support the implementation and accelerating the realization of the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP including MDGs.

**Distinguished Guests,**

The Round Table Meeting Implementation Meeting is under a theme: “Accelerating the achievement of the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP/ MDGs and 2020 LDC Graduation”. It is a key forum for constructive policy dialogues between the Government of Lao PDR and development partners to review progress made in the implementation key policies, strategies and programmes as highlighted in the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP (2013-2014), discuss the challenges ahead including resources required and exchange views on corrective action and future plan (2014-2015) including the off-track MDGs.

The Government of Lao PRD is committed to strengthen partnership for effective development cooperation and for better development results through the Round Table Process. This requires mutual understanding, frank and opened dialogue as well as participation of various stakeholders at national, sectoral and local levels. In particular, it requires greater ownership of national counterparts at all levels to ensure the effectiveness development cooperation.

**Distinguished Guests,**

The Round Table Implementation Meeting is also an important forum for Lao PDR to continue mobilizing support and assistance from all friendly countries, international organizations and development partners. At the same time, through this Round Table Process, the Government is committed to translate important policy discussions into reality under effective management and cooperation under mutual understanding and greater partnership for better development results. I express our country commitment to take all discussions provided by all stakeholders into consideration and take appropriate actions during the implementation of the five year plan including the annual one and the MDGs in order to meet national targets as planned.

We strongly believe that all friendly countries, international organizations and development partners will realize and provide continued support in implementing the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP and attaining the MDGs.

Once again, I would like to express our sincere thanks and warmly welcome you all to our annual Round Table Implementation Meeting 2014 and I believe that this Round Table Meeting will be conducted in a constructive atmosphere and achieve a successful outcome.

Thank You.

## **Annex 4 – Remarks of the UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative**

## Remarks

by Ms. Kaarina Immonen, the UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative

RTIM 2014, 14 November 2014

**Honourable Minister of Planning and Investment,**

**Distinguished participants**

I would like to express our sincere appreciation for the excellent organisation of the meeting by the Ministry of Planning and Investment and the entire team. I wish to also stress how pleased we were with the exceptionally productive dialogue with Ministers and Deputy Ministers of Your Excellency's Government. Our discussions were enriched with a presentation by the Saravane provincial government on our Round Table Consultation in September, and by interventions from the National Assembly, NPA and INGO representatives as well as from the private sector.

With your agreement, I would like to share my observations of the key discussions and some recommendations arising from our today's dialogues.

### **Macro-economic management**

- Continued coordinated management of macro-economic parameters is essential to sustain progress and build buffers to cope with shocks, including management of public debt and the level of external reserves. At the meeting, Development Partners suggested some possible innovations for raising tax resources, including consistent application of policy to FDI projects. In addition, the meeting highlighted budget management as an area needing further improvement.

### **8<sup>th</sup> Plan preparation**

- Development Partners commended the Government for adopting an outcome based approach based on the criteria for LDC graduation. They also welcomed the opportunity to continue to engage in consultations during the formulation of the Plan.
- The meeting also discussed industrial diversification, effective investment in infrastructure and prioritizing sustainability as critical aspects for ensuring quality and equitable growth. This particularly includes promoting green growth and addressing inequalities and vulnerabilities. Affordability of the plan was another key issue raised. Thus, any risks associated with financing of the plan, as well as the issue of data consistency and the application of relevant international standards are important elements to consider throughout the formulation of the next NSEDP.

### **Off-track MDGs and action plans**

- Food and Nutrition Security: Development Partners congratulated the Government's excellent effort and on the progress of the convergence approach. Based on the outcomes from the Round Table Consultation held in Saravane, there is a need to ensure adequate funding of village level interventions, to further promote the multi stakeholder approach to

nutrition at the local level, and to acknowledge the importance of civil society engagement in addressing this very seriously off track MDGs.

- Education: Development Partners welcomed overall the progress being made. However, meeting MDG 2 targets could be challenging. Therefore, the meeting urged for further investments in dealing with first year drop outs as well as the deployment of teachers from over-served to under-served communalities.
- Health: the meeting highlighted progress made in the sector, and Development Partners appreciated the Government's excellent work in making immunization coverage and free MCH programmes successful. But in order to fully implement core health programmes, including the provision of more staff especially in under-served areas, more investments and support from relevant stakeholders will be required.
- Environment: Development Partners commended the Government's initiatives to carry out a forest cover assessment in 2015 and biodiversity assessments in National Protected Areas. At the meeting, it was also recommended that the Government considers setting more realistic targets for MDG7 and prioritize sustainable management of natural resources in the 8<sup>th</sup> plan, including addressing rigorously illegal logging and exports.
- Land: we are looking forward to the finalisation of the National Land Policy and its approval by the National Assembly. In that context, Development Partners encouraged the Government to allow expropriations only for public purposes, to ensure affected parties receive full, fair and prior compensation, both in cases of individually and communally held land, and to define policies and laws that recognize customary rights. The importance of the link between access to land and nutrition and food security should also be recognized.
- UXO: Development Partners welcomed recent efforts to address technical and capacity constraints to improve performance and encouraged early approval by the NRA Board of new survey and clearance methodologies, a new funding window for civil society, and structural and capacity enhancements.

### **Governance reforms**

- Improvements were recommended regarding the space for Civil Society, particularly in relation to the application of the new guidelines. It was suggested that the Government Sector Working Group could host a regular forum between representatives of Civil Society, Government and Development Partners to advance an agreed application of the new guidelines and deal with other outstanding issues, including the enabling environment for Civil Society activities.
- In the case of Mr. Sombath, the Government stressed its continuing efforts and desire to resolve the case and provide updated information to the family and other interested parties.
- The meeting also discussed the progress of the UPR this year, and recommended establishing a mechanism for continuous review of the UPR recommendations and support of their implementation, including accession to the remaining HR convention and provision of invitations to UN special rapporteurs.
- Efforts to ensure progress in governance and legal reforms should continue to receive support by Development Partners with various master plans and be regularly monitored. In respect of Sam Sang expansion, Development Partners welcomed the opportunity to review the Government's propels and how best we can provide collective support to this important initiative.

### **Development cooperation for results**

- Vientiane Declaration Country Action Plan and Aid Management Platform: The Development Partners congratulated the Government on the completion of the VDCAP revision and survey this year. The findings of the survey should be reviewed together, and recommendations should be taken into account for implementation of the development effectiveness agenda at the country level while the country is also preparing for the 2015 global survey.
- In addition, statistical capacities and access to updated information are significant aspects of our work together and would benefit from more concerted support to enhance the capacity to generate and share this data.

There were the most significant points discussed during our sessions today. I believe addressing these issues will be challenging, but this still represents a very positive agenda for the coming year. I look forward to joining you all at next year's High Level Round Table to review the progress we have made.

Before ending my remarks, I would like to congratulate the Minister for his excellent and skillful management of today's proceeding, especially the interactive dialogue encouraged amongst us.

I would like to also thank the organizing team, especially the Department of International Cooperation (DIC) - Mdm. Sisomboun and her staff for their tireless effort in making this meeting a success.

Finally, I appreciate the value added by all distinguished participants, including the Vice Governor from Saravane province, members of Civil Society and the Private Sector as well as our colleagues from the Government.

Thank you very much.

**Annex 5 – Presentation: Achievement of the implementation of the annual National Socio-Economic Development Plan for the fiscal year 2013-2014, the priorities and targets for 2014-2015, and the preparation of the 8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP (2016-2020)**



**Round Table Implementation Meeting 2014**  
"Accelerating the achievement of the 7<sup>th</sup> NSED/MDGs  
and 2020 LDC Graduation"

**Achievement of the National Socio-Economic  
Development Plan FY2013/2014, Directions for NSED  
FY2014/2015 and 8<sup>th</sup> National Socio-Economic  
Development Plan (2016-2020)**

14<sup>th</sup> November, 2014  
Don Chan Palace Hotel

**H.E. Dr. Bounthavy SISOUPHANTHONG**  
Vice Minister of Planning and Investment

## **Presentation Outline**

- Part I: Achievement of the National Socio-Economic Development Plan FY2013/2014
- Part II: National Socio-Economic Development Plan 2014-2015
- Part III: Initial draft of 8th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2016-2020)

**Part I**  
**Achievement of the National**  
**Socio-Economic Development Plan**  
**FY2013/2014**

**Economic Growth**

- GDP Growth Rate: 7.6%, at current price value 91,587 billion kip or equivalent to 11.46 billion USD
  - Agriculture Sector increased 2.9 %; accounted for 24.4%;
  - Industry increased 8.7% accounted for 28.4%
  - Service increased 9.3% accounted for 39.1% (exclude Import Duty)
- GDP per capita: 13.5 million Kip or USD1,692

### **Fiscal-Monetary Targets**

- Revenue: 22,038 billion Kip or 96.72% of the adjust plan target
  - Domestic Revenue 17,168 billion Kip or 96.2% of the plan target
- Expenditure: 26,017 billion Kip or 94.5% of the adjust plan
- Inflation: 5.16% (FY2013-14) slightly decreased compared to the previous year (FY2012-13: 5.64%)
- Exchange Rate
  - Kip-USD depreciated 2% (from 7,856.68 to 8,015.45) (FY2013-14)
  - Kip-Baht appreciated 4% (from 259.37 to 250.28) (FY2013-14).
- M<sub>2</sub> increased by 17.55% (Aug 2014) compared to Aug 2013.
- Foreign Reserves: USD 687.9 million (as of 08/2014)

### **Imports-Exports**

- Exports: USD 1,620 million (first six months)
- Imports: USD 1,979 million (first six months)
- Trade Deficit: USD 359 million (3.1% of GDP).

## Total Investment

- **Government budget (half year):** implemented 2,469 projects, value 2,333.09 billion kip or 31% of the plan, of which, domestic budget of 1,385.31 billion kip or 42% of the plan.
- **Grants and Loans:** implemented 784 projects, value USD795.18 million or 6,361.4 billion kip exceed the plan.
- **Domestic and Foreign Investment:** implemented 1,150 projects value USD3,383 million or 27,138 thousand billion kip, exceed the plan by 61% (increased 11% compared to previous year).
- **Bank Credit:** Increased 7,695.90 billion kip (as of August 2014) exceed the plan.

## Economic Sector Development

- **Rice production:** 4 million tons
  - Rainy Season Rice 2013: 3.28 million tons.
  - Upland Rice: 0,20 million tons.
  - Dry Season Rice 2014: 555.000 tons.
- **Value of Manufacturing and Handicraft Production:** 5,357 billion Kip (increase of 6% compared to previous year).
- **Electricity Production:** 15,131.3 million KWH (increase of 10.7% compared to previous year).
- **Electricity consumption cover 87.58%** (exceed the five year plan target (80%), compared to previous year increased by 2%)
- **Value of Mining Production:** 7,382 billion Kip (6 months), decreased 2,69% compared to previous year

### **Social Sector Development**

- Net Enrolment Ratio in kindergarten: 39%, exceed the plan by 8.3%
- Net Enrolment Ratio in primary education: 98% as the plan target
- Survival Rate in Primary education: 73.3% compared to the plan cannot achieve (84.2%)

### **Social Sector Development**

- Maternal Mortality Ratio: 220 per 100,000 live births
- District hospital: 130 hospitals
- Health Centre: 922 centres
- 16 private hospitals and health centers had been approved, 11 in the central and 5 in provinces

### **Social Sector Development**

- Skill development for 37,054 people compared to the plan can achieve only 83.61%
- Job for Lao workers both domestic and international for 56,941 workers exceed the plan 2.96%.

### **Challenges and pending issues**

- Some targets are pending such as targets on economic growth rate, budget revenue-expenditure, macroeconomic stability, and some socio-culture targets delay.
- Some sectors and provinces did not fully committed and active enough in implementing the plan; ownership and participation from all social group in the plan implementation is not yet widely promoted.

### **Challenges and pending issues (cont.)**

- Inter-sectoral coordination, coordination between sector and provinces are fairly weak and difficult to establish in some areas, several issues are not yet thoroughly taken into detailed and comprehensive consultation which resulted in ineffective implementation of the plan.
- Accountability in the planning and financial principles in some sectors and provinces are fairly weak, enforcement of laws and regulations is not strictly enough especially those provisions on off-plan investments, project operations that are not compliant with the Public Investment Law and other related ones caused an increase in public debts to the critical level that threatening the macroeconomic stability, debt management and clearance concerned sectors are not well coordinated.

## **Part II National Socio-Economic Development Plan 2014-2015**

### **Macro-economic Targets**

- GDP Growth Rate: 7.5%
- GDP in current prices: 102,320 billion Kip
- GDP per capita: USD1,860
  - Agriculture Sector increased 3.0%; accounted for 23.7%;
  - Industry increased 8.9% accounted for 29.1%
  - Service increased 9.1% accounted for 39.0% (exclude Import Duty)

### **Macro-economic Targets**

- Revenue: 25,815 billion Kip accounted for 25% of GDP.
- Expenditure: 31,000 billion Kip accounted for 30% of GDP
- Budget Deficit: 5,185 billion Kip or 5.06% of GDP
- Inflation Rate below GDP growth rate
- Money Supply (M2) increases in a proper rate and does not affect the inflation rate
- Foreign Reserves cover 5 months of imports.
- Saving in the banking system covers 49% of GDP
- Bank credit: 46% of GDP

### **Macro-economic Targets**

- Continue to apply the stated managed exchange rate policy according to the market mechanism, creating normally stable exchange rate, kip currency appreciation and depreciation within  $\pm 5\%$  compared to main foreign currencies
- Exports: USD 4,168 million
- Imports: USD 4,700 million
- Trade Deficit : USD 532 million (4.1% of GDP).

### **Financing Plan**

- Total financing of 30,690 billion Kip or 30% of GDP:
  - Government Budget: 3,300 billion Kip (11% of total financing plan).
  - Grants and Loans: 5,279 billion Kip or USD 660 million (17% of total financing plan).
  - Private domestic and foreign investment 15,611 billion Kip or USD 1,951 million (51% of total financing plan).
  - Bank Credit: 6.500 billion Kip (21% of total financing plan).

### **Implementing measures**

- Raise accountability in domestic revenue collection, ensure budget balance as indicated in the plan target, strictly enforce the financial regulations, counter an issue of budget revenue leakage in areas like tax-custom collection, public assets, land fee collection, logging and export of wood; ensure compliance of import tariff exemption by law and agreements on PIPs.

### **Implementing measures (cont.)**

- Prudently manage budget expenditure by encouraging appropriate use of money and modernizing financial sector step by step; pay special attention to personnel reform and development in the financial sector; and strictly apply measures on financial principle violators.
- Strictly enforcement on Public investment law, Budget Law and planning-budgeting discipline. Definitely do not implement projects without NA approved in yearly.
- Line ministries/provinces shall allocate at least 35% of their annual budget ceiling to cover the debt repayment, if any, to the PIP under their responsibility which have 100 completed and terminated the contacts in order to resolve the debt issues.

### **Implementing measures (cont.)**

- Strictly follow policy on appropriate use of money and stop all forms of extravagance; conduct campaign for public awareness on appropriate use of money and increase savings to create capital for future national development including industrialization and modernization.
- Policies and measures on pricing are not clear and comprehensive, especially pricing of strategic goods and those that have direct impact on people's livelihood which resulted in continued increase in prices of goods and services, cost of living especially in big cities.

## **Part III Initial draft of the 8th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2016-2020)**

**Overall Goal and Directions**

**Overall Goal of the 8th NSEDP**

***“Reduced poverty, graduation from Least Developed Country Status (LDC) by 2020 with sustained and inclusive economic growth through promotion of national potential and comparative advantages; effective management and utilization of natural resources and strong international integration”***

### **5 directions and main tasks**

- i. Economic growth rate constantly and macro stability is achieved
- ii. Human resource development and social-cultural sector development
- iii. Ensure effective management and utilization of natural resources and environmental protection for sustainable development
- iv. Political stability, peace, and social order are maintained;
- v. International cooperation continues to expand in different aspects.

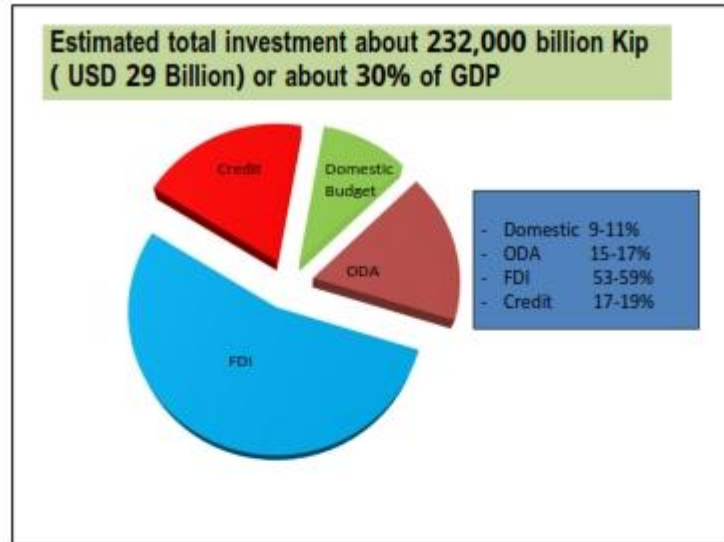
### **Key Indicators and Targets of the 8th NSEDP**

### **Macroeconomic Targets**

- GDP growth in average > 7.5%
- GDP per capita in 2020 : about USD 3,180 (USD 2,700 in GNI)
- Human Asset Index (HAI) > 68 in 2020
- Economic Vulnerability Index (EVI) < 32
- Inflation rate < 6% per year
- Stable and manageable exchange rate

### **Macroeconomic Targets**

- Foreign exchange reserve at least 5 months of imports
- Export: > 18% per year
- Revenue: 23-25% of GDP
- Budget deficit: < 5% of GDP



**Proposed Outcomes and Outputs  
of the 8th NSEDP**

**Outcomes**

1. Sustained inclusive economic growth with economic vulnerability (EVI) reduced to levels required for LDC graduation and consolidated financial, legal and human resources to support growth

**Outcomes cont.**

2. Human development enhanced to LDC graduation criteria level and achievement of off-track MDGs through the provision and use of services which are balanced geographically and distributed between social groups
3. Reduced effects of natural shocks as required for LDC graduation and sustainable management of natural resource exploitation

## Outputs

### Outcome 1:

- Output 1.1 Sustained and inclusive economic growth
- Output 1.2 Macro-economic stability
- Output 1.3 Development planning and budgeting aligned
- Output 1.4 Balanced regional and local development
- Output 1.5 Improved public / private labor force capacity
- Output 1.6 Local entrepreneurs are competitive in domestic and global markets
- Output 1.7 Lao PDR is effectively contributes to and benefits from regional / international integration

## Outputs

### Outcome 2:

- Output 2.1 Improved living standards through poverty reduction
- Output 2.2 Food security ensured and incidence of malnutrition reduced
- Output 2.3 Access to high quality education service
- Output 2.4 Access to high quality health services
- Output 2.5 Access to improved quality social welfare
- Output 2.6 Traditions and culture protected
- Output 2.7 Peace, order and justice achieved in the society with gender equality and transparency

### **Outputs cont.**

#### **Outcome 3:**

- Output 3.1 Environmental protection
- Output 3.2 Preparedness for the natural disasters and risk mitigation
- Output 3.3 Reduced instability of agricultural production

### **Cross-Cutting Issues**

1. Applied science, technology and communication
2. Gender and women's advancement, and mother and child
3. Adolescent and youth development
4. Governance and public administration

### **Timeframe for 8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP Preparation**

### **Timeframe for 8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP Preparation**

- Consultation meetings NSEDP VIII with line ministries/ sectors and provinces and other stakeholders during October to November 2014
- 15<sup>th</sup> January 2015, line ministries/sectors and provinces submit their final inputs to MPI, DOP
- April-May 2015, MPI submit the 8<sup>th</sup> Plan to the Cabinet Meeting for comments
- June 2015, the Government submit the final 8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP to the National Assembly for considering regarding by Law.

**Annex 6 – Presentation: MDG implementation – addressing the off-track targets and acceleration measures**



**Round Table Implementation Meeting 2014**  
**“Accelerating the achievement of the 7<sup>th</sup> NSED/ MDGs**  
**and 2020 LDC Graduation”**

**MDG implementation – addressing the off-track**  
**targets and acceleration measures**

14<sup>th</sup> November, 2014  
Don Chan Palace Hotel

By **H.E. Saleumxay KOMMASITH**  
Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs

**Outline**

- I. The implementation of the off-track MDGs for fiscal year 2013-2014.**
- II. Challenges in attaining the off-track MDGs targets.**
- III. The way forward.**

**I. The implementation of the off-track MDGs for fiscal year 2013-2014.**

- The Lao Government has significantly streamlined all MDG goals and targets to its 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> National Socio-Economic Development Plan base on the specific targets and the particular needs for the development of the Lao PDR .
- The three MDGs Progress Reports (The 3<sup>rd</sup> Progress Report in 2013) are the reference resources and important materials for the Government in planning the strategies for the development goals and cooperation.
- In term of the progress of the implementation, the Government has set up the National Steering Committee and the Secretariat comprising of the relevance sectors to address the off-tack MDGs targets.

**Key results of the MDGs implementation in Lao PDR (2013-2014)**

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <b>The on-track MDGs :</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ MDG 3: Promote gender equality and empower women</li> <li>✓ MDG 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases</li> <li>✓ MDG 7: Ensure environmental sustainability</li> <li>✓ MDG 8: Develop a global partnership for development</li> </ul>   |
| <b>The off-track MDGs :</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MDG 1: Nutrition targets and stunting</li> <li>• MDG 2: Achieve universal primary education</li> <li>• MDG 4: Reduce child mortality</li> <li>• MDG 5: Reduce maternal mortality</li> <li>❖ <i>Localised MDG 9: Clearance of UXO contaminated land and victim assistance.</i></li> </ul> |

**Key results of the on-track MDGs implementation  
in Lao PDR (cont'd)**

**The on-track MDGs**

- ✓ **MDG3:** Gender parity has steadily improved at all levels of education and the country is well on track to achieve the target of parity between boys and girls in primary education. The gender parity index for primary education has increase from 0.79 in 1990 to 0.91 in 2012,the setting target is 1.00 in 2015.
  
- ✓ **MDG6:** HIV prevalence is still low, although the number of new HIV cases has steadily increased at an estimated rate of 1.000 cases each year.

**Key results of the MDGs implementation  
in Lao PDR (cont'd)**

**The on-track MDGs**

- ✓ **MDG 7:** Forest cover in 2012 stood at 9.5 million hectares or an estimated 40% of the area of the country and the target is 65% in 2015. Recently, the Governement is in the process of classification for the type of forest cover.
  
- ✓ **MDG 8:** Lao PDR has made significant progress in integrating within the global trading system, and becoming the 158<sup>th</sup> member of the World Trade Organization ( WTO).

## II. Challenges in attaining the off-track MDGs targets.

### The **off-track** MDG: MDG 1

| MDG 1                                | Indicator   | 1993<br>(Base line) | 2000 | 2011/12 | 2015<br>(Target) | Data Source                                       |
|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------|------|---------|------------------|---|
| Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger | I.8. Prevalence of underweight children under - five year of age  | 48%                 | 40%  | 32%     | 22%              | NCHS<br>( National Center for Health Statistics ) |
|                                      | I.9. Prevalence of stunting in children under - five years of age | 48%                 | 41%  | 40%     | 34%              |   |

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### Challenges in attaining the off-track MDG target (MDG-1)

- Malnutrition or the lack of nutrition for the child under the age of 5 and the stunting in children remain the challenge in MDG-1. Hence, the Government had set up the National Committee and the Secretariat to tackle the Food and Nutrition Security comprising of health, agriculture, education and planning sectors.
- In 2013, the Secretariat has adopted **Multi-sectoral on Food and Nutrition Security Convergence Action Plan** as for the guideline and framework for the implementation of food and nutrition priority strategy. The Round Table Provincial Consultation was held in Salavan Province in September this year to review the progress and purpose the way forward.

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### Challenges in attaining the off-track MDGs

(cont'd)

#### The off-track MDG: MDG 2

| MDG 2  | Indicator   | 1992<br>(Base<br>line) | 2005  | 2012  | 2013-<br>2014 | 2015<br>(Target) | Data<br>Source          |
|--|---|------------------------|-------|-------|---------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| Achieve<br>universal<br>primary<br>education | 2.1. Net<br>enrolment<br>ratio in<br>primary<br>education                                       | 58.8%                  | 84.0% | 98.2% | 97%           | 98%              | MoES,<br>UNESCO-<br>UIS |
|  | 2.3.<br>Proportion<br>of pupils<br>starting<br>grade 1<br>who reach<br>last grade<br>of primary | 47.7%                  | 68.4% | 70.0% | 78%           | 95%              | MoES-<br>EMIS           |

### Challenges in attaining the off-track MDG target (MDG-2)

- The implementation to achieve universal primary education has improved continuously. The net enrolment ratio in primary education has increased from 97% in 2012-2013 to 98% in 2013-2014, the gap between boys and girls is higher from 0.95 to 0.96 and the proportion of pupils from grade 1 to reach grade 5 of primary school has increased from 73% to 78%.
- Nevertheless, the school drop out rate from grade 1 is still a remained challenge. To contribute to the achievement of education outcomes including addressing food and nutrition security, the Government has implemented the priority strategy of multi-sectoral convergence action plan to focus on the rural and remote areas.

**Challenges in attaining the off-track MDGs**

(cont'd)

**The off-track MDG: MDG 4**

| MDG 4                        | Indicator  | 1993<br>(Base<br>line) | 2003 | 2011 | 2014 | 2015<br>(Target) | Data<br>Source |
|------------------------------|--|------------------------|------|------|------|------------------|----------------|
| Reduce<br>child<br>mortality | 4.1. Under<br>-five<br>mortality<br>rate ( per<br>1,000 live<br>births ) | 170                    | 131  | 79   | 72   | 50               | MoH -<br>EMIS  |
|                              | 4.2. Infant<br>mortality<br>rate ( per<br>1,000 live<br>births )         | 114                    | 104  | 68   | 54   | 45               | MoH -<br>EMIS  |

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**Challenges in attaining the off-track MDG  
target (MDG-4)**

- Lao PDR had achieved the national target of reducing the mortality for the child under five rate of 80% per 1,000 live births. However, the country is still ranked amongst the highest under five mortality rates in the region.
- The Government plans to address the challenge of reducing the child mortality within the context of the upcoming 8<sup>th</sup> health development strategy (2016-2020).

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**Challenges in attaining the off-track MDGs.**  
(cont'd)

**The off-track MDG: MDG 5**

| MDG 5                   | Indicator  | 1995<br>(Base line)        | 2003        | 2009        | 2015<br>(Target)        | Data Source              |
|-------------------------|--|----------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Improve maternal health | 5.1. Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births)        | 796                        | 433         | 337         | 200                     | LSH, LSHS2000, LSHS2011. |
|                         | 5.2. Proportion of births attended by trained health personnel | 1994<br>(Base line)<br>14% | 2005<br>23% | 2011<br>42% | 2015<br>(Target)<br>50% | LPHSS1994, LSHS 2011     |

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- Challenges in attaining the off-track MDG target (MDG-5)**
- Lao PDR still has one of the highest maternal mortality ratios in the region although the proportion of birth attended by trained health care personnel has been increased but the rate is still below 50% to achieve the MDG target.
  - To reduce the maternal mortality and crease more health care personnel, as per the MDG 4 - the Government has currently developed the 8<sup>th</sup> national health development strategy (2016-2020) which aim to reduce maternal health to 180 of maternal mortality ratio per 100.000 live births and provide the mid-wife doctor at least one per village.
- 14

**Challenges in attaining the off-track MDGs.**

(cont'd)

**The off-track MDG: MDG 9**

| MDG 9                             | Indicator   | 1999<br>(Base<br>line) | 2007  | 2011  | 2013<br>and<br>2014                | 2015<br>(Target<br>) | Data<br>Source |
|-----------------------------------|---|------------------------|-------|-------|------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Reduce<br>the<br>Impact<br>of UXO | 9.1. Number<br>of hectares<br>released from<br>UXO<br>contamination<br>(hectares per<br>year)           | 580                    | 2,537 | 6,034 | 6,927<br>and<br>5,270<br>(Jan-Sep) | 20,000               | N/A            |
|                                   | 9.2. Number of<br>casualties<br>reported as<br>result of UXO<br>incidents<br>( casualties per<br>year ) | 1999<br>(Base<br>line) | 2007  | 2011  | 2014                               | 2015<br>(Target<br>) | N/A            |
|                                   |   | 227                    | 250   | 99    | 41                                 | <75                  |                |

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**Challenges in attaining the off-track MDG target (MDG-9)**

- Lao PDR is the most suffered from the heavily bombed country in the world compared to the population. Number of hectares released from UXO contamination (hectares per year) in 2013 is 6,927 as the MDG target in 2015 is 20,000 hectares. Number of casualties reported as result of UXO incident in 2012 is 56, in 2013 is 41 and in 2014, are reducing respectively. Nevertheless, This target is still off-track and it needs more funding assistance.
- The Government has adopted the National Strategy Plan “**The Safe Path Forward II**” (2011-2020) which aims to contribute to the achievement of MDGs and the other development objectives captured in the NSEDP in accordance with the implementation of other international convention in which Lao PDR is a party.

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### III. The Way Forward.

- **MDG 1:** The National Committee and the Secretariat on Food and Nutrition Security are continuing with the convergence implementation of the multisectoral on Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan with the prioritize nutrition interventions which comprise of 14 health, 4 agriculture and 4 education interventions.
- **MDG 2:** The education system will aim to focus on specific need of the remote and vulnerable communities. The government is therefore prioritize to expand school infrastructure and increase the incentive for civil servants to work in the remoteness.
- **MDG 4:** The government will continue to develop national health strategy in streamline with the 5 year plan of national social economic development plan (2006-2020).

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### The Way Forward (cont'd)

- **MDG 5:** To implement reform the national health policy with the priority action plan such as the improvement of the health infrastructure and services, increase the capacity building in personnel and financing as well as the mechanism of management of covering the health information.
- **MDG 9:** The clearance of UXO contaminated is the priority task for Lao government. It needs the continue assistance from the development partners and international organisations to further assist this challenge. In particular, there is a need to revisit the clearance methodology and other associated activities.

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### **The Way Forward (cont'd)**

- In July 2014 the MDG Secretariat hold a national focal points consultation workshop on the implementation of MDG and the post 2015 development agenda, and introduced the Open Working Group Report and proposal of 17 goals and 169 target on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- The Government will continue to brainstorm with all relevance sectors as the national consultation for the outcome document on the sustainable development goals or SDGs. It aims to focus on national interests in mobilizing and seeking assistance opportunity in particular from the United Nations after the adoption of the development agenda in post 2015.
- Continue to streamline SDGs to the implementation for the 8<sup>th</sup>, five years national socio-economic development plan from 2016-2020 and to the national strategy in 2025 and vision on the development beyond 2030 aiming to the specific target and particular needs on the development in the Lao PDR.

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### **Conclusion**

- The aforementioned highlights are the progress and challenges of the MDG implementation in Lao PDR. It needs continued assistance and cooperation from the international community to address the challenges for the sustainable development in the future.
- For more details of challenges in attaining the off-track MDGs , the relevance ministers will present the priority strategies of implementation and the way forward to achieve the Millennium Development Goals in the Lao PDR.

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**Annex 7 – Fiscal performance for the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP for 2013-2014  
and the priorities and targets for 2014-2015 and beyond**



**2014 Round Table Implementation Meeting**

**Fiscal Performance of FY 2013-2014 and  
Budget Plan FY 2014-2015**

Vientiane , November 14, 2014  
Don Chan Palace Hotel

H.E. Mr. Santiphab Phomvihane  
Vice Minister of Finance

1

**Presentation Outline**

- I. Fiscal consolidation of FY 2013-2014**
- II. Fiscal Performance for FY 2013-2014**
- III. Direction and Budget Plan for FY 2014-2015**
- IV. Key Measures of Implementation for FY 2014-2015**

2

### I. Fiscal consolidation of FY 2013-2014

- Suspend benefit payment or about 2% of GDP.
- Amend budget for the last six months of FY 2013-2014.
- Strictly control budget spending.
- Government established special high level Task Force to oversight macroeconomic affair and budget implementation.

2

### II. Fiscal Performance for FY 2013-2014

#### ❖ Revenue:



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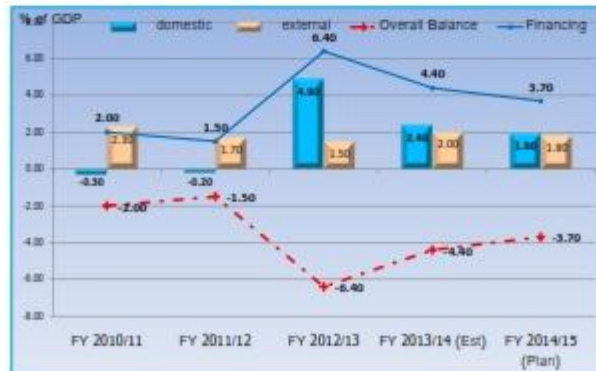
## II. Fiscal Performance for FY 2013-2014 (Con't)

### ❖ Expenditure:



## II. Fiscal Performance for FY 2013-2014 (Con't)

### ❖ Financing:



### III. Direction and budget plan for FY 2014-2015

- Continue to implement fiscal consolidation, maintain expenditure ceiling at the same level as FY 2013-2014.
- Government gives high priority for education and health sectors.
- Improve revenue collection and administration by implementing new measures, closely monitor and supervise the implementation, while eliminating all kind of tax avoidances and preventing revenue leakages.

7

### III. Direction and budget plan for FY 2014-2015 ( Cont' )

- The Budget Plan for FY 2014-2015
  - ⊙ Revenue: 24.8% of GDP:
    - ✓ Tax Revenue: 19.7% of GDP, and
    - ✓ Grant: 5.2% of GDP.

8

### **III. Direction and budget plan for FY 2014-2015 ( Cont' )**

---

- ⊙ **Expenditure: Target for FY 2014-2015 is 28.2% of GDP, including:**
  - ✓ **Current expenditure: 17.9% of GDP.**
  - ✓ **Capital expenditure: 10.3% of GDP.**
- ⊙ **Deficit: less than 5% of GDP.**

### **III. Key measures of Budget implementation for FY 2014-2015**

---

- ❖ **Immediate measures:**
  - 1. Improve the Coordination within MOF, MOF with ministries and agencies at central and local levels.**
  - 2. Improve existing public financial legislation to be more enforcement.**
  - 3. Revenue: Continue working closely with provinces to review and assessment of tax players, especially large and medium enterprises.**
  - 4. Expenditure: Coordinate with MPI to improve the payment and management mechanism.**

**III. Key measures of Budget implementation for FY  
2014-2015 (Cont')**

**❖ Long-term measures**

- 1. Develop long-term fiscal strategy to support SME production and services; maintain fiscal policy balanced and comprehensive to support domestic and foreign SME to be tax payers.**
- 2. Human Resources and Capacity Development of Public Finance staffs.**
- 3. Apply modern system to manage revenue and expenditure.**

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**Thank You**

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**Annex 8 – The progress of implementation of governance framework for achieving the NSEDP/MDGs**



**Round Table Implementation Meeting 2014**  
**"Accelerating the achievement of the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP/ MDGs  
and 2020 LDC Graduation"**

**The Progress of Implementation of Governance  
Framework for Achieving the NSEDP/MDGs**

14 November 2014  
Don Chan Palace Hotel

H.E. Dr. Thongchanh Manixay  
Vice-Minister, Ministry of Home Affairs



## Presentation Outline

- I. Governance reform implementation - 2014 update
  - Public Service Improvement
  - People's Representation and Participation
  - Rule of Law
  - Key Improvement in governance reform
- II. Challenges and constraints
- III. Priorities for enhancement of the governance system in the coming years and some solution

2




## I. Update on Governance Reform

1. **Public Service Improvement**  
on-going progress in strengthening the public administration system to improve:

- **Regulatory framework**
  - On-going revision on the Law of Government and related public administration laws
  - Proposed Law on Citizen Management Law, etc.
  - Support and develop some regulations related to the delegation of responsibilities according to Sam Sang direction
- **State structure and machinery of state administration;**
  - Organization and Operation of Bank of Lao PDR; Securities and Exchange; reorganization of Ministry of Justice;

3



## I. Update on Governance Reform (2)

1. **Public Service Improvement (cont.)**

- **Central-Local Relations**
  - Pilot implementation of Sam Sang – delegate the responsibilities between central, provincial, district and village level.
  - Revision of some public administration laws such as government, Law on Local Administration, proposed Law on City and Municipality
- **Improving civil service management**
  - Civil service recruitment process through the general examination and technical examination
  - Continue to develop Job Position and Job Description (review and pilot in some ministries and some provinces)
  - Development Civil Servant Development Plan and decree on civil service development
  - Draft Decree on Civil Service Appraisal

4



## I. Update on Governance Reform (3)

### 2. People's Representation and Participation

- Dialogue on implementation of 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP & state budget plan
- New laws enacted – 7<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session (mid-year)
  - Law on money laundering; Independent Audit; Value-added Tax; Law on Tax.
  - Amendments to Law on Handling Petitions, Law on Customs, and Law on Standards
- Revision of Decrees on Non-Profit Association and Foundation
- Decree on INGO Implementation Guideline
- Development of PM decree on media fund

5



## I. Update on Governance Reform (4)

### 3. Rule of Law

Steady progress in development of legal framework and law reform

- Revision of the 2003 Constitution
- Codification of criminal and civil codes
- Refinement of the legal framework for Village Mediation Units (VMUs)
- Development of a decree on legal aid
- Preparation of establishment of National Judicial Training Institute

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#### 4. Key Improvement in governance reform

##### 1. Public Service Improvement:

- Expansion of District Development Fund (DDF): 7 provinces; 52 districts in order to strengthen the local administration and improve service delivery
- Pilot climate change grant for local infrastructure – Saravan & Sekong provinces
- Development of Pilot monitoring of local service delivery:
  - District Service Delivery Monitoring System
  - Service User Feedback Survey
- Dissemination of guidelines for the establishment of new ODSCs
- Capacity development support to provincial and district authorities to implement Sam Sang under GPAR-CADEM Fund

7



#### 4. Key Improvement in governance reform (cont.)

##### 2. Rule of Law:

- Underwent the second Universal Periodic Review at the Human Rights Council in Geneva, The Lao PDR accepted fully or partially 107 Recommendations and will be implementing them
- Related to Sam Sang, 45 days- law training courses were conducted to key staff at the provincial and district level (40 intakes) and conducted other law training.
- Improved the organizational structure of district justice offices in 51 districts.

8



#### 4. Key Improvement in governance reform (cont.)

##### 3. People's Representation and Participation

- 35<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA)
- Start the *National Assembly Strategic Support Project* - to effectively exercise the oversight functions
- Civil society engagement with Government vis-à-vis NPA and Foundation Decree revision; input to the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) report; Round Table process, etc
- Six community radios in operation. By end 2014 additional two in Xayabouly & Saravan provinces

9



## II. Challenges and constraints

- The delay of revision of regulations related to the public administration and delegation of responsibilities to the local level leads to the delay of the implementation
- Limited no. of experience staff and budget to support and monitor the work at the local-grass root level
- Big capacity gap of local staff especially at village level and district level

10



### III. Priorities for enhancement of the governance system in the coming years

#### 1. Public Service Improvement

- Amendment to the 2003 Constitution
- Amendments to various laws and regulations to improve public administration
  - Law on Government, Law on Local Administration, law on Civil Service, Decree on State Enterprise Employee Management, Decree on Management and Protection of Religious Activities, Decree on Document Management and Decree on Organizational Structure Standard, etc.
  - Improving organizational structure by defining roles and functions of organizations at each level – relevant to Sam Sang direction
  - Civil service management – develop and improve regulations, staff planning, improve salary system and employee welfare, merit-based recruitment and retention policies for civil servants; developing a civil service registration database to ensure the Govt is able to keep track of the status of civil servants

11



### III. Priorities for enhancement of the governance system in the coming years (cont.)

#### 2. People's representation and participation

- Establishment of People's Assembly
- Consider and approve laws in governance area

#### 3. Rule of Law

- Legal Sector Master Plan
- Building capacity of judges, prosecutors and lawyers to reduce shortage in the number of existing legal professional in Lao PDR; Establishment of a national judicial training institute
- Enhance knowledge of citizens regarding laws and regulation and of their fundamental rights and obligations which affect their ability to comply with existing legal framework – aim to Sam Sang direction

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## Some solutions

- Continue to develop and improve laws-regulation including delegation of responsibility between central - local and province - district based on Sam Sang direction
- Finalize the master plan of civil servant development
- Capacity building for the local administration and its staff especially at village and districts
- Improve and enhance the participation from all sectors including private sector and civil society in service delivery at local level
- Support ministries concerned in fund mobilization

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THANK YOU

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**Annex 9 – Presentation: Enhancing partnership for effective development cooperation and better development results**



**Round Table Implementation Meeting 2014**  
*"Accelerating the achievement of the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP/MDGs  
and LDC Graduation"*

**Enhancing partnerships for effective  
development cooperation and better  
development results**

14<sup>th</sup> November 2014  
Don Chan Palace Hotel

**By H.E Dr. Kikeo CHANTHABOURY**  
**Vice Minister of Planning and Investment**

1

## **Presentation Outline**

- I. Effective development cooperation framework in Lao PDR**
- II. Achievements for fostering effective development cooperation in 2014**
- III. Results of the VDCAP implementation**
- IV. The way forwards**

2

**II. Achievements for fostering effective development cooperation in 2014**

1. Create common understanding in the implementation of the Decree No. 75/PM dated 20 March 2009 on ODA Management and utilization (national and provincial levels)
2. Develop the 2014 RTIM Road Map based on the RTP Retreat – April 2014
3. Conduct the revision of the VDCAP in according to regional and global development contexts
4. Develop the VDCAP monitoring framework which is integrated into SWGs activities to ensure common understanding among various stakeholders.
5. Create enabling environment for local authorities and private sector to continuously engage and participate in the Round Table Process by organizing the Round Table Provincial Consultation in Saravane (September 2014) and the Lao Business Forum which will be organised at the end of this year.

**II. Achievements for fostering effective development cooperation in 2014**

6. Initiate a discussion on the Implications of the Programme-based Approaches (PBA)
7. Create a plan for the Development Finance and Aid Assessment (DFAA) study
8. Carry out an internal government discussion to review the monitoring system and improve SWGs mechanism
9. Organise an Internal government consultation on the current process and system for ODA information management
10. Participate in various global and regional events on partnerships for effective development cooperation (Mexico, South Korea and Germany)

### III. Results of the VDCAP implementation

#### 3.1 Ownership

##### Achievements

- The Government takes lead in formulating the NSEDP in each cycle including implementation, monitoring and reporting especially active participation of the involvement of line Ministries, SWGs and Provincial authorities

##### Challenges

- Although the Government had allocated budget in accordance to the plan, the linkage with the Mid-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) remains a work in progress
- Active participation and coordination mechanism of related stakeholders in the implementation of the 7<sup>th</sup> NSEDP and the formulation of the 8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP need to be strengthened

### III. Results of the VDCAP implementation

#### 3.2 Alignment

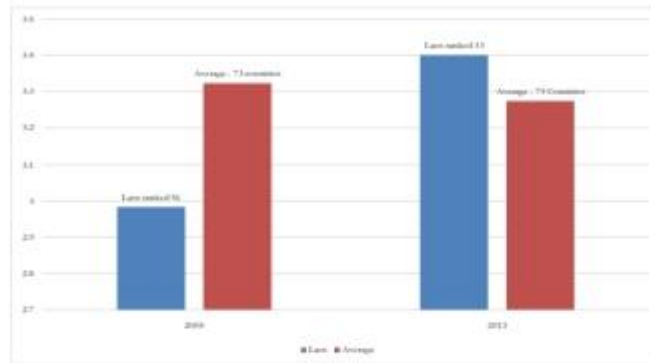
##### Achievements

- There is an effort to strengthen the country systems supported and coordinated by DPs
  - Among 70 odd-developing countries, Lao PDR' World Bank Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA) score improved from 2.98 in 2005 to 3.40 in 2013
  - Over this period, Lao PDR went from one of the lowest ranked developing countries (in the bottom quarter) to being ranked slightly above average. Improvements can be seen across the board.

##### Challenges

- Possibility of DPs adopting /integrating with the national procedures and systems
- Stronger efforts by the government to strengthen the use of country system

**CPIA scores, Laos and developing country averages (2005 and 2013)**



### III. Results of the VDCAP implementation

#### 3.3 Harmonization

##### Achievements

- Attempt to implement Programme-Based Approaches (PBAs) has increased
- Joint missions – increased from 18% in 2007 – 26% in 2011 – more than 50% in 2013 (estimation)
- Coordinated analytical work – 25% in 2007 – 53% in 2011 – over 55% in 2013 (estimation)

##### Challenges

- PBAs have become a new challenge for the Government and DPs
  - Common understanding
  - Reporting
  - Implementation arrangement (the budgetary framework)
- DPs needs to commit to use country systems.

### III. Results of the VDCAP implementation

#### 3.4 Managing for results

##### Achievements

- Focus of development cooperation has been based on the NSEDP goals including MDGs
- The annual NSEDP M&E framework has been developed
- DPs and other stakeholders such as private sector and CSOs have been taking part in the NSEDP formulation and review process.

##### Challenges

- There is a need to strengthen monitoring and evaluation process for NSEDP implementation (approach, system, tools, etc)
- Human and technical capacity limitations (quality and quantity)
- The progress reports by stakeholders need to be better prepared
- Quality of data and various reports are still limited.

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### III. Result of the VDCAP implementation

#### 3.5 Mutual Accountability

##### Achievements

- Mutual assessment structure has been in place at the national, sectoral and provincial levels (the RTMs/RTIMs including provincial consultation, SWGs, and the VDCAP)
- There has been a strong commitment to promote south-south cooperation and mutual accountability at country and regional levels.

##### Challenges

- To be well prepared for information sharing and movement toward International Aid Transparency Initiatives (IATI)
- Delegation of power and responsibility for decision making from headquarters of some DPs to country offices still limited.

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#### **IV. The way forward**

- **On-going efforts are needed to ensure that partnerships for effective development cooperation are inclusive as much as possible – we need to have a shared principle to ensure inclusiveness of development**
- **Enhance consultations among public-private dialogues to create an enabling environment for investment and business operation**
- **Continue active consultations among stakeholders to enhance the use of country systems for better results**
- **Continue improving Information and knowledge sharing which will increase capacity and transparency, for instance**
  - **common understanding of PBAs, PIUs, etc for fostering partnership for effective development cooperation**
  - **Improve system and mechanism of disclosing ODA information and monitoring across agencies**

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#### **IV. The way forward (cont'd)**

- **The SWGs' Secretariats is strengthened to ensure a good coordination and linkage to the Round Table Process.**
- **Considering the key discussion points from the RTMs/RTIMs including provincial consultation, and SWGs which need to be reflected and fed into the development of M&E framework of the next NSEDP**
- **Jointly prepare and organize the 12<sup>th</sup> High Level Round Table Meeting to present the 8<sup>th</sup> NSEDP including strengthening the mechanism of the Round Table Process**

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## **Annex 10 – Lists of 2014 RTIM Participants**

**List of Government Participants**  
**2014 Round Table Implementation Meeting, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2014, Don Chan Palace Hotel**

| No.   | Name and Surname                    | Position                                      | Organization  | Email Address  |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| <b><u>National Assembly</u></b>                   |                                     |   |   |  |
| 1.  | H.E. Dr. Kukeo Akkhamoontry         | Chairman                                      | Foreign Affairs Committee   | <a href="mailto:kukeo@hotmail.com">kukeo@hotmail.com</a>                               |
| 2.  | H.E. Dr. Souvanpheng Boupphanouvong | Chairman                                      | Economy Planning and Finance Committee  |  |
| 3.  | H.E. Mr Khamxao Kayxong             | Vice Chairman                                 | Ethnic Affairs Committee  |  |
| 4.  | H.E.Mr. Kisinth Sinphanngam         | Vice Chairman                                 | Law committee   |  |
| 5.  | Mr. Viengthavisone Thephachanh      | Director General                              | Department of Foreign Affaire   | <a href="mailto:viengthavisone@na.gov.la">viengthavisone@na.gov.la</a>                 |
| 6.  | Ms. Souphaphone Donesavanh          | Officer                                       | Department of Social  |  |
| <b><u>Government's Office</u></b>                 |                                     |   |   |  |
| 7.  | H.E. Mr. Bounheuang Douangphachanh  | Minister to the Government's Office, Chairman | Lao National Committee for Rural Development and Poverty Eradication/ National Regulatory Authority |  |
| 8.  | H.E. Ms. Bundith Prathoumvanh       | Acting President                              | National Commission for the Advancement of Women  |  |
| 9.  | Ms. Chongchith Chantharanonh        | Acting Director General                       | National Commission for Mothers and Children  | <a href="mailto:chongchith@gmail.com">chongchith@gmail.com</a>                         |
| 10.   | Mr. Bounphamith Somvichith          | Deputy Director General                       | National Regulatory Authority   | <a href="mailto:bounphamith.somvichith@gmail.com">bounphamith.somvichith@gmail.com</a> |
| <b><u>Ministry of Planning and Investment</u></b> |                                     |   |   |  |
| 11.   | H.E. Mr. Somdy Douangdy             | Minister                                      | Ministry of Planning and Investment   |  |
| 12.   | H.E. Dr. Bounthavy Sisouphanthong   | Vice Minister                                 | Ministry of Planning and Investment   | <a href="mailto:boun_ss@yahoo.com">boun_ss@yahoo.com</a>                               |

|                                    |                                |   |   |  |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|---|--|
| 13.                                | H.E. Ms. Khamchan Vongseneboun | Vice Minister                                     | Ministry of Planning and Investment         | <a href="mailto:noiysl@hotmail.com">noiysl@hotmail.com</a>                 |
| 14.                                | H.E. Dr. Kikeo Chanthaboury    | Vice Minister                                     | Ministry of Planning and Investment         | <a href="mailto:kikeo_c@yahoo.com">kikeo_c@yahoo.com</a>                   |
| 15.                                | Dr. Samaychanh Boupha          | Head of Lao Statistics Bureau                     | Lao Statistics Bureau                       |  |
| 16.                                | Ms. Phonesaly Souksavath       | Deputy Head of Lao Statistics Bureau              | Lao Statistics Bureau                       |  |
| 17.                                | Mr. Vichit Xindavong           | Assistant Minister                                | Lao-China Cooperation Commission            | <a href="mailto:vichit_x@hotmail.com">vichit_x@hotmail.com</a>             |
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**List of DP Participants**  
**2014 Round Table Implementation Meeting, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2014, Don Chan Palace Hotel Vientiane**

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| 17. Mrs Aurélie BELLON         | Officer, Cooperation and Cultural Section      | Embassy, Vientiane, Lao PDR       |

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| 57. Lee MINJAE                    | Deputy Resident Representative | KOICA, Vientiane, Lao PDR  |
| 58. Boram Koh                     |                                |  |
| 59. Seo Hye Seung                 |                                |  |

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| 63. SCOTT LOH CHEE HEONG             | Chargé d'Affaires                    | Embassy, Vientiane, Lao PDR |
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| 66. Mr. Toura Vanh Hook              | Communication Officer                | Embassy, Bangkok, Thailand  |
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| 73. Mr. Michael Toyryla              | Political and Economic Section Chief | Embassy, Vientiane, Lao PDR |
| 74. Mr. Curtis Borden                | USAID Representative                 | USAID, Vientiane, Lao PDR   |
| <b>United Kingdom</b>                |                                      |                             |
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| 76. Ms. Alexandra Needham            | Deputy Head of Mission               | Embassy, Vientiane, Lao PDR |
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| 77. HOANG XUAN HAI                   | Minister                             | Embassy, Vientiane, Lao PDR |
| 78. Vu Van Hoa                       | First Secretary                      | Embassy, Vientiane, Lao PDR |
| 79. Tran Hong Duong                  | Third Secretary                      | Embassy, Vientiane, Lao PDR |

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### Asian Development Bank (ADB)

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| 81. Mr. Barend Frielink            | Deputy Country Director | Lao Resident Mission Vientiane, Lao PDR |
| 82. Mr. Phantoueth Louangraj       | Sr. Economic Officer    | Lao Resident Mission Vientiane, Lao PDR |
| 83. Mr. Soulinthone Leuangkhamsing | Sr. Economic Officer    | Lao Resident Mission Vientiane, Lao PDR |

### World Bank ( WB )

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| 86. Ms. Soudalath Silaphet   | Country Officer          | World Bank, Vientiane, Lao PDR |
| 87. Mr. Phongsavanh Phomkong | Head of Office           | World Bank, Vientiane, Lao PDR |
| 88. Ms. Toumlham Luanglath   | Communication Specialist | World Bank, Vientiane, Lao PDR |

### International Monetary Fund ( IMF )

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| 89. Mr. Sanjay Kalra | Resident Representative for Lao PDR | Vietnam |
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### International Fund for Agriculture Development ( IFAD )

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| 91. Rik Delnoye       |                |                          |

## INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

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| 94. Mr. Terence D. Jones         | Policy Advisor   | UNDP, Vientiane, Lao PDR |
| 95. Mr. Glenn Dodge              | Head of UN RCO   | UNDP, Vientiane, Lao PDR |
| 96. Ms. Silavanh Vongphosy       | Assistance Resident Representative                       | UNDP, Vientiane, Lao PDR |
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| 107.   | Ms. Sommany Sihathep         | Assistant FAO Representative   | FAO, Vientiane, Lao PDR     |
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| 113.   | Ms. Julia Rees               | Deputy Representative  | UNICEF, Vientiane , Lao PDR |
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| 119.   | Mr. Buahom Sengkhomyong      | Chief Technical Advisor Lao PDR  | UNHABITAT, Vientiane        |
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| 128.  | Dr. Eunyoung Ko            | Technical Officer                   | WHO, Vientiane, Lao PDR   |
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