

Press Release

Meeting of Chairs and Co-Chairs of Sector Working Groups to prepare for the 13th High Level Round Table Meeting

Vientiane, 28 September 2020 –

2020 marks important key milestones of Lao national development agenda. It is a conclusion year for 8th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDP 2016-2020) and the formulation of the 9th NSEDP (2021-2025). 2020 also marks a year that Lao PDR is in the process of preparation the second National Voluntary Review Report of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These are the key agenda for the upcoming development cooperation forum called “the 13th High Level Round Table Meeting (HL-RTM)” which will be tentatively organised sometimes earlier 2021.

The preparation for this HL-RTM is carried out during the most difficult circumstance of our life time due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic which has already imposed a major shock on Lao PDR, with effects that are likely to be felt for years to come. The impact of this pandemic comes on the top of exiting challenges of our country due to the two consecutive years (2018 and 2019) of major natural disasters.

To help prepare for this important HL-RTM, on 28th September 2020 the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI), on behalf of the Government of Lao PDR, organized a meeting among chairs and co-chairs of 10 Sector Working Groups and other partners to discuss various aspects of the HL-RTM, in particular, the preparation of the 9th NSEDP and how the COVID-19 has impact of the preparation of the plan.

This meeting is chaired by His Excellency Dr. Kikeo Chanthaboury, Vice Minister of Planning and Investment, and co-chaired by Ms. Sara Sekkenes, the UN Resident Coordinator in Lao PDR. About 100 participants (vice ministers, director generals, and high ranking government officials from line Ministries, Ambassadors, Heads of international organizations and other relevant development partners in Lao PDR) attended this important event. Through a half-day meeting, participants discussed various matters relating to the HL-RTM preparation, the development of the 9th NSEDP and the impact of COVID-19.

The meeting was carried out very successfully in a productive environment with constructive comments and discussion. As a result, the meeting agreed and set out the overall aim for the HL-RTM to promote coherence and multi-stakeholder partnerships during the time of COVID-19 for implementation of the 9th NSEDP for realizing LDC graduation and achieving SDGs. The Chair of this meeting highlighted the importance of the HL-RTM as its outcomes will strategically guide the finalization of the 9th NSEDP including its implementation and longer term development vision toward 2030 and beyond. While the Co-chair also stated that three important factors for the months ahead for the successful Round Table Meeting, which are 1) solid and credible five-year plan (9th NSEDP), 2) a robust implementation structure and 3) a sound strategic financing strategy.

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