



Progress of the Implementation of the Results from the Roundtable Meeting 2022

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I. The Elaboration of the Results of the Roundtable Meeting 2022

- The Ministry of Planning and Investment has reported on the results of the Roundtable Meeting 2022 to the Government. In the resulting note Nr. 272/PMO, dated 28 February 2023, the Prime Minister's Office has tasked the Ministry of Planning and Investment to coordinate with other concerned ministries to elaborate on the results of the Roundtable Meeting 2022 and formulate a roadmap for the year 2023.
- The Ministry of Planning and Investment issued a formal note Nr. 1696/MPI, dated 10 July 2023 to concerned ministries regarding the elaboration of the results of the Roundtable Meeting 2022 according to their respective mandates.

II. Progress of the Implementation of the Results of the Roundtable Meeting 2022

1. Implementation of the National Socio-Economic Development Plan for the year 2023

- The Order NR. 19/CCLPRP by the Politburo of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party and the Order Nr. 13/GOL by the Government were issued to address the pressing Economic and Financial challenges, particularly the issues related to Inflation, Exchange Rates, Prices and Foreign Debts. In addition, the implementation of the National Agenda to address the Economic and Financial hardship has continued in 2023 and an economic growth rate of 4.2% was achieved.
- In accordance with the Decision Nr. 93/PM, dated 14 July 2023, an emphasis was given on the promotion of local production potentials to substitute import and promote export through the formulation of policies on low interest credits and interest compensation for domestically produced goods and processed goods for export.
- The Legal Framework and Revenue Collection mechanisms were improved for increased efficiency: 70% of all eligible businesses have been integrated to the Value-Added Tax system, the modernization of revenue management through TaxRis has been expanded to 148 districts and 6 Special Economic Zones.
- The Report on the Midterm Review of the 9th National Socio-Economic Development Plan was successfully completed following close consultation with line ministries, local authorities and developments partners. The report was endorsed during the 6th Ordinary Session of the 11th National Assembly in early November 2023 through the Resolution of the National Assembly Nr. 118/NA, dated 21 November 2023.

2. 9th NSEDP Financing Strategy

- A High-Level meeting on “the Monitoring, Management and Coordination of the Financing Strategy Implementation” was organized under the chairmanship of the Minister of Planning and Investment with the participation of vice-ministers, director generals and deputy director-generals. The Meeting has agreed on the formulation of a joint programme, a joint secretariat and a reporting mechanism to the Government. Currently, the Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg is considering providing support to the implementation of 8 out of 54 action related to Green Financing under the Financing Strategy.

3. Lao PDR Economic Resilience Framework

- Consultations were held with line ministries regarding the integration of the 5 pillars into the priorities activities addressing the Economic and Financial hardships as outlined under National Agenda as well as the integration of the 9th NSEDP Financing Strategy and the Smooth Transition Strategy for LDC Graduation which is outlined in their respective documents.

4. Effective Development Cooperation

- The ODA Management Information System (ODA-MIS) database has been improved and integrated with a number of existing databases of concerned line ministries.
- The Department of International Cooperation, as secretariat of the Roundtable Process, has conducted an electronic survey to consolidate views and recommendations regarding the improvement of the Roundtable Process including the 10 Sector Working Groups. Guidelines on the Roundtable Process as well as the Sector Working Groups were also created to serve as reference for future implementation.
- The monitoring mechanism (Quarterly meeting, annual meeting) has been integrated into the workplan for 2024 of the Department of International Cooperation in order to intensify coordination, information exchange and reporting of the Sector Working Groups leading to each Roundtable Meeting.
- A review of the implementation of the Vientiane Declaration on Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation with all 10 Sector Working Groups is planned.
- The 4th Survey on Effective Development Cooperation has been conducted with the engagement of all stakeholders, particularly the Government, Development Partners, the private sector, civil society organizations and others through the monitoring and reporting of the implementation of all 8 principles under the Vientiane Declaration on Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation;

5. Smooth Transition Strategy for LDC Graduation

- The Government issued the Decree on the Endorsement and Promulgation of the Smooth Transition Strategy for LDC Graduation (2022-2026 and the vision until 2023) Nr. 386/PM, dated 25 December 2023.

6. Public Finance Management Reform

- Improved custom revenue management through merging National Single Window and ASYCUDA to NSWA+, implementing the Smart Tax, Improving commission and service fee collection system at the international border (Easy Pass).
- Improved tax collection management through development and improvement of the Land Tax Management System, Road Tax, AMIS, M-Money, and TaxRIS Dashboard Monitoring.

7. Human Resource Development in the Education Sector

- The Government issued the Decision on the policies and measures to address the shortages of teaching staff, school dropout and the promotion of vocation education Nr. 09/GOL, dated 17 July 2023, the Decree on the Development of Teaching Staff and Human Resources in Education Nr. 202/GOL, dated 12 May 2023 and the Decree on Training and Vocational Education Nr.194/GOL, dated 19 April 2023.
- The Planning and Budgeting Committee (PBC) and the Teacher Allocation Committee (TAC) are encouraged to have regular consultations and report to the Education Sector Working Group.
- A new curriculum on learning and teaching was established by the Department of Teacher Education (DTE) and training were conducted at central and local levels.

8. Health Sector

- Expanding health network to focus hard to reach areas, Staffing and allocating the necessary resources to prioritized remote rural areas; Focusing on health promotion works; Strengthening the monitoring system and respond to the outbreak of covid-19 and other seasonal diseases in a timely manner, improve the provision of health insurance and social insurance treatment services; Completing the Human Resources for Health Development Strategy by 2030.
- Focusing on achieving the target of 11 indicators approved by the National Assembly, including the SDGs target in 2030 by coordinating with relevant sectors in central and sub-national levels, neighboring countries and development partners in order to raise funding and improve technical support for the implementation of health sector priorities. According to the efforts in implementing the health sector priorities in 11 months in 2023, 8 indicators are achieved and 3 indicators are potentially not achievable such as, delivery with skilled birth attendance , Penta 3 vaccination rates, and universal health coverage rates.
- Coordinating with related sectors (Ministry of Planning and Investment, Ministry of Finance, National Assembly) through several consultation meetings at various levels, in 2023 the Ministry of Finance approved an additional budget of 50 billion Kip to the health insurance fund that normally receives 180 billion kip; Established a new public health law, revising the law on health insurance; conducting the tax revenue analysis through pro-health taxes to use the income from the tobacco control fund in the public health sector budget.

9. Labor Skill Development and Access to Employment

- A total of 8 projects with an amount of 25.343.015 was mobilized from development partners, international organizations, education institutions and other agencies in form of scholarships in order to develop human resources.
- Access to employment has been facilitated through the expansion of Employment service units in 26 districts, 6 provinces. State and private enterprises, special economic zones and investment projects were encouraged to provide access to employment and access to domestic and international labor markets. Relating to the to the National Agenda, employment was created for 150.469 people, 80.203 women, surpassing the annual plan by 92,41 % (78.200 people).
- The Law on Employment was endorsed by the government as per Presidential Decree Nr. 093/PRE, dated 30 August 2023; other laws related to labor skill development are partially completed.
- In line with the National Agenda, skills for labor without profession, labor looking to change profession, unemployed labor and newly employed or promoted labor with a total of 10.783 people, 4.371 women have been developed, surpassing the annual plan by 34,79% (8.000 people), labor tests according to national labor standards for 32 professions were conducted and further test by labor units were encouraged for 472 people, 361 women equivalent to 63,78% of the annual plan (740 people).

10. Tourism and Culture

- Eco and cultural tourism development was intensified and “Visit Laos” Year was announced to provide incentives for tourists to visit Lao PDR in larger numbers, spend more time and more money.
- Created facilities, conditions, regulations, advertisement and new attractions to provide incentives for tourists to visit Lao PDR in larger numbers.

11. Good Governance

- Enabling environment for local civil society operation has been improved. For instance, average time to register NPAs has been improving from 595 (2018) to 151 working days (2022/2023). MoHA has declared further revising the CSO regulatory framework as one of their top priorities.
- improved access to justice: The Legal Aid Webpage was recently developed and added to the MOJ's main website (moj.gov.la).
- Guideline and instruction 77/PM date 02 March 2023 have been finalized and disseminated across the country for the reform which includes the transfer of financial resources and budgetary powers to local governments.
- The establishment of a national guideline and communication manual for social and behavioral change related to violence against women demonstrates the government's commitment to addressing this critical issue.
- released of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for responding to gender-based violence (GBV) in the justice sector and establishing referral pathways for survivors of GBV.

12. Trade and PSWG

- **Improving the business environment**

- Streamlining procedures for starting a business

- Revision of the Enterprise Law and subsequent procedural reforms resulted in reduction of average time for starting a business from 173 days in 2020 to 30 days in 2022;
- Good progress is being made in developing online business registration system – expected to launch in July 2024;
- 14 sector operating licenses were streamlined, 06 more licenses are scheduled to be streamlined by the end of 2024;
- Good progress is being made to reduce list of activities subject to investment license.

- Upgraded Lao Trade Portal, launched IP filing system, Lao Law Mobile Application, Lao Licensing Portal to improve SME access to regulatory information.

- **Enhancing SME competitiveness**

- Provided access to long term affordable finance for over 200 SMEs;

- Provided TA to over 1,000 SMEs in areas of business planning, strategy development, standard upgrading, marketing and others;

- Development of online training platforms for SMEs;

- Development of export roadmaps for coffee and wood processing sectors;

- Development of guidelines to facilitate export to EU under EBA scheme.

- **Improving Trade Policy and Trade Facilitation**

- Development of E-Stat to update trade statistics;

- Promoting use of risk management and paperless procedures in import/export:

- Approval of the standard operating procedures for joint risk management framework;

- Uploading of risk profiles into the ASYCUDA system, reduction of the percentage of red channel selections from more than 80% to less than 60% by LCD;

- Development and uploaded risk profiles for food, drug, plants and animals;

- Completed merger of National Trade Facilitation Committee and National Transport Committee;

- Good progress in implementing WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement.

13. Agriculture

- Universal Measures to address the impact of COVID-19 pandemic were identified, particularly policies to promote agricultural production for food security and commercial agriculture with emphasis on quantity and quality and meeting demands of domestic consumption and export.
- Capacity Building for officials in agriculture sector in terms of encouraging Husbandry, farming and access to public infrastructure and natural resources was intensified to ensure the people livelihood.

14. Drugs

- A number of laws and regulations were improved to support Socio-Economic governance while shortcomings within society were reduced, in particular the National Agenda to address drug issues.

15. Natural Resources and Environment

- The process of issuing Environment Certificates in accordance with the Decree Nr. 389/PM were improved wherein the time and steps for consideration of Environmental Impacts of Investment projects were reduced.
- Successfully completed trainings, inspection of 52 investment projects for environmental impacts and addressed environmental emergencies in collaboration with concerned provincial and district authorities.
- Investors of 178 projects were encouraged to strictly adhere to their environmental and social commitments as stated in the environment certificates through inspection, notes, claims and meetings.
- A number of laws and regulations were created or revised to serve as references for Land Management.
- The Law on Land was further elaborated and sublegislations were improved.

Thank you for your attention