

## Press Release

Vientiane, Lao PDR ( 3 July 2024) —The Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) and United Nations and UNDP today, convened a meeting of Chairs and Co-Chairs of the Sector Working Groups (SWGs), which is Chaired by H.E Mme Phonevanh Outhavong, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Planning and Investment and Co-Chaired by Mr. Bakbodir Burkhanov, UN Resident Coordinator to Lao PDR with participants of Vice Minister from line ministries, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Ambassadors, representatives from Embassies and Head of International Organization. It is the first meeting of all Chairs and Co-Chairs of SWGs to discuss and consult each other on matters relating to effective development cooperation and how the work of SWGs contributes to the overall development agenda of the country. This meeting is also an opportunity for all 10 SWGs to share a common understanding about the upcoming Round Table Implementation Meeting (RTIM) which will be tentatively organized in November 2024.

H.E Mme Phonevanh stated that it is an opportunity that Line Ministries and Development Partners who Chairs and Co-Chairs SWGs will collectively hear more from and brief each other on great important work of all sector working group and sub-sector working groups in light of the SWGs. The Co-Chair of the meeting, Mr. Bakbodir Burkhanov UN Resident Coordinator to Lao PDR echoed what the Vice Minister highlighted and stressed the importance of a sharp priority on making the best use of all the development resources including ODA since new challenges when countries around the world are grappling with rapidly rising costs of everyday essentials and the economic and financial difficulty that the country is facing are known by all of us, and thus today we take the time to reflect on the lessons we have all learn from the past year and reviews of what working well under SWGs, areas that have been raised as potentially benefitting from strengthening, and ideas on possible ways ahead.

During the meeting, the Department of Planning provided key Presentation on the 10<sup>th</sup> NSEDP (2026-2030) process and timeline, the Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Planning and Investment provided The Progress Update on the Dissemination of the Round Table Implementation Meeting Results 2023 and Draft of RTIM 2024. Then, the floor was opened for plenary discussion for all participants. A key takeaway highlight from today's meeting is the importance of the work of SWGs and its better link with the Round Table and Implementation Meetings under the framework of the Round Table Process.

For more information, please contact:

Mr. Santi Songnavong

Acting Head of International Organization Division, Department of International Cooperation  
Ministry of Planning and Investment.

Tel: +85620 22 223 989 Email: [songnavong@gmail.com](mailto:songnavong@gmail.com)