

Press Release

High-Level Meeting of Sector Working Groups and Development Partners Ahead of 14th High-Level Round Table Meeting 2025

Vientiane, Lao PDR – 9 October 2025 – The International Finance and Cooperation Department, Ministry of Finance, in collaboration with the United Nations in Lao PDR, convened the High-Level Meeting of Chairs and Co-Chairs of Sector Working Groups (SWGs) today to engage development partners and advance preparations for the 14th High-Level Round Table Meeting (HL-RTM), scheduled for 19 November 2025.

The meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Soulivath Souvannachoumklam, Deputy Minister of Finance, and Mr. Bakhodir Burkhanov, UN Resident Coordinator, and brought together chairs and co-chairs of SWGs, development partners, and UN colleagues.

In his opening remarks, Deputy Minister Soulivath highlighted the importance of building a shared understanding among line ministries and development partners to ensure effective HL-RTM preparations.

“Today’s meeting is an important opportunity for line ministries and development partners to exchange lessons, build common understanding, and ensure substantive preparation for the 14th High-Level Round Table Meeting. Efficient resource mobilization, public financial management reform, and coordination across Sector Working Groups are critical to successfully implementing the 10th National Socio-Economic Development Plan,” said the Deputy Minister.

UN Resident Coordinator, Bakhodir Burkhanov emphasized the significance of the 10th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSED 2026–2030) for a resilient, self-reliant, and sustainable Lao PDR, highlighting the need to align the plan with the Smooth Transition Strategy as the country prepares to graduate from Least Developed Country status.

“The 10th NSED 2026–2030 is a crucial roadmap for a resilient, self-reliant and sustainable Lao PDR. As the country prepares to graduate from LDC status, we must ensure the plan is well-resourced, inclusive and forward-looking, including in how it promotes investments in jobs, youth, resilience and digital transformation,” said Mr. Burkhanov.

He acknowledged the support of the Government of New Zealand for UNDP’s National Planning for Inclusive Development (NPFID) project and highlighted UN technical support through the inter-agency Learning, Evaluation & Data Group (LEAD) and the development of an M&E dashboard to strengthen results-based planning and transparency.

The meeting included presentations on the fifth draft of the 10th NSED 2026–2030, the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, and the Draft Financing Strategy, delivered by Mr. Sychantha Thammavong, Acting Director General of Planning, Ministry of Finance. Mr. Vongkhamheng Vongthachack, Director General of the International Finance and Cooperation Department, updated participants on HL-RTM preparations and requested SWG support for the pre-

consultation meeting. Mr. Kouthong Sommala, Deputy Director, provided updates on the Vientiane Declaration III and Action Plan, emphasizing the need for efficient implementation mechanisms.

The meeting concluded with a recap by Mr. Bakhodir Burkhanov, reiterating the importance of collaborative efforts in advancing Lao PDR's development agenda. The 14th HL-RTM is expected to serve as a critical milestone in aligning national priorities with the Sustainable Development Goals and securing the necessary financing for their realization.

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