

Concept Note

Sector Working Groups -Chair & Co-Chair Meeting

Background

The Lao PDR Round Table Process is a national development cooperation and policy dialogue forum established in 2000. It serves as a platform for the government and development partners to discuss and agree on national development priorities and strategies. The process involves high-level meetings, implementation meetings, and Sector Working Groups (SWGs) to coordinate actions and ensure effective development cooperation, as set out in the Vientiane Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (VD) and its Action Plan (VDCAP, 2016–2025).

The Department International Finance and Cooperation of the Ministry of Finance (previously the Department of International Cooperation of the Ministry of Planning and Investment) functions as an overall coordinating agency (RTP Secretariat) and manages the meetings of SWG Chairs and Co-Chairs. The RTP is guided by the globally agreed principles on effective development cooperation defined by the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC), including host government ownership of development priorities, focus on results, inclusive partnerships and transparency and mutual accountability.

The Sector Working Groups are led by the Government and Co-chaired by a bilateral or multilateral development partner. They include representatives of line ministries, national institutions, development partners, civil society and private sector working in the sector. There are currently 10 Sector Working Groups, which facilitate in-depth consultation and coordination of the development efforts of stakeholders in the following sectors: health, education, governance, infrastructure, macroeconomics, trade and private sector, UXO/mine action, illicit drug control, agriculture and rural development, and natural resources management and the environment. The SWGs serve as key links between national plans and policies, and local progress.

Round Table Implementation Meetings (RTIM) are held annually. They provide a platform for dialogue between the Government and its partners on the implementation of Lao PDR's five-year national socio-economic development plans (NSEDP), including monitoring of progress and challenges, and addressing emerging issues.

High-Level Round Table Meetings (HL-RTM) are held every five years, coinciding with the final year of the current NSEDP. Chaired by the Prime Minister, they provide a high-level platform to review and discuss the progress achieved in the current cycle, present and discuss the next five-year NSEDP, and mobilize resources for its implementation.

The Round Table Process plays a crucial role in ensuring that development efforts are aligned with national priorities and that development partners are effectively contributing to the country's progress. The process is designed to be inclusive, transparent, and results-oriented, fostering strong partnerships for sustainable development.

2025 is the last year of implementation of the 9th NSEDP. A High-Level Round Table Meeting will be organized in November 2025 to review achievements and challenges and present to the Lao PDR's next 10th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDP 2026-2030), which

coincide with the final five years for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Other key milestones in 2025 include the update of Lao PDR's Nationally Determined Contribution to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change (NDC 3.0) and the launch of the next phase of the Vientiane Declaration (VDCAP 2026-2030), while preparations are underway for the country to graduate from Least Developed Country status in 2026.

The meeting of the Chairs and Co-Chairs of Sector Working Groups with development partners forms part of the preparations of the High-Level Round Table Meeting.

Objectives

The main objective of the meeting is to share progress in the formulation of the 10th NSEDP and its M&E framework and Financing Strategy, including updates on Development Partners' feedback and contributions to the process, and the preparation of the High-Level Round Table Meeting.

In addition to the Chairs and Co-Chairs of Sector Working Groups, representatives from line ministries and representatives from Development Partners are invited to participate in the meeting.