COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT UNDP COUNTRY PROGRAMME DOCUMENT FOR LAO PDR

Second regular session 2021

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| **Comments by Germany** | **UNDP Response** |
| In general, a well elaborated program. It is noted positively, that UNDP will focus on a limited number of critical and targeted interventions, as this will improve the impact and efficiency of UNDP’s work. | The comment is well-noted. |
| UNDP’s cooperation with MPI and MOFA in order to include the SDGs in the 9th NSEDP is crucial for the development path of Laos. The policy advice on strengthening the links between planning and budgetary processes and developing an integrated national financing framework to achieve NSEDP goals and inclusive recovery is of particular importance, considering the COVID crisis. Laos is in need for this support and UNDP is well placed to lead this task together with the UN RC in collaboration with other development partners. | We agree with the importance of strengthening the links between planning and budgetary processes and will continue to work closely with MPI on this work, with the aim of developing over the coming years an integrated national financing framework to achieve a more inclusive and greener recovery, in line with the NSEDP goals. UNDP in Lao PDR looks forward to working with Germany in this area. |
| Germany welcomes UNDP’s support for vulnerable groups to gain increased access to vocational training (TVET) and may want to coordinate with other Development Partners, such as Germany who is a long standing partner of the Lao Government in the area of TVET. | We take note of the comment and will make sure to coordinate with Development Partners, including Germany, in the area of TVET. We also look forward to partnering with Germany in this area. |
| Germany welcomes UNDP’s engagement and support of the Government to implement and conduct a successful, low-carbon, socially inclusive green growth strategy in urban and rural areas. As Germany co-chairs the Natural resources and Environment Sector Working Group, we would welcome the expertise and participation of UNDP in this group. | We take note of the comment and look forward to participate in the Natural resources and Environment Sector Working Group co-chaired by Germany. |
| **Comments by the United States of America** | **UNDP Response** |
| We strongly encourage UNDP to conduct follow-up discussions with all stakeholders in country, including the bilateral donors on a number of issues in the draft CPD, including:   * Type of interventions on COVID 19 recovery would be used, apart from just acknowledging this in the policy. * Green/pro poor growth policies, and how to integrate resilience to any future of pandemic or unexpected shocks. * Governance pillar’s ambition and scope, ministry partners and geographical locations. * what types of interventions are planned with respect to output 3.2, government capacities to design, implement and monitor the law, especially on the law enforcement? * The target number of people using Legal Aid services in 2026 seems different from place to place (35,000) Vs (100,0000 as per the indicator 3.3.3) | We take note of the comment and will conduct follow-up discussions with all stakeholders in country, including the USA, on the issues mentioned.  In the meantime, we would like to inform that as per amended para.11 of the CPD, we will support the Government of Lao PDR in developing, seek financing and implement pro-poor/green growth policies, including a comprehensive social protection system, that will also contribute to COVID-19 recovery and resilience to future shocks.  On the Governance pillar, UNDP will seek to work with the National Assembly and People’s Provincial Assemblies (PPAs) to build their capacity to fulfil their key responsibilities, including holding national and local government accountable and representing their constituents. UNDP will adopt a hubbing approach, by establishing three hubs, in the north, centre and south of the country, and will support these hubs to in turn support the capacity development of the 5-7 PPAs within the network of each hub. UNDP will also work with the Ministry of Justice, the Supreme People’s Court, the Office of the Supreme People’s Prosecutor and the Lao Bar Association to strengthen the justice system, with a focus on access to justice for the most vulnerable. While efforts will focus on developing capacity at the central level with the Department of Judicial Services Promotion, UNDP will also focus on five provinces for the provision of legal aid, including Savannakhet, Xieng Khouang, Sekong, Attapeu, and Luang Namtha. Finally, UNDP will continue to work with the Ministry of Home Affairs on local governance and engagement with citizens. Geographical locations of interventions will be decided in full consultations with national partners, building on district level initiatives under the previous phase of Public Administration Reform programming, including Phongsaly, Oudomxay, Saravane and Sekong provinces.  With regard to output 3.2., UNDP will support government entities to conduct assessments and consultations with relevant experts and stakeholders when designing or reviewing legislation and regulations. UNDP will also provide support and technical advice on dissemination of existing and new standards and what accompanying measures and/or specific trainings and skills are needed to support law implementation and enforcement. For instance, in order to support law implementation and enforcement in the area of gender-based violence, we are planning specialised trainings for legal aid providers and police officers.  On legal aid, the discrepancy in the figures has been resolved. |