

PRESS RELEASE



United Nations Development Programme

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UNDP support for Decree enabling local not-for-profit associations

The UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative in the Lao PDR, Ms Sonam Yangchen Rana, congratulated the Government on its new Decree on Associations, which will allow local not-for-profit associations to register and operate as independent entities for the first time.

By November this year, Lao citizens will be able to apply to form not-for-profit associations, after the Decree on Associations, signed on April 29 2009 by the Prime Minister Bouasone Bouphavanh, becomes effective within 180 days.

According to an announcement from State Administration and Development Department Deputy Director General, Mr Ampha Simmasone, who was involved in the decree drafting process, it provides a guideline for officials as they consider applications for the establishment of associations in the Lao PDR.

Mr Ampha said that under the decree, a group of two or more people can request formation of an association. Individuals seeking to establish an association operating in more than one province will be required to register their association with the Public Administration and Civil Service Authority (PACSA). Those seeking to operate within a single province can request the association's establishment from the relevant provincial authorities.

The Department plans to spend the next six months disseminating the decree and setting up organisations in both departmental and provincial administrations to begin the registration of associations in the country, and it anticipates processing of the first applications by the end of 2009.

This significant development in Lao civil society was supported through a close partnership between PACSA, Concern Worldwide and UNDP.

UNDP has supported PACSA in the decree drafting process since 2006, and has also provided complementary support in increasing understanding of civil society within government, exposure to international examples, and raising awareness in the provinces and community.

Note:

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