

Accelerating Regional Development

Enabling an Effective Integration of Lao PDR into ASEAN

Project ID : 00054101

Project Description

Since joining the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in July 1997, Lao PDR has emphasized the importance of full integration into ASEAN through active participation in economic, political, security and socio-cultural affairs. Economic cooperation, in particular, and the inclusion in the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) is seen as crucial for the development of the country.

However, full integration poses various challenges for Laos. Among the most significant include: increasing the capacity of the Government of Laos to manage the process of integration, analyzing the impacts of AFTA and other Free Trade Agreements currently under negotiation and finding ways to achieve maximum benefits from ASEAN economic integration and other aspects of ASEAN integration. Increasing understanding among local officials, business leaders and the general public in order that they are able to benefit from AFTA and other aspects of ASEAN integration is also another significant challenge for Laos.

During 2004 and 2005, Lao PDR held the Chair of the ASEAN Standing Committee. During this period, UNDP provided support to the Government of Laos through a 12-month Preparatory Assistance (PA) Project that delivered capacity building and technical assistance to meet the short-term needs of the Government. A further three-year cooperation project is designed to address the existing constraints.

Main Objectives and Activities

Main objectives

The project has developed to mitigate challenges above by assisting the government in achieving three outcomes:

- Increased national commitment to the process of ASEAN integration.
- Improved capacity to coordinate ASEAN affairs within the Government of Lao PDR.
- Enhanced national capacity to assess policy implications of regional integration.

Main activities in 2009

- Conducting a study on the implications for Laos of the acceleration of the creation of an ASEAN community from 2020 to 2015.
- Organizing a workshop on narrowing the development gap through the Initiative for ASEAN Integration for CLMV (Cambodia Lao Myanmar and Vietnam) and a workshop on East Asian integration.
- Preparing a draft strategy paper on guiding economic integration into ASEAN.
- Preparing a draft strategy paper on narrowing the development gap through the Initiative for ASEAN Integration for CLMV.

Project Document

<http://www.undplao.org/whatwedo/Projects.php>

Key Results, Reports and Publications to date

- Significantly increased knowledge and understanding about ASEAN political, economic/AFTA at the central and provincial level through a series of dissemination workshops and seminars across the country.
- Improved coordination between Lao National ASEAN Secretariat, ASEAN Focal Points and provincial

Duration

Jan 2007 to Dec 2009

Location

National level

Project budget

Total budget: US\$500,774

Current year budget: : US\$220,428

Project Partners

Implementing Partner: The ASEAN Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), Lao PDR

Contributing donor(s)

UNDP TRAC

Project Delivery

US\$284,313.(as of Oct 2010)

Funding Shortfall

NA

administrators in security, political, economic and functional areas through regular monitoring visits and meetings.

- Regular consultations on deepening Laos' economic integration into ASEAN and the impact of AFTA have taken place in order to provide a broad guideline for establishing a strategic framework
- The study on the implication of the acceleration of the creation of the ASEAN Community from 2020 to 2015 is being conducted.

Thematic Area

Corporate Thematic Area: Poverty Reduction & MDGs

UNDAF Outcome 1: By 2011, the livelihoods of poor, vulnerable and food insecure populations are enhanced through sustainable development (within MDG framework)

CP Outcome 1.5: Enabled environment for growth with equity

CP output 1.5.2: Enhanced capacity building for service delivery and strengthened negotiation skills and policy advice on trade and poverty policies, including global and regional agreements such as the ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (AFTA), accession to the World Trade Organization and investment promotion (UNCTAD, ITC, UNIDO, UNDP)

Millennium Development Goal

Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.

Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development

Contact

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