

Aid Coordination and Aid Effectiveness through the Round Table Process

Enriching the Round Table Process for increased aid effectiveness and development results

Description

The UNDP programme of support to the Department of International Cooperation (DIC) within the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) is to further enrich the quality and effectiveness of the Round Table Process as a process for facilitating substantive dialogue on key development issues relevant to Official Development Assistance (ODA), sharing valuable knowledge and ideas for advancing development, developing common understandings on evolving national priorities, and further enhancing collaboration among all national and international development partners in the implementation of the National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSED) 2006-2010. Integral to this will be ensuring the mobilization and timely investment of sufficient ODA resources to support effective implementation of the National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSED), especially in the priority sectors.

Main Objectives and Activities in 2009

The programme of support will assist the Government of Laos in implementing activities geared towards achieving its key main objectives for 2009 as follows:

1. Building upon the momentum generated by the successful Round Table Implementation Meeting in November 2008, ensuring that the recommendations and comments made are properly followed up and implemented and at the same time identifying well in advance the objective and key substantive issues for dialogue, common understanding on national priorities and further increasing collaboration among all national and international development partners in the implementation of the National Socio Economic Development Plan;
2. Strengthening the Government's capacity to coordinate and monitor the effective implementation of the Country Action Plan of the Vientiane Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the integration of the Accra Agenda for Action;
3. Strengthening the capacity of the Department of International Cooperation within the Ministry of Planning and Investment to facilitate and coordinate the operation of more effective Sector Working Groups in promoting the implementation of National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSED) and the Vientiane Declaration Country Action Plan;
4. Establishing a new web-based ODA database system to generate development information on ODA which is more easily accessible, accurate, transparent and predictable in order to enable increased integration of ODA into national planning and budgeting and facilitate improved coordination and harmonization of activities;
5. Developing a comprehensive capacity development framework in order to help guide coordinated technical assistance in the area of aid coordination and aid effectiveness;
6. Using the Round Table Process as a forum to monitor MDG progress. In this regard, the second MDG progress report and the MDG strategy will be launched.

Duration

June 2007 to December 2010

Location

Vientiane Capital

Total budget

Total budget: USD 2,584,850

2009 year budget: USD 1,086,629

Available funds: USD 855,231

- UNDP allocation: USD 500,000
- Luxembourg: USD 355,231

Partners

Implementing Partner:

- Department of International Cooperation within the Ministry of Planning and Investment and;
- Department of International Organization within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MDG component)

Other Partners:

- EC (Technical Assistance to DIC), ADB (Technical Assistance to DIC under the framework of the Round Table Process)

Contributing donor

- Luxembourg – USD 584,850

Delivery

Expenditure from the start date till end of 2008: USD 854,221

Funding Shortfall

The total budget will be revised to reflect actual implementation. The current 2009 shortfall is USD 231,398, needed for the establishment of the comprehensive ODA database system and its roll-out plan.

Key Results, Reports and Publications to date

- The Round Table Process programme has strengthened the capacity of the Government of Lao PDR to manage ODA effectively; in particular it has been integrated into the structure of the Department of International Cooperation (DIC) within the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI). The Round Table Process has increased the level of aid coordination between the Government and its development partners through the adoption of the Vientiane Declaration on aid effectiveness (a localized version of the Paris Declaration) and its Country Action Plan. The adaptation and the development process was led by DIC and it was managed in a highly participatory manner with active involvement of nine government agencies and 16 international organizations including representation from International Non-Government Organizations (INGOs);
- First review of the implementation of the Vientiane Declaration Country Action Plan (VD CAP) was carried out in the second half of 2008 based upon which the revision of the VD CAP will be made, to reflect progress on implementation and integrate the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) for accelerating the implementation of the Paris Declaration;
- The Round Table Process has enabled substantive dialogues, research and resource mobilization on critical development issues. Among others, the global financial crisis, child malnutrition and natural resource based growth have been discussed and followed-up throughout the process;
 - On the financial crisis, the government appreciates development partners' concerns and has requested support to help the government to better analyze the situation and propose future concrete actions;
 - Malnutrition was a key theme at the 2008 RTIM. This issue was first raised at the RTIM 2007 at a time when the issue was not recognized. As a result of intensive dialogues the Government, with support from development partners, developed the National Nutrition strategy, adopted by the National Assembly in November 2008;
 - To enrich the dialogues within the Round Table Process, the Government of Lao PDR with support from UNDP has arranged a visit by Dr. Joseph Stiglitz, the Nobel Prize Winner in Economics, to Lao PDR in October 2007. His visit raised awareness about potential development implications of natural resource-based economic growth, and a follow up workshop on optimal contract negotiation and optimal flow of resource revenues was organized within the preparatory process for 2008 Round Table Implementation Meeting. As a result of intensive dialogue and discussion between the Government and development partners, the mining law is currently being reviewed for approval;
- Through monitoring mechanisms (annual review, discussion at Sector Working Groups, and the OECD DAC survey) established through the Round Table Process, the mutual accountability principle within the Vientiane Declaration Country Action Plan was strengthened. In this regard, a set of "building blocks" developed as a joint initiative with three neighboring countries, Cambodia, Laos and Viet Nam, was presented during the Accra High Level Forum 3 on Aid Effectiveness to help move the mutual accountability agenda forward;
- Initial consultations with line ministries have already taken place to discuss different options for aid information management systems. Comparisons between the different ODA databases used in other countries have been undertaken. Based on a full comprehensive study particularly on the regulatory requirements for the establishment of a comprehensive, web-based ODA database system, the Government of Laos has recently made a decision to develop a web based aid information management system. Preparatory work is under way to start setting up the ODA database system which will be rolled out in 2010.
- The dialogue with the Government through the Round Table Process has facilitated greater emphasis on MDGs and the social sector. The Government has confirmed its strong commitment through the Round Table Mechanism to integration of critical MDG-related programmes into the next five year plan (NSED 2011-2015) in order to ensure that MDGs are fully anchored in the National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSED).

Please refer to www.rtm.org.la for more information on the Round Table Process in Lao PDR and relevant publications

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 1.4 : Enhanced ownership and capacity for pro-poor planning, implementation and harmonized aid coordination, and disaster management

CP Output: External aid aligned with MDG-based national development priorities and capacity for ODA management increased through the Roundtable Process.

Millennium Development Goal

Ensuring that international aid is properly coordinated, aligned with national priorities and all MDGs, and effectively delivered is at the core of the Round Table process managed by the Government with UNDP support.

Contact

UNDP Programme Officer

Mr. Phanthanousone Khennavong (phanthanousone.khennavong@undp.org)
Lane Xang Avenue
P.O Box 345 – Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR
Tel: (856-21) 267736

Manager

Ms. Somboun Ounavong (osisomboun@yahoo.com)
Deputy Director General - Department of International Cooperation
Ministry of Planning and Investment
Tel: (856-21) 22 3760

National Director

Mr. Somchit Inthamith (somchith57@yahoo.com)
Director General - Department of International Cooperation
Ministry of Planning and Investment
Tel: (856-21) 22 3760