

# National Assembly Joint Programme

## Support to an Effective Lao National Assembly Joint Programme



### Programme Description

In this four-year joint programme six UN Agencies and other development partners join hands to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the National Assembly of the Lao PDR. The programme will support the National Assembly to further strengthen its legislative, oversight and representational capacity through initiatives targeted for assembly members, the committees, their support staff, and the assembly secretariat.

In 2007 the Lao government started exploring the option of re-establishing Local Councils and initial support was provided for study tours to the Philippines and China to study the design of and experiences with local councils in these countries. The project component on supporting the fact-finding and decision-making process for a possible re-establishment of local councils has three objectives, namely (1) to assess the rationale for establishing local councils (2) to clarify various options with regard to scope of competencies, level of devolution, institutional organization and operational system of the local council, and (3) to determine the steps for establishing local councils, which is detailed in a road map. A comprehensive options paper on the re-introduction of the councils has been formulated with technical assistance provided by UNDP and has been disseminated by the National Assembly to all relevant stakeholders.

Earlier this year (2010) the Lao central authorities have decided to uplift the NA provincial offices, improve their capacity to make the provincial administrations more effectively accountable before the people's representation, in order to lead the way to the future local councils by 2015.

### Main Objectives and Activities in 2010

- Improved co-ordination between the legislature and the executive in legislative and oversight processes
- A more substantial involvement of the legislature in legislative process, including procedures on signing and ratifying international treaties to be developed;
- Better in-house flow of information;
- Strengthening of the committee system with clear guidelines and increased capacity for oversight and scrutiny;
- More involvement of the legislature in the budgetary process (adoption and oversight), including a gender perspective;
- Increased public awareness of the legislature, through enhanced openness in the NA proceedings (public access to bills and reports, etc.) and modernized communication networks;
- Improved citizens' representation and streamlined handling of public petitions.
- Setting up of an ombudsman-like office in the NA;
- Increased participation and interest of the citizens in the electoral process; and
- Strengthening of the human resource base at the National Assembly secretariat

### Agreement signed with Government

### Duration

January 2009 – December 2012 (4 years)

### Location

National Assembly, Vientiane, Laos PDR

### Budget

Total budget: USD 4,125,000  
Unfunded: USD 1,630,000  
2010 budget: USD 840,000

### Partners

Implementing Partner: National Assembly  
Other Partners: UN Agencies (UNODC, UNICEF, UNIFEM, UNFPA, UNAIDS, UNDP), European Commission, Government of Singapore and Government of Germany

### Contributing Donors:

UNODC USD 10,000  
UNDP USD 2,125,000  
Core Resources USD 750,000  
EC USD 1,375,000  
UNFPA USD 50,000  
UNICEF USD 90,000  
Core Resources USD 55,000  
SIDA USD 35,000  
UNIFEM USD 100,000  
Core Resources USD 71,000  
CIDA USD 29,000

Other commitments:  
German Government: 2 Technical Advisors for National Assembly committees

### Delivery

2009: USD 880,060.53

### Funding Shortfall

USD: 1,630,000

<http://www.undplao.org/whatwedo/programmesdemgov.php#NA>

### **Key Results, Reports and Publications to date**

- Media training in Khammouane Province
- Intersession workshop in Pakse on social safety nets in the context of the Global Financial Crisis
- Women's Caucus workshop on gender mainstreaming in Xiengkhouang Province
- Publication of the Local Councils Option Paper

### **Thematic Area**

Corporate Thematic Area: Democratic Governance

Cross-cutting themes: Gender

UNDAF Outcome: CP Outcome 3.2: Increased and more equitable access to justice and strengthened rule of law

### **Millennium Development Goals**

Goal(s) 1-8,: as a cross-cutting issue strengthened governance and in particular improved oversight of the Executive is expected to contribute to the achievement of all MDGs

### **Contact**

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