



Local Project Appraisal Committee  
GPAR Sekong

Improving Access to Services for the multi-ethnic People of Sekong, 2007-2010

Date: Thursday, 14 December 2006, 2:00-3:00pm

Venue: UNDP Ameerah Haq Room

Participants:

Chair:

Dr. Bountheuang Mounlasy, DG DIC

Ms. Sonam Yangchen Rana, UNDP ResRep

DIC

Ms. Sisomboun Ounavong, Director of UN Division

PACSA / GPAR Central

Mr. Khammoune Viphongxay, Deputy Head

Mr. Nisith Keopanya, PM GPAR SBSB

Mr. Athiphone Bounnaphol, DLA

Mr. Saphet Sivilay

PMO

Mr. Tiengthong Nathabudy

MoF

Mr. Saysamone X., DG

MoE

Ms. Viengkeo Phommavong

MCTPC

M. Aphisayadeth Insisiengmay

MoJ  
Mr. Sida Lokaphone, LRIC

Sekong  
Ms. Chanhom Mahaxay, Standing Member of NA  
Mr. Khampheuy Bountdavieng, Vice Governor  
Mr. Khamphiem Bualapha, Head of PCOP  
Dr. Lamthong, PM GPAR Sekong

Saravane  
Mr. Thavorn Bouphavong, PM GPAR Saravane

JICA  
Mr. Hideaki Matsumoto, ARR

SIDA  
Ms. Anne Kullman, First Secretary

SDC  
Ms. Barbara Boeni, First Secretary  
Ms. Nithsa Vongphanakhone, PO

SNV  
Ms. Nicolette Matthijsen, Programme Coordinator Local Governance

World Bank  
Mr. William Rex, Lead Country Officer

UNCDF  
Mr. Roger Shotton, Regional Policy Advisor

UNDP Lao PDR  
Mr. Jamshed Kazi, ARR  
Mr. Matthias Meier, PO  
Mr. Suresh Balakrishnan, STA  
Ms. Fiona Farrell, HRM Advisor  
Mr. Thilaphong Oudomsine, PO  
Ms. Sara van Gaalen, PO  
Mr. Ninhlamay, Associate  
Mr. Phiphob, Associate  
Ms. Fuentes Funya Harumi, PO  
Ms. Sarah Gleave, UNV

**Agenda:**

1. Welcome and introduction by chairpersons: Dr. Bountheuang and Ms. Sonam
2. Presentation of the draft project document: Mr. Khampheuy, Vice Governor Sekong and Mr. Matthias, UNDP
3. Comments and remarks by participants
4. Summary and closing

**Introduction:**

Dr. Bountheuang welcomed the participants to the LPAC meeting, explaining that the purpose was to review the draft Project Document "GPAR Sekong – Improving Access to Services for the multi-ethnic people of Sekong." The chair elaborated on the results and recommendations of the recently held roundtable meeting on Governance. Lao Govt encourages its development partners to extend their support to poor provinces such as Sekong. The chair acknowledged that the project was small but most critical in its effort to improve governance in Sekong. Ms. Sonam joined the chair in welcoming participants, particularly recognizing the guests that have arrived from Sekong and Bangkok. Dr. Bountheuang invited all participants to join hands to improve the project proposal through their critical and constructive feedback.

**Presentation of the project document:**

by Mr. Khampheuy and Mr. Matthias (slides attached)

In his opening statement, Mr. Khampheuy highlighted in particular the strong ownership of the project. The formulation has been carried out with strong involvement of local stakeholders and the project targets local priorities. The leadership of the province has therefore endorsed the project.

**Comments and remarks by participants:**

There was active participation by the government representatives from central and province level as well as international development partners in presenting viewpoints and raising questions and issues for clarification.

The ensuing discussion highlighted the following points:

1. Given the constraints of the province and districts in Sekong to recruit skilled government staff, government representatives welcomed the project's focus on development of human capacities.
2. The UNCDF representative provided clarification with regard to the rationale of District Development Funds (DDF). The proposed project will replicate the DDF model, which is currently developed in neighbouring Saravane Province. The DDF offers a modality for local public expenditure management, including support for more appropriate planning. The contribution to poverty reduction through the performance based block grant allocations is a welcome by-product. The purpose is not only local capacity building, but also meant to help the national level in managing intergovernmental fiscal relations.
3. UNCDF is in discussions with Luxembourg to enter into a partnership to support a DDF component in the central GPAR Project.

4. Experience in Saravane with DDF is so far positive. A post-analysis shows that districts have allocated the bulk of funds for the pro-poor sectors.
5. A message from the UNDP Regional Indigenous People's Programme (RIPP), which will be one of the partners in the project, was conveyed during the meeting: The RIPP supports the concept and will seek to contribute in an advisory role. RIPP may also be able to mobilize modest funding at a later stage.
6. Decentralized GPAR efforts in poor provinces such as Sekong were generally welcomed by the international development partners represented at the meeting. It was however highlighted that there is a risk of wasting scarce resources, if these decentralized activities are not carried out in the framework of a strong central coordination mechanism.
7. The representative from World Bank inquired clarifications about the District Development Fund modality and whether the suggested model is in line with related government policies.
8. The representative of Ministry of Finance expressed strong support for the DDF approach and the project's contribution to improve the planning and budgeting process. It was reiterated that Lao Govt gives priority to the social sector.

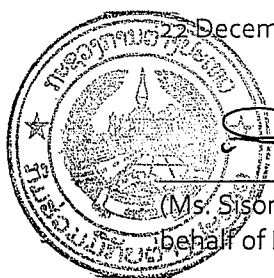
**Conclusion:**

On behalf of the chairpersons, Ms. Sonam concluded that the meeting approved the project document, subject to integration of the following modifications into the project document until 15 January 2007:

- Elaboration on the Saravane experience with District Development Funds, highlighting the block grant model, evidence based policy making and improved alignment with related initiatives;
- Clarification of linkages between governance and poverty reduction.

Date: 22 December, 2006

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_



(Ms. Sisomboun Ounavong, Director of UN Division, DIC, MoFA – on behalf of Dr. Bountheuang Mounlasy, DG, DIC MoFA)

*Sonam Y. Rana*

(Ms. Sonam Yangchen Rana, ResRep UNDP)