



## Minute of

### **“Project Appraisal Committee (PAC) meeting for Initiation Plan of “Support to the National Statistical System in the Lao PDR” project**

Date: Thursday, 29 April, 2010  
Venue: UN house - Lanexang conference room  
Time: 13:30 p.m. to 15: 00 p.m.

The PAC meeting of Initiation Plan (IP) of “Support to the National Statistical System in the Lao PDR” project was organized at UN house- Lanexang Conference room on 29 April, 2010. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Dirk Wagener, Deputy Resident Representative a.i of UNDP and participated by representatives from DIC, DOS, donors, UN agencies and UNDP staff (see annex 1 and 2 for detail list of participants and agenda)

#### **Introduction and Overview of the Project**

Mr. Dirk Wagener, Deputy Resident Representative a.i of UNDP, made a welcome remark to all participants and stakeholders and informed the purpose of the meeting, which to take final review of the IP, and the background of the IP.

Ms Johanna Lindgren made a brief presentation of the project document. She discussed the background to the Initiation Plan, the current development context relating to Statistics in Lao PDR and provided an overview of the outputs and activities propose in the IP.

The five proposed outputs of the IP are:

1. A clear statistics mandate is established
2. Increased visibility and ownership of statistics among users and producers of statistics
3. Promote regional and international statistical cooperation
4. Donor Coordination mechanism established and resources mobilised to support implementation of the NSDS
5. ProDoc completed and approved

#### **Summary of Discussion Points and Agreed Actions**

Mr. Samaychanh Boupha, DG of DOS, expressed his appreciation to UNDP on the preparation of the IP, which is a bridging assistance before the full-fledged five-year project is finalized. Furthermore, he informed the meeting that the Statistical Law and the Master Plan (the National Statistical Development Strategy-NSDS) are two importance documents that will assistance in centralizing the national data system. The expected approval of the new law in June 2010 will upgrade DOS to an authority, with more new staff. In this regard,

Dr. Samaychanh suggested that IP or the new project should consider an activity on induction training for new staff.

GTZ shared with the meeting that there are a number of points that UNDP needs to take into consideration when preparing the full five years support project: 1. the results of Sida ex-post evaluation, 2. Centralization of data, and 3. Improvement of data analyses and interpretation. GTZ expressed an interest to contribute to the data analyses and interpretation through provision of trainings, especially for the enterprise survey. Finally, GTZ shared with the meeting that the issue of sustainability should be considered when a new project is developed.

DIC noticed the sensitization workshop in the central level is not included in the IP and advised that the IP should capture sensitization workshop in the central province beside the two workshops in the northern and southern provinces. DIC further suggested that the issue of data harmonization should be considered in activity 2.1: User Producer Meeting, of Output 2. Finally, the selection of communication officer should be in support of the NSDS, not only this IP.

JICA emphasized that accuracy of data is crucial issue and we all have witnessed a number of significant discrepancies in data, which come from difference sources. She recommended that the new project should consider the issue of capacity building for statistical staff, and on the quality control issues, for example, how data is collected.

DOS informed the meeting that the issue of ensuring accuracy of data has been well addressed in the NSDS. For Sensitisation workshops for National Assembly Members, given the limited budget of the IP, DOS would give priority to the workshops in the northern and southern provinces first. For the workshop in the central province (Vientiane), resources need to be mobilized.

Chief of the Policy and Management Unit (PMSU) confirmed that the template used for the IP is in compliance with the corporate requirement. However, there are a few points where the Poverty Reduction Unit needs to make a few adjustments in the IP, namely:

1. As the IP will be directly implemented by UNDP (DIM), UNDP will be ultimately responsible and accountable, the Executive in the Board should be UNDP which can also act as the Senior Supplier, while DOS can serve as Senior Beneficiary
2. As this IP will be implemented through the DIM modality, if UNDP envisages providing an advance to DoS for the implementation of certain activities (such as large workshops) then we need to conclude a separate agreement with the Government entity that will serve as our Responsible Party. PMSU has the templates for such an agreement.
3. Some Outputs statements could be strengthened by making them "SMART'er"
  - a. There are six outputs mentioned. PMSU recommends that output 5 and 6 could be merged into one (i.e. development of a project document)
  - b. Output 2 and Output 3 are not SMART – they do not sufficiently articulate "tangible deliverables," which makes them hard to measure. For instance, Output 2 could be rephrased focusing upon "TOR of harmonized statistical data collection system approved" "Inter-ministerial coordination system established" "Set of key common indicators selected and agreed among line ministries" etc
4. In AWP, please first put Indicator, then Target, and finally Baseline

5. The document should avoid abbreviation to the extent possible – for instance, NSDS should be fully worded when it is first used i.e. National Statistics Development Strategy

UNICEF shared with the meeting that UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP and FAO are now providing their support to Lao info. She invited Development partners to extend their financial assistance to Lao Info.

UNFPA expressed her appreciation to UNDP and DOS for keeping all stakeholders informed about this IP and look forward to contributing to the coordination mechanism that will be developed under the IP.

The Chair suggested that the coordination mechanism may include the re-activation of the UN statistical group.

Finally, the chair extended his sincere appreciation to participants for their valuable comments on the IP and advised the PRU to revise the IP according to the comments and suggestions raised at the meeting.

**End of the minutes.**