

Minute of the 2009 Annual Review Meeting and Terminal Review Meeting of Promoting Private Sector Development Through Strengthening of Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Business Associations.

27 January 2010 at Lao Plaza Hotel

I. Introduction

The Review Meeting of Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LNCCI) Supported Projects was organized on 27 January 2010 at Lao Plaza Hotel, Vientiane. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Sananh Chounlamany, Vice President of Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LNCCI), PSD Project Executive (NPD) and co-chaired by Mr. Dirk Wagener, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative a.i and Dr. Juergen Reinhardt, UNIDO Project Manager. The meeting was attended by representative from UNDP, UNIDO, DIC, the Foreign Trade Policy Department (MoIC), the Permanent Secretary Office (MoIC), the Department of Industry (MoIC) and the LNCCI Executive Board.

The meeting began with the opening remark of the vice president of LNCCI, followed by the speeches of the UNDP Deputy Resident Representative a.i and the UNIDO Project Manager, and the presentation on the achievements of LNCCI supported projects by the Deputy Secretary General of LNCCI, finally the floor was open for discussion.

II. Summary of the meeting

The key points of the meeting can be summarized as follows:

The UNDP Co-chair emphasized the importance of private sectors and congratulated LNCCI on the approval of the Prime Minister's Decree No. 316 on "Organization and Operation of Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry". It was one of the key achievements of the project over the past three and half years and this project demonstrated that UN could work together. UNDP Co-chair suggested LNCCI to increase their coordination roles, for example LNCCI should have brought more donors to this meeting.

The UNIDO Co-chair shared with the meeting that some 15 months ago the project was about to come to an end due to the seed fund from both UNDP and UNIDO had all been spent. Nevertheless, additional fund of just under US\$ 100,000 from UNDP was transferred to UNIDO to concentrate on advisory and capacity building support on the creation of a new legal base for the further development of Business Membership Organization (BMO). This activities were expected to be completed in this coming April or May, In the light of this should we consider for the future of this project.

The UNIDO Head of UNIDO Operations, Lao PDR expressed his concerned on LNCCI plans and actions to handle with the increasing of number of memberships as the result of the implementation of Decree 316.

The LNCCI Vice President informed the meeting that the membership would be based on voluntary basis and LNCCI will disseminate the decree to public and private sectors and provide a better understanding to them. In this regard, the number of LNCCI and CCI members would increase gradually not sharply.

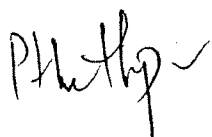
The representative from DIC advised the project team to prepare for project closure and informed that the project would not be audited this year due to its closure. However, the auditors would visit the project to follow up last year's audit action plan.

The chief of Poverty Reduction Unit shared with the meeting that the Outcome Evaluation from outcome 3, which covers all trade, PSD and regional integration projects, has been planned to be conducted in the Q2 of this year. The results of the evaluation would guide future support to the project. At this moment, it would not be possible to provide any pledge on the future support to LNCCI. In addition, she suggested LNCCI, the new Lao Business Forum (LBF) Secretariat, to link the LBF to Round Table Meeting (RTM).

The Project Manager shared with the meeting that since the project is a joint project between UNDP and UNIDO, two kind of different financial reporting systems are used in the project. This has created some difficulties in implementing this project and it would be one of lesson learn of the project in the area of financial reporting. However, the project has done its best to fulfill the requirements.

In the end of the meeting, the chair concluded that strengthened LNCCI capacity will result in stronger private sectors. LNCCI had to continue provide support to private sector in term of finance, information and trainings. However, at the moment, LNCCI was not able to provide sufficient support to private sectors. Finally, the chair agreed on the proposal of linking LBF to RTM.

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