



REPORT

FINAL EVALUATION OF THE GOVERNANCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM (GPARG) - GOVERNANCE FOR INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (GIDP)



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ACRONYMS

ACDA	Aid Children with Disability Association
CPD	Country Programme Document
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
DAFO	District Agriculture and Forestry Office
DDF	District Development Fund
DSDMS	District Service Delivery Monitoring System
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GIDP	Governance for Inclusive Development Programme
GoL	Government of Lao PDR
GPAP	National Governance and Public Administration Reform Programme
GSWG	Governance Sector Working Group
IGFT	Inter-Governmental Fiscal Transfer
IMC	Inter Ministry Committee
LDC	Least Developed Country
LNOB	Leave No One Behind framework
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MPI	Ministry of Planning and Investment
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
NA	National Assembly
NPA	Non-Profit Association
NSDP	National Socio-Economic Development Plan
ODS	One Door Service
ODSC	One Door Service Center
OM	Operations Manual
PIP	Public Investment Plan
PFM	Public Financial Management
PPAs	Provincial People's Assemblies
ProDoc	Project Document
PSIF	Public Service Innovation Facility
RF	Results Framework
RTIM	Round Table Implementation Meeting
RTM	Round Table Meeting Mechanism

RRF	Resource Results Framework
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEDP	Socio-Economic Development Plan
SWG	Sector Working Group
SSWG	Sub Sector Working Group
SUFS	Service Users Feedback System
TOC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNPF	United Nations Partnership Framework

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BASIC GIDP PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Governance for Inclusive Development Programme	
UNDP Award ID	00093816
UNDP Project ID	00098059
Project Duration	4 Years with six- month no-cost extension approved (1 April 2017 – 30 September 2021)
Implementing Partners - National collaborating agencies	Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA)
International collaborating agencies	UNDP and UNCDF
Cost-sharing third parties	SDC
GIDP Project Resources	Budget: US\$9,454,729 (est.); US\$6,500,000 funded budget (SDC: US\$4,000,000; UNDP: US\$1,000,000; UNCDF: US\$1,000,000 – Government US\$500,000) and US \$2,954,729 unfunded budget.
UNPF and Country Programme Outcome	UNPF 2017-21 Outcome 7/CPD 2017-21 Outcome 3: Institutions and policies at national and local level support the delivery of quality services that better respond to people's needs

RATIONALE, SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

The purpose of GIDP final evaluation is two-folded: to ensure accountability of the project against its stated objectives, and for institutional learning for the partners involved. The findings will inform the partners of GIDP on the project's achievements and support institutional learning of the stakeholders engaged therein, both from the Government, development partners and others. The evaluation is to guide all partners to take stock of the progress made in public administration reforms in Lao PDR and identify areas for future programming with a particular focus on making governance inclusive and advancing the achievement of national development goals.

GIDP DESCRIPTION

The GIDP was formulated under the framework of the National Governance and Public Administration Reform Programme (NGPAR) of the Government of Lao PDR (GoL), with the MoHA to lead the implementation, with cross-sector cooperation and implementation by the Ministry of Finance (MoF), Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI), and Provincial and District administrations. GIDP is the third joint project implemented by UNDP-UNCDF (supported by SDC) under the NGPAR programme and is built on the established partnerships through two programmes within the Government's NGPAR - Strengthening Capacity and Service Delivery of

Local Administration (GPAR SCSD Jun 2007-May 2011) and the NGPAR Programme Support Programme (GPAR NGPS 2012- June 2016).

The GIDP sought to create a more enabling local governance environment that would improve service delivery and local development, whilst making it sustainable and inclusive. GIDP was implemented from 2017 to 2021. In order to achieve its goals, the project worked across targeted sectors and districts delivering three main outputs:

1. Inclusive local service delivery and development (**DDF** and **ODSCs**);
2. Accountability framework and citizens' feedback (**SUFS**); and
3. Expanding partnerships and policy dialogue, with civil society engagement, for development effectiveness (**GSWG** and **PSIF**).

GIDP has three key components which are interlinked and designed to contribute to improved public administration and governance reform.

Component I

The first component features:

- The District Development Fund (**DDF**) model for the provision of discretionary, performance-based, district block grant financing for socio-economic infrastructure, e.g. health, education, agriculture, public works and transport and trade. DDF is a fund system implemented through Inter-Governmental Fiscal Transfers (IGFTs) that finances inclusive local planning and services delivery through a process that aims to catalyse cross-sector planning and responsive service delivery at the district level¹. The GIDP's DDF applies revised guidelines that introduce government co-financing from the state budget at either the provincial or district level. It is a system development which promotes more inclusive development and service delivery; through the development and adoption of an enhanced formula approach built from the UN Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) strategy that underpin the SDGs.
- It also provides an opportunity to test and establish the potential for innovative approaches to financing for better local public service delivery and development unlocking private capital and non-government funding for development partnerships (in line with SDG 17).
- The One Door Service Center (**ODSC**) is another feature of this component which is a tool for improving access to services by providing several services under the same roof, and a tool for promoting greater accountability and transparency in public service delivery.

¹ DDF 'uses the treasury system and is being implemented by the government and not as a parallel system. The integrity of the system is solid as all transfers and payments are electronic. No overheads are deducted from the IGFTs for staff or other support, with the only deductible being the corporate tax of the local contractor that is deducted at source. It should also be stated that UNCDF, given its specific capital investment mandate, supported the Inter-Governmental Fiscal Transfers (IGFT) and overall fiscal decentralization aspects, and the development and delivery of performance based grant systems to local government Institutions (DDF). This support also entails overall support to Public Expenditure Management (PEM)/Public Finance Management (PFM) systems and policy promotion related to these areas [Source: GIDP Programme Document, p. 15]

Component 2

The second component features:

- An accountability framework (**SUFS**) to capture and use citizens' feedback on the provision of basic services and consolidates citizens' voice in local decision-making structures where service provision is discussed and managed; and
- Regular assessment of the institutional performance of districts is expected to contribute towards promoting a general shift to greater accountability and transparency. Further analysis is provided in the sections below under the evaluation criteria headings.

Component 3

The third component features:

- Partnerships at the national level (e.g. the **GSWG**) through the RTM process designed to promote dialogue and feedback on governance issues and advocacy that influence governance-related policies and service delivery;
- The new Public Service Innovation Facility (**PSIF**) which is expected to improve the access and quality of basic services and also to encourage proposals jointly made by local administration and civil society/NPAs² including women, youth, disabled persons' organizations, as a practical way of promoting partnerships and an enabling environment for non-government actors;
- It strengthens inter-ministerial practical collaboration on public sector service provision through partnerships between a) MoHA, b) MPI, and c) MoF.

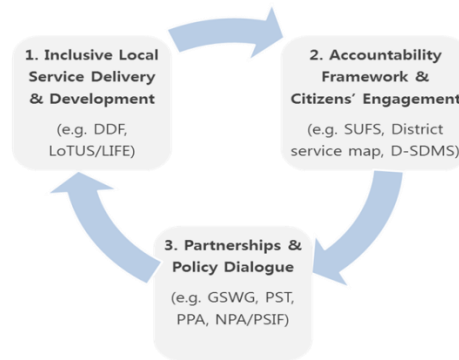
In line with national socio-economic development plans the GIDP, with the support of GPAR's dialogue and coordination platform (**GSWG**), was expected to improve service delivery through the **DDF** mechanism vis-à-vis intergovernmental fiscal transfer system and two 'model' One Door Service Centres (**ODSCs**). The project is also designed to systematically capture citizen's perception on access and quality of basic services (**SUFS**), and to promote opportunities for collaboration with civil society in local development and service provision (**PSIF**).

This evaluation followed what is described in the GIDP ProDoc as the virtuous loop of the outputs to find out how (i) inclusive local service delivery and development (e.g. **DDF**) (ii) the accountability framework and citizens' engagement (e.g. **SUFS**, District service map, D-SDMS) and (iii) partnerships and policy dialogue (e.g. **GSWG**, NAP/**PSIF**) contributed to the achievement of the project's expected outcome/results.

Figure I. GIDP Virtuous Loop - Outputs³

² NPA: Not for Profit Associations, in Lao context.

³ Source: GID programme document



The three GIDP components are interrelated and the complementarity between them is intended to create a virtuous loop that collectively leads to the achievement of the project's expected outcome:

“Local institutions are able to increase the coverage of basic services and include citizens’ feedback in the planning cycle for services provision by 2020.”

The improvement of public administration through capacity building of local authorities, the strengthening of citizens’ participation in public affairs and accountability in public service delivery is expected to also lead to the lessons learned from the process of implementing GIDP feeding into national dialogue for socio-economic development.

The project reflects a strategic shift from grant-driven general infrastructure development to an intervention that seeks to leverage resources from various sources to address priority SDG service delivery, increased citizen and civil society engagement and to facilitate multi-stakeholder dialogue and partnerships. The GIDP involves a mix of activities ranging from local capacity building, citizen and community feedback surveys, to targeted grants for capital and operational expenditure, and grants for collaboration with civil society on local service issues. Resources mobilized from development partners were complemented by resources of local authorities and some domestic capital with the objective of making local development sustainable.

DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

The Project responds to the UN Partnership Framework 2017-2021 (in particular Outcome 7), which prioritizes three broad thematic areas, i.e. Economic Development, Governance and Resilience and feeds into Outcome 3 of UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD) 2016-2020 (*“institutions and policies at national and local level support the delivery of quality services that better respond to people’s needs”*).

With regards to Lao PDR policies and priorities, the project has been formulated under the framework of the National Governance and Public Administration Reform Programme (NGPAR) of the Government of Lao PDR, with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) to lead its implementation. The project is intended to align to the cross-cutting governance goals of the 8th NSEDP 2016-2020, which has graduation from Least Developed Country (LDC) status as its

primary goal, as well as aligning with the Strategic Plan on Governance 2010-2020 which provides the overarching framework for governance reform in Lao PDR. It also draws on the Vision 2016-2030 and Strategic Plan 2016-2025 of the Home Affairs sector developed by MoHA.

The Project also helps contribute towards Lao PDR's global development commitments, namely through the UN Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs. Given the overall objective of promoting good governance through the Project, GIDP contributes most significantly toward the achievement of SDG16, in particular on strengthening institutions. GIDP is expected to contribute toward Indicator 16.5.1, through activities aimed at the promotion of transparency in public service, thus helping to combat corruption by reducing rent and bribe seeking by public officials. GIDP is also expected to make important contributions toward SDG indicator 16.6.1 by strengthening transparency and accountability of local government spending, and toward indicator 16.6.2 through the collection of feedback from service users on experiences dealing with public officials and in receiving public services⁴.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation methodology adopted adhered to the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms & Standards. The evaluation team adopted an integrated approach involving a combination of data collection and analysis tools to generate concrete evidence to substantiate all findings.

Data collected from both project documents and interviews of key stakeholders were carefully analysed. This approach and analysis informed the answering of the fundamental questions posed under the key criteria of the evaluation. Adhering to OECD/DAC standards and practices for evaluation, the methodology is consistent with the overall purpose of this evaluation to assess the *Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability* of the intervention. In addition to these categories, the cross-cutting themes of *Inclusion* and *Gender Equality* informed all aspects of the methodology.

The national consultant was permitted to travel to visit sites outside Vientiane (Saravan province and Champasak province) identified as representative sites for relevant project outputs and was able to observe some outputs, carry out Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and interviews with beneficiaries and with provincial and district officials that participated in the delivery of GIDP activities.

⁴ Details on how the project has advanced the achievement of SDG16 through increased transparency, accountability and effectiveness of public services and expenditure is provided in the findings section in the body of the report (namely in the section on Inclusion and Gender), including how GIDP has made important contributions toward the protection of marginalized and vulnerable groups, in leaving no one behind, by progressing the achievement of SDG5 on gender equality and SDG10 on reducing inequalities.

FINDINGS

EFFECTIVENESS

GIDP Project General Findings

F1. *GIDP achieved its overall goal to a great extent. The project's overall goal to support the government and its public administration reform efforts to provide better service delivery, promote wider governance improvements and increase citizens' systematic engagement at the local levels was achieved to a great extent⁵.*

F2. *The targets for some indicators are not timely-aligned with the progress of activity rolled out. However this resulted in challenges mainly in the first year of the project implementation which is normal. After the first year, projects activities' implementation scaled up quickly with an increase volume of co-financing of DDF projects reaching 15% level. In other words, while the target set for the first year was not met, the project met the targets set for the remaining years.*

F3. *The annual reports documented in detail the process of implementation, which is a strength of the project. The detailed account of the implementation process is important so that all stakeholders are well-informed and it is also important for future further improvement considerations.*

F4. *Records for sub-project activities implemented at local level were kept in hardcopies and traceable, but not digitalized. The project enabled local government levels to coordinate planning and implementation of the sub-projects' activities and delivery of basic services and kept hardcopies of these activities but have not digitalized them which creates challenges in their evaluation and reporting. The evaluation team was not able to access the hardcopies records due to COVID restrictions.*

Output 1: District Development Fund and One Door Service Center

District Development Fund (DDF)

F5 *Although a lot of activities were undertaken to further develop and integrate LoTUS into GIDP, LoTUS ended up not being implemented due to a lack of financial support to complete its implementation.*

F6. *The DDF modality is a GPAR tried and tested model which was successfully modernized for SDG compliance and LNOB targeting under the GIDP with upgraded guidelines which improved its impact and effectiveness as a conduit to localize the SDGs.*

F7. *The allocation of the public sector budget to co-finance the DDF illustrates an ambitious move by the government to secure sub-national financing through a more predictable budget allocation.*

⁵ This finding is to be read together with F5 which recognizes the challenges faced by the GIDP related to LoTUS, resulting in not achieving the integration of LoTUS into GIDP.

Although, moving forward fiscal space will be extremely limited, the integration of the DDF within the treasury system with expenditure coding provides a new conduit for blended finance options (public sector and ODA) to deliver quality local services to the most vulnerable in Lao PDR.

F8, *At the district level, DDF is very well known among authorities.* The district administration confirmed that the district should work collaboratively between different sectors, but pointed out that recently there has been no project/initiative to provide a platform for this work. *Interviewees acknowledged that they have not worked multi-sectorally before on a concrete project until GDP.* The district officials and governors are still hopeful that the DDF scheme will continue to be implemented.

One Door Service Center (ODSC)

F9. *Findings from the evaluation⁶ show that the satisfaction level among the stakeholders with the Xaysettha ODSC is very high in terms of the potential of the ODSC model of public service delivery. However, Xaysettha ODSC faces a number of challenges which are described in the report, including staff replacements without adequate training and limited office supplies.* The constant staff changes occurred in both ODSCs as a measure adopted for the allocation of workload and incentives fairly to staff since ODSC's staff are paid extra money on top of their regular salary. This results in constant staff turnover at ODSC centers.

F10. *In terms of good governance, Bachiengchalernsouk ODSC improved the relationship between the local authorities and the citizens.* Interviews and observations made during field mission reflected satisfactory results. District officials proudly claim that the services they ask their citizens to pay for are transparent and accountable.

Output 2. Service Users Feedback Survey (SUFS) Accountability Framework

F11. *The GDP has successfully built the capacity of 24 MoHA officials, representing the Task Force at the central level, and 80 staff from 8 districts across 8 provinces since 2019, in designing and implementing the SUFS.* It is reported that the MoHA Task Force could independently organize SUFS at the district level and is able to undertake data management, analysis, and report-writing.

F12. *Interviewees reported that the SUFS is a good tool to be used to mobilize resource from other sources such as, for example, the private sector, as the private sector is encouraged to work more closely with and support local authorities after reviewing the results of the surveys, which provide some degree of transparency.*

⁶ This finding is based on FGDs held by the evaluation team with six (6) service users in each ODSC, Xaysettha and Bachiengchalernsouk, who reported having used the ODSC services. The discussions were held independently without Center officials present. Participants were asked about their satisfaction level with the quality of services and in their answer they mentioned a number of challenges but highlighted the fact that they are very happy with the ODSC model of public service delivery (i.e. having several services provided under one roof).

F13. *There is corroborating evidence that SUFS have contributed to more participatory socio-economic planning. SUFS round 1 was conducted in 2019 which allowed time for the results to be considered by the district authority and the district authority responded to people's needs in the districts' socio-economic development plan year 2020-2024⁷. Some of problems and location of the villages' samples were mentioned in the 5-year development plan.*

Output 3: The Governance Sector Working Group and the Public Service Innovation Facility

The Governance Sector Working Group (GSWG)

F14. *The GSWG contributed significantly to the general objective of public administration and governance reform. The GSWG mechanism serves well the purpose of sharing information, lessons learned, and exploring best practices. However, many interviewees felt that the GSWG mechanism should be able to promote more comprehensive and inclusive dialogue and seek concrete feedback on governance issues, and should be used to advocate and influence more governance-related policies that results in a more effective public service delivery.*

The Public Service Innovation Facility (PSIF)

F15. *PSIF is an effective initiative carried out with a relatively small grant but contributed to significant impact. PSIF was effective in supporting local technologies, practices and processes to deliver public services through DOHA that can be replicated by DOHA to other districts.*

F16. *PSIF model, which creates more space for civil society and the private sector to work with authorities on local issues, with a special focus on vulnerable groups including women, youth and persons with disabilities, was an effective initiative carried out with a relatively small grant but contributed to significant impact. PSIF is a system to encourage local communities, civil society and the private sector to collaborate on local administrative reforms and provision of services. In the first PSIF proposal round there was confusion among the applicants about the partnership requirement, which resulted in non-partnership proposal being submitted. After the second round, it was made clear in the PSIF announcement that only partnership proposals would be accepted resulting in the awarded proposals being all in the form of partnerships.*

F17. *The project has done well in adapting to the changing context. In 2020, MOHA with key DPs (UNDP, SDC and UNCDF) agreed to re-purpose the PSIF to focus on COVID-19 response in four high-risk provinces (Bokeo, Laung Namtha, Sayyabuli and Champassak). With a clearer and narrower scope, namely on COVID-19 response and recovery, the 10 partnership projects were able to tailor their objectives to serve urgent needs at the local level. These projects served well*

⁷ For example, in the Oudomxay province, the feedback from SUFs that were included in the provincial plan included: Agriculture access road, kindergarten /preschool building, more user-friendly agriculture extension services, and road networks between district and Koumban (village cluster centers),

In Vientiane capital: the expansion of ODSC to other districts, improvement of public service delivery, promotion of agriculture commercialisation, processing, access to credit for farmers, were included in the provincial plan.

the objectives of the local authorities, with CSOs communities, private sectors working together to increase people's knowledge on COVID-19, and to help returning workers and community members from neighbouring countries to reintegrate in the community and find gainful employment.

EFFICIENCY

DDF

F18. *The DDF output has very high level of efficiency in terms of cost-effectiveness as it has no overhead and transaction costs and the full grant has reached the neediest target recipients and local communities. The whole structure and implementation of the DDF is very efficient.*

F19. *Most importantly is that the DDF is now fully integrated with the national planning system and the national finance system. While initially there were some delays in the disbursement of DDF funds the current modality of DDF has addressed that problem which will improve the system⁸.*

ODSC

F20. *The ODSC initiative made significant contributions toward increased efficiency in public service provision both through the two models being implemented, and the wider training for districts across the country. The initiative benefited both the service users, in terms of services being available at one center, as well as the government, in terms of increased coordination across offices which helped in the tracking of services to avoid delays.*

SUFS

F21. *SUFS surveys were efficient in targeting collection of information that not only is important to assess/improve the performance of other components of the GDP in the districts where SUFS was conducted (e.g. ODSC, ease of access to public services and service quality) but, more importantly, the results can be used in district socio-economic planning for public services provision (e.g. service utilization). SUFS round I was conducted in 2019 and its results were considered by the district authority in the districts' socio-economic development plan year 2020-*

⁸ "DDF grants are "on national balance sheet" transactions that are transferred from UNCDF to the National Bank of Laos (BoL) from where they flow within the national financial system, using a Chart of Account (COA), to relevant Districts' National Treasury accounts. The amounts of funds transferred from UNCDF and received in Districts via the National Treasury Accounts are the same, with essentially no transaction costs". [Source: p.3, UNCDF, The District Development Fund of Laos, "A chronological story of a concept maturing to scale, delivering community cohesion and development, 2021]. In the early days when national financial systems were not so developed, DDF funds were placed with the Ministry of Finance / Bank of Lao in a 'special account' and from there transferred directly to a commercial bank in participating districts. Today, under GPAR-GIDP 2017-2021, DDF operates within a more developed national financial system. DDF funds are now transferred from UNCDF, via MoF national treasury system with a Chart of Account (COA) to the national Bank of Lao from where they flow within the national financial system to relevant Districts' national treasury accounts"... "DDF's use of government financial systems is transparent, easy to operate and easy record-keeping for local officials via the national accounting system" [Source: pp. 1 and 4, Fiduciary Management Report of the District Development Fund (DDF) of GPAR-GIDP 2017-2021]

2024 citing SUFS in addressing some of people's needs in the plan. Tools such as SUFS have contributed to the 'virtuous cycle' at a basic level but overtime can contribute towards completing the cycle.

F22. *The SUFS was also efficient in gender equality and presenting their findings disaggregated by gender. The surveys covered almost the same number of female and male representatives of households – survey informants. In total, 48% of informants were female, while 52% were male.*

GSWG

F23. *There is data that support the finding that GSWG is efficient in its contribution to the overall governance reform. Members and participants in the GSWG process reported participants' satisfaction rate with the 'utility/quality' of discussions held at the GSWG is 76%.*

PSIF

F24. *PSIF is not only an effective but is also an efficient initiative carried out with a relatively small grant. The re-purposing of the PSIF in 2020-2021 to improve the usefulness of the Facility at the local level intended to improve service delivery to reduce the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was an efficient use of the model.*

RELEVANCE

F25. *The GDP project remains relevant to the public administration and governance reform agenda. It has achieved to a large extent the intended objectives, and remains relevant to further advance the reform agenda in future.*

F26. *GDP remains aligned with the cross-cutting governance goals of the 8th NSEDP 2016-2020 and the draft Strategic Plan on Governance 2010-2020, which provides the overarching framework for governance reform in Lao PDR.*

F27. *GDP addressed key governance issues outlined in the 8th NSEDP Outcome 2, Output 1. It contributes to "Output 1: Improved Living Standards through Poverty Reduction using the 3-Builds Directions". The project also contributed to the government's effort to carry out comprehensive rural development linked to the advancement of developed villages. Focusing development investment towards rural areas helped to address both territorial imbalances and inequities.*

F28. *GDP has enhanced transparency and contributed to revenue collection. The DDF component, for example, improved revenues as taxes from contractual value of the projects were deducted at source from the contractor, which helped build up a normalized business approach and practice.*

SUSTAINABILITY

DDF

F29. *DDF as a model, in many respects, has been mainstreamed which contributes to its sustainability?* Interviewees reported that DDF should be continued. However, interviewees pointed out that without a specific project funding and donor support for the DDF, such as GIDP, aspects of the scheme are not likely to be integrated in the government system. There is no current budget or medium term funding availability to continue it in its current form. Given the economic downturn due to COVID-19 and the increasing challenges faced by the government in revenue collection, it is unlikely at least in the short-term that the government will have fiscal space to provide discretionary grants for service delivery infrastructure to sub national authorities. However the system does provide a conduit for earmarked ODA that can be blended with public sector finance to help stimulate socio-economic recovery in rural economies whilst simultaneously targeting the most vulnerable in a very cost efficient manner.

F30. Another indicator of sustainability is that MPI has adopted the DDF-SDG as a planning/budgeting tool for their planning process (complementary to normal planning process) to target vulnerable sectors of society, and which is connected to the central tenet of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, to which Lao PDR committed to in 2015, in Leaving No One Behind, or LNOB, in national development efforts toward the intentional targeting of marginalized and vulnerable groups.

ODSC

F31. *The experiences gained in the implementation of the ODSC model have increased capacity of the key stakeholders which will help to contribute towards its sustainability and towards the efforts to digitalize further in the near future.* It is confirmed that a mobile application has been developed and citizens will be able to access the ODSC service online. Most importantly, the ODSCs are one of the key priorities to be created during the 9th NSEDP time frame, which is another sustainability indicator.

F32. *The fact that MOHA has supported the growth of ODSCs over the years is evidence that it has taken ownership of the ODSCs model which will contribute to its sustainability in the years to come.*

⁹ Evidence that supports mainstreaming of DDF: “The experience gained from the DDF approach that pushed responsibility and accountability for local development to the sub-national governments and which empowered communities to identify local needs has driven the implementation of Sam-Sang policy since 2012. The learning from DDF lessons, directly informed the amended State Budget Law 2015, the amended Law on Government 2015, the amended Law on Local Administration 2015, the Law on Provincial People’s Assembly (PPA) 2015, the Regulation on City and Municipality and the review of the Investment Promotion Law 2009”. .. “DDF has proven to be an effective, government managed, low-cost programme that supports national decentralisation policy “Sam Sang” and has helped to accelerate and localise the MDG and more recently the SDG goals. The government has acknowledged the role that DDF has played in informing their national Sam-Sang decentralisation policy by demonstrating the feasibility of providing predictable district-level budgets for services. Investments”... “The DDF Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) have been conceptualised and generated in Lao language and in a form that is accessible to all members of the sub national civil service and communities. The DDF projects have used the SOPs to deliver trainings and as a tool to measure administrative performance”. [Source: pp.3 and 14, UNCDF The District Development Fund of Laos, A chronological story of a concept maturing to scale, delivering community cohesion and development, 2021]

SUFS

F33. *SUFS has gained popularity with national stakeholders and PPAs/NA value SUFS-collected information which is evidenced by an increasingly call for SUFS to be rolled out. This increase in SUFS' popularity with local national stakeholders will contribute to its sustainability.*

GSWG

F34. *Sustainability of the initiatives developed under GIDP rests upon the good collaboration between all concerned sectors, and the GSWG provides a strong platform for this collaboration. The GSWG, as with other sector working groups, will remain as part of GoL system regardless of GIDP ending but the extent of its technical and financial support will change.*

PSIF

F35. *There is increased interest for local action for more collaborative action on local service improvements which may contribute towards sustainability of PSIF. Evidence of this includes, for example, a process of implementation of the 3rd. round of PSIF was initiated and the process of sharing lessons learned in the PSI-SSWG platform led by MoHA was developed.*

INCLUSION & GENDER

F36. ***GIDP** contributed to greater awareness of the needs of women and other vulnerable groups. By increasing awareness and understanding of the SDGs at the central and provincial levels, the GIDP contributed to 'a greater sensitivity among key Ministries to the needs of the poor and women in particular in development programmes of the government.*

F37. *Under **DDF**, even though there is no clear indication of gender equality integrated into the sub-project designs, roads, bridges, irrigation schemes, schools and waste management benefited women and men equally. DDF projects were funded 33 districts with beneficiaries totalling 124,541 citizens living in 22,565 Households throughout 190 Villages, including 60,800 women.*

F38. *The **SUFS** considered gender equality in presenting their findings disaggregated by gender. The SUFS considered gender equality in presenting their findings disaggregated by gender and reporting on both male and female perspectives on the use and opinions about public services. The surveys covered almost the same number of female and male representatives of households – survey informants. In total, 48% of informants were female, while 52% were male. The results of the survey show 'very similar perspectives of female and male informants. The difference between the opinion of female and male informants is not more than 6%.*

F39. *The **GSWG** provided a platform which contributed to a dialogue on gender issues by different stakeholders.*

F40. ***PSIF** projects were effective in supporting vulnerable groups to improve their income level and contributed to their increased participation. The **PSIF**-supported project implemented by ACDA*

was effective in supporting vulnerable groups to improve their income level and contributed to increased participation from multi ethnic women, disable people, families, students and teachers in the development and implementation of community projects.

F4I. *Under the **PSIF**, activities related to gender are guided by the new PSIF guidelines which include positive actions on gender and social inclusion including disaggregated reporting of the results. By creating more space for civil society and the private sector to work with local authorities in local planning and service delivery issues, PSIF opened the door for greater focus on services needs targeting vulnerable groups including women, youth and persons with disabilities.*

CONCLUSIONS

The project has achieved largely the objectives originally set although with some adaptations to implementation approaches as the project progressed. GIDP aligns with MoHA's Five Year Plan and the Samsang policy which has as its key priority the devolution of powers and responsibility to local administration. It is also aligned with Lao PDR's SDG commitments (SDG localization) and the adoption of an associated LNOB formula in the development and implementation of a LNOB policy through an IGFT (DDF). NGPAR-GIDP was conceived to realize the government's desire to strengthen public administration at the local level and has contributed to progress towards greater governance reform. Key objectives of NGPAR include better public service delivery, increased citizens' engagement and expanded governance improvements at the local level. The following conclusions are based upon the findings of the final evaluation of the GIDP project:

C1. The implementation of the GIDP project integrated the capacity development of local authorities to plan, coordinate, track and report the delivery of basic services to citizens in a transparent manner, which not only delivered the expected project results but also ensured ownership and sustainability of the results¹⁰. GIDP was also successful in building trust and increasing ownership of the general approach to public administration and governance by government officials and citizens.

C2. The **DDF** is the most visible and can be considered the 'crown jewel' and the most successful component of the GIDP program. The DDF is a discretionary Inter-Governmental Fiscal Transfer (IGFT) that has been effective in the implementation of the decentralization process in Lao PDR. It has created a trackable and transparent vehicle for the public sector capital budget to be used effectively and efficiently by local governments to develop and implement projects and services they consider priorities for their citizens. DDF 2.0 has eliminated parallel funding structures by becoming part of the national planning and fiscal system which will contribute to ensuring its sustainability¹¹. In the context of GoL limited public funds, DDF opened

¹⁰ There is still the systemic challenge of lack of financial resources that remains a constraint to the sustainability of the instruments/tools developed under GIDP.

¹¹ All districts adopted the single account system of the National Treasury. The Charts of Account serve the accountability and transparency purposes including the transactions under DDF.

up needed finance to the local level, while using government systems and processes (track-ability in the national accounts and government co-funding). Based on evidence from the field, local planning process is now indeed more participatory and reflects the expectations of the population and the communities to a greater extent. Activities under the DDF are 100% completed¹².

C3. The **ODSC** benefited both the service users as well as the government. The government benefited in terms of increased coordination across offices which helped in the tracking of services to avoid delays, and **service users** benefited in terms of having a number of important services being provided under one roof facilitating the tracking of services to ensure more prompt delivery of services. The ODSC in Xaysettha district is a good example of a center that was successful in building a strong and transparent state apparatus providing excellent public service to citizens¹³. Challenges faced by the ODSCs are highlighted in the report and include staff replacements without adequate training and limited office supplies. Also, there was a policy of scheduling work rotation so that everyone could benefit from the top-up incentive (since ODSC staff are paid extra money on top of their regular salary), which impacted the quality of service delivery in that it resulted in constant staff turnover at ODSC centers.

C4. The **SUFS** has contributed to more participatory socio-economic planning. SUFS round I conducted in 2019 is a good example of SUFS results being considered by the district authority in the districts' socio-economic development plan year 2020-2024 as SUFS round I was specifically cited in addressing some of people's needs in the plan. SUFS implementation was successful (100% completed), and was important in continuing to develop government capacity in conducting citizen surveys at the local level, even if still at a smaller scale¹⁴. SUFS was also effective in promoting gender equality in terms of women's participation in the survey and presenting findings disaggregated by gender.

C5. The **GSWG** is the platform that brings all governance issues to the front burner for multi-stakeholder dialogue and consideration. The GSWG has been instrumental in its contribution to overall governance reform in Lao PDR and there is overall satisfaction among GSWG Secretariat officials with the 'utility/quality' of discussions held at the GSWG¹⁵. There are however challenges in putting forward/raising issues during the GSWG meetings by lower level

¹² DDF. The sustainability of the tool can be understood as following. The term DDF is no longer used, but the approach is adopted by the government. MPI now asks all sectors to develop project proposals - similar to DDF proposals, before they can be considered for funding. This can be attributed to DDF intervention.

¹³ The GIDP supported MOHA to establish 8 ODSCs bringing the total number of ODSCs in the country to 44. ODSCs were included in the 9th NSEDP. GoL aims to establish total of 58 ODSCs by 2025.

¹⁴ SUFS implementation skills have been developed in the areas where SUFS surveys were conducted and, based on the satisfaction level with its results, SUFS is expected to be continued provided that there is financial support for its implementation. SUFS as tool has been developed in parallel paper-based and digital based; in practice, the paper-based was adopted. MOHA has developed a pool of SUFS survey experts/trainers. They could continue to provide the training as needed. SUFS was included in the 9th MOHA sector plan, yet the budget allocation has not been carried out yet.

¹⁵ GSWG remains a high agenda of the government. The commitment is high and the political will remains consistent. The government will need to continue to seek support from development partners to complement the government domestic budget.

officials and lack of synergies between GSWG's two sub-sector working groups and with other working groups in the round table process (RTM) that will need to be addressed to ensure its effectiveness as a convening platform for impact.

C6. The **PSIF** is an effective initiative that was carried out with a relatively small grant but that had a significant impact in improving service delivery through the introduction of a new way of working, and with its 'repurposing' will increase the engagement of NPAs in working with local governments and in ensuring public participation in public service delivery. The PSIF project implemented by ACDA is a good example of PSIF being used to support vulnerable groups in improving their income level and also in increasing participation from multi ethnic women, persons with disabilities, families, students and teachers in the development and implementation of community projects¹⁶.

¹⁶ Financial constraints present challenges to the sustainability of PSIF.

LESSONS AND BEST PRACTICES

L1. The ODSC is a concept that has been to a certain extent replaced/complemented by digitization. One of the lessons learnt from ODSC implementation is that it leads to digitalization of local government services¹⁷.

L2. The COVID-19 lockdown contributed to a lesson in that many meetings, trainings and workshops can be conducted online with remote participants instead of undertaking the costly travel for participants. In implementing activities during lockdown periods, MOHA were able to experiment with digital tools to facilitate workshops and discussions online, including connecting with provincial authorities. For example, for one such training workshop on ODSCs, MOHA connected with over 44 different districts across the country, all joining online. This model was used as standard for other ministries to follow through other UNDP initiatives, including with MOJ and the NA.

L3. UNCDF and UNDP partnership in development programmes brings together different sets of resources, tools and skills that create synergies, effectiveness and efficiencies. In the case of the GIDP project, the intervention draws on UNDP's recognised capacity development, democratic governance and policy development experience, which synergised with UNCDF's specialised expertise in local development finance, improved access to social services, investment capital, and fiscal decentralization, fiscal space creation to ensure successful implementation.

L4. The PSIF re-purpose exercise in 2020 to adapt it to the changing context of COVID-19 has proved effective and successful. This came about as a result of a quick move from the GIDP management and a meaningful coordination with the DPs. *This is a good lesson learned.*¹⁸

L5. Project proposal announcements ought to be made in clear language with the pre-requisites well spelled out. For example, there were very few partnership projects with the participation of NPAs during the first PSIF proposal round (i.e. only 2 partnership proposal awards). However, after it was made clear in the PSIF announcement for the 2nd round that only partnership proposals would be accepted, the awarded PSIF proposals were all in the form of partnerships.

L6. Some of the training workshops for the DDF limited the attendees to 1 participant from each office which resulted in a disproportionate gender imbalance since most offices are headed

¹⁷ It should be pointed out that the process only started with no concrete results of the initiative. ODSC – mobile application was launched at the very late stage of the project and the discussion on mobile application for ODSC in Xaysettha District was conducted in August 2021.

¹⁸ Regarding its initial purpose, the PSIF encouraged partnership between the local administration and civil society, providing an enabling environment for non-government actors to be involved in the development of public service delivery. For example, partnership between stakeholders at the district and village levels working together as equal partners. At central level, through the funding mechanism, GIDP strengthened inter-ministerial collaboration through partnerships between MoHA, MPI, and MoF.

by men. Sufficient budget should be allocated for activities and there should be a requirement that each office send gender balance teams to the training activities.

L7. The elaboration of project's Results Framework (RF) need to be carefully undertaken during the development of the ProDoc to avoid the need for amending the RF in the middle of the project by re-framing indicators, which makes it difficult to assess and evaluate pre-RF amendment and post amendment's project results.

L8. In order to be able to assess and evaluate capacity building achievements of a project, it is necessary that the baseline capacity of participants is identified prior to the training and that there is an assessment of capacity gained after the training program.

L9. Good communication and coordination mechanisms among development partners and donors are crucial not only to the successful implementation of the project but to partners' relationship. Development partners and donors ought to take a more active role in reviewing and analysing quarterly and annual reports of the project and demanding clarifications when necessary.

L10. The Project explored opportunities for synergies between national and regional initiatives with GIDP. SDC and the Project team explored possible integration of components under the Poverty Reduction Fund in Lao PDR with the DDF. A consultancy was undertaken to assess the possibility of integrating DDF and PRF but was deemed not appropriate to take forward, including that no clear mechanism was identified for integration. Further synergies were explored between GIDP and the regional LoTUS initiative, which was led by UNCDF. The integration of LoTUS into GIDP was not possible, due to decision taken by UNCDF at headquarters' level, which was noted under GIDP in the 2018 Annual Project Report. The exploration of synergies between other national, regional and global initiative to scale up or strengthen the impact of GIDP, although unsuccessful, should be considered an example of good practice and taken forward for future phases of public administration support in Lao PDR. Lessons learned from LoTUS also include the importance to have all programming change and external changes be fully discussed and endorsed in the project's Board meeting and documented in respective reports to ensure all partners share a common understanding of important changes made to the project. Part of UNCDF contribution to LoTUS was therefore reallocated to the other GIDP components, namely DDF supported activities that were not covered by SDC funding, that included the development of the LNOB distribution strategy and formula that was tested on the last two funding rounds and continuation of the OEBG TA works with the Ministry of Finance.

RECOMMENDATIONS¹⁹

R1. The District Development Fund (**DDF**) is a discretionary IGFT and system that has proved its relevance and effectiveness in the reform of governance development in Lao PDR and is worth continuing. The model should not only be continued but scale up nationally.

R2. In addition to retaining and scaling up the DDF nationally, the DDF needs be introduced as a **provincial level development fund** (i.e. the **PDF**) following similar advances of decentralization in neighbouring countries (Cambodia)²⁰. The PDF will function to support provincial development initiatives and make functional the Provincial Peoples Assemblies thereby promoting a territorial approach to investments, which will complement the large BRI investments by creating essential backward economic linkages²¹.

R3. GoL should continue the roll out of the One Door Service Center (**ODSC**) learning from the two models developed under GDP, by setting up more ODSCs at the district level and expanding their operations to cover more or all public services. The roll out should focus on continuing to promote transparency, speed and responsiveness in service delivery, as these have been highlighted as strong benefits for service users under the two models implemented. Despite the success, feedback from local authority officials highlighted the need for more specialized training for ODSC staff on the use and operation of office equipment that facilitates the ODSC model, including dashboards and databases. Review the regulatory framework to improve systems for the collection of fees, form fees, service charges, and other necessary charges, and to determine the timelines to receive and submit documents and for the provision of services.

R4. The policy of constant staff changes in both ODSCs - adopted as a measure for the allocation of workload and incentives fairly to staff - ought to be discontinued as it is resulting in constant staff turnover at the ODSC centers. Either ODSC staff should not be paid extra money on top of their salary or ODSC staff should be made permanent ODSC's staff at a higher salary scale.

R5. GoL should complement the expansion of the **ODSC** with an increase in the pace of digitalization of public services.

R6. The Service Users Feedback System (**SUFS**) should be integrated in GoL planning processes and should continue to be supported as it helps to identify which services need

¹⁹ It should be pointed out that many of the recommendations being made go beyond the project life cycle but are important for the national counterparts in the Lao PDR government to consider implementing.

²⁰ DDF introduced as a complementary process to the current capital budget. Some development projects work better if implemented through PDF.

²¹ Current DDF involves three layers, district, province and central levels. Therefore, there is delay especially at the central level to complete the bid evaluation. When one considers the checks and balance aspect of governance, the provincial level, the PPA, is who represent the interests of the citizens. PPAs are also involve in SUFs where they can reflect the results of the surveys in to their decision.

improvement using evidence based approaches to public administration reform and promotes client orientation in local service delivery.

R7. PPAs should advocate/articulate the need for expansion of **SUFS** to other districts in order to increase their oversight over the executive.

R8. The Governance Sector Working Group (**GSWG**) and the wider Sector Working Groups (SWGs) functioning should to be reviewed by the GoL to ensure that the results framework of such groups provide strategic inputs into the Round Table Mechanism (RTM) process as well as to sector-specific planning.

R9. **MoHA** and development partners in the Chair and Co-Chair positions of the GSWG should be more engaged with the **GSWG** in playing a facilitating and advocacy role to ensure that the SWGs are more effective in their functioning in order to create synergies among and between them.

R10. There should be some procedures in place to encourage all members of the GSWG, including members of the Secretariat participating in the GSWG, especially the junior officials, to speak up. Firm commitment from the senior leaders is essential as an enabling environment for this to succeed.

R11 Continued support for **PSIF** and district administrations should be encouraged by MoHA and MPI to collaborate with non-government actors in local development and service delivery.

MAIN REPORT

I.0 RATIONALE, PURPOSE, SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND APPROACH OF THE EVALUATION

I.1 RATIONALE, SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

The purpose of GIDP final evaluation is two-folded: to ensure accountability of the project against its stated objectives, and for institutional learning for the partners involved. The findings will inform the partners of GIDP on the project's achievements and support institutional learning of the stakeholders engaged therein, both from the Government, development partners and others. The evaluation is to guide all partners to take stock of the progress made in public administration reforms in Lao PDR and identify areas for future programming with a particular focus on making governance inclusive and advancing the achievement of national development goals. The draft 9th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDP) aims to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the public sector in providing services to citizens, including through the effective decentralization and system development, ODSCs, digitalization of services and in creating opportunities for citizens to provide feedback on improving services²². It is, therefore, critical for partners under GIDP to understand the main strengths and weaknesses of the project and to use it as a reference guide for developing future programming, and for Government in developing policy. As such, the aim is not to only evaluate the achievements of GIDP but informing the direction and design of the next public administration reform efforts within the governance sector in Lao PDR.

In terms of government bodies, the scope of the evaluation will consider the role of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA), Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI), and Ministry of Finance (MoF) in taking ownership of promoting wider governance improvements beyond the end of project and on the basis of the results of the GIDP. The evaluation will look at systems strengthening, and application of various tools developed by GIDP to improve accountability, transparency and citizen's participation. The extent to which the project's learnings have fed into progressing national development goals and advancing national policy dialogues will be among the areas of focus of the evaluation.

With the approval of the 9th NSEDP 2021-2025 by the National Assembly, this evaluation will identify ways for the next phase of public administration reforms to align more strongly with the NSEDP and more specifically the MoHA Five Year Plan (2021-2025) on improving governance through public administration reforms.

²² Other systems and reforms include Public Financial Management (PFM) and regulatory updates, such as four new laws enacted, that have changed the sub-national governance architecture and the sub-national treasury flows and budget. There is also a need to look and examine local government revenue options.

2.0 GIDP OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

2.1 GIDP DESCRIPTION

The GIDP sought to create a more enabling local governance environment that would improve service delivery and local development, whilst making it sustainable and inclusive. GIDP was implemented from 2017 to 2021. In order to achieve these goals, the project expected to work across targeted sectors and districts delivering three main outputs²³:

4. Inclusive local service delivery and development;
5. Accountability framework and citizens' feedback; and
6. Expanding partnerships and policy dialogue, with civil society engagement, for development effectiveness.

The GIDP was designed with three main “inter-related components”, which are directly linked with its outputs, leading to the following three results:

1. Targeted local administrations are able to develop and finance the implementation of multi-sector work plans based on community priorities;
2. Accountability framework applied at the district level to capture and use citizens' feedback on provision of basic services;
3. Enhanced multi-stakeholder governance process promoting dialogue and feeding into good governance related policies including the delivery of basic services.

The Project responds to the UN Partnership Framework 2017-2021 (in particular Outcome 7), which prioritizes three broad thematic areas, i.e. Economic Development, Governance and Resilience and feeds into Outcome 3 of UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD) 2016-2020 (“*institutions and policies at national and local level support the delivery of quality services that better respond to people's needs*”).

With regards to Lao PDR policies and priorities, the project has been formulated under the framework of the National Governance and Public Administration Reform Programme (NGPAR) of the Government of Lao PDR, with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) to lead its implementation. The project is intended to align to the cross-cutting governance goals of the 8th NSEDP 2016-2020, which has graduation from Least Developed Country (LDC) status as its primary goal, as well as aligning with the Strategic Plan on Governance 2010-2020 which provides the overarching framework for governance reform in Lao PDR. It also draws on the Vision 2016-2030 and Strategic Plan 2016-2025 of the Home Affairs sector developed by MoHA.

²³ GIDP ProDoc p. 1-2; GIDP Outcome Statement (CPD 2017-21 Outcome 3/UNPF 2017-21 Outcome 7): *Institutions and policies at national and local level support the delivery of quality services that better respond to citizens' needs; GIDP Outcome Statement: Local institutions are able to increase the coverage of basic services and include citizens' feedback in the planning cycle for services provision by 2020.*

GIDP Resources

The Project was designed for a period of four years (1 April 2017 – 30 September 2021 with six-month no-cost extension approved) with a total estimated budget of US \$9,454,729 of which US \$6,500,000 funded budget (SDC: US \$4,000,000 – UNDP: US \$1,000,000 - UNCDF: US \$1,000,000 – Government US \$500,000) and US \$2,954,729 unfunded budget.

2.2 DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

The GIDP was formulated under the framework of the National Governance and Public Administration Reform Programme (NGPAR) of the Government of Lao PDR (GoL), with the MoHA to lead the implementation, with cross-sector cooperation and implementation by the Ministry of Finance (MoF), Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI), and Provincial and District administrations. GIDP is the third joint project implemented by UNDP-UNCDF (supported by SDC²⁴) under the NGPAR programme and is built on the established partnerships through two programmes within the Government's NGPAR - Strengthening Capacity and Service Delivery of Local Administration (GPAS SCSD Jun 2007-May 2011) and the NGPAR Programme Support Programme (GPAS NGPS 2012- June 2016)²⁵.

The project is responsive to the growing emphasis on the need for multi-sector planning and the use of data/information to inform the content, nature, and scope of district plans²⁶. In line with national socio-economic development plans, the GIDP was expected to improve service delivery through the DDF mechanism vis-à-vis intergovernmental fiscal transfer system and two 'model' One Door Service Centres (ODSCs). The project also systematically captures citizens' perception on access and quality of basic services, and promotes opportunities for collaboration with civil society in local development and service provision, both of which may contribute to the development of interventions to enable the People's Provincial Assembly (PPA) members to strengthen their oversight functions over the provinces and district administrations.

Recognizing the contribution that is made by civil society organizations (CSOs), the project is designed to forge collaboration between local authorities and CSOs to identify innovative ways of improving service delivery and of promoting community participation in local development. The three GIDP outputs contributing to inclusive service delivery and development, accountability framework, citizen's engagement and partnerships and policy dialogue are all interrelated and designed to create a virtuous loop that promotes good governance and accountability as well as sub-national and national partnerships. The lessons learned from the project are expected to feed into the national decentralization and Public Financial Management

²⁴ It is the fourth project for SDC as SDC has entered into this partnership for the support to NGPAR since 2003 under the GPAS-SBSD (2003-2007) with SDC's contribution of 3.5 million USDC.

²⁵ In fact, the 4th project is the Saravan pilot, a joint project which set up the GPAS, is included (Funding: UNCDF – US \$2.1 M; UNDP US \$600,000; and EU US\$600,000).

²⁶ The overall GPAS programme has driven the fiscal and administrative decentralization process in Lao and has been responsible for setting an informed decentralization policy (Sam Sang) and for managing its implementation.

(PFM) policy dialogue on socio-economic development through the Governance Sector Working Group (GSWG).

3.0 EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENT

The overall context, tone and direction of GoL's vision and goals of the 8th NSEDP 2016-2020 and the strategic plan 2016-2025 of the Home Affairs sector developed by MoHA has been summarized as follows: *"As good governance plays a vital role in economic development and sustainable poverty reduction, the government is committed to strengthen governance and public administration reform initiatives to graduate from the Least Developed Country status by the year 2020. Furthermore, the regional and global integration of Lao PDR particularly to the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Economic Community in 2015 proves to be a significant milestone and yet a challenge for the governance system of Lao PDR to improve its country wide administration to build trust of its constituents and the international community. For these reasons, governance and public administration reform in the government's programmes and initiatives are a priority²⁷."*

The MoHA strategic plan identified areas of focus for the vision to be achieved, through:

1. Governance and public administration improvement;
2. Civil service management improvement;
3. Governance practices/techniques improvement;
4. Improvement of system and mechanisms for public service delivery; and
5. Effective international cooperation on home affairs.

The GIDP is aligned to the cross-cutting governance goals of the 8th NSEDP 2016-2020, which has LDC graduation as its primary goal.

The GoL vision reflected in the MoHA 2016-2030 Strategic Plan together with the UN Country Analysis Report (2015) informed the design of the Governance for Inclusive Development Programme (GIDP). The project design feeds into Outcome 7 of UNPF 2017-2021 and Outcome 3 of UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD) 2016-2020, *'institutions and policies at national and local level support the delivery of quality services that better respond to people's needs'*. GIDP responds to the United Nations Partnership Framework (UNPF 2017-2021), which prioritises three broad thematic areas for the next implementation phase a) Economic Development, b) Governance and c) Resilience. It also responds to the UNCDF Strategic Framework 2018 – 2021, which aims to support the achievement of sustainable development goals 1 and 17 in least

²⁷ Minister for Home Affairs' introduction letter to Vision and Strategic plan for Home Affairs sector

developed countries by making finance work for inclusion, in collaboration with UNDP and other United Nations partners²⁸.

The GIDP supports the government's strong ambition to strengthen its public administration's ability to achieve the goals of better service delivery, promote wider governance improvements and increase citizens' systematic engagement, especially at the local levels where basic services are coordinated, planned, tracked and reported. The GIDP acted as a platform for providing tools and scalable learning that encourage more inclusive service delivery and local development, which benefits a wide section of Lao people.

GIDP's *Theory of Change* (ToC) is based on the logic that, inclusive service delivery and local development and increased dialogue and collaboration between citizens and state for more effective service delivery will be enhanced, if:

- District teams are entrusted with financial resources to implement district plans with their staff/village communities and assets/funds are used efficiently to improve performance and accountability;
- Support is provided for appropriate learning opportunities suited to government officials working in Laos such as 'learning by doing' where UNCDF and UNDP project staff work collaboratively with GoL staff;
- Appropriate fiduciary management reporting and safeguards for disbursement of funds to district administration as contained in the existing DDF guidelines and with appropriate implementation periods with milestones and standards are successfully established; and
- A supply-driven approach is shifted to a demand-driven approach, where project supports (e.g. DDF, PSIF) are used to increase motivation in sub-national offices and to encourage self-reliance at the local levels, as advocated under Sam Sang policy.

The GIDP's ToC experience with DDF shows that, when provided with the opportunity and sufficient financing, authorities at the sub-national level are capable of taking budget responsibility and accountability in terms of out-turn and execution through localized capacities, to design and innovate public service delivery solutions to implement, monitor and adapt their processes to ensure greater participation of the community in decision making. In turn, authorities have experienced an improvement in the provision of services as a result. The DDF initiative has proved to provide excellent results in terms of introducing new approaches to finance local services while simultaneously strengthening public administration, decentralization, participation, fiscal space²⁹ and governance.

²⁸ UNCDF does this by building on its years of experience in expanding inclusive financial markets and local development finance systems that help unlock public and private finance at the local level. Source: <https://www.uncdf.org/strategic-framework-2018-2021>

²⁹ Increased fiscal space in local government territories – but was not scale sufficiently to impact fiscal space at provincial level.

Based on the evaluation team's preliminary analysis during the inception phase, the team felt confident that the logical pathways and assumptions were sufficiently plausible, understandable, and verifiable criteria against which to evaluate the project. It is important for the evaluability assessment that the objectives of proposed activities in a project are well-defined and easily verifiable³⁰. The evaluation team is satisfied that activities and outputs/outcomes are sufficiently aligned and follow a logical causal pathway. The evaluation placed a focus upon verifying the logic of this causal pathway, as well as identifying any unanticipated results and/or factors affecting results achievement.

During the evaluation an adequate level of data was obtained to address the three fundamental evaluation questions and the key guiding criteria sub-questions in pages 4-6 of the evaluation ToR.

3.1 PREVIOUS AND/OR OTHER EVALUATIONS

The evaluation team reviewed GIDP Mid-Term Evaluation Report (2019). This report made a number of recommendations and the evaluation team has reviewed carefully and the extent to which recommendations deemed valid have been implemented. The Mid-Term Evaluation Report for GIDP received a critical review by partners, about which the evaluation team reviewed carefully and consulted carefully with the GIDP team, MoHA officials and development partners in the development of this Final Evaluation Report³¹.

4.0 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

4.1 OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY

The evaluation methodology adopted adhered to the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms & Standards. The evaluation team adopted an integrated approach involving a combination of data collection and analysis tools to generate concrete evidence to substantiate all findings. Evidence obtained and used to assess the results were triangulated from a variety of sources, as detailed in the paragraphs below, including verifiable data based on project indicators, existing reports, evaluations and technical papers, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, surveys and site visits where/when possible. The evaluation team followed a participatory and consultative approach that ensured close engagement with the evaluation managers, implementing partners and direct beneficiaries.

The evaluation utilized a theory-of-change based approach applying analysis and interpretation techniques that looked into the logical consistency of the chain of effects, linking project activities

³⁰ The OECD DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management (2002) states that the evaluability assessment "calls for the early review of a proposed activity in order to ascertain whether its objectives are adequately defined and its results verifiable."

³¹ Consultations carried out during the evaluation revealed that, although there were changes in the project's implementation after the mid-term evaluation (e.g. re-evaluation of indicators in the RRF), they were not tracked in terms of the recommendations made in that report due to the fact that MoHA and UNDP did not accept that report including its recommendations.

and outputs with changes in higher level outcome areas. Data collected from both project documents and interviews of key stakeholders were carefully analyzed. This approach and analysis informed the answering of the fundamental questions posed under the key criteria of the evaluation. Adhering to OECD/DAC standards and practices for evaluation, the methodology is consistent with the overall purpose of this evaluation to assess the *Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability* of the intervention. In addition to these categories, the cross-cutting themes of *Inclusion* and *Gender Equality* will inform all aspects of the methodology. A single comprehensive **Evaluation Matrix** structured around the key analytic categories, elaborated using the key ToR questions and detailing the sources, tools and approaches that were used to answer the evaluation questions³². The matrix ensured that the methodology (from design, to data collection, to analysis) is consistent and rigorous, supported *data triangulation* across different types of data for each category and question, and enabled analysis of the different project components, addressing the full scope of the project at the different levels at which it operates (individual and institutional).

In implementing the evaluation methodology described above, methodological approaches included some or all of the following steps:

- Collection and analysis of key relevant documents such as project documents, such as: the project document (ProDoc), annual work plans and quarterly reports, theory of change and results framework, technical reports, GIDP mid-term evaluation report and national response, project's quality assurance reports, internal and other assessments, financial reports, field visit reports, UNDP CPD evaluation, Partner Agreements and the Exit Transition Plan (2020); also Lao PDR reference documents, including development plans, Government decisions, laws and regulations and other relevant documents available on the web.
- Drawing a Work Plan for interviews and field visits.
- Interviewing key stakeholders such as the implementing partner, UNCT members, the project team, donor community members, representatives of key civil society organisations and the beneficiaries of the various components of GIDP national, provincial and local authorities. *Annex D provides a list of persons and organizations consulted.*
- Field visits and on-site validation of key tangible outputs and interventions were undertaken as much as Covid-19 travel restrictions permitted.
- Analysis of all information collected from interviews and field visits including *triangulation* to check for corroboration or lack thereof and to fill in any gaps.

³² Annex F (Evaluation Matrix)

In line with the UNDP's gender mainstreaming strategy, gender disaggregation of data is a key element of all UNDP's interventions and data collected for this evaluation is disaggregated by gender, to the extent possible, and assessed against the project outputs/outcomes.

4.2 CRITERIA AND QUESTIONS

Evaluation criteria and key guiding questions

The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the GIDP final evaluation specifically stipulated that the following criteria and questions be covered³³.

The evaluation will address three fundamental questions:

- I. *What did the project intend to achieve during the period under review?*
- II. *To what extent has the project achieved its intended objectives?*
- III. *What factors have contributed to or hindered the project's performance and eventually the sustainability of the results?*

a) Effectiveness

- In which component did the project have the least number of tangible achievements? What have been constraining factors and why? How can they or could they be overcome?
- How and to which extent have the three main components complemented each other, strategically contributed to the project's objectives and made use of the initially proposed interlinkages of the three main components in a virtuous loop?
- To what extent were the overall objectives achieved / are likely to be achieved? How/to which extent have the activities/outputs strategically contributed to those?
- What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?
- To what extent are the intended beneficiaries satisfied with the results? How well are gender and ethnicity considerations been considered?
- To what extent has the project work been able to form and maintain partnerships with other development actors, including other UN agencies, Development Partners, Civil Society Organisations, or government agencies?
- Have there been regular reviews of the progress to ensure that the project is on track to achieve the desired results and to inform course corrections if needed? How has the project

³³ GIDP final evaluation ToR, p. 4

reacted to challenges identified, including addressing recommendations from the Mid-Term Review and the GSWG Secretariat Capacity Assessment conducted in 2019?

- Has the governance mechanism (GIDP Programme Board) provided their guidance and functioned well? If not, comments and recommendations to be provided.
- Are the outcome indicators measured against baseline and target values (if available) and reflects quantitative and qualitative dimensions of the achievement?
- To what extent has the project achieved or led to unexpected development results or outcomes, which were not originally envisaged in the Project Document and Theory of Change?

b) Relevance

- To what extent has the GIDP project addressed key governance issues as outlined in the 8th NSEDP-Outcome 2, MoHA Sector Plan 2021-25 and recommendations of the RTIM pertaining to governance?
- To what extent is the project aligned with the national development needs and priorities including Sam Sang Directive and has been able to address relevant targets under SDG 16?
- As the project is about inclusive development, how well does the design of the project address the needs of the vulnerable groups such as women, ethnic groups, and persons with disabilities in the country?
- What opportunities has the project created or identified in improving local governance?
- Has the project pro-actively addressed emerging demands and opportunities unforeseen during the design of the intervention, adapting its theory of change to respond to changes in the country context and governance landscape, including national priorities, legislative and policy updates and changes in power relation among key stakeholders?
- Has the project resulted in empowerment and capacity development of the local authorities and PPA members as envisaged in the project design and if so, are the efforts sustainable?
- Is there any indication of the government continuing the efforts of promoting accountability and citizen's as well as NPA /private sector engagement?

c) Efficiency

- How cost-effective and time-efficient is the implementation of activities to achieve the outputs by project implementing partners during the evaluation period? What measures are being taken to ensure competitiveness?

- What are the transaction costs for each component?
- How efficiently did the various modalities of the joint partners, UNDP and UNCDF provide the required support to the government in implementation of the project?
- To what extent are the planned funding and timeframe enough to achieve the intended outcomes?
- How well did the implementing partners mobilise resources to fill the funding gaps as envisaged in the project document? What lessons can be learned from this element? And how can the project do better?

d) Sustainability

- Are stakeholders and national partners fully engaged in the decision-making, implementation, and monitoring of the project?
- To what extent has the project contributed to the wider governance improvements and what are the indications that the government will benefit from systems strengthening, capacity development and tools developed by the project to realize inclusive development after the project's completion?
- What were the major factors which influenced non-achievement of sustainability of the project?
- To what extent is the Government of Lao PDR increasing its capacity and ownership for improving public administration during the period in question? What impact has this had on external support?
- Is the Exit Strategy/Transition Plan developed by GIDP being implemented and is the plan regularly reviewed and adjusted according to the project progress, including its financial commitments and capacity?
- To what extent did the benefits of a project or project will be able to continue after donor funding ceased?
- To what extent has the lessons learned fed into national policy dialogue on socio-economic development through the Governance Sector Working Group?

e) Inclusion

- As the project is about inclusive development, how well did the implementation of the project in accordance with the plan address the most marginalized and vulnerable groups such as women, people with disabilities and ethnic minorities in the country.

- To what extent has the project contribution to wider governance improvement result in promotion and protection of marginalized and vulnerable groups such as women, persons with disabilities and ethnic minorities?

f) Gender Equality

- How well did the project ensure that women, girls, boys, and men have equal access to basic service delivery? What lessons can be learned from this element? And how can the project do better?
- As the project is about increasing accountability and citizen engagement, how well did the project ensure that women's meaningful participation in the decision-making process at the local level?

4.3 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS METHODS

Data collection and analysis methods included the following steps:

- Collection and analysis of key relevant documents such as project documents, such as: the project document (ProDoc), annual work plans and quarterly reports, theory of change and results framework, technical reports, GIDP mid-term evaluation report and national response, project's quality assurance reports, internal and other assessments, financial reports, field visit reports, UNDP CPD evaluation, Partner Agreements and the Exit Transition Plan (2020); also Lao PDR reference documents, including development plans, Government decisions, laws and regulations and other relevant documents available on the web.
- Drawing a Work Plan for interviews and field visits *as outlined in Annexes C & D.*
- Interviewing key stakeholders such as the implementing partner, UNCT members, the project team, donor community members, representatives of key civil society organisations and the beneficiaries of the various components of GIDP national, provincial and local authorities. *Annex C provides a list of persons and organizations that the evaluation team consulted.*

Semi-structured interviews supported by targeted questionnaires were carried out with key stakeholders listed on Annex C applying the following modality:

- Evaluation questions were developed around relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability and designed for different groups of stakeholders interviewed;
- All interviews were undertaken in full confidence and anonymity. The final evaluation report does not assign specific comments to individuals.
- Field visits and on-site validation of key tangible outputs and interventions were undertaken, although such visits were limited to specific pilot or representative sites, due to COVID-19 travel restrictions.

- Analysis of all information collected from interviews and field visits including *triangulation* to check for corroboration or lack thereof and to fill in any gaps.
- Assessment and drawing conclusions on the performance of the project based on the evaluation criteria and the evaluation questions, which was used to inform the evaluation team on answering the questions posed and in making constructive observations and recommendations.

In line with the UNDP's gender mainstreaming strategy, gender disaggregation of data is a key element of all UNDP's interventions and efforts were made during this evaluation to collect data disaggregated by gender, to the extent possible, and assessed such data against the project outputs/outcomes.

4.4 DATA SOURCES

Data sources included GIDP project reports, internal and external statistics and data collected during interviews held during the evaluation, including verifiable data on indicator achievement, existing reports, evaluations and technical papers, stakeholder interviews and focus groups (see Annex C), surveys and site visits where/when possible (see Annex D). Data Sources Column in the Evaluation Matrix (see Annex F) contains detail description of data sources used during this evaluation.

4.5 CONSTRAINTS AND LIMITATIONS

The UNDP Country Team and partners were very helpful in assisting with the development of a list of key stakeholders available to be interviewed by the evaluation team³⁴. During the scoping exercise conducted in developing this Work Plan and the Inception Report all stakeholders were found to be very receptive and cooperative towards the evaluation team. Although no resistance was anticipated, the evaluation team was sensitive to the fact that the Mid-Term Evaluation Report of GIDP was not well received by MoHA and understood that there might be some challenges during consultations. The evaluation team however was able to build trust and confidence of GoL partners in the evaluation team and is confident that such challenges did not impact the evaluation. Other potential challenges that were identified during the inception phase included:

- Difficulty in interviewing stakeholders, as some key informants have already left the institutions involved;
- Difficulty in comparison analysis due to different experiences in different districts and locations where GIDP activities were delivered;
- The ongoing COVID-19 travel restrictions which did not permit some site visits and in-person interviews with stakeholders;

³⁴ See Annex C for the List of Stakeholders interviewed.

- Possibility of bias on the part of some stakeholders given level of knowledge and understanding of the NGPAR as a whole and GIDP in particular.

The fact that the national evaluation consultant has experience working in Lao PDR and the different regions of the country helped to mitigate the difficulties that these challenges presented. The national consultant was permitted to travel to visit sites outside Vientiane (Saravan province and Champasak province) identified as representative sites for relevant project outputs and interview provincial and district officials who participated in the delivery of GIDP activities. The evaluation team was able to interview key stakeholders that have already left a relevant post through Zoom. COVID-19 travel restriction prevented the international consultant to join the national consultant in the field mission trips. However, the international consultant was able to participate in interviews with key stakeholders remotely through Zoom.

The evaluation team is confident that data collected from the interviews with the key stakeholders coupled with the data in the documentation provided by the implementing partners resulted in valid findings of the results of the GIDP project and adequately informed the conclusions and the recommendations of this evaluation.

5.0 KEY FINDINGS

5.1 EFFECTIVENESS

Overall

The design of this project presents a reasonably clear set of expected results. The GIDP design is inclusive in inviting all parties to participate in public administration and governance reform efforts including civil society partners, NGOs and the private sector. This is a major move by the government to reach out to these stakeholders. Traditionally, the government and CSOs rarely collaborated. The project aims to build strategic relationships with and between such partners, thus increasing the likelihood of such collaborations in the future.

UNCDF has a unique financial mandate within the UN system to promote increased capital flows to the local level, reducing inequalities, improving services and increasing opportunities for sustainable economic development, which helped to make strong contributions towards sustainable and inclusive local development under GIDP³⁵.

⇒ *GIDP achieved its overall goal to a great extent.* The project's overall goal to support the government and its public administration reform efforts to provide better service delivery, promote wider governance improvements and increase citizens' systematic engagement at the local levels was achieved to a great extent³⁶.

Training and capacity building

In the duration of the GIDP, the DDF supported the capacity development of 617 local staff (92 women)³⁷ and benefitted 142,541 local beneficiaries (60,800 women)³⁸. The GIDP supported MOHA to establish 8 ODSCs bringing the total number of ODSCs in the country to 44³⁹ and

³⁵ Technical Note on UNCDF Financing Mechanisms and Global and Regional Programmes

³⁶ The resource limitation was a constraint that, when taken together with the broad scope of the project, potentially reduced the project's achievement e.g. the tangible output of the project (DDF) was only financed for 0.9 million dollars. The decision of the GIDP board not to proceed with the integration of LoTUS into GIDP due to lack of funding is discussed later in the report.

³⁷ See Annex F "GIDP Capacity Building Summary" p. 2 – 5. DDF training included: Project planning; Bidding process; Contracting with contractors; Conflict mediation; Financial management; Reporting system of DDF implementation; Monitoring and inspection (internal and external); Maintenance of infrastructure after completion.

³⁸ Source: GIDP Closing Report, p. 7.

³⁹ Id.

providing training for 769 participants (229 women)⁴⁰. While the training activities were provided for all 44 ODSCs, GIDP provided equipment and covered renovations in only 2 district ODSCs⁴¹.

SUFS was successfully conducted in 8 districts across 7 provinces: Kua district, Samphan district – Phongsaly province; Xiengkong district, Huaphan province; La district- Oudomxay province; Hinboun district - Khammuan province; Samouy district – Saravan province; Darkjurg district – Sekong province, and Xaysettha district, Attapeu province. 370 participants (133 women benefitted from training provided under SUFS⁴².

PSIF directly benefited 21,710 beneficiaries (8,377 women) and indirectly benefited 637,176, including 315,895 women⁴³. 18,225 (7,320 women)⁴⁴ benefitted from training and other PSIF capacity development activities.

Annex F (GDIP Capacity Building Summary) provides a more complete account of the extent of training and capacity building provided under the different components of the GIDP. Explanations are provided for the fact that some of the training workshops for the DDF limited the attendees to 1 participant from each office which resulted in a disproportionate gender imbalance since most offices are headed by men. It recognizes this as a lesson in that sufficient budget should be allocated for activities and there should a requirement that each office send gender balance teams to the training activities.

Results Framework (RF)

⁴⁰ Source: Annex F “GIDP Capacity Building Summary” p. 2 – 5. ODSCs training included: Current laws and regulations related to preparation for establish ODSC; Service mind and effective communication; Examine steps of document process / workflow; Document management; E-document management; Use and maintenance database; Using barcode in services; How to use ODSC applications ;How to create and use dashboard in ODSC.

⁴¹ To clarify, it should be pointed out that during the GIDP phase, DDF support was focused on Bachiengchaleunsouk district in Champasak and Saysettha district in Vientiane Capital. However, there are 6 other ODSCs: Korb, Hongsa, Xaysathan, Pheing, thongmixay, Paklay districts, During GIDP support was provided to all ODSCs as a result of the PSIF initiative. For example, the ODSC framework and guidelines were developed and training provided to all concerned ODSCs; coordination with the governor’s office for approval and support (i.e. office space); service-related frontline workers’ training.

⁴² Ibid. SUFS training included: Objectives and principle of survey; How to prepare survey tools eg. guideline and questionnaires; How to be the good presenters and facilitators during the workshop and group discussion at local and community level; Data collection and enter data in KoboCollect ; Data cleaning; How to use excel and create graphs; Analysis and report writing.

⁴³ Source: GIDP Closing Report, p. 8.

⁴⁴ Source: Annex F “GIDP Capacity Building Summary” p. 2 – 5. PSIF training included: Project proposal writing; M and E; Gender mainstreaming; Financial rules and report; Using excel; Document filing. Training at community level by grantees: Village administration; Village mediation; Improve the civil registration services; Participatory villagedevelopment plans; Effective document archive using ITC; Promote ITC application in public sector, private sector and civil society; build capacity for the committee responsible for INGO management; COVID -19 prevention and control for local authorities and health volunteer; Food processing for returnees impacted by COVID-19;Organic farming techniques.

The following Table (**Table I**) summarizes the outputs achieved and their relationships to the baselines and targets set in the Results Framework (see **Annex G** for the Final RF as amended⁴⁵):

Table I. The GDP results under the Results Framework (RF)

Components	Indicators	Verifications	Baselines	Targets	Actual
1. Targeted local administrations are able to develop and finance the implementation of multi-sector work plans based on community priorities	1.1. Number of DDF: financed district multi-sector project work plans co-financed by the government	Project proposals on DDF awarded and Report of annual project report	2015: 0	2018: 0 2019: 12 2020: 7 2021: 15	2018: 0 2019: 12 2020: 7 2021: 16
	1.2. Amount (USD) of government's co-financing DDF funded proposals.	DDF implementation report	2015: 0	(\$ DDF BBG co-financed by state budget) 2018:0 2019: 57,000 2020: 60,000 2021: 61,500 Total: 178,500	(\$ DDF BBG co-financed by state budget) 2018:0 2019: 65,847 2020: 45,068 2021: 91,189 Total: 202,104
	1.3. Number of DDF awarded districts addressing local SDG priorities and inequality in service delivery	Project proposals on DDF-SDG LNOB awarded	2015: 0	2018: 0 2019: 0 2020: 0 2021: 10	2018: 0 2019: 0 2020: 0 2021: 16
	1.4. Level of satisfaction expressed by women in terms of their participation in the planning process.	SUFS results/analysis from citizens who use our DDF project	2015: Data not available	2021: Nearly half of targeted respondents are women	2021: 47 % of the respondents were women

⁴⁵ The RRF was amended on 26 October 2020. From information received during consultation, the RRF was amended for 2 reasons: 1. The original RRF was based on the full estimated budget of about 9.5 million USD but in the reality the funded budget ended up to be only 6.5 million USD. This is one of the reasons that the RRF needed to be adjusted to be more realistic with the available resources; 2. SDC raised the issue that the original RRF used mainly quantitative indicators and should have more qualitative indicators.

	1.5. Level of application of the DDF tools applied to policy and/or regulatory change to support enhanced financing for district administrations	New MOF instruction related to financing for district administrations (draft)	2016: Budget law 2017: Draft PFM Reform Strategy	2021: DDF Operational Manual and SOP in compliance with the relevant laws and regulations	2021: Not achieving the results as the national regulations on fiscal budget do not have specify details on budget allocation based on provinces and districts
	1.6. Degree of satisfaction expressed by citizens about new model of ODSC (Bachiong district)	Result from user's feedback forms	2017: No data available	2021: Available information on level of satisfaction	2021: 69.2 % of citizens rated satisfactory experiences (happy and very happy) with Bachiong ODSC services (38% of the respondents are women)
	1.7. No. of clients use new model of ODSC (Bachiong district)	Report of ODSC (Bachiong district)	2015: 0	2021: 100	Nov 2020 to June 2021: 1,178
	1.8. Extent to which ODSC sustains the interest of departments in providing services to citizens.	Report of ODSC (Bachiong district) about department which join with the ODSC at the beginning vs. end of the GDP	2017: 0	2021: All the 9 governmental offices providing their services at Bachiong ODSC stayed throughout 2021	2021: 14 offices governmental offices as of Sep 2021.
2. Accountability framework applied at the district level to capture and use citizens' feedback	2.1. No. of DDF districts applying the updated SUFS giving local citizens' voice on basic service delivery	GIDP annual report and SUFS reports	2015: 2	2018: 0 2019: 4 districts 2021: 4 districts	2018: 0 2019: 4 districts 2021: 4 districts

on provision of basic services	2.2. Extent to which citizens feel satisfied about the quality of public services	SUFS reports	2015: Citizens from 2 pilot SUFS district express their opinion about quality of services	2021: Citizens from 8 new SUFS districts express their opinion about quality of services	2021: Citizens from 8 new SUFS districts express their opinion about quality of services
	2.3. DSDMS revised tools available for PPA and district chiefs to use	The revised DSDMS tools adopted	2015: Old DSDMS introduced to district line offices	2021: PPA and district chiefs use new DSDMS tools	2021: 7 PPA and 8 district chiefs use new DSDMS tools
	2.4. % of districts who confirmed the application of SUFS recommendations.	Draft of district socio-economic development plan	2015: Data not available	2020/21: 50% of the selected districts (8 districts) apply SUFS recommendations	2021: 4 districts applied SUFS recommendations from the 2019 survey in their local socio-economic development plans (meeting the target set). However, there is no information on the 4 districts that used SUFS survey tools in 2021 as the next round of follow-up is in 2024.
	2.5. % districts and PPAs confirmed the usefulness of SUFS results	Minutes of meetings/workshops on SUFS and	2015: Data not available	2018: N/A 2019: N/A 2020: 4 2021: 4 Total: 8	2020: 100% (4 districts) 2021: 100% (4 districts)
	2.6. # of districts' reports on SUFS recommendations	Handover notes of SUFS report to district and PPAs	2015: 2 districts using SUFS	2018: N/A 2019: N/A 2020: 4	2020: 4 2021: 4

	made accessible to the PPAs and communities		prepared reports on implementation and disseminated through internal channels, but not reports were made accessible to public or media.	2021: 4	The reports are published in MOHA website for public access
	2.7. PPA members use the SUFS results to fulfil their oversight role powers of the citizens pertaining to basic services.	Adopted provincial socio-economic development plans (SEDP)	2015: data not available	2021: Majority of PPA in the SUFS district/ province contribute to SEDP to improve service delivery	2021: All PPA (7 provinces) use SUFS to improve their oversight roles
3.Enhanced multi-stakeholder governance process promoting dialogue and feeding into good governance related policies including the delivery of basic services.	3.1. Perceptions of dialogue partners (govt, academia, civil society, private sector) on utility and quality of multi-stakeholder dialogue process.	Survey feedback forms	There were 24 multi-stakeholder policy discussions facilitated under the GSWG but no data on perceptions of dialogue partners on utility and quality of multi-stakeholder dialogue	2018: 25% 2019: 30% 2020: 40% 2021: 50% [Summary of % satisfaction rating using survey data weighting Scoring weights TBC. (e.g. Rating 1 = -2/ Rating 2 =-1 Rating 3=1, Rating 4= +2 Rating 5=+3)]	2018: N/A 2019: 76% 2020:61% 2021: The data are not available in Sept 2021

			process 1 Very low 2 Low 3 Medium 4 High 5 Very high		
	3.2. Synergy amongst the two sub-sector groups in sharing lessons learned/inputs to inform the ongoing national policy dialogue.	Inputs for the RTM document, national plans / strategies)	2015: Inputs from 2 sub-sector working groups provided for the RTM document	2021: Inputs from 2 sub-sector working groups provided and documented for all documentation in the round table meeting process and national agenda eg.9 th NSEDP	2021: Inputs from 2 sub-sector working groups (PSI and LIO)
	3.3. # of governance related policies / priorities informed through multi-stakeholder discussions facilitated under the GSWG at the national and provincial levels.	GSWG annual report (indicate number of workshops and topic discussed)	Year 2012 – 2016 there were 21 – topics discussed under GSWG / SSWG	2017: 6 2018: 6 2019: 6 2020: 3 2021: 3	2017: 6 2018: 6 2019: 11 2020: 6 2021: 6
	3.4. % of PSIF proposals out of the total awarded that promote partnerships between local administrations and NPAs for improved service delivery		2015: 0	2018: 10% (with 100%, 10% is CSO) 2019: 10% 2020: 20% (Friends of the CSOs)	2018: 6% 2019: 6% 2020: 100% (CSO + Govt + Private) (Amended selection criteria, only partnership project to be eligible)

An analysis of the GDP achievement of the targets set by the project in Table I above shows that, with the exception of indicators 1.5 and 2.4, all other targets have been achieved and many of them exceeded by GDP.

There was an explanation provided in Table I for not achieving the target in indicator 1.5 (*'i.e. DDF Operational Manual and SOP in compliance with the relevant laws and regulations' to support enhanced financing for district administrations*). The explanation was that 'the national regulations on fiscal budget do not specify details on budget allocation based on provinces and districts'.

In regards to achievement of the target in indicator 2.4 which required that '*50% of the selected districts (8 districts) apply SUFS recommendations*' 4 districts applied SUFS recommendations from the 2019 survey in their local socio-economic development plans (meeting the target set). It was explained in Table I that there is no information on the 4 districts that used SUFS survey tools in 2021 as the next round of follow-up are in 2024. This is a great achievement of the project. Kua, Xiengkor, Hinboun, Xaysettha were able to applied SUFs recommendations. All benefited from feedback in relation to agriculture, health and education sectors. Cross-cutting issues such as human trafficking and migration were mentioned for Kua and Xiengkor districts.

With respect to indicator 1.4 "*Level of satisfaction expressed by women in terms of their participation in the planning process*", the target is not aligned with the indicator. The target set in the RRF is that for the SUFS '*nearly half of targeted respondents are women*' when it probably should have been '*the percentage of women who expressed satisfaction with their participation in the planning process*'.

SUFS is one way which helped reporting the satisfaction level of the people who receive the service, including satisfaction with DDF infrastructure projects, because the sample villages of the survey are villages which were locations where DDF projects were implemented.

⇒ *The targets for some indicators are not timely-aligned with the progress of activity rolled out.* For example, for indicator 1.1 "*number of district multi-sector project work plans co-financed by the government*", the baseline is zero (0), target for year 1 is also zero (0) which is fine, the target for year 2 is four (4), year 3 seven (7) and year 4 is nine (9). This looks fine assuming the activities will be scaled up as the project advances. This is normal and the activities were scaled up after the first year with an increase volume of co-financing that reached around 15% for the DDF projects⁴⁶. In other words, while the target set for the first year was not met, the project met the targets set for the remaining years.

None of the first year (2017) output targets were met but this is understandable. The project set ambitious targets to be met in the first year. The progress at the output level of the first year is

⁴⁶ This is quite remarkable given the current fiscal constraints imposed by GoL to manage the public budget deficits.

very reasonable, so not achieving the target would not be considered under performance⁴⁷. It is normal for the project to lay the ground work, given the restructuring of the DDF and an introduction of the PSIF, regardless of the fact that the umbrella programme of GPAR had been under implementation already for approximately a decade.

⇒ *The annual reports documented in details the process of implementation, which is a strength of the project.* The detailed account of the implementation process is important so that all stakeholders are well informed and it is also important for future further improvement considerations. For example, the annual report 2017 documented the reasons for delay in the approval of legal documents that enables the funding availability for DDF activities. There were also delays in conducting the DDF grant missions⁴⁸. This delayed delivery of output I in the first year. Processing documents in hard copy often takes time.

⇒ *Records for sub-project activities implemented at local level were kept in hardcopies and traceable, but not digitalized.* The project enabled local government levels to coordinate planning and implementation of the sub-projects' activities and delivery of basic services and kept hardcopies of these activities but have not digitalized them which creates challenges in their evaluation and reporting. The evaluation team was not able to access the hardcopies records due to COVID restrictions..

Output I: District Development Fund and One Door Service Center

District Development Fund (DDF)

As mentioned earlier, the DDF is a funding mechanism, implemented through the Inter-Governmental Fiscal Transfers (IGFTs), that promotes inclusive local planning and services delivery, targets local SDG priorities and inequality in service delivery, promotes more inclusive service delivery - Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) of SDGs. The mechanism has contributed to capacity building by IMC (MOHA, MOF, MPI) in multi-sectoral planning, application of financial regulations, community engagement and project cycle management. Local authorities are exposed to SDG LNOB model of implementing DDF.

DDF Key Features:

- A system that promotes inclusive local planning and services delivery.
- District discretionary block grant financing for socioeconomic infrastructure,

⁴⁷ One other reason was that, although the ProDoc sign at the end of March 2017, full operation including cash and personnel of GDP started only in Sept 2017 so the first year was more an inception period for the project.

⁴⁸ Causes for delays in conducting grant missions reported include, for example, the fact that the grant review committee members at the central level were from different ministries which made it difficult to convene meetings. At the central level, government officials reported that they usually busy with their routine work tasks, particularly those who are in inter-ministry committees.

- Promotes more inclusive development and service delivery; and Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) of SDGs.
- GIDP advocacy is to ensure 5% of the investment budget goes to DDF projects.

The DDF targeted Sam Sang selected districts and provinces which resulted in a greater bang for the money invested. The Sam Sang districts' civil service personnel that were trained under DDF became better administrators than in other Sam Sang districts where DDF was not implemented⁴⁹. The Sam Sang directive proposes provinces as the strategic unit, districts as the integration unit, and villages as the development unit but it also envisages the role of the private sector in rural development.

The DDF was upgraded to include government co-financing of selected infrastructure with a goal to provide better working environment and motivation of individual sub-national administrators in the hope that this would result in improving service delivery to citizens. It evolved from a grant system where the funds were allocated to arbitrarily selected provinces (and all the selected provinces' districts) to a competitive call for proposals from all districts capable of developing projects based on SDGs and LNOB framework (DDF 2.0 model). This new model implemented under the GIDP targets the most vulnerable populations irrespective of their geographical location.

In the project document it was expected that UNCDF's Local Transformative and Uplifting Solutions (LoTUS/Local Investment Facility (LIFE)), which is a proven investment financing mechanism to unlock domestic capital for small-scale local infrastructure projects, would support the participation of private sector in rural development; but LoTUS ended up not being implemented due to lack of funding resulting in a decision taken by UNCDF at headquarters' level, which was noted by the GIDP Project Board. GIDP was hoping to test the potential of LoTUS type alternative financing mechanisms to provide better local public services and development⁵⁰.

⇒ Although a lot of activities were undertaken to further develop and integrate LoTUS into GIDP, LoTUS ended up not being implemented due to a lack of financial support to complete its implementation.

Findings in the UNDP Country Programme (2017-2021) Evaluation acknowledge the fact that the UNDP-supported actions, which include actions under the GIDP, 'facilitated broader engagement between communities, local authorities and the central government' and that, notwithstanding

⁴⁹ Source: DDF stakeholders' key informant interviews #1, #6, #12 and #18.

⁵⁰ Source: The GIDP project document. It should be mentioned that the UNCDF incurred total expenses of US\$1,014,339 in their commitment to provide support to GIDP and to implement the DDF covering all costs from core fund. In this context UNCDF has deployed and financed a P4 position for 18 months, and a full-time NOC staff position to provide technical, operations and programme support for the duration of GIDP. Additional technical and administrative support has been provided by UNCDF regional team at cost. In this context UNCDF has financed all their staff positions and technical missions such PFM work with MoF and the DDF stock-taking and Fiduciary Management reporting as well as DDF field monitoring missions through a mix of LoTUS funding and corporate core funding.

the lack of sustained funding for the governance portfolio, contributed towards decentralization in governance and to raising public awareness of the SDGs. The Final Report states that⁵¹:

“The [UN’s] contribution to setting up the District Development Fund (DDF) which now operates in [many] districts ought to help consolidate the decentralisation process”.

The findings of the UNDP Country Programme (2017-2021) Evaluation also point to the fact that *“UNDP [UNDP-UNCDF partnership⁵²] interventions have been successful when: (a) it enabled others (NRA, UXO Lao, provincial departments in implementing the small-scale rural infrastructure project or DDF, MICT on community radio) and (b) the results were specific and clearly defined”⁵³.*

Key achievements under of DDF can be summarised as follows:

- The scheme has reached 124,541 citizens (women 60,800), 190 villages, 33 districts, 14 provinces.
- The sub-component has trained 14 provincial officials 33 district officials were trained (including 37 women)
- District discretionary block grant financing for socioeconomic infrastructure.
- 35 projects implemented under DDF cycle 1, 2 and 3 of the GDP.
- Successful in capacity-building of district and provincial authorities⁵⁴.
- DDF well integrated into the GoL’s planning and finance systems (National Treasury System)⁵⁵.
- GDP advocacy ensures a minimum commitment of the investment budget goes to DDF projects.

By design, DDF was established as an incentive-driven and performance-based grant system geared towards strengthening the capacities of districts in core generic functions related to the public financial management (PFM) process, ranging between (A) Planning and Budgeting, (B) Financial Management and Procurement (expenditure and reporting), (C)

⁵¹ Source: UNDP Country Programme (2017-2021) Evaluation, Lao PDR, Final Report, p. viii. As a clarification, it should be pointed out that the DDF was, in fact, the result of the UNCDF-UNDP partnership and that they jointly contributed to the setting up of the DDF.

⁵² Added to make it clear that these interventions were as a result of a joint implemented partnership of the UNDP and the UNCDF.

⁵³ Source: UNDP Country Programme (2017-2021) Evaluation, Lao PDR, Final Report, p. viii.

⁵⁴ Capacity development activities carried out were discussed earlier in the report.

⁵⁵ DDF is well integrated into the GoL’s planning and finance system at all levels. The process started at the district level when they consolidate the plan from all sectors before submitting to the provincial and further to the central levels. However, the integration still has certain hurdles to get over to ensure it works seamlessly. Contribution fund from the government is provided based on the ceiling of the fund requested. For the DDF funding cycle, one of the issues is that currently funding is dependent on donor support and funding availability from donor is not predictable, which delays the bid opening, in turn delaying the screening and the awarding of the proposal. Also, it is a challenge to match the government budgeting cycle and the DDF cycle, which makes it difficult to decide on the extent of the government’s contribution.

Implementation/Execution-Service Delivery, and (D) Accountability and Transparency (monitoring and oversight).

By Q2 2018, the first round of opening for proposals was announced, guided by the newly upgraded DDF operations Manual. *Findings from the interviews at local levels*⁵⁶ are consistent with the desk review findings, that the proposals for DDF funding must be included in the approved district and provincial strategic plan (annual provincial public investment plan PIP) to secure State co-financing of the project. In practice, however, the proposed project must be awarded DDF fund first before they are included in the approved annual district and provincial PIP. Due to the delay of the annual DDF announcement of awarded districts and proposal processing, it is difficult to include the DDF project in the district's PIP.⁵⁷

The first PFM function (i.e. planning and budgeting) continues to use DDF modality, which is a GPAR tried and tested model for the provision of discretionary block grant financing for prioritised social economic infrastructure. It also catalyses cross-sector planning and service delivery at district level through the untied nature of these DDF block grants. During the first 6 months inception period, the GIDP upgraded the current DDF guidelines to, *inter alia*, include:

- Government co-financing of selected infrastructure;
- Move to a more demand-driven approach taking into account governance factors, such as the capacity and motivation of individual sub-national administrations to improve the lives of their citizens through responsive service delivery;
- Strategically positioning the DDF as a seed capital for leveraging increased financing for local development, as well as public service delivery, by exploring opportunities for aligning and coupling with other available funds (e.g. Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF)).

⇒ *The DDF modality is a GPAR tried and tested model which was successfully modernized for SDG compliance and LNOB targeting under the GIDP with upgraded guidelines which improved its impact and effectiveness as a conduit to localize the SDGs.*

⇒ *The allocation of the public sector budget to co-finance the DDF illustrates an ambitious move by the government to secure sub-national financing through a more predictable budget allocation. Although, moving forward fiscal space will be extremely limited, the integration of the DDF within the treasury system with expenditure coding provides a new conduit for blended finance options (public sector and ODA) to deliver quality local services to the most vulnerable in Lao PDR.*

Sourcing private capital for local services is an area largely unexplored at sub-national administration and GIDP provided an opportunity to test and establish the potential for complementary approaches to funding better local services and development with private capital and non-government funding (in line with SDG 17).

⁵⁶ Source: DDF stakeholders' key informant interviews #12 & #13.

⁵⁷ Source: DDF beneficiaries' FGD #2.

The current DDF system is now open to all districts and provides opportunity for co-financing of district plans from their official budget assignments and DDF funds with targeting ability for local SDGs applying LNOB principles. The LNOB strategy is one of the core principles that the GoL has adopted and has been embedded within the 9th National Social Economic Development Plan (NSED) development and policy plan⁵⁸.

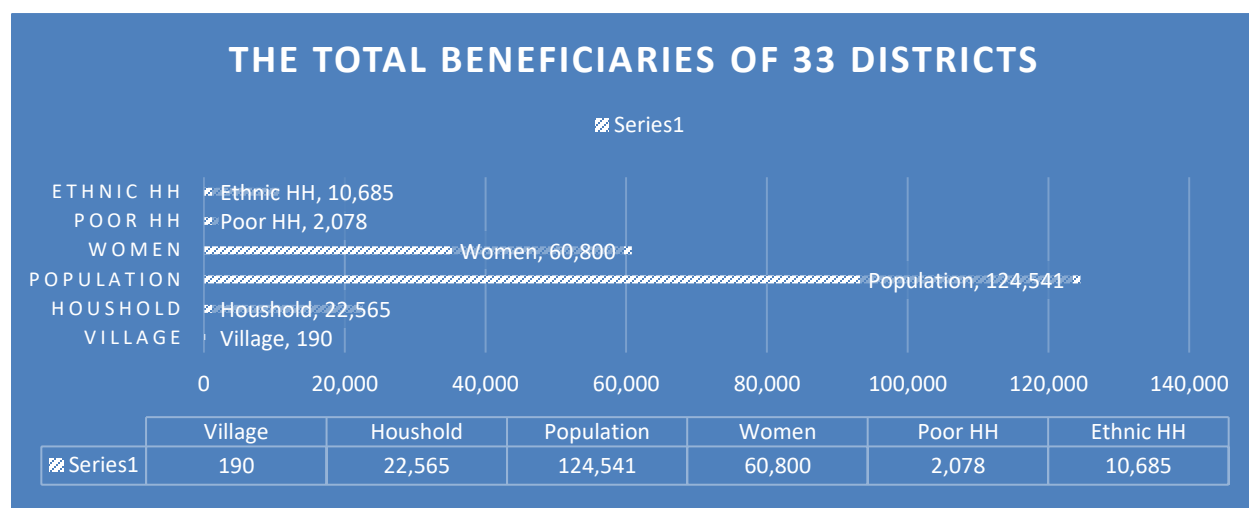
⇒ At the district level, DDF is very well known among authorities. The district administration confirmed that the district should work collaboratively between different sectors, but pointed out that recently there has been no project/initiative to provide a platform for this work. Interviewees acknowledged that they have not worked multi-sectorally before on a concrete project until GDP. The district officials and governors are still hopeful that the DDF scheme will continue to be implemented.

Beneficiaries' view on DDF

Projects funded under the GDP's DDF component include small construction projects such as: roads and bridges, concrete pipes, kindergarten places and community markets.

⇒ Overall, DDF projects were undertaken in 33 districts. Charts 3 below provide the breakdown of data in terms of beneficiaries of DDF projects funded in those 33 districts, totalling 124,541 citizens including 60,800 women.

Chart 3. Breakdown of the beneficiaries of DDF projects in those 33 districts



The evaluation team held focus group discussions (FGD) with beneficiaries of DDF in Daxia-Phonhin village, Lao Ngan district, Saravanh province.

One of the four villages visited during this evaluation process benefited from a road improvement project supported by DDF fund. The project was implemented during 2018-19. The evaluation

⁵⁸ Source: UNCDF “The District Development Fund of Lao: A chronological story of a concept maturing to scale, delivering community cohesion and development”, 2021, p. 13.

team held a FGD with 8 participants who were randomly selected and the discussion took place without project staff presence. The villagers reported that before they relied on the shifting cultivation. When there is a “boom” in agriculture production, particularly coffee and now cassava, “life has changed” as a result of the road improvement and DDF projects.

Pictures 1 and 2 below depict small infrastructure projects planned, managed and implemented at the district level (supported by District Development fund).

Picture 1. The water supply in Mai, Savang and Naphay villages, Thongmixay district, Xaiyabouly province and in Phaosamphanmixay village, Saysettha district, Attapeu province.



Picture 2. The primary school in Mounmeung village, Xay district, Oudomxai province and the Namhong irrigation in Nammang village, Viengphoukha district, Louangnamtha province.



One Door Service Center (ODSC)

Together with other tools, ODSCs are adopted as part of promoting a general shift to greater accountability and transparency in public service delivery, while strengthening client orientation and accessibility. ODSC involves a model that can deliver local government services that are accessible, transparent and accountable. The framework around ODSCs provides the following objectives⁵⁹:

- (i) To provide integrated support and assistance to citizens applying for various services that requires approval from the government

⁵⁹ One-Door-Service Center Framework, Ministry of Home Affairs, Lao PDR, December 2018, p. 4.

(ii) To facilitate immediate and convenient access to a range of services including but not limited to birth certificate, death certificate, marriage certificate, land entitlement certificate, investment related services and others

(iii) To save resources and transactional cost that might possibly be incurred in the service application process

Services provided at ODSCs include: birth, marriage and other certificates; permits to build a house, register a car, motorcycle or a Tuk Tuk; land registration; permits and licences to run a business. In coordination with UNDP and GIDP team, UNDESA provides technical support to the rolling out of ODSCs in Lao PDR.

Key achievements under this output include⁶⁰:

- 44 ODSCs functioning in the country (30 more planned by 2025);
- 25 services provided by 6-9 departments;
- Piloting 2 model ODSCs in Bacheingchalearnsouk and Xaysettha districts under GIDP;
- Management Information technology systems (MIS) Barcode / QR to track progress of application Forms.

Xaysettha ODSC

Xaysettha district is one of the nine districts of Vientiane Capital. It is also one of the four metropolitan districts of the Capital. The demand for the services would be greater in Xaysettha compared to a district outside of the Capital metropolitan or districts in other provinces such as, for example, Bajiengchaleaunsouk district, Champassack Province.

Xaysettha is considered part of the center of development in Lao PDR and covers 17 villages in the urban area and 31 villages in the suburbs, with a total area of 14,503 hectares, 114,607 people, and 58,215 women⁶¹. The district is home to a great deal of areas of development potential, such as some rich agricultural land and the newly developed That Luang Lake area. With the amount of development activities taking place in the district, there is greater demand for public services at the ODSC in Xaysettha compared, for example, to its Bachieng counterpart.

In 2006, the Mayor of Vientiane Capital issued Resolution No. 123 / CHN, dated 14/3/2006, approving the opening of a one-stop service mechanism in Xaysettha district. Then, the city has assumed responsibility for promoting quality one-stop service. Overall, the implementation of the ODSCs is seen as satisfactory to service users, as discussed further below.

⁶⁰ “To date (as of February 2021), there 44 active ODSCs across the country providing different governmental services to citizens, ranging from birth certificate to marriage certificate to business permit applications” – Source: Concept Note, Webinar for One-Door-Service-Centers (ODSCs) in Lao PDR, 2 April 2021, p. 1.

⁶¹ Source: Xaysettha ODSC annual report, DOHA, January 2021. P. 4-5.

In 2008, the Governor issued Decision No. 313 / CHN dated 8/6/2008 on the approval of Xaysettha District to expand the One Door Service to other sectors within the District, expanding it to cover the services of seven institutions: Ministry of Public Works and Transport, Office of the Governor, Land Office, Office of Industry and Commerce, Information and Culture Office, Office of Tourism and the issuance of tax registration of the tax department. The Governor also issued Decision No. 308 / dated 4/5/2008 on the one-day service fee collection and Decision No. 250/VTE dated 4/5/2008 on copies cost recovery for the ODSC.

⇒ Findings from the evaluation⁶² show that the satisfaction level among the stakeholders with the Xaysettha ODSC is very high in terms of the potential of the ODSC model of public service delivery. However, Xaysettha ODSC faces a number of challenges which are described in the report, including staff replacements without adequate training and limited office supplies. The constant staff changes occurred in both ODSCs as a measure adopted for the allocation of workload and incentives fairly to staff since ODSC's staff are paid extra money on top of their regular salary. This results in constant staff turnover at ODSC centers.

There are many factors that contributed to ODSCS success as a public service delivery model⁶³. The service is convenient, prompt and transparent. Service users are satisfied with the service, such as saving time, not necessary to go to too many places like in the past and saving unnecessary costs. For the government, collection of revenue into the central budget, especially revenue collection turned out as planned and exceeded the plan each year. Furthermore, the ODSC is really implementing the State policy and directive, making the state administration more streamlined and the people using the services are more satisfied, increasing the trust and confidence in the Party-State services⁶⁴.

The work of the staff now is more transparent and verifiable and the district leadership has more time to research other work as the amount of paperwork is reduced. It was reported to the evaluation team during consultations that the duration of processing documents has been shortened from 3-15 days before to 2-7 days now. For example, processing a foreigner's marriage certificate now takes only 10 to 15 days while before it could take from two months to sometimes two years⁶⁵.

However, ODSC are facing many challenges. The one-stop service mechanism is to improve the public administration system but it involves many different departments, many different offices, having to deal with the old-fashioned and bureaucratic work apparatus that is slow and cumbersome⁶⁶. There is some degree of resistance to the changes being implemented under the

⁶² This finding is based on FGDs held by the evaluation team with six (6) service users in each ODSC, Xaysettha and Bachiengchalernsouk, who reported having used the ODSC services. The discussions were held independently without Center officials present.

⁶³ GIDP support for ODSC in Xaysettha is the office renovation including ICT equipment, digitalized service (using application for process tracking etc.) and capacity building for ODSC staff.

⁶⁴ Source: ODSC stakeholders' key informant interviews #1, #4, #8, and #10.

⁶⁵ Source: ODSC stakeholders' key informant interviews #8, #10 and #14.

⁶⁶ ODSC stakeholders' key informant interviews #8, #11, and #14.

ODSCs as it shakes the status quo by introducing increased levels of transparency. However, increased transparency could act as a barrier to bribe schemes and corruption.

Other challenges reported to the evaluation team include the following:

- Front line workers are frequently shifted (i.e. every 3 months), resulting in constant staff turnover⁶⁷;
- The appointment of the responsible committee is often changed, making the direction of the work inconsistent;
- At the technical level, the management of copied documents and the circulation of documents is ineffectively operated; and
- Some staff are not committed to the work and some exploited opportunities for personal gain.

Bachiengchalernsouk ODSC

ODSC activities included both the human resource capacity building and facilities improvement. Through GIDP, 31 local government officials (16 female) across nine line offices have received training in providing 69 different services to citizens in Bacheingchalearnsouk district. The themes of the training projects included the ‘Service Mind’ training to enhance the commitment of ODSC officials and to improve public relations and client orientation, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in public administration related to ODSC, and communication training on promoting ODSC model.

Upon launching in November 2020, Bachiengchalernsouk ODSC has brought in nine different government offices with 69 products/services available to citizens through the ODSC model. In 2021, the center expanded adding 14 more services to make a total of 94 products, services available at the center.

In just one year of operation, the center has contributed to an increase in revenue collection of 70% that would not have been realised without the ODSC model. The center has created trust by displaying visibly the fees and charges for each of the services. Therefore, service users are happy to pay the fee and charges. In the past, there was a strong suspicion that the money they pay for the services to the officials would not “enter the budget review process”. Previously, there was suspicion that the officials take the money for themselves and never report the money to the authorities. The practice is called “leaking”. So the center closed this “leakage” resulting in an increase in the revenue. The center also contributed to efficiency in “handing the collected money” to the treasury. In the past, when officials collected fees they kept such fees for a while

⁶⁷ This issue was reported to the evaluators by both ODSCs as a measure adopted for the allocation of workload and incentives fairly to staff. ODSC front line staff earns extra money on top of their salary. Consequently, many staff members want to join the ODSC. This results in constant staff turnover at ODSC centers.

before they hand over the money to the treasury. Now the center collected all the revenue and the handing over is done instantly⁶⁸.

⇒ *In terms of good governance, Bachiengchalernsouk ODSC improved the relationship between the local authorities and the citizens.* Interviews and observations made during field mission reflected satisfactory results. This is corroborated by the results of the user's feedback forms used to assess degree of satisfaction expressed by citizens about new model of ODSC to which 69.2% of citizens (38% women) rated satisfactory experiences (happy and very happy)⁶⁹. District officials proudly claim that the services they ask their citizens to pay for are transparent and accountable. In total 14 ODSC governmental offices were successful set up and usage of the center greatly exceeded the original target of 100 individuals. For example, between November 2020 to June 2021 1,178 citizens used the ODSC in the district⁷⁰.

The change that has come as a result of this reform resulted in the population being supportive of the governor and the local administration office. However, there are still many **challenges**. The technical offices have not yet been fully operationalized in the center. One reason is because the services used to be provided in their offices and service users are familiar with the old system. It is difficult to turn people away by suggesting them to go to the ODSC. As a result, the technical office (back office) offers the service there, unable as of yet to consistently turn citizens away to the ODSC. At times, it is simply because it is more convenient to provide service outside the center, for example during outreach or mobile services, in cases where take up of the services is low⁷¹.

Therefore, some services are not fully being provided at the center. The solution adopted is to provide the service outside, but to report the transaction to the center for consolidation of all rendered services in a single and coordinated manner. It is important to plan and implement an effective communication strategy so that the service users are fully aware of the services and the benefits they can get from the center.

While the benefits of ODSC in Bachiengchalernsouk are similar to Xaysettha, the challenges are quite different. Reports received during the evaluation process show that officials assigned to the ODSC are often absent or come late or come to the office for two hours and then go back to their own office. Some offices have withdrawn some of their services from the center. It is worth noting that some service are currently not being done at the center such as for example the mobile tracker registration and the small business registration that need to be done at the village level⁷². Some offices still follow the traditional approaches to service delivery, administered

⁶⁸ Source: ODSC stakeholders' key informant interviews #11, and #14.

⁶⁹ Source: GIDP Closing Report, p. 16

⁷⁰ Id.

⁷¹ Source: ODSC stakeholders' key informant interviews #8, #10, #11 and #13.

⁷² This was described to the evaluators as a strategy adopted in the transition period. In Bachieng, there are certain activities that they will use a mobile team to do outreach. This is to encourage compliance by villagers with the law

through their own office. Therefore, the center doesn't meet the ambitious targets in relation to revenue collection.

Another finding was that there is mis-alignment between technical offices, the district administration office and the governor's office, which are better well known the horizontal and vertical lines. These levels of institutions are not aligned with each other, or are not fully “long-song”⁷³, which may frustrate the effectiveness of the ODSC model.

Output 2. Service Users Feedback Survey (SUFS) Accountability Framework

The Service Users Feedback Survey (SUFS) captures local citizens' perception of and feedback on local public services, administrative performance and governance practices. It provides a platform for citizens to participate in local governance through providing feedback directly to local authorities to inform public administration reform efforts, in turn strengthening the relationship between local authorities and citizens, which is critical to the advancement of good governance. SUFS is one of the localized indicators under SDG-16.

In addition, the National Assembly (NA) and Peoples' Provincial Assembly (PPA) members have benefited from SUFS in fulfilling their mandate as PPA members, with PPA members benefitting significantly in terms of findings from constituents in their respective provinces participating in the SUFS⁷⁴. The GIDP, through SUFS, has developed SUFS Results Users' Manual, a tool to boost the capacities of elected NA-PPA members in the target provinces (8 districts), in increasing their oversight over district administration. In summary, SUFS key design features include⁷⁵:

- To improve the public services at the local level, particularly at the district level
- To provide information to district authorities for their district socio-economic development plan periodically
- To serve as the mechanism that collects and analyses feedback of public service users and provide information to the relevant sectors
- To provide information to the People's Provincial Assembly (PPA) to oversee the implementation of the relevant sectors
- To promote people's participation in the governance or public service reform

Results from the survey will be considered according to the following factors⁷⁶:

- Location (rural remote, hardship or urban areas);
- Social-culture aspects (ethnicity);

such as, for example, tractor vehicle registration. Once people are aware of the requirement to comply with the law, this strategy will change.

⁷³ 'long-song' is the Lao word for aligned.

⁷⁴ Source: SUFS stakeholders' key informant interviews # 2, #4 and #9.

⁷⁵ Source: Service User Feedback Survey (SUFS), Operational Manual, May 2019, p. 4.

⁷⁶ Id.

- Populations (gender, age and disability);
- Economic factor (household poverty)

SUFS serves as an accountability framework to capture and use citizens' feedback on the provision of basic services and to consolidate citizens' voice in local decision-making structures, where service provision is discussed and managed. It is used as a tool designed to elevate the social inclusion of people, who may not have been included in local governmental planning efforts in the past, and to bolster the quality and use of information and data by governance structures, such as the new PPAs⁷⁷.

Two rounds of SUFS have been implemented under the GIDP. The tool is regarded as very important piece of good governance. It shows that the government is willing to listen to the feedback of citizens now more than before. In addition, the tool is developed and implemented jointly with other sectors, such as for example, the Lao Women's Union, and the Lao Youth Union.

The SUFS 01 was successfully completed in 2019 in four districts across four provinces and results shared with governance stakeholders. The survey interviewed 56 Villages' citizens (1,734 House Holds (H/H)) . Afterwards, the SUFS 02 was carried out in 4 new districts: Samphan district, La District, Samouy District and Dukchung District.

⇒ *The GIDP has successfully built the capacity of 24 MoHA officials, representing the Task Force at the central level, and 80 staff from 8 districts across 8 provinces since 2019, in designing and implementing the SUFS⁷⁸.* It is reported that the MoHA Task Force could independently organize SUFS at the district level and is able to undertake data management, analysis, and report-writing.

The Service Users Feedback Survey is designed to measure different aspects good governance dimension⁷⁹:

- Service usage;
- Staff's competency and attentiveness;
- Complaint mechanism;
- Transparency of services;
- Quality of services; and
- Ease of access to services.

⁷⁷ Source: SUFS stakeholders' key informant interviews #5, #9.

⁷⁸ Ibid at p. 34: "SUFS was successfully completed and relatively effectively implemented. The taskforce and committee were set up swiftly. The taskforce contributed greatly to the implementation of the SUFS from the design to the report writing step. The district committee in all four districts closely supervise the district survey team during the implementation, participated actively in the results presentation workshops. The district survey teams put tremendous efforts in data collection overcoming numerous difficulties faced during the survey, traveling to remote villages on the difficult road condition, difficulty in communicating with villagers, who speak ethnic languages".

⁷⁹ Source: Report of "Service User Feedback Survey (SUFS)", April-May 2019, p. 14.

The results of the SUFSs with respect to the different aspects of good governance dimensions were as follows⁸⁰:

- Staff competency: 47.5%
- Efficiency: 71.6%
- Transparency: 61%;
- Quality: 75%
- Accessibility: 64%

More than 50% of the citizens expected improvements particularly in basic public services. It was interesting that the findings were that persons with disabilities were more satisfied with the services than those citizens that do not have disabilities. Women perspectives were similar to male perspectives. It is also “*interesting to note among persons with disabilities many (88%) reported that they participated in the village development planning*”⁸¹. The explanation for greater participation by persons with disabilities may be due to the fact that they have more time availability to participate. Also the fact that they participated in the planning process may explain their higher satisfaction rate with the services that resulted from such planning process.

SUFS collected citizen’s opinion about six main public services, namely⁸²:

1. Primary education (services of primary and lower secondary schools);
2. Primary health care services (services of health centres and district hospitals);
3. Water supply and sanitation service (WASH);
4. Public work service (road and bridges);
5. Agriculture extension services (services of district agriculture extension stations/centres); and
6. Civil registration service (services of DoHA).

The **table** below depicts its graphic format:

Table I. SUFS public services opinion survey

⁸⁰ Source: Pradeep Bagival interview and presentation.

⁸¹ Source: Report of “Service User Feedback Survey (SUFS)”, April-May 2019, p. 28

⁸² Ibid at p. 14.

Good governance dimension					Public services	Already good, no need to improve	Improve a little	Improve moderately	Improve a lot	Improve urgently
Staff's competency and attentiveness	Complain mechanism	Transparency of services	Quality of services	Ease of access to services		(1) 😊	(2) 😊😊	(3) 😊😊😊	(4) 😊😊😊😊	(5) 😊😊😊😊😊
						Education	%	%	%	%
						Health	%	%	%	%
						WASH	%	%	%	%
						Roads and bridges	%	%	%	%
						Agriculture extension	%	%	%	%
						Civil registration	%	%	%	%

During a Service User Feedback Survey (SUFS) study conducted in April-May 2019 it was found that⁸³:

- 99% of interviewed informants reported that they used roads and bridges which is to be expected since they are basic public work sector services;
- 94% of interviewed informants reported that they used primary healthcare service;
- 84% of interviewed informants reported that they used Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and primary education services;
- 58% of interviewed informants reported that they used the agricultural extension service provided by DAFO; and
- Less than 43% of interviewed informants reported that they used civil registration services provided by district home affairs office (DOHA)

Although more male than female citizens reported using public services the difference was only about 6%. For example, 44% interviewed male informants reported using education services while only 39% interviewed female informants reported having done so⁸⁴.

During this evaluation there was support from the district in selecting sites to visit and villagers to interview to ensure that poor and very poor villagers were included as well as non-poor villagers. Officials interviewed would like to see SUFS continue to be implemented, but they have not allocated budget for it⁸⁵. The results from SUFS have not been used via the supposed DSDMS tool. The tool has been revised but the project ended before there was a chance to fully apply it. If the project had lasted another year, this tool would have been tested⁸⁶. Officials interviewed reported the results were disseminated via the district monthly meeting and that the governor

⁸³ Ibid, at p. 15. Survey participants included the same number of male representatives of households as female. 48% of informants were female; 52% were male. The results show that perspectives of male and female informants were very similar, with a discrepancy of only 6%.

⁸⁴ Ibid, at p. 22.

⁸⁵ Source: SUFS stakeholders' key informant interviews #2, #4 and #9.

⁸⁶ It is difficult to assess the extent of the impact this may have had on the overall project achievement. Officials interviewed reported that even without the DSDMS tool, they report through their traditional methods. This means that they use the weekly briefing at the district governor presence to report the results of the SUFs and convey to the concerned sectors.

and the sector were told about what the need to improve it. However the results were not promoted widely among the public or citizens to highlight the citizen feedback approach.

⇒ Interviewees reported that the SUFS is a good tool to be used to mobilize resource from other sources such as, for example, the private sector, as the private sector is encouraged to work more closely with and support local authorities after reviewing the results of the surveys, which provide some degree of transparency. The findings of the SUFS show moderate to high rate of usage and satisfaction with most of the sectoral services, particularly about the access to primary education and healthcare services. Most people reported satisfaction with the quality of civil registration service and rated the staff competency level to be high⁸⁷.

⇒ There is corroborating evidence that SUFS have contributed to more participatory socio-economic planning. SUFS round I was conducted in 2019 which allowed time for the results to be considered by the district authority and the district authority responded to people's needs in the districts' socio-economic development plan year 2020-2024⁸⁸. Some of problems and location of the villages' samples were mentioned in the 5-year development plan.

Below are pictures of SUFS activities:

Picture 3. Activities carried out under SUFS



⁸⁷ Source: Key Stakeholders Interviews #1, #4 and #8. This is also corroborated by the findings in the Report of “Service User Feedback Survey (SUFS)”, April-May 2019 at p. 34.

⁸⁸ For example, in the Oudomxay province, the feedback from SUFS that were included in the provincial plan included: Agriculture access road, kindergarten /preschool building, more user-friendly agriculture extension services, and road networks between district and Koumban (village cluster centers), In Vientiane capital: the expansion of ODSC to other districts, improvement of public service delivery, promotion of agriculture commercialisation, processing, access to credit for farmers, were included in the provincial plan.



Output 3: The Governance Sector Working Group and the Public Service Innovation Facility

The Governance Sector Working Group (GSWG)

The Sector Working Groups (SWGs) are forums to discuss and build consensus about development priorities, and improve sectoral aid coordination and effectiveness as set out in the Vientiane Declaration – Country Action Plan (VDCAP), across key government agencies, development partners and other stakeholders. Under the common framework of the Round Table Process, these SWGs commit to Lao PDR's development efforts in the areas of their expertise under the leadership of the GoL.

According to the project design, the Governance Sector Working Group (GSWG), through partnerships at the national level promotes dialogue and captures feedback from key partners on governance issues, advocates for reform and aims to influence governance-related policies and service delivery. It is a platform for exchange of views and awareness-raising of governance issues. The GSWG is one of the SWGs and it is a system that facilitates multi-stakeholder dialogue on governance issues under the RTIM process structured as follows:

- MoHA and MoJ are the lead GoL members of the GSWG Secretariat and co-chair the GSWG together with SDC,EU and UNDP;
- Secretariat staff are from MoHA, MoJ, NA and MoF;
- GSWG has two (2) sub-sector working groups: the Public Service Improvement Sub-Sector Working Group, and the Legal and Institutional Oversight Sub-Sector Working Group.

In a study aiming at taking stock of the capacity of the members of the GSWG Secretariat in order to plan for a forward-looking strategy to aid the GSWG Secretariat in performing its tasks

at the optimal level and to support the GSWG in line with the overall objectives of the Vientiane Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Round Table Meeting⁸⁹, there was a comment that:

“Generally, the senior officials understood their roles and responsibilities in the GSWG Secretariat. However, they felt that they could not fully contribute to the work of the GSWG Secretariat as they were often involved in many other commitments. The lack of clear roles and responsibilities assigned to the function from each ministry is also part of the reasons for the members not being able to fully contribute their fair shares to the GSWG Secretariat. In any case, they wished they could contribute more than what they were currently doing. In terms of support, they felt that the senior leaders at the executive level of the GSWG (Chairs and Co-Chairs) could have spent more time and efforts to provide a clearer direction and guidance to the GSWG Secretariat. Coupled with the lack of a clear roadmap and strategy of the GSWG, it makes it even more difficult for the GSWG Secretariat to function and obtain necessary support. No doubt that the AWP’s are already reflective of the government’s policies and the NSEDPs. However, the clear long-term directions on governance could be milky sometimes. The members in the executive level of the GSWG are the same people in line of reporting that some members in the GSWG Secretariat, especially MoHA and MoJ, have to report to in their routine work in the offices. In this regard, the support could be interpreted in both ways. On the one hand, the members in the GSWG Secretariat could get direct support from the executive level more easily as they already often interact on a daily basis. On the other hand, there is a level of uncomfortableness as there is a psychological feeling among some members of the GSWG Secretariat that “too much” follow-up on the work of the GSWG that requires their inputs might appear “pushy” and this might have adverse impact on their career progression. Moreover, the heads of the SSWG’s are the same persons in the executive levels. Hence, the structure of SSWG presenting discussion points to the GSWG Secretariat whom further presenting to the executive level for feedback does seem to serve its purpose. In most cases, when the heads of the SSWG’s approve of the work, it is often by default to be approved by the executive levels as they are the same persons with double-hatting roles”⁹⁰.

Findings from interviews carried out during the evaluation process⁹¹ corroborated the above comment made in the report.

⇒ *The GSWG contributed significantly to the general objective of public administration and governance reform. The evaluation found that the GSWG mechanism serves well the purpose of sharing information, lessons learned, and exploring best practices. However, many interviewees felt that the GSWG mechanism should further improve other functions such as to promote dialogue and to seek feedback on governance issues, and to advocate and influence governance-related policies and service delivery. It is felt that the GSWG meetings are too formal “focusing too much on sharing good things, achievement, information that can easily be shared via emails.”⁹² The GSWG meetings*

⁸⁹ Capacity Assessment of the Governance Sector Working Group Secretariat, Sanva Saephan, 8 October 2019.

⁹⁰ Ibid, at p. 21.

⁹¹ Source: GSWG stakeholders’ key informant interviews #7 and #16.

⁹² Source: GSWG stakeholders’ key informant interviews #7 and #16.

rarely discuss issues and challenges, or looking for the root causes of the problems and arrive at solutions.

Views are diverse among stakeholders about the effectiveness of the GSWG. The evaluation found that GSWG contributed significantly to the general objective of public administration and governance reform. This is corroborated by the results of interviews conducted during this evaluation and other data of achievements, including the following data⁹³:

- The GSWG is regarded as one of the well-functioning and well attended among the sector working groups, with a **participants' satisfaction rating an average of 76%**.

Technical/Thematic Workshops from 2017 – 2020

- **32 topics, approx 1,600 participants;**
- **Workshops on SDGs for local staff in 6 provinces – about 200 participants;**
- **Workshops on strengthening local governance on COVID-19 preparedness and PHC beyond COVID-19**
 - **4 provinces 7 districts: Bokeo (Paoudom, Houyxay), Luangnamtha (Luangnamtha), Xayabouly (Ngeun, Kenthao) and Champasak (Pakse, Pathoumphone)'**
 - **Participants: provincial governors, COVID-19 committees (pro/&dis), district chiefs, personnel from boarder checkpoints, villages;**
 - **321 participants (96 female participants).**

GPAR involvement in the GSWG mechanism, to a certain extent, is difficult to separate from that of MOHA⁹⁴. It is important to note that in the government system in general, one person has to work in many roles e.g. the Head of the GSWG secretariat is the same person as the DDG of the planning and cooperation departments. However, it should be pointed out that the budget and logistic support to the GSWG does not come from the DG or the DDG, but from the GPAR⁹⁵.

There will be some challenges if the GPAR funding support is withdrawn, as the budget to support the meetings under the GSWG is very limited and may not be able to implement the GSWG annual work plans well as without funding, if at all. It may be difficult to adapt to the new context under which no GPAR funding available. This would be unfortunate because for decades the GSWG has been supported by GPAR through the government and MPI's Roundtable process. With GPAR support, the GSWG has provided coordination as well as information sharing. For example, all required reports were submitted on time, meetings particularly at the high level were

⁹³ Source: GDP Annual Project Review Report 2019, p. 34 -36.

⁹⁴ Source: GSWG stakeholders' key informant interviews #18, #19 and #20.

⁹⁵ Source: GSWG stakeholders' key informant interviews #1 and #20.

conducted as planned with good logistics including documents made available in two languages (Lao and English) to the government side and DPs to make sure everyone understand contents. This support has led to the high satisfaction rates for the GSWG outlined above. Recently, in particular, the GSWG has been supported by the technical advisor from the GIDP as there are synergies between the GSWG and the objectives of the development partners under GIDP, SDC and UNDP, both of whom also co-chair the GSWG.

The Public Service Innovation Facility (PSIF)

The Public Service Innovation Facility (PSIF) provides funding support for innovative pilot projects with the objective to pilot and test a concept or try new knowledge, technologies, processes or practices to deliver public value and that can be scaled up or replicated across government.

In addition, the PSIF seeks to foster a dynamic environment of ongoing adaptation within local administration, while building public sector capability, responsive delivery, data-driven decision-making. The priority is given to experiential learning, reflection of the principles and approaches of public sector reform, to fund activities to address chronic bottlenecks in the provision of local services.

⇒ During the evaluation consultations it was reported that PSIF was an effective initiative carried out with a relatively small grant but contributed to significant impact. PSIF was effective in supporting local technologies, practices and processes to deliver public services through DOHA that can be replicated by DOHA to other districts. In practice, PSIF is an example of decentralisation, as it is designed to allow for the provision of public services most relevant to local context, but at the same time it provided an overall support to the existing services provided by departments of home affairs. For example, the training of village heads in mediation and other public administration duties is a very important component of the public administration reform efforts at the local level. Under MOHA, DOHA is the closest agency of the Ministry to citizens but DOHA has limited resources to reach local communities and consequently must prioritize support accordingly. There are a lot of other activities that take place at the village level for which DOHA is not able to carry out oversight or provide direct support⁹⁶.

All sectors rely heavily on village heads but these are not employed government officials. As a result, there is often a lack of comprehensive support for village heads. Thus, PSIF initiatives supported administration at village level, to try and fill this gap. For example, there are villages located near the border where there are incidences of human trafficking, women victims of violence and abductions. Under the PSIF, district and village authorities partnered, worked together and developed projects involving Lao Front for National Construction, village defense, and village mediation unit. This is an innovative approach that has championed a multi-sector collaboration which had tailored impact to the needs of the local community. The reports

⁹⁶ Source: PSIF stakeholders' key informant interviews #2, #13.

received during the evaluation consultations as to the achievements of the PSIF are **corroborated** by the following data:

32 projects were fully implemented under PSIF since 2018⁹⁷, including:

- **7 partnership projects between Government and CSOs;**
- **3 partnership projects between Government and private sector;**
- **4 target projects: Bokeo, Luangnamtha, Xayabuli and Champasak.**

PSIF activities impacted a large number of stakeholders and citizens:

- **12757 local government officials have benefited in terms of capacity enhancement;**
- **131,456 citizens (64,967 women).**

PSIF was designed to strengthen partnerships at the provincial level where new People's Provincial Assemblies have opened up opportunities for better governance and citizens' engagement through the creation of strong links between elected representatives and their constituents. The PSIF aims to improve access to and quality of basic services by inviting proposals jointly made by local authorities and CSOs⁹⁸ including women groups, youth groups, organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), as a practical way of promoting partnerships and an enabling environment for non-government actors to support in local public administration reforms efforts, and in service delivery.

⇒ *PSIF model, which creates more space for civil society and the private sector to work with authorities on local issues, with a special focus on vulnerable groups including women, youth and persons with disabilities, was an effective initiative carried out with a relatively small grant but contributed to significant impact.* PSIF is a system to encourage local communities, civil society and the private sector to collaborate on local administrative reforms and provision of services.

By the end of the project, partnerships between local governments and NPAs had some success in terms of the results of their respective initiatives. From the outset, the partnerships started slowly. For the first two rounds of the grant launch only two partnership projects were awarded. Then the situation improved significantly, by the third round of the grant availability, as the project approved 10 out of the 10 proposed partnership projects. This was due in part to the evolution of the strategy behind the PSIF which began to embrace more private sector as partners with local governments. Another reason for the improvement in terms of developing partnership projects is that the fact that the PSIF grants announcement included a guideline which clearly stressed that only partnership projects are eligible for the grants, which was possibly unclear from previous rounds. Under the last round of

⁹⁷ Started late 2020, ten (10) projects are currently being implemented with the aim to promote innovation in responding to COVID-19.

⁹⁸ NPA: Not for Profit Associations, in Lao context.

GIDP, there were 12 projects delivered, out of a total 42 projects under the PSIF. These partnerships all consisted of Government and CSOs and/or private sector.

During the first PSIF round, there were only two partnership projects developed with the participation of Not for Profit Associations (NPAs). During this evaluation's consultations it was reported that NPAs were not very interested in applying for the fund, in part because the PSIF grant was too small and NPA's overheads were too high to deliver the project effectively with local governments. There was also confusion from the applicants about the partnership requirement that resulted in non-partnership proposal being submitted. After the second round, it was made clear in the PSIF announcement that only partnership proposals would be accepted and the awarded proposals were all in the form of partnerships⁹⁹.

The main challenge that the PSIF faced is not related to the fact that initiative is implemented through local authorities. Findings from consultations highlight that local authorities were very engaged throughout the project proposal and implementation process. The challenge was that the demand was far greater than the supply. Local authorities are engaged and motivated to manage the projects by themselves and they have proved to be effective and efficient in doing so. The small number of available awards was however an issue, since every year there are more and more proposals as the PSIF opened participation to all kind of organisations (central, provincial, district, civil society and private sector).

⇒ *The project has done well in adapting to the changing context.* In 2020, MOHA with key DPs (UNDP, SDC and UNCDF) agreed to re-purpose the PSIF to focus on COVID-19 response in four high-risk provinces (Bokeo, Laung Namtha, Sayyabuli and Champassak). Therefore, with a clearer and narrower scope, namely on COVID-19 response and recovery, the 10 partnership projects were able to tailor their objectives to serve urgent needs at the local level. These projects served well the objectives of the local authorities, with CSOs communities, private sectors working together to educate people on COVID-19, and to help returning workers and community members from neighbouring countries to reintegrate in the community and find gainful employment. Therefore, the COVID-19 re-purposing exercise in 2020 proved effective and which came about as a result of a quick and adaptive thinking from the GIDP management in coordination with GIDP partners. This is an important lesson learned under the GIDP in terms of ensuring adaptability and moving quickly toward reprogramming to respond to the urgent needs of local communities.

⁹⁹ Source: PSIF stakeholders' key informant interviews #10 and #20.

5.2 EFFICIENCY

The **GIDP** was efficiently implemented with cost-effective activities and outputs (e.g. **DDF**) that resulted in increasing the capacity of local institutions to provide basic services in the provinces and districts of the project interventions. GIDP outputs such as **SUFS** were effective in ensuring that citizens' feedback was included in the planning cycle for services provision. For example, as of 2020, the GIDP project was able to increase the capacity of local institutions to provide basic services in 10 provinces, 19 districts and 132 villages. Institutions that benefitted from capacity increase include the PPA, district administrations, village leaders and NPAs. With the support of GIDP, local governments were able to provide basic services to 126,321 Households. The model **ODSC**, although still constrained by bureaucracy and the low level of digitalization in the system, was implemented and has been efficient in bringing public services closer to the service users. ODSC provides 60 services and serves on average 20-25 citizens on a daily basis.

The GSWG system is fully (100%) developed by MPI and well established. GSWG has, for example, made recommendations to the MPI in the form of outputs for the draft of the 9th NSEDP 2021-2025¹⁰⁰. The **PSIF** is a system that provides an opportunity for the government to engage with civil society and collaborate on local public service and administrative reforms. PSIF system development was successfully implemented and the system is fully developed (100%) and functioning¹⁰¹.

The following Chart provides financial information of the activities/outputs for each of the components of the project, including the cost of workshops, equipment, consultants and support costs.

Chart 3. Rate of Output Completion vs Rate of Budget Expenditure Analysis

	Outputs	PLANNED BUDGET	OUTPUT(s) COMPLETION RATE %	ACTUAL BUDGET EXPENDITURE RATE %
	COMPONENT 1: Inclusive local service delivery and development	3,032,656	100%	96%
<i>DDF</i>	<i>District Development Fund (DDF)</i>	1,544,794	100%	101%
	<i>DDF grant</i>	951,118	100%	100%

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, at p. 13

¹⁰¹ Ibid, at p. 12.

	<i>Workshop/training/ travel ..</i>	282,188	100%	100%
	<i>Inter. & Natioinal Consultant</i>	148,088	100%	99%
	<i>Equipment</i>	94,100	100%	92%
	<i>Local staffs</i>	69,300	100%	132%
ODS	fdddddvdvbf 1	124,865	100%	79%
	<i>Workshop/training/ travel ..</i>	82,577	100%	85%
	<i>Inter. & Natioinal Consultant</i>	28,330	100%	72%
	<i>Equipment</i>	13,958	100%	52%
	Support Costs	1,362,997	100%	93%
	<i>UNCDF Support costs</i>	1,020,000	100%	100%
	<i>UNDP Support Costs</i>	180,712	100%	63%
	<i>GMS/ Gain / loss exchange rate</i>	162,285	100%	84%
	COMPONENT 2: Accountability framework and citizens' feedback	813,032	100%	108%
SUFS	Service Users Feedback System (SUFS)	356,564	100%	116%
	<i>Workshop/training/ travel ..</i>	213,803	100%	120%
	<i>Inter. & Natioinal Consultant</i>	25,800	100%	122%
	<i>Equipment</i>	4,000	100%	102%
	<i>Local staffs</i>	112,961	100%	108%
	Support Costs	456,468	100%	101%
	<i>UNDP Support Costs</i>	411,990	100%	100%

	GMS/ Gain / loss exchange rate	44,478	100%	113%
	COMPONENT 3: Expanding partnerships and policy dialogue, with civil society engagement, for development effectiveness	1,343,138	100%	101%
	Management Cost	811,174	100%	102%
	Support Cost/ GMS/Salary	811,174	100%	90%
	Grand total	6,000,000	100%	100%

The evaluators conducted an analysis of the GIDP outputs' implementation achievements described above and in the sections below and contrasted it with the yearly budget vs expenditures delivery by the project shown in both **Chart 3** and **Chart 4** below and concluded that overall the GIDP project was efficiently implemented.

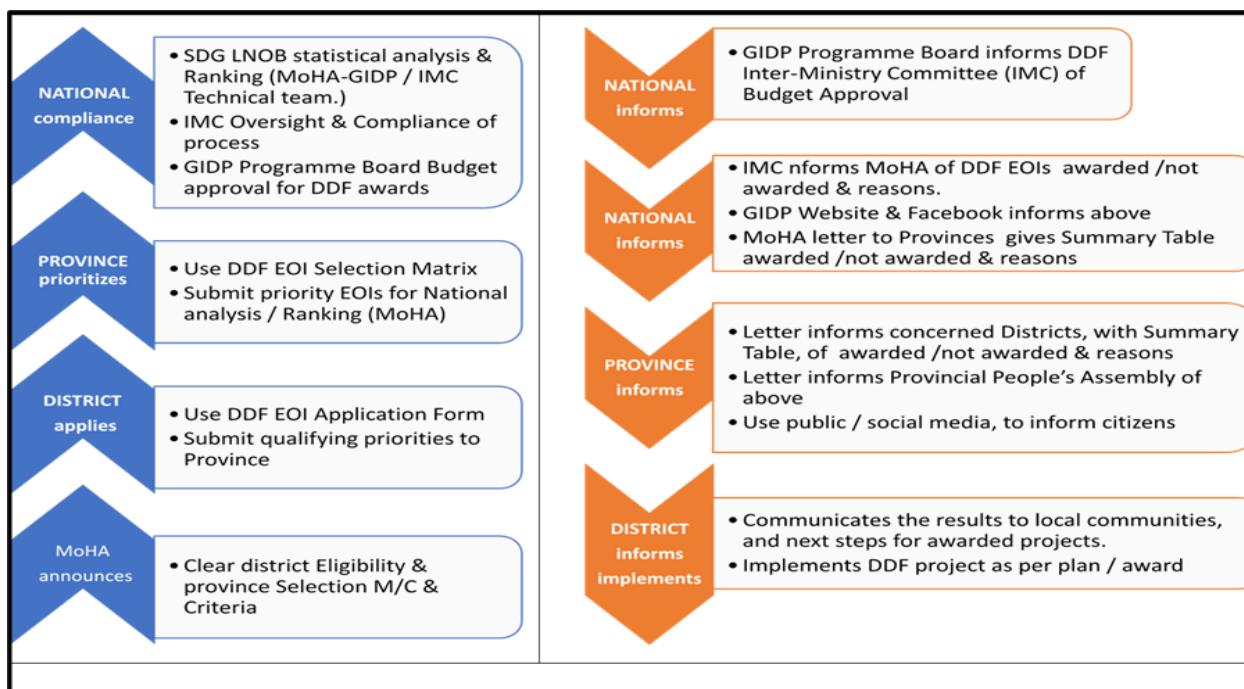
Chart 4. GIDP Project delivery 2017 - 2021

GIDP Year	Budget - USD	Expenditure - USD	Delivery Rate (%)
2017 (Ap. To Dec.)	\$ 752,883	\$ 690,879	92%
2018	\$1,784,860	\$1,659,801	92%
2019	\$1,749,056	\$1,664,440	95%
2020	\$1,194,113	\$1,151,952	96%

DDF

⇒ The DDF output has very high level of efficiency in terms of cost-effectiveness as it has no overhead and transaction costs and the full grant has reached the neediest target recipients and local communities. The whole structure and implementation of the DDF is very efficient. Let's start by examining the **Chart** below of the DDF process for identification of projects and awarding grants.

Chart 5. DDF process for identification of DDF projects and award of grants



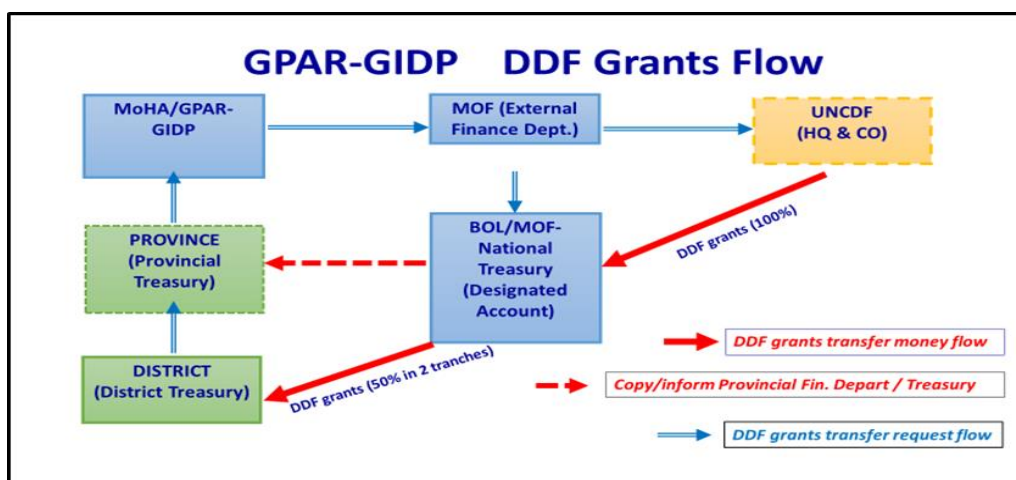
The Chart above provides a visual overview of the GPAR-GIDP DDF processes, from identification of SDG-eligible projects, to steps to ensure oversight and transparency, and to communicating grants awards and specific project results¹⁰². While the process of identifying the most suitable district projects for DDF support and award decision is quite time consuming at around 3-4 months, it is a very well- structured and efficient project identification and grant award system.

The other evidence of the DDF efficiency is the fact that the amount of funds for the DDF projects transferred from UNCDF and deposited in the Bank of Lao (BoL) are the same, with no deductions or transaction costs. Also, there were minimum transaction costs incurred in transferring DDF funds from BoL to the District national treasury accounts in a local branch of a Lao commercial bank. The **Chart** below provides a visual overview of the flow of DDF funds from UNCDF to the MoF/BoL and then to the District national treasury accounts¹⁰³.

Chart 6. DDF Grants Flow Chart

¹⁰² Source: Fiduciary Management Report of the District Development Fund (DDF) of GPAR-GIDP 2017-2021, August 2021, p. 6.

¹⁰³ Ibid, at p. 4



Three cycles of DDF finance to support DDF projects have been made, Fiscal Year 2019, FY 2020, and FY 2021. Normally funds are transferred in two tranches of 50% each on the basis of the approved plans, however in the final year (FY 2021), since the GIDP project was ending, 100% of funds were transferred in one tranche.

DDF effectively and efficiently benefitted equally women (60,800) and men (63,741) through its 33 districts and 35 local service investments supported by the GPAR-GIDP. The **Chart** below provides an overview of the data collected for these investments between 2017 and 2021¹⁰⁴:

Chart 7. GIDP District Development Fund Investments 2017-2021

GIDP District Development Fund 2017-2021									
Partners: MoHA, MPI, MoF, UNCDF, UNDP, with finance and support from the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC).									
Number of active Districts		Beneficiaries Male/Female		DDF Funds USD		Additional Local / co-funds USD		Total Capital investments	
33		63,741/ 60,800		950,000		26%		1,285,690	
Economic sector investment					Social sector investment				Total DDF assets
Public Works	Agriculture	Trade	Waste Sites	Health (inc. Watsan)	Education	Health			
13	5	1	3	8	5		35		

⇒ Most importantly is that the DDF is now fully integrated with the national planning system and the national finance system¹⁰⁵. While initially there were some delays in the disbursement of DDF funds the

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, at p. 5

¹⁰⁵ DDF grants are "on national balance sheet" transactions that are transferred from UNCDF to the National Bank of Laos (BoL) from where they flow within the national financial system, using a Chart of Account (COA), to relevant Districts' National Treasury accounts. The amounts of funds transferred from UNCDF and received in Districts via the National Treasury Accounts are the same, with essentially no transaction costs'. [Source: p.3, UNCDF, The District Development Fund of Laos, 'A chronological story of a concept maturing to scale, delivering community cohesion and development, 2021]. In the early days when national financial systems were not so

current modality of DDF has addressed that problem which will improve the system. The DDF system development was efficient and 100% achieved with good results in 5 provinces (Phongsaly, Luangnamtha, Oudomxay, Salavan and Sekong), 7 districts and 40 villages, benefitting 17,871 citizens who, as a result of 7 DDF projects, now have new roads, schools, irrigation and waste management sites¹⁰⁶.

ODSC

⇒ *The ODSC initiative made significant contributions toward increased efficiency in public service provision both through the two models being implemented, and the wider training for districts across the country. The initiative benefited both the service users as well as the government. The government benefited in terms of increased coordination across offices which helped in the tracking of services to avoid delays, and **service users** benefited in terms of having a number of important services being provided under one roof, this reducing time spent working across offices, and equally benefitted from the increased tracking of services to ensure the prompt delivery of services.*

Management of ODSCs interviewed for this evaluation believe that there is still room for improvement in the services they provide through the ODSCs. They reported that, for now, ODSCs only provide the types of services that were previously provided through the relevant departments/offices with the same bureaucratic processes. They added that there is still “too much detail, too many documents” and different steps for officials to manage. The underlying processes for these services need to be reviewed, revised and streamlined to further increase efficiency.

Frontline staff reported that they can benefit from more training. They also raised concerns that, according to the current regulations, all documents generated from ODSC operations have to be copied and stored in the office. As a result, the documents keep being generated and the stock pile of documentation keeps increasing. The staff suggested that digitalizing some or all of their paper work would increase efficiency and lower the cost significantly.

SUFS

The SUFS System development was efficiently completed (100%) and implemented in a relatively efficient manner in 56 Villages involving 1,734 Households in a gender balanced manner (804

developed, DDF funds were placed with the Ministry of Finance / Bank of Lao in a ‘special account’ and from there transferred directly to a commercial bank in participating districts. Today, under GPAR-GIDP 2017-2021, DDF operates within a more developed national financial system. DDF funds are now transferred from UNCDF, via MoF national treasury system with a Chart of Account (COA) to the national Bank of Lao from where they flow within the national financial system to relevant Districts’ national treasury accounts... DDF’s use of government financial systems is transparent, easy to operate and easy record-keeping for local officials via the national accounting system’ [Source: pp. 1 and 4, Fiduciary Management Report of the District Development Fund (DDF) of GPAR-GIDP 2017-2021]

¹⁰⁶ Source: 2020 Annual Project Review Report, p. 6.

female and 844 male)¹⁰⁷. There was an efficient process of implementing SUFS activities that required good team work by the taskforce and district committee members and the district survey teams tasked with data collection. The taskforce and committee implementing the activities were set up swiftly. The taskforce contributed greatly to the implementation of the SUFS from the design to the report writing step. The district committee in all four districts closely supervised the district survey team during the implementation, participated actively in the results presentation workshops. It is reported that *'the district survey teams put tremendous efforts in data collection overcoming numerous difficulties faced during the survey, traveling to remote villages on the difficult road condition, difficulty in communicating with villagers, who speak ethnic languages'*¹⁰⁸.

⇒SUFS surveys were efficient in targeting collection of information that not only is important to assess/improve the performance of other components of the GDP in the districts where SUFS was conducted (e.g. ODSC, ease of access to public services and service quality) but, more importantly, that the results can be used in district socio-economic planning for public services provision (e.g. service utilization). SUFS was efficient in collecting data such as, for example, that '23% of informants indicated that the quality of the primary education service is already good, while almost half (45%) said it needs to be improved a little. Primary healthcare ... 22% of informants said the service quality is already good and 44% suggested that it only needs to be improved'¹⁰⁹, data that are crucial in the development of district socio-economic plans. As mentioned earlier in this report, there is concrete evidence that SUFS has contributed to more participatory socio-economic planning. SUFS round I was conducted in 2019 and its results were considered by the district authority in the districts' socio-economic development plan year 2020-2024 citing SUFS in addressing some of people's needs in the plan.

⇒The SUFS was also efficient in gender equality and presenting their findings disaggregated by gender. The surveys covered almost the same number of female and male representatives of households – survey informants. In total, 48% of informants were female, while 52% were male¹¹⁰.

Tools such as SUFS have contributed to the 'virtuous cycle' at a basic level but overtime can contribute towards completing the cycle.

GSWG

The GSWG is a system that facilitates multi-stakeholder dialogue on governance and that provides an opportunity for coordination, harmonization and resource mobilization.

⇒During the evaluation data review and consultation process, the evaluation found data that support the finding that GSWG is efficient in its contribution to the overall governance reform. Members and participants in the GSWG process reported participants' satisfaction rate with the 'utility/quality'

¹⁰⁷ 966 Ethnic Households also participated. Source: 2020 Annual Project Review Report, p. 9.

¹⁰⁸ Source: Service User Feedback Survey (SUFS) Report 2019, p. 34.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, at p. 17.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, at p. 22.

of discussions held at the GSWG is 76%. The overall satisfaction levels were very high (73% - 80%), indicating that the majority of participants regard the GSWG as valuable, useful and generally well run¹¹¹.

Concerns raised during the evaluation included:

- High turnover of the GSWG focal points in line Ministries;
- Lack of synergy among the GSWG and other SWGs and between the two SSWGs and between them and the GSWG;
- Although the GSWG is a platform for dialogue to generate diverse viewpoints, the formality of the level of discussion did not allow for meaningful discussion about governance issues;
- Some stakeholders find the role of the NGPAR and MOHA in the GSWG Secretariat unclear in that they feel that the GSWG should be wholly Government led where possible, and with support from the GPAR team in the GSWG Secretariat's work.

Findings from a report aiming to take stock of the capacity of the members of the GSWG Secretariat¹¹² show that there are still capacity gaps in:

- Understanding of the TOR of the GSWG Secretariat,
- Medium of communication, (3) Commitment of the GSWG Secretariat Members,
- Human Resource Development,
- GSWG Mainstreaming,
- Supporting Resources and
- Documentation Archiving.

PSIF

As mentioned earlier, in 2020-2021 to improve the usefulness of the Facility at the local level, UNCDF, UNDP and SDC agreed to support a 'repurposed' PSIF intended to improve service delivery to reduce the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Provincial People's Assembly (PPA) worked with NPAs and this collaboration was reported to have been efficient and well-received by the local administration. There was better engagement of civil society organizations (NPAs) starting with cycle 2 of PSIF which '*demonstrated the importance of engaging NPAs in service delivery to the vulnerable sections of society*'. The system still faces challenges in the engagement of NPAs and achieving their greater participation in the PSIF projects.¹¹³

¹¹¹ GIDP Annual Project Review Report 2019, p. 34 -36.

¹¹² Capacity Assessment of the Governance Sector Working Group Secretariat, Sanva Saephan, 8 October 2019, p. 39.

¹¹³ Source: GIDP Annual Project Review Report 2019, p. 12.

⇒ *PSIF is not only an effective but also an efficient initiative carried out with a relatively small grant.* Data from the PSIF project implemented by ACDA support the proposition that it was efficient in supporting vulnerable groups to improve their income level and contributed to increased participation from multi ethnic women, disable people, families, students and teachers in the development and implementation of community projects¹¹⁴.

¹¹⁴ Source: Thematic workshop of PSI SSWG on 28/08/20 for the Project: Empowerment of vulnerable groups through sustainable income generation, waste management and promotion of human rights (Hongsouphap village)

5.3 RELEVANCE

⇒ *The GIDP project remains relevant to the public administration and governance reform agenda. It has achieved to a large extent the intended objectives, and remains relevant to further advance the reform agenda in future. In many cases, never before have people, at the community level, participated in the local development planning process. But GIDP has presented this opportunity so local communities can prioritize their needs for better use of limited resources. Although not perfectly executed as of yet, for a country renowned for governing through a top-down approach, with central planning and execution of social-economic development, GPAR and GIDP's achievement has made a significant contribution toward changing the direction of the country's sub-national public administration processes, namely by strengthening local participation, fiscal decentralization, localizing the SDGs and implementing LNOB policy action¹¹⁵. Generally speaking, GPAR personnel have grown and progressed in their careers and many of them have been promoted to higher positions, including the current Prime Minister and the Vice Minister of MOHA, as well as a number of provincial governors/deputy governors, heads of departments, district governors and deputy governors, heads of line offices and technical officials, especially those who were involved in DDF implementation. This means that the concepts and principles championed through GPAR have gained respect, trust and acceptance by both the party and state institutions. From the State's perspective, 'good governance' principles advanced under GPAR and GIDP, have gained mainstream status. Many interviewees reported they have applied their experiences to other aspects of their work and lives which have helped them be more effective in their jobs and advance in their careers.*

⇒ *GIDP remains aligned with the cross-cutting governance goals of the 8th NSEDP 2016-2020 and the draft Strategic Plan on Governance 2010-2020, which provides the overarching framework for governance reform in Lao PDR. The strategy supports the government policy i.e. that government mechanisms and local administration must manage better and implement local economic development and delivery priority services effectively, with a greater level of financial, administrative and representational self-reliance, and provide for greater engagement and responsiveness to citizens' needs and concerns. The project is also aligned with MOHA's vision 2030 and strategic plan 2025, which commits to good governance and acknowledges that governance plays "a vital role in economic development and sustainable poverty reduction". The Government is committed to strengthen governance and public administration reform initiatives in order to graduate from Least Developed Country status.*

⇒ *GIDP addressed key governance issues outlined in the 8th NSEDP Outcome 2, Output 1. It contributes to "Output 1: Improved Living Standards through Poverty Reduction using the 3-Builds Directions". The project also contributed to the government's effort to carry out comprehensive rural development linked to the advancement of developed villages. Focusing development investment*

¹¹⁵ It also contributed towards committed public sector budget @15%.

towards rural areas helped to address both territorial imbalances and inequities. Furthermore, GIDP contributed to the implementation of the 3-builds directive which is designed to improve and strengthen the Party's committees at provincial, district and village levels, to become strong, transparent and with high levels of local leadership and ownership, and to strengthen solidarity and harmonization among ethnic groups in the provinces.

The project helped to address the issue of **inclusion** in development at the aggregated level thanks to the sub-projects and activities under DDF and PSIF that benefit a wider group of people, including **vulnerable groups**¹¹⁶. It should be pointed out however that although the IGFT award design and formula promoted inclusiveness¹¹⁷, the project does not necessarily have specific “inclusive” design feature integrated into some of the basic infrastructure projects i.e. disabilities inclusive design. However, many initiatives did result in ensuring greater inclusion of vulnerable groups and women. For example, women benefit from the improved road condition (i.e. DDF projects) as they travel to see doctors especially for reproductive healthcare including, family planning and pre-natal care, delivery in the health facilities and post-natal care. Roads also have economic benefits as it facilitates transporting products and access to markets and access to education for children.

The project has contributed to strengthening the “social contract” between district authorities and their constituents. The project has contributed to this social contract, where the government is the provider of the public infrastructure through inputs from local government adding up to 15% of the project value and from grants and/or loans. The project has brought the two parties together through sub-projects, such as roads and other small public infrastructures¹¹⁸.

GIDP also created enhanced ownership of citizens of public goods such as road or other small infrastructure developments through DDF financing contribution or maintenance of local public infrastructure. For example, villages benefited from the road improvement project in Lao Ngam and villagers interviewed during this evaluation confirmed that they ‘care more’ and feel greater ownership about the road than before after they were assigned the road maintenance role. They take their oversight responsibility of the road very seriously, controlling for example the weight of the cargo and imposing fines to overloaded trucks which exceed the allowed weight¹¹⁹.

The DDF, after the 2018 revision, is aligned with the Lao PDR's SDG commitments and the 3 Builds directives, a policy that assigns greater responsibilities at the district level. Government officials interviewed reiterated that this policy directive is important in that it increases ownership of the district authority.

⇒ *GIDP has enhanced transparency and contributed to revenue collection.* The DDF component, for example, improved revenues as taxes from contractual value of the projects were deducted at

¹¹⁶ Source: DDF stakeholders' key informant interviews #4, #6, #12 and FGD#2.

¹¹⁷ The IGFT award design specifically addressed the issue of LNOB addressing 3 out of 5 criteria of the LNOB strategy.

¹¹⁸ Source: DDF stakeholders' key informant interviews #1 #12 and FGD #2.

¹¹⁹ Source: DDF stakeholders' key informant interviews #12 and FGD#1 and #2.

source from the contractor, which helped build up a normalized business approach and practice. The ODSCs have played a huge role in enhancing transparency by establishing and publicly displaying the regulations and fees and charges related to public services. These measures helped to create trust in public administration among citizens¹²⁰. This was important at a time when the trust in authorities was low due to misconduct of some government officials. For example, some officials were known to have over charged for the provision services. Furthermore, the revenue collected was not all reported to the government; instead some ‘bad’ officials kept the money collected for themselves. ODSCs have brought into the center a transparent process of setting the fees and charges and a transparent process on how revenues are fully reported to the government authority. This has benefited people and the authorities alike¹²¹.

According to the fact-finding mission report under GPAR, the Government of Lao PDR employs a combination of top-down and bottom-up approach to planning processes¹²². The top down approach involves the central government setting national development goals, targets and strategic directions every five years (NSEDPs) and annually. The bottom-up approach is a participatory process that identifies and prioritizes public investment projects. The consultation process starts from the village level with the results consolidated into the next higher level such as the kumban, the district and the provincial levels, before all is consolidated into the central government level plan. The plan is then presented to the National Assembly where each sector defends their respective budget components of the plan.

The final evaluation confirmed the finding also made in the GPAR fact-finding mission that, in practice, the participatory planning process has not been fully followed due to the lack of predictable budget information and limited financial and human resources’ capacity of the district administrations. Also in the process of developing a five-year socio-economic development plans (SEDPs) and annual plans, each line office would consult with and collect data from village authority but with no real citizens’ participation in these consultation processes¹²³.

The lack of community participation can be offset by the fact that government officials are representative of the communities. They are from the areas they represent and know the place very well. They are part of the communities. As several interviews confirmed *“we are son and daughter of the village, we grew up here, we know well the problem the village has been facing. We need inputs in terms of development. Many of the development priorities have been in our ‘wish-list’ for many years”* claimed a district level official. This is indeed legitimate claim. It is generally true that many government officials at the district level are from the local areas.

At the provincial level, all activities of the project are addressing ‘critical issues’ of public service provision and governance improvement. Specific sub-projects are all in the approved provincial

¹²⁰ Source; ODSC stakeholders’ key informant interviews #8, #11 and #13.

¹²¹ FGD at Bachieng district ODSC.

¹²² GPAR. UNCDF and UNDP. 2016. District Development Fund (DDF) Final Report on Impacts and Lessons Learnt based on the fact-finding mission conducted in 2016.

¹²³ Source: DDF, ODSC, PSIF key stakeholders interview #11, #12 and #13.

plans¹²⁴. For example, some provinces have included in the SEDP plan 2010-2016, the roll out of ODSCs as one of their priorities. The project helped to advance especially one the four breakthroughs in the government policy, which is the 2nd breakthrough. The 2nd breakthrough addresses the bottlenecks for service delivery in the public sector. Similarly, the district officials reported that the government has been facing a difficult fiscal situation for a long time. The budget provided only satisfies a small portion of a huge demand. The officials reported that it would be more difficult to develop a project that does not align with the district and community needs.

The village visited during this evaluation confirmed also that the road improvement project supported by DDF under GIDP addresses their need “perfectly” and timely. Villagers are happy now that they can invest more in their cultivation as they have access to improved transportation and markets as well as the access to raw materials at a lower cost. The positive changes have led to a majority of villagers to stop practicing the ‘shifting’ cultivation technique, which is considered unsustainable.

5.4 SUSTAINABILITY

There is a Transition Exit Plan developed for the GIDP that was approved by the Programme Board in 2020 and that was further updated (as on June 2021) to take external factors that have impacted the project implementation that hopefully will contribute to the sustainability of the outputs of the Project¹²⁵.

DDF

⇒DDF as a model, in many respects, has been mainstreamed which contributes to its sustainability¹²⁶. Interviewees reported that DDF should be continued with donor support. Without a specific project funding the DDF, such as GIDP, aspects of the scheme are not likely to be integrated in the government system. There is no current budget or medium term funding availability to continue it in its current form. Given the economic downturn due to COVID-19 and the

¹²⁴ Source: Key Stakeholder Interview #8 GIDP project management; Interview #7 about the SUFs

¹²⁵ Source: NGPAR-GIDP – Transition/ Exit Plan (updated as on June 2021).

¹²⁶ Evidence that supports mainstreaming of DDF: “The experience gained from the DDF approach that pushed responsibility and accountability for local development to the sub-national governments and which empowered communities to identify local needs has driven the implementation of Sam-Sang policy since 2012. The learning from DDF lessons, directly informed the amended State Budget Law 2015, the amended Law on Government 2015, the amended Law on Local Administration 2015, the Law on Provincial People’s Assembly (PPA) 2015, the Regulation on City and Municipality and the review of the Investment Promotion Law 2009”. .. “DDF has proven to be an effective, government managed, low-cost programme that supports national decentralisation policy “Sam Sang” and has helped to accelerate and localise the MDG and more recently the SDG goals. The government has acknowledged the role that DDF has played in informing their national Sam-Sang decentralisation policy by demonstrating the feasibility of providing predictable district-level budgets for services. Investments”... “The DDF Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) have been conceptualised and generated in Lao language and in a form that is accessible to all members of the sub national civil service and communities. The DDF projects have used the SOPs to deliver trainings and as a tool to measure administrative performance”. [Source: pp.3 and 14, UNCDF The District Development Fund of Laos, A chronological story of a concept maturing to scale, delivering community cohesion and development, 2021]

increasing challenges faced by the government in revenue collection, it is unlikely at least in the short-term that the government will have fiscal space to provide discretionary grants for service delivery infrastructure to sub national authorities. However the system does provide a conduit for earmarked ODA that can be blended with public sector finance to help stimulate socio-economic recovery in rural economies whilst simultaneously targeting the most vulnerable in a very cost efficient manner.

Sustainability of the respective DDF-funded projects is likely. For example, infrastructure projects such as road rehabilitation initiative have brought about positive changes and maintenance arrangements are currently in place. Beneficiaries have confirmed that improved transportation continues to bring about many positive changes for villagers¹²⁷. Before the implementation of the initiative, whole regions used to rely on coffee production because coffee is easier to transport in difficult road conditions. Now that road conditions are improved, communities grow also cassava, sweet potatoes, and corn, thus villagers are now able to diversify their products. As a result, they can also afford to end the practice of ‘shifting’ cultivation. Before they simply could not stop this practice, despite knowing that ‘shifting’ cultivation is harmful to the environment, produces low yields, is labour intensive, and places an excessive workload especially on women¹²⁸.

Other DDF-funded projects such as clean water systems, irrigation systems, primary school construction, bridge construction and community markets are also likely to be sustainable as they benefit the population greatly and there is strong local ownership. Another factor that contributes to their sustainability is the fact there was capacity building of provincial and district officials in system development and maintenance. Given these tangible benefits to community development, including to environmental protection, we can see how DDF projects will attract further investment and commitment from local authorities to ensure their sustainability after the end of GDP.

Sustainability of the respective projects under DDF can be seen also through the arrangements and relationships that have been established by the DDF sub-project teams led by the district office of public works and transportation, and the local communities who participated in the design and implementation of the projects.

⇒ Another indicator of sustainability is that MPI has adopted the DDF-SDG as a planning/budgeting tool for their planning process (complementary to normal planning process) to target vulnerable sectors of society, and which is connected to the central tenet of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, to which Lao PDR committed to in 2015, in Leaving No One Behind, or LNOB, in national development efforts toward the intentional targeting of marginalized and

¹²⁷ Source: Beneficiary FGD #1 and #2.

¹²⁸ Source: Beneficiary FGD #2.

vulnerable groups. As well, MoF uses a revised Chart of Accounts (CoA) and criteria-based budget assignments to sub-national levels for current account budget assignments¹²⁹.

GIDP introduced a cost-sharing modality that involves 'MOHA staff and assets, MoHA budget contribution to support the implementation of the GIDP and a co-financing requirement from the State Budget to fund DDF service district investments, thereby promoting national ownership and financing – and paving the way for a transition to the government for the sustainability of GIDP supports'¹³⁰. However, there is no concrete evidence to confirm that the government will continue to finance the DDF from the State budget.

ODSC

The ODSCs initiative under GIDP has achieved its targeted objectives, although without the proper indicators in place to capture this achievement. Two ODSCs have been piloted as model ODSCs in the country under GIDP. The two ODSCs have established clear procedures and systems for the rolling out of more ODSCs across the country to move forward. By the time of this evaluation, the collaboration between MoHA, UNDP, and UNDESA was ongoing, supporting the government to expand ODSCs.

⇒ *The experiences gained in the implementation of the ODSC model have increased capacity of the key stakeholders which will help to contribute towards its sustainability and towards the efforts to digitalize further in the near future.* It is confirmed that a mobile application has been developed and citizens will be able to access the ODSC service online. Most importantly, the ODSCs are one of the key priorities to be created during the 9th NSEDP time frame, which is another sustainability indicator¹³¹. The target is that by 2025, at least 50% of the districts in the country have established ODSCs. Similarly as with the DDF, the positive results achieved by the two model pilots will help ensure continued support for the rolling out of ODSCs and thus their sustainability in the future, including the government's clear commitment to the proliferation of ODSCs under the NSEDP.

At the time of this evaluation, UNDESA is collaborating with GIDP to support the development of a Road Map for expansion of ODSCs to 50% of the districts in the country by the end 9th NSEDP. Improved Workflow Charts for each of the ODSC services are being developed by training officials, which can then be replicated throughout the country.

⇒ *The fact that MOHA has supported the growth of ODSCs over the years is evidence that it has taken ownership of the ODSCs model which will contribute to its sustainability in the years to come.*

SUFS

¹²⁹ GIDP Transition Exit plan 2020 (updated as in June 2021), p. 4.

¹³⁰ NGPAR-GIDP – Transition/ Exit Plan (updated as on June 2021), p.2.

¹³¹ Ibid, at p. 7.

A sustainability indicator for SUFS is for its citizens' surveys to become institutionalized so that they continue to be carried out in new districts and results submitted to PPAs and district authorities after GIDP closure.

PPAs use the surveys on local services and/or administration performance in their oversight role as representatives of local people and provincial and district administrators use the surveys as planners and service providers.

⇒ *SUFS has gained popularity with national stakeholders and PPAs/NA value SUFS-collected information which is evidenced by an increasingly call for SUFS to be rolled out. This increase in SUFS' popularity with local national stakeholders will contribute to its sustainability. The 2nd round of SUFS 2020-21 was successfully completed in Q1 of 2021*¹³².

GSWG

The GSWG, as with other sector working groups, will remain as part of GoL system regardless of GIDP ending. However, the extent of its technical and financial support will change. From a sustainability perspective, the coordination capability has accumulated throughout the project cycle. The key is the GSWG Secretariat which has benefitted from capacity building (including learning by doing) and knowledge transfer received from the support of DPs under GIDP. The Secretariat members have 'expanded members and shared responsibility' within the line departments so that now more officials know are familiar with the work and can cover the related tasks in case of unexpected turnover or changes in personnel¹³³.

The GSWG remains an important platform, and is likely to become even more important in the future. Many interviewees reported that the government and their departments/offices will commit to carry on with important achievements under GIDP, such as ODSCs, DDF (perhaps integrate them into normal government procedures), and SUFS. Most importantly, the GSWG will continue to push and improve where weaknesses are identified in governance reform efforts. Governance is a cross-cutting issue that permeates all sectors.

⇒ *Sustainability of the initiatives developed under GIDP rests upon the good collaboration between all concerned sectors, and the GSWG provides a strong platform for this collaboration*¹³⁴.

The 9th NSEDP (2021 – 2025) continues to see governance as one of the critical development pillars, even as the government is reducing costs and tightening budgets. Senior officials interviewed during this evaluation reported that good governance will continue to improve revenue collection, close the 'leakages'/corruption and enhance domestic revenue mobilisation. There is also political will to advance the governance reform agenda in the government. One of

¹³² GIDP Transition Exit plan 2020 (updated as in June 2021), p. 10.

¹³³ Source: GSWG stakeholders' key informant interviews #16 and #19.

¹³⁴ Source: Key Stakeholders Interview # 1, # 4, #5 and #20.

the factors which have contributed to this political will may be the impact that the GPAR experience had on those politicians who participated in GPAR prior to occupying their higher posts in government¹³⁵.

The end of GIDP poses financial challenges to the functioning of the GSWG Secretariat. The GSWG Secretariat has been heavily dependent on the GIDP project budget.

PSIF

Districts and citizens' recognition of the benefits of civil society organizations working together with local administration in local development and service delivery is an indicator of PSIF's sustainability.

⇒ *During interviews carried out during this evaluation there were reports of increased interest for local action for more collaborative action on local service improvements which may contribute towards sustainability of PSIF.* Evidence of this includes, for example, a process of implementation of the 3rd. round of PSIF was initiated and the process of sharing lessons learned in the PSI-SSWG platform led by MoHA was developed¹³⁶.

However, it should be pointed out that many stakeholders raised questions about the PSIF funding awards process. Many sub-national interviewees suggested that the final decision should be made at the provincial level. The project's central level should provide oversight which makes sense in terms of sustainability, effectiveness, and efficiency of the effort. If it is efficient it is likely that the effort can be sustainable. Even so, the initiative has not gained mainstream status compared with DDF and many people suggested that the idea of innovation can be integrated into the DDF.

¹³⁵ Source: GSWG, GIDP management, DDF, SUFs stakeholders' key informant interviews #1, #2, #8 and #13.

¹³⁶ Ibid, at p. 14

5.5 INCLUSION & GENDER

Proposal developments, as well as the (five-year) SEDPs, are based on the available data from the information management system of the line offices. One such example is the Education Information Management System of the District Education Office, the administrative data of which can be useful for making projection and setting target for indicators. Then the annual plan is developed based on the SEDPs by each sector (the cross-cutting issues are not easily coordinated). The District Planning and Investment Office consolidates the district annual SEDP. The investment projects need to be in the “wish-list” of projects already in the district SEDP. The proposal development is based on the proposal template developed by the Project for Enhancing Capacity in Public Investment Programme Management (PCAP) of MPI.

Although slightly different, DDF, PSIF and other sectors investment project proposals follow MPI template. As discussed in the Relevance section above, lack of organized participation of the community is compensated by the on-going engagement between local officials and communities they served. The officials know well what their community needs are as many of them are part of the community they served. As many officials insisted the problem is not that they don't know community needs, but the lack of resources to address them.

Some officials interviewed seem to confuse community participation in the development proposal process and interpret it instead as requiring community's financial contribution to the project. They argue that community participation can lead to greater contribution of resources or labour to government-initiated activities. It should be pointed out that while it is clear that under DDF local participation is a criteria there is no requirement for local financial contribution.

⇒ *GIDP contributed to greater awareness of the needs of women and other vulnerable groups. By increasing awareness and understanding of the SDGs at the central and provincial levels, the GIDP contributed to ‘a greater sensitivity among key Ministries to the needs of the poor and women in particular in development programmes of the government’¹³⁷.*

⇒ *Under DDF, even though there is no clear indication of gender equality integrated into the sub-project designs, roads, bridges, irrigation schemes, schools and waste management benefited women and men equally. DDF projects were funded 33 districts with beneficiaries totalling 124,541 citizens living in 22,565 Households throughout 190 Villages, including 60,800 women. FGDs found that road improvement addressed a much-needed access to healthcare for women. They now enjoy easier access to health care services including reproductive services such as pre-natal care, delivery, and vaccination for new-borns, among other important health services for women. Previously without improvements to the road, women took risks not going for pre-natal care check-ups, or choosing to deliver the baby at home often without a trained birth midwife to support¹³⁸. Girls looking to*

¹³⁷ Source: UNDP Country Programme (2017-2021) Evaluation, Lao PDR, Final Report, p. viii; “The UNDP-supported community radio project has contributed to changing people's views on women's role”.

¹³⁸ Source: Beneficiary FGD #2.

attend school also benefit from better road conditions and school accessibility as they can travel to schools more easily and safely¹³⁹.

⇒The **SUFS** considered gender equality in presenting their findings disaggregated by gender and reporting on both male and female perspectives on the use and opinions about public services. The surveys covered almost the same number of female and male representatives of households – survey informants. In total, 48% of informants were female, while 52% were male. The results of the survey show ‘very similar perspectives of female and male informants. The difference between the opinion of female and male informants is not more than 6%¹⁴⁰’.

⇒The **GSWG** provided a platform which contributed to a dialogue on gender issues by different stakeholders. However, although there were efforts in gender equality issues in terms of participation of women as beneficiaries of activities under the GDP, ‘there is no indication that women play a significant role in determining development policy or any other area of relevance to gender policies and programmes’¹⁴¹. Also, when we look at the GDP data and results from trainings, it is clear that gender equality in training participation was not strictly adhered to. During the evaluation, interviewees reported that assigning training participants was based on their current positions/role in the departments/offices. Under the DDF 15 provincial officials (including 4 women) and 43 district officials (including 9 women) were trained.

As reported earlier, **PSIF** opened up opportunities for better governance and citizens’ engagement through the creation of strong links between elected representatives and their constituents. PSIF aims to improve access to and quality of basic services by inviting proposals jointly made by local authorities and NPAs, including women groups, youth groups, organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), as a practical way of promoting partnerships and an enabling environment for non-government actors to support in local public administration reforms efforts, and in service delivery.

⇒**PSIF** projects were effective in supporting vulnerable groups to improve their income level and contributed to their increased participation. One such example was a PSIF-supported project implemented by ACDA:

“Contributed substantially to the community, support to vulnerable groups to have better income and improvement in the environment by encouraging participation from multi ethnic women, disabled people/family, students-teachers from primary school, to do the small size organic gardening and animal husbandry”¹⁴².

¹³⁹ Source: Beneficiary FGD #2.

¹⁴⁰ Source: Service User Feedback Survey (SUFS) Report 2019, p. 22.

¹⁴¹ Source: UNDP Country Programme (2017-2021) Evaluation, Lao PDR, Final Report, p. viii.

¹⁴² Source: Thematic workshop of PSI SSWG on 28/08/20 for the Project: Empowerment of vulnerable groups through sustainable income generation, waste management and promotion of human rights (Hongsouphap village).

⇒ Under the PSIF, activities related to gender are guided by the new PSIF guidelines which include positive actions on gender and social inclusion including disaggregated reporting of the results. By creating more space for civil society and the private sector to work with local authorities in local planning and service delivery issues, PSIF opened the door for greater focus on services needs targeting vulnerable groups including women, youth and persons with disabilities.

Going forward, **PSIF** could be designed specifically for the village level. As far as the public administration is concerned, the village level is the busiest and the most demanding level in the administration chain, yet the project support tends to end at the district level. It is clear that all sectors work with village authorities. They facilitated, and participated in, the community consultations. It could be more effective and efficient if further decentralization happens at the most grassroots level. This would test if the village could conduct community consultation without influence of the district so they can focus on what their capacity and village development needs are.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS

6.1 CONCLUSIONS

The project has achieved largely the objectives originally set although with some adaptations to implementation approaches as the project progressed. GIDP aligns with MoHA's Five Year Plan and the Samsang policy which has as its key priority the devolution of powers and responsibility to local administration. It is also aligned with Lao PDR's SDG commitments (SDG localization) and the adoption of an associated LNOB formula in the development and implementation of a LNOB policy through an IGFT (DDF). NGPAR-GIDP was conceived to realize the government's desire to strengthen public administration at the local level and has contributed to progress towards greater governance reform. Key objectives of NGPAR include better public service delivery, increased citizens' engagement and expanded governance improvements at the local level. The following conclusions are based upon the findings of the final evaluation of the GIDP project:

C1. The implementation of the GIDP project integrated the capacity development of local authorities to plan, coordinate, track and report the delivery of basic services to citizens in a transparent manner, which not only delivered the expected project results but also ensured ownership and sustainability of the results¹⁴³. GIDP was also successful in building trust and increasing ownership of the general approach to public administration and governance by government officials and citizens.

C2. The DDF is the most visible and can be considered the 'crown jewel' and the most successful component of the GIDP program. The DDF is a discretionary Inter-Governmental Fiscal Transfer (IGFT) that has been effective in the implementation of the decentralization process in Lao PDR. It has created a trackable and transparent vehicle for the public sector capital budget to be used effectively and efficiently by local governments to develop and implement projects and services they consider priorities for their citizens. DDF 2.0 has eliminated parallel funding structures by becoming part of the national planning and fiscal system which will contribute to ensuring its sustainability¹⁴⁴. In the context of GoL limited public funds, DDF opened up needed finance to the local level, while using government systems and processes (track-ability in the national accounts and government co-funding). Based on evidence from the field, local planning process is now indeed more participatory and reflects the expectations of the population and the communities to a greater extent. Activities under the DDF are 100% completed¹⁴⁵.

C3. The ODSC benefited both the service users as well as the government. The government benefited in terms of increased coordination across offices which helped in the tracking of

¹⁴³ There is still the systemic challenge of lack of financial resources that remains a constraint to the sustainability of the instruments/tools developed under GIDP.

¹⁴⁴ All districts adopted the single account system of the National Treasury. The Charts of Account serve the accountability and transparency purposes including the transactions under DDF.

¹⁴⁵ DDF. The sustainability of the tool can be understood as following. The term DDF is no longer used, but the approach is adopted by the government. MPI now asks all sectors to develop project proposals - similar to DDF proposals, before they can be considered for funding. This can be attributed to DDF intervention.

services to avoid delays, and **service users** benefited in terms of having a number of important services being provided under one roof facilitating the tracking of services to ensure more prompt delivery of services. The ODSC in Xaysettha district is a good example of a center that was successful in building a strong and transparent state apparatus providing excellent public service to citizens¹⁴⁶. Challenges faced by the ODSCs are highlighted in the report and include staff replacements without adequate training and limited office supplies. Also, there was a policy of scheduling work rotation so that everyone could benefit from the top-up incentive (since ODSC staff are paid extra money on top of their regular salary), which impacted the quality of service delivery in that it resulted in constant staff turnover at ODSC centers.

C4. The SUFS has contributed to more participatory socio-economic planning. SUFS round I conducted in 2019 is a good example of SUFS results being considered by the district authority in the districts' socio-economic development plan year 2020-2024 as SUFS round I was specifically cited in addressing some of people's needs in the plan. SUFS implementation was successful (100% completed), and was important in continuing to develop government capacity in conducting citizen surveys at the local level, even if still at a smaller scale¹⁴⁷. SUFS was also effective in promoting gender equality in terms of women's participation in the survey and presenting findings disaggregated by gender.

C5. The GSWG is the platform that brings all governance issues to the front burner for multi-stakeholder dialogue and consideration. The GSWG has been instrumental in its contribution to the overall governance reform in LAO PDR and there is overall satisfaction among GSWG Secretariat officials with the 'utility/quality' of discussions held at the GSWG¹⁴⁸. There are however challenges in putting forward/raising issues during the GSWG meetings by lower level officials and lack of synergies between GSWG's two sub-sector working groups and with other working groups in the round table process (RTM) that will need to be addressed to ensure its effectiveness as a convening platform for impact.

C6. The PSIF is an effective initiative that was carried out with a relatively small grant but that had a significant impact in improving service delivery through the introduction of a new way of working, and with its 'repurposing will increase the engagement of NPAs in working with local governments and in ensuring public input in public service delivery. The PSIF project implemented by ACDA support is a good example of PSIF being used to support vulnerable groups in improving

¹⁴⁶ The GIDP supported MOHA to establish 8 ODSCs bringing the total number of ODSCs in the country to 44. ODSCs were included in the 9th NSEDP. GoL aims to establish total of 58 ODSCs by 2025.

¹⁴⁷ SUFS implementation skills have been developed in the areas where SUFS surveys were conducted and, based on the satisfaction level with its results, SUFS is expected to be continued provided that there is financial support for its implementation. SUFS as tool has been developed in parallel paper-based and digital based; in practice, the paper-based was adopted. MOHA has developed a pool of SUFS survey experts/trainers. They could continue to provide the training as needed. SUFS was included in the 9th MOHA sector plan, yet the budget allocation has not been carried out yet.

¹⁴⁸ GSWG remains a high agenda of the government. The commitment is high and the political will remains consistent. The government will need to continue to seek support from development partners to complement the government domestic budget.

their income level and also in increasing participation from multi ethnic women, persons with disabilities, families, students and teachers in the development and implementation of community projects¹⁴⁹.

¹⁴⁹ Financial constraints present challenges to the sustainability of PSIF.

6.2 LESSONS & BEST PRACTICES

L1. The ODSC is a concept that has been to a certain extent replaced/complemented by digitization. One of the lessons learnt from ODSC implementation is that it leads to digitalization of local government services¹⁵⁰.

L2. The COVID-19 lockdown contributed to a lesson in that many meetings, trainings and workshops can be conducted online with remote participants instead of undertaking the costly travel for participants. In implementing activities during lockdown periods, MOHA were able to experiment with digital tools to facilitate workshops and discussions online, including connecting with provincial authorities. For example, for one such training workshop on ODSCs, MOHA connected with over 44 different districts across the country, all joining online. This model was used as standard for other ministries to follow through other UNDP initiatives, including with MOJ and the NA.

L3. UNCDF and UNDP partnership in development programmes brings together different sets of resources, tools and skills that create synergies, effectiveness and efficiencies. In the case of the GIDP project, the intervention draws on UNDP's recognised capacity development, democratic governance and policy development experience, which synergised with UNCDF's specialised expertise in local development finance, improved access to social services, investment capital, and fiscal decentralization, fiscal space creation to ensure successful implementation.

L4. The PSIF re-purpose exercise in 2020 to adapt it to the changing context of COVID-19 has proved effective and successful. This came about as a result of a quick move from the GIDP management and a meaningful coordination with the DPs. *This is a good lesson learned.*¹⁵¹

L5. Project proposal announcements ought to be made in clear language with the pre-requisites well spelled out. For example, there were very few partnership projects with the participation of NPAs during the first PSIF proposal round (i.e. only 2 partnership proposal awards). However, after it was made clear in the PSIF announcement for the 2nd round that only partnership proposals would be accepted, the awarded PSIF proposals were all in the form of partnerships.

L6. Some of the training workshops for the DDF limited the attendees to 1 participant from each office which resulted in a disproportionate gender imbalance since most offices are headed

¹⁵⁰ It should be pointed out that the process only started with no concrete results of the initiative. ODSC – mobile application was launched at the very late stage of the project and the discussion on mobile application for ODSC in Xaysettha District was conducted in August 2021.

¹⁵¹ Regarding its initial purpose, the PSIF encouraged partnership between the local administration and civil society, providing an enabling environment for non-government actors to be involved in the development of public service delivery. For example, partnership between stakeholders at the district and village levels working together as equal partners. At central level, through the funding mechanism, GIDP strengthened inter-ministerial collaboration through partnerships between MoHA, MPI, and MoF.

by men. Sufficient budget should be allocated for activities and there should a requirement that each office send gender balance teams to the training activities.

L7. The elaboration of project's Results Framework (RF) need to be carefully undertaken during the development of the ProDoc to avoid the need for amending the RF in the middle of the project by re-framing indicators, which makes it difficult to assess and evaluate pre-RF amendment and post amendment's project results.

L8. In order to be able to assess and evaluate capacity building achievements of a project, it is necessary that the baseline capacity of participants is identified prior to the training and that there is an assessment of capacity gained after the training program.

L9. Good communication and coordination mechanisms among development partners and donors are crucial not only to the successful implementation of the project but to partners' relationship. Development partners and donors ought to take a more active role in reviewing and analysing quarterly and annual reports of the project and demanding clarifications when necessary.

L10. The Project explored opportunities for synergies between national and regional initiatives with GIDP. SDC and the Project team explored possible integration of components under the Poverty Reduction Fund in Lao PDR with the DDF. A consultancy was undertaken to assess the possibility of integrating DDF and PRF but was deemed not appropriate to take forward, including that no clear mechanism was identified for integration. Further synergies were explored between GIDP and the regional LoTUS initiative, which was led by UNCDF. The integration of LoTUS into GIDP was not possible, due to decision taken by UNCDF at headquarters' level, which was noted by the GIDP Project Board. The exploration of synergies between other national, regional and global initiative to scale up or strengthen the impact of GIDP, although unsuccessful, should be considered an example of good practice and taken forward for future phases of public administration support in Lao PDR.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS¹⁵²

R1. The District Development Fund (**DDF**) is a discretionary IGFT and system that has proved its relevance and effectiveness in the reform of governance development in Lao PDR and is worth continuing. The model should not only be continued but scale up nationally.

R2. In addition to retaining and scaling up the DDF nationally, the DDF needs be introduced as a **provincial level development fund** (i.e. the **PDF**) following similar advances of decentralization in neighbouring countries (Cambodia)¹⁵³. The PDF will function to support provincial development initiatives and make functional the Provincial Peoples Assemblies thereby promoting a territorial approach to investments, which will complement the large BRI investments by creating essential backward economic linkages¹⁵⁴.

R3. GoL should continue the roll out of the One Door Service Center (**ODSC**) learning from the two models developed under GDP, by setting up more ODSCs at the district level and expanding their operations to cover more or all public services. The roll out should focus on continuing to promote transparency, speed and responsiveness in service delivery, as these have been highlighted as strong benefits for service users under the two models implemented. Despite the success, feedback from local authority officials highlighted the need for more specialized training for ODSC staff on the use and operation of office equipment that facilitates the ODSC model, including dashboards and databases. Review the regulatory framework to improve systems for the collection of fees, form fees, service charges, and other necessary charges, and to determine the timelines to receive and submit documents and for the provision of services.

R4. The policy of constant staff changes in both ODSCs - adopted as a measure for the allocation of workload and incentives fairly to staff - ought to be discontinued as it is resulting in constant staff turnover at the ODSC centers. Either ODSC staff should not be paid extra money on top of their salary or ODSC staff should be made permanent ODSC's staff at a higher salary scale.

R5. GoL should complement the expansion of the **ODSC** with an increase in the pace of digitalization of public services.

R6. The Service Users Feedback System (**SUFS**) should be integrated in GoL planning processes and should continue to be supported as it helps to identify which services need

¹⁵² It should be pointed out that many of the recommendations being made go beyond the project life cycle but are important for the national counterparts in the Lao PDR government to consider implementing.

¹⁵³ DDF introduced as a complementary process to the current capital budget. Some development projects work better if implemented through PDF.

¹⁵⁴ Current DDF involves three layers, district, province and central levels. Therefore, there is delay especially at the central level to complete the bid evaluation. When one considers the checks and balance aspect of governance, the provincial level, the PPA, is who represent the interests of the citizens. PPAs are also involve in SUFs where they can reflect the results of the surveys in to their decision.

improvement using evidence based approaches to public administration reform and promotes client orientation in local service delivery.

R7. PPAs should advocate/articulate the need for expansion of **SUFS** to other districts in order to increase their oversight over the executive.

R8. The Governance Sector Working Group (**GSWG**) and the wider Sector Working Groups (SWGs) functioning should to be reviewed by the GoL to ensure that the results framework of such groups provide strategic inputs into the Round Table Mechanism (RTM) process as well as to sector-specific planning.

R9. MoHA and development partners in the Chair and Co-Chair positions of the GSWG should be more engaged with the **GSWG** in playing a facilitating and advocacy role to ensure that the SWGs are more effective in their functioning in order to create synergies among and between them.

R10. There should be some procedures in place to encourage all members of the GSWG, including members of the Secretariat participating in the GSWG, especially the junior officials, to speak up. Firm commitment from the senior leaders is essential as an enabling environment for this to succeed.

R11. Continued support for **PSIF** and district administrations should be encouraged by MoHA and MPI to collaborate with non-government actors in local development and service delivery.

ANNEXES

ANNEX A: TERMS OF REFERENCE

See [link](#) to ToR

ANNEX B: LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED

Institution/Affiliation	Contact Person/Name	Position / Role in GIDP	Contact details / Location	Email	Female	Male
1. GIDP Development/ Implementation Partners						
SDC GIDP focal point	Anhsany Sypasong	National Programme Officer, SDC	020 5465 9345	anhsany.sypasong@eda.admin.ch	x	
UNCDF	Thilaphong Oudomsine	Programme Specialist, UNCDF	020 55 510 588	thilaphong.oudomsine@uncdf.org		x
MOHA	Nisith Keopanya	Vice Minister	020-5555 5180	nisithk@yahoo.com nisith.keopanya@moha.gov.la		x
MOHA	Vilaythone Sounthone Xaymongkhonh	Deputy Director General of Planning and Cooperation Department	020-5699 4155	vilaythonespx@gmail.com	x	
MOHA	Saykhith Visisombat	Deputy Director of International Cooperation Department	020-5665 1888	saykhithnoni@gmail.com ; pchanthamany@yahoo.com	x	
MOHA	Mouknapha Manirath	Technical staff, Planning and Cooperation Department, Ministry of Home Affairs	020-5520 1076	mouknaphamanirath@moha.gov.la	x	
MOHA	Souphavanh Phoosavanh	Coordinator of GIDP		souphavanh84@gmail.com	x	

Institution/Affiliation	Contact Person/Name	Position / Role in GIDP	Contact details / Location	Email	Female	Male
UNDP	Sean O'Connell	UNDP Head of Governance		sean.oconnell@undp.org		x
MOJ	Bounthom Phenglattavong	Director of International Cooperation Division, Planning and Cooperation Department	020-9714 3987	phenglattavong@yahoo.com		x
MOJ	Kethsana Phommachan	Director General of International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Justice	020-9980 1571	phketsana@yahoo.com	x	
2. Management and staff of the Governance Sector Working Group Key Staff and the heads of departments and technical staff (including beneficiaries of trainings) and those directly involved in the provision of support to GIDP						
SDC GIDP focal point	Anhsany Sypasong	National Programme Officer, SDC	020 5465 9345	anhsany.sypasong@eda.admin.ch	x	
EU Governance and Rule of Law	Francesca Arato	Attaché, Governance and Rule of Law, EU	020 5251 7990	Francesca.ARATO@eeas.europa.eu	x	
Ministry of Home Affairs	Vilaythone Sounthone Xaymongkhonh	Deputy Director General of Planning and Cooperation Department	020-5699 4155	vilaythonespx@gmail.com	x	
Ministry of Home Affairs	Phetsomphone	Director of international cooperation division, Cabinet				x

Institution/Affiliation	Contact Person/Name	Position / Role in GIDP	Contact details / Location	Email	Female	Male
Ministry of Justice	Saykhith Visisombat	Deputy Director of International Cooperation Department	020-5665 1888	saykhithnoni@gmail.com ; pchanthamany@yahoo.com	X	
Ministry of Justice	Bounthom Phenglattanavong	Director of International Cooperation Division, Planning and Cooperation Department, Ministry of Justice	020-9714 3987	phenglattanavong@yahoo.com		X
3. Management and administrative staff delivering/implementing the District Development Fund (DDF) component of GIDP -Key Staff and the heads of departments and technical staff (including beneficiaries of trainings) beneficiaries of GIDP and those directly involved in the provision/ delivery of DDF at the central and provincial level as well as at the district level, including management and staff at 2 districts outside Vientiane						
Ministry of Home Affairs	Laty Phimmachak	Department of Local Administration	22494443			X
UNCDF	Mr Thilaphong Oudomsine	Programme Specialist, UNCDF	020 55 510 588	thilaphong.oudomsine@uncdf.org		X
UNCDF	Mr Paul Martin	Programme advisor		paul.martin@uncdf.org		
Ministry of Home Affairs	Pongphonh Xayachack	Department of Local Administration	22494443			X
GIDP	Mr. Gerry O'Driscoll.	CTA		gerry.odriscoll@uncdf.org		
Ministry of Home Affairs	Salaam Phouthavongsa	Department of Local Administration	52547997			X

Institution/Affiliation	Contact Person/Name	Position / Role in GIDP	Contact details / Location	Email	Female	Male
Ministry of Home Affairs	Sisouda Souvanno	Department of Local Administration	99346832		x	
	Sommala Phonsena	Department of Local Administration	28999219			
Ministry of Planning and Investment	Mr. Kaluna Nanthavongdounsy,	DDG Department of Planning				
Daxia-Phonhinh village, Laongam district, Saravanh province	8 representatives of DDF beneficiaries	Village authorities and villager recipients of DDF		Focus group discussion	x	x
4. Management and staff delivering/implementing the One-Door-Service Centers (ODSC) component of GIDP -Key Staff and the heads of departments and technical staff (including beneficiaries of trainings) beneficiaries of GIDP and those directly involved in the provision / delivery of ODSC at the central and provincial level as well as at the district level, including management and staff at 2 relevant districts outside Vientiane						
Ministry of Home Affairs	Laty Phimmachak	DG/DDG of local administration department				x
POHA, Champasack Province	Deaunsy	Head Local administration division, PAHO.	02022282699		x	

Institution/Affiliation	Contact Person/Name	Position / Role in GIDP	Contact details / Location	Email	Female	Male
POHA, Champasack Province	Khamko Senthavysouk,	Deputy Head of Division, Public Administration reform				X
POHA, Champasack Province	Panya Thongsavath -	ODSC focal point, POHA	020 55413390			X
UNDESA	Sanvan Seaphan	International consultant	55507167	saephansanva@gmail.com		X
Bachiangchaleunscouk ODSC, Bachiang district, Saravan province	Phetmychai chansichalnead	Head of ODSC, Deputy Head of the District Administrative Office				X
Bachiangchaleunscouk ODSC, Bachiang district, Saravan province	Bounthanoun vongvilsay	Post Office representative				X
Bachiangchaleunscouk ODSC, Bachiang district, Saravan province	Phaivanh keochampa	District Finance Office			X	
Bachiangchaleunscouk ODSC, Bachiang district, Saravan province	Bangon Larmanyvong,	Information and culture back Office				X
Bachiangchaleunscouk ODSC, Bachiang district, Saravan province	Ms Bounthavy chanthakhot	DONRE, Front line staff			X	
Bachiangchaleunscouk ODSC, Bachiang district, Saravan province	Bounleart Xaypanya,	DPWT ODSC officer				X

Institution/Affiliation	Contact Person/Name	Position / Role in GIDP	Contact details / Location	Email	Female	Male
Bachiangchaleunscouk ODSC, Bachiang district, Saravan province	Sivilay vilaythong,	DOCI responsible officer				x
Bachiangchaleunscouk ODSC, Bachiang district, Saravan province	Khamsaveng visouthivong,	DOHA, ODSC back officer				x
Bachiangchaleunscouk ODSC, Bachiang district, Saravan province	Khanthaphon sackpasith	ODSC receptionist			x	
Bachiangchaleunscouk ODSC, Bachiang district, Saravan province	Jiengthong khamtou	District Administration Officer, front line officer			x	
Bachiangchaleunscouk ODSC, Bachiang district, Saravan province	Vanxay sakbouavong,	Transportation, ODSC back office				x
Bachiangchaleunscouk ODSC, Bachiang district, Saravan province	Somsy chanthadeth,	DDG DOHA, ODSC management.				x
ODSC, Saysetha district, Vientiane Capital	Khampheuy Phonasa	Head of DOHA/Head of ODSC	22227410			x
ODSC, Saysetha district, Vientiane Capital	Leokham Soumaly	Front line Officer			x	
ODSC, Saysetha district, Vientiane Capital	BangOn Sengaloun	Front line Officer, Public Work and Transportation			x	

Institution/Affiliation	Contact Person/Name	Position / Role in GIDP	Contact details / Location	Email	Female	Male
ODSC, Saysetha district, Vientiane Capital	Lienthong Vongphakdy	Front line Officer, Natural Resource and Environment			x	
ODSC, Saysetha district, Vientiane Capital	Leokham Douangkhily	Front line Officer, District Administrative office			x	
5. Management and staff delivering/implementing the Service Users Feedback System (SUFS) component of GIDP -Key Staff and the heads of departments and technical staff (including beneficiaries of trainings) beneficiaries of GIDP and those directly involved in the provision/ delivery of SUFS at the central and provincial level as well as at the district level, including management and staff at 2 relevant districts outside Vientiane						
MOHA taskforce	Mr. Laty Phimmasack	DG of local administration Department				x
MOHA taskforce	Khonesavanh Voralath	Director of Division, ethnic and Religion Department			x	
MOHA taskforce	Vilaythone Sounthone Xaymongkhonh,	Deputy Director General of Planning and Cooperation Department	020-5699 4155	vilaythonespx@gmail.com	x	
Oudomxay's Provincial People's assembly (PPA)	PPA representative	Chairperson/deputy chairperson of PPA – Oudomxay province		Meeting via zoom		x
Provincial Home Affairs Department – Oudomxay	Provincial Home Affairs and team	DDG of POHA, Oudomxay		Meeting via zoom		x
6. Management and staff delivering/implementing the Public Service Innovation Facility (PSIF) component of GIDP -Key Staff and the heads of departments and technical staff (including beneficiaries of trainings) beneficiaries of GIDP and those directly						

Institution/Affiliation	Contact Person/Name	Position / Role in GIDP	Contact details / Location	Email	Female	Male
	involved in the provision/ delivery of PSIF at the central and provincial level as well as at the district level, including management and staff at 2 relevant districts outside Vientiane					
MOHA	Vilaythone Sounthone Xaymongkhonh,	Deputy Director General of Planning and Cooperation Department	020-5699 4155	vilaythonespx@gmail.com	x	
Bachiang District, Champasack Province	Thongkham photisane,	District Office of Industry and Commerce				x
Bachiang District, Champasack Province	Silolack yata	LWU Deputy head			x	
Bachiang District, Champasack Province	Vanida thankaisone,	DAFO responsible officer				x
Phon village, Bachiang district, Champasack Province	Six beneficiaries of sweet potatoes farmers	Villager recipients of PSIF		Focus group discussion	x	x
Laongam District, Saravanh province	Phosy Louangsoulivan	District personnel office	02091786813			x
Laongam District, Saravanh province	Khamla Phothisene	Deputy DOHA	02055309709		x	
Laongam District, Saravanh province	Lienxay Chanthala	Deputy DOHA	0309814079			X
Laongam District, Saravanh province	Kithong Phoumkonsan	DOHA	02055459357			x
Laongam District, Saravanh province	Souklamphone Sengsoulith	Public work Office	0309384828			x
Laongam District, Saravanh province	Chanthachone Keomanyvanh	Planning Office	02098554454			x

Institution/Affiliation	Contact Person/Name	Position / Role in GIDP	Contact details / Location	Email	Female	Male
Laongam District, Saravanh province	Singmano Phanoulangsy	Finance Office				

ANNEX C: EVALUATION MISSION WORK SCHEDULE

date	Time	Items	Remarks
2021/7/25	16:00	Travel to Champasak	(flight)
26/2021/7/	09.00-10:30	Work with Provincial Department of Home Affairs about PSIF, DDF and ODSC	COVID-19 measures observed
	10.30-11:30	Travel to Bajieng district	Rented vehicle
	11:00-12:00	Work with committee on ODSC	(PSIF) 2020-2021
	13:30-15:30	Working with PSIF team 2020-2021 Join meeting with District LWU and DAFO about their respective PSIF projects	Joint meeting – make sure COVID19 prevention measures are observed
	15:30-17:00	Discussion with village beneficiaries (PSIF) 2020-2021	COVID-19 measures observed
26/2021/7/		Overnight at Bajieng	
27/2021/7/	07:00-09:00	Travel to Laongam district	
	09:00-10:30	Work with DOHA responsible for DDF and PSIF	COVID-19 measures observed
	10:30-11:00	Travel to target villages	COVID-19 measures observed
	11:00-12:00	Discussion with village beneficiaries	COVID-19 measures observed
	13:00-16:00	Travel back to Champassak	Rented vehicle
28/2021/7/	10:05	Flight back to Vientiane	(flight)

ANNEX D: DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

- UNCDF, The District Development Fund in Laos, UNCDF 2021
- UNDP Strategic Plan (2018-2021)
<http://strategicplan.undp.org/>
- Lao PDR-United Nations Partnership Framework (UNPAF 2017-2021)
<http://www.la.one.un.org/sdgs>
- UNDP Country Programme Document (2017-2021)
<https://www.undp.org/content/dam/laopdr/docs/Reports%20and%20publications/2016/UNDP%20Laos%20CPD.pdf>
- UNDP Country Programme (2017-2021) Evaluation – Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Final Evaluation Report 2021
- UNDP Lao PDR, “Enhancing People’s Participation through Community Radio (EPPCR)” Annual Work Plan 2019
- UNDP Lao PDR, “Preliminary Assessment of Gender Mainstreaming in UNDP Lao PDR,” November 2019- February 2020
- Project Documents and Project Brief
- NGPAR, Report on Training of Trainers, For Task Force on Service Users Feedback Survey (SUFS) 2019
- NGPAR, Guideline on Re-purposed Public Service Innovation Facility **2020-2021** (Special round – focus on the recover socio-economic impact from COVID -19)
- ACDA, Project: Empowerment of vulnerable groups through sustainable income generation, waste management and promotion of human rights Hongsouphap village, Thematic Workshop of PSI SSWG 28.08.2020
- Vientiane Times News, May 25, 2021, GIDP news ‘People with disabilities can take part in national socio-economic development’
- Vientiane Times News ‘Govt officials beef up on use of E-government messaging app’
- Vientiane Times News, 5 July 2021, ‘How COVID-19 continues to disproportionately impact vulnerable groups’
- Home News, July 2, 2021 ‘Goals of service user feedback survey reviewed’
- Project mid-term evaluation report
- GIDP Transition Exit Plan 2020 (updated 24 June 2021)
- Fiduciary Management Report of the District Development Fund (DDF) of GPAR-GIDP 2017-2021
- 8th National Social and Economic Plan (2016-2020)
www.la.one.un.org/images/publications/8th_NSEDP_2016-2020.pdf
- 9th National Social and Economic Plan (2021-2025)
- Governance strategies
- Lao People’s Democratic Republic: Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
<http://www.la.one.un.org/media-center/publications>
- UNDP Evaluation guidelines

- <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/index.shtml>
- UNEG norms and standard
<http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1914>
- Human Development Reports
- Other UNDP Evaluation Reports
<http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/index.shtml>
- Gender Inequality Index
<http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii>
- National Round Table Website
<https://rtm.org.la/>
- Voluntary National Review of SDGs – 2018
- DDF-SDG LNOB SOP
- GSWG Capacity Assessment
- Donor Agreements and reports
- Result Analysis Annual Reports
- Programme Monitoring Reports
- Project Board Meeting Minutes
- Service Users Feedback Survey (SDFS) results
- Jean-Joseph Bellamy, Thongdeuane Nanthanavone (2016). Mid-Term Review of the UNDP-GEF-LDCF-Government of Lao PDR Project “Effective Governance for small-scale rural infrastructure and disaster preparedness in a changing climate, Final Report
- Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), DDF SDG Implementation Guidelines, 22 September 2020
- Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development, Collaboration between the Poverty Reduction Fund and the District Development Fund, A framework of options, August 2018
- The World Bank (2019). Lao Peoples’ Democratic Republic Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) Assessment 2018, March 2019
- The World Bank, Social Development Papers (No. 76): Social Accountability, An Introduction to the Concept and Emerging Practice.
- Technical Review of the District Development Fund (DDF) 2.0 in Lao PDR, May 2019
- Technical Reports and
- Other relevant documents and resources.

ANNEX E: EVALUATION MATRIX

Type D – Descriptive – what is N – Normative – What is with what should be C&E – Cause and effect	Design: ED = experimental design QED = quasi- experimental design NED = Non experimental
	Sample or Census S = sample C = census

Evaluation Criteria: 1. Results & Effectiveness; 2. Relevance; 3. Efficiency; 4. Sustainability; 5. Inclusion; 6. Gender Equality

Questions/Sub-questions	Type	Measure or Indicator	Target or Standard	Baseline Data	Data Source	Design	Sample	Data Collection Methods / Tools	Methods for Data Analysis	Comments
Outcome/Output 1. Targeted local administrations are able to develop and finance the implementation of multi-sector work plans based on community priorities										
1. Key Questions: 1.1 What did the project intend to achieve during the period under review? 1.2 To what extent has the project achieved its intended objectives? 1.3 What factors have contributed to or hindered the project's performance and eventually the sustainability of the results? Effectiveness Questions: • To what extent were the overall objectives achieved / are likely to be achieved? How/to which extent have the	D	1.1 Number of DDF-financed district multi-sector project work plans co-financed by the government 1.2. Amount (USD) of government's co-financing DDF funded proposals.	1.1. (# DDF awards) 2018: 0 2019: 12 2020: 7 2021: 15 (Total: 34) 1.2. (\$ DDF BBG co-financed by state budget)	1.1. Year 2015 – 0 1.2. Year 2015 – 0	1.1. Project proposals on DDF awarded and Report of annual project report 1.2. DDF implementation report; Project financial records	N E D	C	Collect data from project reports and review them; Review of results/analysis from citizens beneficiaries of DDF project; MOF document re financing for district administrations; ODSC reports.	Data tabulation and analysis. Evidence/data obtained will be used to assess the results of UNDP support. Evidence/data will be triangulated	The evaluation is being conducted mostly applying remote techniques due to COVID-19 travel restrictions and this may pose some constraints.

Questions/Sub-questions	Type	Measure or Indicator	Target or Standard	Baseline Data	Data Source	Design Sample	Data Collection Methods / Tools	Methods for Data Analysis	Comments
<p>activities/outputs strategically contributed to those?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are the outcome indicators measured against baseline and target values (if available) and reflects quantitative and qualitative dimensions of the achievement? What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives? <p>Efficiency Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How cost-effective and time-efficient is the implementation of activities to achieve the outputs by programme implementing partners during the evaluation period? What measures are being taken to ensure competitiveness? <p>Sustainability Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has the programme contributed to the wider governance improvements and what are the indications that the government will benefit from systems strengthening, capacity development and tools developed by the programme to realize inclusive development after the project's completion? 		<p>1.3.Number of DDF awarded districts addressing local SDG priorities and inequality in service delivery</p> <p>1.4.Level of satisfaction expressed by women in terms of their participation in the planning process.</p> <p>1.5.Level of Application of the DDF tools applied to policy and/or regulatory change to support</p>	<p>2018:0, 2019: 57,000 2020: 60,000 2021: 61,500 Total: 178,500</p> <p>1.3.Number of DDF-SDG LNOB awarded: 2021:10 (total: 10)</p> <p>1.4.Year 2021: nearly half of targeted respondents are women</p>	<p>1.3. Year 2015 – 0</p> <p>1.4.Year 2015 – data not available</p> <p>1.5 Budget law 2016 and Draft PFM Reform</p>	<p>1.3.Project proposals on DDF-SDG LNOB awarded</p> <p>1.4 Client/beneficiary satisfaction surveys – segregated data.</p> <p>1.5 DDF stakeholders, government officials and other beneficiaries</p> <p>1.6. D Result from user's feedback forms;</p>		<p>Use stakeholders interviews and questionnaires to collect data:</p> <p>I. Evidence and examples of the extent of the upgrading and implementation of DDF system?</p> <p>II. How many guidelines and manuals were produced and are the beneficiaries making use of these instruments?</p> <p>III. Has the government implemented the State's co-financing? And established the new Inter Ministry Committee? How are they functioning?</p> <p>IV. Is GoL planning and financing system making use of the standardized record system of compliance and</p>	<p>from a variety of sources, including verifiable data on indicator achievement, existing reports, evaluations and technical papers, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, surveys and site visits where/when possible.</p> <p>Targets set in the project Results Resource Framework will be assessed against actual results achieved by the project.</p>	<p>However, the national evaluation team member intends to reach out in person as many stakeholders as possible and the team will use Whatsapp, Zoom and other communications technology to overcome this constraint.</p>

Questions/Sub-questions	Type	Measure or Indicator	Target or Standard	Baseline Data	Data Source	Design Sample	Data Collection Methods / Tools	Methods for Data Analysis	Comments
<p>Inclusion Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has the project contribution to wider governance improvement result in promotion and protection of marginalized and vulnerable groups such as women, persons with disabilities and ethnic minorities? <p>Gender Equality Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well did the project ensure that women, girls, boys, and men have equal access to basic service delivery? What lessons can be learned from this element? And how can the programme do better? As the programme is about increasing accountability and citizen engagement, how well did the programme ensure that women's meaningful participation in the decision-making process at the local level? 		<p>enhanced financing for district administrations.</p> <p>1.6.Degree of satisfaction expressed by citizens about new model of ODSC (Bajiang district)</p> <p>1.7.No. of clients use new model of ODSC (Bajiang district)</p> <p>1.8.Extent to which ODSC sustains the interest of departments in providing services to citizens.</p>	<p>1.5. DDF Operational Manual+SO P) - OEBG / PFM support - ministerial instruction) and DDF SDG modality Applied</p>	<p>Strategy (2017).</p> <p>1.7. Year 2015 – 0</p> <p>1.8.Year 2015: 0</p>	<p>Data segregated citizens surveys records/media reports</p> <p>1.7 Report of ODSC (bajiang). Rate of use of new models of ODSC and Client satisfaction surveys</p> <p>1.8 Report of ODSC (bajiang) about department which join with the ODSC at the beginning VS end of the GDP. Rate of allocation of budget to gender and equal access; use and participation rate segregated data.</p>		<p>following the DDF manual?</p> <p>V. Is the MoF implementing the Provincial Formula-based budget allocation? And is this sustainable without the support of the TA?</p> <p>VI. Is the SOP for the DDF SDG LNOB module being implemented?</p> <p>VII. Is the model ODSC being implemented by the government counterparts? Are there any assessments made of the results of the ODSC training? Are the beneficiaries of the training confident in applying the training skills in their jobs?</p>	<p>Quantitative data will be supplemented by qualitative data collected during stakeholders' interviews which may provide corroboration and narratives of results and outcomes that quantitative data may not fully reflect. Qualitative analysis will involve triangulation, trend identification, content analysis, clustering, contrast-comparative analysis</p>	

Questions/Sub-questions	Type	Measure or Indicator	Target or Standard	Baseline Data	Data Source	Design	Sample	Data Collection Methods / Tools	Methods for Data Analysis	Comments
Outcome/Output 2.Accountability framework applied at the district level to capture and use citizens' feedback on provision of basic services										
<p>Key Questions:</p> <p>2.1.What did the project intend to achieve during the period under review?</p> <p>2.2 To what extent has the project achieved its intended objectives?</p> <p>2.3 What factors have contributed to or hindered the project's performance and eventually the sustainability of the results?</p> <p>Other Effectiveness Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent are the intended beneficiaries satisfied with the results? How well are gender and ethnicity considerations been considered? <p>Relevance Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the programme is about inclusive development, how well does the design of the programme address the needs of the vulnerable groups such as women, ethnic groups, and persons with disabilities in the country? 	D	<p>2.1. No. of DDF districts applying the updated SUFS giving local citizens' voice on basic service delivery</p> <p>2.2.Extent to which citizens feel satisfied about the quality of public services.</p>	<p>2.1. 2018: 0 additional 2019: 4 (Surveys) 2020: 6 (results applied¹⁵⁵) 2021: 4 (Survey) Total: 10 (results applied¹⁵⁶)</p> <p>2.2.Year 2021 – citizens from 8 new SUFS district express their opinion about</p>	<p>2.1.No. of Districts applied SUFS 2015: 2</p> <p>2.2.Year 2015 – citizens from 2 pilot SUFS district express their opinion</p>	<p>2.1. GDP annual report and SUFS reports</p> <p>2.2. SUFS reports</p> <p>2.3.The revised DSDMS tools adopted</p> <p>2.4.Draft of district socio-economic</p>	N E D	C	<p>I. Check with the selected DDF districts beneficiaries of capacity development on usage of the DSDMS tool and on evidence-based planning using SUFS results (including PPAs)</p> <p>II. Research of surveys and studies done internally and externally; Interviews with stakeholders and gender specialists.</p>	<p>Data tabulation and analysis</p> <p>Data analysis includes gender and ethnicity and other inclusivity criteria if segregated data is obtainable.</p>	<p>Relevance & importance to be assessed. Data analysis will use the methodology described in the methodology section of the Inception Report.</p>

¹⁵⁵ 2 districts used SUFS in 2015 covered

¹⁵⁶ 2 districts used SUFS in 2015 covered

Questions/Sub-questions	Type	Measure or Indicator	Target or Standard	Baseline Data	Data Source	Design	Sample	Data Collection Methods / Tools	Methods for Data Analysis	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the programme resulted in empowerment and capacity development of the local authorities and PPA members as envisaged in the programme design and if so, are the efforts sustainable? Is there any indication of the government continuing the efforts of promoting accountability and citizen's as well as NPA /private sector engagement? 		2.3. DSDMS revised tools available for PPA and district chiefs to use	2.3.Year 2021 -PPA and district chiefs use the DSDMS 2.4.Year	quality of services about quality of services 2.3.Year 2015 – old DSDMS introduce to district line offices				III. Stakeholders interviews and review of records; Document analysis; Observations during field mission; Individual or group gender discussion(s)		

Outcome/Output 3. Enhance multi-stakeholder governance process promoting dialogue and feeding into good governance related policies including the delivery of basic services.

Key Questions: 3.1 What did the project intend to achieve during the period under review? 3.2 To what extent has the project achieved its intended objectives? 3.3 What factors have contributed to or hindered the project's performance and eventually the sustainability of the results? Effectiveness Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has there been regular reviews of the progress to ensure that the programme is on track to achieve the desired results and to inform course corrections if needed? 	D	3.1.Perceptions of dialogue partners (govt, academia, civil society, private sector) on utility and quality of multi-stakeholder dialogue process.	3.1. 2018: 25% 2019: 30% 2020: 40% 2021: 50% [Summary of % satisfaction rating using survey data weighting Scoring weights TBC. (E.g.	3.1. there were 24 multi-stakeholder policy discussions facilitated under the GSWG but no data on perceptions of dialogue partners	3.1.Survey feedback forms 3.2.Inputs for the RTM document, national plans / strategies) 3.3.GSWG annual report (indicate number of	N E D	C	I. Which local governance policy and/or regulations were developed by MoHA with the support of GIDP? II. Which gender mainstreaming tools and guidelines were developed by MoHA with the support of GIDP? III. Any client-satisfaction survey results from	Data tabulation and analysis. Data analysis will review corrections made and will assess rate of implementation of recommendations from the Mid-Term reviews and	The evaluation team will hold discussions with the project team and key stakeholders to assess course corrections, if any and how has the programme reacted to
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Questions/Sub-questions	Type	Measure or Indicator	Target or Standard	Baseline Data	Data Source	Design	Sample	Data Collection Methods / Tools	Methods for Data Analysis	Comments
<p>How has the programme reacted to challenges identified, including addressing recommendations from the Mid-Term Review and the GSWG Secretariat Capacity Assessment conducted in 2019?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the governance mechanism (GIDP Programme Board) provided their guidance and functioned well? If not, comments and recommendations to be provided. <p>Relevance Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent has the GIDP programme addressed key governance issues as outlined in the 8th NSEDP-Outcome 2, MoHA Sector Plan 2021-25 and recommendations of the RTIM pertaining to governance? To what extent is the programme aligned with the national development needs and priorities including Sam Sang Directive and has been able to address relevant targets under SDG 16? What opportunities has the programme created or identified in improving local governance? <p>Sustainability Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are stakeholders and national partners fully engaged in the decision-making, implementation, and monitoring of the programme? 		<p>3.2. synergy amongst the two sub-sector groups in sharing lessons learned/inputs to inform the ongoing national policy dialogue.</p> <p>3.3. # of governance related policies / priorities informed through multi-stakeholder discussions facilitated under the GSWG at the national and provincial levels.</p> <p>3.4. % of PSIF proposals out of the total awarded that promote partnerships between local administrations and NPAs for</p>	<p>Rating 1 = -2/ Rating 2 = -1 Rating 3=1, Rating 4= +2 Rating 5=+3]]</p> <p>3.2. Year 2021 inputs from 2 sub sector working group provided and documented for all documentation in the round table meeting process and national agenda eg.9th NSEDP</p> <p>3.3. 2017: 6 2018: 6 2019: 6</p>	<p>on utility and quality of multi-stakeholder dialogue process</p> <p>1 Very low 2 Low 3 Medium 4 High 5 Very high</p> <p>3.2. Year 2015 – inputs from 2 sub sector working group provided for the RTM document</p> <p>3.3. Year 2012 – 2016 there were 21 –</p>	<p>workshops and topic discussed)</p> <p>3.4 Document and reports on the 8th NSEDP-Outcome 2, MoHA Sector Plan 2021-25 and recommendations of the RTIM</p>			<p>thepolicy/law briefing sessions done by GIDP (at national and provincial level)?</p> <p>IV. Interview of MoHA programme and planning officer.</p>	<p>the GSWG capacity assessment.</p> <p>Assess GIDP response to key governance issues as outlined in the 8th NSEDP-Outcome 2, MoHA Sector Plan 2021-25 and recommendations of the RTIM pertaining to governance.</p>	<p>challenges identified, including addressing recommendations from the Mid-Term Review and the GSWG Secretariat Capacity Assessment conducted in 2019.</p>

Questions/Sub-questions	Type	Measure or Indicator	Target or Standard	Baseline Data	Data Source	Design	Sample	Data Collection Methods / Tools	Methods for Data Analysis	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent is the Government of Lao PDR increasing its capacity and ownership for improving public administration during the period in question? What impact has this had on external support? To what extent has the lessons learned fed into national policy dialogue on socio-economic development through the Governance Sector Working Group? Is the Exit Strategy/Transition Plan developed by GIDP being implemented and is the plan regularly reviewed and adjusted according to the project progress, including its financial commitments and capacity? <p>Inclusion Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the programme is about inclusive development, how well did the implementation of the programme in accordance with the plan address the most marginalized and vulnerable groups such as women, people with disabilities and ethnic minorities in the country. 		improved service delivery.	2020: 3 2021: 3 (Total:24)	topics discussed under GSWG / SSWG 3.3. 2015: 0					The evaluation team will assess factors such as government commitment to sustainability; existence of budgetary lines for continued implementation of activities that will sustain the gains of GIDP.	

ANNEX F: GIDP CAPACITY BUILDING SUMMARY

Capacity Building through GIDP, under Ministry of Home Affairs

September 2021

Prepared by Souksan Thavikham, Assistant Programme Manager, GIDP

1. Overview of GIDP under (NGPAR)

Samsang policy accords high priority to devolution of powers and responsibility to local administration, NGPAR-GIDP was conceived to realize government's desire to strengthen public administration at the local level.

GIDP (Mar 2017 - Sep 2021) aims to strengthen local authorities capacity to plan, coordinate, track and report delivery of basic services to citizens. MoHA Five Year Plan accords top priority for improving local governance. Capacity development of local authorities is a critical component under GIDP and a strategy to improve governance for citizens.

2. Outcome result

GIDP has been supporting the development and implementation of a number of core governance and public Administration systems that support the government policies and needs to enable local institutions to increase the coverage of basic services and include citizens' feedback in the planning cycle for services provision.

From 4 years of implementation of GIDP, now it has completed the major outputs as defined in the project document with some outcome and results are clearly seen and have been recognized by the government and local authority.

With the consultation and support from SDC, UNDP and UNCDF, many deliverables have been completed with good adaptation and GIDP has increased the partnership across government agencies, civil society and private sector with the aim to address the unexpected challenges and issue due to COVID-19 pandemic and to recovery and improve the livelihoods of multi ethnic people in Lao PDR.

Main components of GIDP :

- District Development Fund (DDF)
- One Door Service Centre (ODSC)
- Service Users Feedback Survey (SUFS)
- Public Service Innovation Facility (PSIF)
- Protection and Response to COVID-19
- Governance Sector Working Group (GSWG)

Main components	Area/topics of training	Results	No. of beneficiaries of capacity building	Remarks

			(on & offline workshops/ trainings)	
District Development Fund (DDF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation planning with community at village level and Koumban - Step for DDF application process including project proposal writing - Important of co-finance to DDF project from local authority - Procurement procedure according to the current laws – regulations - Roles and responsibility of the sectors at provincial level and district level on coordination, implementation, inspection of DDF project at local level - Project planning - Bidding process - Contracting with contractors - Conflict mediation - Financial management - Reporting system of DDF implementation - Monitoring and inspection (internal and external) - Maintenance of infrastructure after completion 	DDF grants have supported 35 projects in rural and poor/poorest districts helping the government and local auhtoiry to improve the capacity building of local staff with pratical hands on approach in planing, prioritise and implement local projects and related tasks which about 617 local staff (92 women) and about 142,541 local beneficiaries (60,800 women).	617 local staff (92 women)	As the invitation were sent to the relevant positions and normally only 1 participants from one offices so there are big different between women and men. In the future, Need to increase the number of participants to be more gender balance. For example, invite both women and men from the same office, if the budget is allowed.
One Door Service Centre (ODSC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current laws and regulations related to preparation for establish ODSC 	In year 2021 GIDP have supported MOHA and local auhtoiries to strenthen capacity and expand one door service centres which	769 participants (229 women)	GIDP support to provide equipment and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Service mind and effective communication - Examine steps of document process / workflow - Document management - E-document management - Use and maintenance database - Using barcode in services - How to use ODSC applications - How to create and use dashboard in ODSC 	<p>has a clear plan to cover half of total districts (74/148) by 2025 as it is clearly stated out in the approved 9th NSEDP and Samsang criteria for local levels.</p> <p>One door service modality have been recognised by the government, local authorities for the good approach for public administration reform by reducing the unnecessary steps and clarify roles and responsibility, this lead to faster and more efficient service to citizens. The citizens who benefit from these 44 ODSCs (in 36 districts of 10 provinces) are expected about 2,231,804 people (1,112,105 women)</p>		<p>renovation in 2 ODSCs in 2 districts. But the training/workshop activities covers all 44 ODSCs.</p>
Service Users Feedback Survey (SUFS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Objectives and principle of survey - How to prepare survey tools eg. guideline and questionnaires - How to be the good presenters and facilitators during the workshop and group discussion at local and community level - Data collection and enter data in KoboCollect - Data cleaning - How to use excel and create graphs - Analysis and writing report - 	<p>GIDP is able to successfully conduct two times of SUFS in year 2019 and year 2021. From the 2 rounds of SUFS there are total 8 districts (6 out of 8 are the poorest districts) in 7 provinces cover 2,775 households (1937 non Lao households), 1304 women respondents. The report of the SUFS round 1 and round 2 are available in Lao and English which publish (or soon) in the website of MOHA and UNDP. The reports of individual districts are distributed to their provinces including PPAs so they can refer and use for</p>	370 participants (133 women)	

		the function of the oversight and resolve the local problems related to the service delivery and governance matters.		
Public Service Innovation Facility (PSIF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project proposal writing - M and E - Gender mainstreaming - Financial rules and report - Using excel - Document filing <p>Training at community level by grantees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Village administration - Village mediation - Improve the civil registration services - Participatory village development plans - Effective document archive using ITC - Promote ITC application in public sector, private sector and civil society - build capacity for the committee responsible for INGO management - COVID -19 prevention and control for local authorities and health volunteer - Food processing for returnees impacted by COVID-19 - Organic farming techniques - Anti-corruptions - Laws and regulations related to human trafficking for women - Rights of children living with disabilities 	PSIF has promoted innovative pilot projects to deliver public value while aiming to promote collaborative, networked and innovative ways of working between government, citizens and communities to improve outcomes for rural communities, especially women, youth and ethnic communities. Total 42 projects (12 partnership projects between government, civil society and private sectors).	18,225 participants (7,320 women)	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organizational analysis and restructure, - improve job description and civil service management - propaganda and gender promotion - gender promotion and support the participation to the family income generation of women - blood management and safety blood supply to save the lives - rubbish management 			
Protection and Response to COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - strengthening local governance on COVID-19 preparedness and primarily health care beyond COVID-19 including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 provinces 7 districts: Bokeo (Paoudom, Houyay), Luangnamtha (Luangnamtha), Xayabouly (Ngeun, Kenthao) and Champasak (Pakse, Pathoumphone) • Participants: provincial governors, COVID-19 committees (pro/&dis), district chiefs, personnel from boarder checkpoints, villages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs, Roles and responsibilities of provincial and district, village level authorities are better understood • Enhance the collaboration between all sectors of society on carefully observe, prepare for pandemic (beyond COVID -19) • Target districts are instructed, supports both technical and grant assistances in order to better manage their quarantine centres • Encourage to prepare and endorse “Preparedness Action Plan” to inform local planning and policies related to the topic and potential adaptation in the time of COVID-19 and beyond 	321 participants (96 female)	

3. Challenge on capacity building during the GIDP 2017- 2021

- a. Training on village administration is significant (large number and covers varied topics)
Therefore, trainings/workshop should be conducted regularly and continuously especially at district level and village level due to staff are transferred and promoted
- b. Knowledge transfer between current staff and their successors still challenge
- c. Support from GIDP/NGPAR ends in Sep 2021 – need to create new cooperation projects

4. Way forward

- a. Fund mobilization to continue the local service improvement – e-government according to the 9th NSEDP
- b. Encourage for village administration training according to Samsang policy
- c. Encourage for establishment and effective management of the ODSC as defined target
- d. Encourage expansion of SUFS to other districts
- e. Encourage local authorities on the protection and control of disease pandemic

ANNEX G: GDP RESULTS FRAMEWORK (RF)

Project Title: Governance for Inclusive Development Programme (GIDP)
<p>- GDP Outcome Statement (CPD Outcome 3/UNPF Outcome 7): Institutions and policies at national and local level support the delivery of quality services that better respond to citizens' needs</p> <p>- GDP Outcome Statement: Local institutions are able to increase the coverage of basic services and include citizens' feedback in the planning cycle for services provision by 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>number of additional households (160,000 by GDP) receive two or more basic services¹⁵⁷ from their districts</i> - Baseline: 373,948 (2015) / Target: 160,000 (by 2021)¹⁵⁸ • <i>number of people (disaggregated by sex, age, disability & ethnicity) give feedback on services received</i> - Baseline: 0 / Target: 20,000 (by 2021)¹⁵⁹ • <i>number of district level multi-sector, participatory annual service project plans implemented as planned</i> - Baseline: 662 / Target: additional 60 (by 2021)¹⁶⁰
<p>Contributing to:</p> <p>UNDP CPD (2017-2021) Output 3.1: Local administrations able to develop and finance multi-sectoral plans based on community priorities</p> <p>UNDP Strategic Plan Output 2.2.2 (2017-2021): Constitution-making, electoral and parliamentary processes and institutions strengthened to promote inclusion, transparency and accountability.</p> <p>UNCDF local development practice theory of change</p>

¹⁵⁷ Basic services: Community prioritised local services, as defined in DDF Guidelines, viz. Health (e.g. clean water / sanitation, clinics, outreach health services etc.); Education (Schools, promotion, inspection/standards, etc); Agriculture (e.g. irrigation, technical visits/instruction, outreach services, etc.); Public Works (e.g. Access via local bridge & road, markets, outreach services & community-based maintenance, etc)

¹⁵⁸ Activities contributing to the results : DDF, ODS, PSIF and MPTF

¹⁵⁹ Activities contributing to the results: SUFS and PSIF (linked with DDF and ODS)

¹⁶⁰ Activities contributing to the results : DDF, MPTF, PSIF

Outputs	Indicators	Mean of verification	Baselines	Targets	Activities	Responsible Party/ Implementing Organization
1. Targeted local administrations are able to develop and finance the implementation of multi-sector work plans based on community priorities	1.1 Number of DDF-financed district multi-sector project work plans co-financed by the government	1.1. Project proposals on DDF awarded and Report of annual project report	1.1. Year 2015 – 0	1.1. (# DDF awards) 2018: 0 2019: 12 2020: 7 2021: 15 (Total: 34)	I. Upgrade and implement DDF system, guidelines and manuals (incl. State's co-financing and new Inter Ministry Committee) (linked with 1.2)	UNCDF/UNDP MoHA
	1.2. Amount (USD) of government's co-financing DDF funded proposals.	1.2. DDF implementation report	1.2. Year 2015 – 0	1.2.(\$ DDF BBG co-financed by state budget) 2018:0, 2019: 57,000 2020: 60,000 2021: 61,500 Total: 178,500	II. Screen high priority local basic service infrastructure by District Investment Committees (linked with 1.3) III. Approve and award DDF capital block grant IV. Set up and maintain standardized record system of compliance with GoL planning and financing system and DDF manual	
	1.3.Number of DDF awarded districts <i>addressing local SDG priorities and</i>	1.3.Project proposals on DDF-SDG LNOB awarded	1.3. Year 2015 – 0	1.3.Number of DDF-SDG LNOB awarded: 2021:10 ¹⁶¹ (total: 10)	V. Progress reporting on DDF services granted and delivered,	

¹⁶¹ DDF-SDG LNOB modality introduced in 2020

	<p><i>inequality in service delivery</i></p> <p>1.4.Level of satisfaction expressed by women in terms of their participation in the planning process.</p> <p>1.5.Level of Application of the DDF tools applied to policy and/or regulatory change to support enhanced financing for district administrations</p>	<p>1.4.SUFS results/analysis from citizens who use our DDF project</p> <p>1.5.(draft) New MOF instruction related to <i>financing for district administrations</i></p>	<p>1.4.Year 2015 – data not available</p> <p>1.5 Budget law 2016 and Draft PFM Reform Strategy (2017).</p>	<p>1.4.Year 2021: nearly half of targeted respondents are women</p> <p>1.5. DDF Operational Manual+SOP) - OEBG / PFM support - ministerial instruction) and DDF SDG modality Applied</p>	<p>disaggregated by social inclusion (women and ethnic groups, other social groups)</p> <p>VI. TA support to MoF on the design of Provincial Formula-based budget allocation</p> <p>VII. Development of SOP for the DDF SDG LNOB module</p>	
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	<p>1.6.Degree of satisfaction expressed by citizens about new model of ODSC (Bajieng district)</p> <p>1.7.No. of clients use new model of ODSC (Bajieng district)</p> <p>1.8.Extent to which ODSC sustains the interest of departments in providing services to citizens.</p>	<p>1.6.Result from user's feedback forms</p> <p>1.7. Report of ODSC (bajieng)</p> <p>1.8.Report of ODSC (bajieng) about department which join with the ODSC at the beginning VS end of the GIDP</p>	<p>1.7.Year 2015 – 0</p> <p>1.8.Year 2015: 0</p>	<p>1.6. Available information on level of satisfaction (2021)</p> <p>1.7. No. of client use ODSC in Bajieng district Year 2021- 100</p> <p>1.8.Year 2021: majority of departments rendering services through ODSC continue to retain the interest in providing services in the ODSC</p>	<p>I. Design, develop and demonstrate model ODSC</p> <p>II. Training on ODSC services matters</p>	MOHA UNDP
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2.Accountability framework applied at the district level to capture and use citizens' feedback on provision of basic services	2.1. No. of DDF districts applying the updated SUFS giving local citizens' voice on basic service delivery	2.1. GDP annual report and SUFS reports	2.1.No. of Districts applied SUFS 2015: 2	2.1. 2018: 0 additional 2019: 4 (Surveys) 2020: 6 (results applied ¹⁶²) 2021: 4 (Survey) Total: 10 (results applied ¹⁶³)	I. Update the DSDMS tool and SUFS using participatory techniques II. Field test and report on the updated DSDMS tool and SUFS in selected districts & capacity development on usage (linked with DDF districts)	UNDP MoHA
	2.2.Extent to which citizens feel satisfied about the quality of public services.	2.2. SUFS reports	2.2.Year 2015 – citizens from 2 pilot SUFS district express their opinion about quality of services	2.2.Year 2021 – citizens from 8 new SUFS district express their opinion about quality of services	III. Present findings from the updated DSDMS tool and SUFS to selected districts, PPAs and GSWG IV. Introduce the updated DSDMS and SUFS to other districts V. Capacity development on evidence-based planning using SUFS results (incl. PPAs)	
	2.3. DSDMS revised tools available for PPA and district chiefs to use	2.3.The revised DSDMS tools adopted	2.3.Year 2015 – old DSDMS introduce to district line offices	2.3.Year 2021 - PPA and district chiefs use the DSDMS	VI. Monitor usage of SUFS results by	

	<p>2.4.% of districts who confirmed the application of SUFS recommendations.</p> <p>2.5.% districts and PPAs confirmed the usefulness of SUFS results</p> <p>2.6.# of districts' reports on SUFS recommendations made accessible to the PPAs and communities.</p> <p>2.7.PPA members use the survey results to fulfill their oversight role powers of the citizens pertaining to basic services.</p>	<p>2.4.Draft of district socio-economic development plan</p> <p>2.5.Minutes of meetings/workshops on SUFS and</p> <p>2.6.Handover notes of SUFS report to district and PPAs</p> <p>2.7.Adopted provincial SEDP</p>	<p>2.4.Year 2015 – data not available</p> <p>2.5.Year 2015 – data not available</p> <p>2.6.Year 2015: 2 districts using SUFS prepared reports on implementation and disseminated through internal channels, but not reports were made accessible to public or media.</p> <p>2.7.Year 2015 – data not available</p>	<p>2.4.Year 2020/21: 50%</p> <p>2.5. 2018: N/A 2019: N/A 2020: 4 2021: 4 Total: 8</p> <p>2.6.2018: N/A 2019: N/A 2020: 4 2021: 4 Total: 8</p> <p>2.7.Majority of PPA in the SUFS district/ province contribute to SEDP to improve service delivery</p>	<p>VII. PPAs and district authorities. Share SUFS reports with concerned authorities, PPAs and communities (recommendations per district, disaggregated by type)</p> <p>VIII. Link Digital Service Mapping exercise with DDF</p>	
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	3.1.Perceptions of dialogue partners (govt, academia, civil society, private sector) on utility and quality of multi-stakeholder dialogue process.	3.1.Survey feedback forms	3.1. there were 24 multi-stakeholder policy discussions facilitated under the GSWG but no data on perceptions of dialogue partners on utility and quality of multi-stakeholder dialogue process 1 Very low 2 Low 3 Medium 4 High 5 Very high	3.1. 2018: 25% 2019: 30% 2020: 40% 2021: 50% [Summary of % satisfaction rating using survey data weighting Scoring weights TBC. (E.g. Rating 1 = -2/ Rating 2 =-1 Rating 3=1, Rating 4= +2 Rating 5=+3)]	I. Convene, monitor and report on GS and Sub-WGs according to annual plan and implement activities related to NSEDP and SDGs II. Support MoHA in local governance policy and regulation development III. Support MoHA in developing gender mainstreaming approach, tools and guidelines IV. Deliver policy/law briefing sessions (at the national and provincial levels)	UNDP MoHA
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	<p>3.2. synergy amongst the two sub-sector groups in sharing lessons learned/inputs to inform the ongoing national policy dialogue.</p>	<p>3.2.Inputs for the RTM document, national plans / strategies)</p>	<p>3.2. Year 2015 – inputs from 2 sub sector working group provided for the RTM document</p>	<p>3.2. Year 2021 inputs from 2 sub sector working group provided and documented for all documentation in the round table meeting process and national agenda eg.9th NSEDP</p>		
	<p>3.3. # of governance related policies / priorities informed through multi-stakeholder discussions facilitated under the GSWG at the national and provincial levels.</p>	<p>3.3.GSWG annual report (indicate number of workshops and topic discussed)</p>	<p>3.3. Year 2012 – 2016 there were 21 – topics discussed under GSWG / SSWG</p>	<p>3.3. 2017: 6 2018: 6 2019: 6 2020: 3 2021: 3 (Total:24)</p>		

	3.4. % of PSIF proposals out of the total awarded that promote partnerships between local administrations and NPAs for improved service delivery; -		3.3. 2015: 0 ¹⁶⁴	PSIF grants 2018: 10% 2019: 10% 2020: 20%	I. Design PSIF implementation manual (promote partnerships) II. Implement and monitor PSIF	
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¹⁶⁴ Under GPAR SCSD 2012-2016, there were 76 sub project awarded from GPAR *CADEM Fund (Public administration enhancement & modernization grants)*. This grant support only the central and local administration to build capacity, improve service delivery and address cross cutting issue eg. gender and environment