**GPAR assessment and Concept development assignment, Lao PDR**

**Terms of Reference**

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**ACRONYMS**

ADB Asian Development Bank

DDF District Development Fund

DP Development Partner

EU European Union

GoL The Government of Lao PDR

GPAR Governance in Public Administration Reform

GPAR SCSD Strengthening Capacity and Service Delivery of Local Administrations project

GPAR NGPS National GPAR Programme Secretariat Support Project

GSWG Governance Sector Working Group

Lao PDR Lao’s People Democratic Republic

LDC Least Developed Country

MDG Millennium Development Goals

MoHA Ministry of Home Affairs

MPI Ministry of Planning and Investment

NA National Assembly

NGO Non-Governmental Organization

NGPAR New Governance and Public Administration Reform

NSEDP National Socio-Economic Development Plan

RoK Republic of Korea

RTM Round Table Meeting

SDC Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

TOR Terms of Reference

UNCDF United Nations Capital Development Fund

UNDAF United Nations Development Assistance Framework

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

VDCAP Vientiane Declaration Country Action Plan

# Governance and Public Administration Reform

Public administration reform has been a priority activity of the Government of Lao PDR from the early 90’s. The GPAR Programme, established in 1997, has been implemented through projects at the national and provincial levels. The focal point for public administration reform is now the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA). Given the wide scope of governance reforms, related activities have been taken up in several ministries and offices of the Government, which include the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Planning and Investment. The GPAR Programme provides leadership and guidance for governance reforms and directly supports the high level Leading Committee on Governance, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister.

## Programme Profile

Strengthening the administrative machinery of the Government to execute the core functions of the state is a key to achieving the country’s socio-economic development goals including the MDGs. Under the draft Strategic Plan on Governance 2011-2020 the Government of Lao PDR identified a number of reforms which are reflected in the 7th NSEDP as key areas underpinning the capacity of the state to deliver basic public services. These policy actions focus on developing the state administrative regulatory framework, state machinery, civil service management, and central-local relations. The Government, through the GPAR Programme, and under the leadership of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA), has made steady and significant progress in developing the foundation for an effective, accountable and responsive public administration. . This is central to consolidating the impressive national development progress already achieved in many areas and ensuring that growth benefits all people in the country and does not harm the environment.

UNDP and UNCDF are the main partner of the Government in developing the GPAR Programme. The Programme draws on UNDP’s recognised core mandate in the areas of capacity development, democratic governance and policy development, which synergises with UNCDF’s specialized expertise in local development, improved access to social services, investment capital, and fiscal decentralization. Other key partners currently supporting the GPAR programme include, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Republic of Korea, Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, European Union, and ADB.

The GPAR programme is expanding to accommodate new reform initiatives and currently the overall UNDP support to the Governance Strategic Plan is delivered through 7 projects, as detailed in the Annex. UNDP also serves as the key agency in coordination and dialogue on governance issues through the Round Table process.

While within the National GPAR programme there are a number of projects, the overall purpose this assignment is to assess progress towards achieving expected outcomes, key benefits, achievements and possible gaps in the current GPAR Programme. The specific evaluation targets of this assignment are the two core GPAR projects; - the National GPAR Programme Secretariat Support Project (GPAR NGPS) and the Strengthening Capacity and Service Delivery of Local Administrations (GPAR SCSD).

The National GPAR Programme Secretariat Support Project enables the MOHA to coordinate and implement relevant component of the Strategic Plan on Governance (2011-2020). The overall objective of the project is to strengthen the capacity of public administration to deliver efficient, effective and accountable services to citizens through high level oversight and leadership, strategic management and support to all components of the national GPAR Programme in Lao PDR. The project helps to coordinate with development partners for policy dialogue through the Governance Sector Working Group, and assists MOHA in resource mobilization to support the NGPAR programme.

The Strengthening Capacity and Service Delivery of Local Administrations project is a Joint programme between UNDP and UNCDF, in partnership with MoHA. This project aims to strengthen the capacity in local administration leading to better delivery of services, which improve the lives of the poor, especially in rural areas of Lao PDR. The project aims to strengthen the capacity and service delivery of local administration through 6 inter-related outputs: (i) Policies and regulatory frameworks for effective local administration at provincial and district levels; (ii) Improved capacity of local administration to fulfil its service delivery mandates; (iii) Improved MDG focused service delivery provided through formula-based and equity focused block grants to districts; (iv) Improved Access to Citizen Services through One Door Service Centres; (v) The GPAR Capacity Development and Modernization Fund (CADEM) supports strategic Innovations in public administration reforms; and (vi) Citizen feedback and district mechanisms.

A key component of the SCSD project, and earlier related projects, is the District Development Fund (DDF), supported technically and financial through UNCDF’s partnership with UNDP in SCSD project. DDF provides formula derived, performance-based block grants for districts via the Ministry of Finance, coupled with hands-on capacity development and institutional and process improvements. The DDF is now being operating by 53 District Administrations nationwide (37% of country), and has invested over $5 million USD to date, to help provide hundreds of local social investments and service interventions, which have directly benefited some 800,000 people since inception in 2006.

With a view to enhancing its continued relevance and effectiveness, a forward-looking strategic review is now being undertaken as part of the GPAR assessment and SCSD evaluation. The objective of the consultancy is to undertake a forward-looking strategic review of the DDF mechanism, its implementation, and its broad-based impacts (including impacts on poverty, government policies, capacity development, local development, and governance and public administration reform); to identify areas for improvements and articulate a strategy or an approach to enhance the effectiveness of the DDF in supporting the implementation of local development and/or governance reform initiatives in the country. The approach of this review exercise is to build on strengths and successes to date and identify options and opportunities for increased alignment and effectiveness in the short and medium term, within the overall development framework in Lao PDR. In this context, the recent national pilot “Sam Sang” (loosely translated as 3 Constructions) is particularly relevant. Sam Sang aims to devolve greater authority and responsibility to sub-national levels, with the objective to improve local socio-economic conditions and improve local service delivery. It is expected that the mission Team will liaise with the Sam Sang secretariat and that the assignment will take into account any emerging results of the national evaluation of the Sam Sang pilot, which is anticipated during the latter part of 2014.

Further details on Sam Sang and other related initiatives are contained in the Annex.

# Evaluation framework and methodology:

## Rationale, purpose and objective

The current national Governance and Public Administration Reform programme (GPAR) began in 2012 and is scheduled to be completed by end 2015. It is desirable that informed discussions between the government, UN and development partners on governance reform in Laos and the role and contribution of present and potential new GPAR programmes can be facilitated within the near future, so that an agreed course of action can be discussed and developed before the expiration of the current GPAR programme (GPAR NGSP project and GPAR SCSD project) in December 2015. The primary audience for the results of this assignment is the contributing partners in the GPAR programme; government, UNDP, UNCDF and other development partners. The findings should also be of interest and value to wider stakeholders, including other development agencies, potential development partners and as part of the general discourse on development agenda, progress and direction in Lao PDR.

The overall purpose of the assignment is to help inform and guide stakeholder decision-making on the current achievements against planned outcomes and to develop a concept for further discussion and development for the potential continuation of the programme, under a new programme phase from 2016-2020.

The objectives of the evaluation are to assess the relevance effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the national GPAR programme, including the District Development Fund, in terms of achieving defined outcomes and results. The objectives include;

to assess the level of satisfaction of programme stakeholders and beneficiaries with the results;

to contribute to UNDP, UNCDF and partners’ learning from programme experience;

to help programme stakeholders assess the value and opportunity for broader replication of the programme;

to help programme stakeholders determine the need for follow-up on the intervention, and general direction for the future course;

to ensure accountability for results to the programme’s financial partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries.

Therefore, the Govt. of Lao PDR is now taking the assistance of UNDP, UNCDF, and development partners to undertake an assessment of the results and lessons from the national GPAR programme and to develop a concept paper for a potential new National Governance and Public Administration Reform Programme for the period 2016-2020.

## Approach and Methodology:

This assignment has three interrelated components / main Deliverables, which will be addressed simultaneously by the Team. These are listed below and detailed under Outputs/Deliverables section;

* **Assessment of progress towards expected outcomes in the current GPAR Programme, with evaluation of the two core GPAR projects; - the National GPAR Programme Secretariat Support Project (GPAR NGPS) and the Strengthening Capacity and Service Delivery of Local Administrations (GPAR SCSD) including the**
* **District Development Fund (DDF), and**
* **Develop Concept for GPAR 2016-2020**

The Team Leader will take the lead in developing a methodology for the assignment that reflects best practices and encourages the use of participatory and consultative approach. As the first output, the Team Leader will deliver an inception report and overall framework as required under the Outputs. It is expected that the general approach to the assessment /evaluations will be to set out the intervention logic of the UNDP/UNCDF component through a results chain of inputs – outputs – outcomes and likely impact, as well as the expected broader contribution of this component to the GPAR programme overall. More specific parts of the results chain may then be focused in upon (evaluation matrix) and agreed during the inception phase of this assignment.

## Gender and Rights-based approach:

As with all evaluations conducted by the UN, the evaluation must include an assessment of the extent to which the design, implementation and results of the project have incorporated a gender equality perspective and rights-based approach. For more guidance on this the consultants are requested to review UNEG’s Guidance in integrating these aspects during the inception phase. The methodology used, data collection and analysis methods should be rights and gender sensitive to the greatest extent possible, with evaluation data and findings disaggregated by sex, ethnicity, age etc.

## Mission Team and management arrangements

The mission team will be composed of;

**One International Team Leader (TL)– specialised in International development, Governance, Public Administration Reform, Service Delivery and Local Governance, with evaluation/RBM profile**

35 working days in total – 29 days in Lao PDR and 6 working days home based

**One International Team Member (TM) - specialised in Evaluation of programme in the area of International development, Governance, Public Administration Reform and Service Delivery**

35 working days in total – 29 days in Lao PDR and 6 working days home based

**One Lao National Team Member (NTM)– specialised in Public Administration and Local Governance in Lao PDR**

35 working days with the international mission team in Lao PDR & Report translation

**One Regional Team member – specialised in Gender and Ethnicity mainstreaming in Lao PDR and/or in the South-East Asia region.**

35 working days in total - 29 days in Lao PDR and 6 working days home based *(this post is funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Switzerland’s international cooperation agency within the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of the Swiss Government.* *Interested candidates for this position shall send your proposed daily fees, CVs and references to SDC office, Lao PDR to: vientiane@eda.admin.ch*

The Mission Team will be responsible for delivering the required outputs to meet the objective of the assignment, and will work under the overall guidance and supervision of the National GPAR Programme Manager and direction and supervision of UNDP, together with inputs from UNCDF on DDF and related matters. The GPAR Secretariat will facilitate the entire exercise, including providing technical inputs and supports as necessary. In the interests of closer everyday guidance to the selected assignment team, a Mission Task Force will be established, which will include the UNDP Assistant Resident Representative and Head of Governance Unit, the UNDP Chief Technical Advisor to GPAR programme, the UNCDF Technical Advisor to SCSD, member from the Ministry of Home Affairs and member development partners and others to be determined.

The overall responsibility for the implementation of the assignment (all components) rests the International Team Leader, who will be supported by one International Team Member and one National Team Member. The Team Leader will be responsible for delivering the final version of the required reports, the GPAR Assessment, including the DDF Review, and the GPAR Concept paper, in a timely manner.

## Indicative Timetable

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Product** | **Responsible Party** | **Estimated Time Frame** | **Place** |
| Work plan with specific dates | Assessment Team |  | Home based |
| Mission: Vientiane Lao PDR and provinces / districts | Assessment Team | Mid-October 2014 | Lao PDR |
| Inception Report | Assessment Team |  | Lao PDR |
| Consultations with relevant stakeholders, etc. | Assessment Team |  | Lao PDR |
| Facilitate an internal workshop or focus group discussion about the lessons learned & future direction.  Lead the national debriefing for programme stakeholders / presentation of the initial findings to gather feedback from stakeholders | Assessment Team |  | Lao PDR |
| Draft Report of the GPAR Assessment + Draft Concept Note | Assessment Team |  | Home based |
| Review of Draft Report of the Mid-Term Assessment + Draft Concept Note refinement | MOHA, and UNDP |  | Concurrent action |
| Final Report, including the concept note & executive summary | Assessment Team |  | Home based |
| Dissemination of final version of the Mid-Term Assessment Report to stakeholders | MOHA, and UNDP |  | UNDP |

## Scope of Work:

The Mission team will hold meetings and discussions with concerned Government of Lao PDR leadership, ministries and supporting staff, Programme beneficiaries, stakeholders and counterparts, in the execution of the mission.

1. Oversee and conduct the GPAR assessment and projects evaluation, applying the general evaluation criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, likely impact, and including
   * compare the achievements at the output and outcome level and gaps of intended results with actual delivery
   * identify lessons learned and best practices (that can be considered or explored in the context of the Concept note on the possible future of a GPAR programme beyond 2015)
   * assess the stakeholders’ level of satisfaction with the Programme’s results
   * assess the sustainability of implemented activities and interventions in the medium and longer term
   * Assess whether adopting a different approach and/or using alternative delivery mechanisms could be more sustainable and/or cost effective, and recommendations in this regard
   * Assess if the organizational structure, managerial support and coordination mechanisms effectively support the delivery of the Programme, and recommendations in this regard
   * Assess if the programme has effective monitoring mechanisms in place to measure progress towards results, and any recommendations.
   * Assess how well does the Programme coordinate and harmonize its work with other partners (including government actors and development actors), and recommendations in this regard.
   * Assess the likelihood that the benefits from the Programme will be maintained for a reasonably long period of time after the end of the current Programme, and recommendations in this regard
   * Incorporate the findings from the strategic review of the District Development Fund (DDF) into the GPAR Assessment and Concept note.
   * How relevant is the GPAR programme to the National Development priorities and the achievement of the MDGs, and recommendations in this regard.
   * Identify the lessons learned from the shift from the project-based approach to a programme-based approach under NGPAR 2011-2015, and recommendations in this regard.
2. Assuming the evaluators’ recommendation is to continue the programme, the team will then be asked in a Phase II of the exercise to develop a draft concept paper for GPAR 2016 – 2020. Using the lessons emerging from the assessment, to devise a Concept note which outlines the required approach/strategy, with concrete key recommendations (structured around possible outcomes / outputs / activities / timeline / broad budgetary implications), for a possible new phase of the current GPAR programme beyond 2015
3. Present the initial findings of the Assessment and proposed future direction (Concept note) to key stakeholders
4. Submit a first draft of the assessment Report and the Concept note for review, which reflects the feedback given by stakeholders
5. Revise on the basis of comments received, and submit the Final draft Assessment Report and simultaneously revise the final draft Concept Note to accurately reflect comments and inputs received

It is expected that the mission Team will liaise with the Sam Sang secretariat and that the assignment will take into account any emerging results of the national evaluation of the Sam Sang pilot, which is anticipated during the latter part of 2014

In conducting the Assessment and Concept note development, the mission should consider the country’s context and the cultural and socio-political dynamics including thematic areas like poverty reduction, corruption, climate change, gender equality and ethnic diversity and decentralization.

## Product / Deliverables

The team will be responsible for submitting the following **Outputs/Deliverables**:

1. **An inception report** which contains the description of the assessment methodology/methodological approach, data analysis methods, key informants/agencies, issues to be studied, work plan. The inception report will outline the proposed division of labour within the team, which will also reflect the specific Terms of Reference of each member. Note that the methodological approach will be devised by the team as a stand-alone document which will set out the approach and design for the assessment in line with the UNEG/G (2010)1[[1]](#footnote-1).
2. **A draft Assessment report -** assess progress towards achieving expected outcomes, key benefits, achievements and possible gaps in the current Programme. Within the National GPAR programme there are a number of projects. The specifics targets of this assignment are the Strengthening Capacity and Service Delivery of Local Administrations (GPAR SCSD) and the National GPAR Programme Secretariat Support Project (GPAR NGPS). The Mission team is expected to analyse all relevant information sources, such as annual reports, programme documents, internal review reports, programme files, strategic country development documents and any other documents that may provide evidence on which to form opinions. The team is also expected to use face to face interviews as a means to collect relevant data for their assessment.
3. **A draft Review of District Development Fund (DDF)** - the objective of the consultancy is to undertake a forward-looking strategic review of the DDF mechanism, its implementation, and its broad-based impacts (including impacts on poverty, government policies, capacity development, local development, and governance and public administration reform); to identify areas for improvements and articulate a strategy or an approach to enhance the effectiveness of the DDF in supporting the implementation of local development and/or governance reform initiatives in the country. The approach of this review exercise is to build on strengths and successes to date and identify options and opportunities for increased alignment and effectiveness in the short and medium term, within the overall development framework in Lao PDR.

The DDF Review is an integral part of the GPAR assessment, but for greater clarity on this important component, it is expected that the strategic review will receive special attention and that the resultant report may be easily read as a section of the overall assessment and as a stand-alone document.

1. **A draft Concept for potential GPAR 2016-2020** - Assuming the evaluators’ recommendation is to continue the programme, the team will then be asked in a Phase II of the exercise to develop a draft concept paper for GPAR – 2016 – 2020. Using the information gathered during the assessment exercise and taking into account stakeholder consultations, concurrently review and assess the information specifically around lessons learned to identify the key issues. This should articulate through a broad mapping on how GPAR relates to and could contribute to the overall national governance strategy and other major activities. Propose thematic and/or programmatic interventions, an appropriate strategy and approach (with concrete key recommendations related to outcomes / outputs / activities / timeline / budgetary implications) for the formulation of a new phase of the current programme beyond 2015 and make concrete recommendations with regards to GPAR programme beyond 2015. The Concept, which will include a stakeholder analysis, should also include a Theory of Change that illustrates how the identified activities will contribute to achieve the intended outputs and outcomes, including the keys influences and assumptions shall be included.  This will allow the program stakeholders to have a commonly understood vision of the long terms goals, and how they will be reached. Key gender and ethnicity elements will be included in the new programme concept note.
2. **Power point presentation** of preliminary findings to the key stakeholders for dissemination purposes.

Based on comments received on the drafts, the Mission Team Leader will finalize the deliverables, with inputs from other assessment team members, as required, and submit to UNDP as Managing Agent of the Programme by the agreed date.

**The Mission team should pay particular attention to the following criteria:**

1. *Relevance*: Assess the relevance to national policies/UNDAF and unity of the process in planning and design of activities.
2. *Efficiency:* Assess the efficiency of the Programme implementation, the quality of the results achieved and the time/political constraints.
3. *Effectiveness:* Conduct an assessment the cost effectiveness and to which extend the Programme outputs have been effectively achieved.
4. *Impact:* Assess the achievement in the framework of the potential overall impact of the Programme and its contribution to furtherance of governance reform and greater people’s participation in local development and nation‐building.
5. *Sustainability:* Assess the sustainability of results with specific focus on national capacity and ownership over the process.

## Offer should include:

**Financial Offer**

Provide a lump-sum cost in USD for their consultancy including:

* Fees per working day
* International travel costs (if applicable) and local per diem costs (will be borne by the consultant(s))
* Visa fee (visa upon arrival)

Domestic travel in Lao PDR should not be included in the lump sum. Travel costs in Lao PDR will be arranged & met by GPAR.

**Technical Offer**

1. Provide a CV and filled in P11 form
2. The International Team leader, the International Team Member and National Team Member will provide: 2 sample reports recently written by them on public administration reforms in English, by way of reference. ( In accordance with normal UNDP practice additional checks with nominated Referees will also be made for the preferred candidates.)

## Guarantee of availability

Following agreement on timing, the consultants may be required to provide a signed and dated declaration guaranteeing his / her availability mentioning:

*“I declare that I am able and willing to work:*

1. *For the period(s) foreseen in the terms of reference attached to the request for the position for which I have applied*
2. *Within the execution period of the specific contract which runs from XX to YY*
3. *Furthermore, should this offer be accepted, I am fully aware that if I am not available at the expected start date of my services for reasons other than ill-health or force majeure, I may be subject to exclusion from other tender procedures and contracts funded by UNDP.”*
4. ANNEX - Country Context

## Socio-economic basics

The Lao People’s Democratic Republic was established in 1975, and has a multi-ethnic population of around 6.6 million (2012). The country is one of the 13 least developed in the Asia Pacific region, with GDP (current US$) $9.418 billion (2012) and GNI per capita of $1,270. It is the government’s goal to graduate from LDC status by 2020.

Very good progress has been made with poverty reduction: the poverty ratio has declined from 33.5% in 2002-03 to 20.5% in 2012-13 against a 7th NSEDP (2010-2015) target of less than 19%. Policies for rural development and associated development of the non-resource sector are not yet showing clear results and inequalities are emerging – urban and rural, inter-regional and intra-regional. Some geographic regions continue to lag behind (GDP per capita in 2011/2012 in the northern region and in the south are both lagging significantly behind the central region). These regional inequalities also mask inequality between the one part of a region and another, with the likelihood of localised pockets of poverty.

In Lao PDR, the significant gains made in economic growth and social sectors over the recent years have paved the way for continual improvement in human development in the country. Between 1985 and 2012, substantial progress has been made in the main HDI indicators: life expectancy increased by 19 years, mean years of schooling increased by 2.5 years, expected years of schooling increased by 3.7 years and Gross National Income (GNI) per capita increased by about 178 percent. Consequently, Lao PDR has seen steady improvement in its HDI value over time, making Lao PDR one of the HDI growth leaders in the medium human development category, where it currently sits. Overall, Lao PDR’s HDI of 0.543 in the 2012 Human Development Report positions the country at 138 out of 187 countries and territories in the World. However, when discounted for inequality, the HDI value for Lao PDR falls to 0.409, a loss of about 25 percent.

Lao PDR, a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the ASEAN Economic Community, is increasing its integration into the regional and global economy.  On February 2, 2013, Lao PDR officially became a full member of the World Trade Organization, the culmination of a 15-year process of reforms and negotiations.

## Vientiane Declaration

The Vientiane Declaration on Aid Effectiveness was signed by the Government of Lao PDR and development partners at the Round Table Meeting in November 2006. Twenty five countries are now signatories to the Declaration.

UNDP has a partnership with the Department for International Cooperation of the Ministry of Planning to further support the implementation of the Vientiane Declaration and Country Action Plan (VDCAP).

The current Governance and Public Administration Reform Programme supports the oversight in the Governance Sector through the support to the Governance Sector Working Group (GSWG), its Secretariat and its two Sub-Sector working groups:

* Legal and Institutional Oversight (including the legal sector and people’s participation)
* Public Service Improvement

The GSWG brings together representatives from government and donor agencies and NGOs. Under the common framework of the Round Table Process, the GSWG and its sub-sector working groups are forums to discuss and build consensus about development priorities, and improve sectorial aid coordination and effectiveness as set out in the Vientiane Declaration Country Action Plan. In this context, the GSWG provides substantial feedback in the process of the elaboration of governance and public administration issues and to the Five Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan process and implementation.

## National Socio-Economic Development Plan

Overall performance targets of the 7th NSEDP are being achieved in many respects: economic growth has been sustained; economic and trade continue to gradually transform into a more open; along with public investment, private investment has greatly contributed in economic development; MDG achievement has been prioritized; basic infrastructure has been developed and expanded; and people’s living condition has been gradually improved. However there are areas where targets have not been achieved and where the downside of resource-led growth could be emerging.

Despite international economic constraints, GDP grew at an annual average rate of 8.2% for the period 2011-13. It is estimated that growth over the first 3 years of the 7th NSEDP (201-2015) averaged 13.7% in the industrial sector, 8.60% in the services sector and 2.9% in the agriculture and forestry sector. Total investment has reached (85,147 billion Kip) over 67% of the 7th NSEDP target, annual budget revenue has reached (41,832 billion Kip) 19.6% of GDP and annual budget expenditure has reached (47,302 billion Kip) 22.2% of GDP and resulting in a budget deficit of about 2.5%. GDP per capita has exceeded plan targets in two of the three financial years covered by the plan to date and is expected to exceed the planned 7th NSEDP target of USD 1, 700 per capita.

It is possible, however, that the impetus given to the national economy by the resources sector could be linked to increasing disparities and the target of inclusiveness remains a challenge, with signs that income inequalities are widening (in contrast to most other ASEAN countries). Some 77% of rural households are engaged in agriculture or fisheries and agricultural development requires continues attention. Overdependence on the resources sector at this stage of development carries risks to the whole economy, particularly if it inhibits the competitiveness of the non-resource sector through exchange appreciation and/or increased domestic wages and non-tradable goods. Increases in Public Services wages are attributed as one of the causes of recent fiscal pressures especially on the Current Account side.

The Lao government is currently in the process of preparing a Concept Note to guide the preparation of the 8th NSEDP (2016-2020) and it is anticipated that there will be a welcome shift to outcomes rather than outputs in the format of new 8th NSEDP, including annual and medium term national NSEDPs. This reorientation towards outcomes could bring major benefits to NSEDP effectiveness and to the precision, specification and measurability of development objectives.

Governance and public administration reform is recognised as a fundamental condition to help achieve the national goals, NSEDP and the moves towards a more equitable and cohesive society governed by the Rule of Law.

## MDG Framework

The Lao PDR is ac­tively implementing its MDG commitments and repor­ting obligations with the first and second MDG Progress Reports produced in, respectively, 2004 and 2008. The MDGs have formed a focus of the 5th, 6th and 7th NSEDPs. In 2010, the Government developed the 2010 Framework for accelerating progress towards the MDGs, identifying priority areas for action. The MDG Framework builds on the initiatives which are implemented or which have been planned in Lao PDR. One of its intentions is to propose a way forward as a guide to and basis for actions rather than an all-encompassing blueprint for work.

The 2013 MDG Progress Report was designed to feed into discussions on the post-2015 framework at the UN General Assembly in September 2013 and to l also provide information for assessing Lao PDR’s progress towards the goal of gra­duation from LDC status by 2020. Overall, the objective is to trigger action for accelerating progress to­wards the MDGs within the time remaining before the 2015 deadline, with a fourth MDG progress report envisaged in 2016 to assess the extent of achievement.

In the Seventh National Social and Economic Development Plan (NSEDP) for 2011-2015, the government laid out its poverty reduction strategy to meet the MDGs by 2015, aiming to foster economic growth with equity, develop and modernize the country’s social and economic infrastructure and enhance human resource development.

Overall, Lao PDR made good progress on many of the Millennium Development Goals but is off track in some areas. These include malnutrition, which remains a major challenge (44% of under-five children are stunted), measles immunization, maternal mortality rate, skilled birth attendance, and gender equality. The country has seen a steady reduc­tion in the poverty gap and in poverty severity and hence is well on track to achieving poverty target or, indeed, may have already achieved them. Poverty rates have de­clined across nearly all population groups, but the poverty rate in rural areas is still almost twice that of the urban areas, with mountai­nous areas and upland villages showing the highest inci­dence of poverty.

As the pursuit of the MDG targets and implementation of the 7th NSEDP continues, it is increasingly accepted that poverty is multi-dimensional and goes beyond income poverty to encompass deprivations in public services such as a lack of education, poor health, poor environmental quality, and exclusion from mainstream society.

## Strategic Plan on Governance

The draft Strategic Plan on Governance (2011-20) describes the government’s broad commitment to prioritize governance reforms through four thematic areas:

* Public Service Improvement
* People’s Participation
* The Rule of Law
* Sound Financial Management

Apart for its support to the oversight of the Governance Sector, GPAR activities relate primarily to two pillars of the: Public Service Improvement (PSI) and People’s Participation (PP).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| The PSI pillar spells out four areas of intervention: | The PP Pillar is articulated around: |
| * Regulatory Framework on State Administration * State Organizational Machinery * Civil Service Management * Central-Local Relation | * Strengthening People’s Representation * Strengthening Social Participation * Promotion of transparency and Openness * Access to Public Services |

Particular emphasis has been given in the draft Strategic Plan on Governance (2011-20) on identified priorities on Governance in setting the direction for governance reform in Lao PDR, namely human resource management, capacity building, dividing management responsibilities across central and local levels and mechanisms for management of devolved tasks by province and district administrations.

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| **The overall UNDP support to the Governance Strategic Plan is delivered through the following projects ( 1-3 below are managed and report under the existing NGPAR programme):**   1. **National GPAR Programme Secretariat Support Project (GPAR-NGPS)**   The National GPAR Programme Secretariat Support Project enables the MOHA to coordinate and implement relevant component of the Strategic Plan on Governance (2011-2020)**.** The overall objective of the project is to strengthen the capacity of public administration to deliver efficient, effective and accountable services to citizens through high level oversight and leadership, strategic management and support to all components of the national GPAR Programme in Lao PDR. The project helps to coordinate with development partners for policy dialogue through the Governance Sector Working Group, and assists MOHA in resource mobilization to support the NGPAR programme. This project is being implemented in alignment with other projects of the National GPAR Programme.   1. **NGPAR Strengthening Capacity and Service Delivery of Local Administrations( GPAR-SCSD) Project**   In partnership with MoHA and UNCDF, this project aims to strengthen the capacity in local administration leading to better delivery of services, which improve the lives of the poor, especially in rural areas of Lao PDR. The project aims to strengthen the capacity and service delivery of local administration through 6 inter-related outputs: (i) Policies and regulatory frameworks for effective local administration at provincial and district levels; (ii) Improved capacity of local administration to fulfil its service delivery mandates; (iii) Improved MDG focused service delivery provided through formula-based and equity focused block grants to districts; (iv) Improved Access to Citizen Services through One Door Service Centres; (v) The GPAR Capacity Development and Modernization Fund (CADEM) supports strategic Innovations in public administration reforms; and (vi) Citizen feedback and district mechanisms.   1. **Civil Society Support Programme**   In partnership with the Ministry of Home Affairs, the programme aims to support the development of an enabling environment for emerging and functioning local and international civil society organisations. It enhances the knowledge of government officials and legislators in regard to the role of not-for profit associations (NPAs), foundations and international NGOs to work alongside government towards the MDGs, especially towards gender equality and women empowerment.The purpose is to deepen government - civil society partnership in the line of Accra Agenda for Action, in order to achieve the MDGs.   1. **Support Project to Implementation of Legal Sector Master Plan**   This project aims to strengthen the rule of law in Lao PDR, by supporting the *"Master Plan for Law Development to 2020,”* officially adopted by the government of Lao PDR on 11 September 2009, which lays out a comprehensive sectorial reform agenda that enables the country to become a state fully governed by the rule of law. The Support Project will deliver 6 key outputs: (i) Enhanced capacity, procedures, and standards for legislative development and implementation in Lao PDR; (ii) Institutional capacity, structure, and arrangements further improved at legal and judicial institutions for more effective and responsive judicial process; (iii) More systematic development of legal and judicial professionals enabled through the establishment of a unified judicial training institute; (iv) Increased public understanding of legal rights and information, and increased participation in the legal system towards full realization of their rights; (v) Lao PDR’s further integration into regional and international communities enabled through adoption, implementation, enforcement, monitoring, and reporting of international legal instruments; and (vi) Enhanced capacity of the Secretariat for more effective coordination in the legal sector and implementation of the LSMP.   1. **Community Participation and Communication Support Project**   In partnership with the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism, and with support From Oxfam, this project aims to strengthen the wider civil society in Lao PDR through supporting community organizations. Access to information that is relevant to the community is vital to help people take informed decisions about their lives. Local information about markets, services, job opportunities and development issues, such as reproductive health, is very often lacking. The programme contributes to this goal by supporting six community radios across Lao PDR.   1. **Strengthening Legal and Institutional Frameworks for Effective Public Administration–GPAR SLIFEPA**   The overall objective of the Project is to strengthen the legal and institutional frameworks for effective public administration (national and local) and improved service delivery. This project enables the Ministry of Home Affairs in setting in place more effective public administration across the respective tiers of government whilst ensuring the rights of individuals vis a vis the administrative system of Lao PDR. The desired results by the end of this project is that new and/or revised legal and institutional provisions will be in place, in line with contemporary regional (ASEAN) and international principles and practices in administrative law, providing the legal basis for more efficient and effective public administration and service delivery in Lao PDR.   1. **National Assembly Strategic Support Project**   The project, which is being implemented under the framework of the 2012-2015 Country Programme Document, is designed to support the country in the process of graduating from the ranks of the least developed countries by 2020 and to strengthen the role of the National Assembly (NA) within the framework of its Strategic Directives to meet such objectives. Assistance will strengthen the NA as an accountable, inclusive and responsive institution. Support will enhance trust in State-society relations, and promote inclusive political processes with a focus on women, youth, and disadvantaged groups. |

# ANNEX-Sam Sang & other initiatives

In October 2012, the Government launched the pilot implementation of “3 Builds” initiative or *Sam Sang* (PM Order 16/2012) with the objective to improve delivery of public services. Covering all provinces; 51 pilot districts; 109 villages, and 15 ministries of the Government, Sam Sang involves the further transfer of responsibilities, functions and resources from central ministries to the provinces and onwards to the districts. On successful completion of the pilot, it is expected to inform the development of an overarching regulatory framework on delegation of powers to the various levels of sub-national administration. It will contribute to improved transparency and accountability in the delivery of services by clarifying the roles and responsibilities at each level of administration.

Complementing the on-going *Sam Sang* pilot, the Government has been systematically developing the capacity of district administrations to deliver local public services under the District Development Fund (DDF) since 2006. The DDF provides both capacity development and direct budget support (capital and operational expenditure block grants) to Districts. DDF now covers 53 districts in 7 provinces that have directly benefited over 400,000 people under the current SCSD project (800,000 direct beneficiaries since inception in 2006). Recently, a performance based grant system has been introduced that will measure comparative district performance across 21 key institutional performance indicators, in planning, financial management and implementation of service delivery. The review of the DDF should also explore the relationship with Sam Sang and highlight options and opportunities for increased alignment and effectiveness.

Work is also underway to develop a district service delivery monitoring system for key services areas in primary health, primary education, improved water and access, and is being linked to a service users’ feedback mechanism. These initiatives are expected to contribute to better service delivery by providing evidence-based insights to improve the planning and implementation of local services, enhance community participation and engagement, and identify areas for improving the capacity of district administrations.

Many challenges remain. The full scale implementation of *Sam Sang* will require the wide scale development of capacity at the sub-national level as a result of the increased devolution of responsibilities and functions to the provinces and to districts. Increased budgetary resources to sub-national administration is also needed to enable local authorities effectively perform additional functions and responsibilities resulting from expanded scope and scale of service delivery and bring development closer to communities. Financing the implementation of *Sam Sang* will be an important challenge given the fiscal constraints of the Government. Adjustments in the PFM system will be required achieving the objectives of *Sam Sang*.

# ANNEX – International Team Leader

**Specialised in International development, Governance, Public Administration Reform, Service Delivery and Local Governance, with evaluation/RBM profile**

**Responsibilities**

* Leading the mission team in planning, execution and reporting
* Supervise the work of the other Mission Team member(s) and distribute roles and responsibilities amongst the team; supervise the Regional Gender and Ethnicity Specialist to make sure that key gender elements were assessed, analysed and reflected in the overall assessment report.
* Guide and oversee the strategic review of the District Development Fund (DDF) and incorporate the outcomes into the GPAR Assessment and Concept note.
* Provide a global perspective and insights about governance, public administration reform;
* Documentation review and framing approach and questions for the assessment and concept development;
* Ensure use of best practice assessment and Concept design methodologies in conducting the mission;
* Hold consultations and interviews with relevant stakeholders and strategic partners: the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Planning and Investment and a selection of other services ministries (e.g. Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Public Works and Transport, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment), a selection of Line offices in a number of provinces and districts, UNDP, UNCDF, EU, ADB, WB, SDC, RoK, GD of Luxembourg, and other development partners, (Lao) civil society organizations, mass organizations, international NGOs;
* Data collection and data analysis;
* Identify possible capacity development/enhancement issues;
* Identify and analyse the GPAR results, achievements and constraints;
* Facilitate an internal workshop or focus group discussion about the lessons learned and on the future concept development
* Lead the national debriefing for programme stakeholders in Lao PDR;
* Lead the drafting and finalization/quality control of the assessment report and concept development report.

**Technical Qualifications**

* Master’s Degree in Economics, International Relations, Development Studies, Public Administration or related field
* 15 years of experience in Public Administration Reform (with a focus on Service Delivery and Local Governance and experience in working with sub-national public expenditure management and intergovernmental fiscal framework, or public financial management in an international development setting)
* Knowledge of UNDP mandates and programmes, especially in the area of public administration reform and deconcentrated governance, and with a RBM (Results Based management) / evaluation profile
* Substantive experience with the formulation of multi-donor supported programmes and the management, monitoring and assessment of multi-donor supported programmes with multiple levels of government (national, local e.g. province, district)
* Ability to assess the effectiveness and sustainability of programme structure and implementation modalities
* Thorough understanding of key elements of results-based programme management;
* Good experience in capacity building and institutional strengthening. (Experience at the level of local government or local administrations would be desirable)
* Good experience in management development and process facilitation
* Strong capacity for data collection and analysis, as well as report writing;
* Good experience in training and workshop facilitation.
* Sound knowledge and understanding of gender sensitivity and social inclusion;
* Experience in South East Asia – experience in Lao PDR is considered as an asset
* Fluency in both written and spoken English. Strong oral and written communication skills - use of simple and clear language
* Proven success in working collaboratively with a number of different stakeholders.
* **Competencies**
* Strong leadership, communication and interpersonal skills;
* Excellent organizational skills;
* Demonstrated ability to work in a team (strong task management and team leading competencies);
* Ability to work under pressure and in a politically sensitive environment;
* Demonstrated cultural sensitiveness and sound judgment.

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| **Signatures- Job Description Certification** |
| **Incumbent** *(if applicable)*  Name:  Signature: Date: |
| Supervisor: Sudha Gooty, UNDP Assistant Resident Representative and Head of Governance Unit, Lao PDR  Signature: Date |
| Chief Division/Section: Kaarina Immonen, UNDP Resident Representative, Lao PDR  Signature: Date: |

# Annex – International Team Member

**Specialised in Evaluation of programme in the area of International development, Governance, Public Administration Reform and Service Delivery.**

**Responsibilities**

* Provide an evaluation discipline and perspective with global insights about governance, public administration reform;
* Methodically document, review and frame approach and questions for the assessment and concept development;
* Ensure use of best practice evaluation, assessment and Concept design methodologies in conducting the mission, ensuring approach, findings and recommendations are firmly grounded;
* Support the mission team with the review of the DDF, including the positioning, approach and practices adopted in the context of government reforms for sub-national administration and vis-à-vis government policy and other directly relevant initiatives.
* Support with the review of the purpose and impacts of DDF on local poverty reduction, government policies, capacity development, local development, and governance and public administration reform in Lao PDR.
* Assist with Identifying key strengths, weaknesses and opportunities relating to DDF;
* In coordination with the Team Leader, assist in holding consultations and interviews with relevant stakeholders and strategic partners: the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Planning and Investment and a selection of other services ministries (e.g. Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Public Works and Transport, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment), a selection of Line offices in a number of provinces and districts, UNDP, UNCDF, EU, ADB, WB, SDC, RoK, GD of Luxembourg, and other development partners, (Lao) civil society organizations, mass organizations, international NGOs;
* Advise and assist with data collection and data analysis;
* In coordination with the Team Leader, identify possible capacity development/enhancement issues;
* Methodically identify and analyse the GPAR results, achievements and constraints;
* Assist to facilitate an internal workshop or focus group discussion about the lessons learned and on the future concept development
* Contribute and assist with the national debriefing for programme stakeholders in Lao PDR;
* Ensure quality control in the drafting and finalization of the assessment report and concept development report.

**Technical Qualifications**

* Master’s Degree in Economics, International Relations, Development Studies, Public Administration or related field
* 10 years of experience in evaluation, with a focus in governance, public administration reform and Service Delivery and/or Local Governance)
* Substantive experience with the evaluation of multi-donor supported programmes with multiple levels of government (national, local e.g. province, district)
* Thorough understanding of key elements of results-based programme management;
* Strong capacity for data collection and analysis, as well as report writing;
* Ability to assess the effectiveness and sustainability of programme structure and implementation modalities
* Knowledge of UNDP mandates and programmes, especially in the area of public administration reform and deconcentrated governance.
* In-depth knowledge and experience in working with sub-national public expenditure management and intergovernmental fiscal framework, or public financial management in an international development setting is desirable.
* Good experience in capacity building and institutional strengthening. (Experience at the level of local government or local administrations would be desirable)
* Sound knowledge and understanding of gender sensitivity and social inclusion;
* Experience in South East Asia – experience in Lao PDR is considered as an asset
* Fluency in both written and spoken English. Strong oral and written communication skills - use of simple and clear language
* Proven success in working collaboratively with a number of different stakeholders.

**Competencies**

* Strong leadership, communication and interpersonal skills;
* Methodical with excellent organizational skills;
* Demonstrated ability to work in a team (strong task management and team competencies);
* Ability to work under pressure and in a politically sensitive environment;
* Demonstrated cultural sensitiveness and sound judgment.

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| **Signatures- Job Description Certification** |
| **Incumbent** *(if applicable)*  Name:  Signature: Date: |
| Supervisor: Sudha Gooty, UNDP Assistant Resident Representative and Head of Governance Unit, Lao PDR  Signature: Date |
| Chief Division/Section: Kaarina Immonen, UNDP Resident Representative, Lao PDR  Signature: Date: |

# Annex - National Team Member

* **specialised in Public Administration and Local Governance in Lao PDR**

**Responsibilities:**

* The national consultant will support the international consultants with the implementation of the overall assignment and will work under the guidance and direction of the International Team Leader. In addition to contributing to the substance of the assignment objectives, s/he will provide general interpreter/translator services to the mission, including during meetings, interviews and presentations.
* Ensure that country-specific conditions and learning approaches are well understood and considered in the work conducted by the mission;
* Provide country context perspectives about socio-political economy in Lao PDR;
* Assist with the focused group discussions at all levels;
* Attend the briefing and debriefings with partners and government agencies;
* Be responsible for report writing covering his /her areas of competence.
* Provide overall facilitation and assistance to the team leader in terms of meetings and interviews with key stakeholders;
* Translate the inception report with a list of preliminary findings to gather feedback from stakeholders for the National debriefing for programme stakeholders in Vientiane
* Translate the executive summary of the draft report of the mid-term assessment and draft concept note
* Full time availability for the in-country Mission duration (35 working days)

**Competency and Technical Qualifications required:**

* Master level qualification in Public Administration, Finance/MBA, Local Development, Economics or Management/Organisational Science, or very strong directly relevant experience in lieu.
* At least 5 year’s work experience in the application of participatory assessment techniques and methodologies, or conducting local development assessment at the programme, project, institution and or sub-national levels.
* In-depth knowledge and experience in working with Government and Development Partners at the country level on either aid effectiveness, local development, sub-national public expenditure management and intergovernmental fiscal framework, or public financial management
* Substantive knowledge of governance issues together with work experience and knowledge of the overall political, policy environment, governance challenges and capacity development context of the Lao PDR
* Sound knowledge and understanding of gender sensitivity and social inclusion
* Fluency in Lao and English, in speaking and writing, with at least 2 years of interpretation experience;
* Strong ability for data collection and analysis, as well as report writing;
* Strong interpersonal and communication skills;
* Full time availability for the in-country Mission duration (35 working days)

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| **Signatures- Job Description Certification** |
| **Incumbent** *(if applicable)*  Name:  Signature: Date: |
| Supervisor: Sudha Gooty, UNDP Assistant Resident Representative and Head of Governance Unit, Lao PDR  Signature: Date |
| Chief Division/Section: Kaarina Immonen, UNDP Resident Representative, Lao PDR  Signature: Date: |

**8 Annex - Regional Gender and Ethnicity Specialist[[2]](#endnote-1)**

**Responsibilities:**

* Assist the lead consultant in all the tasks assigned.
* Coordinate with all members to ensure that gender and ethnicity issues will be assessed in all components.
* Collect and analysis of all documentation from a gender and ethnicity perspective.
* The facilitation of focus group discussions and individual interviews.
* Conduct and report on the interview with key informants.
* Assess and analysis of gender results in each project components.
* Preliminary briefing about the initial findings in the field and presentation on the main findings to the Program Management team.
* Provide gender and ethnicity inputs to the overall assessment report.
* Assisting in the drafting of and feedback on the gender and ethnicity issues in new program concept note.
* Provide 1000 word text for the SDC Mekong Region blog-post

**Competency and Technical Qualifications required:**

* Post graduate degree in development studies, social studies or related fields, preferably including gender and ethnicity diversity studies, with demonstrated professional practice in gender and ethnicity analysis during the last five years.
* Must have profound knowledge in gender and ethnicity analysis of development projects/programmes.
* Must be experienced in developing and implementing gender and ethnicity sensitive evaluation methodologies.
* Good knowledge and experience in survey design, implementation of surveys and statistical data analysis is required.
* Experience in the use of participatory appraisal techniques in data collection.
* Excellent analytical and research skills.
* Experience working with gender and ethnicity equity interventions and programming;
* Knowledge of government processes, national strategies, national plans for gender and international frameworks such as CEDAW, Beijing Platform for Action, MDGs and others.
* Experience with programmes with multiple levels of government (national, local e.g. province, district)
* Experience in South East Asia – experience in Lao PDR is considered as an asset
* Fluency in both written and spoken English. Strong oral and written communication skills – use of simple and clear language.

Interested candidates for the Regional Gender and Ethnicity Specialist post, please send your proposed daily fees, CVs and references to the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Swiss Cooperation Office for the Mekong Region, Lao PDR to: [vientiane@eda.admin.ch](mailto:vientiane@eda.admin.ch) with the subject **“Gender and Ethnicity Specialist”.**

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for interview. SDC does not return application files.

1. United Nations Assessment Group Quality Checklist for Assessment Terms of Reference & Inception Reports [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *(this post is funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), Switzerland’s international cooperation agency within the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of the Swiss Government.)* [↑](#endnote-ref-1)