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**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR PREPARATION OF THE SELNA JOINT PROGRAMME FINAL EVALUATION & AN ASSESSMENT OF THE NEED FOR FURTHER SUPPORT TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF LAO PDR 2012**

**Project ID and Title: 00069660**

**Duty Station: Vientiane, Lao PDR**

1. **Background:**

The Constitution of Lao PDR, adopted in 1991 and amended in 2003, assigns the National Assembly as the highest organ of the State, vested with representative, legislative and oversight functions. As such, the National Assembly has a pivotal role in the national policy with wide ranging duties and responsibilities. The capacity of the National Assembly to fulfil its constitutional mandate has increased over the years. Despite these significant achievements, the NA is still a young institution.

Since the late-1990s, UN Agencies have provided technical support to the National Assembly. In 2007 the National Assembly undertook a strategic assessment of its own development priorities for the period 2008-2020. The findings were developed by the National Assembly into a concept note for coordinated international development cooperation. The United Nations responded to this request by proposing a Joint Programme of support to the National Assembly. The Joint Programme approach presents a unified work plan and budget, which coordinates inputs from all development partners under a common management arrangement. It seeks to increase aid effectiveness by improving coordination in the delivery of resources, while avoiding duplication and gaps. It also supports national ownership by explicitly aligning development assistance to national priorities.

The Programme seeks to strengthen the capacities of the National Assembly and its staff to improve the quality of services provided to the NA Members and their constituents, as well as building the capacities of the Members to exercise the oversight function and to influence policy making in order to enable the Institution to fully contribute to a truly participatory and representative democracy. The National Assembly as Implementing Partner is responsible and accountable for managing the Programme, including the monitoring and evaluation of Programme interventions, achieving Programme outputs, and for the effective use of donor resources.

1. **SELNA Joint Programme summary:**

The Joint Programme seeks to strengthen the capacities of the National Assembly and its staff as well as building the capacities of the NA Members to exercise the oversight function and to influence policy making in order to enable the Institution of the National Assembly to fully contribute to a truly participatory and representative democracy.

As a foundation for legislative appraisal and oversight functions, the Programme provides Members and technical staff in Committee Departments with improved knowledge and awareness of relevant sectoral issues. Key activities include awareness-raising workshops on national and international policy and development issues, assisting Committees to access national and international expertise, gender sensitization, harnessing internet technology to promote information exchange between Members dispersed across the country.

To increase representation of its citizens, the Programme has sought to provide capacity building for Members and Staff of Constituency offices about their representative role; promote public access to the National Assembly building; strengthen the processing, monitoring and reporting of public petitions; and strengthening the processing, monitoring and reporting of public complaints.

As part of the Joint Programme, there was explicit recognition about the importance of strengthening the Institution of the National Assembly to ensure that National Assembly is able to more efficiently and effectively discharge its political responsibilities. Capacity gaps in the Office of the National Assembly were identified and addressed through the introduction of a performance-based human resource development system, and the establishment of annual training plans. Information services have been strengthened through the development of ICT infrastructure and skills, as well as through improvements in existing research, reference and archiving facilities, and through development of the parliamentary library. Finally, training and other capacity building related to planning, coordination, monitoring and reporting have been delivered to National Assembly staff members acting as focal points for Programme activities in each department.

**The expected results included:**

Output 1: Members of the NA and Committee Departments have the necessary skills and capacities to review policy, legislative and budgetary issues and more effectively oversee their implementation

Output 2: The National Assembly effectively and accurately represents constituents’ interests, needs and expectations.

Output 3: The National Assembly has Upgraded Parliamentary Support Services.

Output 4: Technical Assistance and Programme Support Services operational

1. **Purpose of the proposed evaluation and programme formulation Mission:**
2. To assist the National Assembly, UN Agencies and donors in Lao PDR to assess the performance of the SELNA JP against its intended objectives as set out in the Results and Resources Framework.
3. To assist the National Assembly and UN Agencies and donors in Lao PDR to identify the future strategy and direction of support to the National Assembly of Lao PDR after 2012.
4. **Objectives of the Mission**

Based on request from the National Assembly this TOR and Mission have been formulated. The purpose of the Mission is to:

1. *Conduct a final evaluation of the SELNA JP:* to assess progress towards achieving expected outcomes. This segment will consider the key benefits, achievements and possible gaps in the current Joint Programme.
2. *Development of a Concept Note*: Using the lessons learned and information gathered in (A) above devise a Concept Note which seeks to identify the vision, possible outcomes, outputs, activities, timelines and budgetary implications associated with any future support to the National Assembly post 2012.
3. **Scope of Work:**

The Mission team will be responsible for the following activities under the overall guidance and supervision of the National Assembly and UNDP (as the Managing Agent)

1. Conduct the Final Evaluation of the SELNA JP and compilation of the lessons learned.
2. Submit a first draft of the Final Report for review
3. Concurrently using the lessons learned portion of the Evaluation, devise a Concept Note which outlines the key thematic areas or issues, timelines and budgetary implications that need to be addressed in any future iteration of support to the National Assembly.
4. Present the findings of the evaluation and proposed future direction to all key stakeholders.
5. Revise on the basis of comments received, the Final Evaluation Report and simultaneously revise the draft Concept Note to accurately reflect comments and inputs received.
6. An agreed Final Evaluation report of the SELNA JP
7. A Concept Note which captures the direction and thematic focus of future support to the National Assembly

This is further explained below:

**Existing SELNA JP**

1. To conduct a final evaluation of the SELNA Joint Programme using the Programme Document (Pro Doc) to compare the achievement and gaps of intended results with actual delivery.
2. To identify lessons learned which should be considered or explored further when considering designing future NA support post 2012.
3. To assess the stakeholders’ level of satisfaction with the Programme’s results.
4. To assess the sustainability of implemented activities and inventions in the medium and longer term.

**Looking forward**

1. To assess the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of programme design and implementation in the context of Lao PDR.
2. To evaluate the modality of joint programme working and identification of any lessons learned.
3. Extract lessons learned and best practices that can be considered in the planning and design of future support activities for the Lao PDR National Assembly.
4. Develop recommendations for the future direction, strategies (including about capacity development versus policy advice) and areas of possible focus for any future iteration of NA support.

**Illustrative methodology**

The Mission team will review existing documentation related to the National Assembly and the SELNA Joint Programme, including the Programme Document (ProDoc), Programme work plans, Programme reports; as well as other relevant documents from other UN Agencies participating in the SELNA JP.

The Mission team will hold meetings and discussions with Programme beneficiaries and counterparts including NA Committees, relevant National Assembly Members, NA staffers, and the Government of Lao PDR leadership and supporting staff. The Mission will also meet with the National Programme Director and Programme Coordinator and other relevant actors including project management and technical staff, donors, UN personnel and strategic partners.

In addition the Mission team may wish to conduct a site visit to a location where the SELNA JP has conducted an outreach mission in order to broaden the scope of inputs at the stakeholder level. Such a site visit will need to be included into the outline indicative timelines for the evaluation included in this Terms of Reference.

In conducting the evaluation, the Mission should consider the country’s context and the elected bodies’ cultural and socio-political dynamics including thematic areas like poverty reduction, corruption, climate change, gender equality and decentralization.

A final meeting will be organized to discuss the mission findings. The mission is expected to take into account the comments and suggestions provided at such discussions into the final version of the report, to be submitted by October 22, 2012.

# Indicative content & scope of the Final Evaluation

## Evaluation Questions for the country level assessment (additional questions may be added)

It is also important for the Consultants to provide live examples to demonstrate or support the findings which will help to enrich the Final Evaluation report.

### Overall Results Achievement at the Final Evaluation stage

* What has been the progress made towards achievement of the expected outcomes and expected results? What are the results achieved? What are the reasons for the achievement or non-achievement?
* To what extent have beneficiaries been satisfied with the results?
* Is the Programme cost-effective, i.e. could the outcomes and expected results have been achieved at lower cost through adopting a different approach and/or using alternative delivery mechanisms?
* Have the Programme activities enhanced a sustainable improvement in the working of the National Assembly? Have they strengthened the capacities of the Implementing Partner?
* In line with the ProDoc to what degree have human rights and gender equality considerations been integrated in the design and implementation of SELNA JP interventions?
* Does the programme have effective monitoring mechanisms in place to measure progress towards results?
* What are the lessons learned?
* Following the April 2011 Mid Term Evaluation exercise, have all the recommendations been completed?
* to what extent have the recommendations contained within that MTE been addressed in the final portion of the Programme?
* What are the lessons learned?

### Overall Results achievement at the output and outcome level

* What measures have been taken during planning and implementation to ensure that resources are efficiently and effectively used?
* Have the organizational structure, managerial support and coordination mechanisms effectively supported the delivery of the Programme?
* How does the Programme utilize existing local capacities of right-bearers and duty-holders to achieve its outcomes?

### Factors affecting the successful implementation and overall results achievement

* What external factors have influenced the Programme implementations and results?
* Were there opportunities that the Programme explored in order to receive support for its implementation?

### Strategic Positioning and Partnerships

* How well has the Programme coordinated and harmonized its work with other actors in the sector?
* How relevant is the SELNA JP to the National Development priorities and the achievement of the MDGs?
* What are the lessons learned in the context of UN joint programming?

### Future direction

* What is 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?
* Is the Programme supported by National/Local Institutions? Do these Institutions demonstrate leadership commitment and technical capacity to continue to work with any successor iteration of NA support or to replicate the SELNA JP model?
* What operational capacity of National Partners, also known as capacity resources, such as technology, finance, and staffing, has been strengthened?
* What adaptive or management capacities of National Partners, such as learning, leadership, programme and process management, networking and linkages have been supported by the Programme?
* Does the National Assembly have the financial capacity to maintain the benefits from the Programme?

The team will be responsible for submitting the following **outputs**:

1. **An inception report** which contains the description of the evaluation methodology/methodological approach, data analysis methods, key informants/agencies, issues to be studied, work plan. Note the methodological approach will be devised by the team as a stand-alone document which will set out the approach and design for the evaluation in line with the UNEG/G (2010)1[[1]](#footnote-1).
2. **Executive Summary** (max 6 pages);
3. **Final Evaluation Report** including (max 20 pages but excluding annexes):

* Executive Summary (maximum five pages)
* Programme description
* Evaluation purpose
* Evaluation methodology
* Findings
* Lessons learnt
* Recommendations
* Annexes (including interview list – without identifying names for sake of confidentiality/ anonymity, data collection instruments, key documents consulted, Terms of Reference).

1. **Concept Note development:** Using the informationgatheredduring the Final Evaluation exercise, concurrently review and assess the informationspecifically around lessons learned to identify the key issues confronting the National Assembly. Propose thematic and/or programmatic interventions, activities, indicative timelines and budgetary implications for a future iteration of support to the National Assembly after 2012. The Team may also want offer suggestions about the modality of future support to the National Assembly after 2012.
2. Based on comments received on the drafts, the Mission Team Leader will finalize the deliverables, with inputs from other evaluation team members, as required, and submit to UNDP as Managing Agent of the Joint Programme by the agreed date.
3. Power point presentation of preliminary findings to the key stakeholders for dissemination purposes.

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

* *Relevance*: Evaluate the logics and unity of the process in planning and designing the activities for supporting the National Assembly.
* *Efficiency:* Evaluate the efficiency of the Programme implementation, the quality of the results achieved and the time/political constraints.
* *Effectiveness:* Conduct an assessment of management decisions vis-a-vis the cost effectiveness; and to which extend the Programme outputs have been effectively achieved.
* *Impact:* Evaluate the overall impact of the Programme and its contribution to the development of the National Assembly of Lao PDR.
* *Sustainability:* Assess the sustainability of results with specific focus on national capacity and ownership over the process.

In this Final Evaluation, 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 the Final Evaluation.

The methodology and techniques to be used in the evaluation should be described in detail in the desk study report and the final evaluation report, and should contain, at minimum, information on the instruments used for data collection and analysis, whether these be documents, interviews, field visits, questionnaires or participatory techniques.

# Management of the Evaluation & Stakeholder engagement

This Evaluation Mission and Concept Note development is being jointly commissioned by UNDP Lao PDR and the President of the National Assembly. The final evaluation was foreshadowed in the original Programme Document 2009.

The Managing Agent (UNDP) of the Joint Programme will establish a Reference Group, who will in the initial stages, seek to validate the evaluation processes. However as the evaluation proceeds, the membership will be enlarged to broaden the range of stakeholder[[2]](#footnote-2) involvement and engagement during the evaluation.

The Reference Group’s role is to act as a sounding board, facilitate and review the work of the evaluation. In addition, this group may be tasked with facilitating the dissemination and application of the results and other follow-up actions.

The Reference Group will include a representative from all participating UN Agencies, the National Assembly, SELNA JP team and development partners. Such a group will help to review the evaluation TOR, the inception report, and the first draft of the Final Evaluation Report and provide feedback.

Transparency and consultation with the major stakeholders are essential features of the evaluation process. This helps to improve the credibility and quality of the evaluation. It will also help build consensus especially when developing the outline concept note which will identify any future support for the National Assembly after 2012.

The roles and responsibilities of the Managing Agent and the Reference Group are as follows:

* + Liaise with the Reference Group to finalize the TOR for the Final Evaluation so as to ensure that an effective evaluation is conducted that is relevant to key users and that includes a desk review, stakeholder interviews, and in-depth information gathering;
  + There will be the opportunity for UNDP and the Reference Group to offer inputs into the draft methodological approach proposed by the Mission team.
  + The Reference Group will also provide additional secondary data for the evaluation team desk review in order to make the evaluation as comprehensive as possible.
  + Timely delivery of documentation and information requested by the Evaluation Team;
  + Facilitating meetings and interviews requested by the evaluation team with internal and external parties.
  + Monitor the evaluation work-plan and ensure its timely completion, including time-line and deliverables of the Evaluation Team;
  + Organize debriefings with the SELNA Programme’s main donors[[3]](#footnote-3) as necessary;
  + Facilitate the coordination of the Evaluation Team’s meetings in Lao including briefings by the Evaluation Team to present preliminary and final findings and recommendations;
  + Review and technically assess the Evaluation Team’s work plan, inception report, preliminary and final evaluation products to ensure Evaluation Team products reflect all requirements for a high quality evaluation;
  + Circulate the Evaluation Team’s products for review and compiling comments and feedback from internal and external stakeholders;
  + Organize timely briefing sessions for the Reference Group in line with the indicative timelines to ensure a collaborative and participatory approach is in place throughout the evaluation.
  + The Reference Group will also help to provide quality control of the emerging findings/draft report and also to provide an independent and impartial assessment about the SELNA JP.
  + Hold briefing and debriefing sessions with the Evaluation Team and maintain regular contact throughout the evaluation;
  + Oversight of the Evaluation Team’s inception report to fully comply with evaluation quality standards, including sending it for consultation with key stakeholders.
  + Review the list of preliminary findings
  + In collaboration with the Reference group, UNDP will provide oversight and technical review of the draft report and the final evaluation report to ensure a quality product.

**INDICATIVE TIMELINES**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Product** | **Responsible Party** | **Estimated Time Frame** | **Place** |
| Develop the draft TOR and seek comments on the scope of evaluation from stakeholders involved | NA and UNDP | 2nd week of June | Vientiane, Lao PDR |
| Finalise TOR and source the Mission team | NA and UNDP | 4th Week of June | Vientiane, Lao PDR |
| Work plan with Specific dates | Evaluation Team | 9 – 15 July 2012 | Home based (6 work days) |
| Field visit #1 Lao PDR   * Inception report | Evaluation Team | 1 August – 10 August 2012 | Lao PDR (9 work days) |
| List of preliminary findings | Evaluation Team to NA and UN | 25 August 2012[[4]](#footnote-4) | Home based (8 work days) |
| Provide feedback/comments to the Evaluation Team | NA and UN | 14 September 2012 |  |
| Draft Report of the Final Evaluation + Outline Concept Note | Evaluation Team | 24 September 2012 | Home based (11 work days) |
| Review of draft Concept Note | UN and NA | 24 September 2012 | Concurrent action |
| Field visit #2 Lao PDR | Evaluation Team | 24 September to 3 October 2012 | Lao PDR (8 work days) |
| Concept Note refinement | UN/UNDP and NA | 26 September 2012 onwards | Concurrent action |
| Final Report & Executive Summary | Evaluation Team | 16 October 2012 | Home based (8 work days) |
| Dissemination of Final Evaluation Report to stakeholders | NA and UN | 22 October 2012 onwards | UNDP |

***Estimated Level of Effort 50 work days on a 6 day working week***

**COMPOSITION OF THE TEAM**

This is an important Mission insofar as this will be an Evaluation jointly commissioned by UN and the National Assembly of Lao PDR. As such that will require a team who are both knowledgeable about legislative strengthening globally but with an appreciation of the unique issues that characterize the democratic processes in Lao PDR.

The Team Members will have to be able to focus on the core issues and to be able to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities encountered during the current SELNA JP and with that knowledge, frame a Concept Paper which is fully informed and structured to avoid similar pitfalls in any future iteration of support to the National Assembly.

1. **Team Leader: Ms Thusitha Pilapitiya Policy Adviser Democratic Governance.**

The Parliamentary Development Expert will evaluate the final results, achievements and constraints in the implementation of the Support to an Effective Lao National Assembly (SELNA) Joint Programme 2009 - 2012 and provide recommendations for future strategy. The Team Leader will be responsible for delivering the Final Evaluation Report in a timely manner.

**Responsibilities of the Team Leader**

* Documentation review and framing of evaluation questions
* Leading the evaluation team in planning, execution and reporting
* Deciding and managing division of labour within the evaluation team
* Use of best practice evaluation methodologies in conducting the evaluation
  + Hold consultations and interviews with relevant stakeholders in the National Assembly, UN Agencies, donors and other related parties.
  + Evaluate the SELNA JP results, achievements and constraints
  + Facilitate an internal workshop or focus group discussion about the lessons learned.
* Leading the national debriefing for programme stakeholders in Lao PDR
* Leading the drafting and finalization/quality control of the evaluation report
  + Supervise the work of the other Mission Team members and distribute roles and responsibilities amongst the team.

**Monitoring arrangement**

The Team Leader will report to UNDP’s Head of the Governance Unit

**Qualifications:**

* + - * Master’s degree or higher on governance specializing in democratic institutions and other relevant fields;
      * At least 15 years of professional experience in governance related issues, especially in developing countries;
      * Sound knowledge and experience in evaluation of development programmes/projects;
  + Demonstrated project evaluation experience.
  + Demonstrated experience with UNDP in similar Missions an advantage.
    - * Thorough understanding of key elements of results-based programme management;
      * Strong capacity for data collection and analysis, as well as report writing;
      * Experience/knowledge of the National Assembly in Lao PDR and/or regional experience in the area of parliamentary development;
      * Sound knowledge and understanding of gender sensitivity and social inclusion;
      * A good level of experience in the strategic positioning of decentralization and local development programmes in relationship to the GoL, donors/development partners and local authorities;
      * Ability to assess the effectiveness and sustainability of programme structure and implementation modalities to inform UN;
      * Strong task management and team leading competencies;
      * Fluency in English, both in speaking and writing.

**Competencies**

* + Strong leadership, communication and interpersonal skills
  + Excellent organizational skills
  + Demonstrated ability to work in a team
  + Ability to work under pressure and in a highly political environment
  + Demonstrated cultural sensitiveness and sound judgment
  + Demonstrated experience in developing and transition legislatures.
    1. **Mr. Khampasong Ratsachak, Deputy Director General, Research & Reference Department of the National Assembly of Lao PDR**

**Responsibilities:**

* Provide first-hand experience and knowledge about the working of the National Assembly in Lao PDR;
* Provide overall assistance to the team in terms of meetings and interviews with key NA stakeholders;
* To 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 the Lao PDR National Assembly;
* Sound knowledge and understanding of the Lao PDR political economy and power dimensions in Lao PDR;
* Assist with the focused group discussions at all levels;
* Attend the briefing and debriefings with UN partners and government agencies;
* Be responsible for report writing covering their areas of competence.

**Qualifications:**

* Bachelor’s degree or higher in public administration and other relevant fields;
* Sound knowledge and understanding of Lao local/rural development & community development work;
* Strong ability for data collection and analysis, as well as report writing;
* Sound understanding of the political structures and sub-national government systems;
* Sound knowledge of institutional capacity development skills and techniques:
* knowledge and understanding of gender sensitivity and social inclusion issues;
* Strong interpersonal and communication skills;
* Fluency in English, in speaking and writing.
  + 1. **Specialist in democratic governance & capacity development specialist**

**Ms Diane Sheinberg:**

**Responsibilities:**

* Provide a global perspective and insights about democratic governance and deliberative bodies;
* Provide overall assistance to the team in terms of data collection and data analysis;
* Assist with the focused group discussions at all levels;
* Identify possible capacity development/enhancement issues;
* Assist with the conduct of interviews at all levels;
* Attend the briefing and debriefings with UN partners and government agencies;
* Be responsible for report writing covering their areas of competence;
* Contribute relevant inputs to the Mission’s expected outputs within the established

timelines.

**Qualifications:**

* Bachelor’s degree or higher in public administration, local development and other relevant fields;
* Strong ability for data collection and analysis, as well as report writing;
* Minimum seven years of experience in the reform and/or strengthening of legislative

Institutions;

* Understanding of political structures and sub-national government systems;
* Sound knowledge of institutional capacity development skills and techniques
  + Demonstrated experience in developing and transition legislatures.
  + Excellent organizational skills
  + Demonstrated ability to work in a team
  + Demonstrated cultural sensitiveness and sound judgment
* Sound knowledge and understanding of gender sensitivity, social inclusion & human rights issues;
* Strong interpersonal and communication skills;
* Fluency in English, in speaking and writing.
  + 1. **Assistant/Interpreter/translator**

The Interpreter/Translator will support the Team with interpretation services during meetings, interviews and presentations.

**Qualifications**

* + University Degree in International Development, Business Administration, Foreign Languages or related fields;
  + Experience working with a legislative body in Lao PDR would be an asset;
* Fluency in English, in speaking and writing.
  + Proven experience in secretariat/administrative support functions;
  + Fluent English speaking and writing skills, with focus in social sciences;
  + Minimum of 2 years of interpretation experience;
* Provide translation and other assistance to the team;
* Translate Executive Summary and Recommendations of the final report into Lao language.
  + Full time availability for the in-country Mission duration (x18 days)

1. **DOCUMENTS (**initial listing as at July 5, 2012 ongoing additions)

* 7th NSEDP 2011-2015
* Programme Document (ProDoc revised January 25, 2012 + Original ProDoc)
* Mid Term Evaluation April 2011
* MTE Management Response (inc. Statement of Coordination Principles April 2012)
* EU ROM Evaluations 2010 & 2011
* SELNA JP Annual Programme Review documents (2010 & 2011)
* Annual Workplans 2011 and 2012
* Narrative Reports submitted to EU by UNDP
* Programme Board and Programme Assurance Group papers 2011 & 2012
* SELNA JP Annual Progress Reports 2010 & 2011
* Operational Close out plan June 2012
* Strategic Framework on Governance (unofficial translation November 2011)
* Vientiane Declaration
* Country Analysis Report Lao PDR and analysis to inform the selection of the UNDAF priorities 2012-2015

1. United Nations Evaluation Group Quality Checklist for Evaluation Terms of Reference & Inception Reports [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. UNEG/2(2011)2 Integrating Human Rights & Gender Equality in Evaluation – towards UNEG Guidance Page 23 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Consider the idea of also including known possible future NA partners including SDC, WB & ADB [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. NA in Session from June 20 to July 13 but in Vientiane. In August many DPs may be unavailable to review the draft documents [↑](#footnote-ref-4)