STRATEGIC SUPPORT TO STRENGTHEN THE RULE OF LAW IN LAO PDR (3S-ROL)

Project Description
Since the adoption of the Legal Sector Master Plan (LSMP), significant accomplishments have been achieved towards strengthening the rule of law and advancing the exercise of rights in Lao PDR. The LSMP initiated a framework for coordinated and systematic development in the justice sector, with the ultimate goal of establishing a rule of law state by 2020 in Lao PDR.

Meeting of the Lao People’s Supreme Court. Photo: UNDP Lao PDR/Daniel Hodgson

Building on the success of the previous joint projects UNDP’s Strategic Support to Strengthen the Rule of Law in Lao PDR (3S-Rol) continues to work towards advancing the rule of law in the country. Despite the development achieved, progress remains challenging. Regional and international integration, while presenting many opportunities, simultaneously tests the system in terms of rapid economic and social change and both trans-border trade and crime.

Project Summary:
- **Duration:** August 2017 - December 2021
- **Geographic coverage:** National level
- **Focus area:** Governance / Legal sector
- **Implementing partners:** Ministry of Justice together with Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Public Security, Office of Supreme People’s Prosecutor, People’s Supreme Court, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Planning and Investment, National Assembly, Lao Bar Association

Streamlined coordination and synergy of action, both between justice sector agencies and with Development Partners, as well as more comprehensive long-term planning require continued attention. Shortfalls reflect a broader disconnection in fully translating policies, international commitments and reforms introduced, both legislative and organizational, into consistent implementation and service-delivery at all levels, especially at the grassroots’ level. In addition, it is crucial to engage citizens in the process, working together to build a rule of law state.

Most importantly, efforts to establish a rule of law state must aim to change attitudes and behavior, as well as strengthen relationships between the people and State’s institutions.

Main Objectives and Outcomes
The Strategic Support to Strengthen the Rule of Law will seek to address these challenges by delivering on 5 key outputs:

**Output 1: Enhanced ability of the Government to coordinate, monitor, and identify resources to establish a rule of law state:**
Technical expertise will be provided to enable the Government to track progress more effectively and realign support for more efficient achievement of a rule of law state by 2020 and beyond.
Output 2: Expanded and systematized use of evidence-based policy and legislative-development:

The development of strategic pieces of legislation such as the revision of the Criminal Procedure Law and the creation of processes and tools will ensure that policies and laws are formulated based on concrete evidence e.g. statistical data, monitoring and assessment reports, surveys and, generally, “the facts on the ground.”

Output 3: Strengthened capacity of Lao PDR to harmonize with, and transpose international obligations and standards into domestic law and practices:

Systems will be developed to enable officials to track implementation of existing commitments, more effectively prepare for accession to additional priority international agreements,

Funding:

- Project budget required: USD 4,000,000

implement existing and future international commitments more effectively, and ensure that such international commitments are built-in into national laws and practices.

Output 4: Improved access to justice and justice service delivery for citizens – The programme will complement the Government’s efforts to scale-up or refine previously developed initiatives, roll-out new pilot ones to improve the accessibility, transparency, responsiveness and effectiveness of justice services delivered at the local level.

Output 5: Increased public awareness of legal rights and responsibilities, and confidence in justice institutions:

Efforts to disseminate information about strategic laws, employ improved communication techniques, enhance information-exchange and engage citizens further with justice sector institutions while reforms will be further enhanced and law enforcement targeted.

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