



European Joint Programming for Lao People's Democratic Republic 2016–2020



At a Glance

European development partners and Lao People’s Democratic Republic

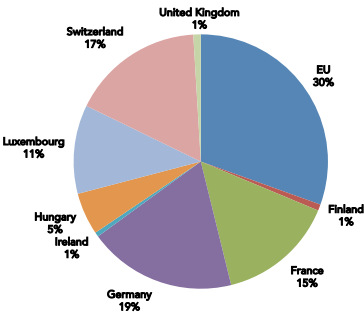
The European development partners and Lao People’s Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) have a long standing, strong and dynamic partnership fundamentally grounded in their mutual commitments to social and economic development in Lao PDR and its growing profile and participation in the global economy and governance systems. The partnership is through dialogue on sustainable economic development, environmental protection, integration in the world economy and trading systems, improving social service delivery and Lao PDR’s transition to an open, democratic society based on good governance, the rule of law, respect for human rights, women, children and minorities. This dialogue is further facilitated by European development cooperation that contributes much needed financial and, more importantly, technical and human resources.

WHAT IS JOINT PROGRAMMING?

Every Laotian knows that if they want to participate in the boat races they must practice, and that practice is more than anything else about building a team. In each team, the rowers in the boat come with their own individual strengths and weaknesses. Despite the differences in the stature and profile of the rowers, rowing together as a team will assure greater probability for success. This means agreeing the best strategy, taking advantage of each other’s strengths and compensating for each other’s weaknesses. Most importantly, participating together means agreeing to go in the same direction, pitching up on time and following the coordinated approach.

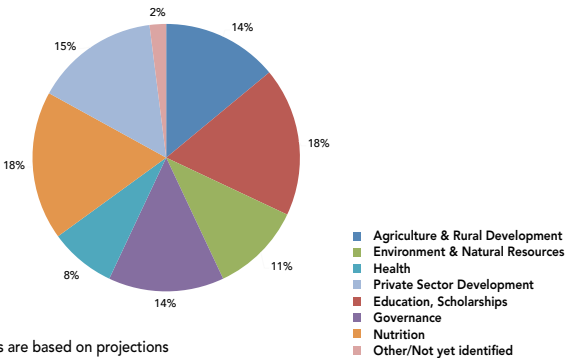
Joint programming follows the same principles except the rowers are development partners supporting the National strategies. In Lao PDR ‘Team Joint Programming’ embraces nine European development partners alongside the Lao Government. The nine European development partners are the EU, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Hungary, Luxembourg, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. The European Joint Programming thus aims to fully support and align with the Lao PDR strategy. This is a joint team in which the mutual objectives are poverty eradication, a clean and safe environment, good social services and a better life for all.

KIP 4.5 Trillion in combined Development Resources



The above figures do not constitute commitments. The amounts are based on projections or extrapolations of bilateral and/or regional programmes Lao PDR. For more information see section 5.2 of the European Joint Programming Document for Lao PDR 2016-2020

European Development Cooperation Investments by Sector



Why Joint Programming Now?

The Government of Lao PDR has long been a supporter of efforts to improve the effectiveness of development cooperation. Development cooperation is more effective when development partners coordinate, communicate, agree a shared vision and strategy and play by the same rules. Last year, the Government drafted the 8th National Social and Economic Development Programme (NSED) for 2016 to 2020. The NSED provides European development partners an opportunity to come together in one team in support of the Government's own planning.

In this regard, European joint programming follows the Government's lead by using the NSED timetable 2016-2020, pursuing goals identified in the NSED, adopting the same sector definitions as used in the NSED and promoting the use of government reporting, monitoring and evaluation contributing to one single benchmark for success. It is also the foundation for dialogue on fundamental human rights, environmental protection and the expansion of good governance practices in Lao PDR, amongst other shared European values.

Why is the European Joint Programme for Lao PDR Important?

Lao PDR is still highly dependent on international development partners for public investment funds. The 8th NSED reports that almost two thirds of public investment funds come from international development partners. Accordingly, when the European development partners improve their efficiencies and the effectiveness of

their contributions it means more value can be delivered to Lao PDR from the same resources.

European development partners use a joint approach to improve their focus on delivering results as identified in the 8th NSED. The pie chart on the opposite page shows how the European donors plan to spend their combined budget of LAK 4.5 trillion on improving the quality of life in Lao PDR. European joint programming concentrates on seven sectors, all of which are priorities for the Government and people of Lao PDR.

Conclusion

Joint programming is a first step that is essentially agreeing a shared strategy, common and aligned objective and allocating resources. Going forward the European team is working together to improve their effectiveness in each of the sectors listed above. Having a shared strategy and agreeing the same direction, timetable and rules are only the beginning. In the future when projects are designed or activities planned they will increasingly be done jointly amongst European development partners and always with the government and also encouraging other development partners to join up and work together.

In this regard, it is worth noting that Lao PDR is a global best practice in JP and the first case of a joint programming that has successfully been able to replace the EU's own country strategy documents. Step by step, the joint approach is being progressively made more feasible by removing administrative barriers and building on a strong partnership and dialogue with the Lao Government.

