

OUTCOME REPORT

Webinar with ODSCs in Lao PDR

06 April 2021

14:00 – 16:00

Organization	Participant Names
Ministry of Home Affairs	<p>Mr. Nisith Keopanya, Director General of Department of Administrative Development, and Programme Manager of NGPAR</p> <p>Mr. Laty Phimmachack, Deputy Director-General of Department of Local Administration</p> <p>Together with colleagues</p>
One Door Service Centers	44 ODSCs across Lao PDR
UNDESA	<p>Mr. Bokyun Shim, Head of UN Project Office on Governance (UNPOG) of DPIDG/UN DESA</p> <p>Together with colleagues</p>
UNDP	<p>Ms. Catherine Phuong, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP Lao PDR</p> <p>Together with colleagues</p>

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1. Opening Remarks

Mr. Nisith Keopanya and Mr. Lay Phimmachack highlighted the success of ODSCs in Lao PDR over the past 15 years. Despite the success, challenges remain. Hence, MOHA welcomes the support from UNDP and UNDESA to enhance the development of ODSCs. They also encouraged ODSCs to contribute their feedback openly in this meeting and treat the meeting as a learning environment.

Mr. Bokyun Shim expressed the support from UN DESA to ODSCs in Lao PDR and highlighted the important elements to a successful ODSC. He stressed that UN DESA, through DPIDG with the support of its project office (UNPOG), stands ready to provide advisory support to you and promote Peer-to-Peer learning opportunities by looking into other countries' innovative examples.

Ms. Catherine Phuong encouraged ODSCs to continue to develop and embrace technology in their work. In addition, she also encouraged ODSCs to include citizens at the center of the design. She expressed appreciation to the Lao PDR government to include ODSC and digital governance development in Lao PDR in the 9th NSEDP (2021 – 2025).

2. Discussion Points

Prior to the Webinar, a list of questions was sent to the ODSCs on the success and challenges. The findings were analyzed and presented in the Webinar by Mr. Sanva Saephan.

2.1 Success

Key success indicators or achievements that ODSCs are proud of include:

- The number of ODSCs has grown over the years
- The number of public services in each ODSC has expanded
- The number of citizens using services at ODSCs has increased
- Standards, regulations, and committees have been established to facilitate the operations of ODSCs
- The presence of ODSCs has gained increasing notice and acknowledgment from the top leadership

2.2 Challenges

Challenges that ODSCs have been facing include:

- Citizens do not know about the existence of the ODSC yet
- The capacity of the ODSC officials still requires further enhancement in the customer service-centric approach
- ODSC space is limited and insufficient to invite or accommodate more government departments to provide services
- Citizens complain about the ODSC service fees
- Technological infrastructure to support ODSC operation is insufficient

- Coordination within and between departments is still weak concerning approving ODSC service application

2.3 Detailed Accounts

In this Webinar, Saysettha ODSC, Bachieng Chalernsouk ODSC, Bolikhamxay ODSC, and Luang Prabang ODSC also provided detailed accounts of their success challenges and priority development plans as captured in the below table.

ODSCs	Success factors	Challenges	Priority development plans
Saysettha ODSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is the implementation of the Party's policy guidelines and the state's rules and regulations into actual work • The leadership's determination, the department's unity, the courage to act, and the courage to take responsibility. • Lessons and legislation, assistance from the Ministry of Home Affairs, experts, and practical techniques. • The issuance of clear, concise legislation, contributions, and information from staff, people, and customers. • The solution is to reduce the paperwork so that customers do not have to spend a lot of time, convenient, fast, transparent, and unnecessary costs. • Licensing services at the district level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding and ability, the ethics of employees in each sector needs further improvement • Streamlined coordination still needs further enhancement • Lack of technological and advanced equipment to support the operation of ODSC • Public awareness of ODSC is still low. • The division of responsibilities among the ODSC staff is still not clear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will continue to embrace technology to the operation of ODSC • Will continue to streamline its workflow processes to ensure citizens find it easy to apply for any governmental services at the ODSC • Will continue to work with the village heads to promote the existence of ODSC

<p>Bachiong ODSC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Party committees and district administrations pay close attention to an increasingly important role of leadership and guidance through a single door • The office building's location, a one-stop service center, separated from the district administration office, is an independent location. Such a location also projects a friendly image to citizens. • The Front Office has assigned its staff to provide one-stop service at the One-Stop Service Center, one person per office, and the District Administration has assigned the Head of the Local Administration Office to monitor the progress of the ODSC • The collection of service fees is in accordance with the Presidential Decree No. 003 / PPT, dated 26 December 2020, and the issuance of invoices issued by the District Office (District Tax). • The GIDP project provided several equipments, and the Ministry of Home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sense of ownership and responsibility of the front office staff coming from different departments is still not high. • Awareness and understanding of the staff of the role of ODSC are still low. • People are not used to using ODSC to submit their service applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Local Administrative Office will continue to obtain support from the higher level to ensure the success of ODSCs. • Will continue to bring more services to ODSC • Develop a monthly income-expenditure budget regularly • Continue to advertise to business units, entrepreneurs, and people in each village about the existence of ODSCs • Continue to renovate the ODSC to have a complete, clean, beautiful, and green image and be satisfied with customers.
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	<p>Affairs provided support, including the ODSC office building's renovation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provincial Finance Department has approved the fee allocation. There are 30% of the ODSC revenue to be channeled to ODSC operations and management and 70% to be given to the departments providing services at the ODSC. 		
Bolikhamxay ODSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life has become easier with the adoption of ODSC that facilitates administrative tasks and makes public affairs less complicated and time-consuming • Adopting technology into the ODSC operation and will continue to enhance it to serve citizens better • Obtain support and leadership from the Governor of Bolikhamxay, and the Governor has paid extra attention to ODSC development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of public awareness • Lack of trained human resources to handle customer service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will source for opportunities to attend or participate in study visits of exchanges with other ODSCs within and outside of the country • Will continue to simplify the ODSC workflow processes • Will focus on the improvement in public administration to build public trust.
Luang Prabang ODSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizens are becoming aware of ODSC • Managed to get approval from the provincial level to provide additional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited and insufficient infrastructures • Limited scope of available services • Lack of coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will pursue its plans to maintain uniformity in delivering services across the center • Will build a common understanding among departments and

	financial rewards to staff stationed at ODSC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Governor of Luang Prabang issued a certificate of recognition to outstanding ODSC staff 	within and between line ministries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively a smaller number of organizations involved • Lack of financial support for service delivery 	agencies to increase more services in the ODSC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will ensure proper allocation of duties and budgets among respective ministries
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2.4 Interventions by UNDESA

Mr. Bokyun Shim shared with the ODSCs the success factors of an ODSC and the best practices of other countries.

Consider Three Levels for ODSC Project

- **System Level:** Institutions, mechanisms, and processes –within and outside government structures –through which economic and administrative authority is exercised.
- **Organizational Level:** Underpinning a well-networked matrix organization requires re-engineering processes to equip the various departments and people involved in service delivery to meet immediate citizen demands and develop performance improvements and efficiencies. The issue involved with re-engineering should not be underestimated. It is very difficult to turn manual, paper-based systems into automatic digital systems.
- **Individual Level:** Delivering tailored, citizen-focused services requires transformation at all levels of the organization to empower both organization and public officials within individual agencies and across public sector Departments or Agencies. Citizen-centric services cannot be created and sustained without empowering the public officials.

The Best Practice Principles for ODSCs cover ten areas¹:

1. Political commitment

- Ensure strong and long-term political support
- Establish continuous communication between the political and administrative levels on ODSC development, implementation, and improvement

2. Leadership

- Managers need to be committed to the objectives of the ODSC and have the ability to be flexible if goals change
- Make realistic plans

¹ OECD (2020), One-Stop Shops for Citizens and Business, OECD Best Practice Principles for Regulatory Policy, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/b0b0924e-en>.

- Ensure that good project management practices are followed
 - Ensure that ODSCs have appropriate staffing and resources
- 3. Legal framework**
- Make necessary adjustments to the legal framework to ensure the cooperation with other agencies and so that ODSC can maximize their potential net benefit to society
- 4. Cooperation and coordination**
- Entities responsible for planning ODSC need to have strong communication and feedback channels with those responsible for the implementation
 - Focus on building strong relationships and permanent communication channels between all the participating agencies and other stakeholders
- 5. Role clarity**
- Set clear objectives and expectations for what ODSC can achieve
 - Focus the design and structure of ODSC on user needs and requirements, relying on focus groups, surveys, and pilots to identify potential users' needs and expectations
- 6. Governance**
- Design a governance structure for ODSC where all agencies participate at an executive level and high-level political commitment can be obtained
 - Develop governance mechanisms that allow operative decisions to be taken by a single organism leading to ODSC
- 7. Public consultation**
- Undertake public consultation to ascertain whether ODSCs is the best solution from the users' perspective
 - Plan and execute a pilot phase to test the services before they go live, ensuring that they meet users' expectations
 - Follow a phased approach for the implementation of ODSC, ensuring that lessons from one phase are taken into consideration for the implementation of the following phases
- 8. Communication and technological considerations**
- Utilize communication methods that will benefit users while also taking into account potential accessibility issues.
 - Where information and assistance is provided via multiple channels, customize content to assist users best
- 9. Human capital**
- Allocate sufficient resources to change management and tailor-made design programmes for training ODSC staff
 - Focus training not only on technical competencies but also on interpersonal and social skills

10. Monitoring and evaluation

- Establish quantitative and qualitative indicators and evaluation methods to test the success and quality of the service provided to users
- Implement continuous improvement processes
- Ensure that significant changes to ODSCs are subject to both appropriate impact assessment and public consultation processes before their commencement.

The ODSC should look at the long-term perspective. It is imperative to plan for future trends in service requirements beyond the current operating model, requiring long-term planning and strategy development with changing citizen expectations. The ODSC can be conducted through integrated management to increase the business sector and technology sector's capacity related to public business. The ODSC can change public officials' mindsets to have citizens at the center of the service delivery. Below are the guiding principles of a citizen-centric ODSC.

Guiding principles of citizen-centric ODSCs²:

- **Listen to your citizens:** Understanding a Department or Agency's citizens base is a prerequisite in delivering services to meet their needs in the way they want them delivered.
- **Break down the silos:** When seeking to break down hierarchical structures, emphasis should be placed on making agency silos more networked rather than abandoning them altogether. While this is no simple task, it does not imply that a complete government restructuring is required. Instead, it means addressing the silos within individual public sector Departments or Agencies integrating them to form what we refer to as a 'connected government'.
- **Enable a multichannel service interface:** Channels provide a means for public sector Departments or Agencies to deliver services to citizens and citizens to access government through various communication and delivery methods (e.g., mail, telephone, face-to-face, online, mobile, SMS, fax, and kiosks). In designing a channel strategy for public sector Departments or Agencies, care should be taken not to force citizens in any one direction. Because of the diversity for their citizens base, public sector Departments or Agencies need to create multiple delivery channels so that citizens can have 'channels of choice', depending on specific needs at specific times.
- **Continuous improvement through citizen feedback:** Citizens' feedback is a powerful tool for understanding citizens' experience and satisfaction with public services and developing strategies to improve those services. Despite this, citizens' feedback has traditionally been under-utilized by public sector Departments or Agencies. For public sector Departments or Agencies, the lack of citizens' feedback can be a source of major operational risk and severely hinder their continuous learning capabilities. As a result, any ODSC model should ensure an ongoing, iterative approach to incorporating citizens' feedback into service design, processes, and citizens interfaces.
- **Set Citizens Centric Service Standards:** Rising demand for better governance standards in the public sector has spurred initiatives aimed at improving disclosure and public governance. In particular, heightened citizens' awareness has driven demand for greater

² PwC (2016) [Transforming the citizen experience – One Stop Shop for public services](#)

accountability and transparency, forcing public sector Departments or Agencies to respond positively. One way this can be achieved is through the passing of legislation setting out the citizens' right to information and service standards mandated by law. This provides positive evidence of the public sector's desire to place its citizens in a central position and drive citizen trust and belief in public sector Departments or Agencies.

- **Open data system:** The data should be open and shared to process the citizens' civil petitions or applications. A standardized form of data sharing should be created. Processing and sharing data might need an institutional and legal framework. The electric database is needed to circulate and share promptly. While sharing the data, the importance of privacy and data protection needs to be considered.
- **Flexible budget system:** The budget process should be flexible because creating a database can take several years. The private sectors should be involved to create the database as the government budget might not be enough. The government, in partnership with the private sectors, can lead the digital government. The lead ministry of the ODSCs needs to have a big picture to partner with the private sectors.
- **Transparency:** A successful ODSC model needs to embed the themes of transparency and accountability in the way it delivers services to its citizens. Technology should enable increased accessibility to government services. To achieve transparency, there should be visibility of operations (e.g., agency scorecard performance, update the status of service requests). Performance information can be used to improve service levels and hold agencies accountable for achieving targeted service levels.
- **Innovative organizational culture, process, and procedure to save the transactional cost:** We should save transactional costs of governance mechanisms by stimulating innovative organizational culture, process, and procedure, opening the data, and sharing the data between the different ministries and departments.
- **Enhance public trust in government** by delivering people-centered services

Delivering tailored, citizen-focused services requires transformation at all levels of the organization to empower both staff and citizens within individual agencies and across public sector Departments or Agencies. Citizen-centric services cannot be created and sustained without cultural changes taking place. A number of risks are expected from a citizen-focused service transformation project. To overcome these barriers and to get started on the journey of embedding and sustaining transformational change involves a number of key success factors such as clear strategy with buy-in from the top leadership.

2.5 Intervention by UNDP

Pradeep Bagival, Chief Technical Advisor from UNDP, highlighted the following points.

- ODSC should aim for a long-term approach. Having a long-term perspective for audiences. It may not be an immediate need, but in the future, that is something that ODSCs have to look into.
- One should ensure that ODSCs are inclusive in the future with the principle of leaving no one behind.
- ODSCs should also be equipped with a service-oriented approach in their service.

- The quick turnover of ODSCs' staff should also be addressed so that the ODSCs can retain the staff to avoid cost and inefficiency of retraining.

2.6 Intervention by Public Digital

Emily Middleton, Partner at Public Digital, highlighted the following points.

Digitalization is not transformative unless it benefits everyone and unless it is inclusive. ODSC should be easier for everyone in Lao PDR to access, even those who cannot currently use digital devices.

Three opportunities for ODSCs moving forward to improve the delivery of public services include:

- **The real ODSC is what happens behind the scene.** It is breaking down the silos between ministries and departments. It's changing cultures and attitudes. And it is improving the processes in the back office to create a faster, easier experience for citizens. Streamlining the process is an essential step towards digitalization. Without improving processes, there is a risk of digitizing inefficient or less effective ways of working.
- **The benefit of real-time citizen feedback.** The most effective digital governments worldwide regularly conduct user research and look at analytics to understand the experience, the pinpoints, and citizens' needs. And this can be qualitative as well. It can include observing how citizens are using ODSC's services, what they're struggling with in a particular center, and how to make improvements. It would include looking at why citizens are not using ODSCs and understanding their behavior. There is a real opportunity to build skills and user research and data analysis, both centrally and at ODSCs. For this to be effective. It will need continued leadership of those at ODSCs that can regularly review and act on feedback both locally and centrally.
- **Awareness is critical for inclusion.** Citizens do not need to know which ministry they need to access a particular service or obtain the right document. Public awareness campaigns have been important for raising awareness and a clear brand.

3. Post Webinar Survey

Eighteen (18) evaluation responses were collected following the Symposium.

Overall, ODSCs found the Webinar a useful and practical one. They were satisfied with the contents presented at the Webinar. For many ODSCs, it was their first time using Zoom or joining a virtual conference. However, they were grateful to DOLA for the guidance and prior training on Zoom before this meeting.

All the ODSCs mentioned that they could learn something from this Webinar and be willing to apply what they have learned to their ODSCs, especially on the workflow processes and the need to engage citizens and embrace technology to ODSC operations.

Many of the ODSCs expressed interest in holding such a webinar regularly. Topics for the next webinars could include capacity-building training on utilizing online resources to support ODSCs and start embracing technology in the ODSC operation without incurring much of the financial cost.

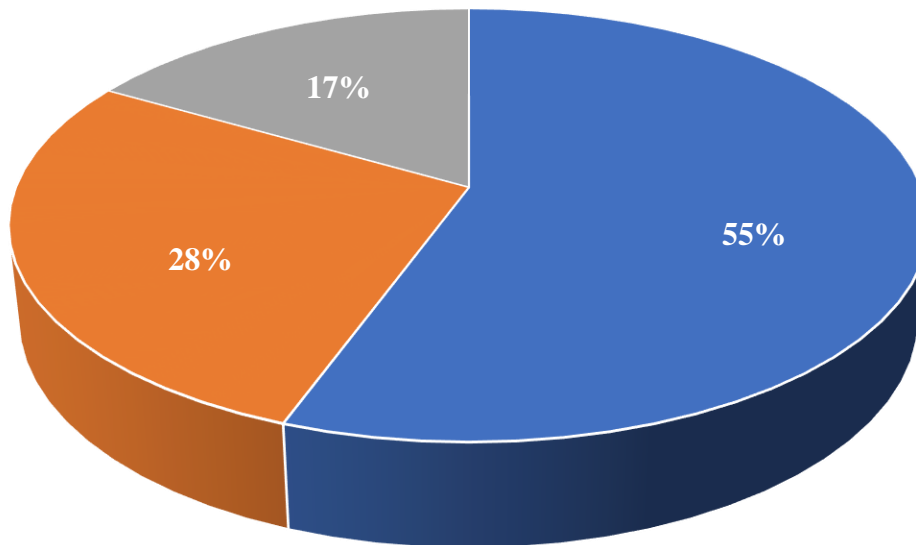
ODSCs hope that DOLA, UN DESA, and UNDP can provide more support on the study visits within and outside of Lao PDR to learn from other ODSCs. They also hope to get more support in terms of facility and technology upgrades to aid them daily.

All respondents gave consistently high ratings of "Excellent" and "Good" on the relevance, clarity, and objective of the Webinar. The respondents very much appreciated the Webinar with a 100% approval rating. 61% of the respondents rated the Webinar as "Excellent," and 31% of the respondents rated the Webinar as "Good". Please check Annex 4.1 for more details on the Post-programme survey.

4. Appendix

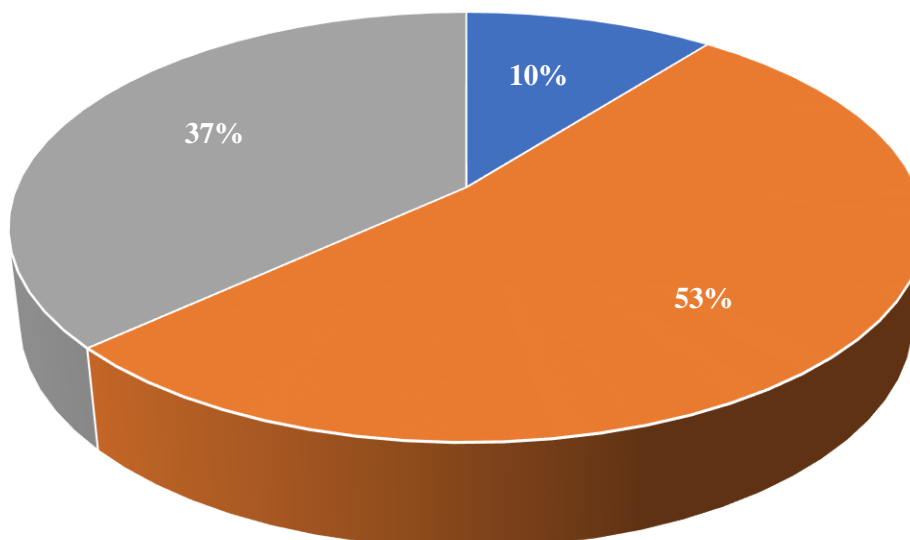
4.1 Post-programme Evaluation Survey

In which aspects do you think your participation in the Webinar will help strengthen the role of your ODSC in advancing digital government development, the potential roadmap, and interventions?



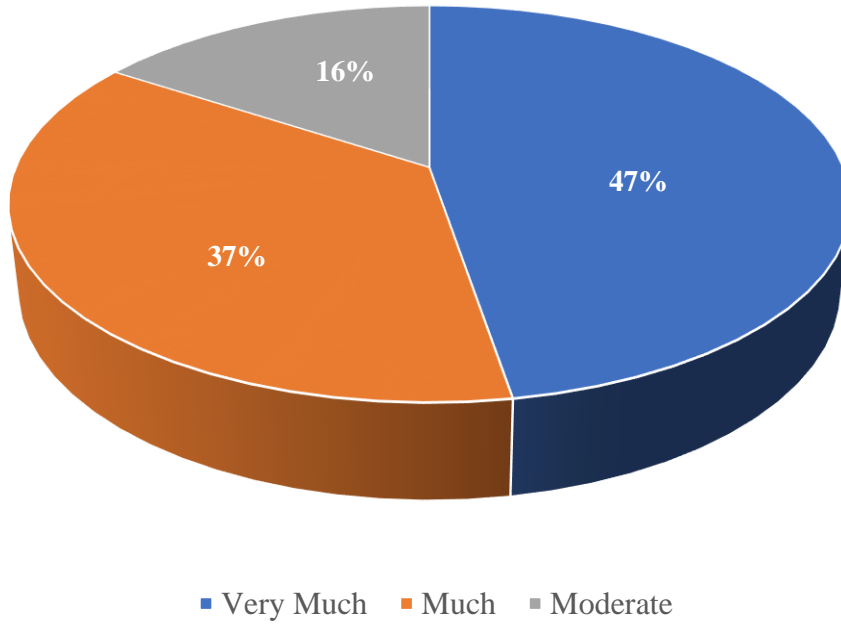
- Better defining the role of ODSC as an integral part of digital government development
- Facilitate the public administration/sector reform
- More efficient service delivery to better meet the needs and demands of citizens

In which aspects do you think your participation in the Webinar will contribute to building capacities of ODSC to deliver public service better?

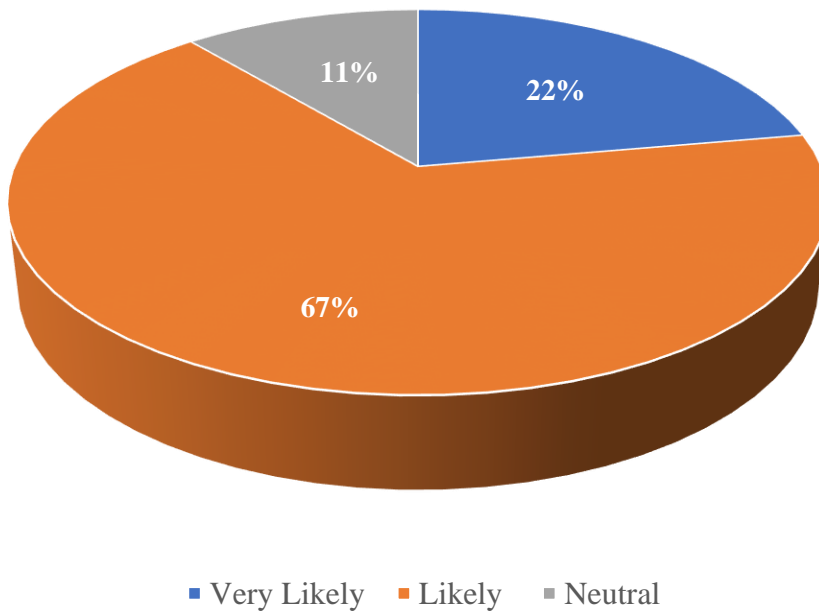


- Strengthening interdepartmental coordination
- Enhanced awareness to increase the efficiency of service delivery

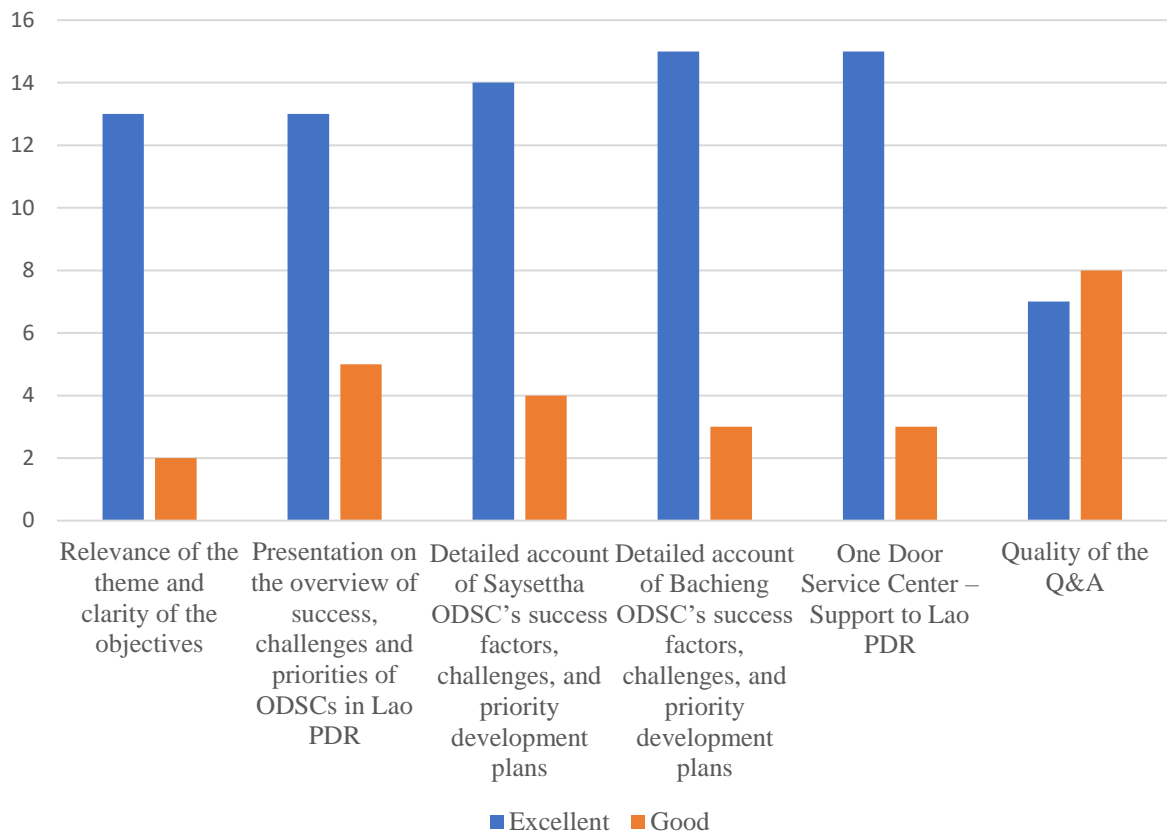
To what extent do you think your participation in the Webinar has provided an opportunity for networking and collaboration among the ODSCs?



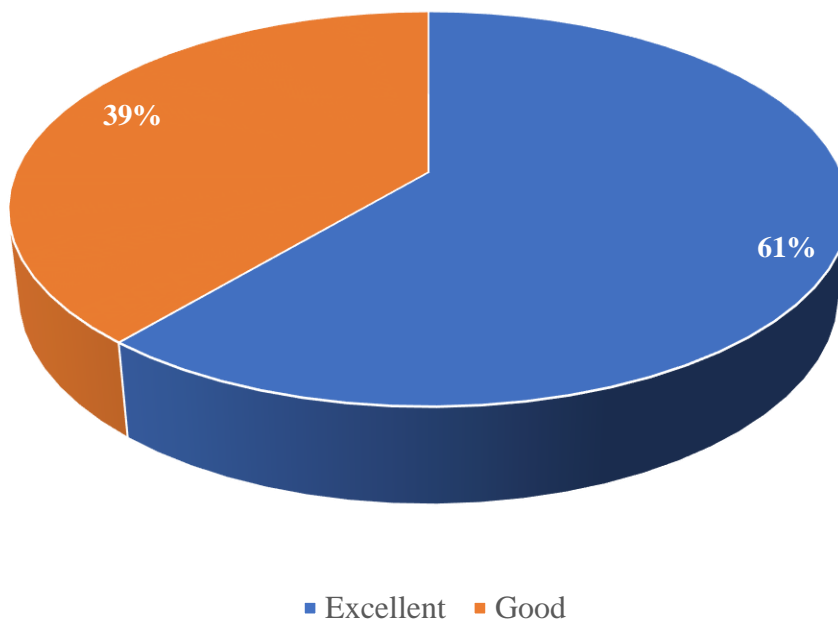
To what extent do you think your participation in the Webinar has encouraged you to streamline the ODSC Framework?



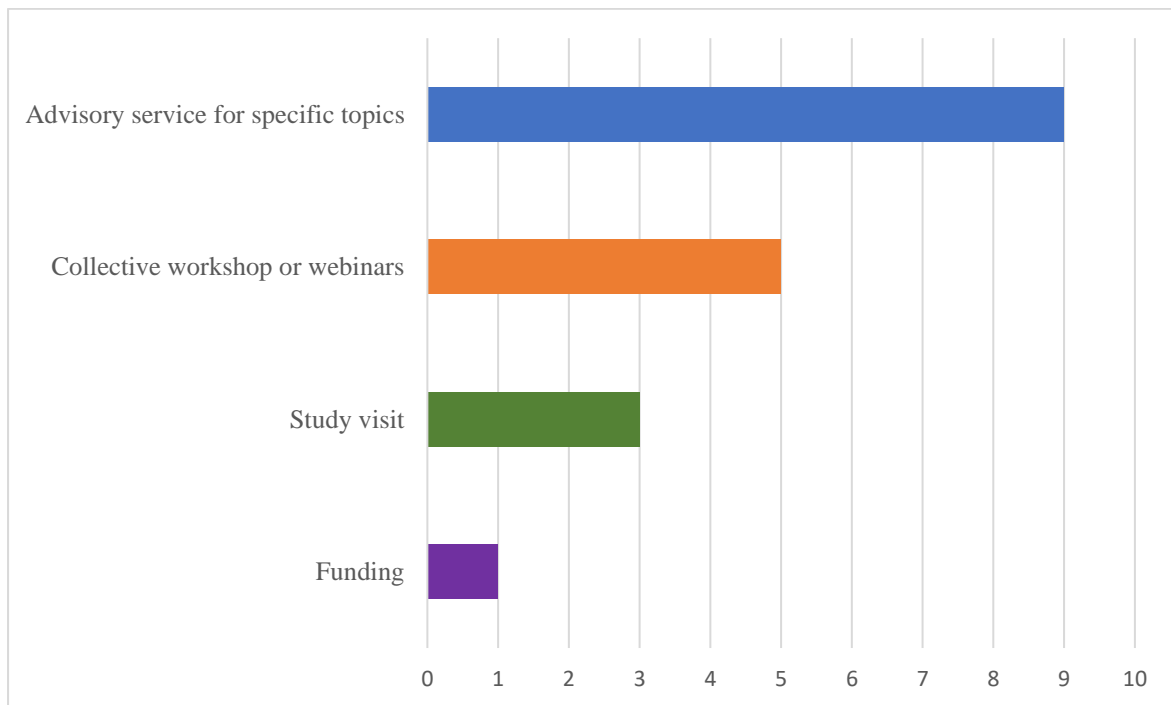
Please assess the following aspects of the Webinar



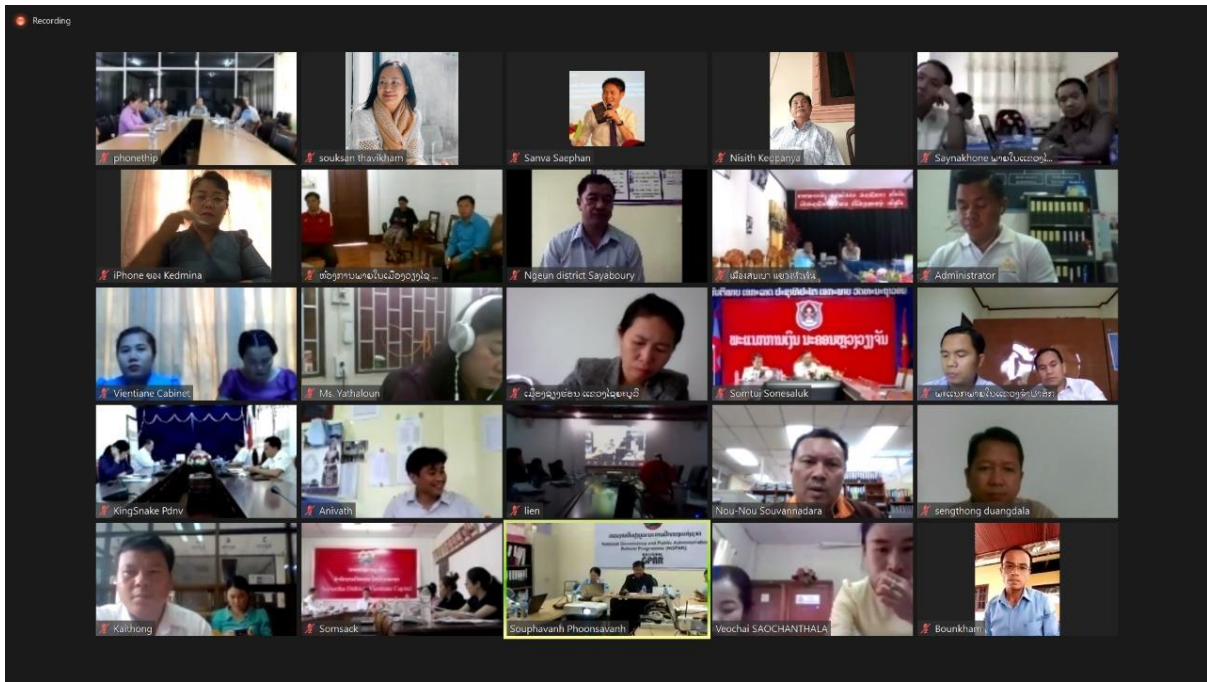
Overall rating of the Webinar

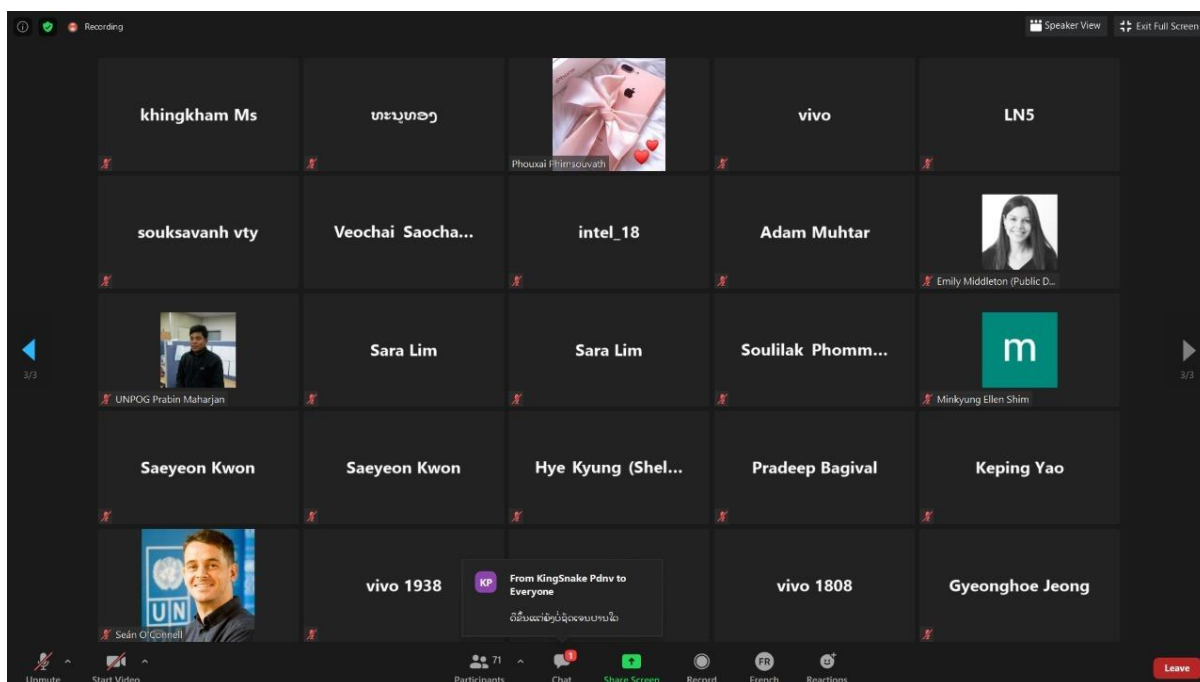


What type(s) of the development capacity support do you expect to receive?



4.2 Photo





4.3 Concept Note

Webinar for One-Door-Service-Centers (ODSCs) in Lao PDR

1. Background

The One Door Service Centers (ODSCs) have been established in Lao PDR under the leadership of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA) since 2006. The establishment of ODSCs is part of the large governance reform initiative of Lao PDR under the National Governance and Public Administration Reform (NGPAR) Programme supported by the Government of Switzerland via the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC UNDP, UNCDF, and other development partners. One of the key objectives of ODSCs is to provide accessibility of governmental services to citizens in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

To date (as of February 2021), there 44 active ODSCs³ across the country providing different governmental services to citizens, ranging from birth certificate to marriage certificate to business permit applications. The growing number of ODSCs over the years implies that the approach has been considered successful by MOHA. However, as the network is getting larger, challenges on coordination among governmental agencies providing services in the ODSCs are often cited as a key challenge.

Therefore, MOHA has decided to hold this first-ever Webinar to bring the representatives of all the 44 ODSCs together to discuss the some of the success factors and challenges confronting ODSCS as well as their priority development plans. This Webinar is supported by the Development Account Project 1819G of UN DESA ("Institutional arrangements for policy integration, coordination & stakeholder engagement in SDG implementation & reviews in Asia & the Pacific").

³ Department of Local administration (DOLA) is currently assessing the active/inactive status of the ODSCs. Hence, the actual number might vary. The number of 44 ODSCs was reported to DOLA by the respect local authorities. However, DOLA has yet to perform assessment of their status; hence being unable to ascertain the status of the ODSCs at this point.

This Webinar also comes as an opportune time as MOHA is devising plans to support the ODSCs in transitioning to adopting the ODSC Framework, which has been developed and approved in principle in 2018 by the former Minister of MOHA. Therefore, the discussions resulting from this Webinar will be invaluable inputs for MOHA.

2. Objectives

This Webinar aims to achieve the following three objectives:

- To highlight the success factors and challenges of the ODSCs as well as their priorities so that the findings can inform the potential roadmap and interventions for ODSCs in Lao PDR
- To provide an opportunity for networking among the ODSCs
- To introduce the overview of the ODSC Framework to the ODSCs Offices.

3. Date and Agenda

The Webinar will take place on 6 April 2021 from 14:00 – 16:00 (Lao Time)

To facilitate the ODSCs to join and contribute productively to the Webinar, each ODSC office will provide a venue for the ODSC staff to join the Webinar. There will also be a live interpretation between Lao and English via the Zoom live interpretation function.

Time	Details	In-charge
14:00 – 14:05	Opening remarks by DG. Mr. Nisith Keopanya, NGPAR	DG. Mr. Nisith Keopanya, NGPAR
14:05 – 14:10	Opening remarks by DDG. Mr. Laty Phimmachack, DOLA	DDG. Mr. Laty Phimmachack, DOLA
14:10 – 14:15	Opening remarks by UNDESA and UNDP	Mr. Bokyun Shim, Head of UN Project Office on Governance (UNPOG) of DPIDG/UN DESA Ms. Catherine Phuong, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP Lao PDR
14:15 – 14:25	Video presentation of ODSC Framework	Facilitated by Sanva Saephan, Senior Consultant

14:25 – 14:35	Presentation on the overview of success, challenges and priorities of ODSCs in Lao PDR	Sanva Saephan, Senior Consultant
14:35 – 15:15	Presentation by 2 ODSCs on the detailed account of their success factors, challenges, and priority development plans. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saysettha ODSC • Bachieng ODSC 	
15:15 – 15:50	Open discussions or reactions from UNDESA/UNPOG, Public Digital, UNDP, ODSCs and other participants	Facilitated by Sanva Saephan, Senior Consultant
15:50 – 16:00	Closing remarks by DG. Mr. Nisith Keopanya, NGPAR	DG. Mr. Nisith Keopanya, NGPAR

4. Participation and Preparation

To make this Webinar a productive and practical session, MOHA will invite concerned development partners such as UNDP and UN DESA as well as and Public Digital to provide their insights on the success, challenges and priority development plans of ODSCs.

The following questions will be sent to the ODSCs in advance so that their responses can be synthesized to be presented at the Webinar.

1. What is the greatest success of your ODSC?
2. Which aspect of your ODSC are you most proud of?
3. How do you rate the current performance of your ODSC? Why?
4. What are the current top 3 challenges of your ODSC?
5. What interventions do you prioritise to improve your ODSC?
6. What are the development capacity support do you expect to receive?