



**United Nations**

Department of  
Economic and  
Social Affairs

In cooperation with the Resident  
Coordinator Office and UNDP in  
Lao People's Democratic Republic



# Inter-ministerial Policy Workshop on Implementing the One-Door-Service Centers in Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR)

## November 2021





# **Implementing One-Door-Service Centers in Lao People's Democratic Republic**

**Outcome Report of the Inter-ministerial Policy Workshop  
on Implementing the One-Door-Service Centers in Lao  
People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR)**

**November 2021**

## **United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs**

The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat is a vital interface between global policies in the economic, social, and environmental spheres and national action. The department works in three main interlinked areas: (i) it compiles, generates, and analyses a wide range of economic, social, and environmental data and information on which States Members of the United Nations draw to review common problems and to take stock of policy options; (ii) it facilitates the negotiations of Member States in many intergovernmental bodies on a joint course of action to address ongoing or emerging global challenges; and (iii) it advises interested Governments on the ways and means of translating policy frameworks developed in United Nations conferences and summits into programmes at the country level and, through technical assistance, helps build national capacities.

### **Disclaimers**

The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The views expressed are those of the individual authors and do not imply any expression of opinion on the part of the United Nations.

Copyright © United Nations, 2021

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without prior permission. Websites: [publicadministration.un.org](http://publicadministration.un.org) and [unpan.un.org](http://unpan.un.org)

## Acknowledgments

This report provides an overview of the key findings of the "Inter-ministerial Policy Workshop on Implementing the One-Door-Service Centers in Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR)" organized on 23 November 2021 by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Lao People's Democratic Republic, in partnership with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), through the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG) and its project office -United Nations Project Office on Governance (UNPOG), and in collaboration with the Resident Coordinators Office (RCO) in Lao PDR and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The workshop was supported by UN DESA's Development Account Project 1819G on "Institutional arrangements for policy integration, coordination, and stakeholder engagement in SDG implementation and reviews in Asia & the Pacific."

We are grateful to H. E. Mr. Thongchanh Manixay, Minister of Home Affairs and H.E. Mr. Nisith Keopanya, Deputy Minister of Home Affairs (MOHA), Lao PDR, and his team from MOHA and the Department of Local Administration (DOLA) for the invaluable time and contribution to the workshop as well as to the Prime Minister's Office and the 18 deputy ministers from the Government of Lao that actively took part in the event.

Under the responsibility of Juwang Zhu, Director of DPIDG, the UN DESA team was led by Adriana Alberti, Chief, Programme Management and Capacity Development Unit, and Bokyun Shim, Head of UNPOG, with the support of Keping Yao, Prabin Maharjan, Samuel Danaa, Hye Yong Kim, Markus Johannes Zock, Hye Kyung Choi (Shelley), Wooyoung Kim. Sanva Saephan and Souvannadara Souvannasane, both UN DESA consultants, supported the organization of the workshop and acted as facilitators. Aslam Alam, Chairman, and Executive Director, Bangladesh Institute for Information Literacy and Sustainable Development, and UN DESA consultant, also contributed to the event's organization and facilitation.

Likewise, we are indebted to Ms. Sara Sekkenes, UN Resident Coordinator to Lao PDR, and Ms. Ricarda Rieger, Resident Representative of UNDP in Lao, for their excellent collaboration.

The high-level opening remarks were delivered by H. E. Mr. Thongchanh Manixay, Minister of Home Affairs Lao PDR, Ms. Sara Sekkenes, UN Resident Coordinator to Lao PDR, and Mr. Juwang Zhu, Director, DPIDG / UN DESA.

Special thanks go to the speakers, including Mr. Bounchan Niyavong, Director General of Department of Local Administration, Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA), Lao PDR, Ms. Adriana Alberti, Chief, Programme Management and Capacity Development Unit, DPIDG/UN DESA, Mr. Bokyun Shim, Head, UN Project Office on Governance (UNPOG), DPIDG/UN DESA, and Ms. Vilaythone Sounthonexaymongkhonh, Head of Cabinet, MOHA, Lao PDR.

This report benefited from the presentations, fruitful discussions, comments, and information provided by the workshop participants from the Prime Minister's Office and the seventeen ministries in Lao PDR.

## Table of Contents

<b>1. Overview of the Inter-Ministerial Policy Workshop .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2. Key Messages from the Opening Session .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>3. Decision-Making Session on Strengthening One Door Service Centers (ODSCs) For A Better Life for All .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>4. Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>5. Highlights from the Closing Session .....</b>	<b>11</b>

## **1. Overview of the Inter-Ministerial Policy Workshop**

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA), Lao PDR, in partnership with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), through its Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG) and with the support of its project office on governance (UNPOG), and in collaboration with the Resident Coordinator Office in Lao PDR and UNDP, organized an inter-ministerial technical workshop on One-Door-Service Centers (ODSCs) in Lao PDR. The inter-ministerial technical workshop on ODSC was supported by UN DESA's Development Account Project 1819G on "Institutional arrangements for policy integration, coordination, and stakeholder engagement in SDG implementation and reviews in Asia & the Pacific". The inter-ministerial policy workshop focused on (1) strengthening institutional coordination mechanisms at national and provincial/ district levels, (2) line ministry services delivered through ODSCs and fees charged, (3) leveraging digital technology and data governance for ODSCs, and (4) awareness-raising and citizen feedback on ODSCs.

The event was conducted virtually through the zoom platform. The event was internal for invited Lao officials and the UN only. The Minister of MOHA, Deputy Minister, and Senior Officials from 17 ministries participated in the workshop. The Inter-ministerial Policy Workshop is a follow-up to the Inter-ministerial Technical Workshop, attended by senior officials from 18 ministries (including Prime Minister's Office), and organized by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Lao PDR, on 28 October 2021.

## 2. Key Messages from the Opening Session

In his opening remarks, **H. E. Mr. Thongchanh Manixay, Minister of Home Affairs Lao PDR**, welcomed participants and thanked the UN DESA, UNDP, and UN RCO for holding the historical "Inter-ministerial Policy Workshop on Implementing One-Door-Service Centers". Mr. Manixay also held high regards for this event as it was unprecedented for MOHA to bring all the deputy ministers together to discuss on way forward for ODSCs.

Mr. Manixay mentioned some the key achievements of ODSCs in Lao PDR, especially the introduction of mobile application to ODSCs. Such development is currently being piloted in Saysettha ODSC and it is planned to roll it out to all the ODSCs. Despite the success of the mobile application, there are still a number of challenges that impede the effective functioning of the ODSCs. He urged all the participants to actively contribute to the discussions on key recommendations to bring ODSC forward and in line with the 9<sup>th</sup> National Social Economic Development Plan (NSED) of Lao PDR.

Mr. Manixay also expressed his gratitude to UN DESA, UNDP and UNRCO for organizing this event with MOHA and for always putting a high regard to the development of ODSCs in Lao PDR.

In her opening remarks, **Ms. Sara Sekkenes, UN Resident Coordinator to Lao PDR**, stressed the importance of integrated approaches for public service delivery for addressing development goals and citizen satisfaction. After many decades of development, cooperation, and public administration experiences, one of the key lessons learned across administrations around the world is that inter institutional cooperation among various ministries is essential given the complex cross-sectoral nature of public service itself. Without effective, accountable, inclusive public service delivery, there will be little progress in realizing the Sustainable Development Goals. Indeed, out of the 18 SDGs in Lao PDR, all goals have content related to public service delivery. Among the 169 Global SDG targets, more than 1/3 relate to public service delivery. And among the 238 National SDG indicators, this number will be even higher.

It is globally observed that governments are striving to advance public service delivery mechanisms, including through One-Door-Service Centers. The international experiences of one door service systems show that key benefits include increased citizen satisfaction and trust in governments, better regulatory delivery, and enhanced national competitiveness. These are all important for citizens themselves but will also be vital for the government in the context of the forthcoming graduation anticipated in 2026 from the status of a least developed country.

Despite challenges faced in recent weeks in the health sector, with a high number of confirmed cases needing care, the government of Lao PDR has faced limited challenges during the pandemic without causing any serious interruption in other service delivery. The continuation of all activities related to this project in support of SDG implementation followed a similar trend.

This project managed to advance an unprecedented novel meeting between One-Door-Service Centers across all 18 provinces. The project also consolidated the One-Door-Service Centers as a network, having initiated MOHA's support to an important peer-to-peer learning process with other countries. Many new initiatives under the support of UN DESA and UNDP are being pilot tested successfully at the Saysettha District ODSC, which will be replicated all the One-Door-Service Centers across the country.

MOHA has already developed the ODSC strategic roadmap to guide its next phase with a focus on digitalization. According to UN experience, strategic roadmaps require political commitment and strong coordination between different ministries and between supporting entities. Ms. Sekkenes stressed the importance of the Inter-ministerial Policy Workshop and underscored that it provided a crucial inter-ministerial dimension to public service delivery. She ensured that under the 2022-2026 Lao PDR-UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), the UN would strive for comprehensive, integrated solutions across the support delivered by UN entities.

In most countries, the effectiveness of institutional coordination through inter-ministerial mechanisms reporting to higher national decision-making levels has been fundamental to advancing sustainable development and public service delivery. The key to the discussions and going forward will be a deeper look into how One-Door-Service Centers are operationalized across all ministries, the practical measures needed to coordinate across ministries at the central level, and down to local service delivery at the district level.

Ms. Sekkenes stressed that one of the most critical starting points for ODSCs' coordination is developing a common mindset across ministries that focuses on putting citizens at the center of public service delivery and ensuring that it starts at the highest level of government, filtering through all levels of the public sector. The UN will spare no efforts to continue supporting the government in its important activities to implement the activities needed to attain the sustainable development goals and deliver better services for all within the context of the ninth national socio-economic development plan, which underpins the collaboration outlined in 2022-2026 Lao PDR-UNSDCF.

The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Lao PD will continue to collaborate closely with UN DESA to ensure MOHA and all ministries have the support to meet the ambition set out in the 9th National Socioeconomic Development Plan (NSED) for a nationwide rollout of the ODSCs. Similarly, the UNCT will ensure that all relevant entities are linked up to the whole government approach in public service delivery, maximizing the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery to the benefit of the population of Lao PDR.

**Mr. Juwang Zhu**, Director of DPIDG / UN DESA, delivered opening remarks on behalf of Mr. Liu Zhenmin, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs. He commended the government of Lao PDR for its dedication to advancing a holistic approach to effective and inclusive service delivery for the benefit of all people in Lao PDR. Mr. Zhu shared some of the key messages from the Inter-ministerial Technical Workshop as follows:

- A whole-of-government approach is essential for the effective implementation of ODSCs
- The commitment of the Government of Lao PDR to putting people at the center of development will promote people-centered services
- Effective, inclusive, and accountable ODSCs can help mitigate current and future challenges in public service delivery and achieve higher citizen satisfaction
- ODSCs can create a streamlined and easy-to-use interface between government and citizens, offering a number of services in one location
- The most significant developments in the design and functioning of ODSCs are linked to digital transformation
- Designing and implementing ODSCs requires upfront and ongoing investment and a change in public servants' mindset on the need to focus on citizens' needs and results



He also noted with appreciation that the Inter-ministerial Technical Workshop resulted in follow-up actions to:

- Establish relevant institutional mechanisms to facilitate inter-ministerial coordination and effective implementation of the Presidential Decree 02 for effective services
- Raise awareness and accessibility of information on ODSCs
- Ensure transparent and effective service delivery to citizens –increasing revenue and accountability
- Have a clear e-Government framework, including a digital government strategy, digital security strategy, and national data strategy
- Transform the ODSC system by leveraging ICTs and developing an online system for data integration and coherent decision-making
- Address the digital divide by improving access to the Internet and electronic devices
- Shift mindsets in the public sector to transform the way services are provided and improve people’s well-being
- Introduce different training programmes to improve the capacity of the government officials and support citizens in accessing ODSCs
- Increase the availability of services for citizens to access more services
- Involve citizens in the process of delivering services

Mr. Zhu highlighted that that one of the 11 principles of effective governance for sustainable development, developed by the UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration and endorsed by the United Nations Economic and Social Council in 2018, advocates for collaboration and coordination. It calls on institutions at all levels of government and in all sectors to work together and jointly with non-state actors towards the same objective. He noted that the government’s decision to hold this inter-ministerial policy workshop is a step in the right direction towards effective governance in Lao PDR.

In concluding his remarks, Mr. Zhu reiterated that UN DESA would continue to work with colleagues in the Resident Coordinator's Office, UNDP, and partners in other parts of the UN system to support Lao in its efforts to strengthen capacities to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through effective public service delivery.

### 3. Decision-Making Session on Strengthening One Door Service Centers (ODSCs) For A Better Life for All

The session proposed recommendations on three agenda items as follows:

- Agenda 1: Strengthening institutional coordination mechanism at national and provincial/ district levels
  - **Recommendation 1.1:** Recognized that developing/strengthening institutional coordination mechanisms at the national and district level is critical for effective public service delivery through ODSCs.
  - **Recommendation 1.2:** Resolved that an inter-ministerial policy/ steering committee, membership of which will be at Minister/ Deputy Minister level, be formed with a secretariat at the MOHA to promote coherent and integrated planning, policymaking, monitoring, and evaluation of the ODSC initiative as well as to promote investment (with clear budget allocation, enhancing capacities of officials at all levels, changing mindsets), and to facilitate effective implementation of the Presidential Decree 02 for effective services.
  - **Recommendation 1.3:** Resolved that an appropriate coordination mechanism be formed at each province/ district.
- Agenda 2: Line ministry services delivered through ODSCs and fees charged
  - **Recommendation 2.1:** Resolved that guidance will be issued regarding line ministry services and uniform fees in consultation with the policy/ steering committee.
- Agenda 3: Leveraging digital technology and data governance for ODSCs
  - **Recommendation 3.1:** Resolved that the Ministry of Post, Telecommunication and Communication will take measures to connect the ODSC system to the national e-Government framework.
  - **Recommendation 3.2:** Resolved that appropriate measures will be taken to create ICT infrastructures for ODSCs.

## 4. Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions

The respective ministries agreed on the proposed recommendations and rendered their support to MOHA in chartering ODSCs into the next phase of development.

MOHA will prepare an outcome report of the workshop and submit the proposed recommendations to the Prime Minister Office for guidance and endorsement. This process is expected to be completed by January 2022. MOHA will subsequently act upon the guidance and directions of the Prime Minister Office.

## 5. Highlights from the Closing Session

**Mr. Bokyun Shim**, Head, UN Project Office on Governance (UNPOG), DPIDG/UN DESA, underscored that the Inter-Ministerial Policy Workshop is a major historical event in the promotion of the ODSC project in Lao PDR.

Mr. Shim emphasized that the recommendations need to be transformed into action, and that the citizens in Lao PDR should be made aware of the new approaches of citizen-centric services models. The transformation of ODSCs will create many opportunities for citizens to promote this project and enable citizen ideas and perspectives to be included in a citizen-centric service delivery model. Involving citizens in the design and delivery of public services by engaging them sends a proactive message that their views and opinions matter and has been found to engender trust and confidence in government. Therefore, it is hoped that the government, citizens, and experts will work together to create this project and demonstrate collective intelligence to take root in the local community and become a symbolic project of the government that is loved and trusted.

Mr. Shim expected that the participants would revisit the principles of effective governance, for strengthening the ODSC project such as awareness-raising, digital transformation, data governance, streamlining business procedure, leadership, ownership, and transparency. Mr. Shim highlighted that this project would be fully developed and trusted by the citizens. He noted that he looks forward to seeing recommendations turn into actions and serving the citizens better. He anticipated that the ODSCs in Lao could become an excellent model for public service delivery with high satisfaction from the population.

Mr. Shim emphasized that DPIDG/UN DESA, together with its partners, is committed to promoting and supporting the government of Lao PDR's capacity development through demand-driven and solutions-driven partnerships.

**Mr. Thongchanh Manixay, Minister of Home Affairs Lao PDR**, in his closing remarks, thanked UNDESA, UNRCO and UNDP for their continuous support and commitment towards the ODSC development in Lao PDR. Mr. Manixay also thanked the respective deputy ministers and their representatives for their commitment and fruitful discussions.

Despite some achievements, ODSCs are still confronted with many challenges. Mr. Manixay emphasized the importance of overcoming those challenges from a whole-of-government approach that required concerted efforts and leadership from all the ministries. The provision

of public service delivery should be at the heart and existence of the government. Mr. Manixay emphasized the historical and symbolic significance of this event and encouraged all the participants to act upon the proposed recommendations resulting from the workshop.