

United Nations
Resident Coordinator Annual Report 2000
Lao PDR



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Foreword

I am pleased to present the 2000 United Nations Resident Coordinator Annual Report for the Lao PDR. The report was prepared in collaboration with all United Nations programmes and specialized agencies operating in the Lao PDR and in line with the 2000 Guidelines for the Annual Report of the Resident Coordinator.

This report highlights the impact of collaborative UN System activities in 2000, status of the implementation of the UN Secretary-General's Programme for Reform in the Lao PDR, and our plans for further collective efforts in 2001 in support of national development objectives and priorities.

Kari Nordheim-Larsen
UN Resident Coordinator

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Part One of the Annual Report

1.1 Introduction and Methodology for Preparation of the Report

The 2000 Resident Coordinator Annual Report was prepared by the Office of the Resident Coordinator in close collaboration with the United Nations Country Team (UNCT), including both resident and non-resident UN System agencies, Bretton Woods Institutions, and the Asian Development Bank, that became member of the UNCT in November 2000. The report was also prepared in accordance with the 2000 Annual Report Guidelines distributed by the UNDP Administrator and UNDG on 18 December 2000.

In December 2000 the Office of the Resident Coordinator distributed the 2000 Annual Report Guidelines to the UNCT. The preparation of the Annual Report was discussed by the UNCT at the monthly meeting of 4 January 2001. The Resident Coordinator encouraged all agency representatives to actively participate in the Annual Report process, including self-assessment by the Country Team and development of the 2001 RC Work Plan. The Office of the Resident Coordinator was charged with facilitating and preparing a first draft of the Annual Report in close consultation with the UNCT.

On the basis of the 2000 Annual Report Guidelines, the Office of the Resident Coordinator began with a review of the 2000 Work Plan. With the full support of the UNCT, the Office of the Resident Coordinator carried out an evaluation of UN collaborative activities undertaken within the framework of the Resident Coordinator System in 2000, including a review of inter-agency support to national development objectives and the implementation of the UN Secretary-General's Programme for Reform. Based on the review of the 2000 Work Plan, the Office of the Resident Coordinator prepared a preliminary Work Plan for the year 2001.

The Office of the Resident Coordinator distributed a first draft of the Annual Report to the UNCT for discussion in February 2001. The UNCT reviewed the draft and submitted comments and suggestions. The Office of the Resident Coordinator then incorporated additional comments made by the UNCT into a revised draft which was subsequently approved for publication by the UNCT.

1.2 Strategic Implications of Recent Political and Socio-Economic Trends for United Nations System Development Assistance. Overview of UN System Cooperation

Following the launching of reforms under the New Economic Mechanism (NEM) in 1986, which targeted at transforming the economy from a centrally planned to a market oriented system, and a sustained period of relatively stable macroeconomic management, the Lao PDR was able to share many of the benefits of the "Asian miracle". Real economic growth averaged almost 7 percent per year from 1990 to 1997, and it appears that the poor were among the most important beneficiaries, with the incidence of poverty falling from 45 to 39 percent between 1992/93 and 1997/98.¹ Nevertheless, the Lao PDR remains a poor country, and depends on many more years of such growth to provide the conditions for continued poverty reduction.

¹ Lao Expenditure and Consumption Surveys (LECS) I and II, National Statistics Centre

The Lao PDR joined the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1997. As a full member of ASEAN, the Lao PDR is committed to implementing the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) Common Effective Protection Tariff Scheme (CEPT), which involves the reduction of tariffs and the removal of non-tariff barriers on designated products by 2005. The 13th ASEAN - European Union Ministerial Meeting under the co-chairmanship of the Lao PDR and France, acting as Presidency of the Council of EU, took place in Vientiane on 11-12 December 2000. The Lao PDR pursued active foreign relations programmes, including the visits by the President of China and Prime Ministers of Vietnam and Thailand.

Also, in 1997 the Lao PDR announced its desire to join the World Trade Organization (WTO) and is currently moving forward with preparations for accession. In 2000, with assistance from AusAID and UNDP, the Government prepared a strategic plan and established a Lao National Committee for WTO Accession. The memorandum for accession has been finalized for submission to WTO.

Like all other countries throughout the South-East Asian region, the Lao economy suffered from the negative effects of the Asian economic crisis. Although the agricultural sector provided some resiliency, especially in the early stages of the crisis when world prices of rice remained high, the crisis had severe impact on macroeconomic management. Major revenue shortfalls in the public sector, combined with the large increases in off-budget public investment expenditures on rural infrastructure, led to serious and largely unintended monetary and inflationary consequences.

The inflation rate began to accelerate in early 1998, reaching a peak of 167 percent in March 1999. Month to month inflation rates remained high until August 1999. Monetary-induced inflation led to a massive fall in the nominal value of the Kip and a smaller but significant decline in its real value. In July 1999 the Kip reached its lowest point representing only 14.8 percent of its pre-crisis value relative to the Thai Baht.²

The large changes in price levels and the exchange rate had significant differential effects across socio-economic groups. Workers relying on inflexible nominal wages, most notably those on government salaries, suffered from incomplete adjustment of their incomes to rising consumer prices. Private sector wages have tended to be more flexible than in the public sector. As urban residents are much more dependent on wage income than those in rural areas, the burden of adjustment to lower wages fell disproportionately on urban areas. Fiscal pressures resulted in reduced expenditures on social and human resource development. Combined with increased prices for basic commodities and social services, these budget cuts had a significant effect on most vulnerable groups.

Strong fiscal and monetary measures, initiated in the final months of 1999, have laid the foundations for renewed macroeconomic stability. Since September 1999 month to month inflation rates have remained extremely low and sometimes negative, a trend now reflected in a declining annual inflation rate. The Kip appreciated, in nominal and real terms, and has remained stable (relative to the Baht). However, despite this commendable achievement, macroeconomic stabilization remains fragile, and further progress is required to maintain recent hard-won gains.

An immediate challenge facing the Lao PDR is to continue market-based reforms in order to strengthen macro-economic management, ensure a sustainable platform for economic growth, and provide an enabling environment for the development of private sector. At the same time

² UNDP Development Cooperation Report (DCR) 1999

it is essential to maintain broad investments in poverty reduction programmes, including education, health and rural development, and improve the quality of, and access to, basic social services.

On the political side, in September 2000 the Lao People's Revolutionary Party (LPRP) Central Committee convened for its 12th plenum session, and on 29 September - 4 October 2000 the National Assembly convened for the 6th session of the fourth legislature (the current term of the National Assembly expires in December 2002). The National Assembly heard reports on the economic development plan and budget plan for 1999/2000, as well as on the forthcoming economic plan and budget covering 2000/01. On 2 December 2000 the Lao PDR commemorated its 25th anniversary. The two main political events scheduled in the near future are the Seventh Party Congress in 2001 and the National Assembly elections in 2002.

The Seventh Round Table Meeting (RTM) of development partners for the Lao PDR was organized jointly by the Government and UNDP from 20-22 November 2000, attended by over 250 representatives of donor countries, EU, multilateral financial institutions, UN System, and NGOs. For the first time the RTM was held in Vientiane.

The RTM in the Lao PDR has progressively evolved from an one time event towards an ongoing cyclical process, involving stakeholder dialogue on national strategies for agriculture, rural development, health, education, roads, forestry, and macroeconomic management, as well as aid management and absorptive capacity issues. The development partners reaffirmed their commitment to support the Lao PDR in alleviating poverty, and graduating from the LDC's status by the year 2020. Many development partners announced firm commitments in the form of loans and grant aid and made specific pledges totaling approximately US\$ 385 millions for the year 2001. This figure is higher than the commitments made at the Sixth RTM in 1997.

Official Development Assistance (ODA) inflows play a central role in the Lao economy. In 1998, disbursement of ODA to the Lao PDR, inclusive of both grants and loans, totaled US\$ 302 million.³ Between 1995 and 1998, ODA has increased from 11.6 to 17.8 percent of GDP. Long-term loan disbursements have been the fastest growing component, increasing from 5.5 to 11.9 percent of GDP.

In 1998, grants accounted for 60.9 percent of the total ODA disbursed. Bilateral donors represented the primary source of grant contributions, with Japan, Sweden, USA, Germany and Australia being the country's top five donors.

The transport sector continued to receive the largest share of ODA, accounting for some 24.3 percent of total external assistance in 1998. Infrastructure development and the construction of transport and communications networks, particularly road transport, has been identified by the Government of the Lao PDR as one of the eight priority programmes.⁴ Human resource development received the second largest share of ODA, accounting for some 10.6 percent of total assistance. Several other sectors also received significant ODA contributions, including agriculture, forestry and fisheries (9.7 percent), economic management (9.6 percent), development administration (8.5 percent), and energy (8.4 percent, representing a decrease from 16 percent in 1997).

³ All data is drawn from UNDP Development Cooperation Report (DCR) 1999. Other sources of development assistance information may yield different statistics. ODA figures for 1999/2000 not yet available.

⁴ The 1996-2000 Socio-Economic Development Plan outlines the eight national priority programmes: food production, commercial production, stabilization of shifting cultivation, rural development, infrastructure development, external relations and cooperation, human resource development, and services development.

In 1998, the UN System contributed approximately US\$ 17.2 million in both grants and loans to the Lao PDR, whilst the World Bank provided over US\$ 24.7 million, other IFI's (including IMF and the Asian Development Bank) contributions totaled over US\$ 75.2 million, and non-UN System multilateral assistance accounted for nearly US\$ 15 million.

The UN System continues to provide support to the Government of the Lao PDR in the implementation of its national priority programmes within the context of the transformation from a centrally planned to a market orientated economy. The UN System works in a wide range of fields to promote poverty eradication and sustainable development including governance, education, health, rural development, food security, environment, drug control and refugee assistance, with particular emphasis placed on women and children.

The multi-disciplinary expertise, cross-sectoral cooperation and unparalleled breadth of experience gained from forty years of active participation in the development process makes the UN System a trusted partner of the Government of the Lao PDR. The impartiality of the UN System places it in an excellent position to effectively provide important policy advice on many sensitive issues. The close relationship between the UN System and the Government has also been pivotal in bringing forth participatory development projects that aim to build long-term sustainability and national ownership.

1.3 Results Achieved from United Nations Collaborative Activities in Support of National Development Objectives and Priorities

A. Integrated Follow-up to Global United Nations Conferences

During 2000 the UNCT continued to provide support to the Government of the Lao PDR to ensure an integrated and coordinated follow-up to, and monitoring of the objectives, goals and targets emerging from the major UN World Conferences and Summits of the 1990s. The special attention was given to the seven goals endorsed by the Millennium Summit in September 2000, as representing the key dimensions of human poverty.

The CCA process provided the UNCT with a platform to monitor outcomes of the World Conferences at the national level, and assess congruence of national policies with the global World Conference commitments. The CCA was used as a basis for undertaking an analysis of the World Conference follow-up initiatives, and an examination of the progress made towards implementation of the global development agenda at the national level. The World Conference goals and objectives provided benchmarks for the situation analysis undertaken within the framework of the CCA process, with the World Conference targets forming the backbone of the CCA Indicator Framework.

National Progress in Achieving the Goals of the Millennium Summit

| Goals | National Progress |
|--|---|
| Halve the proportion of people living in extreme poverty between 1990 and 2015 | The overarching goal of the Government of the Lao PDR is to free the country from underdevelopment and quit the status of Least Developed Country by the year 2020, through sustainable and equitable development. ⁵ |

⁵ Socio-Economic Development and Investment Requirements 1997-2000

| | |
|---|---|
| Enroll all children in primary school by 2015 | <p>In 1999, approximately 70% of villages had access to some grades of primary school. Among these primary schools, 64.2% were incomplete, and 35.8% offered a complete primary school education, mostly in large villages close to roads.⁶</p> <p>More than 4,000 rural villages have no access to primary schools.⁷</p> |
| Empower women and eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 | <p>In 1997/8, the net primary education rate of school age children (6-10 years) was 76.2%: male 79.8%, and female 72.4%.⁸ The same rate for 1997 was 68.5%: male 70.2%, and female 66.6%.⁹</p> <p>In 1997/8, the gross enrolment (combined primary, secondary and tertiary education) rate was 57%: male 62%, and female 48%.¹⁰</p> |
| Reduce infant (IMR) and child mortality rates (CMR) by two-thirds between 1990 and 2015 | <p>For the period 1995-1999, the IMR was 82 (urban 42, and rural 87) deaths per 1,000 live births.¹¹</p> <p>In 1995, the IMR was 104 deaths per 1,000 live births. The IMR by province ranged from 72 to 1,000 (Vientiane Municipality) to 138 per 1,000 (Xaysomboune). The IMR also varies considerably between rural areas (127 per 1,000) and urban areas (68 per 1,000).¹²</p> <p>For the period 1995-1999, the CMR (1-5 years) was 25 deaths per 1,000 live births (urban 7, and rural 27).¹³</p> <p>For the period 1989-1994, the CMR was 33 deaths per 1,000 live births (male 47, female 50, urban 15, and rural 56). Between 1984-1994 the CMR dropped by about 52%.¹⁴</p> |
| Reduce maternal mortality ratio (MMR) by three-quarters between 1990 and 2015 | <p>In 2000, the MMR was 530 per 100,000 births (urban 170, and rural 580).¹⁵</p> <p>In 1998, the MMR was 650 per 100,000 births.¹⁶</p> <p>In 1994, the MMR was 653 per 100,000 births.¹⁷</p> |
| Provide access for all who need reproductive health services by 2015 | <p>In 2000, 77% of all women had heard of a modern method of contraception. In the same year, 78.6% of women currently married (urban 96.0%, and rural 75.2%) were reported as knowing a modern contraceptive method¹⁸, compared to 69.4%</p> |

⁶ Education for All Assessment 2000

⁷ National Human Development Report 1998

⁸ Education for All Assessment 2000

⁹ Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS I) 1997

¹⁰ UNDP Human Development Report 2000

¹¹ Reproductive Health Survey 2000

¹² National Census 1995

¹³ Reproductive Health Survey 2000

¹⁴ Fertility and Birth Spacing Survey 1994

¹⁵ Reproductive Health Survey 2000

¹⁶ UNDP Human Development Report 1999

¹⁷ Social Development Information Project (LAO/95/003)

¹⁸ Reproductive Health Survey 2000

¹⁹ Fertility and Birth Spacing Survey 1994

²⁰ Reproductive Health Survey 2000

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>of married women in 1994.¹⁹</p> <p>In 2000, 37.2% (urban 58.2%, and rural 33.1%) of women currently married had ever used a modern birth spacing method²⁰, compared to 20.9% (urban 42.9%, and rural 15.3%) of married women in 1994.²¹</p> |
| <p>Implement national strategies for sustainable development by 2005, so as to reverse the loss of environmental resources by 2015</p> | <p>In 1999, the number of National Biodiversity Conservation Areas increased to 20, covering the total land of 3,313,596 ha, compared to 18 in 1993.²²</p> <p>In 1999, the number of species of national and/or global conservation significance was 319/1,140.²³</p> <p>In 1989, in the Lao PDR current forest covered 47.2% of total land area, compared to 49.1% in 1982. Net loss of current forest was 470,000 ha with an annual loss of 67,000 ha in 1982-1989.²⁴</p> |

The UNCT, led by UNICEF, UNESCO and UNDP, provided support to the Government of the Lao PDR on follow-up to the World Conference on Education for All (EFA). The support was given to a broad range of education initiatives in line with EFA objectives, including the collection of statistical data on education, and assistance with preparations for the Global EFA Conference in Dakar in April 2000.

In follow-up to the World Summit for Children (WSC), the UNCT led by UNICEF provided support to the National Commission for Mothers and Children (NCMC) in finalizing the Government's WSC End-Decade Review. The Multiple Indicator Survey (MICS) presented up-to-date figures related to health, education, water, sanitation and child protection. As an important achievement, the Lao PDR was declared Polio Free in October 2000. Previously, polio had been one of the leading causes of disability amongst children, and its eradication will have a significant impact on reducing the incidence of disability.

Important improvements were also encountered in the health sector. The Lao Reproductive Health Survey 2000 showed decreases in Infant, Under-five (0-5 years), Child (1-5 years) and Maternal Mortality Rates, which dropped to 82/1,000, 107/1,000, 25/1,000 and 530/100,000 respectively. The coverage of the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) reached 95 percent of villages in 2000. A survey on household and retail salt found adequate iodine levels in 95 percent of all salt tested, demonstrating progress towards the Universal Salt Iodization (USI). Good results were also achieved in breastfeeding with five Baby Friendly Hospitals accredited and 95 percent of Lao women breastfeeding their infants.

In the area of Water and Environmental Sanitation (WES), in 1999 the safe drinking water coverage rate reached 53 percent of population (urban 49, and rural 54 percent). In the same year, the sanitation coverage rate for the population was 42 percent (urban 75, and rural 34 percent).²⁵

²¹ Fertility and Birth Spacing Survey 1994

²² International Union for Conservation of Nature 1999

²³ Wildlife in the Lao PDR 1999

²⁴ National Reconnaissance Survey 1989

²⁵ Nam Papa / Nam Saat

UNICEF and the UNCT supported the Government in the organization of a number of actions designed to commemorate the Tenth Anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), including national celebration of the International Children's Day. A committee was established under the leadership of the NCMC for preparation of the Government's Second CRC Report to be submitted in 2001. The CRC Committee and NCMC Secretariat took an active interest in the most critical CRC issues, including tackling the problems of child soldiers, trafficking in women and children, juvenile justice and drug abuse. The CRC Resource Centre was open at the Ministry of Justice to disseminate the CRC related materials and resources. In addition, efforts were made to strengthen the Provincial Commissions for Mothers and Children (PCMCs).

The maternal mortality in the Lao PDR remains amongst the highest in the region, with 530 women dying each year from pregnancy and childbirth complications for every 100,000 children born alive. Women's high fertility rate (an average of 4.9 children per woman²⁶) is one of the reasons for their lower educational attainment, lower literacy and limited access to social services. The National Fertility and Birth Spacing Survey supported by UNFPA in 1994 revealed a large unmet need for contraceptive services throughout the country. In response to this, the Ministry of Health began establishing Birth Spacing services at 13 provincial and 71 district hospitals/MCH centres. Under its second Country Programme (1997-2001) UNFPA has extended family planning and reproductive health services to over 500 health facilities throughout the country.

The UNCT lead by UNFPA assisted the Government in follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the ICPD +5 review meeting. In particular, UNFPA and the UNCT assisted in the development of an action plan for the implementation of the first National Population and Development Policy of the Lao PDR, marking a shift in the Government's policy on population and reproductive health, which recognizes the importance of improving the health of the population in general, and of mothers and children in particular, balancing social and economic growth, whilst guaranteeing choice, access and quality of services.

The UNCT continued to place a particular focus on the integration of gender strategies in the UN development programmes. In 2000 the UNCT supported the Lao Women's Union in preparation of the report on the implementation of Beijing Platform for Action for the Beijing +5 review (June 2000) of the Fourth World Conference on Women, and completion of the report on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (for more details please refer to section 1.3 C. Gender of this report).

In follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development (WSSD), the UNCT provided support to the Government in preparations for the UN General Assembly Special Session on follow-up to the WSSD in 2000. In line with the 20/20 initiative adopted under the auspices of the WSSD, the Government of the Lao PDR is committed to allocate at least 20 percent of the national budget to social programmes, in particular, education, health and social welfare. Under PIP II (1996-2000) the Government allocated 24.6 percent of its public expenditure (investment and recurrent costs) to the social sectors (education 9.7, public health 8.1, and social welfare 6.8 percent), compared to 10.5 percent (education 6.6, public health 3.5, and social welfare 0.4 percent) under PIP I (1991-1995).²⁷

²⁶ Reproductive Health Survey 2000

²⁷ Public Investment Plan I (1991-1995) / Public Investment Plan II (1996-2000)

The UNCT continued to provide support to the Government to follow-up on the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) through assistance with the development of a greenhouse gas inventory and a strategy and action plan for greenhouse gas mitigation, as well as preparation of the Lao PDR's first communication to the Conference of Parties (COP) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2000.

The UNCT provided support to the Government on follow-up to the International Conference on Nutrition and World Food Summit, assisting in the preparation and implementation of the Strategic Vision for Agricultural Sector, implementation of the National Environmental Plan, and the National Programme for Food Security.

In addition, the UNCT, lead by ILO and UNDP, provided assistance to the Lao Front for National Construction and the Leading Committee on Rural Development in translating the ILO Convention 169 on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, organizing workshops to raise awareness of the Government's policy on ethnic minorities, and submitting the Convention for ratification by the Government.

In late 2000 the HIV/AIDS Theme Groups initiated support for the national level preparations for the upcoming UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS in June 2001.

B. Halving Extreme Poverty and Girls' Education Initiatives

The UNCT in the Lao PDR is committed to implementing the Halving Extreme Poverty and Girls' Education initiatives launched by the Secretary-General and endorsed by the ACC. The preparation of the Lao PDR Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, and the Girls' Education project can serve as examples of UN System action in support of these two key initiatives.

Halving Extreme Poverty

The UNCT fully supports the Government of the Lao PDR's commitment to graduate from the Least Developed Country (LDC) status by the year 2020. The eradication of poverty lays at the core of the UN Programme for Reform and forms a basis for a number of initiatives being undertaken by the UN System, including the CCA and UNDAF processes, coordinated follow-up to the World Conferences, and joint UN public information and advocacy initiatives, such as the annual UN Development Award issued in recognition of poverty eradication and SHD achievements.

The Lao PDR was scheduled to produce an Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (I-PRSP) within the year 2000, and a full Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) by the end of 2001. The completion of these papers is mandatory in terms of eligibility for concessional assistance from IMF and the World Bank. The completion of the PRSP process is given high priority by the Lao Government, who wishes to move quickly towards restarting its IMF programme and, therefore, to gain access to Poverty Reduction Grant Facility (PRGF).

In February 2000 UNDP fielded a mission to discuss the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) and PRSP initiatives with the Government, and provided technical assistance for the preparation of the I-PRSP from April – September 2000, in close cooperation with IMF, the World Bank and Asian Development Bank. During the concluding phase of assistance, the agencies worked with the Technical Working Group comprised of representatives from the State Planning Committee, Committee for Investment and Cooperation, Ministry of Finance, Bank of the Lao PDR, Leading Committee for Rural Development, Lao Front for National Construction, Lao Women's Union, and Lao Federation of Trade Unions. The final drafting

process also allowed for further stakeholder consultations including those with several line Ministries and the National Assembly.

In addition to meetings and discussions with stakeholders, the development of the I-PRSP benefited from the activities conducted as part of the Round Table Meeting (RTM) process. The Round Table documents and results of dialogue on national strategies for agriculture, rural development, health, education, roads, forestry, macroeconomic management, and public investment programme were important inputs into the I-PRSP process.

There has been effective collaboration at country level between the World Bank, IMF, UNDP, ADB, WFP and other agencies and partners since the start of this process. All missions fielded to the Lao PDR that specifically relate to PRSP by any of these organizations have met with the other parties, and all strategies and other background documents have been shared. More specifically, the World Bank made available information relating to poverty assessment studies conducted in collaboration with the National Statistics Centre, the ADB provided good access to outputs from poverty related studies and strategies developed under its technical assistance, and WFP shared a different perspective of poverty and vulnerability analysis.

The I-PRSP was presented by the Government to IMF and the World Bank in December 2000. In addition, as part of the Round Table and I-PRSP processes, the ADB assisted the Government to conduct a Participatory Poverty Assessment, with the principal findings presented at the Seventh RTM. The ADB subsequently approved technical assistance to establish an effective mechanism for the monitoring of the level, intensity and geographic distribution of poverty in the Lao PDR.

As another important initiative, WFP and the UNCT, in cooperation with the National Statistics Centre, Prime Minister's Office and National Rural Development Committee, have been developing a better understanding of the extent and causes of vulnerability in the Lao PDR, particularly in relation to household food security. A number of studies were commissioned on poverty, food consumption patterns and food insecure areas. An initial vulnerability analysis mapping (VAM) exercise was undertaken in August 2000 based on the results of the studies. VAM used six simple indicators, four related to income sources and two social indicators to define vulnerability, including: i) rice production per capita; ii) villages' distance to road; iii) access to forest; iv) livestock; v) education; and vi) health. WFP plans to further refine its analysis to lead to an improved targeting and priority setting mechanism for both WFP programmes and the poverty analysis by the Government. VAM was also incorporated in the Government's proposal for a poverty alleviation strategy presented at the Seventh RTM.

Girls' Education

In the Lao PDR, nearly 38% of population aged 6+ years had never been to school: 28% of males compared to 47% of females.²⁸ The Girls' Education project was designed by UNICEF as part of a larger All Girls in School Program resulting from commitments taken by the Lao Government (Ministry of Education and Lao Women's Union) to the objective of girls' education. As there are no local NGOs in the Lao PDR, the Lao Women's Union (LWU), one of the four mass organizations, serves as the implementing arm of the Government for the Girls Education project in local villages.

²⁸ National Census 1995

The Girls' Education project is designed to raise national awareness of the importance of girls' gaining full access to education, and to build sustainable systems to ensure that girls become educated. Among project activities carried out in 2000 were: the village needs assessment, training of VDCs, gender training, establishment of five new school clusters, and multigrade teaching.

The village needs assessment, a strategic process for identifying the number of girls who do not enroll in school or drop out, and the underlying causes, was conducted with the participation of local villagers in 69 villages in five districts in five provinces. The cooperation at all levels led to the formation of five new school clusters to assist with the data collection, problem prioritizing and analysis. The data collected is used for planning a range of interventions to provide girls with better living conditions and a greater access to quality education. The Village Development Committees (VDCs), elected in all villages and 40 percent comprised of women, are charged with the role to assess issues relating to girls' education, access to literacy and training courses, and to investigate strategies for improving the current situation.

In 2000 the project conducted three workshops to train education staff and school teachers at central and provincial levels in gender awareness, Government's policy on gender, sharing of labour, employment opportunities for women, and social and traditional attitudes. In addition, the development and promotion of positive attitudes about girls and access to education are essential for the implementation of the Girls' Education project. Radio, TV and printed materials are developed to encourage parents to send their girls to school and increase girls' opportunities for receiving a good education.

In order to facilitate girl's greater access to a quality education, five new school clusters were established in five target districts and provinces through series of workshops involving school teachers and technical staff, pedagogical advisors, Parents and Pupils Associations (PPA), and representatives from the district and provincial Ministry of Education. The participants at each workshop reviewed the rules and guidelines for cluster development, selected Cluster Committees, and identified sites for construction of cluster Resource Centres.

The Girls' Education project has a particular focus on introducing the child-centred learning and multigrade teaching approaches to learning. Many small villages have incomplete schools (grade 1 and 2), and as a result, many children have to drop out after grade 2 because it is often too far to walk to a complete school. This particularly disadvantages girls in completing full 5 grades of basic education. Focusing on multigrade teaching development enables teachers to increase their capacity and provides better learning opportunities for girls in remote villages.

In remote, poor and food insecure areas, sending children, especially girls, to school is often seen as an unacceptable net cost by their parents. In light of this challenge, the Ministry of Education approached WFP to integrate food incentive and school feeding in its new girls' education initiative aiming to increase the education level of rural women and girls. In the proposed project, the role of food aid will be to:

- reduce the opportunity cost to poor households of maintaining girls in school through all primary education;
- increase enrollment rate, particularly of girls;
- encourage regular attendance through the whole school year; and
- increase school children's concentration by providing a healthy meal.

The proposed project will be implemented in remote, poor and food insecure areas where school attendance is very low and the gender gap between girl and boy attendance is high. The

WFP-MOE proposal will be submitted to the WFP Executive Director in February 2001. Through this project, WFP expects an increased enrollment rate of a minimum of 20 percent for boys and 35 percent for girls.

C. Cross-Cutting Issues

In 2000 the UN System in the Lao PDR continued to jointly address a number of development issues of a cross-cutting nature, including, among others, HIV/AIDS, gender, human rights, governance and UXO.

HIV/AIDS

The UN Integrated Work Plan on HIV/AIDS 2000-2001 was developed during a UN retreat for identifying the common goals, objectives and strategies in supporting the national response to HIV/AIDS epidemic. The main priorities of the national AIDS programme that receive support from the UN System and donors, include strengthening of the National Committee for the Control of AIDS (NCCA) and its provincial branches, development of national HIV/AIDS legislation and policies, implementation of sustainable surveillance and research programmes, condom promotion, care and support of people living with HIV/AIDS, and STD prevention and care.

The UNCT established a number of mechanisms to ensure a concerted and coordinated response to HIV/AIDS epidemic, including the HIV/AIDS Trust Fund and HIV/AIDS Theme Group (please refer to section 1.4 A. of this report). Among the most significant achievements of the UN System, Government and development partners in addressing HIV/AIDS are the Condom Social Marketing project implemented by PSI, which launched the “Number One” condom in all major provinces of the Lao PDR, the Behavioural Sentinel Surveillance (BSS) among service women, female factory workers, truck drivers, and male and female migrant workers in five provinces, the Generation Surveillance programme, and the Information Development project (InfoDEV), which provided access to and training on the use of e-mail and Internet for eight national partners in HIV/AIDS prevention.

The UNCT also supported the organization of various activities to mark the World AIDS Day in 2001. The International Anti-AIDS Music Festival, with the participation of popular music performers from Laos and all of its neighbours, Thailand, Myanmar, China, Vietnam and Cambodia, gathered a large audience at That Luang square of Vientiane capital. The song and drama performance and poster design competition, attended by over 200 youths from six villages and several high schools, took place at the Adolescent Drop-in Centre. The National University organized a debate between male and female students on the topic “AIDS: Men Make a Difference”.

Gender

The UNCT continued to place a particular focus on the integration of gender strategies in the UN development programmes. In 2000 the UNCT assisted the Lao Women’s Union in preparation of the report on the implementation of Beijing Platform for Action for the five-year Beijing +5 review (June 2000) of the Fourth World Conference on Women.

As other developments, the draft report on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was gathered into draft form by the LWU, and is nearing completion with the support of UNDP and SIDA funding. An inter-ministerial

working group on CEDAW was established to review and finalize the draft report, as well as to mainstream legislation and policies according to CEDAW provisions. The LWU also studied the CEDAW's Optional Protocol with a view to considering its ratification by the Government. The Prime Minister's directive on gender disaggregated data collection was an important step towards promoting the awareness of gender-sensitive development.

Human Rights

The UNCT identified governance and human rights, along with poverty, as overarching themes for the CCA. As an important development, in December 2000 the Lao PDR signed the two key human rights law instruments: the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The UN System will work with the Government on ratifying the covenants and beginning the process of implementation. In addition, the project on the integration of international legislation into the domestic legal framework is nearing agreement between the Government, UNDP and Finland. Primarily, the project will focus on capacity building at the Department of Treaties and Legal Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the entry point for international legislation. However, it will also work closely with the legislature, judiciary and Ministry of Justice to institutionalize a structure for the comprehensive and sustainable performance of treaty obligations.

In 2000 the UNCT commissioned an assessment of the Lao PDR's participation in multilateral treaties deposited with the Secretary-General, with a particular focus on the twenty-five "core" treaties identified by the Secretary-General as representing the spirit and goals of the United Nations in the wake of the Millennium Summit. In addition, UNHCR assisted the Government in translating the Convention on the Status of Refugees, the Convention on the Prevention and Reduction of Statelessness, and the High Commissioner's Statute, to create a better understanding with the Government on these important matters.

Governance

In 2000 the UNCT achieved important changes in creating a framework for the implementation of public sector reforms in the Lao PDR. The governance programme has mainly focused on pursuing the conceptualization of high priority reforms (civil service reform, decentralization, and institutional improvements). These reform packages are being discussed at the highest levels of the Government and the Party. The Governance and Public Administration Reform programme was explicitly mentioned at the Seventh Round Table Meeting in November 2000 as one of the key Government priorities.

An important evolution is currently taking place with regard to local Government in the Lao PDR. Whilst the central Government continues to strengthen capacities at the central level, to improve personnel management policies, and to put in place accountability procedures, recent decentralization policies issued in March 2000 aim for a prudent and progressive transfer of responsibilities to the provincial, local and village administrations. In line with the new decentralization policies, the first provincial Public Administration Reform pilot project in Luang Prabang was approved in September 2000. Also, a very concise policy paper "Towards Better Governance in the Lao PDR" was drafted by the project, paving the way for substantial developments over the next decades, and providing a framework for essential donor interventions in the area of governance.

Unexploded Ordnance (UXO)

The UNCT also continued to provide support to the national Unexploded Ordnance programme, UXO LAO, which has increasingly been recognized as a model for cost effective Mine Action. A socio-economic study carried out in 2000 by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining confirmed that UXO LAO's work is clearly justified on economic terms alone. Eighteen international donors continued to provide cash and in-kind contributions, with the UXO LAO Trust Fund raising close to 3 million dollars for activities in 2000. In the same year, 742,9032 hectares of agricultural and other land were cleared in nine provinces, and 80,538 UXOs (bombs, bombies and mines) were destroyed. 813 villages were visited as part of the UXO community awareness campaign.

1.4 Impact of UN Reform on the UN System at the Country Level

A. Programming Related Measures of Harmonization and Simplification, Programming Cycles, Joint Programmes and Joint Mid-term Reviews

Harmonization of UN Funding Agency Programming Cycles

In response to the General Assembly Resolution No. 47/199 and the related joint letter from the Executive Board of UNDG, and in order to ensure an overall improvement in the effectiveness and efficiency of the UN System, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP held extensive discussions, and by October 1999 reached an agreement on the harmonization of programming cycles of UN funding agencies in the Lao PDR.

UNFPA and UNDP agreed that their future programming cycles should be extended to five-year cycles in line with those of UNICEF. UNFPA and UNDP agreed to extend their current programming cycles by one year until December 2001, whilst UNICEF agreed to shorten its existing programming cycle by one year until December 2001. All three agencies then agreed to commence five-year programming cycles, beginning in January 2002 and ending in December 2006. With regard to WFP, it has been in the process of switching from a mainly emergency focused operation to a longer-term development programme. Any future programming cycles developed by WFP will take into account the harmonized programming cycles of UNICEF, UNFPA and UNDP.

There is a full understanding by the UNCT that, in line with the UNDAF Roll-out Plan, the preparation of the CCA and UNDAF should be completed in close conjunction with the harmonization of programming cycles.

Joint UN Programmes

The UN System in the Lao PDR has a number of ongoing joint UN programmes and projects, including the HIV/AIDS Trust Fund, National UXO Programme, Joint UN Alternative Development project in Nonghet, and UN project on Eliminating Trafficking in Women and Children in the Mekong Sub-region.

HIV/AIDS Trust Fund

The Lao HIV/AIDS Trust Fund was formed in July 1998 by the Government of the Lao PDR, with support from UNDP, to assist in mobilizing and coordinating resources for the national plan on HIV/AIDS/STD 1997-2001. The HIV/AIDS Trust Fund has a broad range of partners, including the UN System, donors, NGOs and mass organizations, supported by the HIV/AIDS Theme Group. It's partnership expanded significantly to include all Lao mass organizations,

key line Ministries, and the Provincial Committees for the Control of AIDS (PCCAs) established in every province.

The Condom Social Marketing project implemented by Population Services International (PSI) was among major achievements of the Trust Fund in 2000. Almost 3 million “Number One” condoms, conforming to WHO quality standards and accompanied with instructions in Lao language, were sold through the private sector and distributed free of charge. The “Number One” was launched through series of special events (sports, concerts, TV and radio broadcasts) in all major provinces of the Lao PDR. The project also initiated the first Generation Surveillance programme in South-East Asia.

National Unexploded Ordnance Programme

During its fifth year of operation, UXO LAO consolidated its operations and developed the Standard Operating Procedures as a result of observations and research by UXO LAO, UNDP and the six partners: Mines Advisory Group, Gerbera, World Vision Australia, Norwegian People’s Aid, Handicap International and the Belgian Military. As part of the consolidation process, UXO LAO gradually takes over the responsibility for staff, vehicles and equipment.

Selection of land to be cleared of UXO and villages to be visited by Community Awareness teams is a decentralized process performed each year. It seeks to integrate UXO LAO’s activities with the provinces’ overall development priorities and as planning improves, rural development aid projects are increasingly being included in UXO LAO’s comprehensive work plan for the year. This allows the Government to provide a valuable clearance service, free of charge, to small and medium-sized development projects.

Internationally, UXO LAO is increasingly being recognized as a model for cost effective Mine Action. Eighteen international donors continued to provide cash and in-kind contributions, with the Trust Fund raising close to 3 million dollars for activities in 2000.

Joint UN Alternative Development Project in Nonghet

The Joint UN Alternative Development project in Nonghet, Xieng Khouang province, launched by UNDCP, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, FAO, WFP, UNAIDS and IFAD in 1997, represents not only the first UN joint programming effort, but also the first UNDCP nationally-executed project in the Lao PDR. It addresses a number of national development priorities and focuses UN System support on the reduction of opium production and consumption among ethnic minorities in highland areas.

In 2000 a number of activities were undertaken within the framework of the project, including training in the Participatory Rural Appraisal methodology in 55 target villages, introduction of new agricultural varieties, training of villagers in upland farming, fisheries, micro-finance and income generation, establishment of rice banks and revolving funds, provision of school facilities and clean water supply systems. The opium production area was reduced by 20 percent (approximately 75 hectares) in 2000.

UN Project on Eliminating Trafficking in Women and Children in the Mekong Sub-region

The UN project on Eliminating Trafficking in Women and Children is one of a number of initiatives currently being undertaken by UN agencies, Governments, NGOs and community-based organizations to combat the problem of trafficking in women and children in the

Mekong sub-region. The project provides the UN System (including UNAIDS, UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, UNDCP, UNHCR, UNESCO, ILO, and ESCAP among others), in partnership with regional Governments and other concerned organizations, with an overarching mechanism to coordinate local, national and sub-regional activities through a multidisciplinary participatory approach. The project covers Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Thailand and Vietnam.

Following the signing of the project document in 2000, the Government of the Lao PDR was the first to approve the work plan and initiate project activities. A national workshop on Trafficking in Women and Children was also hosted by the Government. The next plans include research and data collection on trafficking, migration, child labour and HIV/AIDS issues. UNDP and UNICEF share the focal point responsibilities for the Eliminating Trafficking in Women and Children project in the Lao PDR.

B. Theme Groups

At the meeting of 6 April 2000, the UNCT reviewed the status and role of the UN Theme/Working Groups and agreed that such groups should be organized on the basis of specific objectives and topics for discussions, with the major outcomes brought to the attention of the UNCT. Throughout 2000, a number of UN Theme/Working Groups have been functioning, and at least two new Groups were established.

The UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS has been among the most active, benefiting from the UNAIDS secretarial support. It met once every three months with an expanded membership inclusive of the Government, bilateral donors, international NGOs, and Lao mass organizations to discuss and coordinate joint response to HIV/AIDS. The group work resulted in the production of a UN Integrated Work Plan on HIV/AIDS 2000-2001. With funding support from UNAIDS APICT and the World Bank, the Information Development project (InfoDEV) provided access to and training on the use of e-mail and Internet for eight national partners. The Theme Group also initiated the Behavioural Sentinel Surveillance (BSS) among service women, female factory workers, truck drivers, and male and female migrant workers in five provinces of the Lao PDR: Vientiane Municipality, Luang Prabang, Khammouane, Savannakhet and Champassak.

In November 2000, the UNCT established the UN Theme Group on Rural Development and Food Security chaired by FAO, and charged it with the mandate to facilitate and mobilize support for the Government's efforts in implementing the Plan of Action of the World Food Summit (Rome, 1996), and to provide an effective framework for discussion, planning and implementation of collaborative activities in the area of rural development and food security. The Theme Group will begin functioning in 2001, involving a broad range of partners from the Government, donors and NGOs – to private sector, civil society and media.

The UN Task Force established in 1999 to assist UNHCR in phasing-out its assistance and presence in the Lao PDR, convened for its first meeting in June 2000 with an objective to identify durable solutions for Lao returnees in rural settlements.

As part of the CCA process, the UNCT formed a number of UN Theme/Working Groups to undertake a broad assessment of the development situation in the Lao PDR and in-depth analysis of the emerging key development issues. The assessment and analysis was undertaken with reference to the three overarching themes of poverty, governance and human rights, identified by the UNCT at the CCA workshop held on 7-8 June 2000. The three CCA Working Groups, coordinated by the CCA Steering Committee, addressed these overarching themes from three specific viewpoints: socio-economic management (“top-down” approach),

community participation (“bottom-up” approach), and household security. The two Working Groups on community participation and household security were later merged to avoid duplication. Each Working Group consisted of the UNCT members, key UN agency staff and resource persons, and was chaired by a Head of Agency.

In addition, the UN Theme Group on Statistical Indicators was established in August 2000 to identify data for inclusion in the CCA Indicator Framework, and to review and maintain the UN Statistical Indicator Database developed for the CCA process. The Group currently consists of focal points assigned by the UNCT, including Bretton Woods Institutions, with a plan for further involving the National Statistics Centre and other relevant partners.

Finally, the UN Disaster Management Team (DMT) worked extensively from September-October 2000 to address the flooding, which resulted from early and heavy rainfalls and several typhoons, and coordinate assistance to flood victims. In the Lao PDR, the Mekong river and its tributaries overflowed their banks in September 2000 and flooded more than 80,000 hectares of land, affecting a total of 43 districts in 7 provinces. Almost 400,000 people lost part of or their entire wet season harvest. The DMT coordinated response to flooding by the UN System, Government (National Disaster Management Office, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare), bilateral donors and NGOs, with WFP acting as secretariat.

C. UN House and Common Premises and Services

In 2000 the UNCT in the Lao PDR continued consultations with a view to establishing a UN House as called for in Action 10(c) of the UN Secretary-General’s Programme for Reform. However, in view of the lack of suitable premises for relocation, the UNCT undertook a number of measures aimed at establishing a “virtual” UN House.

Since 1999, a number of UN agencies including UNDCP, UNFPA, WFP, UNESCO, UNAIDS and UNV have been using the common Internet connection and e-mail system via the satellite link established by UNDP. A joint website of the UNCT in the Lao PDR, with pages of non-resident agencies, Bretton Woods Institutions and ADB, was developed in 2000. In the longer term, plans remain to develop a UN Intranet configuration. The UNCT also established a common security account to finance the cost of the UN Security Assistant and shared communications equipment.

Part Two of the Annual Report

2.1 Assessment of the United Nations Country Team Based on the 2000 Work Plan of the Resident Coordinator System

The UNCT self-assessment exercise, carried out in conjunction with the preparation of the 2000 Annual Report of the Resident Coordinator, revealed that the majority of UN System activities projected in the 2000 RC Work Plan were implemented to a moderate (3 to 4) extent.

The action plan for the harmonization of programming cycles commencing in January 2002, was elaborated by the UN funding agencies (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP) in 1999. During 2000 the UNCT carried out the extensive CCA preparation process, including collection of indicator data and situational analyses, two CCA workshops, meetings and assessment work by the three CCA Working Groups and the Steering Committee. As a result of extensive discussions, the final draft of the CCA document was completed by the end of December 2000 for consultations with the Government and development partners. Meetings and discussions on, and initial planning for, the UNDAF were also initiated by the UNCT. Joint UN programmes and projects continued throughout 2000 (please refer to section 1.4 A. of this report).

The UNCT made moderate progress on the development of an integrated and coordinated follow-up to the Global UN Conferences, including support for national policy dialogue on conference follow-up, UN System collaboration in the formulation and implementation of programmes and projects arising from conference follow-up, and using the CCA/UNDAF exercise as a platform for follow-up to the Global Conferences. The UNCT developed conference indicators as part of the CCA Indicator Framework, and carried out the assessment of national progress towards the UN sponsored World Conference and Summit targets, with a particular focus on the goals endorsed by the Millennium Summit.

In the area of strengthening UN System common premises and services, the UNCT made some progress in setting up a “virtual” UN House, while progress towards establishing a physical UN House remained slow owing to the unavailability of a suitable building. A number of agencies used the National Execution Support Unit for procurement, contracting, training and other services. The UN Security Management Team, comprising all UNCT members, met on a monthly basis to review and discuss the security issues of common concern, including the UN Travel Advisory, procedures for medical evacuation of UN staff, the UN warden system and security plan. The UNCT also established a common security account to finance the cost of the UN Security Assistant and shared communications equipment.

In 2000 the UNCT pursued a number of joint public information and advocacy initiatives (UN Development Award, commemoration of International Days, and development of a joint website of the UN System in the Lao PDR), to raise public awareness of the UN mandate, promote the UN’s role in development, and communicate results of the UN work.

Following the annual tradition, in 2000 the UN Development Award was issued to two outstanding Lao individuals: Mr. Sai Kue Lor - a reformed opium farmer from Nonghet district, now successfully growing asparagus; and Mrs. Khamphang - a medical worker who, on her own initiative, established the counselling service for HIV/AIDS patients in Savannakhet province. The UN Award ceremony took place in October 2000 in

commemoration of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty and the UN Day, with high-level participation from the Government, bilateral donors, civil society and mass media.

The UNCT demonstrated good collaboration in the process of preparing the 2000 RC Annual Report and 2001 Work Plan.

Table I: Self-Assessment by the UN Country Team

| Areas of Collaboration | Extent of Collaboration on Scale 1-6 Limited (1-2) Moderate (3-4) Extensive (5-6) |
|---|--|
| <i>1. Support to collaborative programming</i> | |
| <u>Benchmarks:</u> | |
| • Action plan for harmonization of programming cycles | 3.8 |
| • CCA | 5.4 |
| • UNDAF | 3.8 |
| • Joint programming and programmes | 2.4 |
| <i>2. Integrated and coordinated follow up to global United Nations conferences</i> | |
| <u>Benchmarks:</u> | |
| • Support for national policy dialogue on conference follow up | 3.3 |
| • Development of conference indicators | 4.3 |
| • Formulation and implementation of integrated programmes arising from conference follow-up | 3.3 |
| • Use of CCA/UNDAF as platform for conference follow-up | 3.5 |
| <i>3. United Nations House and common services</i> | |
| <u>Benchmarks:</u> | |
| • Establishment of a United Nations House | 1.4 |
| • Creation of a “virtual” United Nations House | 2.7 |
| • Procurement/contracting | 3.3 |
| • Security | 4.9 |
| • Other services | 3.6 |
| <i>4. United Nations System public information and advocacy</i> | |
| <u>Benchmarks:</u> | |
| • Advocacy initiatives | 3.1 |
| • Common information and communication strategy | 3.3 |
| • Country website | 4.9 |
| • Media outreach | 3.5 |
| <i>5. Other areas for collaboration</i> | |
| <u>Benchmarks:</u> | |
| • Annual Report preparation | 4.4 |
| • Annual Work Plan | 4.1 |

2.2 Report on the Utilization of Funds Allocated to Support Coordination Functions in the Lao PDR for 2000

In 2000 the Resident Coordinator System in the Lao PDR was allocated a total amount of US\$ 70,000 from the Support to Resident Coordinator (SRC) funds, which made up the total budget for the year. The RC System disbursed a total amount of US\$ 69,554, or 99.4 percent of the total allotment made available, with no undisbursed commitments outstanding at the beginning of 2001. All SRC funds were utilized in accordance with Chapter 9 “Programme Support to the Resident Coordinator” of the UNDP Programming Manual.

In 2000, the RC System utilized the financial resources made available to undertake a series of important activities in support of the national development priorities, and to enhance inter-agency coordination in managing UN development assistance at the country level. The SRC funds were used to strengthen the capacity of the Office of the Resident Coordinator, to support more collaborative and integrated UN programming, to increase public awareness and advocacy on UN System initiatives, and to ensure the progressive implementation of the UN Secretary-General’s Programme for Reform.

In addition, the Office of the Resident Coordinator used its human resource capacity to support numerous UN System activities without utilizing significant financial resources. For example, in 2000 it completed the overview of the Lao PDR’s participation in Multilateral Treaties deposited with the UN Secretary-General at no financial costs involved.

The RC System expended US\$ 3,226 to carry out the CCA process, excluding the document printing costs. Two CCA workshops were organized in June and September 2000, with the facilitator costs contributed by UNICEF. The Resident Coordinator provided US\$ 2,000 for the establishment of the UN Theme Group on Rural Development and Food Security, whilst subsequent funding for the Group would be acquired from other sources. US\$ 3,500 was spent in support of the organization of HIV/AIDS stakeholder coordination workshop. The RC System also contributed US\$ 4,997 for the production of the Government’s report to the Seventh Round Table Meeting, in line with the UN aid coordination efforts within the framework of the Round Table Process 2000.

As far as the assessment of national progress towards the World Conference and Summit targets was carried out as part of the CCA process, the preparation of an in-depth review of the status of follow-up to the UN sponsored World Conferences and Global Summits of the 1990’s by a consultant, was postponed to 2001, also due to the deficit of funds in late 2000. In addition, FAO allocated US\$ 4,500 to assist the Government in organizing a national workshop to review progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action of the World Food Summit.

A total amount of US\$ 7,445 was used for the UN public information, advocacy initiatives and media events designed to raise public awareness of the UN mandate and disseminate results and achievements of UN development work. In 2000 the RC System continued with the practice of issuing the UN Development Award to convey recognition of extraordinary leadership in, and contribution to, the advancement of sustainable human development and alleviation of poverty in the Lao PDR. In addition, the RC System commemorated International Days, and developed of a joint website of the UN System in the Lao PDR.

And finally, US\$ 48,386 constituted support costs of the Office of the Resident Coordinator, including maintaining the Executive Assistant to the RC (full cost) and UNV RC Support Officer (75 percent of cost) to provide high quality continuous support and back up for the

Resident Coordinator function from January - December 2000, plus minor miscellaneous expenses. The publication of the 1999 RC Annual Report amounted in US\$ 700.

Table II: Report on the Utilization of Funds Allocated to Support Coordination Functions in the Lao PDR for 2000

| Management and Coordination Functions of the United Nations System | Actions and Initiatives (from 2000 Work Plan) | Results Achieved (Impact) | Expenditures (in US\$) | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|-------------------------|-------------|-----|--------|
| | | | SRC Funds | | | UN Agencies | GOL | Donors |
| | | | Allotment | Expenditures | Undisbursed Commitments | | | |
| Support to collaborative and more integrated UN programming | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete CCA process and document Initiate UNDAF process – Contract facilitator, hold CCA/UNDAF workshops | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carried out the CCA process and completed final draft of the CCA document. Organized two CCA workshops, with facilitator costs contributed by UNICEF. UNDAF process postponed until early 2001 Supported the establishment of the UN Theme Group on Rural Development and Food Security Supported the organization of HIV/AIDS coordination workshop to produce an overview of activities in the area of HIV/AIDS prevention Published the Government of the Lao PDR's Report to the Seventh Round Table Meeting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15,000 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3,226 2,000 3,500 4,997 | | | | |
| Follow-up to global UN conferences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a review of the status of follow-up to UN sponsored World Conferences and Global Summits of the 1990's at the national level | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the status of follow-up to UN sponsored World Conferences and Global Summits of the 1990's postponed to 2001 Completed the overview of the Lao | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10,000 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 By the | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | <p>PDR's participation in Multilateral Treaties deposited with the UN Secretary-General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO assisted the Government in organizing a national workshop to review progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action of the World Food Summit (US\$ 4,500 allocated by FAO) | | Office of the RC | | | | |
| UN House and common services (Resident Coordinator Office, common premises and services) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract Assistant to the Resident Coordinator • Miscellaneous costs etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Assistant to the Resident Coordinator (full cost) and UNV RC Support Officer (75% of cost) maintained to provide high quality continuous support and back up for the RC function from January - December 2000 • Miscellaneous support costs: photocopy of documents, refreshments for SMT/UNCT meetings, RC Season Greetings cards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30,000 • 1,000 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 48,160 • 226 | | | | |
| UN System public information and advocacy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual UN Development Award • Commemorate International days, years and decades • Establish electronic UN System in the Lao PDR • Publish 1999 Annual | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2000 UN Development Award ceremony hosted by the UN System in commemoration of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty • Commemorated International days, incl. World Population, Eradication of Poverty, UN, Children's, World AIDS, etc. • Developed an Internet website of the UN Country Team in the Lao PDR • Published the 1999 Annual Report of | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4,000 • 2,000 • 4,000 • 1,000 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,071 • 674 • 3,000 • 700 | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|---|----------|--|--|--|
| | Report of the Resident Coordinator | the Resident Coordinator | | | | | | |
| Other activities in line with the Secretary-General's Programme for Reform of 14 July 1997 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNCT training on the UN Programme for Reform | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carried out UNCT training on the UN Programme for Reform as a component of the CCA process launching workshop | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3,000 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Included in the CCA costs | | | | |
| Special assignments given by the Secretary-General or the UNDP Administrator | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake special assignments when requested | | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | | | 70,000 | 69,554 | 0 | | | |

2.3 2001 Work Plan of the Resident Coordinator System

In 2001 the Resident Coordinator System in the Lao PDR intends to undertake a number of important activities to further the implementation of the UN Programme for Reform, in particular the UNDAF process and follow-up to the Global UN Conferences, which form the basis of the 2001 RC Work Plan.

In 2001 the RC System will focus on developing more collaborative and integrated UN programming within the framework of the CCA and UNDAF process, the implementation of joint UN programmes and projects, and preparations for the launch of funding agency harmonized programming cycles in January 2002. The UNCT expects to complete the UNDAF by April/May 2001, and to operationalize the UN statistical indicator database originated from the CCA exercise.

To strengthen collaborative follow-up to the global development agenda at the national level, the UNCT plans to carry-out a review of the status of follow-up to the UN sponsored World Conferences and Global Summits of the 1990's, and enhance information sharing and coordination between UN agencies on the World Conference activities and outcomes. The UNCT will also continue to provide support to the Government of the Lao PDR on follow-up to the major World Conferences through assistance and implementation of national initiatives, strategies and action plans designed to address the World Conference commitments. The UNCT will use the CCA and UNDAF as a platform for the World Conference follow-up. The Overview of the Lao PDR's participation in Multilateral Treaties deposited with the UN Secretary-General completed in 2000, will be printed in 2001.

The UNCT intends to support the functioning of the existing (HIV/AIDS) and recently established (Statistical Indicators, and Rural Development and Food Security) UN Theme Groups using the SRC as seed funds. FAO intends to mobilize additional support for the UN Theme Group on Rural Development and Food Security.

In 2001 the UNCT will further pursue the joint public information and advocacy initiatives to raise public awareness of the UN mandate and disseminate results of UN development work, including the annual UN Development Award and commemoration of International Days. The UNCT plans to launch the joint UN System website in March 2001.

The Office of the Resident Coordinator will also be maintained in order to provide effective support and back up to the Resident Coordinator and the UNCT.

Table III: 2001 Work Plan of the Resident Coordinator System in the Lao PDR

| Management and Coordination Functions of the United Nations System | Planned Actions and Initiatives | Results to be Achieved (Impact) | Time Frame | Responsibility | Funds Required (in US\$, by Source) | | |
|--|---|--|--|---|---|-------------|--------|
| | | | | | SRC | UN Agencies | Others |
| <p>Support to collaborative and more integrated UN programming:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action plan for Harmonization of programming cycles • CCA • UNDAF • Joint programming and programmes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold CCA consultation workshops • Print CCA document • Maintain CCA statistical database • Complete UNDAF process - Hold workshops, print document | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCA consultations held and comments captured • CCA document printed • CCA statistical database operational • UNDAF process and document completed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • February 2001 • March 2001 • March / April – December 2001 • January – April / May 2001 | UNCT / Office of the RC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4,000 • 4,000 • 3,000 • 15,000 | | |
| <p>Follow-up to global UN conferences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for national conference follow-up • Development of conference indicators • Formulation and implementation of integrated programmes arising from conference follow-up and the Secretary-General's Priorities • Formulation and | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a review of the status of follow-up to UN sponsored World Conferences and Global Summits of the 1990's – Contract consultant, print document • Print overview of the Lao PDR's participation in Multilateral Treaties deposited with the | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of follow-up to World Conferences document completed • Overview of the Lao PDR's participation in Multilateral Treaties printed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • February / March – June 2001 • February – March 2001 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNCT / Office of the RC / Consultant • UNCT / Office of the RC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15,000 • 4,000 | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|---|---|--|--|
| <p>implementation of collaborative activities in support of national priorities on cross-cutting issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of CCA/UNDAF as platform for conference follow-up | <p>UN Secretary-General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support functioning of the UN Theme Groups (Rural Development and Food Security) and UNAIDS secretariat | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN Theme Groups functioning / Secured support for UNAIDS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January – December 2001 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNCT / Office of the RC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5,000 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO 10,000 | |
| <p>UN House and common services (Resident Coordinator Office, common premises and services):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of a United Nations House • Creation of a “virtual” United Nations House • Procurement/contracting • Security • Other services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract Executive Assistant to the Resident Coordinator • Miscellaneous costs (photocopy documents etc.) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective and efficient support to the Resident Coordinator | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January – December 2001 | <p>UNCT/ RC</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30,000 | | |
| <p>UN System public information and advocacy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy initiatives • Common information and communication strategy • Country website • Media outreach | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue annual UN Development Award to commemorate Poverty Eradication and UN Days • Commemorate international days and years • Host and maintain website of UNCT in the Lao PDR | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organized annual UN Development Award ceremony and media campaign • Advocated for UN role and mandate • UNCT Lao PDR website hosted and up to date | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October 2001 • January – December 2001 • February – December 2001 | <p>UNCT / Office of the RC</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5,000 • 2,000 • 2,000 | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|-------------------------|---|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish 2000 Annual Report of the Resident Coordinator | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2000 Annual Report of the Resident Coordinator published | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 2001 | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,000 | | |
| Other activities in line with the Secretary-General's Programme for Reform of 14 July 1997 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNCT training / workshop | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNCT capacity-building | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2001 | UNCT / Office of the RC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5,000 | | |
| Special assignments given by the Secretary-General or the UNDP Administrator | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake special assignments when requested | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2001 | UNCT / Office of the RC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,000 | | |
| TOTAL | | | | | 97,000 | | |

2.4 Assessment of Headquarters' Support Received in 2000

The Resident Coordinator System in the Lao PDR received good support from Headquarters throughout 2000, primarily from UNDG and DGO, but also from ACC/CCPOQ and various UN agency Headquarters and Regional Offices.

UNDG and DGO provided the UNCT with a series of guidelines on the key aspects of inter-agency coordination emanating from the UN Secretary-General's Programme for Reform. These included among others, the Guidelines for the CCA and UNDAF processes, ACC Guidelines on the Functioning of the Resident Coordinator System, Guidance Note on Preparing Joint Programmes/Projects, "UN and Human Rights" Guidelines and Information, "Halving Extreme Poverty" Action Strategy for the UN, ACC Matrix on Governance, and Guidelines for the preparation of the Annual Report of the Resident Coordinator.

DGO ensured that the UNCT was regularly updated on RC System developments at UN Headquarters and in programme countries by regularly sharing the "Recent Developments of Interest to the Resident Coordinator System" monthly newsletter, and other ad-hoc information updates. The periodic information notes on the UN Programme for Reform and progress reports concerning UNDG activities were also useful for the UNCT, and served to provide a comprehensive summary of trends in UN collaboration, policies and partnerships.

The Resident Coordinator Network (RC Net) and DevLink websites established by DGO provided the UNCT and the Office of the Resident Coordinator with a valuable and easily accessible resource for information on RC activities and initiatives, including the CCA and UNDAF, follow-up to the Global UN Conferences, common services and premises, harmonization, Halving Extreme Poverty and Girls' Education initiatives, as well as best practices and links to the UN System websites in different countries.

During the year, the Office of the Resident Coordinator maintained close contact through e-mail with the DGO Policy Specialist in charge of the Lao PDR and a number of other countries in the Asia and the Pacific region, and benefited from the timely support, advice and information received.

In addition, a meeting of the UNCT with UNESCAP and Regional Offices based in Bangkok in October 2000, and sharing of information on the CCA/UNDAF processes and regional programmes proved interesting and provided the UNCT with new insights to collaboration and partnerships.

Table IV: Assessment of Headquarters' Support Received in 2000

| Headquarters' Support | 1= Very Poor 2= Poor 3= Fair 4= Good 5= Very Good NA= Not Applicable | Comments/ Suggestions |
|---|---|--|
| Quality of communications between agency Headquarters and Regional Offices/Country Offices on UN Reform related issues: | | |
| a) CCA/UNDAF | 4.2 | |
| b) Joint programmes | 3.5 | Funding problems |
| c) Theme Groups / substantive issues (poverty, girls' education, HIV/AIDS etc.) | 3.5 | |
| d) Common premises and services | 2.3 | |
| Usefulness of ACC/CCPOQ, joint ExCom letters, or other inter-agency materials | 2.8 | The amount of materials is too large to be targeted |
| Quality of response from various UN System HQs and Regional Offices | | |
| a) Overall | 3.8 | |
| b) Funds and programmes | 3.5 | |
| c) UNDG subgroups | 3.0 | |
| d) DGO | 4.3 | |
| Communications from DGO (e.g. monthly newsletter) | | |
| a) Quality | 3.8 | |
| b) Relevance | 3.3 | |
| Support in terms of training/ staff development | 3.6 | The meeting with UNESCAP (Bangkok) in Oct. 2000 was very interesting |
| Quality and usefulness of RC Net | 3.8 | Not all agencies have access to Internet (UNHCR) – use e-mail |

Annex 1: Composition of the United Nations System Country Team

UN Resident Coordinator: Ms. Kari Nordheim-Larsen

Funds, Programmes and Agencies Represented

Name and Title of Representative

(a) Based in the Country:

| | |
|------------|--|
| ADB | Mr. Paul Turner, Representative ² |
| FAO | Mr. Tsukasa Kimoto, Representative ³ |
| IMF | Mr. Eric Sidgwick, Representative ⁴ |
| UNDCP | Mr. Halvor J. Kolshus, Representative |
| UNFPA | Ms. Patrizia Franceschinis, Representative ⁵ |
| UNHCR | Mr. Jiddo van Drunen, Representative |
| UNICEF | Ms. Inese Zalitis, Representative ⁶ |
| WFP | Mr. Malcolm Duthie, Representative ⁷ |
| WHO | Dr. Giovanni Deodato, Representative |
| World Bank | Ms. Linda Schneider, Chief Country Office |
| UNDP | Mr. Gana Fofang, Deputy Resident Representative ⁸ |
| UNAIDS | Dr. Khamlay Manivong, National Country Programme Advisor |

(b) Based Outside the Country:

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| ILO (Bangkok) | Mr. Siwu Liu, Director |
| UNESCO (Bangkok) | Mr. Zhou Nanzhao, Director a.i. ⁹ |
| UNIDO (Bangkok) ¹ | Mr. Claudio Scaratti, Regional Representative ¹⁰ |

¹ The UNIDO Regional Office for South-East Asia, located in Bangkok, became operational in June 2000. In addition to Thailand, it covers four countries: the Lao PDR, Cambodia, Myanmar and Malaysia, and is also responsible for sub-regional initiatives and programmes in ASEAN member countries.

² Joined the UN Country Team in November 2000

³ Posted in April 2000. Until April 2000 – Mr. Haji Adji Ismet-Hakim, Representative a.i., FAO

⁴ Posted in June 2000. Until June 2000 – Mr. Wayne Camard, Representative, IMF

⁵ Posted in January 2000. Until January 2000 – Dr. Sheila Macrae, Country Director, UNFPA (based in Bangkok)

⁶ Posted in November 2000. Until September 2000 – Dr. Jacqueline Badcock, Representative, UNICEF; and from September-October 2000 – Dr. Kam Suan Mung, Officer-in-Charge, UNICEF

⁷ Posted in January 2000. Until January 2000 – Ms. Genevieve Chicoine, Officer-in-Charge, WFP

⁸ Posted in January 2000. Until January 2000 – Mr. Jeffrey Avina, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP

⁹ From September 2000. Until September 2000 – Mr. Victor Ordonez, Director, UNESCO (based in Bangkok)

¹⁰ From June 2000. Until June 2000 – Mr. Markku Kohonen, Representative, UNIDO (based in Hanoi)

Annex 2: Composition of Theme Groups and/or Inter-Agency Task Forces in 2000

| UN Theme Groups and Inter-Agency Task Forces | Membership and <u>Chairs</u> | Mandate |
|--|--|---|
| HIV/AIDS Theme Group | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>UNICEF and UNDP</u> as alternate chairs • UNAIDS * • UNDCP • UNESCO • UNFPA • WHO • World Bank • ADB • Government • Bilateral donors • NGOs <p>* Serves as Secretariat</p> | Coordinate the efforts and resources of UN System and development partners in support of the national response to HIV/AIDS epidemic |
| UN Statistical Indicator Theme Group | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Chair</u> to be identified • UN Country Team including non-resident agencies and Bretton Woods Institutions • Relevant Government, donor and NGO resource persons | Established in 2000 as part of the CCA process to identify data for inclusion in the CCA Indicator Framework, and review and maintain the UN Statistical Indicator Database |
| UN Theme Group on Rural Development and Food Security | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>FAO</u> and UNCT • Government • Bi- and multilateral donors • Civil society and NGOs • Academic institutions • Private sector, media • Community-based organizations, entities and individuals active in the fields of RD and Food Security | Established by the UNCT in 2000 to facilitate and mobilize support for the Government's follow-up to the World Food Summit, and to provide an effective framework for discussion, planning and implementation of collaborative activities in RD and Food Security |
| UN Task Force on UNHCR Phase-out | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>UNHCR</u> • UNCT including Bretton Woods Institutions • Selected bilateral donors and NGOs | Assist UNHCR in phasing-out its assistance and presence in the Lao PDR, and identify durable solutions for Lao returnees in rural settlements |

| UN Theme Groups and Inter-Agency Task Forces | Membership and <u>Chairs</u> | Mandate |
|---|---|---|
| UN Disaster Management Team (UN DMT) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>RC, WFP</u> as Secretariat • UNCT • National Disaster Management Office and relevant Ministries • Donors and NGOs involved in disaster management | Effectively coordinate UN and donor assistance in all phases of disaster management, including preparedness, relief/response and rehabilitation |
| CCA Working Groups on Socio-Economic Management and Participation + Household Security | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>UNDP and FAO + UNICEF</u> respectively • UNCT • Resource persons | Carry out the assessment, analysis and drafting of the CCA sections |
| CCA Steering Committee | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>RC</u> • UNCT | Coordinate work and oversee output of the CCA Working Groups |

Annex 3: Development Assistance ¹¹

A. Summary of Total Development Assistance in 1998

| Source of Aid | US Dollars | Percentage |
|---|--------------------|-------------------|
| <u>Multilateral</u> Breakdown | | |
| UN System (excluding the IFIs) | 17,164,000 | 5.7 |
| Grants | NA | |
| Loans | NA | |
| World Bank | 24,732,000 | 8.2 |
| Grants | NA | |
| Loans | NA | |
| Other IFIs | 75,214,000 | 24.9 |
| Grants | NA | |
| Loans | NA | |
| Non-United Nations System | 14,937,000 | 5.0 |
| Grants | NA | |
| Loans | NA | |
| <u>Bilateral</u> | 158,697,000 | 52.5 |
| Grants | NA | |
| Loans | NA | |
| Sub Total ODA | 290,744,000 | 96.3 |
| Grants | NA | |
| Loans | NA | |
| NGOs | 11,290,000 | 3.7 |
| Total Development Assistance | 302,034,000 | 100 |
| Grants | 183,908,500 | 60.9 |
| Loans | 118,125,500 | 39.1 |

¹¹ All data is drawn from UNDP Development Cooperation Report (DCR) 1999. Other sources of development assistance information may yield different statistics. ODA figures for 1999/2000 not yet available.

B. United Nations System ODA in 1998

| Funds, Programmes and Agencies | US Dollars |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| UNDP and UNDP Administered Funds | 8,235,000 |
| FAO | 1,729,000 |
| IFAD | 1,136,000 |
| UNAIDS | 17,000 |
| UNDCP | 259,000 |
| UNESCO | 6,000 |
| UNFPA | 438,000 |
| UNHCR | 629,000 |
| UNICEF ¹² | NA |
| UNIDO ¹³ | NA |
| WFP | 3,273,000 |
| WHO | 1,442,000 |
| Total | 17,164,000 |

¹² UNICEF total Country Programme budget for 1998-2002 is US\$ 24,765,000

¹³ UNIDO's development assistance disbursement in the Lao PDR in 2000 was US\$ 150,000