

Lao People's Democratic Republic
Peace Independence Democracy Unity Prosperity

TERMS OF REFERENCE
Health Systems Strengthening Task Force

By
Country Coordinating Mechanism
2015

Overall Objective:

To prepare a Health System Strengthening (HSS) Concept Note (CN) for submission to the Lao PDR Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) in Global Fund format that supports key interventions in Governance, Human Resources for Health and Health Information Systems of the Lao PDR health system.

I. Background

1. Summary

- The Lao CCM, Ministry of Health (MOH) and three disease programs decided to develop a stand-alone Health System Strengthening (HSS) Concept Note (CN).
- Three priority areas are included in the HSS CN are: Governance, HRH and HIS.
- The funding split of contributions from national programs to the HSS CN, are: Malaria \$2.0M, HIV \$1.0M, TB \$0.70M. Total: \$3.7M.
- The HSS CN development is led by the Lao CCM and is elaborated by a HSS Task Force.
- Technical assistance for HSS CN development is provided from the AfD, FEI 5% Initiative with a team of 3 consultants.

2. Overview

The Lao CCM is being supported by the Global Fund to fight the 3 diseases (TB, HIV/AIDS Malaria), and in other efforts to strengthen related key functions of the Lao PDR health system.

Through the CCM, the GF supports and reinforces the Government and the Ministry of Health (MOH) on-going efforts' in communicable disease control and in health system strengthening.

The Minister of Health mandated the formation of a Health System Strengthening Task Force (HSS-TF) through Ministerial Decree No. 1193/MoH on 22 May 2014.

The HSS-TF is tasked to collaboratively develop a comprehensive Concept Note for submission through the CCM that seeks GF support for several key HSS interventions that are based on need, are aligned with the national health sector reform (HSR) framework, are linked to subsector strategies for control of the 3 diseases, the MNCH strategy and targeting of underserved groups for services.

The HSS-TF comprises senior MOH and technical officers from various MOH departments who are assigned to elaborate the technical CN development tasks.

The HSS-TF members are to work collaboratively together with relevant development partners in smaller working groups that are aligned with each of three selected health system program areas¹ (modules).

II. Mission

1. Promote sector and MOH cross-department collaboration, participation and shared vision for strengthening of the Lao PDR health system
2. Deepen development partnerships and build consensus through collaborative HSS-TF and working group team efforts;
3. Facilitate inclusive discussion and dialogue on health system strategies and feasible interventions, aligned with national policy and sector and sub-sector strategies.

¹ Governance, Human Resources for Health and Health Management Information Systems

II. Strategies:

1. Advocate and raise awareness on health systems related issues at national and provincial levels;
2. Intensify cooperation and efforts to ensure that system gaps are highlighted and addressed in national efforts;
3. Improve access to HSS information through dialogue, and information technologies;
4. Further develop national and collective capacities in HSS, and consider implications and potential opportunities and challenges from regional economic integration, trade liberalization, new technologies, care innovations and globalization.

IV. Scope of Work:

The scope of work of the Health System Strengthening Task Force is to:

1. Convene and agree Task Force responsibilities and document the ongoing work and processes of the HSS-TF;
2. Reach consensus on a conceptual framework for the development of the HSS CN, based on national policies and the strategic guidance of:
 - a. The Health Sector Reform (HSR) for The Lao PDR, 2012-2025;
 - b. The 7th Health Sector Development Plan (2011-2015);
 - c. (in draft) the 8th Health Sector Development Plan (2016-2020);
3. Within each of the three selected health system program areas (modules), the HSS-TF agrees on the priority of related, sub-modules and scope that:
 - a. expands service coverage,
 - b. improves quality of care and/or services' management, and
 - c. are more likely to be sustained after Global Fund support ceases;
4. Prepare from currently available data, an indicative programmatic and financial gap analysis for each selected module and sub-module;
5. Elaborate key interventions within each module/sub-module. Prioritize each intervention applying criteria of:
 - a. alignment with HSR framework and health sector/sub-sector Strategies and Plans
 - b. linkage to the 3 diseases (TB, HIV, Malaria)
 - c. linkage to Maternal Neonatal and Child Health (MNCH)
 - d. targeting of currently underserved population groups;
6. Define agreed indicators to monitor and measure progress in targets for each key intervention;
7. Identify valid baseline values for each indicator or, elaborate a suitable methodology to develop a valid baseline value for each indicator. Set annual indicative targets using the Global Fund model formats;
8. Develop a work plan of activities for each key intervention. Prepare cost estimates of each supporting activity using the Global Fund model formats;
9. Prepare aggregate cost estimates using the Global Fund formats for each key intervention. This is based on the detailed cost estimates of each supporting activity included in the key intervention work plans;
10. Present in narrative the investment case for Global Fund support in the required format and page restrictions. Ensure consistent referencing throughout the Concept Note and attach as an annex to the CN each reference cited in the CN.

V. Procedures/Mechanisms

1. The permanent members of the HSS-TF are the nominated MOH officer representatives of selected MOH departments and Institutions, as per Ministerial Decree No# 1193/MoH on 22 May 2014.

2. These are: Department Planning and International Cooperation (DPIC), Health Care Department (HCD), Training and Research Department (TRD), Food and Drugs Department (FDD), Bureau of Food and Drug Inspection (BFDI), Medical Pharmaceutical Supply Chain Centre (MPSC), Centre for HIV/AIDS and STI (CHAS), National Tuberculosis Centre (NTC), Centre for Malaria Parasitology and Entomology (CMPE), Foreign Relation Division (Cabinet), Department of Finance (DOF), Department of Human Resources for Health (DHRH), Statistics Division, Planning Division (DPIC) and representative from non-governmental organizations.
3. The participation of relevant development partner representatives is invited and encouraged: UN Agencies, international organizations, NGOs, and Civil society organizations involved in the health sector and that support efforts in the each of the three priority health system modules/sub-modules.
4. Development partner representatives are invited to participate in the regular HSS-TF meetings and to specifically collaborate and work with the relevant MOH officers in smaller technical working groups in order to elaborate and complete technical inputs required in the CN. Collaborative technical work group efforts can be face to face or remote. Evidence of working group meetings and outputs requires to be submitted to the HSS-TF Secretariat.
5. The HSS-TF may consider to invite other related organizations on ad. hoc. basis, to attend regular meetings as necessary. Consultative and consensus building workshops, ad hoc and other urgent HSS-TF meetings may be convened as considered necessary by the Chair or delegate.
6. The HSS-TF shall meet as group on a weekly basis every Thursday, from late September 2014 until submission of the CN to the CCM in Jan 2015.
7. The Deputy Director of the Department of Planning and International Cooperation (DPIC), Ministry of Health, shall serve as Chair of the HSS-TF and preside over the task force meetings and report to the Director, DPIC and the Cabinet, Ministry of Health.
8. The Secretariat of the HSS-TF is the Division of International Cooperation: Ms. Toumlakhone Rattanavong and Ms. Phanomvanh Sithixay, Ministry of Health. The Secretariat shall send invitations, prepare meeting documents, meeting programmes, take note of the meetings and prepare meeting reports and do all necessary logistical arrangements for the HSS-TF. Development partner representatives are invited to assist the Secretariat to document HSS-TF process and outputs in English language, as needed.
