

## **Summary**

## SUMMARY

The Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (hereinafter referred to as the Lao PDR) is implementing its Social-Economic Development Plan with the long-term goal of breaking away from its LLDC status by 2020. Human resources development is one of the eight priority development areas of this Plan and various training schemes, mainly for government officials and technocrats, to improve the administrative efficiency and other purposes are important means of human resources development. At present, training for human resources development, mainly in Vientiane, is organized by government institutions, mass organizations of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party and various donors in the form of seminars and workshops, etc.

The Lao PDR also regards the expansion of external economic relations as one of the eight priority development areas and has joined such regional cooperation arrangements as the Mekong River Commission in addition to its affiliation with the ASEAN and AFTA in 1997. Given the government policy of further promoting the development of the national economy following the step of affiliating with the APEC, ASEM and WTO, etc. in the coming years, there has been an increasing trend of the number of training sessions and conferences relating to regional and international cooperation.

Although government institutions and mass organizations of the Party have their own training facilities, their capacity is small with inadequate systems to support major conferences. As a result, such external facilities as hotel facilities are rented when necessary. The increase of the number of training and conferences and the use of existing facilities by the private sector, however, have made it necessary to restrict training and regional as well as international conferences using these facilities. Moreover, the available external facilities are limited in that a maximum of only 300 people can be seated and there are no facilities for exclusive use for training and conferences, etc. involving some 500 people as hoped for by the government, making it necessary to either restrict the number of participants or to tolerate over-crowding.

To redress this situation, the Government of the Lao PDR formulated the Project to construct the International Cooperation and Training Center (hereinafter referred to as the Center) in Vientiane for exclusive use for training by government institutions and for regional as well as international conferences and made a request to the Government of Japan for the provision of grant aid for the construction of the Center and the provision of the necessary equipment.

In response to this request, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) dispatched the Preparatory Study Team to the Lao PDR in December, 2001 and, during the visit by the Study Team, both sides confirmed the necessity for the Government of the Lao PDR to prepare a management and utilization plan for the Center and to establish the National Committee on the Management and Utilization of the Center.

The JICA then dispatched the Basic Design Study Team to the Lao PDR for the period from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2002 and this Study Team conducted surveys on the demand for the planned Center, the site conditions and facilities similar to the planned Center, the gathering of relevant data and other activities. In addition, the Basic Design Study Team held consultations with related persons in the Lao PDR on the operation and maintenance plan for the Center and the facility details. It also conducted a survey on the natural conditions, including the topographic survey, soil investigation and water quality analysis at the site.

On its return to Japan, the Basic Design Study Team analysed the existing need for the use of the planned Center and the operation and maintenance cost of the Center based on the field survey findings. The Basic Design Study Team then prepared the Basic Design Study Report (Draft Final) by examining the contents as well as the scale of the optimum facilities, equipment and soft components, selecting the necessary equipment and materials, roughly estimating the project cost and formulating the project implementation plan. The JICA subsequently dispatched the Explanation on Draft Final Report Team to the Lao PDR for the period from 9<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2002 to examine and discuss the said report with related persons in the Lao PDR and to conduct an additional field survey.

In regard to the formulation of the Project, the highest priority was given to examining the appropriate size based on the findings of the demand survey and the operation and management budget on the Lao PDR side and taking the natural and social conditions, architectural style, construction and procurement situation, operation and management capability of the project implementation agency in the Lao PDR and the construction work period in accordance with the grant aid scheme of the Government of Japan into consideration.

In regard to the demand, data suggesting an annual increase of the number of days on which training and conferences are held by 2 – 5% from the 2001 level was presented by the Lao PDR side during the field survey. Given the absence of a clear basis to guarantee such an annual increase, however, this data was not used for the planning of the Project. Instead, the demand up to 2009 was estimated based on the existing demand in 2001 and the total scale and holding capacity of each room were examined in detail. As a result, the adequate total floor area was calculated to be approximately 4,020 m<sup>2</sup>, representing a some 20% reduction of the original request.

The Project aims at providing facilities for seminars, workshops and conferences to promote human resources development and regional and international cooperation by means of the construction of facilities for exclusive use for training and conferences in Vientiane. The concrete subjects of Japan's grant aid are the construction of the Center building, the procurement of equipment required for training and conferences and the provision of assistance for the operation and management of the Center (soft components).

< Facilities >

Center building: two story reinforced concrete structure and partially steel-frame structure with a total floor area of 4,020.7 m<sup>2</sup>

**Main Rooms**

Type of Room	Quantity	Remarks
Multi-Purpose Hall	1	Used for large and medium-scale seminars and conferences with a seating capacity of 700 (can be partitioned into two rooms with a seating capacity of 500 and 200 respectively)
Seminar Room	2	Used for small-scale seminars and conferences
Foyer	1	To facilitate entry and exit to and from the Multi-Purpose Hall and used for exhibitions and refreshments
Supporting Section Rooms		Lecturer/Preparation Room, Interpretation Booths, Audio Control Room, Mini-Cafeteria/Kitchen
Administration Rooms		Director's Room, Administration/Data Information Room, Staff Rooms

< Equipment >

**Main Equipment**

Type	Main Equipment
Multi-Purpose Hall: simultaneous interpretation system and conference system	Simultaneous interpretation system, chairman's unit, delegate units, earphones, headphones, infrared transmitters, infrared radiator and infrared hearing system, etc.
Multi-Purpose Hall: AV presentation system	LCD projector, slide projector, VTR, microphone system, audio mixer, speakers and notebook-type PCs, etc.
Seminar Rooms: AV system	LCD projector, OHP, slide projector, VTR, microphone, audio mixer, speakers and notebook-type PCs, etc.
Personal computer equipment	PCs, printer and scanner, etc.
Office equipment	Facsimile machine and copy machine
Workshop	Maintenance tools
First aid	Wheelchair
Furniture	Desks, chairs, moveable partitions and moveable stage, etc.

< Outline of Soft Component s >

The Lao PDR does not have exclusive facilities to hold training and conferences and the halls of hotels provide the nearest facilities. As such, the planned Center will be the first of its kind to provide such a service. While government officials are expected to fill staff positions at the Center, they lack sufficient knowledge of the operation and management of this kind of facility. As it is unreasonable to expect them to formulate and decide the operation policies, rules, promotion and business management policies and the operating plan based on their knowledge of operation and management, support will be provided for the operation and management of the Center so that policies and plans, etc. which are appropriate for the local conditions can be prepared.

In regard to the project implementation system, the Prime Minister's Office which supervises all government institutions will be the responsible organization. Until the completion of the Center, the National Committee on the Construction of the Center, the establishment of which is instructed by the Prime Minister and which is headed by the Vice-Minister of the Prime Minister's Office, will act as the implementation agency. This Committee will, therefore, be responsible for the design, tender for and construction of the Center.

Following the completion of the Center, the said Committee will be dissolved and the National Committee on the Management and Utilization of the Center is scheduled to be established under the supervision of the Prime Minister's Office. This will replace the National Committee on the Construction of the Center as the project implementation agency with responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the Center. Staff members of the Center will be appointed/recruited around November, 2003 to commence the operation of the Center.

In the case of the Project's implementation under the grant aid scheme of the Government of Japan, the expected project implementation period is 5.5 months for the detailed design and 12 months for construction and procurement (13 months if the soft components is included). The estimated cost to be borne by the Lao PDR side is approximately Japanese yen 20.53 million to cover the cost of banking work, planting work, gate and fencing work, infrastructure connection work, bank payment charge and the procurement of general furniture and fixtures, etc.

The implementation of the Project is expected to have the following direct effects.

The completion of the Center will provide a venue for human resources development training and conferences, mainly for government officials and regional and international conferences as listed below.

- ① Total number of days for training and conferences: approximately 270 days in 2005, increasing to 540 days in 2009
- ② Total number of participants in training and conferences: approximately 28,700 in 2005, increasing to 57,600 in 2009

In addition, the following indirect effects can be expected.

- ① Government officials and others who participate in training and conferences will contribute to so-called "good governance" by effectively utilizing their newly acquired knowledge and information in their respective areas.
- ② The holding of such regional cooperation conferences as those of the ASEAN and AFTA and such international cooperation conferences as those of the WTO and others, international cooperation will be promoted, contributing to enhancing the state of the Lao PDR in Asia and the global community.

As the Project is expected to have the above-mentioned effects and also to contribute to the development of human resources, mainly government officials, and the promotion of regional and international cooperation, the suitability of the Project's implementation under the grant aid scheme of the Government of Japan is confirmed. The Lao PDR side has firmly pledged to secure the necessary personnel and funding for the operation and maintenance of the Center and the necessary system will be in place by the time of the completion of the construction work.

For the smooth implementation of the Project, the Lao PDR side should take appropriate action in regard to the following issues.

**(1) Recruitment of Staff Members for the Center and Establishment of Operation and Management System**

As the Center will be the first facility of its kind in the Lao PDR, it is assumed that the government officials to be recruited as staff members will have little knowledge of its operation and management as the required know-how of the staff members of this type of facility is usually acquired through actual business practice. It is, therefore, essential to accumulate such know-how together with the establishment of the Center's organizational strength through the provision of technical assistance under the soft components, training at similar facilities and training during a provisional operation period.

**(2) Securing of Operation and Maintenance Budget**

The necessary budget to ensure the adequate operation and maintenance of the Center is planned to be subsidised by the government and the Prime Minister's Office as the responsible organization has firmly pledged the necessary budgetary appropriation. Meanwhile, the National Committee on the Management and Utilization of the Center as the implementation agency should follow the necessary procedure without delay so that the government subsidy for the Center is promptly disbursed every year.

**(3) Securing of Equipment Renewal, Major Maintenance and Repair Costs**

The facilities and equipment can be expected to maintain their functions for a long period of time with daily maintenance. However, all equipment has its own service life, making replacement necessary in due course even if daily maintenance is properly conducted. Similarly, facilities eventually require major maintenance and repair work. Accordingly, it is essential to secure the necessary budget for equipment renewal and facility maintenance and repair in a planned manner.