

Terms of Reference

Communications Specialist

Title:	Communications Specialist
Duty Station:	Department of Statistics (DoS) Vientiane, Lao PDR
Project:	Support programme to National Statistics system
Cooperating UN Agency:	UNDP
Duration of Appointment:	6 months (under SSA contract)
Expected Starting Date:	1 July 2010

Background

The Ministry of Planning and Investment, through the department of Statistics has been preparing a statistical Master Plan or the “National Statistical Development Strategy” (NSDS), with inputs from Sida/Statistics Sweden, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development/ Partnership in Statistics in the 21st Century (OECD/PARIS21). The NSDS covers a 10 year period from 2010-2020 and is split in two phases. Guided by the NSDS the aim of the Government is to strengthen the National Statistical System (NSS) in Lao PDR to provide relevant, timely and reliable statistical data. Statistical capacity-building will be pursued using a system-wide approach. The success of the NSDS will also rely on the advocacy, dissemination and outreach to inform and educate both users and producers of statistics at all levels.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is presently formulating a 5 year programme of support to the NSDS with the view of strengthening the NSS to perform its functions efficiently and effectively. It is expected that the full programme of support will start on January 1, 2011. However, while the full programme document is being prepared, there are a number of key activities in support of the Department of Statistics and the NSS that require immediate support for implementation. For this reason a preparatory assistance project has been approved by UNDP that will run until the end of 2010 to help the Department of Statistics implement critical activities within the NSDS work plan. UNDP has also been called upon to play a central role in coordinating development partner assistance to the NSDS.

Against this background, the UNDP is now seeking a Communications Specialist that will support the Department of Statistics in the implementation of the NSDS.

Duties & Responsibilities

Under the overall guidance of the UNDP Head of the Poverty Unit, and the technical direction and supervision of the Deputy Director General of the Department of Statistics, the Communication Specialist will provide support to implement the activities of the NSDS. In particular, the Communication Specialist will function as a member of the Department of Statistics, with the special task to design an Advocacy, Dissemination and Outreach Strategy for the NSDS and coordinate its implementation. In the preparation of the Strategy and the design of the advocacy materials the specialist will liaise closely with PARIS21.

Her/his tasks include:

- Develop a draft Advocacy, Dissemination and Outreach Strategy for the NSDS

- Coordinate and produce advocacy materials in close consultation with PARIS21. PARIS21 has prepared a set of advocacy materials appropriate for an NSDS, however these will have to be 'localised' to the Lao context;
- Assist in the preparation of the National Statistics Day celebrations
- Assist in the preparation of the Annual Statistics Stakeholders Forum
- Assist in the organization of workshops, seminars and trainings on NSDS
- Organize press briefings and interviews
- Coordinate and constantly upgrade NSDS information on the Department of Statistics website
- To build a good, trusting relationship with the Department of Statistics counterparts at central and sub-national level and with development partners
- To become familiar with current implementation of the government policies, laws, regulations, instructions, circulars, procedures and UNDP's National Execution (DIM and NIM) modality
- Liaise with concerned parties on Human Development, MDG and NSEDP advocacy activities
- Maintain contacts with the NHDR network in Lao PDR including the media

In addition, the communications specialist will work closely with the responsible UNDP Programme Analyst and the Public Information Officer at UNDP and other Development Partner agencies, and s/he will communicate with relevant Government institutions and organizations.

The Communications Specialist will be based in Vientiane, with travel to provinces expected.

Qualifications Required

- A university degree in the field of communication, public information or related area
- At least 5 years work experience in communication
- Proven experience in developing targeted advocacy materials
- Experience in organising high level events, seminars and workshops
- Proficiency in oral and written English and computer skills (In particular, Word, Power Point and Excel) are pre-requisites as well as publishing, design and editing software.
- Excellent communication and writing skills in both, Lao and English.
- Excellent interpersonal and social skills, self-motivated and ability to take initiative
- Work experience with Lao government is an asset