

Year 4 Report (2015 activities) *Please see a reminder of Strategic Objectives (SO) and Expected Results (ER) at the end of the document*

Country: Lao PDR

EU-Lux-WHO UHC Partnership

Date: 30 Nov 2015	Prepared by: WHO CO/RO/HQ
Reporting Period: 1 August – 30 November 2015	
Main activities as planned in the Road Map.	
Put here all activities as set in the roadmap and link them to SO I, SO II or SO III and to an expected result	
SO I	
Activity 1 (ER1): UHC Partnership launch in Lao PDR with the aim of increasing awareness, visibility, and understanding of Partnership amongst key stakeholders	

Main activities achieved and progress made:
<p><i>Please estimate approximate percentage of achievement for each roadmap activity. Please note which activities were undertaken with the technical support of WCO (potentially in collaboration with existing initiatives of UN agencies, NGOs etc.)</i></p> <p><i>What are some concrete and visible outputs of Partnership activities?(ex: annual review report, key policy changes that may be under way as a result of the processes described; has there been or will there be any likely improvement in service delivery outputs?)</i></p> <p>Please relate all undertaken activities to SO I, SO II or SO III, to an expected result (ER1-ER6) and report progress on the indicators as per the roadmap. This can be presented in a table format or in bullet points.</p> <p>100% of the activity planned for 2015 was achieved. The UHC Partnership launch was a success and included the participation of 65 stakeholders, including the various departments of the Ministry of Health; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Donors including the EU, World Bank, Luxembourg, JICA, USAID; development partners and key stakeholders including Swiss Red Cross; Embassies of Japan, Korea and Luxembourg (Hanoi); UN Agencies including ILO, UNAIDS, UNICEF, UNFPA; and the print and electronic media. A more nuanced understanding of the flexibility and uniqueness of the Partnership was conveyed, as well as the importance of UHC for WHO and its partners, as evinced by the following</p>

statements:

“I wish to express my appreciation for the valuable support and assistance to the Ministry of Health from Luxembourg and the European Union through WHO. This partnership programme will help identify the policy gap and developing the platform and the mechanism toward Universal Health Coverage”. H.E Professor Dr. Eksavang Vongvichit, Minister of Health, Lao PDR.

“Back in 2012, [the partnership] started as a regional programme covering our five African partner countries. Through the very global nature of the partnership – with the EU component covering several regions – it quickly became clear to us that we also had to expand. In this reflection, we had no doubt that Laos belonged in this partnership, in fact it was impossible to imagine the next phase without the inclusion of Laos, a country where health sector reform is at its prime and where Luxembourg has been highly engaged. Laos has set the highly commendable objective of achieving UHC by 2025. This partnership will be one milestone on its way there”. Ms Natacha Gomes, Representative from the Luxembourg Ministry of Foreign Affairs

“This Launch, while promoting visibility of the commencement of the Partnership Programme in Lao PDR, also provides the opportunity to advocate for UHC. UHC has a direct impact on a population’s health and thus a critical component of sustainable development and poverty reduction.” Dr Juliet Fleischl, WHO Representative, Lao PDR.

Please explain any changes in circumstances or programme implementation challenges encountered affecting the original plan:

Please provide information on activities eliminated, changed, added or postponed. Please list them and provide the reasons for each of them (obstacles encountered, remedial measures taken,...).

The UHC Partnership began in Laos in August 2015 with the arrival of the Policy Advisor, with the official launching ceremony on 19 November 2015. Hence, the Partnership is in a nascent stage and the sole activity which took place this year was the high-level launch.

Proposed modifications to Programme Road Map resulting from changes above:

If the changes above have implications for future work, please attach the new roadmap to this report and confirm that the changes have been discussed with the MoH and EU delegation.

Not applicable

Lessons learned:

Please describe the principal lessons learned during the last 12 months of implementation of the UHC Partnership:

The launch has provided an opportunity to:

1. Gain stakeholder interest in the Partnership
2. Clarify how the Partnership is different from other programmes, emphasizing its flexibility and enabling approach
3. Raise in-country visibility of the Partnership
4. Begin the dialogue with key stakeholders on the Lao work plan activities planned under the Partnership
5. Provide advocacy in Lao PDR for the UHC vision

Road Map and timeline for 2016:

*Please list here the work plan activities as well as the time frame for those activities for the calendar year 2015. **These activities should be related to objectives/ER and have clear timeline and indicators.***

Priority area for UHC Partnership	UHC Partnership activities within priority area	Necessary inputs to carry out activities	Deliverables/indicators	Funding source
Planning & Coordination	Support health sector planning and coordination at provincial level	Training workshops, field trips	Report	
	National Health Forum	Preparatory meeting and workshops; post forum dialogue	Forum Report/Outcome Document	Bilateral Support (LUX,ADB, WB) + EU-WHO-LUX Partnership
	Capacity Building for MoH on Sector Wide development and Aid Coordination	health sector coordination workshops; Donor roundtable meetings	Workshop Report	Global Fund/HSS
Priority area for UHC Partnership	UHC Partnership activities within priority area	Necessary inputs to carry out activities	Deliverables/indicators	Funding source
Integrated Health Services Delivery	Capacity development on governance and management of the health service delivery system	Training workshops, study tour	Guidelines and reports	WHO & Bilateral Partner support; EU-WHO-LUX Partnership
	Support review of health policies, strategies and standards	technical support, review of key documents; meetings	Reports	EU-WHO-LUX Partnership
Human resources for Health	Support training in the use of HRH information system and database	Training Workshops, training manuals	HRH Reports	EU-WHO-LUX Partnership
	Support capacity building of MoH in HR development and management	Training Workshops, HR training manuals	HRH Training reports	
Health care financing policies, strategies for better developing and operating health financing policies toward UHC	Support capacity building and institution development on health financing at provincial and district level	Capacity building workshop, follow-up evaluation and training	Provincial and district Reports	EU-WHO-LUX Partnership + EU-WHO Project
	Review and revise operational guidelines/SOPs for linking standards to payment of HEF, CHBI and free MCH initiative	TA	revised operational guidelines, SOPs in use	ILO/WHO Project; EU-WHO Project
Priority area for UHC Partnership	UHC Partnership activities within priority area	Necessary inputs to carry out activities	Deliverables/indicators	Funding source
Monitoring & Evaluation	Capacity building for Monitoring & Evaluation of health policies and plans	Capacity building workshop, follow-up evaluation and training	Workshop Reports and follow up Evaluation Reports	EU-WHO-LUX Partnership
Communication & Visibility	Awareness and Visibility of Partnership Programme	Launch of Partnership Programme (2015)	Regular website updates and Press/Media Releases	EU-WHO-LUX Partnership
		Media, Pamphlets, Posters		

The HRH activity is planned for 1st quarter 2016. The activities under 'planning and coordination' are foreseen for the 2nd quarter of 2016, while the work on monitoring & evaluation will take place during the last 2 quarters of 2016.

Visibility and communication

Please give a short overview of visibility and communication events that took place and attach evidence (scanned newspapers, pictures, brochure,...). Please describe how communication of programme results to the public has been ensured

An article for the WPRO and Laos WCO web site was published as well as an article on the UHC Partnership web site. In addition, media was present at the UHC Partnership launch event with the National Lao TV station airing the launch during its prime time news. A local media story was also published in the KPN and Vientiane Times newspapers and uploaded to the WPRO web site.

During the launch event itself, care was taken to adequately explain the nature and uniqueness of the Partnership as well as clarify the fact that this is a flexible Partnership and not to be misunderstood as a separate, additional programme.

With the presence of His Excellency, Professor Dr. Eksavang Vongvichit, Minister of Health, the UHC Partnership launch enjoyed high-level participation.

Impact assessment:

*Please explain to which extent 1-3 country level activities have already contributed towards achieving the overall programme objectives. **Carrying out activities as per the roadmap is good. We would like to go beyond the activities and try to relate them to potential contribution of the Partnership to broader results or impact: better services for the population, improved health status of the population or a specific target group, better equity, contribution to health in all policies, contribution to lives saved, better access to care and services, improved financial risk protection, better coordination or involvement of the actors... The linkages might be direct (sometimes) or indirect (most of the time) but should be explained with as many details as possible to let an "external" reader understand the added value of the Partnership. If possible, those broader results should be supported by indicators.***

Where possible, please use short stories /field voices box / quotes (MoH, district level officials, health workers etc) / press releases to illustrate the impact and added value of the programme and WHO action in the policy dialogue process.

Not applicable

Linking activities to overall Objectives:

Please see below list of overall programme monitoring indicators and select the ones which apply to your country Road Map. Please describe if this target has been met and how.

- Development and use of National Monitoring & Evaluation framework indicators
- Reduced share of direct out-of-pocket payments in total health expenditure by at least 10%
- Fall in the incidence of financial catastrophe and impoverishment from direct payments of health
- NHPSP in line with JANS attributes
- Agreed Health Financing (HF) strategies, linked to NHPSP,
- Increase in utilization of outpatient health services, particularly among the poor, or a more equitable distribution of public spending on health
- Inclusive National Policy Dialogue
- Substantive policy changes achieved as a result of more effective and inclusive health sector reviews
- Number of improved and resourced policy frameworks elaborated and implemented as a result of a truly representative multi-stakeholder consultation
- Positive trend in stakeholders’ alignment with NHPSP
- Existence and implementation of, an IHP+ compact or equivalent at the country level
- Agreed or strengthened mutual accountability mechanisms such as joint annual reviews
- Positive trend in stakeholders overall performance on aid effectiveness performance scorecards, or equivalent

None of the above indicators apply in Laos’ case as only 1 activity has happened this year, namely the launch of the UHC Partnership as a high-level event with the aim of increasing visibility and understanding of the Partnership and its goals.

Reminding Strategic Objectives and Expected Results of the EU-Lux/WHO UHC Partnership

Strategic objectives (SO)	Expected Results (ER)
SO I. To support the development and implementation of robust national health policies, strategies and plans to increase coverage with essential health services, financial risk protection and health equity;	ER 1. Countries will have prepared/developed/updated/adapted their NHPSP through an inclusive policy dialogue process leading to better coverage with essential health services, financial risk protection and health equity; ER 2. Countries will have put in place expertise, monitoring and evaluation systems and annual health sector reviews.
SO II. To improve technical and institutional capacities, knowledge and information for health systems and services adaptation and related policy dialogue;	ER 3. Countries requesting health financing (HF) support will have modified their financing strategies and systems to move more rapidly towards universal coverage (UC), with a particular focus on the poor and vulnerable: ER 4. Countries receiving HF support will have implemented financing reforms to facilitate UC;

	ER 5. Accurate, up-to-date evidence on what works and what does not work regarding health financing reforms for universal coverage is available and shared across countries.
SO III. To ensure international and national stakeholders are increasingly aligned around NHPSP and adhere to other aid effectiveness principles.	ER 6. At country level, alignment and harmonization of health aid according to national health plans is consolidated and accelerated.