

Meeting Report

“Consensus Meeting on the NNP 2020”

January 11, 2008

Objectives:

1. Introduce the background of the National Nutrition Policy and its development
2. Introduce the policy per chapter and paragraphs
3. Discuss the policy: content, Lao language
4. Discuss management (NCMC or/and establishing new body: National Nutrition Committee)

All PPTs were presented in English and in Lao. Please note in the PPT of Dr. Bounthom: “NNP cannot buffer adverse impacts from other development policies”. Refer here to resettlement, hydropower and mining.

Outcome:

1. Policy background and policy were introduced to GoL, selected international agencies and donors (ADB, WB, EC)
2. Clear GoL consensus on draft content with only minor requests for amendment.
3. Request to include role of each GoL institutions under chapter “role and responsibilities/Chapter III”.
4. Consensus that nutrition has to be made more central in development. Vice-Minister of Planning and Investment mentioned the lack of nutrition focus in the NGPES.
5. Various requests for editing and clarification on terms (Lao language) as NNP has to pass National Assembly and will serve as national (even international) document. It was agreed upon to establish a GoL Editing Committee (with strong guidance from MoJustice) for finalization. Troublesome words: poverty reduction, malnutrition, vulnerability.
6. WREA advises for the development of the NNS and NAP to avoid overlapping/redundant activities/programming (with special regard to the word “food” and “environment”). The NNP does not show difficulties though.
7. Clarification still needed for management responsibilities and M+E. Some argue there is no need to establish a subcommittee (NCC), NCMC is suffice. Others point out that there is such need (questioning NCMC’s capacity and technical skills). MoFA/NCMC asks MoH to draft the TOR of NCMC and/or NCC. Nota bene: NCMC has no authority to work with international organizations (e.g. also to sign a MOU), only the Secretariat which is chaired by HE Vice PM.
8. Need to expand the role of the Nutrition Division within MoH. During the lunch meeting, Vice Minister MoH mentioned about restructuring MoH – mentioned also by Dr. Somchit in closing ceremony. This could go in pair with the establishment of a Nutritional Institute/Center
9. NLFC points the call for nutritional well-being of **all** ethnic groups might be overambitious. Mr. Somlith points out that there are 49 groups, with more than 200 linguistic subgroups. He was also wondering what about those

53,000 people which the Census did not classify. In general, everyone is in favor to increase cultural understanding and specific interventions (language, beliefs, etc).

10. WREA points out that environmental issues could be more specific.
11. Target: urban population should be more specified (only mentioned as scope, but full rationale only focused on rural areas)
12. NNP needs strong commitment for implementation otherwise only lip service.
13. WFP comments on scope “resettlement “ by requesting that nutritional activities should not only be tacked on right after the damage is done (“start at the source”). WFP also advised to expand the concept of accountability (not only of investors but for GoL policies). WFP also points out that other MDGs cannot be reached if nutritional well-being is not reached.
14. UNICEF highlighted that nutritional improvement needs more than economic growth.

Participants were invited to provide further written feed-back to the Nutrition Division, MoH until January 25th, 2008.