

Lao ADVANCE Project



LAO-08-020

M E M O R A N D U M

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GDO USAID RDM, Asia (RDM/A)

FROM: Victoria Waite
Project Director
Contract No. 486-I-00-07-00008-00, Task Order 02

DATE: 16 October 2008

SUBJECT: Lao BTA/WTO Project Quarterly Report: April - June 2008

SUMMARY OF PROJECT

The Assistance to Lao BTA Compliance and WTO Accession (Lao BTA/WTO Project) program is the second task order awarded under the ASEAN Development Vision to Advance National Cooperation for Economic Integration (ADVANCE), a five year indefinite quantity contract of the U.S. State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development. The task order was awarded in December 2007; Lao BTA/WTO Project activities were launched in early January 2008.

The objective of the Lao BTA/WTO Project is to support the Government of Laos' (GoL) --- primarily through the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MOIC) --- efforts to implement reforms necessary to move Laos towards its goal of accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO); to successfully implement the U.S.-Lao Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA); and to fulfill its commitments, along with the other ASEAN member nations, of achieving an ASEAN Economic Community by 2015 as outlined in the Vientiane Action Program and the AEC Blueprint. These three paths—multilateral, bilateral, and regional—have a common core of commitments, giving ADVANCE the opportunity to deliver one technical assistance package to help Laos achieve progress in all three. The program envisions the provision of related, targeted technical assistance and training to relevant line Ministries and the National Assembly.

Victoria Waite, a Managing Associate at Nathan Associates, is the Project Director and Trade Specialist and will manage the Lao BTA/WTO Project from headquarters in Arlington, Virginia. Her primary counterpart in the MOIC's Foreign Trade Policy Department is Ms. Latthana Douangboupha. Together they will work to ensure that the work plan activities are implemented on behalf of USAID, other USG agencies, and the Government of Laos.

CURRENT STATUS OF ALL ACTIVITIES AND PROGRESS

For the third quarter of 2008, the Lao BTA/WTO Project provided an informal training session on scheduling trade in services commitments; held a communications workshop on writing trade-related fact sheets; and undertook an assessment of trade in telecommunications services in the Lao PDR. In addition, a services consultant began researching and drafting the briefing note on establishing a GATS enquiry point, and the Project Director submitted draft technical instructions on IPR and the website activity to the MOIC for review and approval. Other project highlights include the submission by Nathan Associates of a new implementation plan and estimated budget in response to USAID's Phase II funding Scope of Work in August, expanding the project modestly and extending the duration until December 2009.

Project highlights for third quarter, July – September 2008, include:

Informal training on scheduling trade in services commitments (July 24). The Project Director, Ms. Waite, gave a day-long informal training session on scheduling trade in services commitments. The request came directly from the MOIC to provide additional detailed training to members of the Lao inter-Ministerial committee on services. While this activity was not on the formal work plan, we were able to accommodate the request since Ms. Waite was in Vientiane on other project related business. (see agenda attached).

Assessment on trade in telecommunications services in Lao PDR (co-funded with DC-based USAID-funded TCBoost Project). On July 28 – August 6, a three person team conducted meetings with Lao officials responsible for either negotiating or implementing legal measures affecting trade in telecommunications services. In addition, they met with a number of service providers to get a better understanding of market structure in Laos. A draft report (electronic and hard copies) was submitted to the MOIC at the end of September and has been circulated to the concerned Lao agencies for review. We hope to receive feedback from the Lao Government in late October. Once we have addressed their comments, the TOR deliverables will be officially submitted to both TCBoost and the Lao Project.

Communications Workshop: Drafting Trade-related Fact Sheets (July 28). The project organized a one-day training session designed to improve the MOIC's communication and outreach skills to stakeholders in the form of drafting trade-related fact sheets. This activity is part of the work plan listed under the trade resources center and is integral to increasing transparency and building stakeholder support to the WTO accession process as well as the BTA. This is also the first training that MOIC staff have had of this kind, and they appreciated learning new skills. The presenter, Ms. Dian Estey (on loan from the ASEAN Facility), delivered a well-thought out program and the participants were able to sketch out draft outlines for fact sheet topics. The idea was that the MOIC would continue to work on the fact sheets over a couple of weeks with a goal to finalize the drafts with Ms. Dian during a follow-up visit. To my knowledge, there has been no movement by the participants to finish drafts of the fact sheets, in part due to busy schedules, and also there does not seem to be someone reinforcing the importance of finishing the drafts. Corrective action will be discussed with the FTPD in mid-October and a plan to finish the fact sheets will be discussed. The agenda, training module, and Dian's trip report are attached.

Translations (Lao to English). Draft translations of the two decrees applicable to the Enterprise Law as well as the Standards Law were submitted to the MOIC's Foreign Trade Policy Department (FTPD) in May and June, respectively. The FTPD and relevant line Ministries have reviewed the translations and provided comments. They have also requested that these be marked as unofficial translations. With regard to the Standards Law (and IP Law being translated by the USPTO/Bangkok), the project has spoken to the UNDP project Strengthening the Lao National Assembly about using the US sponsored draft translations of the primary laws on standards and IP as a basis for their formal translation process which works closely with the National Assembly and Singaporean lawyers to officially adopt accurate translations.

Briefing note on Establishing a GATS Enquiry Point. Approval was requested in late September for Peter Collins, a former Deputy Assistant USTR for Services, to undertake a short technical consultancy to research and draft a briefing note on establishing a GATS Enquiry Point as part of Laos' WTO accession requirements. While this obligation is only due upon accession, the Lao MOIC wanted to prepare itself in advance on what will be expected of them once they become a full WTO member. The draft briefing note will be submitted to the MOIC for review mid-October.

Other Work Plan Activities.

- The draft Agenda for National Assembly Workshop on Lessons Learned from Vietnam and Cambodia's WTO accession and implementation of the BTA (Vietnam only) has been submitted to the USG, MOIC, and the National Assembly for inputs and feedback. A tentative timeframe suggested by the NA is set for late January. There do not seem to be any conflicts for the USG or GoL. We are incorporating inputs from USTR and USAID and will circulate revised agenda shortly.

Preparation for Work Plan Activities 4th quarter 2008.

- Submitted a draft TOR for the IPR Assessment.
- Submitted a draft TOR to officially initiate website development.

IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Project staff and MOIC are doing their best to implement project activities as timely as possible. This continues to be an issue, but I believe that everyone is aware of the constraints. Distance and the lack of an in-country advisor to push things along on a daily basis, in addition to scarce human resources at the MOIC, have contributed to implementation delays.

OTHER ISSUES

There are no other issues to report at this time.

Lao BTA/WTO Project

Agenda - Training Session on Scheduling of Trade in Services Commitments

July 24, 2008

Vientiane, Lao PDR

Venue: LangXang Hotel

Thursday, July 24

- 9:00 am – 10:00 am **Scheduling Services Commitments (Presentation)**
- How to schedule services commitments (4 columns, horizontal and sectoral)
 - What to include in a schedule and what not to include
 - What constitutes market access and national treatment restrictions
 - Examples
- 10:00 am – 10:45 am **Is this a Market Access or National Treatment Restriction? (Exercise)**
- Participants will be given a number of restrictions, they will have to decide if it falls under MA or NT (or both/neither)
- 10:45 am – 11:15 am **Coffee Break**
- 11:15 am – 12:00 pm **Review a WTO Member's Schedule of Commitments (Discussion)**
- Will select a member country's schedule of commitment to use as an example to discuss the organization of the schedule and the different types of nomenclature used to schedule binding commitments, including full, partial and no liberalization
- 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm **Lunch**
- 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm¹ **Interactive Session (Scheduling Exercise)**
- Participants will be presented with a scenario and will have to take pieces of information provided and determine how the information fits into a services schedule

¹ Can run over if additional time is needed.

Agenda

Lao BTA/WTO Project

Communication Skills Workshop: Trade-related Fact Sheets

July 28, 2008

Lao Plaza Hotel

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| 8:30 – 9:00 | Arrival/Registration/Coffee |
| 9:00 – 9:15 | Welcome and Workshop Overview <i>Mr. Bounsone, DG, FTPD, MOIC</i> <i>Victoria Waite, Project Director</i> |
| Session 1 9:15 – 9:45 | Know your Purpose <i>Dianthus Estey</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">— 5 Ws and H (Who, What, Where, When, Why and How)— Introduction to Fact Sheet (What it is, How is it different from press release and FAQs)— Exercise: Participants are given different documents to define whether it is a fact sheet, press release or FAQ |
| Session 2 9:45 – 10:30 | Know your Audience <i>Dianthus Estey</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">— Why does knowing your audience important?— How can we define our audience?— Who is your audience? Exercise: Participants are divided into working groups to define the audience for their fact sheets based on the different criteria. |
| 10:30 – 10:45 | Coffee Break |
| Session 3 10:45 – 11:30 | Communicating for Change <i>Dianthus Estey</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">— What is communication?— Communicating for Change— Four Basic pillars of communication |
| Session 4 11:30 – 12:15 | Know your Message <i>Dianthus Estey</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">— Defining your message— Defining your supporting messages— The importance of having a consistent message |
| 12:15 – 1:30 | Lunch |
| Exercise 2 1:30 – 2:30 | Exercise <i>Participants will be divided into groups and given a relevant topic with some raw information. They will work together to define: target audience, audience characteristics, influencers, and message to convey</i> |

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 2:30 – 2:45 | Coffee Break |
| Session 4 | Deliver your Message |
| 2:45 – 3:30 | <i>Dianthus Estey</i> Steps to writing your fact sheet |
| Exercise 3 | Putting into Practice |
| 3:30 – 4:45 | <i>Participants return to their groups. Using a relevant scenario, each group follows the steps to writing a Fact Sheet and writes a fact sheet to support a subject relevant news release. The session concludes with each group presenting their work to the plenary for discussion.</i> |
| 4:45 – 5:00 | Review, Wrap-up and Evaluations |



Communications Skills Workshop:

Trade-related Fact Sheets

July 2008

This publication is prepared by Nathan Associates Inc. to be presented at the **Communications Skills Workshop: Trade-related Fact Sheets** under the LAO BTA/WTO project.

WORKSHOP

Communications Skills Workshop: Trade-related Fact Sheets

DISCLAIMER:

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MODULE 1—UNDERSTAND THE WRITING TASK

Definition of Fact Sheet

A *fact sheet* is an important public relations tool that give readers an overall view of a subject or topic. Though they can stand alone, fact sheets are commonly used to supplement a news release, anchor a press kit, or replace a brochure. A *press release* is pseudo-news story, written in third person, that seeks to demonstrate to an editor or reporter the newsworthiness of a particular person, event, service, or product. *FAQs*, or Frequently Asked Questions, is a document prepared to answer common questions. The following table summarizes the usual purpose, audience, length, , and action expected for each message format.

| | Fact Sheet | Press Release | FAQ |
|-----------------------------|--|--|--|
| Purpose | Provide information on a certain topic/subject | Provide a ‘tease’ for the media to cover the subject/topic | Provide answers to possible questions on a topic |
| Audience | Editors/reporters, any stakeholders | Editors/reporters | Stakeholders |
| Length | 1 page | 1 page | 1 page |
| Action expected of audience | For the reader to understand the topic/subject at a glance | For the media to contact us for more information | |

Before Writing

What, where, when, who, why and how? Before writing a fact sheet or any form of public communication, we should ask ourselves these five basic questions to *define the piece* we are going to write:

- Who are we writing this for?
- What do we want to say?
- Why are we writing it? (To inform, as a call for action, etc)
- When is it going to be distributed?
- Where is it going to be distributed?
- How will it be packaged? (Press release, fact sheet, etc)

And to *craft the piece*:

- Who did what?
- What happened?
- Where did it happen?
- When did it happen?
- Why did it happen?
- How did it happen?

Before the writer of the sample fact sheet below began writing, he or she answered these questions to define the piece:

1. **What** am I going to write about? The ASEAN Consultation to Solve Trade and Investment Issues.
2. **Who** am I writing for? Who is my audience? Business operators in ASEAN countries.
3. **Why** am I writing this? To encourage business operators to use ACT as their problem solving mechanism by providing them basic information on the ACT and its process.
4. **When** am I going to distribute it? This is going to be distributed after the announcement of the ACT.
5. **Where** am I going to distribute it? At the launch of the ACT.
6. **How** am I going to deliver or craft it? I am going to use the inverted pyramid style and include a diagram of the ACT process to ensure easy-to-digest information.

Again, the writer again asked the following questions to craft the piece:

7. **What** is the ASEAN Consultations to Solve Trade and Investment Issues? The ACT is an internet-based problem-solving network of government agencies created for business operators.
8. **Who** is it for? Business communities operating in ASEAN.
9. **When** can it be used for? It can be used when business operators encounter operational problems on cross-border issues related to the implementation of ASEAN agreements in trade and investment UNLESS legal proceedings are already underway.
10. **Why** was it developed? The ACT is developed to support the creation of a pro-business environment in ASEAN.
11. **Where** can it be used? Business operators can use ACT via the ACT website or a national ACT office in the ASEAN Member States.
12. **How** can a complaint be lodged? (Answered under ‘The Process’ heading)

Sample Fact Sheet

Company/ministry name,
Address
Telephone number

Contact name, title,
Telephone number

ASEAN CONSULTATION TO SOLVE TRADE AND INVESTMENT ISSUES**FACT SHEET**

Businesses encountering operational problems on cross-border issues related to the implementation of ASEAN agreements in trade and investment can turn to the ASEAN Consultation to Solve Trade and Investment Issues, or ACT. The ACT supports the creation of a pro-business environment in ASEAN.

The ACT is an internet-based problem-solving network of government agencies created for business operators. The ACT's current coverage is limited to problems encountered trading under the ASEAN Free Trade Area but will eventually be expanded to cover investment issues.

As the ACT is an informal non-legally binding dispute resolution mechanism, should the problem go unresolved, or the proposed solution is found unacceptable, companies can still pursue legal action through a national court, lodge a formal complaint with the ASEAN Member Country concerned, or revert to other elements of the Enhanced ASEAN Dispute Settlement Mechanism. The ACT should not be used if legal proceedings are already underway.

The Process

Complaints can be lodged via the National ACT Office of the ASEAN Member Country where the operator is registered (Host ACT). The Host ACT will review the complaint and, if it is valid, will convey it to the national ACT of the ASEAN Member Country where the infringement occurred (Lead ACT).

If the Lead ACT agrees that further investigation is required, the complaint becomes an ACT "case." The Host and Lead ACTs will work together to solve the problem. The Host ACT office will keep the complainant informed of progress. Complainants can also monitor progress on the online ACT database.

How to Submit a Complaint

A complaint should be submitted via the ACT website (<http://act.aseansec.org>) or a national ACT office, along with documents related to the company's complaint. A company using the ACT for the first time will have to register itself at the ACT website to receive a user ID and password. More details can be found on the ACT website.

For more information on the ACT, contact Ms. Kanya Satyani (kanya@aseansec.org) of the Bureau for Economic Integration and Finance of the ASEAN Secretariat.

Insert: Diagram "The ACT Process"

###

Month, 2008.

MODULE 2—KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

The *who* in the set of basic questions is asking you to define your audience. Why is this important? Because how you explain something to your 10-year-old daughter or your boss will be different. It is very important to tailor what you write to your audience to make sure the message can be understood.

Audience can be defined on the basis of

- Age group
- Occupation
- Level of education
- Level of income
- Level of familiarity with political issues
- Level of familiarity with economical issues.

These criteria are usually considered as defining your audience demographically. You can also further define your audience by

- Psychographics
- Core values
- Behavior
- Influences
- Media habits.

Example:

The Business Community:

- Demographics—Regional companies/players, multinationals (MNCs), domestic firms and small-and-medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Predominantly family-owned or locally-listed companies. The majority of CEOs and senior executives are primarily men and communicate in English.
- Psychographics—largely skeptical about the benefits of Lao accession to WTO. Mainly due to lack of clarity of how the accession can affect their businesses – both in terms of opportunities and threats.
- Core Values-- National and business interests
- Behavioral—Typically driven by competitive advantages and defines business strategies
- Influences – consumers, regulators, industry associations, and competitor activity, especially for MNCs.
- Media Habits—primarily reads business/national media, with print and broadcast dominating. Some also stay up to date via online media.

MODULE 3—DEFINE THE MESSAGE

Communication is the process of transferring information from a sender to a receiver with the use of a medium in which the communicated information is understood by both sender and receiver.



What we are trying to do is communicate for change. What we want to change perceptions and behavior

Deliverer → Message → Mechanism → Receiver =
CHANGE

- **Deliverer:** Someone or something with a message to deliver
- **Message:** A point of view—objective or subjective—to inform, add or change general knowledge of a topic
- **Mechanism/channel:** Any tool used to deliver or distribute the message (s)
- **Receiver:** Someone or something who wants/should/needs to hear the message

All forms of communication have four basic pillars

13. Sender
14. Message
15. Mechanism/Channels
16. Receiver

We already know who our receiver will be. We also know what mechanism we are going to use. And now the **MESSAGE**.

Outreach under any communications program requires a defined message. The program should have a single *umbrella* message that the audience retains after everything is over. That umbrella message must appeal to the audience for *rational* reasons (tangible, specific facts or actions, etc) and *emotional* reasons (subjective benefits, connection to personal values, and endorsement by relevant support).

Remember, whatever the message, it must be communicated **consistently** in various forms to ensure wider reception.

SAMPLES: Finding Key Messages in different Ads (samples attached)

After you have defined the umbrella message, you will define two to three *supporting* messages. These substantiate the overall message and provide “body” to communications. You will then add depth to the supporting messages with evidence, statistics, proof, or supporting documentation—the “who, what, when, and how” of an initiative—scientific data, personal experience, or anecdotal evidence.

SAMPLES: Going back to the samples shown before to identify its supporting messages

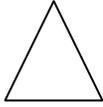
**Exercise**

Please divide into groups. When you have received a fact sheet topic, work in groups to define your audience, umbrella message, and supporting messages. Be prepared to present your results to the other groups.

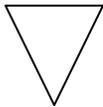
MODULE 4—CRAFT THE MESSAGE

1. Get organized. Gather your thoughts (brainstorm) before you write and plan. Prepare a rough guideline (logic flow)

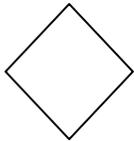
2. Decide on a structure—pyramid, inverted pyramid, diamond.



A pyramid structure is chronological and ends with the summary or main points.



An inverted pyramid, common in news writing, arranges information in descending order of importance, capturing attention by presenting the most important facts first. Even if readers do not finish the article, they will have been presented the salient points of the piece.



A diamond structure, popular in magazine writing, starts off with a person (or specific issue) then moves into the broader picture before returning to the specific issue.

3. Decide on Tone. The tone of a piece determines how you come across to readers. It is important to be “likeable” so you have credibility—so readers listen to what you have to say. To maintain likeability (1) keep the audience in mind—their interests, needs, and own styles of communication; and (2) support the message with evidence, citing statistics, reports, studies, etc. so the audience may draw its own conclusions rather than having to accept yours.

4. Find a lead. Your first sentence should grab the reader’s attention and make him or her want to know more.

5. Be Active. Use active sentences and minimize the use of passive sentences.

6. Avoid long sentences. Keep sentences and paragraphs short and simple, focusing paragraphs on a single idea.

7. Use transitions. Transitions lead the reader smoothly from one topic or idea to the next. A transition is usually a single word or phrase but can also be a sentence or even a paragraph. Some useful transition words are *also, besides, furthermore, moreover, too* (to express addition); *likewise, similarly* (to express comparison); *in contrast to, notwithstanding, otherwise, yet, still, nevertheless* (to express contrast). More transitions are presented in the table below.

8. Avoid jargon. Jargon is the technical language used by specialists to communicate with one another. Jargon is invented to make it easier to communicate with other specialists. But jargon is obscure to readers who are not technical specialists. Explain what you have to say in a simple manner, even if you must use more words.

Transitional Expressions

| When you want to | Consider saying |
|-------------------------|--|
| Add to what came before | Again, also, and, and then, besides, equally important, finally, first (never firstly!!), further, furthermore, in addition, last, likewise, moreover, next, nor, second, third, too |
| Make a comparison | In like manner, likewise, similarly |
| Show contrast | And yet, at the same time, but, even so, however, in contrast, nevertheless, nonetheless, notwithstanding, on the contrary, otherwise, still, yet |

| | |
|---|---|
| Indicate place | Adjacent to, beyond, here, nearby, on the opposite side, opposite to, there |
| Indicate purpose | For this purpose, to this end, with this object |
| Indicate result | Accordingly, as a result, consequently, hence, then, therefore, thereupon, thus |
| Provide a summary, repetition, example, intensification | As has been noted, as stated earlier, for example, for instance, in any event, in conclusion, indeed, in fact, in other words, on the whole, that is, to be sure, to tell the truth |
| Indicate time | Afterward, beforehand, currently, in the meantime, in the past, later, meanwhile, next, now, previously, soon |

9. Spell out abbreviations the first time you use them.

10. Keep the fact sheet short and simple. Ideally, a fact sheet is no more than one page of writing that helps readers understand a subject *at a glance*. If a person must read the fact sheet more than once to understand it, it failed to serve its purpose.

11. Follow a set format. Make sure the fact sheet has the following:

Company/ministry name, address and phone number on upper left. If using a letterhead, disregard this step.

A contact name, title, and phone number on upper right.

Triple space down and center the name of the subject in all caps.

Double space down and center “Fact Sheet.”.

Choose a readable typeface and size, at least 12-point font.

Be brief; no one wants to read tons of information in a small font.

Present the most important information in the first paragraph

Give references for more information; you can offer links

Make sure the fact sheet is self-contained. Do not refer to previous documents or assume that the reader remembers the information.

Use bullets when you can.

If the document is longer than one page, center “-more-“ at the bottom of the first page.

At the end of the sheet, center “###.”

Double space down and type the month and year, flush right.

12. Follow a clear distribution plan. Develop a clear and specific distribution plan so the target audience receives the information. For example, you may want to include the fact sheet in your newsletter, your website, or your media kit.

APPENDIX. ONLINE RESOURCES

- Dictionaries & Thesaurus <http://www.allwords.com>
 Online dictionary that gives definitions, translates words into five languages, and lets you listen to word pronunciation.
- <http://www.m-w.com/home.htm>
 Website by Merriam-Webster that features a dictionary and

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| | thesaurus. http://www.rhymer.com/ WriteExpress online rhyming dictionary capable of searching for end rhymes, last syllable rhymes, double rhymes, beginning rhymes, and first syllable rhymes. |
| Encyclopedias | http://www.britannica.com Online version of Encyclopedia Britannica. |
| Quotations | http://www quoteworld.org Over 13,000 quotes, in association with Amazon.com. |
| References and Writing Help | http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/ A Guide to grammar and writing. http://www.webgrammar.com A site devoted to grammar. |
| Language Translators | http://world.altavista.com A simple language translator. |
| Copyright Information | http://lcweb.loc.gov/copyright Home page of the U.S. Copyright Office. |

APPENDIX. ONLINE RESOURCES

Trade-related Resources on the Web (Attached)



Training Summary and Evaluation

Communications Skills Workshop:

Trade-related Fact Sheets

July 28, 2008 in Vientiane, Lao PDR

COMPILED FOR
USAID/RDM/A

UNDER CONTRACT
Lao BTA/WTO

SUBMITTED BY
Victoria Waite
Chief of Party
Nathan Associate Inc

August 2008

American people through the United States
efforts are the sole responsibility of the
Department of USAID or the United States

As Lao PDR moves forward with efforts to integrate into the global economy through multilateral, regional, and bilateral agreements and initiatives, it is important that all stakeholders (i.e. government, private sectors, consumers, academia, civil society, etc) be informed and involved in the domestic reform and liberalization process to ensure ownership and sustainability of reforms. The success of this effort depends on how well the government can communicate its efforts and accomplishments to all its stakeholders. To enhance the skills of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce of Lao PDR in developing and communicating its messages, the Lao BTA/WTO Task Order organized a Communications Skills Workshop: Trade-related Fact Sheets on July 28, 2008 in Vientiane, Lao PDR. The workshop aims to equip the MOIC staff with basic communication skills especially on how to write Fact Sheets. The workshop was attended by 28 participants coming from different departments of the MOIC.

The workshop was followed enthusiastically by the participants and was effectively used as a brainstorming forum to develop ideas for the initial set of fact sheets the MOIC is going to produce. After the initial basic communications session, participants were divided based on the departments they belong to which are: the Foreign Trade and Policy Department, SME, Department of Industry, Production and Trade Promotion Department, Domestic Department, Department of Export-Import, Research and Development Department as well as the Office of Permanent Secretary. Each group started out by listing out all the possible topics for their fact sheets after which they pick one topic to be worked on as an exercise of the day. The list of topics developed by the different groups of participants is attached.

Though there is some language barrier due to the participants' varying levels of English proficiency, the workshop was alive with questions and interactions. (the agenda is attached)

Participants rated the workshop favorably, with the presentations and exercises rating an average of 4 or 5 out of 6 possible points in terms of utility for their work. Participants also commented favorably on the exercise and case studies portion of the workshop where they were able to practice the fact sheet writing steps and come up with their first draft of fact sheets. Participants also expressed their interest in learning other forms of communications i.e. press release writing, speech writing, newsletter, etc.

This workshop is the first out of a series of two workshops. A follow-on activity will be conducted in the 4-5 weeks to review the fact sheets that will be produced by the participants. Participants are also encouraged to contact Dian Estey of the Facility who served as the main speaker in the workshop, to discuss their fact sheets and/or pose any questions they may have in the process.

List of Fact Sheet Topics from the participants:

Foreign Trade Policy Department:

1. Benefits of International Trade for Poverty Reduction in Lao
2. Trade Related Technical Assistance in Lao
3. Benefits of Lao Accession to WTO
4. What is WTO
5. Bilateral Trade Cooperation Assisting Rural Development
6. Challenges behind Lao Accession to WTO
7. FTA Challenges for Lao
8. Impacts from WTO Accession for Small and Vulnerable Economy
9. What's AID for Trade
10. Bilateral Trade Agreement between Lao – U.S.
11. Lao's preparation for WTO Accession

SME Department:

1. SME Fund
2. Business Plan Competition
3. Enterprise Award
4. Provincial Public-Private Dialogue
5. E-learning on productivity improvement for SME
6. 5 S model Company

Department of Industry:

1. Industrial Development
2. Export Production

Production and Trade Promotion Department and Domestic Department:

1. Encourage Businessmen' Participations in EXPO/Exhibition
2. Business directory of Lao PDR
3. Buys Laos.com.la
4. Trade Information
5. Detail of oil, steel, cement prices control structure

Department of Export – Import:

1. ROO for Export to EU
2. Export-Import Process in Lao
3. Trade Borders

Research and Development:

1. One District, One Product
2. Food Processing Industry Development

Office of Permanent Secretary:

1. Public Investment Projects
2. Cooperation: Bilateral and Multilateral

Evaluation

Communications Skills Workshop: Trade-related Fact Sheets

July 28, Vientiane, Lao PDR

Your answers to this questionnaire will help us to improve our training programs. Thank you for taking the time to fill it out.

Personal data

Total Participants = **28 persons**

Presentations

On a scale of 1 to 5, please rate how informative each session was for you. A rating of 5 indicates that you found the session highly informative; a rating of 1 that you did not find it informative.

| Session | Presentation | Average |
|---------|--|---------|
| 1 | Know your purpose | 4 |
| 2 | Defining Fact Sheet, Press Release and FAQ | 4 |
| 3 | Know your audience | 4 |
| 4 | Samples and Exercise | 4 |
| 5 | Communicating for Change | 5 |
| 6 | Know your message | 4 |
| 7 | Deliver your message | 5 |
| 8 | Putting it into practice | 5 |
| 9 | Review/ Wrap Up discussions | 4 |

General

1. Which sessions or topics are most applicable to your current of future work?
 - All
 - English Knowledge
 - Know my purpose

- Definition of Fact Sheet.
- Crafting the Message
- Exercise session
- Know your audience
- 5W + H **(2 comments)**

2. How do you intend to use the news skills and information that you have acquired?

- Use in my writing **(4 comments)**
- Applied it in my everyday work **(5 comments)**
- To help me write my report and project brief **(2 comments)**
- Write a Fact Sheet about my project **(3 comments)**
- Share it with my colleagues **(3 comments)**
- To disseminate information to businessmen

3. What additional topics would you include in the workshop

- None **(13 comments)**
- Press Release **(2 comments)**
- More exercise on sessions **(2 comments)**
- Reports writing
- How to research **(2 comments)**
- How to write talking points **(2 comments)**
- More discussions sessions **(2 comments)**
- Cost effective channel of deliveries

4. Are there any topics you would recommend deleting, or spending less time on?

- No **(22 comments)**
- Message **(1 comment)**
- We need more time on this, maybe 3 days or a week.
- Audience **(1 comment)**
- No, it is all very good **(1 comment)**
- No, all the topics look fine and good **(1 comment)**

4. Comments and Observations:

- Very good
- Short time
- All subjects are interesting but there was not enough time to discuss or to share ideas.
- Today is very good but one day is not enough for us to understand all the topics
- Good, useful but time is limited. Not enough time to understand all the concepts.
- Very useful topic
- Should have more time for exercise and presentation
- Not enough time to write a fact sheet
- It would be very useful if we have more time to learn about the workshop
- If any ready made topics are available, please add them for a wider range of sectors