



LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC–WHO

Country Cooperation Strategy 2017–2021

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ABBREVIATIONS

AMR	antimicrobial resistance
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CCS	country cooperation strategy
GDP	gross domestic product
HSDP8	Eighth Health Sector Development Plan
IHR (2005)	International Health Regulations (2005)
LDC	least-developed country
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NCDs	noncommunicable diseases
NSEDP8	Eighth National Socio-Economic Development Plan
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TB	tuberculosis
UHC	universal health coverage
UXO	unexploded ordinance
WHO	World Health Organization

FOREWORD

The Ministry of Health of the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the World Health Organization (WHO) are pleased to present the *Lao People's Democratic Republic- WHO Country Cooperation Strategy 2017-2021*. The strategy provides a blueprint for collaboration on health for the next five years between the Lao People's Democratic Republic and WHO.

Countries are changing and developing rapidly, as are the needs and expectations of their populations. The Lao health system has shown significant improvements, as evidenced by the achievement of most of the country's Millennium Development Goal targets.

The cooperation strategy was developed by leveraging these developments, in consultation with Government agencies, the United Nations system in the country and other multilateral health and development partners.

The strategy reflects the national health needs, challenges and public health priorities of the country, aligned with global development goals and international norms. On behalf of the Lao Government and WHO, we express our gratitude to the many national counterparts, staff and other stakeholders that contributed to the development of the strategy.

In partnership and solidarity, we look forward to working together to implement this strategy over the next five years to benefit the health of all the people of the Lao People's Democratic Republic.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The country cooperation strategy (CCS) provides a medium-term strategic vision for World Health Organization (WHO) cooperation with a given Member State in support of the country's national health policies, strategies and plans. The Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic and WHO, in consultation other health and development partners, have jointly developed the *Lao People's Democratic Republic-WHO Country Cooperation Strategy 2017-2021*. The strategic priorities of this CCS are based on and aligned with the country's *Lao Health Sector Reform 2013-2015*, the *Eighth Health Sector Development Plan (2016-2020)*, the *Lao People's Democratic Republic-United Nations Partnership Framework (2017-2021)*, WHO's *Twelfth General Programme of Work (2014-2019)* and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

As one of the fastest-growing economies in the WHO Western Pacific Region, the Lao People's Democratic Republic has seen rapid economic development in recent years. The country reached lower-middle-income status in 2011 and is on track to achieve the graduation criteria from least-developed country (LDC) status by 2020. Economic growth has been accompanied by a reduction in poverty rates, but at a slower pace than anticipated due to limited job creation, low income growth and high vulnerability (1). Moving towards sustainable and more equitable growth will be the main challenge for the Lao People's Democratic Republic in the coming years if the global SDG agenda of leaving no one behind is to be achieved.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic has made significant progress in improving the health of its citizens, with life expectancy reaching 66 years in 2013 (2). Progress in service delivery and access to health services was reflected in the achievement of a majority of the health-related Millennium Development Goals targets. The national policy of graduating from LDC status underlines the commitment of the Government

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