

**GMS Sustainable Tourism Development Project in Lao PDR
ADB Grant No. 0117 - SF**

**Development of the Project's Human Resource Development Action Plan
(2009- 2014)
and
Contract Packages to Support Implementation of the Plan**

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Acronyms

ACTPPR	Asian Center for Tourism Planning and Poverty Reduction
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ASEAN	Association South East Asian Nations
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
GMS	Greater Mekong Subregion
HRD	Human Resource Development
HRM	Human Resource Management
HRMS	Human Resource Management System
LATA	Lao Association of Travel Agents
LNTA	Lao National Tourism Administration
ME	Micro Enterprise
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NUOL	National University of Laos
NZAID	New Zealand Aid
PATA	Pacific Asia Travel Association
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
STDP	Sustainable Tourism Development Project
STEA	Science, Technology and Environment Agency
THTC	(LNTA) Tourism and Hospitality Training Centre
TOR	Terms of Reference
USP	Unique Selling Proposition

Definitions

Manager: those employed at management level. For example, owner manager, general manager, deputy manager, department managers such as restaurant manager, bar manager, human resources manager and others at management level.

Supervisor: those employed at supervisory level. For example, head waiters/restaurant supervisors, head chefs and others employed at a supervisory level.

Clerical/Administration: those employed in clerical and administrative roles throughout the tourism services or attractions operation, including those at the front office.

Skilled Operative (also referred to as craft workers): those employed at operative level in skilled positions. For example, housekeeping assistants, qualified chefs, wait staff, bar persons and so on.

Unskilled Operative: those employed as unskilled operatives in any area of the business. For example, those involved in food production (kitchen helper), food service (general restaurant assistant), bar staff (lounge staff), cleaners and general assistants.

Sales/Marketing: those employed as non-administrative staff in sales and marketing. For example, sales person, marketing representative.

Others: those employed in specialised roles, such as tour guide, as well as business support staff such as accountants, IT professionals and other recognised professionals.

Project: refers to the GMS Sustainable Tourism Development Project in Lao PDR 2009-2014 (STDP).

Tourism Promise: is a marketing term - the tourism promise is what a tourism destination claims visitors will receive. It is usually communicated through its marketing and publicity efforts and frequently this becomes the 'brand' for the destination. The imagery used in a destination marketing campaign usually conveys the best of what is on offer in terms of scenery, activities, culture, people and so on and suggests a memorable experience awaits. A powerful brand inspires people to visit that destination with the 'promise' that each and every visitor can experience and enjoy what the destination has to offer.

The Lao PDR 'tourism promise' projects Laos as "Laos: Simply Beautiful"
'From historic temples, lush landscapes and welcoming smiles, the heart of Southeast Asia is waiting to be explored. Laos is a country as yet untouched by the modern demands, stress and pace of life. The beauty lies in the Loas people, traditions and heritage and its pristine landscape'.

Some other notable examples of destination branding that invokes a 'tourism promise' include, "New Zealand 100% Pure", "Amazing Thailand", "Charming Vietnam", "Malaysia Truly Asia", and "Pearl of the Orient" (Penang, Malaysia).

Introduction

Tourism is a major element within the future economic strategy of Lao PDR and the industry's development builds upon a diverse and exciting portfolio of natural, cultural and heritage resources which are dispersed across the country. The projected growth of the industry presents particular challenges in terms of the skilled manpower that will be required to provide quality services to the growing number of discerning and demanding international visitors. Ensuring that this skilled workforce is in place, across a wide range of vocational and managerial areas, presents a major Human Resource Development (HRD) challenge.

This report, commissioned by the GMS Sustainable Tourism Development Project (STDP) in Lao PDR, is intended to analyze the skills profile of the current workforce in the country, identify the key skills gaps and propose training interventions that will assist in closing the identified gaps.

The terms of reference (ToR) for this analysis are available at the GMS Sustainable Tourism Development Project in Lao PDR 2009-2014 website www.stdplaos.com.

In preparing this report, the primary sources of information were secondary materials on tourism, human resource development and training relating to Lao PDR. In particular, reference was made to the following:

- 2008 Statistical Report on Tourism in Laos (LNTA 2009)
- Tourism Employment and Education in Lao PDR: Research and Fieldwork (LNTA and Project LAO/020, 2009)
- Tourism Employment and Education in Lao PDR: Summary of Research (LNTA and Project LAO/020, 2009)
- Achieving Service Quality Through People - Tourism Human Resource Development Vision and Strategic Recommendations Lao PDR (LNTA and Project LAO/020, 2009)
- Papers and Proceedings from GMS Workshop: Sub regional Measures for Vocational training for Small and Medium Tourism Hospitality Sector in the Greater Mekong Sub region (Cambodia, February 2009)
- Training Needs Analysis (Lao Association of Travel Agents 2007, updated 2009)
- Mekong Tourism Office Marketing Plan (Mekong Tourism, 2008)
- Asean Common Competency Standards Framework (ACCSTP) - User's Guide(2005, revised 2008)
- National University of Laos Department of Tourism and Hotel Management Training Needs Analysis (SNV 2006)

In addition, meetings were held with senior personnel from the National University of Laos, Department of Tourism and Hotel Management and the LNTA Training Centre.

Finally a range of international comparator sources were used, drawing on the consultant's local knowledge as well as professional and academic experience in this field.

PART 1: HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN

1 The Challenges for Tourism HRD within the Lao Tourism Industry

1.1 Introduction

The tourism industry in the Lao PDR is in its infancy when compared to regional and international competitors. It is only recently that the country has placed priority on the development of the sector as complementary to existing areas of economic activity. Development activity, both nationally and internationally sourced, has also focused on priorities that relate to the wellbeing (health, education, security) of Lao citizens and investment in sectors such as tourism have not been accorded priority within this context. The tourism sector, in Laos, is also fragmented and dominated, in organizational terms, by small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). These businesses in Laos as worldwide are seen to under-perform in their capacity and capability to operate effective business systems, including those related to training and development. Therefore, it is not surprising to find that human resource development (HRD) activities, both within enterprises and within the education and training system, are recent in their institution and immature in their extent and organization. This immaturity is a real challenge in the context of a tourism sector in Laos that is projected to grow significantly over the coming decades.

The HRD challenge is further driven by the pressure of this impending growth within the sector. From 1.7 million overseas visitors in 2008 employing a core workforce of 17,000 people with a further indirect employment effect of up to 167,000 people, the industry is currently working towards targets of 3.4 million overseas visitors in 2015 and 4 million by 2020. By 2020 it is estimated that direct employment in tourism will reach 40,000 with indirect and induced employment providing a further 250,000 jobs.¹

HRD within the tourism industry in Lao PDR faces a complex set of challenges as the second decade of the century approaches. In particular, the industry and its key stakeholders must:

- provide the means to enable the existing tourism workforce (operational, supervisory/management, senior leadership) to up-grade its skills and competencies in order for the industry to compete effectively on an international stage;
- support the quantitative (number of staff) and qualitative (skills) requirements that will be a necessity in the achievement of challenging visitor and revenue targets to the year 2020;
- grow and expand overall employment and, in particular, the skilled worker numbers that will be required to meet these targets;
- achieve this growth at a time when the competitiveness and product mix of Lao tourism may need to be reviewed and changed; particularly in key customer contact and operational positions;

¹ 2008 Statistical Report on Tourism in Laos (LNTA 2009)

- achieve this skilled employment expansion despite the generally low skills level within the national workforce;
- compete with other service sectors for a small pool of skilled indigenous labour;
- develop the skills and behaviours necessary to support a premium tourism product;
- convince employers struggling with high costs to make the necessary investment in human capital; and
- promote the concept of people as a credible and defining source of competitive advantage, requiring on-going training and investment through lifelong learning and continuous professional development (CPD).

1.2 Importance of an Effective Enabling Environment

In the Lao PDR tourism industry, HRD is both a process and a crucial goal. It involves a planned approach to learning aimed at changes in knowledge, skills, understandings, attitudes and values, and behaviour of a learner or group of learners. The goals of HRD will vary with the context and the learners themselves. It is often associated with a technical goal - to provide a trained work force, to promote the knowledge and skills required by a society to acquire greater prosperity; in short, to provide or build productive capabilities. However, for some educators and development planners HRD is an end in itself, and its goal should be realizing human potential and developing individual self-reliance.

A key dimension for the enhancement of HRD in the Lao PDR tourism industry is institutional capacity building. Capacity-building efforts should focus on institutional strengthening, including the design of new organizational structures to improve the fit between the policy context for tourism development and the institutions (both public and private sector) which deliver training. These institutions include tourism education and training providers, as well as the Lao National Tourism Administration (LNTA)², government ministries, other public sector bodies, private sector associations, business operators (especially SMEs) and community organizations among others. HRD enhancement can be even greater if strong linkages among these bodies are fostered.

1.3 Focus on Capacity Building

Capacity building as it relates to the strengthening of national tourism education and training is critical given that many of the institutions involved are in their relative infancy and are not fit-for-purpose with respect to their mission of training a competent workforce for the sector, either through initial or in-service training. In many institutions, there is a lack of an effective human resource management system (HRMS). An institutional analysis should assess the existing HRMS and design improvements. Among other areas, there should be attention to results-oriented performance appraisal; mechanisms for improving communication to and from staff; identification of knowledge/skill gaps and staff training needs; teams skills development and the reinforcement of teamwork; and transparent staff selection and promotion processes.

² A major 5 - year institutional capacity building programme within the LNTA is planned to begin in late 2009 with support from NZAID, the National Tourism Strategy Implementation Support Programme 2009-2014. (NZAID is the Government agency responsible for developing New Zealand's official development assistance.)

Systematic capacity building in tourism requires a supportive and enabling policy environment and a realistic investment in both formal and non-formal tourism education. Policies that create, strengthen and support HRD systems should be a high priority for Lao PDR as well as donors and technical assistance agencies. In particular, importance should be placed on HRD in tourism, given its potential for economic development and employment creation in the country. A wide level of support and investment is needed from the Government, and increased support from the private-sector.

1.4 Focus on Small and Medium Enterprises

The total number of enterprises involved in tourism is unclear but in 2008 the Lao National Tourism Administration (LNTA) estimated that there were 2,291 hotels, guesthouses, resorts, restaurants and entertainment establishments in Lao PDR of which there were 1,120 guesthouses/resorts, 265 hotels and 742 restaurants. Within the accommodation sector alone, this is a jump from just 571 establishments in 2001. Of the current business profiles, 73.2% are family-run businesses, 60% have less than 10 employees and 30% have less than five employees.

Source: Tourism Employment and Education in Lao PDR Summary of Research 2009³

The tourism industry in Lao is dominated by SMEs making them very important to the Lao organisational and economic landscape in terms of their number and impact. Yet SMEs seem to under-perform in their capacity and capability to operate effective business systems, including those related to training and development.

SMEs in Lao PDR struggle to provide an environment within which sustained and developmental learning takes place. The owners of SMEs typically work “in” the business, rather than “on” the business. They are hands on employers who are required to undertake a multiplicity of roles within their business, many of which they have no training for. This, in turn, militates against the capacity of the sector to innovate and create new product, marketing and financial opportunities. Such barriers to learning have been identified as a major cause of management skills deficiencies and a reason for business failure in the tourism sector. In turn, the lack of scope and opportunity to learn in the workplace acts as a barrier to the recruitment and retention of high quality staff. Anecdotal evidence suggests that it is this lack of management expertise that is the most important factor in the failure of small businesses.

SMEs worldwide frequently respond that their small business scale prevents them from employing the kind of human resource management expertise needed to respond to these issues, and this certainly appears to be the case in Lao PDR. The problem is compounded in a country such as Lao PDR by the geographical dispersal of the small businesses preventing them from fully participating in HRD provision on a collective basis or to access mainstream “conventional” education providers.

However small tourism businesses do not necessarily need a specialist human resources manager, but they do need well-designed human resource practices. In particular they need

³ Tourism Employment and Education in Lao PDR Summary of Research 2009 (LNTA 200)

practices through which they can recruit and train better and qualified staff, design better work processes and shift structures, and promote autonomy and responsibility at the level of the individual worker.

1.5 Summary of the Key Challenges

The issue in Lao PDR is both the quantity and quality of trained human resources for tourism and its projected growth. In Lao PDR there is a limited tradition of training and development within the tourism sector, either at an institutional level (public authorities, Universities, colleges) or within the industry itself, comprising a predominance of SMEs within all sub-sectors.

The current training system is beset by problems compromising its efficiency and effectiveness: shortages of qualified teachers and instructors; outdated 'theory based' programmes, curricula and teaching methods; lack of practical training facilities, equipment and learning resources.

Therefore investing in people and, particularly, training as a route to business competitiveness is wasted unless the public and private sectors are enabled and supported to deliver the requisite training and development.

The recently completed research on tourism employment and education in Lao PDR⁴ identified the challenges as follows:

(i) Quality Issues

All institutions (public and private) that provide any form of hotel and tourism education highlighted a lack of qualified teaching personnel for the tourism industry as a major problem. Most teachers are from non-tourism backgrounds.

Source: Tourism Employment and Education in Lao PDR Summary of Research 2009

The pool of properly qualified industry professionals in the country is seriously deficient. The quality of higher education and wider training is as important as the number of educational institutions and tourism graduates. The main challenge now facing education and training for the tourism sector in Lao PDR is how to improve the quality as well as how to extend the coverage, which means that educational innovation should be high on the agenda. This will require intensive investment in the capacity and capability of the country's main tourism education and training institutions.

(ii) Curriculum, Training Programmes and Learning Resources

⁴ Tourism Employment and Education in Lao PDR Summary of Research 2009 (LNTA 2009)

In terms of teaching materials, it is clear that little is available that is specifically relevant to the Lao context. Many curricula are designed based on programmes developed in Thailand and other neighbouring countries as well as material from institutions abroad, where individual teachers have gained their qualifications. Foreign textbooks are used and adapted to suit the training needs of local students. There are very limited reading resources available in the Lao language in the hotel and tourism sector. The teaching is usually in didactic lecture style with very little interaction between student and teacher.

Source: Tourism Employment and Education in Lao PDR Summary of Research 2009

One area where innovation is needed in tourism education and training in Lao PDR is in the curricula, programmes of study and supporting learning resources that are available. There needs to be technical up-grading in terms of content and delivery as well as the development of learning materials in the Lao language.

(iii) Equipment and Facilities

Institutions that provide any form of hotel and tourism education have very basic training facilities that normally comprise classrooms; some equipment and primitive kitchen, restaurant and accommodation facilities for practical sessions. At this point in time none of the private institutions have kitchens or accommodation facilities for on-site practical training.

Source: Tourism Employment and Education in Lao PDR Summary of Research 2009

A long term programme of infrastructure and capital investment will be required to upgrade the existing facilities so that effective practical training and flexible models of delivery can be achieved.

(iv) Access and Delivery

Small scale business size is compounded by geographical dispersal which has significant repercussions upon the ability of the sector to fully participate in HRD provision on a collective basis or to access mainstream “conventional” education providers.

The mode and location of training is important, and choosing the right methods to deliver training to match the skills requirement and level is a necessary consideration for managers.

Source: Tourism Employment and Education in Lao PDR Summary of Research 2009

The mode and location of training is important, and choosing the right methods to deliver training to match the skills requirement. The use of technology to support access and delivery will be an important element in meeting this objective in the long-term.

1.6 Conclusion

The Lao tourism sector is now at a turning point.

Achieving the targets set by the National Tourism Strategy for Lao PDR 2006 - 2020⁵ may very well be possible. The real challenge facing the sector is to increase spending as well the average length of stay of visitors to Laos. To achieve this will require an enhanced performance across all sectors of the industry. This performance is only likely to be achieved in the context of parallel enhancements in product quality, service quality, an appropriately trained workforce and regional competitiveness.

Tourism and hospitality is largely experiential and depends very heavily on the people who provide the experience to ensure that customers both return and refer. To ensure that the *tourism promise*⁶ is delivered consistently, and well, means that by 2020, 40,000 people (and up to 250,000 in induced employment) have to be charged with that responsibility, a difficult enough feat at the best of times, but particularly so in a country where tourism is in its infancy and the geographical dispersion of the tourism product.

Exacerbating the situation is students' inability to pay the "real" cost of training coupled with insufficient public financial support stalls the HRD process – these needs to be overcome.

Responding to these challenges can best be supported by a human resource development strategy and action plan which purports a sustained investment in people. The delivery of premium quality tourism services, and the creation of an outstanding customer experience, depends entirely on the people working in the industry.

This analysis underpins the core recommendation in this report which is recognition that, a crucial requirement in tourism in Lao PDR is the development of a nationwide and sector-wide (public and private) team of skilled and knowledgeable Master Trainers, competent in both their specialist areas and in up-to-date pedagogy/ training skills as well as the production of appropriate teaching materials and learning resources.

⁵ National Tourism Strategy for Lao PDR 2006 – 2020 (LNTA 2005)

⁶ The tourism promise is what a destination claims visitors will receive, see also explanation on page 4.

2 Skills Needs of the Lao PDR Tourism Industry: Private Sector

An effective sector-wide approach to people and organizational development in tourism in Lao PDR must maintain an appropriate balance between individual and organizational learning. To do this, the sector must be able to identify the skills it needs as well as understanding the best means of developing these skills.

This analysis of the skills needs within the Lao PDR tourism industry identifies both generic requirements which cut across all sub-sectors and levels of responsibility and skills needs which are specific to certain business areas within the industry.

2.1 General skills needs

A number of recent studies⁷ relating to tourism and HRM in Lao PDR point to key skills requirements which are common to all sub-sectors of the industry as well as most staff levels within businesses. These requirements are also applicable across both public and private sector interests within tourism. Essentially, all these skills relate to what might be styled “soft” or generic competencies rather than the “hard” skills normally associated with specific vocational areas within tourism. All, in some form, relate to the broad areas of communications.

These key skills areas are applicable to all sector analysis in subsequent sections and as such are not replicated in each section.

The three key skills areas include:

- **Foreign language skills:** (particularly English and thereafter other languages⁸) are essential for a contemporary and competitive tourism destination. Without the ability to communicate effectively with international guests, it will be difficult for tourism businesses and their staff to deliver the level of service quality expected. This requirement is a particular challenge for existing workers in the tourism industry, often older and less exposed to English at school and college and in their engagement with electronic media. It is also an issue for those working in or seeking entry to the tourism industry in more remote and less developed areas of the country where the underlying level of education within the tourism sector is probably lower than in major urban centres. Foreign language skills, in the context of the tourism workplace, are specific and contextualized communication tools, and much existing language teaching is probably too academic and remote from the workplace, taught by non-native speakers, to be of practical benefit within the workplace.
- **Quality service:** there are a number of reasons why tourism businesses and destinations can benefit from the delivery of good service. The first of these is based on social and cultural considerations in that good service portrays a positive image of a people, a country and/ or an organization. This is particularly true when this represents the natural

⁷Tourism Employment and Education in Lao PDR: Research and Fieldwork (LNTA and Project LAO/020, 2009). Tourism Employment and Education in Lao PDR: Summary of Research (LNTA and Project LAO/020, 2009)

⁸ It is envisaged that English language will remain a ‘core’ language for the tourism sector. However shifts in visitor market trends may demand additional language capability, for example, growth in the Chinese market to Lao will result in Chinese taking on increasing importance as a working language for the tourism sector.

courtesy of a people and is used effectively in the marketing of destinations (Thailand is one such example). A further reason is economic in that good service by staff of an organization or at a destination level can enhance the guest's or user's sense of well being and may induce higher spend. Restaurant staff, who are particularly attentive and warm in their service, are more likely to facilitate the purchase of additional products than is likely to be the case when the service is slow, fragmented, inefficient and inconsistent. In addition, good service may well increase chances of repeat business and, through word of mouth, may support the generation of new business. There are also managerial benefits when companies focus on the delivery of good service. Satisfied customers are generally easier to manage than those who are unhappy with their experience and, as a result, businesses and their staff face fewer difficulties at an operational level. This is true of the front line staff members who have to handle guests in real time as well in terms of back of house personnel who are likely to handle fewer complaints and other follow-up problems. Finally, contemporary consumers expect good service as the norm and have been "educated" to expect this from their experiences at home and while travelling internationally.

In operational terms, at the heart of this skills requirement, is the development of a service culture at an industry and, indeed, a national level through a focus on training. It is imperative that Lao PDR strives to emulate regional competitors and, ideally, surpass them in this regard. In Singapore and Thailand, this culture has been developed through a series of deliberate and strategically orientated integrated measures, involving education and training at all levels and within both public institutions and the private sector as well as national public (tourism) awareness campaigns. In the Lao context, this culture will only be developed through a truly effective training system at all levels and accessible to all employees within the tourism sector, both new entrants and those currently working within tourism. Quality service is about attitude and the personal attributes of staff delivering the service. It is also about technical competence in all areas of the sector because, without such skills, employees cannot have the confidence to deliver quality service in its broadest interpretation.

- **Information and communications technology (ICT):** there is a clear need for applied ICT comprehension and skills as a tool to support a wide range of marketing, financial management and operations across all industry sectors and at all levels. There is a general failure to appreciate the value of ICT and how SMEs can operate competitively against the power and sophistication of multinational companies through the effective deployment of technology. This is particularly the case with respect to the area of electronic marketing and customer communications. In the area of operational skills, there is a need to up-grade the fundamental ICT skills within the existing tourism workforce, particularly older staff, so that key areas, both front and back of house, can operate with greater efficiency and effectiveness. Likewise, the increasing general level of ICT competence among school and college graduates - the new entrants into the tourism industry - needs to be concentrated on skills that are of value in tourism.

These key skills are applicable to all sector analysis in subsequent sections and as such are not replicated in each section.

2.2 Management and Supervisors

The tourism industry in Lao PDR is dominated by small business, which are substantially owned and managed by entrepreneurs within the private sector. These owners and managers have received little formal training in either general business skills or in the

management requirements of internationally-orientated tourism operations. Management development requirements relate to both pre-entry through more effective applied business education in colleges and universities, and to existing owners and managers.

Recent research⁹ reported key management and senior operational staff development needs as perceived by the industry itself to be as follows (in order of priority):

Hotel/Guesthouse	Tour Operators/Travel Agents
Human resource development	Marketing
Front desk operations	Business management
Hotel management	IT for tourism
Tourism management	Business finance
Tourism marketing	Tourism management
Managing food and beverage	Contracting
Lao cooking and international recipes	Language skills, chiefly English
Human resource development	Customer service

Considering these and related needs across the wider tourism sector, general management development and training requirements lie in the areas of:

- International trends and developments within tourism and hospitality
- Product marketing
- Finance, including pricing, yield and revenue management
- Human resource management
- Training and train the trainer skills
- Supervisory development
- Facilities and property management
- Conference and meetings management
- Product and service quality
- Cross-cultural understanding
- Tourism operations and systems management in key sub-sectors including accommodation, culture and heritage, transport, food service, crafts and retail
- Environmental management
- New product development

There is also a requirement for all managers to up-date their knowledge and, to some extent, skills in their specific operational areas of responsibility.

2.3 Accommodation Sector

The accommodation sector is an important part of the experience for all tourists, whether domestic or international and the effective execution of skills relating to all aspects of operations within this sector are of paramount importance to a competitively successful international tourism industry. Beyond the generic areas already addressed above, skills needs are particularly evident with respect to operational areas of front office, housekeeping, hygiene, security, engineering and property maintenance. There are also

⁹ Hotel Sector: Tourism Education and Employment in Lao PDR Summary of Research (LNTA 2009), and Travel Sector: Lao Association of Travel Agents Training Needs Analysis (SNV 2007 updated 2009).

main skills gaps with respect to product sales and marketing, finance and financial control, supervision and training.

Therefore, specific training needs for this sub-sector include:

Operative	Management and Supervisors
Understanding the international customer	Front office operations, including use of administration technology
Using local information - the role of concierge	Implementing yield and revenue management techniques
Housekeeping skills including room servicing, laundry	Property maintenance
Hygiene and safety	Security
Security	

2.4 Food Service Sector

Food service, whether from hotels or free-standing restaurants and street vendors is also core to the tourist experience when visiting Lao PDR. In addition to the generic skills identified above, which are of major importance within this sub-sector, a range of critical skills development needs can be identified. In the kitchen, there is a need to enhance the skills level of current and future employees with respect to key areas including food preparation and development (both Lao and international), food hygiene and sanitation, food costing, purchasing, stock management, food presentation, the implementation of quality standards and menu development. Alongside the kitchen, restaurant or service areas require skills attention with regard to restaurant ambience, service systems, up-selling and promotion, personal presentation and hygiene, product knowledge, menu design, food and beverage presentation and quality control.

Therefore, specific training needs for this sub-sector include:

Skilled Operative	Management and Supervisors
International cuisine	Kitchen management
Lao cuisine	Food hygiene and sanitation
Service styles - western, Lao	Food costing and waste management
Service systems	Stock control and purchasing
Restaurant selling	Quality and standards consistency
Personal hygiene and presentation	Buffet operations and management
Product awareness	
Beverage knowledge and service	

2.5 Transport Sector

Training for the transport sector (air transport, tourist road transport, and taxi services) requires a focus on the generic skills of languages, especially English, customer service and, in some respects, ICT. There is also a significant requirement for skills development within this sector with respect to:

- Safety
- Hygiene (personal and vehicular)
- Product and destination knowledge

2.6 Travel Agency and Tour Operations Sector

The emphasis here is on those operations which focus on inbound tours and domestic travel agency services.

The 2007 LATA report on training needs for the sector, in addition to the generic skills training, identified the specific and enhanced skills as the key requirements for staff.

Clerical/Administration	Management
Tour guide skills	Tour guide management and training
Itinerary planning	Marketing
Eco-tourism	Web-based marketing
IT for tourism	Electronic distribution systems
	Business management
	Eco-tourism marketing and management

2.7 Crafts and Retail Sector

The craft and wider retail sector, designed to meet tourist needs, is highly dependent at all levels, for its success, upon the previously identified generic skills. In particular, foreign language and service skills ensure the effective communication of product information, in its broadest sense, which can inform and inspire purchase by tourists. At the same time, the skills requirements in this area go beyond the communications competencies required for selling. They include skills which relate to the production of handicrafts and other tourist-oriented goods through to the successful operation of the micro-businesses which typically provide the context for handicraft sales.

Therefore, specific training needs for this sub-sector include:

- Handicraft design
- Handicraft production
- Quality standards implementation and monitoring
- The cultural context of handicrafts
- Handicraft merchandising and marketing
- Handicraft pricing
- Handicraft display
- Micro-business management

2.8 Heritage, Interpretation and Guiding

The heritage, interpretation and guiding sector is relatively under-developed in Lao PDR as an area of professional activity. At present the responsibility for tour guide training¹⁰ is vested in the LNTA and is the only nationally recognized tour guide training qualification, awarded at certificate level, in Lao PDR. The more recent initiation of a 'Cultural

¹⁰ The National Tour Guide Training Programme is a 45 day class-room based programme organized twice per year by the LNTA Tourism and Hospitality Training Centre (THTC). The curriculum includes legislation, tourism policy and planning, local history and culture. Field trips are organized to provide training in practical guiding skills.

Heritage Specialist Guide' programme¹¹ indicates that initial progress is being made to expand the training opportunities available but more needs to be done. Every effort should be made to mainstream support for regular training of local tour guides at both World and National heritage sites.

Heritage, interpretation and guiding are integral to the international tourist's experience of the country and, as a result, effective skills development within this sub-sector is essential. Guiding is the area requiring the most widespread interface with tourists and training should build, substantially, on effective utilization of the generic skills identified above.

However, the skills needs of guides go beyond communications, languages and the use of technology. They include a strong understanding of national, regional and local history, heritage and culture and extend to include the packaging of such knowledge into tour itineraries and visitor experiences. Guide skills requirements also include critical areas such as health and safety, first aid, risk assessment, cross-cultural understanding, ethics and simple finance management. Those working in the wider heritage and interpretation area will frequently be located in employment situations where they may not readily associate their role with tourism – in museums, national parks and the like. Their skills needs are an adaptation and extension of their core museumology or environmental competencies to their tourism application context, focusing on presentation, interpretation, marketing/ sales and commercialization.

2.9 Public Sector Destination Management and Marketing

In Lao PDR, the public sector has a wide range of responsibilities for the management and marketing of tourism destinations, whether at national, regional, local or site level. These responsibilities require wide-ranging technical and management skills which are not always evident in public sector environments.

Specific skills development is required with respect to:

- Destination planning and development
- Environmental planning at the destination level
- Destination transport and infrastructure management
- Events and conferences
- Destination marketing and promotion
- Tourism and marketing research
- Use of ICT and internet technology as a destination marketing and distribution tool
- Tourism data and statistics management and interpretation

2.10 Public Sector Tourism Administration

A key administration role in the Lao PDR tourism industry is performed by the public sector, in particular with respect to the organization of and support for tourism at a local, provincial and national level. These roles include the organization of tourism and the

¹¹ The Cultural Heritage Specialist Guide Programme (www.unescobkk.org/culture/asian-academy/heritageguides) was awarded a PATA gold award in 2007 for its efforts to improve heritage guiding in Lao PDR.

management of nationally operated sites (heritage, culture, natural environment, transport, travel facilitation). Much of the training for this sector is carried out externally. Their training needs are met either through participation on academic programmes at international institutions or nationally, on short term programmes delivered by external experts. The specific training needs in this sector include:

- Tourism industry stakeholder engagement and involvement
- Tourism sector legislation
- Heritage, cultural and natural environment management
- Commercialization of heritage, culture and the natural environment
- Training coordination and management
- Training needs identification
- Tourist information office management
- Tourist policing and security
- Customs and immigration training

The LNTA Tourism and Hospitality Training Centre currently is responsible for two forms of training interventions, providing for national tour guide training and also basic skills training for small hotels and guesthouses through the mobile training unit. Both areas of activity require up-grading in terms of their programme content, delivery methods and the skills of the trainers engaged in this role¹².

Specific training is required to support:

- Programme content up-date in all areas
- Teaching and learning support resource development
- Trainer content awareness up-dating
- Trainer specific practical skills enhancement
- Training methodologies
- English language proficiency

2.11 National University of Laos (NUoL)

NUoL specifically the Department of Tourism and Hotel Management is a major public sector provider of management training for the tourism sector through its two BA degree programmes in Tourism and Hotel Management. Current enrolment is 1,044 students over both programmes with the first output of graduates due in August 2010.

The University operates alongside a number of public vocational schools/ colleges as well as a variety of private institutions which offer a range of courses at sub-University level.

A key deficiency within the current teaching and leadership of tourism and hospitality education in the University and elsewhere is their lack of sustained, professional exposure to the industry, both public and private sector. Credible tourism and hospitality education, both initial and in-service, cannot be delivered from secondary source material without exposure to the how the industry operates at all levels.

¹² Quality Tour Guiding in Lao PDR – Training Pilot Seminar, STEA/LATA/LNTA sponsored by the EU: power point presentation by Dr Stefan Thelen, Senior Tourism Training Specialist (December 2006)

There is potential for the University and other initial training providers to make a constructive contribution to meeting the training needs across the private and public sectors. However, it is also clear that, at present, these providers and, in particular, NUoL does not have the capacity or the capability to meet this challenge.

The training needs of the University were first identified and reported in the training needs analysis conducted by SNV in 2006¹³ and verified at a meeting with senior Department officials in August 2009.¹⁴

Taking into account the current operating environment of the Department of Tourism and Hotel Management at their training needs (which are common to all other tourism education sector providers) include the following key areas:

- Tourism and hospitality industry awareness and exposure.
- Current trends and developments within international tourism, particularly with respect to customer expectations and needs
- Accessing current tourism information sources and data
- The role and use of ICT within tourism and hospitality
- Curriculum development
- Production of teaching materials and learning resources
- Tourism and hospitality pedagogy and training skills
- English language proficiency

2.12 Conclusion

In addition to the generic skills identified in section 2.1 which apply to all sub-sectors there is further overlap in the training requirements between the different sub-sectors. They were categorized in this manner to illustrate the wide range of training that is required by the sector.

Clearly meeting the skills need of each sub-sector is beyond the scope of any one initiative, rather this is indicative of the need to institute a medium to long term HRD plan for the tourism sector in Lao PDR. The recently published LNTA report¹⁵ on tourism human resource development in Lao, which was informed by research, presents a vision of tourism in Lao by 2020 and outlines the strategic pillars that need to underpin HRD in the sector to achieve service quality and enhance the competitiveness of Lao as a tourism destination.

It further indicates the need for the formal education sector to evolve and develop as a resource for local enterprise and skills development as well as providing access to the preliminary skills training required for employment in the industry.

As a short-term and interim measure it is possible to both categorize and prioritize the skills training that can be addressed by the GMS STDP from 2009 – 2014. The GMS

¹³ National University of Laos Department of Tourism and Hotel Management Training Needs Analysis (SNV November 2006)

¹⁴ Meeting with Mrs Khamphou Phetxaysy, Head –Department of Tourism and Hotel Management ,NUoL and Assoc. Prof. Dexanourath Seneduangeleth (August 2009)

¹⁵ Achieving Service Quality Through People - Tourism Human Resource Development Vision and Strategic Recommendations Lao PDR (LNTA and Project LAO/020, 2009)

STDP focus will be on those trainings identified as having sector-wide importance as well as those which can have an immediate impact.

In the immediate future particular emphasis needs to be placed on supporting tourism workers to gain the skills they need to operate effectively moving towards building a higher skills base across the tourism sector as well as training public officials to be better administrators and 'managers' of tourism.

The subsequent sections of this report identifies the nature of training that should be developed by the Project to best meet these objectives. It also provides a prioritization for the training programmes that can contribute to meeting the identified skills needs

3 Proposed Interventions to Meet Identified Skills Needs

The identified training needs for the tourism industry, both private and public sectors, in Lao PDR provides a comprehensive and extensive list of areas where up-skilling is required at the levels of business owners and operators, senior management, middle and supervisory management, skilled technical employees and low skills workers.

Addressing these training requirements in a meaningful way will require long term commitment together with substantial, sustained investment over the period and full engagement of all stakeholders. The level of intervention required will be beyond the scope of any one initiative.

It is recommended that the STDP consider a number of priority measures which focus on specific, achievable objectives and on practical implementation activities that have obvious and lasting benefits. Recommended priority actions include:

- Priority Measure 1:** Creating a ‘Skillsnet’ of Trainers
- Priority Measure 2:** Improving Front Line Hospitality
- Priority Measure 3:** Skills Training Building the Right Skills-set
- Priority Measure 4:** Supporting (selected) Tourism Training Institutions
- Priority Measure 5:** Strengthening Private and Public Sector Management

Priority Measure 1: Creating a ‘Skillsnet’ of Trainers

Objective: To create a cohort of Master Trainers who can ‘train the trainers’ in the public and private sectors of tourism, who in turn can deliver training at enterprise/organization level.

In the previous section, the absence of a national training and development culture in the tourism industry of Lao PDR was noted. The skills needs of the sector within both the public and private sectors cannot be addressed until this deficit is bridged and, in many respects, this represents the “trump card” in terms of ensuring that the tourism industry in Lao PDR develops in a competitive manner. Identifying training needs across both the public and private sectors is one thing, delivering the consequent training through skilled and current trainers is an entirely more challenging task.

Currently, there is an almost total absence of training leadership and trainers at all levels within Lao PDR tourism that can provide and deliver quality training. This is felt most acutely

- At University and college level
- Within the LNTA specifically for specialist training
- Within national and local public sector agencies with a direct responsibility for supporting the development of tourism in all its aspects
- Within management in the private sector
- Within senior technical and supervisory staff in the private sector

It is clear that this gap cannot be filled exclusively through the import of external and international trainers. It will require addressing the need to build local capacity as a matter of priority at a local level.

The problem is compounded by the geographic dispersal of tourism in Lao PDR which challenges businesses in their efforts to access conventional training routes. A flexible training mechanism that “takes industry education and training to the industry rather than take industry to the Institute” will be required to achieve cost-effective and quality-effective HRD within the sector.

The implementation of a train-the-trainer programme that targets both trainers in Vientiane and those stationed in the regional centres such as Pakse, Luang Prabang, Luang Namtha and Savannakhet is one way of achieving this.

The STDP proposes the development of Master Trainers with the knowledge and skills required to deliver training in high priority areas as identified within the STDP. The Master Trainers will train the trainers in the enterprises and tourism organizations who in turn will train the workforce in the specific skills areas.

The cohort of Master Trainers will be:

- University and college teachers
- Staff within LNTA responsible for external training activities
- Supervisors and managers within national and local public sector agencies with a direct responsibility for supporting the development of tourism in all its aspects
- Owners, senior and middle management in the private sector
- Senior technical and supervisory staff in the private sector

The Master Trainer programme will focus on:

- (i) Providing intensive skills development in current pedagogy and training skills
- (ii) Providing intensive up-dating in current competence and skills measurement to agreed minimum standards
- (iii) Up-dating knowledge about tourism in Lao PDR and internationally
- (iv) Up-dating knowledge and skills in appropriate areas of tourism competence
- (v) Enabling participants to set minimum operational standards for their areas of responsibility

The importance of creating such a cohort of Master Trainers is well recognized in the objectives of the STDPs HRD component which makes explicit reference to creating a pool of Master Trainers in the areas of:

- (i) small-scale tourism and hospitality operations (40)
- (ii) public sector tourism planning and management (50)

Under the first of these, up to 40 Master Trainers with expertise in tourism and hospitality skills will be trained. This group will be selected predominantly from the private sector (with some also from the public sector). These Master Trainers will then go on to train enterprise trainers that is staff working in tourism SMEs such as hotels and restaurants. These enterprise trainers will in turn train craft workers to reach the standards of competency, and so lift performance in tourism enterprises of all types, sizes and classification throughout the country. By training of entry level enterprise staff, will create a cascade effect that will impact on thousands of workers in the tourism sector. Thus, it will enable the latter to greatly enhance levels of knowledge, experience, service quality and job mobility; and as such contributes substantially to upgrading standards of service quality in the tourism sector in Lao

PDR. In order to achieve wide geographic dispersal of Master Trainers it is recommended they are recruited from as broad a base as possible encompassing the following targets and locations.

Table i Private Sector Hospitality Management: Target 40

Location	Target Number of Trainers		Total
	Private Sector	Public Sector	
Vientiane	10	4	14
Luang Prabang	8	2	10
Pakse	6	2	8
Savannakhet	4	2	6
Luang Namtha	1	1	2
	29	11	40

Under the second area, the STDP will provide train-the-trainer programmes to public officials working at the provincial, district, and village level in tourist site management, and pro-poor tourism planning and management.

Table ii Public Sector Officials: Target 50

Government Unit	Target Number of Persons	
Provincial Tourism Departments (17)	17 x 2 = 34	34
LNTA Departments (5)	5 x 1 = 5	5
Provincial Department of Information & Culture	Vientiane Capital = 1 Vientiane = 1 Champasak = 1 Savannakhet = 1 Khammouane = 1 Xieng Khouang = 1 Luang Prabang = 1 Houaphan = 1 Luang Namtha = 1 Bokeo = 1	10
Ministry of Information & Culture	1	1
Department of Museums & Archaeology	1	1
		51

Priority Measure 2: Improving Front Line Hospitality

Objective: To create a culture of customer care through enhanced English language proficiency and upgraded service delivery skills.

1. Foreign Language Skills, especially English

Training in languages development, for all categories of staff and at all levels, including students, needs to be:

- Sustained - it requires on-going investment and the opportunity for improvement over a significant time span.
- Graduated - it must be geared to meet the needs of different levels of learners so that students can advance at their own pace.
- Supported - it must offer learners the opportunity to develop their skills away from the training room through use of electronic language packages.
- Tourism specific - it must build language skills in areas that are of direct relevance to work within the tourism sector and should focus on speaking and listening skills.

As an initial step, language training should prioritize the needs of tourism staff with direct customer contact in heritage sites, the accommodation, food service and crafts/ retail sectors together with all students on programmes in the University and college sector. This should be undertaken through:

- a) Intensive 2 week training programmes at beginners, intermediate and advanced levels in English, offered within the industry and in close proximity to the employees' workplace (schools, colleges, within businesses) for frontline staff and managers.
- b) Enhanced language training (in both time allocation and quality) within the University and college sector (public and private) with the employment of native speakers where possible.

Linking skills training with language training

Linking skills training with language training is a very effective way of improving language proficiency specifically linked to the job. This methodology of using bi-lingual skills training when it takes place in an authentic environment such as in the restaurant (for food and beverage service training) instead of the artificial environment of the classroom ensures learning is more successful.

For example, creating routines for each task helps someone with limited language skills to learn their job methodically, including the words and phrases associated with each task. Demonstrating tasks instead of just describing them is very effective in linking the job/task with the appropriate vocabulary.

Supporting language and skills training with simple written materials supplemented heavily with visuals, such as, pictures, pictograms, diagrams etc. enhances the learning experience.

See also [Annex I](#) English Language Training Guidance.

2. Service Delivery Skills

Quality service can be directly stimulated through “good host” training to increase awareness of tourism, encourage friendliness and foster attitudes of customer care in all front line staff. It will be necessary to commission a customized customer service programme, for example, “*Sabaidee, Welcome - the Lao Host Training Programme*” which would become the standard custom care programme for the tourism sector in Lao PDR.

The training programme needs to be supported by an accompanying bi-lingual manual, developed in Lao and English, which would become the standard customer care guide for the sector.

The “*Sabaidee, Welcome - the Lao Host Training Programme*” ” could be adapted from or modeled on an established customer service programme such as Welcome Host¹⁶.

An outline of the ‘Welcome Host’ programme is included as [Annex II](#).

2.1 “*Sabaidee, Welcome - the Lao Host Training Programme*”

The outline of the ‘Welcome Host’ programme is included as a reference point only, the proposed “*Sabaidee, Welcome - the Lao Host Training Programme*” needs to be developed within a Lao context taking cognizance of cultural issues and practices that may impact on the effective implementation of this initiative.

This core manual should form the heart of service delivery skills and customer care training for all technical, supervisory and management development within tourism and should complement the more specific skills training manuals prepared in certain technical areas.

Topics to be included:

- The value of excellent customer service
- Understanding the tourism industry and the benefits of tourism
- Understanding your customers
- Delivering service excellence
- Communicating effectively
- Providing information and advice
- Meeting specific needs
- Dealing with difficult situations
- Good service as sound business sense

By incorporating the main topics listed above, applying them to the main disciplines (where training needs have been identified) and factoring in cultural issues the “*Sabaidee, Welcome - the Lao Host Training Programme*” might evolve as follows:

¹⁶ ‘Welcome Host’ is an established (international) customer service training programme focusing on communication skills as well as improving the participant’s knowledge of local facilities and services. Other internationally branded customer service training programmes are also available but any international programme will need to be customized to a Lao context. Similar customer care programmes are used in the region, such as, South Asia Host and in India where this initiative is called “Guest is God”.

1. “Sabaidee, Welcome - the Lao Host” – a responsibility for all
2. Providing a welcome in every guest encounter
3. Lao PDR – what we have to offer our guests
4. Understanding the needs of all our guests
5. Cultural differences and guest expectations
6. Working together – teamwork across the tourism industry
7. Hospitality in the accommodation sector
8. Hospitality in the food service sector
9. Hospitality in the heritage and cultural sector
10. Hospitality in the travel agency, tour operations and travel sector
11. Hospitable tour guides
12. Managing and supervising a hospitable business

An effective customer service programme of this nature can provide staff with the communication tools and insights into customer expectations to enable them to provide service excellence and contribute to increased business performance.

Developing a unique (to Lao PDR) customer care programme with sector wide application and a national identity has multiple benefits,

- it benchmarks ‘best practice’ in customer care for the sector
- it identifies the minimum standards to be achieved
- it transforms cultural challenges into advantages
- it engenders pride at enterprise level motivating staff to deliver the best possible service
- this has a knock-on effect at national level inspiring all citizens to be a good ‘Lao host’
- it creates a ‘unique selling proposition’ (USP) for Lao as a tourist destination that can be exploited through the marketing efforts of the LNTA and others.

2.2 Delivering the “*Sabaidee, Welcome - the Lao Host Training Programme*”

This programme needs to be delivered with a ‘hands on’ approach with an emphasis on exploring tips and techniques for excellent service. Interactive learner centred techniques should be utilized, including role playing and group work. The trainer’s role is to work as a ‘guide on the side’ with the group to deliver an energizing and enjoyable training programme.

Priority Measure 3: Skills Training - Building the Right Skills-set

Objective: To increase the competitiveness of businesses by raising skill levels among the workforce.

1. Operational training in basic technical skills in accommodation, food service, retail, transport, travel agency, culture and heritage sectors

Operational up-skilling of staff in the tourism sector of the Lao PDR covers a wide range of areas and skills levels so that all guests experience a consistent level of technical and service delivery throughout their stay in the country. A number of specific basic technical skills programmes are proposed with emphasis on practical applications, in

- Professional cookery skills
- Food and beverage service skills
- Bartending skills
- Housekeeping skills
- Reception skills
- Food hygiene skills and practices

An outline of the specific skills programme content is included as [*Annex III*](#).

2. Applied information and communications technology (ICT) comprehension and skills

This training requirement should be met by focusing on the needs of management and staff whose work can benefit from regular access to ICT. They include frontline reception staff in the accommodation, transport, retail and culture/ heritage sectors as well as those involved in administration and marketing. The University and college sector also need to up-grade the intensity and content of their provision in this area.

Training in this area must be applied and relevant as well as current. The focus should be on the use of applications software that will allow participating employees and students to understand the use of ICT within the industry. Management training in SMEs will focus on developing an understanding of ICT as a tool which can enhance business competitiveness and increase market access.

Priority Measure 4: Supporting (selected) Tourism Training Institutions

Objective: To support tourism training institutions in order that they can improve their general standards, increase the incapacity of their core staff and upgrade their curricula to reflect international best practice.

The requirement to up-grade the provision of tourism education in the National University of Laos, within the LNTA Training Centre and within both public and private colleges is crucial for the future prosperity of the industry in Lao PDR. This requirement is multi-faced and complex and is a challenge that probably requires an integrated approach to support and development, through a series of courses, workshops and related interventions. It will require close planning and collaboration from the institutions in question, particularly the NUoL, as well as support of leading players within the tourism industry to facilitate faculty placements for purposes of familiarization.

1. NUoL Department of Hotel and Tourism Faculty Development Programme

The focus of this faculty development programme should be on:

- Tourism industry exposure and up-dating through attachments to tourism enterprises
- International tourism industry up-dating - knowledge, sources
- Curriculum review and development
- Pedagogy and training methods for tourism

Given the major language skills deficiency within tourism in Lao PDR, a major curriculum development focus should be on the development of a new University programme to target languages (especially English) graduates for an intensive post-graduate Diploma programme in tourism, to include industry placement in the area of accommodation and guiding.

It is proposed that the most effective method to support the core requirement to develop the tourism department and its staff is through the deployment of an experienced international tourism academic/educational advisor from an affiliated or partner institution as and advisor to the University on a part-time, periodic basis. This will involve site visits to conduct training and provide face-to-face tutoring as well as on-going and extensive electronic communication and support.

A valuable addition to this process would be the establishment of a formal “twinning”¹⁷ agreement between NUoL and a major regional University with expertise in tourism and hotel management with the aim of establishing long-term capacity and capability transfer. This partner institution, located in, for example, Thailand or Hong Kong, can take an active role in supporting the higher learning needs of University staff (masters, PhD, professional qualifications) in the area of tourism and hotel management and can also develop twinning arrangements for individual staff with their counterparts in NUoL.

¹⁷ The term “twinning” is used in the context that NUoL will be matched or paired off with a major regional University who will become the partner institution for the proposed training and development activities.

The starting point is that all those recruited into teaching within the Department of Tourism and Hotel Management are highly educated and well motivated to an academic career but are lacking in the specific skills and experience which can allow them to prepare future graduates for the specialist environment of the international tourism industry.

The role of the tourism academic/educational advisor will be:

1. To deliver core development workshops for staff and administrators in the areas of contemporary international tourism and hotel management in order to enhance and up-date awareness of the industry.
2. To undertake curriculum development workshops with teaching staff in order to review and up-date all aspects of the Tourism and Hotel Management curricula, including content, delivery, pedagogy and assessment.
3. To advise on the role of industry and industrial placement within the curriculum and the associated learning process.
4. To provide support for the programme of staff industry attachment and assist staff to evaluate their industry learning. This role will support the placement experience of all staff so that learning relevant to the classroom is drawn from all industry experiences.
5. To provide individual development support to teaching staff in key curriculum areas.
6. To advise on support resource development and requirements, including advising on core books to translate into Lao and other resource issues (see below).
7. To advise on research and information sources for tourism education.
8. To support the University and individual staff in the development of a research culture and a research-informed curriculum in tourism and hotel management.
9. To provide on-going electronic support for staff and administrators on a group and/ or individual basis in the areas of tourism, hotel management, curriculum development, pedagogy and research.

This is a highly ambitious component of this plan but is a vital building block for the future development of tourism in Lao PDR. It lies at the heart of an effective management culture in the future because tourism and hotel management graduates of NUoL will form the basis from which an improved and competitive industry can develop over the next 10 to 15 years.

The input into this component requires careful phasing in order to maximize its effectiveness. Ideally, this intervention should be phased over a four (4) year period from 2010 to 2014 to encompass

Year 1 (2010 - 2011)

Year 1 will provide a focus on industry familiarization within the tourism industry of Lao PDR and regional neighbours. One of the key identified weaknesses of teachers within NUoL is their lack of industry awareness and tourism specific exposure. Therefore, this familiarization should include extended attachment within selected industry partners, encompassing all major sectors, where University staff will work alongside and shadow owners, managers and senior technical staff in the conduct of their day to day business over periods of up to six (6) weeks. Critical to this phase will be tutored support from the tourism academic/educational advisor who will help University staff to critically interpret their experiences and to learn how things could/ should be done differently.

Local familiarization will be followed by international familiarization visits to selected destinations in locations such as Thailand and Hong Kong where again short-term tutored attachments in industry will be arranged in order that University staff can gain insights into best international practice in selected areas of tourism operations and management.

The final component within Year 1 will be a series of workshops in NUoL which will build on learning from the attachments in Lao PDR and abroad and enable University staff to apply their learning to their classroom planning and delivery. This will be facilitated by the tourism academic/educational advisor.

Year 2 (2011 - 2012)

The focus of Year 2 will be to build the subject specialisms of NUoL tourism and hotel management staff. This will be achieved through tutored reading and mentoring by the tourism academic/educational advisor who will assist lecturers to develop course curricula and related teaching materials.

The role of the regional partner University will be to nominate their own subject counterpart to provide local expertise and advice on the specific subject area.

The workshop series, commenced in Year 1, will continue into year 2.

Year 3 (2012 - 2013)

The focus on Year 3 will be on enhancing the pedagogy of lecturing staff at NUoL to enable them to deliver programmes that make the best use of both local and international resources and contemporary approaches to teaching and learning in tourism and hotel management.

The aims of this year will be achieved through a series of teaching, learning and assessment workshops which will be strongly practical in focus and be designed to build upon subject-focused development during years 1 and 2.

Year 4 (2013 - 2014)

During Year 4, academic staff at NUoL will receive support to enable them to develop their skills as researchers able to focus their research on the needs of the tourism industry in Lao PDR. The purpose of this process will be to re-equip staff members as competent tourism and hotel management academics and to allow them to feed the information gathered into the teaching and learning process.

The role of the partner University will be to provide a locally delivered Masters in Tourism and Hospitality Education programme (or equivalent) with a focus on both research and the translation of research outcomes into teaching and learning.

The tourism academic/educational advisor will provide individual research development mentoring to staff of NUoL.

2. LNTA Tourism and Hospitality Training Centre

Training for the LNTA THTC personnel to up-grade their current work with tour guides and SMEs through the mobile training unit is urgently required with respect to

the content of the programmes, knowledge and delivery skills of the trainers and the resources available to support the training.

Specific requirements are:

- Industry exposure and awareness
- Training programme review and up-date including content, delivery, pedagogy and assessment
- Curriculum review and development
- Technical skills training in core hospitality skills
- Resource development, training materials and learning resources
- English language proficiency
- Teaching methodologies

Priority Measure 5: Strengthening Private and Public Sector Management

Objective: To provide accessible training for management in SMEs and public sector tourism that addresses the defined immediate and longer term needs to develop new methods of work organization to increase competitiveness.

1. SME Management and Supervisor Development

Management development is key to creating a learning culture within SMEs. The training needs identified for management in the Lao PDR tourism sector under 2.2 above were extensive and varied. Each identified area is of considerable importance, particularly to smaller businesses and their owners/ managers.

- International trends and developments within tourism and hospitality
- Product marketing
- Finance, including pricing, yield and revenue management
- Human resource management
- Training and train the trainer skills
- Supervisory development
- Product and service quality
- Tourism operations and systems management in key sub-sectors including accommodation, culture and heritage, transport, food service, crafts and retail
- Environmental management

The training model best suited for this area in order to maximize impact is one of a series of short, intensive courses offered to owners, managers and supervisors over 2 to 3 days on location near to their businesses. They must be delivered by industry experts, preferably with extensive experience of the international tourism industry. It is likely that some of the core training within this area will include input by international experts.

Phase 1 of the management training, targeting all those with management responsibility in the Lao PDR tourism industry, should focus on the basic concepts and applications within each of the identified areas.

Phase 2 should provide more advanced training in each of the areas and should be offered on a self-select basis so that managers can develop those skills of specific relevance to their needs.

Phase 3 of the management training is to provide extended management development modules in selected specialist areas, possibly through enhanced capability within the National University.

2. Public Sector Tourism Administration and Management

The identified training needs apply to staff employed predominantly within the public sector, within LNTA, national and local government units. The training areas identified should be addressed in a progressive and developmental manner, leading to formal certification through LNTA or an appropriate academic institution.

Delivery should be external to the workplace, in a central University, college or dedicated training centre location and will require specialist trainers with extensive

international experience in the key areas identified. It is likely that the core training within this area will include input by international experts. The identified areas could be consolidated into broader module themes such as:

- Destination planning
- Destination marketing
- Tourism information and management
- Quality and service in tourism
- Tourism support services etc.

Taking cognizance of the practical issues in releasing staff for prolonged periods it is proposed that training inputs are short, intensive and frequent. Each module should require a minimum of five (5) days full-time (or part-time equivalent) of trainer contact plus extensive directed reading and study. Appropriate texts, ideally translated into Lao, should be identified/ developed in support of these modules.

5 Support Materials

The wide range of training necessary to support the development of skills within the tourism industry of the Lao PDR will require both skilled and experienced trainers and high quality training manuals or texts which are tailored to the needs of the Lao tourism sector and its employees.

In terms of teaching materials, little is available that is specifically relevant to the Lao context. Many curricula are designed based on programmes developed in Thailand and other neighbouring countries as well as material from institutions abroad, where individual teachers have gained their qualifications. Foreign textbooks are used and adapted to suit the training needs of local students. There are very limited reading resources available in the Lao language in the hotel and tourism sector.

Source: Tourism Employment and Education in Lao PDR Summary of Research 2009

Therefore, it is recommended that a range of core manuals are prepared in order to support the delivery of training which are:

- Current and up-to-date
- Relevant to the Lao PDR tourism sector, particularly the SME context
- Accessible to personnel in the industry at all levels and are published in the Lao language when appropriate

5.1 Training Manuals

The objective of the training manuals for tourism in Lao PDR is to support the development of minimum operational, supervisory and training standards across all key areas of tourism within the country. Their use should be required within all initial training programmes in NUoL together with the LNTA Tourism and Hospitality Training Centre and all private educational and training establishments. They should also form the core for all in-service and up-dating training for the industry in Lao PDR.

The existing portfolio of related training manuals includes:

- English for Eco-Guides (2006): this publication is the result of collaboration between the LNTA - ADB Mekong Tourism Development Project and SNV. This simple, easy to use bi-lingual manual is a very useful 'teach-yourself' English language learning tool and potentially could be adapted and expanded for use in other job areas.

The other training manuals available, published with the support of the LNTA - ADB Mekong Tourism Development Project, are available in the Lao language only are:

- Producing and Selling Handicrafts to Tourists at the Village Level – A Guide for Local Producers
- Interpreting Your Local Knowledge – A Manual For Local Tour Guides (2005)
- Designing and Operating an Eco-Lodge in Lao PDR (2005)

All of these manuals are simple, easy to use and are focused on the needs of their target audience. This concept is effective and can be emulated as the minimum standard in the development of additional training manuals. It is recommended that all future manuals be developed as bi-lingual publications, in English and Lao, to

further the requirement to increase the English language proficiency of everyone associated with the tourism sector.

The following are deemed to be the priority manuals for development:

1. Service delivery skills in customer care (linked to the “Sabaidee, Welcome – the Lao Host” programme)
2. Food hygiene and safety
3. Hospitality skills
 - Professional cookery - international and Lao cuisine
 - Housekeeping
 - Reception skills for hotels and travel agents
 - Food and beverage service
 - Bartending skills
4. Tour guide resource pack
5. Using ICT in the tourism, travel and hotel industries
6. Training skills
7. Supervisory skills

5.2 Developing the Training Manuals

Developing the above suggested training manuals is an important component of any HRD plan and represents a significant investment in time and resources. The manuals are just one of the constituent parts of the training process; their development needs to be in sync with the development of the training programmes themselves and other resources, such as the trainer guides. Considerations are,

STDP Brand

The series of training manuals should be developed as a distinct brand under the SDTP umbrella. The brand image should also convey a clear message common to all manuals, such as, each manual belongs to the “How to...” series of training publications that focus on practical procedures and their application in the tourism industry with emphasis on ‘how to do the job’.

To achieve this it is suggested that the manuals are consistent in format and design which in addition to giving them a clear identity also allows learners and trainers to access relevant information across all manuals.

The Training Pack

Subject to budget availability, the SDTP might consider developing a producing a training pack comprising the Training Manual which would be used by course participants or trainees in the workplace and a Trainer Guide for use by the trainer or supervisor.

- **Training (Participant/Trainee) Manual**

The training manual is as an important ‘take away’ from a training programme, providing the participant with a learning tool and reference source that can be accessed time and time again.

It can be used also as an on-the-job training support tool thereby increasing the capacity of supervisors to carry out training in the workplace.

▪ **Trainer Guide**

It is recommended that all training manuals are complemented by a trainer guide that will assist in their effective use in the classroom, training facility or workplace.

Content Development

The training manuals need to be developed to underpin the content of the training programmes and so they should be developed in unison, as a 'package', ensuring consistency and uniformity in content and message.

Outline content for the specific skills manual is included as [Annex III](#).

It is recommended that each manual is developed by a team, comprising local experts from industry and the education sector and led by an international expert in the field. The expert will provide the broad picture in terms of content, together with the learning/ pedagogic structure necessary to support training learning. The local experts will input the Lao context and ensure that the manuals meet the above requirements.

Language

All manuals should be produced in a bi-lingual format, initially in English and Lao, and later in other languages should the market require it. This emphasis on bi-lingualism will be fundamental to the manuals long term usefulness and effectiveness in the sector.

Format

Each manual will be subject specific, for example, the Housekeeping Manual will focus on the essentials of housekeeping operations dealing with the specific skills and knowledge required to effectively carry out the main job tasks (room maid, laundry etc) in the housekeeping department. The emphasis will be on developing the competencies needed to meet the needs and expectations of guests in all ranges of accommodation from the 4* hotel to the simple guest house.

Any traditional practices unique to Lao will be addressed. Procedures on 'how to do' each job will be explained clearly with simple tips provided to assist in carrying out the task.

Style

The manuals need to be simple and user friendly. Visuals, such as, drawings, photographs and diagrams should be used as much as possible to illustrate 'how to do the job'.

Sample pages are included as ¹⁸ [Annex IV](#).

Layout

The layout should be designed in such a way that the user can open it at any place and be provided with useful information and tips on 'how to do' the job. For example:

¹⁸ Excerpts from the practical training manual series developed by Lux-Development for the Vietnam HRD in Tourism Project.

- The table of contents should help the user see at a glance how the information is organized;
- Using Housekeeping as an example, this subject can be divided into ten (10) main topics, these should be presented as 'stand alone' chapters/sections;
- Each section can be sub-divided into key 'need to know' themes, allowing the manual be studied in logical, manageable chunks;
- Headings should show clearly what is covered in each chapter or section;
- Each main topic should begin with a list of the objectives, or what will be learned in this section;
- Technical terms should be highlighted and explained in a glossary of terms, this list can be used also as a revision aid;
- Checklists related to the job, such as, a room cleaning checklist can be included, again as both a revision aid and a useful 'how to do' tool;
- Simple exercises and/or discussion questions and activities included at the end of each chapter helps the user review his/her own learning and monitor his/her progress. It also reinforces understanding of the content and enables the user relate general procedures and practices to their job;
- References can be provided, websites and/or further reading, where the user can get additional information.

Packaging and Presentation

Manuals should be packaged in a loose-leaf ring binder format allowing for updating of information as well additional information be added over time thereby becoming a useful long term resource pack for the user. The flexibility of this format facilitates photocopying of individual pages/sections for wider distribution in the workplace as handouts or 'how to do' lists.

A good example of this is the Cultural Heritage Specialist Guide Training Course pack for Luang Prabang, the Plain of Jars in Xieng Khouang and Vat Phou in Champasak, developed as a collaboration between UNESCO and LNTA.

Target Groups

The manuals will be used by different target groups based on their training needs.

The knowledge and skills requirements of the private sector SMEs (hotels and guesthouses) are relatively simple with respect to operational skills and their training needs might best be served by providing them with just one manual combining the multi-skills requirements of a small hospitality business. This Hospitality Skills Manual will include sections representing each of the key operational departments will explain and illustrate with simple visuals the key skills and knowledge required to perform effectively in the small hotel/guesthouse or restaurant. This manual could also be used to underpin the training carried out by the LNTA Tourism and Hospitality Training Centre mobile training unit.

Some manuals will have wider use and application, for example, the customer service skills manual ("Sabaidee, Welcome – the Lao Host") will be used on all programmes as the standard customer care training for the sector and potentially become part of a national tourism awareness programme.

The food hygiene and safety manual will underpin all training for food handlers regardless of position or sector.

Website

The development of a support website for the training manuals should be a medium term development target, which will allow learners and trainers to obtain up-to-date information on key topics.

5.2 Text Books

As an interim measure, the procurement of additional core up-to-date texts, used as standard on international tourism management programmes, will be of value to the Department of Hotel and Tourism in NUoL to assist in the enhancement of their knowledge base in tourism and hotel management. They will also provide the basis for the selection of a range of books suitable for student use in translated form.

The interim list of recommended text books is included as [*Annex V*](#).

6. Recommended Training Providers/Institutions in Lao PDR

At present there is no **one** training provider or institution in Lao PDR capable of servicing all the training priorities identified in this report. In country research has identified four private training providers/ institutions, all located in Vientiane, that individually have specific expertise and/or capability as well as the facilities required to support the STDP in the partial implementation of the HRD Action Plan. Each of the recommended training institutions employs personnel with international credentials.

The recommended institutions are:

	Established	Courses	Facilities	Special Features
The Lao American College	1993	1. up to BA degree level 2. Microsoft diploma	Classrooms, library, computer laboratories	1. The American Centre – a resource centre with library and computer facilities 2. Microsoft laboratories 3. Bilingual programmes
Unity School of Management	1993	1. Certificate. Diploma and Advanced Diploma courses in various Management and Administration fields 2. English language	Classrooms, library, computer laboratories	1. Recently upgraded facility 2. Experience in developing short term training programmes for clients 3. Involved in tourism HRD research
Vientiane College		1. English language to Diploma level 2. Technical & academic English 3. Hospitality & customer services training 4. Computer applications training	Classrooms, library, computer laboratories	1. Overseas examination testing center 2. Developed skills manuals for hospitality sector in Lao 3. Experienced in hospitality skills training in Lao (e.g. Joma)
21st Century School of English	2002	1. Varied English language courses, TOEFL and specialized	Classrooms, library, computer laboratories	1. Piloting a new English language training course 'Swift English' 2. Designed customized programs for local clients

Many of the training programmes proposed in section 3 are not standard 'shelf programmes' that can be sourced from elsewhere. The selected training provider/s will be required to research and develop each programme appropriate to the local

tourism environment and target audience. These programmes will be developed and customized to meet the specific training requirements identified in this report.

For specific expertise as in the case of the NUoL training requirements the STDP might need to consider expanding the search to the region and beyond in pursuit of the appropriate expert support.

The contact details for the recommended training providers/institutions are included as [Annex VII](#).

7 Priority Training Plan

Section 3 identifies the range of training interventions that are required to enable tourism in Lao PDR to meet its HRD requirements. In terms of priority, it is recommended that initial resources are invested in the following:

Category of Training	Training Needs	For Whom	Possible Sources	Duration	Priority
Priority Measure 1: Creating a Network of Trainers					
Master Trainer: Public Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Pedagogy and training skills → Competence and skills measurement → International tourism 'best practice' → Site development and management → Pro-poor tourism → Tourism administration competencies 	50 public sector managers and supervisors	Lao American College (possibly in collaboration with a regional partner institution)	10 - 20 days	Immediate
Master Trainer: SMEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Pedagogy and training skills → Competence and skills measurement → Technical skills in hospitality 	40 private sector owners, managers and supervisors	Unity School of Mgt	10 days	Immediate
Priority Measure 2: Improving Front Line Hospitality					
English Language: Beginners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Emphasis on communication at work → Listening skills → Speaking skills → English for specific purpose (job related) 	All SME and public sector front-line staff	1. Vientiane College 2. 21 st Century School	10 day intensive with ongoing inputs	Immediate
English Language: Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Listening skills → Reading skills → Writing skills → Speaking skills → English for specific purpose (job related) 	SME managers and front-line employees Public sector varied	1. Vientiane College 2. 21 st Century School	10 day intensive with ongoing inputs	Medium
English Language: Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Listening skills → Reading skills → Writing skills → Speaking skills 	Public sector managers and senior personnel	Vientiane College	2 – 4 years	Medium to long term
Service Delivery Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Tourism awareness → Delivering service excellence → Cultural diversity → Communicating effectively 	Front-line employees - all sectors Trainers from LNTA training centre		2-3 days on-site	Immediate

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Providing information and advice → Meeting specific needs → Dealing with difficult situations 					
Priority Measure 3: Skills Training Building the Right Skills-set						
Operational Technical Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Customer expectations → Standard awareness and setting → Product knowledge → Technical skills development (job specific) → Safe work practices → Health and safety(job specific) 	<p>SMEs - all staff by department / job function</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Kitchen -Restaurant -Housekeeping -Reception -Travel agents etc <p>Trainers from LNTA training centre</p>	Master Trainers with industry expert for practical applications	<p>Frequent short term interventions of 2-3 days on site</p> <p>Access to practical facilities required for applications training</p>		Medium
Food Hygiene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Personal and work hygiene → Classification of food → Contamination and spoilage → Safe handling and storage of food 	<p>All food handling staff</p> <p>Trainers from LNTA training centre</p>	Vientiane College with approved hygiene trainers	3 days		Immediate
ICT Skills: Beginners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Using basic software packages → Carrying out basic computer maintenance → Applications software for the Tourism and Hospitality Industry (GRS/PMS/etc.) 	<p>All staff with access to computers for job purposes</p> <p>Trainers from LNTA training centre</p>	Lao American College	3 days full-time or 6 days part-time		
ICT Skills: Intermediate Using technology in hotels, travel agencies and tourism organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Applications software for the Tourism and Hospitality Industry (GRS/PMS/etc.) → Database technology 	<p>Junior receptionists, travel agency staff and tourism organization staff</p>	Lao American College	3 days		
ICT Skills: Advanced Managing technology in hotels, travel agencies and tourism organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Using software for statistical analysis (SPSS) → Revenue and yield management → Conducting Basic on-line research 	<p>Managers and supervisors: hotels, travel agencies and tourism organizations</p>	Expert	5 days		

Priority Measure 4: Supporting (selected) Tourism Training Institutions

<p>Capacity Building of Educators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Tourism industry update and exposure → Curriculum design and development → Developing lecture plans → Researching and preparing lectures → Developing appropriate teaching materials → Active teaching methodologies → Adult learning styles/behaviour → Presentation skills and teaching aids → Assessment and evaluation of learning 	<p>All teaching/ research faculty at Department of Hotel and Tourism NUoL</p> <p>All personnel from LNTA training centre</p>	<p>International Expert from 3rd level educational establishment</p>	<p>Ongoing over 2- 4 years</p>	<p>Medium to long term</p>
<p>Professional Development for LNTA Trainers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Identification of industry training needs → Developing short training courses, workshops and seminars → Promoting training products to Industry → Train the trainer programme 	<p>Senior personnel from LNTA training centre</p>		<p>Ongoing over 1 -2 years</p>	<p>Medium to long term</p>

Priority Measure 5: Strengthening Private and Public Sector Management

<p>People Management Skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Human resources planning → Supervisory development → Training skills → Teamwork → People management: (delegation, motivation, monitoring and control) 	<p>SME and Public Sector Managers and Supervisors</p>		<p>Short intensive 2-3 day courses</p>	<p>Medium to long term</p>
<p>Product Management Skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → International trends → Product development and quality → Marketing → Finance → Environmental issues → Advanced technical skills 	<p>SME and Public Sector Managers</p>		<p>Short intensive 2-3 day courses</p>	<p>Medium to long term</p>

Work Performance Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Time management skills → Work planning and management → Project management skills → Organizational skill 	SME and Public Sector Managers		Short intensive 2-3 day courses	Medium to long term
Destination Planning and Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Destination planning and development → Destination marketing → Tourism information and management → Quality and service in tourism → Tourism support services 	National and local government officers, LNTA officers	Unity School of Management Lao American College	Module specific programmes 5 days full-time (or part-time equivalent) Ongoing over 1-2 years	Medium to long term
Destination Management: Environment, Infrastructure, Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Environmental planning at destination level → Destination transport and infrastructure management → Destination marketing and promotion → Events and conferences → Use of ICT → Tourism data and statistics management and interpretation 	Senior national and local government officers, LNTA officers	Unity School of Management Lao American College	Module specific programmes 5 days full-time (or part-time equivalent) Ongoing over 1-2 years	Medium to long term

Note: It is proposed that English language training is incorporated into most/all training activities. This will require collaboration between the training providers to incorporate the technical training inputs with the corresponding English language training requirements.

The proposed Implementation Schedule is attached as [Annex VI](#).

Annex I English Language Training Guidance

Adult language training falls into two general categories:

1. Classroom training
2. Self tutoring using books, audio-visual aids or online resources.

Classroom Training: Language Schools

Classroom training can be delivered intensively via full-time or part-time courses at selected language schools. Intensive full-time language classroom training involves up to six hours of training a day – generally four hours of general English followed by two hours of Business English and/or English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Part-time language classroom training options vary in accordance with the needs of the target group.

Classroom training is highly effective because of the live interaction between teachers and students, as well as between students.

The number of weeks someone might need training depends on their starting ability, their effort and their motivation. It is impossible to predict how long it might take for someone to achieve their language goals, but it could take as few as several weeks or it could take a year or more.

Language schools generally offer training that leads towards certain proficiency tests. The most common are **Cambridge Examinations** and the **International English Language Testing System** (IELTS). The Cambridge Examinations test students at four levels of English proficiency, while the IELTS is a single level.

Given the logistical constraints and the magnitude of the task class room training alone on either a full or part time basis is not a practical option to resolve the English language training needs of the tourism and hospitality sector. Greater flexibility in the delivery of language training needs to be considered.

Class room training on either a full or part time basis is an option that might be considered for specific target groups, for example, public sector officials, NUoL and LNTA personnel.

Language School Organization in Lao PDR

Lao PDR has a large number of language schools. Most of them are in Vientiane but there are others scattered around the country.

Two English language schools in Vientiane have been identified as potential training providers to host and deliver training activities in compliance with the needs of the GMS Sustainable Tourism Development Project. They are

- Vientiane College
- 21st Century

Supported Self Tutoring Options: Books and Tapes

In situations where limits related to time, geography or finances rule out classroom learning of English, the other option is supported self tutoring. The range of books and tapes to 'Teach Yourself English' is vast and resources can be ordered online.

For example, Amazon.co.uk has an entire section devoted to learning English as a Foreign Language that is updated regularly with new material, including ESP categories.

For most tourism and hospitality sector workers, the greatest need will be to build vocabulary, listening and speaking skills. Pronunciation is very important and tapes will assist in practicing this aspect of the language.

Online Options

Another source of self-tutoring choices is the internet. There are thousands of sites offering English as a Foreign Language lessons, vocabulary, quizzes and support. Many of these sites offer specific courses for a fee, but others provide free resources and links to other sites. One well known site, **Dave's ESL Cafe** (www.eslcafe.com) includes an interactive forum where students can ask specific language questions and get an answer from a teacher. However, there is no audio on this site. Another excellent source of online training is offered by **Learning English section of the BBC World Service** website (www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/index.shtml).

This site has 'watch and listen' segments, grammar and vocabulary, quizzes etc. and the material is updated regularly. Although much of it is oriented to non-nationals working in the United Kingdom, it can still be a valuable resource.

The advantage of internet-based materials is their 24 hour availability, their ability to include mixed medium materials such as audio and video and the potential they have to link isolated learners with others. However, not every site is reputable particularly the fee charging sites. For free sites, the regularity with which material is updated or modified suggests a certain reliability, as well as recommendations made by other users.

Annex II Outline of the 'Welcome Host' Programme

1. Introduction

- The importance of excellent customer service

2. The Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality industry

- Industry sectors
- The benefits of tourism
- The value of tourism
- What makes a business or organization stand out?

3. Understanding your customers

- The customer experience
- Put yourself in the customer's shoes
- Identifying needs and expectations
- Identifying the types of customers at your own organization

4. Delivering excellent customer service

- Key elements of customer service
- Trends in customer service and changing expectations
- Check your level of service
- Setting and maintaining standards
- How to make a great first impression

5. Successful communication

- Verbal communication
- Body language
- The importance of listening skills
- Open and closed questions
- Written communication
- Communication by telephone

6. Providing information and advice

- Presenting information to customers
- Sharing local information

7. Meeting specific needs

- Providing an accessible service
- Language and cultural diversity
- Different needs for customers of different ages

8. Dealing with difficult situations

- 'The nice customer' may not be the repeat customer!
- The causes of dissatisfaction
- Handling complaints effectively
- Recognizing customer reactions
- Dealing with feelings
- Dealing with difficult situations
- Resolving problems
- Using customer feedback for positive change

9. Boosting business

- Opportunities to increase business
- Improvements you can make in your own business or organization

Annex III Outline Content for Specific Skills Courses and Training Manuals

Professional Cookery Skills (2-3 days per module)

- Core culinary skills
- Breakfast cookery
- Contemporary/ethnic cuisine
- Deli/larder
- Pastry
- Health and safety
- Professional development
- Kitchen operations and technology
- Customer care

Food and Beverage Service Skills (2-3 days per module)

- Service techniques and styles
- Customer care
- Restaurant operations
- Wine knowledge and service
- Health and safety
- Professional development
- Sales and bar control

Bartending Skills (2-3 days per module)

- Bar operations
- Lounge and wine service
- Bar food production and service
- Health, safety and law
- Professional development
- Sales and bar control
- Customer care

Multi-Skills Course for Micro Enterprises (2-3 days per module)

- Basic culinary skills
- Restaurant and bar service techniques and styles
- Housekeeping skills
- Reception
- Customer care
- Health and safety
- Professional development

Subjects common to all courses

All courses include training in customer care, personal and work hygiene and computing appropriate to area.

Annex IV Sample Hospitality Skills Manual

Sample pages extracted from the basic skills manuals developed in Vietnam by the Lux-Development Project 'Strengthening Human Resources in the Tourism Sector' are attached separately.

Food & Beverage Service – A Practical Approach
Housekeeping Skills – A Practical Approach

Annex V Interim List of Recommended Text Books (NUoL)

1. Baum, T. (2006) *Human Resource Management for the Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure Industries: An International Perspective*, London: Thomson Learning
2. Cooper, C., Fletcher, J., Gilbert, D., Fyall, A. and Wanhill, S. (2008) *Tourism: Principles and Practice*, London: Financial Times/ Prentice Hall
3. Hayes, D. and Ninemeier, J. (2006) *Hotel Operations Management*, New York: Prentice Hall
4. Hoffman, K., Bateson, J., Wood, E. and Kenyon, A. (2009) *Services Marketing - International Edition*, London: Cengage Learning EMEA
5. Lyengar, A. (2008) *Hotel Finance*, New Delhi: OUP India
6. Livingston, B. (2008) *How You Do... What You Do: Create Service Excellence That Wins Clients For Life*, New York: McGraw-Hill
7. Middleton, V., Fyall, A. and Morgan, M. (2009) *Marketing in Travel and Tourism*, Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann
8. Nickson, D. (2006) *Human Resource Management for the Hospitality and Tourism Industries*, Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann
9. Pease, W. Rowe, M. and Cooper, M. (2007) *Information and Communication Technologies in Support of the Tourism Industry*, Hershey, Penn.: IGI Publishing
10. Pike, S. (2008) *Destination Marketing: An Integrated Marketing Communication Approach*, Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann
11. Weaver, D. (2008) *Sustainable Tourism*, Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann

Annex VII Recommended Training Providers/Institutions in Lao PDR and the GMS

Institution	Contact Person/Title	Telephone/Fax	Email
Lao American College Kaysone Phomvihane Road Vientiane P.O.Box 327	Ms. Virginia Van Ostrand Co Director	Tel: 021-900454 Fax: 021-900453 Mobile: 020-5503746	lacschool@hotmail.com thelaoamericacollege@yahoo.com
Unity School of Management 311 Ban Wat Nak Km 3 Lao-Thai Road Vientiane P.O.Box 4569	Mr. Kanna Baran Director	Tel: 021-350352/314150 Fax: 021-314150 Mobile: 020-7875565	u4unity@gmail.com
Vientiane College 23 Singha Road Vientiane P.O.Box 4144	Mr. Denley Pike Director	Tel: 021-414873/412598 Fax: 021-414346 Mobile: 020-5610219	denley.pike@vientianecollege.com denleypike@yahoo.com
21st Century School of English 074/6 Sisangvone Road That Luang Thai Vientiane P.O.Box 77	Mr. Alastair Maitland Director	Tel: 021-452500 Fax: 021-452927 Mobile: 020-5504077	alastair@21centuryeducation.com
Suggested Institution/s within the Greater Mekong Sub-region			
Asian Center for Tourism Planning and Poverty Reduction (ACTPPR) Thammasat University Pathumthani 1212 Thailand	Prof. Dr. Walter Jamieson	Tel: +66-2-696 5508 Fax: +66-2-986 8322	wjtourism@hotmail.com
Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Prince of Songkla University Phuket Campus Thailand	Mr. Ajan Somjate Director of Faculty	Tel: +66-76276200	jssrirabai@gmail.com www.pukhet.psu.ac.th

PART 2: IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT CONTRACT PACKAGES

CONTENTS

1. Criteria for Selection of Master Trainers

2. Contract Package 1: Small-scale Tourism and Hospitality Operations

- Annex A** Audit of Existing English Language Manuals
- Annex B** Outline Content of Training Programmes and Supporting Manuals

3. Contract Package 2: Public Sector Tourism Planning and Management

- Annex C** Audit of Existing English Language Manuals
- Annex D** Outline Content of Training Programmes and Supporting Manuals

1. Criteria for Selection of Master Trainers for the Tourism and Hospitality Sector

Background- GMS Sustainable Tourism Development Project in Lao PDR

The main problems confronting development of a sustainable tourism sector in the GMS countries concern the management of tourism growth rather than the promotion of growth in itself. The current situation in all GMS countries, including the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), is that the distribution of the benefits of tourism are highly concentrated in the main towns; natural and cultural heritage assets are threatened by inappropriate tourism use; quality standards and standards of hygiene, especially among small scale hospitality enterprises are low, making it difficult to attract higher spending tourists; public sector management capacities to plan, develop, market and manage the sustainable development of the tourism sector are weak; there is a lack of tourist information and support services; and the development of small and medium tourism enterprises is impeded by lack of clear laws and regulations and financial and technical support.

Therefore, actions are urgently needed to improve heritage management practices and implement a more inclusive approach to pro-poor tourism development that accelerates poverty reduction and reduces undesirable social impacts. There is also a need to develop protection infrastructure at natural, cultural and urban sites and to strengthen the sustainable management of tourism and upgrade service skills in the small to medium hospitality sector.

To address these and other tourism-related issues, the Lao PDR has received a grant from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to undertake the GMS Sustainable Tourism Development Project (STDP) from 2009-2014. The Lao National Tourism Administration (LNTA) is the executing agency responsible for the coordination, management and implementation of the project in cooperation with the 9 provinces of Champasak, Salavanh, Savannakhet, Vientiane Province, Houaphanh, Oudomxay, Sayabouli, Bokeo and Luang Namtha.

The main goal of the project is to contribute towards the sustainable socioeconomic development of Lao PDR focusing especially on poverty reduction, sustainable development and protection of the natural and cultural heritage and protection of vulnerable groups from exploitation. To achieve this goal the project seeks to enhance the protection and conservation of natural, cultural and urban heritage assets of importance for tourism; increase tourism's contribution to poverty reduction by expanding the traditional community-based tourism approach to include tourism-related supply and value chains interventions; improve the facilitation of tourism along the economic corridors by improving services and management of tourist attractions found there; raise public sector official's tourism management skills at the national, provincial, district and site level; improve service and hygiene standards among staff in small to medium hospitality enterprises; and enhance local private sector participation in small and medium tourism enterprise investment and operation.

There are 5 parts of the project:

Part 1.A: Biodiversity Conservation and Protection through Tourism at the Siphandone Wetland

Part 1.B: Urban Environment Protection and Management - Vang Vieng Town Waste Water Centralization and Treatment
Part 2: Pro-Poor Tourism Development in Salavanh, Vientiane Province, Houaphanh, Oudomxay, Sayabouli and Bokeo
Part 3: Facilitation of Tourism on the North-South (Part 3.A) and East-West (Part 3.B) Economic Corridors
Part 4: Human Resource Development (HRD) Component
Part 5: Institutional Strengthening and Implementation Assistance

General Objectives

The objective of the STDP's HRD Component is to create a pool of master trainers in the areas of:

- (iii) small-scale tourism and hospitality operations
- (iv) public sector tourism planning and management

Under the first focus area, tourism and hospitality training skills of master trainers selected from predominately the private sector (and the public sector) will be upgraded. These master trainers will then go on to train trainers of staff working in tourism SMEs such as hotels and restaurants.

Under the second focus area, the STDP will train public officials working at the provincial, district, and village level as tourist site management trainers and trainers of pro-poor tourism planning and management.

The Master Training Programme

Capable trainers help raise performance standards among staff, they also help to reduce waste, cut customer complaints, increase safety levels in the workplace and enhance the image of the enterprise.

Training is required to develop confident and competent trainers. Trainers require training in the theoretical knowledge and practical skills needed to deliver tailored, effective results – orientated instruction on the job.

The Master Trainer programme is for senior hospitality and tourism personnel experienced in hospitality and tourism operations. The Master Trainers will be trained in professional training skills and techniques creating a pool of Master Trainers who will be charged with the responsibility to 'train the trainers' in SMEs and in public sector hospitality and tourism enterprises. These enterprise trainers will independently support training and related skills development in the rank and file, supervisory, and management areas within their enterprise. Through establishing this "Skillsnet" the cascade effect training can impact on thousands of people working in the tourism sector.

Duration and Outline Content

The Master Trainer training will be structured and implemented as follows:

- 10 days for industry personnel
- 15 days for public sector

Training topics will include

- Understanding how adults learn
- Different learning styles
- Instructional design strategies and tools
- Presentation skills
- Teaching methodologies and instructional skills
 - Giving a job talk
 - Doing a demonstration
 - Feedback and coaching
- Group training
- Development skills
- Testing skills: measuring the impact of training

Who Can Apply?

Applications are invited from senior hospitality and tourism personnel experienced in hospitality and tourism operations who are interested in becoming Master Trainers.

Hospitality and tourism teachers with expertise in any of the core hospitality and tourism disciplines may also apply.

The participants for this programme will be drawn from

- 40 Master Trainers selected from small-scale tourism and hospitality operations
- 50 Master Trainers selected from public sector tourism planning and management

Selection Criteria

Preference will be given to candidates who

- are graduates of a University or vocational training college with a qualification in any hospitality or tourism related subject;
- have a minimum of 5 years experience in the hospitality and tourism sector, preferably at supervisory/line manager or department head level;
- are graduates of a teacher training college and currently teaching any hospitality or tourism related subject;
- are competent in English language up to IELTS 5.0 level or equivalent;
- are good communicators;
- demonstrate the interest and ability to become a skilled Master Trainer;
- are committed to upgrading the tourism sector through training.

2. Contract Package 1: Small-scale Tourism and Hospitality Operations

Background- GMS Sustainable Tourism Development Project in Lao PDR

The main problems confronting development of a sustainable tourism sector in the GMS countries concern the management of tourism growth rather than the promotion of growth in itself. The current situation in all GMS countries, including the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), is that the distribution of the benefits of tourism are highly concentrated in the main towns; natural and cultural heritage assets are threatened by inappropriate tourism use; quality standards and standards of hygiene, especially among small scale hospitality enterprises are low, making it difficult to attract higher spending tourists; public sector management capacities to plan, develop, market and manage the sustainable development of the tourism sector are weak; there is a lack of tourist information and support services; and the development of small and medium tourism enterprises is impeded by lack of clear laws and regulations and financial and technical support.

Therefore, actions are urgently needed to improve heritage management practices and implement a more inclusive approach to pro-poor tourism development that accelerates poverty reduction and reduces undesirable social impacts. There is also a need to develop protection infrastructure at natural, cultural and urban sites and to strengthen the sustainable management of tourism and upgrade service skills in the small to medium hospitality sector.

To address these and other tourism-related issues, the Lao PDR has received a grant from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to undertake the GMS Sustainable Tourism Development Project (STDP) from 2009-2014. The Lao National Tourism Administration (LNTA) is the executing agency responsible for the coordination, management and implementation of the project in cooperation with the 9 provinces of Champasak, Salavanh, Savannakhet, Vientiane Province, Houaphanh, Oudomxay, Sayabouli, Bokeo and Luang Namtha.

The main goal of the project is to contribute towards the sustainable socioeconomic development of Lao PDR focusing especially on poverty reduction, sustainable development and protection of the natural and cultural heritage and protection of vulnerable groups from exploitation. To achieve this goal the project seeks to enhance the protection and conservation of natural, cultural and urban heritage assets of importance for tourism; increase tourism's contribution to poverty reduction by expanding the traditional community-based tourism approach to include tourism-related supply and value chains interventions; improve the facilitation of tourism along the economic corridors by improving services and management of tourist attractions found there; raise public sector official's tourism management skills at the national, provincial, district and site level; improve service and hygiene standards among staff in small to medium hospitality enterprises; and enhance local private sector participation in small and medium tourism enterprise investment and operation.

There are 5 parts of the project:

Part 1.A: Biodiversity Conservation and Protection through Tourism at the Siphandone Wetland

Part 1.B: Urban Environment Protection and Management - Vang Vieng Town Waste Water Centralization and Treatment

Part 2: Pro-Poor Tourism Development in Salavanh, Vientiane Province, Houaphanh, Oudomxay, Sayabouli and Bokeo
Part 3: Facilitation of Tourism on the North-South (Part 3.A) and East-West (Part 3.B) Economic Corridors
Part 4: Human Resource Development (HRD) Component
Part 5: Institutional Strengthening and Implementation Assistance

The works outlined in this terms-of-reference are particular to Part 4 of the project and involve the provision of consultancy services to the LNTA to assist in the design of the project's Human Resource Development Action Plan and preparation of two HRD Implementation Support contract packages for the STDP in Lao PDR.

General Objectives

The objective of the STDP's HRD Component is to create a pool of master trainers in the areas of:

- small-scale tourism and hospitality operations
- public sector tourism planning and management

Under the first focus area, tourism and hospitality training skills of master trainers selected from predominately the private sector (and the public sector) will be upgraded. These master trainers will then go on to train trainers of staff working in tourism SMEs such as hotels and restaurants.

Under the second focus area, the STDP will train public officials working at the provincial, district, and village level as tourist site management trainers and trainers of pro-poor tourism planning and management.

Lao PDR-based training institution(s) will be selected to host training activities in each of the two focus areas in partnership with GMS-based educational institutions, firms or individuals that have experience in training master trainers in the tourism sector. One institution will focus on training master trainers in small-scale tourism and hospitality operation, while the other will train public officials in tourist site management and pro-poor tourism planning and management. Tendering processes for each contract package will comply with ADB's consultant qualification selection procedure. Each Lao training institution selected will receive modest STDP support to improve its facilities

Scope of the Consultancy

The HRD Action Plan proposed a number of priority measures to address the most urgent training needs of the sector, summarized as:

- Priority Measure 1: Creating a 'Skillsnet' of Trainers
- Priority Measure 2: Improving Front Line Hospitality
- Priority Measure 3: Skills Training Building the Right Skills-set
- Priority Measure 4: Supporting (selected) Tourism Training Institutions
- Priority Measure 5: Strengthening Private and Public Sector Management

Training for small-scale tourism and hospitality operations is included in all of the priority measures with the exception of priority measure 4 which focuses exclusively on supporting (selected) tourism training institutions.

The main components of the consultancy are to:

1. Develop the pre-determined portfolio of training programmes appropriate to the identified needs of the SME tourism sector.
2. Develop 'user friendly' training manuals as a learning resource to underpin the training.
3. Conduct, initially, a series of a training methodologies and skills training programmes targeted at experienced hospitality and tourism personnel to equip this target audience with the skills to become Master Trainers for the SME sector. Target: 40 persons. Thereafter additional training may be required to support the Master Trainers in the implementation and delivery of training for the sector.
4. Initiate the concept of bi-lingual training, that is, in English and Lao, to commence the process of upgrading the English language competencies in the sector.

Specific outcomes are to:

- Create a training culture within the tourism sector;
- Develop a cohort of Master Trainers specifically for the SME tourism sector;
- Increase knowledge (SMEs) about benefits of training and to install a training structure in SMEs;
- Improve service quality in the SME tourism sector;
- Enhance service skills through training;
- Improve of food hygiene practices skills particularly for food handlers;
- Initiate supervisor development measures as a means to advance professionalism in tourism operations;
- Upgrade English language competency throughout the sector.

Services Required

The services required will include but may not be limited to:

- Developing training programmes and accompanying training manuals to publication standard;
- Implementing the Master Training programme;
- Installing bi-lingual, English and Lao, teaching methodologies into all training activities.

Specifically the contract package has two main components, the provision of training services in specific areas and the development of training programmes with supporting training manuals, summarized as:

1. Provision of training services, in

- Train the Trainer, training of Master Trainers
- English language specific to the identified training/skills areas
- Specific technical training in:
 - Professional cookery skills
 - Food and beverage service skills
 - Bartending skills
 - Housekeeping skills
 - Reception skills

- Food hygiene skills and practices
- Service delivery skills (customer care)
- Information and communications technology
- Supervisory development

2. Development of training programmes with supporting training manuals, in.

Programme Title	Manual Title*
1. Master Trainer development	Training Skills for Master Trainers
2. Sabaidee, Welcome – the Lao Host	Sabaidee, Welcome – the Lao Host
3. Hospitality skills (with five (5) ‘stand alone’ modules) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Professional cookery skills ▪ Food and beverage service skills ▪ Bartending skills ▪ Housekeeping skills ▪ Reception skills 	Hospitality Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Professional cookery skills ▪ Food and beverage service skills ▪ Bartending skills ▪ Housekeeping skills ▪ Reception skills
4. Food hygiene skills and practices	Targeting Hygiene
5. Information and Communications Technology	ICT in the Workplace
6. Supervisory development	Supervisor Development

*An audit of pre-existing manuals is included as **Annex A**.

Note: It is assumed that the Master Trainer Development programme, the Information and Communications Technology programme and the Supervisor Development programme together with their supporting training manuals will be developed once only and adapted to the requirements of the SMEs and Public Sector audience.

Deliverables

1. A portfolio of specially designed training programmes and supporting manuals customized to the tourism SME operating environment in Lao PDR for exclusive use by the Project:
 1. The Master Trainer Development Programme for SMEs
 2. The “Sabaidee, Welcome – the Lao Host” Customer care Programme
 3. Food Hygiene Programme
 4. The Hospitality Skills (modular) Programme
 5. Information and Communications Technology Programme
 6. The Supervisory Development Programme
2. Training of 40 Master Trainers on small-scale tourism and hospitality operations.
3. It is the goal of the STDP to upgrade the English language skills of those people working in the tourism sector therefore all training programmes and manuals need to be developed and delivered bi-lingually.

Note: Outline content for the various programmes (which is also the core content for the supporting training manuals) is attached as **Annex B**. This is provided as an

indicative reference only, and is not exhaustive; the contractor can amend and augment content as required.

Selection of the Implementation Agent

Lao PDR-based training institution(s) will be selected to host training activities independently or in partnership with GMS-based educational institutions, firms or individuals that have experience in training master trainers in the tourism sector. The specification of the organizational /person selected for this contract package should be compliant with the following:

Profile

- Is an existing vocational training and/or educational institution with at least 5 years of demonstrated experience in delivering tourism development training programmes.
- Is a recognized English language training provider.
- Has sufficient classrooms, accommodation and teaching facilities to deliver the specified training and demonstrate its commitment to improving the quality of its training facilities and programs.
- Has a cohort of suitably qualified and experienced staff with international origins and /or training.
- Has existing and/or potential partnership arrangements with GMS-based educational institutions who can supplement the international team.
- Can demonstrate capacity and capability to undertake the core activities of:
 1. developing training programmes and training manuals to publication standard;
 2. delivering hospitality training across the tourism SMEs;
 3. integrating bi-lingual teaching methodologies into all training programmes.

The appointee should hold a relevant qualification at higher degree at postgraduate level in hotel and/or catering education management, or equivalent. The appointee should also have a wide range of professional experience in the field of hotel and catering management.

Specific Organizational/Team Expertise Required

- Wide experience in hospitality/hotel education with a multi-disciplinary background at craft and management level;
- Wide experience in English language training to international examination level;
- Experience in industry based training delivery;
- Experience and expertise in the hospitality and tourism industry;
- Expansive operational experience encompassing all hospitality disciplines with an understanding of examination systems and hotel operations;
- Experience in programme and manual design preferably for the tourism sector;
- Excellent writing skills.

Skills and Demonstrated Competence

- Track record in all aspects of education/training organization and implementation;
- Significant experience in English language training;
- Extensive knowledge in hospitality and tourism particularly the SME sector;
- Effective communication, writing and presentation skills.

Annex A

Audit of Existing Materials

The research that informed this report indicated a dearth of appropriate training materials available in either the Lao language or in English. Most of the material available has been taken from other countries (mainly Thailand) and in some cases has been translated incorrectly. This audit indicates that training manuals need to be developed to underpin each training programme.

Generic Course Titles	Training Manual Available (in English)	Name of Existing Manual	Proposed Manual to be Developed
Master Trainer (PM1)	No	n/a	Training Skills
English language (PM2)		English for Eco-Guides	No one specific manual, all manuals will be bilingual
Service delivery skills (PM2)	No	n/a	Sabaidee, Welcome – the Lao Host
Operational technical skills (PM3)	No	n/a	Hospitality Skills
Food hygiene (PM3)	No	n/a	Targeting Hygiene
Information and communications technology (ICT) skills (PM3)	No	n/a	Getting Started in ICT
People management skills (PM5)	No	n/a	Supervisor Development
Product management skills (PM5)	No	n/a	Supervisor Development
Work performance skills (PM5)	No	n/a	Supervisor Development

Note: It is assumed that the Master Trainer Development programme, the Information and Communications Technology programme and the Supervisor Development programme together with their supporting training manuals will be developed once only and adapted to the requirements of the SMEs and Public Sector audience.

Annex B

Outline Content of Training Programmes and Supporting Manuals

Master Trainer Development Programme

Duration: 10 days
Participants: Senior Supervisors/Managers

Outline Content:

Part 1: Creating a Training Culture

- Understanding training
- Identifying training needs
- Planning for training
- The organizational training plan

Part 2: Strategies for Enhanced Learning

- Understanding how adults learn
- Different learning styles
- Instructional design strategies and tools
- Presentation skills

Part 3: Teaching Methodologies and Instructional Skills

- Giving a job talk
- Doing a demonstration
- Feedback and coaching
- Tailoring and improving delivery
- Dealing with difficult training situations
- Group training techniques
- Developing skills

Part 4: Testing Skills

- Measuring the impact of training
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the group training session

Part 5:

- **Stage 2: Creating the Training Skillsnet of Departmental Trainers**

Departmental Trainer Programme

Duration: 4-5 days
Participants: Department Supervisors from SMEs

Outline Content:

Part 1: Identifying Training Needs

Know your job
Know your department
Identifying training needs
Creating a departmental training plan

Part 2:

▪ **Operations Training Techniques**

Planning and preparing training sessions
Breaking tasks into easy-to-learn components
Effectively demonstrating practical elements of the job
Evaluating the effectiveness of a training sessions

Part 3:

▪ **Group Training Techniques**

Preparing and structuring presentations
Using visual aids effectively
Tailoring and improving delivery
Dealing with difficult training situations
Evaluating the effectiveness of the group training session

Part 4:

▪ **Stage 2: Implementing Training at Work**

Sabaidee, Welcome - the Lao Host Customer Care Programme

Duration: 3 days (2 day generic training + 1 day departmental application)
Participants: Mandatory for all employees (including Executive)

Outline Content:

- **Tourism Awareness**

Significance of the tourism industry to the Lao PDR economy
"Sabaidee, Welcome - the Lao Host" – a responsibility for all
Lao PDR – what we have to offer our guests

- **Service Excellence**

The value of excellent customer service
Providing a welcome in every guest encounter
Understanding the needs of all our guests
Cultural differences and guest expectations

- **Communication**

Communication across cultures
Effective listening
Telephone communication
Working together – teamwork across the tourism industry

- **Customer Care..... the Lao Way**

Planning the image
Professional grooming
Successful 'Customer Care'
Handling complaints and compliments
Dealing sensitively with disabilities and special needs customers:

- **Applications at Work**

Hospitality in the accommodation sector
Hospitality in the food service sector
Hospitality in the heritage and cultural sector
Hospitality in the travel agency, tour operations and travel sector
Hospitalable tour guides

The Hospitality Skills Programme (Operational Technical Skills Modules)

Each programme is developed and delivered as a 'stand alone' module.

Duration: 3 days (2 day generic training + 1 day departmental application)
Participants: Departmental staff

Food and Beverage Service Skills

1. Food and Beverage Service Operations

- Service operations
- Operational tasks
- Styles of service
- Health, hygiene and safety at work

2. Food and Beverage Product Knowledge

- Importance of product knowledge
- Know your Menu
- Alcoholic beverages
- Wines

3. Food Service – Technical Knowledge and Skills

- Preparation for service
- The menu
- Taking orders/placing orders
- Using a tray
- Carrying and clearing

4. Beverage Service – Technical Knowledge and Skills

- Serving non-alcoholic beverages
- Serving wine
- Serving other alcoholic beverages
- Cocktail presentation

5. Operational Activities

- Preparing customer bills
- Handling cash and credit cards

Bartending Skills

1. Operational Activities

- Setting up the bar for service
- Bar stocks
- Preparing garnishes and decorations

2. Bar Service

- Serving non-alcoholic beverages
- Serving wine
- Serving other alcoholic beverages

3. Cocktails

- Know your cocktail Menu
- Making cocktails
- Cocktail presentation

4. Operational Activities

- Preparing customer bills
- Handling cash and credit cards

Professional Cookery Skills

1. Menu Planning

- Menu formulation and design
- Dish popularity

2. Preparation / Techniques and Processes

- Practical application of core cookery skills and processes
- Use, care and evaluation of kitchen equipment for different purposes
- Skills development in the preparation of popular international dishes and traditional Lao cuisine
- Use of fresh and convenience foods
- Related theory

3. Contemporary Cuisine

- Commodities and equipment used in contemporary cuisine
- Preparation of contemporary dishes –vegetarian, Asian salads, sandwiches,

4. Pastry

- Fresh and convenience products related to pastry
- Equipment and techniques related to pastry
- Preparation of classical pastry products and desserts
- Pastry related theory

Reception Skills

1. Product Knowledge

- Organization of hotels and guest houses
- Organization and function of travel agents
- Role of reception

2. Communication

- Using the telephone effectively
- Communicating with guests, customers and colleagues

3. Reservations, Check-in and Registration

- Taking reservations
- Check in procedures
- Handling enquiries

4. Guest Check-out and Cashiering

- Methods of payment
- Preparing bills
- Check out procedures
- Handling cash and credit cards

5. Computer Systems

- Uses of computers in hotels and travel agents
- Applications related to job

Housekeeping Skills

1. Product Knowledge

- Type of tourist accommodation
- Organization of housekeeping department
- Cleaning equipment and chemicals

2. Effective Housekeeping Operations

- General rules of the quality of service for accommodation
- Cleaning practices
- Bedding, linen and laundry
- Operational procedures

3. Hygiene in Housekeeping

- Personal hygiene
- Work hygiene

4. Servicing Guestrooms

- Quality standards
- Cleaning the bedroom
- Cleaning the bathroom
-

Food Hygiene Programme

Duration: 3 days (2 day generic training + 1 day departmental application)
Participants: Mandatory for all food handlers

Outline Content:

- Importance of food hygiene
- Personal and work hygiene
- Food contamination and food poisoning
- Food delivery and storage
- Food preparation and cooking
- Food display and service
- Layout of food premises
- Pest control
- Cleaning and disinfection

Information and Communications Technology Skills

Duration: 3 - 5 days depending on level of participant
Participants: 3 levels of participant: Beginners, Intermediate, Advanced

Beginners

- Understanding ICT
- Using basic software packages
- Carrying out basic computer maintenance
- Applications software for the tourism and hospitality industry (GRS/PMS/etc.)

Intermediate

- Applications software for the tourism and hospitality industry (GRS/PMS/etc.)
- Database technology

Advanced

- Using software for statistical analysis (SPSS)
- Revenue and yield management
- Conducting basic on-line research

Supervisory Development Programme

Duration: 4 day
Participants: Supervisors
Outline Content:

- **Managing The Customer/Staff Relationship**

Customer expectations
Guest relations
National and international standards and trends
VIP's and dignitaries
Customer orientation
Selling strategies

- **Team Building**

Group development
Team building
Teamwork and organizational success
Teams in a multidisciplinary context
Teams in a multinational context
Problem solving and decision making
Self-assessment within a team

- **Setting Standards and Managing Performance**

Perception, personality and attitudes
Theories of motivation
Factors that determine motivation
Individual needs and organizational objectives
Understanding attitudes
Enhancing individual and group performance

- **Problem Solving and Decision Making**

Problem identification strategies
Root causes of a 'problem'
Creating solutions
Applying problem solving techniques

- **Total Quality Management**

The meaning of quality
Quality control, quality assurance, total quality management (TQM)
Importance of the customer
Standards
Cost implications of TQM
Measuring performance, continuous improvement
Empowerment of employees

3. Package 2: Public Sector Tourism Planning and Management

Background- GMS Sustainable Tourism Development Project in Lao PDR

The main problems confronting development of a sustainable tourism sector in the GMS countries concern the management of tourism growth rather than the promotion of growth in itself. The current situation in all GMS countries, including the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), is that the distribution of the benefits of tourism are highly concentrated in the main towns; natural and cultural heritage assets are threatened by inappropriate tourism use; quality standards and standards of hygiene, especially among small scale hospitality enterprises are low, making it difficult to attract higher spending tourists; public sector management capacities to plan, develop, market and manage the sustainable development of the tourism sector are weak; there is a lack of tourist information and support services; and the development of small and medium tourism enterprises is impeded by lack of clear laws and regulations and financial and technical support.

Therefore, actions are urgently needed to improve heritage management practices and implement a more inclusive approach to pro-poor tourism development that accelerates poverty reduction and reduces undesirable social impacts. There is also a need to develop protection infrastructure at natural, cultural and urban sites and to strengthen the sustainable management of tourism and upgrade service skills in the small to medium hospitality sector.

To address these and other tourism-related issues, the Lao PDR has received a grant from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to undertake the GMS Sustainable Tourism Development Project (STDP) from 2009-2014. The Lao National Tourism Administration (LNTA) is the executing agency responsible for the coordination, management and implementation of the project in cooperation with the 9 provinces of Champasak, Salavanh, Savannakhet, Vientiane Province, Houaphanh, Oudomxay, Sayabouli, Bokeo and Luang Namtha.

The main goal of the project is to contribute towards the sustainable socioeconomic development of Lao PDR focusing especially on poverty reduction, sustainable development and protection of the natural and cultural heritage and protection of vulnerable groups from exploitation. To achieve this goal the project seeks to enhance the protection and conservation of natural, cultural and urban heritage assets of importance for tourism; increase tourism's contribution to poverty reduction by expanding the traditional community-based tourism approach to include tourism-related supply and value chains interventions; improve the facilitation of tourism along the economic corridors by improving services and management of tourist attractions found there; raise public sector official's tourism management skills at the national, provincial, district and site level; improve service and hygiene standards among staff in small to medium hospitality enterprises; and enhance local private sector participation in small and medium tourism enterprise investment and operation.

There are 5 parts of the project:

Part 1.A: Biodiversity Conservation and Protection through Tourism at the Siphandone Wetland

Part 1.B: Urban Environment Protection and Management - Vang Vieng Town Waste Water Centralization and Treatment
Part 2: Pro-Poor Tourism Development in Salavanh, Vientiane Province, Houaphanh, Oudomxay, Sayabouli and Bokeo
Part 3: Facilitation of Tourism on the North-South (Part 3.A) and East-West (Part 3.B) Economic Corridors
Part 4: Human Resource Development (HRD) Component
Part 5: Institutional Strengthening and Implementation Assistance

The works outlined in this terms-of-reference are particular to Part 4 of the project and involve the provision of consultancy services to the LNTA to assist in the design of the project's Human Resource Development Action Plan and preparation of two HRD Implementation Support contract packages for the STDP in Lao PDR.

General Objectives

The objective of the STDP's HRD Component is to create a pool of master trainers in the areas of:

- small-scale tourism and hospitality operations
- public sector tourism planning and management

Under the first focus area, tourism and hospitality training skills of master trainers selected from predominately the private sector (and the public sector) will be upgraded. These master trainers will then go on to train trainers of staff working in tourism SMEs such as hotels and restaurants.

Under the second focus area, the STDP will train public officials working at the provincial, district, and village level as tourist site management trainers and trainers of pro-poor tourism planning and management.

Lao PDR-based training institution(s) will be selected to host training activities in each of the two focus areas in partnership with GMS-based educational institutions, firms or individuals that have experience in training master trainers in the tourism sector. One institution will focus on training master trainers in small-scale tourism and hospitality operation, while the other will train public officials in tourist site management and pro-poor tourism planning and management. Tendering processes for each contract package will comply with ADB's consultant qualification selection procedure. Each Lao training institution selected will receive modest STDP support to improve its facilities

Scope of the Consultancy

The HRD Action Plan proposed a number of priority measures to address the most urgent training needs of the sector, summarized as:

- Priority Measure 1: Creating a 'Skillsnet' of Trainers
- Priority Measure 2: Improving Front Line Hospitality
- Priority Measure 3: Skills Training Building the Right Skills-set
- Priority Measure 4: Supporting (selected) Tourism Training Institutions
- Priority Measure 5: Strengthening Private and Public Sector Management

Training for small-scale tourism and hospitality operations is included in all of the priority measures with the exception of priority measure 4 which focuses exclusively on supporting (selected) tourism training institutions.

The main components of the consultancy are to:

1. Develop the pre-determined portfolio of training programmes appropriate to the identified needs of the public sector tourism organizations.
2. Develop 'user friendly' training manuals as a learning resource to underpin the training.
3. Conduct, initially, a series of training methodologies and skills training programmes targeted at experienced hospitality and tourism personnel to equip this target audience with the skills to become Master Trainers for the public sector. Target: 50 persons. Thereafter additional training may be required to support the Master Trainers in the implementation and delivery of training for the sector.
4. Initiate the concept of bi-lingual training, that is, in English and Lao, to commence the process of upgrading the English language competencies in the sector.

Specific outcomes are to:

- Create a training culture within the tourism sector;
- Develop a cohort of Master Trainers specifically for the public sector tourism organizations;
- Promote the benefits of training and to install a training structure public sector tourism;
- Upgrade the capacity of tourism officials to manage the organization of tourism at national and provincial level;
- Enhance the skills and knowledge of tourism officials in modern management techniques;
- Improve work practices;
- Initiate supervisor development measures as a means to advance professionalism in tourism operations;
- Upgrade English language competency throughout the sector.

Services Required

Specific training and professional development programmes will be required for two public sector constituents namely:

1. Educators and trainers from
 - the National University of Laos (NUoL) Department of Tourism and Hotel Management, and
 - the Lao National Tourism Administration (LNTA) Hospitality and Tourism Training Centre
2. Senior officials from key public sector tourism organizations

The services required will include but may not be limited to:

- Developing training programmes (to meet identified needs) and accompanying training manuals to publication standard;
- Implementing the Master Trainer programme;

- Supporting the delivery of specific training programmes within the constituent areas;
- Installing bi-lingual, English and Lao, teaching methodologies into all training activities.

Specifically the contract package has two main components, the provision of training services in specific areas and the development of training programmes with supporting training manuals, summarized as:

1. Provision of training services for the public sector in

- Train the Trainer, training of Master Trainers
- Use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT)
- English language specific to the identified training/skills areas

2. Development of training programmes and appropriate supporting training manuals in the general areas of:

- Development of hospitality and tourism educators
- Destination Planning and Marketing
- Destination Management: Environment, Infrastructure, Transport
- Product Management Skills
- People Management Skills
- Work Performance Skills

Identification of specific training needs has yet to be finalized, however preliminary research indicates that the range of training and support materials required is in the areas of:

Programme Title	Manual Title*
1. Master Trainer Development (PM1)	Training Skills for Master Trainers
2. Information and Communications Technology (PM3)	ICT in the Workplace
3. Development of Hospitality and Tourism Educators (PM4)	To be decided
4. Destination Planning and Marketing (PM5)	To be decided
5. Destination Management: Environment, Infrastructure, Transport (PM5)	To be decided
6. Product Management Skills (PM5)	Supervisor Development
7. People Management Skills (PM5)	Supervisor Development
8. Work Performance Skills (PM5)	Supervisor Development

Note: It is assumed that the Master Trainer Development programme, the Information and Communications Technology programme and the Supervisor Development programme together with their supporting training manuals will be developed once only and adapted to the requirements of the SMEs and Public Sector audience.

*An audit of pre-existing manuals is included as **Annex C**.

Deliverables

- A portfolio of specially designed training programmes and supporting manuals customized to the needs of hospitality and tourism educators, public sector tourism planning and management officials including but not limited to:
 1. The Master Trainer Development Programme for Public Sector
 2. Information and Communications Technology Programme
 3. Development of Hospitality and Tourism Educators and Trainers
 4. Development of hospitality and tourism educators
 5. Destination Planning and Marketing
 6. Destination Management: Environment, Infrastructure, Transport
- Training of 50 Master Trainers on public sector tourism planning and management organizations..
- It is the goal of the STDP to upgrade the English language skills of those people working in the tourism sector therefore all training programmes and manuals need to be developed and delivered bi-lingually.

Note: Outline content for the various programmes (which is also the core content for the supporting training manuals) is attached as **Annex D**. This is provided as an indicative reference only, and is not exhaustive; the contractor can amend and augment content as required.

Selection of the Implementation Agent

Lao PDR-based training institution(s) will be selected to host training activities independently or in partnership with GMS-based educational institutions, firms or individuals that have experience in training master trainers in the tourism sector. The specification of the organizational /person selected for this contract package should be compliant with the following:

Profile

- Is an existing educational institution with at least 5 years of demonstrated experience in delivering tourism development training programmes.
- Has wide range of professional experience in the field of tourism and education. management
- Has the capacity to deliver English language training programmes or to support the delivery of bi-lingual training initiatives.
- Has sufficient classrooms, accommodation and teaching facilities to deliver the specified training and demonstrate its commitment to improving the quality of its training facilities and programs.
- Has a cohort of suitably qualified and experienced staff with international origins and /or training, some of which hold relevant qualifications at higher degree/ postgraduate level tourism education management, or equivalent.
- Has existing and/or potential partnership arrangements with GMS-based educational institutions who can supplement the international team.
- Can demonstrate capacity and capability to undertake the core activities of:
 1. developing training programmes and training manuals to publication standard;

2. delivering training across public sector tourism organizations and educators;
3. integrating bi-lingual teaching methodologies into all training programmes.

Specific Organizational/Team Expertise Required

- Expertise in tourism management and development;
- Expertise in 'best practice' educational technologies;
- Strong capability in English language training;
- Experience in organizational analysis and training delivery;
- Knowledge of 'best practice' from developed tourism economies;
- Demonstrated ability in project management with multiple stakeholders;
- Experience in programme and manual design preferably for the tourism sector;
- Excellent writing skills.

Skills and Demonstrated Competence

- Track record in all aspects of education/training organization and implementation;
- Significant experience in delivering training to special interest groups;
- Extensive knowledge of tourism both as an area of academic study and a functional discipline particularly in Lao PDR;
- Effective communication, writing and presentation skills.

Annex C

Audit of Existing Materials

The research that informed this report indicated a dearth of appropriate training materials available in either the Lao language or in English. Most of the material available has been taken from other countries (mainly Thailand) and in some cases has been translated incorrectly. This audit indicates that training manuals need to be developed to underpin each training programme.

Generic Course Titles	Training Manual Available (in English)	Name of Existing Manual	Proposed Manual to be Developed
Master Trainer (PM1)	No	n/a	Training Skills
English language (PM2)		English for Eco-Guides	No one specific manual, all manuals will be bilingual
Information and communications technology (ICT) skills (PM3)	No	n/a	Getting Started in ICT
Development of Hospitality and Tourism Educators (PM4)	No	n/a	To be decided
Destination Planning and Marketing (PM5)	No	Assorted manuals in Lao language 1. Producing and Selling Handicrafts to Tourists at the Village Level – A Guide for Local Producers 2. Interpreting Your Local Knowledge – A Manual For Local Tour Guides (2005) 3. Designing and Operating an Eco-Lodge in Lao PDR (2005)	To be decided
Destination Management: Environment, Infrastructure, Transport (PM5)	No	Designing and Operating an Eco-Lodge in Lao PDR (2005)	To be decided
People management skills (PM5)	No	n/a	Supervisor Development
Product management skills (PM5)	No	n/a	Supervisor Development
Work performance skills (PM5)	No	n/a	Supervisor Development

Note: It is assumed that the Master Trainer Development programme, the Information and Communications Technology programme and the Supervisor

Development programme together with their supporting training manuals will be developed once only and adapted to the requirements of the SMEs and Public Sector audience.

Annex D

Outline Content of Training Programmes and Supporting Manuals

Development of Hospitality and Tourism Educators

- Curriculum design and development
- Developing lecture plans
- Researching and preparing lectures
- Developing appropriate teaching materials
- Active teaching methodologies
- Adult learning styles/behaviour
- Presentation skills and teaching aids
- Assessment and evaluation of learning

Destination Planning and Marketing

- Destination planning and development
- Destination marketing and promotion
- Events and conferences
- Tourism information and management
- International trends

Destination Management: Environment, Infrastructure, Transport

- Finance
- Environmental issues
- Environmental planning at destination level
- Destination transport and infrastructure management
- Tourism data and statistics management and interpretation

Product Management Skills

- Product development and quality
- Quality and service in tourism
- Tourism support services

People Management Skills

- Human resources planning
- Supervisory development
- Training skills
- Teamwork
- People management

Work Performance Skills

- Delegation
- Motivation
- Monitoring
- Control