

**Review of the Organizational Assessment and  
Organizational Development Strategy for  
Luang Namtha Provincial Tourism Office**



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## ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS REPORT

ADB	Asian Development Bank
APPA	Appreciative Participatory Planning and Action
CBT	Community-based tourism
CBE	Community-based ecotourism
EDC	Enterprise Development Consultant Company
HRD	Human resource development
HRM	Human resource management
IOM	Integrated Organizational Model
IT	Information technology
LNTA	Lao National Tourism Administration
LPTO	LuangNamtha Provincial Tourism Office
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
MOU	Memorandum of understanding
MTDP	Mekong Tourism Development Project
TOR	Terms of Reference
OTOP	One district (Tam bon) one product
PTO	Provincial Tourism Office
PTPU	Provincial Tourism Police Unit
SNV	Netherlands Development Organisation
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunity, Threats
TNA	Training needs assessment
TOT	Training of trainer
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

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## **Preface**

The Luang Namtha Provincial Tourism Office was established in 1995, however did not begin normal operations until 1998 because of the small number of tourists and lack of activity in the provincial tourism industry until the late 1990's. Today, as in the past, Luang Namtha has great potential for tourism. The province has ethnic diversity, the Nam Ha National Protected Area, and land borders with China and Myanmar. The north-south economic corridor passes right through the province, which is located roughly half-way between Kunming, P.R. China and Bangkok, Thailand. Luang Namtha's airport is presently being upgraded to an international-standard facility, with both road works to the north-south economic corridor and airport construction expected to be completed in late 2007. The number of tourist arrivals to the province and corresponding investment in the tourism sector is set to explode, thus now more than ever, it is critically important to the strengthen local human resources to properly manage tourism, to ensure that it contributes to poverty alleviation and conservation of the natural and cultural heritage that underpins the provincial tourism industry.

## **Background**

The Luang Namtha Tourism Office, (PTO) under supervision of the Lao National Tourism Administration, has been implementing “The Lao National Tourism Administration – UNESCO Nam Ha Ecotourism Project” (hereinafter called the project) since 1999 (Phase I, 1999-2002 & Phase II, 2005 – 2007) with cooperation from Provincial Department of Agriculture and Forestry and Provincial Department of Information and Culture. Nam Ha Ecotourism Project: Phase II is supported by grant assistance from the Government of New Zealand with in-kind funding provided by the Government of Lao P.D.R. Technical assistance and monitoring is being furnished by the project’s executing agency, the Office of the UNESCO Regional Advisor for Culture in Asia and the Pacific.

The project’s main objectives are to strengthen the capacities of provincial authorities and the private sector to regulate, coordinate and expand sustainable community-based ecotourism (CBE) programmes in Luang Namtha; use CBE as a tool for conservation, rural development and poverty alleviation; provide the Luang Namtha Provincial Tourism Office (PTO), local guides and private sector operators with essential training in CBE management and operations and to increase the number of women and ethnic minorities from both the public and private sector that are trained in the development and management of CBE activities.

Prior to commencement of Phase II, there was a situational analysis and review of the project document conducted by SNV in late 2004. Among other areas, this review found that the situation regarding tourism and human resource management in the Luang Namtha Provincial Tourism Office had seriously deteriorated from 2002 - 2004. Thus two of the main recommendations were that the internal organization and human resource capacity of the PTO office be strengthened to ensure the long-term sustainability of initiatives that were introduced by the Phase I project.

Although, Phase II has been implemented for about one year and some progress has been made, strengthening the PTO’s capacity still remains a crucial and challenging task. Therefore, the Office of the UNESCO Regional Advisor for Culture in Asia and the Pacific and the Lao National Tourism Administration has contracted Enterprise & Development Consultant Co., Ltd (EDC) to carry out a review of the organizational capacity of the Luang Namtha PTO and assist the PTO develop a staff training program and Human Resource Management Strategy aimed at improving the tourism, cultural and natural heritage management capacity of PTO staff of the Luang Namtha Provincial Tourism Office.

## **Introduction**

The review of the organizational assessment, training need assessment and design of a staff training programme and human resource management plan for the Luang Namtha Provincial Tourism Office (hereinafter called the assignment) was conducted from mid July until September 2006 by a team of consultants from EDC.

This assignment aims mainly to:

- Review and update the Organizational Assessment of the PTO performed by SNV in 2004.
- Perform a Training Need Assessment and design of a Staff Training Programme for the PTO and Provincial Tourist Police.
- Create a Human Resource Management Plan for the Luang Namtha PTO

This report comprises two main sections. Section I provides results of the organizational re-assessment of the Provincial Tourism Office in Luang Namtha and Section II documents the organizational development strategic plan of the PTO. Section II consists of five main parts. Part 1 provides a comprehensive organizational strategy, including vision, mission, goal and

strategy; PTO structure, internal and external communication strategy, human resource management and development strategy and training plan for PTO staff. Part 2 highlights the gender equality promotion strategy. Part 3 presents a strategy for further development of Provincial and District's Tourism Information Centers. Part 4 gives the strategy for cooperation with other stakeholders and with the private sector. Conclusion and recommendations are provided in the last part, which is part 5.

## ***Methodology***

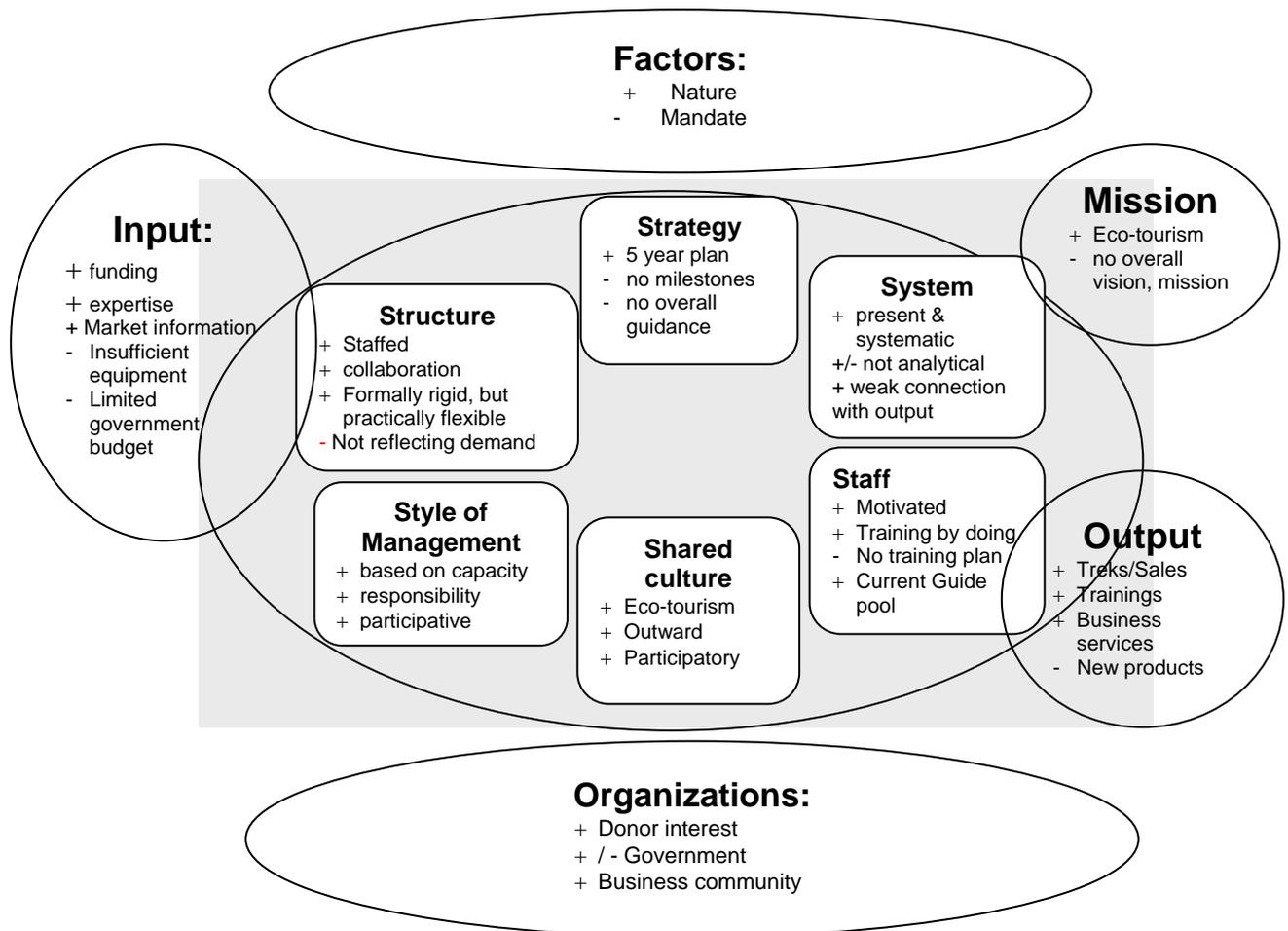
For the purposes of reviewing the existing organizational assessment, crafting a HRD strategy and plan, including a training plan, the team has mainly employed secondary data review, semi-structured interview, focus group discussion and workshops. Prior to the actual assessment exercise the team reviewed relevant documents provided by the Nam Ha Project team. The team made two visits to Luang Namtha in which interviews, workshops and consultation with the PTO's director and staffs were conducted.

For organizational assessment purposes, the consultants followed the Integrated Organizational Model (IOM) model that was used during the first organizational assessment conducted by SNV in 2004 as basic framework. Based on the model, the consultants have designed guiding questions for gathering updated information (please see annex 2: List of Guiding Questions) during interview and workshops with PTO staff and some stakeholders.

The team has formulated the strategic plan for PTO in participatory way. Three one day workshops have been organized. The first workshop involved mostly PTO staff. In this workshop all staff contributed to a SWOT analysis of the Luang Namtha PTO, as well as contributed to the PTO's draft a strategic plan for 2006 – 2010. The second and third workshops were organized for presenting and discussing the results of the initial review and detailed draft strategic plan, HRD Strategy and Training Plan with PTO staff and stakeholders respectively. The comments gathered during these workshops were considered and most incorporated into the final report.

## **Part I: Updated Organizational Assessment**

Generally the results of this “Organizational Assessment Review” indicate that since the first organizational assessment carried out by SNV in 2004, the Provincial Tourism Office of Luang Namtha province has improved in many ways, though some issues are in the process of being addressed and some additional challenges have been identified. Figure 1 below shows the new updated IOM of PTO with current information.



## I.1 Updated institutional review of provincial stakeholders

Several concerned organizations such as the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, Department of Information and Culture, Tourism Police, Department of Commerce and Industry, Lao Women's Union, Department of Planning and Investment and tourism businesses have been interviewed and consulted to find out their opinion about the tourism sector in Luang Namtha, and specifically to find out about cooperation between them and PTO. These stakeholders, at a later stage, participated in the stakeholder workshop which was organized with the aim of further improving the PTO's external communication approaches as well as its collaboration with stakeholders.

It was found that most of the stakeholders above, especially tourism-related organizations, indicated that they have a good and close relationship with the PTO. The PTO communicates formally and when urgent informally about their activities and plans. The PTO often encourages participation of many stakeholders in their activities.

## I.2 Output: products & services

To date, the services and products that the PTO/Tourism Information center is providing are similar to those offered during the first review in 2004. They include: i) arranging treks and providing general information; ii) guide training; and iii) business licensing. In addition, PTO has been trying to meet the demand by expanding scope of its services to a certain extent.

- The PTO has attempted to position itself as an effective organization, and the tourism sector as an important industry, by promoting itself and the tourism sector on a local radio programme one time per week. The PTO has also improved its services, becoming more efficient and providing faster services, for instance, it is now much faster to issue/obtain a tourism-related business licenses.
- As recommended in the first organizational review regarding the output (products and services), so far what PTO has been achieved was that PTO has initiated regular meetings and integrating joint activities with ADB, GTZ and EU funded activities. In fact, since the EU MPDLC is ending the PTO has taken over the tasks of oversight the operation and management of Vieng Phoukha tourism office. The PTO while implementing the project has meeting with GTZ funded project every six month.
- Regarding new tourism products, the PTO has several new ideas about the new product development and open for private sector to involve in developing new products. For instance, the PTO is planning to build a night market for handicraft products, give opportunities to Green Discovery company to take part in tourism service provision for which they have developed several new products and treks.

### **I.3 Input: Staff, Technical advice, funding and (market and legal) information**

In general the PTO has relatively sufficient inputs. Since the Nam Ha Ecotourism Project Phase II has started, PTO could leverage more inputs.

- It was reported that there are sufficient technical advice from national and international experts and technical support from LNTA, when needed.
- Donor funding is also available, which enable PTO to implement necessary activities.
- Another positive aspect in terms of input pointed out by the PTO's staff is that there is now good office facilities with a good surrounding environment.

The challenges that PTO is still facing are:

- There is an insufficient number of staff.
- Some of the existing staff do not have educational background directly related to their work, while having limited working experience in tourism.
- Office equipment is insufficient, for instance computers.
- The government budget for PTO is still limited.

### **I.4 Strategy**

The PTO has its own five year plan, annual plan, bi-annual, quarterly and monthly plan. Most of the staff have been informed generally about the five year plan, upon which the annual plan has been developed. Under the new management, the plans of Nam Ha project and of ADB supported project are integrated with annual plan of PTO. The annual plan was developed with all staff. The bi-annual, quarterly and monthly plans have been developed from the bottom up, meaning the staff drafts the plans and then submits them to the director. Thus, it appears that the staff have ownership of these plans.

However, until now the most of the plans are for operations or specific activities and contain very little strategic aspects. The staff therefore, very much focus on day to day activities. They have only a general, rather weak idea about the mandate of the PTO, its contribution to socio-economic development of the province, for instance contribution to poverty reduction, conservation of natural resources and culture. To date, there is no specific strategic plan for PTO yet. Thus, when they were asked, the staff are not aware of what is the vision, mission, targets/objectives and strategy specific to the PTO to develop itself and guide its staff in the same direction. The training plan, HRM&D strategy, including performance appraisal and management have not yet been formulated as suggested by the first review.

The task of crafting the strategic plan, including these aspects is included in this assignment as mentioned earlier. The PTO's strategic plan, training plan, communication strategy, and HRM&D strategy have been developed and presented in the following sections.

## **I.5 Structure**

Currently the PTO's official structure is the same organizational structure documented during the first review which was approved by the Provincial Government. There are still 14 staff, of which 3 staff have been recruited as permanent staff. It was found that some units and divisions within this the structure are not in line with the structure of LNTA. However, forcing a structure that is in line with LNTA would at this time reduce the PTO's management flexibility. The current organizational structure is presented in section II part 2. In fact, since the new director has assumed his work he has reassigned staff new job description and reallocates some staff to new units. The staff is relatively satisfied with their newly assigned areas of work. Yet the new tasks and responsibilities have not been officially approved by the LNTA. The PTO does, however, maintain a high spirit of teamwork, job-rotation, sharing responsibilities and information sharing.

The issues that the PTO is still facing or some of which are currently tackling are:

- The number of staff is apparently not sufficient.
- Since the tasks and responsibilities are newly reallocated and have not yet been officially recognized staff are not fully confident to take full responsibility in their new roles.
- Up until very recently, there was no PTO deputy director who can help manage the office and make decisions. This placed decision making solely on the director, thus it sometimes causes delays, especially when the director is away.

## **I.6 Systems**

The operation of the PTO is rather systematic, mostly based on work plans that are agreed in bi-annual, quarterly and monthly meetings and follow tasks that have been assigned to every one. Administration and document archives are still systematic and well maintained. Human resource management has been improved a great deal, especially reassignment of responsibilities to staff according to their competence. Up to the time of this review, there are still other aspects of human resource management that have to be improved, such as performance appraisal, reward system, etc. It was also accepted by the staff that they are still not strong in analysis.

To recommendation from the first review that there should be working manual for the PTO, it was found that at this office it is not necessary yet. That is because the organization is rather small. It was indicated that merely good organizational structure, job description and internal and external communication are in place would help PTO works systematically and smoothly and avoid duplication.

Financial management is currently transparent. The new director is happy to share with the team its income and expenditure, including the village development fund which the PTO is managing under the supervision of the provincial governor who approves the disbursement/spending from the fund. So far the village development fund has been used for developing and maintaining some infrastructure in target villages for instance: supporting the clearance/cleaning of Poum Pouk Stupa, contributed to building bridges, supporting organizing study tours for villagers and support for villages that are in need buying necessary equipment for their guesthouses.

Issues for further consideration are:

- To develop a Management Information System including central document storage and electronic information system in computers that is accessible to every one and it is used for operation and decision making. This will help to increase the effectiveness of the PTO's work.

- Increase capacity in strategic financial management of the management of the PTO which will help improve the management of PTO.

## **I.7 Staff and their skills**

PTO staff who have been evaluated by the first review are one of the office's biggest assets and are even more enthusiastic and motivated now. Even though most of the PTO staff have educational backgrounds that does not directly related to tourism, they like to learn and love their jobs. They are prepared to contribute fully to implementing their tasks. Many staff have talents that are suitable to the tasks assigned by the director, which is a great asset that should help them develop themselves to become professionals in the future. For instance, some staff have talent to be a good trainer, or competency in managing and coordinating with tourism businesses, who are main clients using the services of PTO. With regard to the recommendations of the previous organizational review regarding the job descriptions, up until the time of this assignment, the PTO had not improved its job descriptions yet. However, the job descriptions are being studied, drafted and communicated during this study. This study is also drafting a strategy for human resource management and development, including a training need assessment and training plan for PTO, which is presented in the section 5 and 6 below.

## **I.8 Style of management**

Under management of new director, the PTO has friendly and dynamic working atmosphere. The new director is well accepted and known as a performance oriented and hands-on manager. What is appreciated most with the new management by the staff is that the director has reallocate tasks and responsibility of the staff which relevant to their strengths and interest.

The management is mainly based on the activity plan identified and agreed upon, with close follow up and consultation. The communication and coordination are rather simple, informal and rather effective. Every month there is a monthly meeting in which feedback is presented and a sharing of lessons learnt/experiences. Future plans are usually formulated in these meetings. However, management issues that persist are related to delays in decision making. This is because in absence of a deputy director, the decision making was centered with only the director of the PTO. There is also no head of each section officially confirmed by LNTA which also means that there is no division of authority/level of decision making. This issue has been taken into consideration of the team and is one of the bases for drafting internal and external communication strategy. Recently, one new deputy director of the PTO has been assigned and dispatched to the office, so problems with decision making are starting to get tackled. Units in the PTO have been clearly defined and tasks have been allocated and job descriptions have been defined which are presented in part II below.

# **Part II: Organization Development Strategy**

## **II.1 Section 1: PTO's Strategic Plan 2006-2010**

As mentioned earlier in Section I (Review of Organizational Assessment) the Luang Namtha PTO has been operating under general direction of Luang Namtha province's policy and socio-economic plan and fulfilling its mandates assigned from NTA. It was realized that a clearer strategy specific to PTO can bind and motivate PTO staff to a greater extent, while giving clear direction to PTO management. After reviewing the PTO state of affairs, PTO staff and leadership by the director, the team of consultants and PTO staff have developed a draft strategic plan for 2006-2010. They spent one whole day to review internal and external situation of PTO using SWOT analysis. Based on the result of SWOT analysis, a strategic plan to guide

the management of the PTO has been brainstormed. The team of consultants, then later on, worked together with the director of PTO to finalize the strategic plan.

## **1. Future direction**

### **Vision**

The Luang Namtha Provincial Tourism Office is able to promote and develop the tourism sector in Luang Namtha, boost the annual number of tourists arrivals in Luang Namtha to meet the annual targets set by the National Tourism Authority in order to reduce poverty and contribute to the protection of the cultural and natural resources.

### **Mission**

By 2010 the LNT PTO will be well known as a highly effective organization, providing fast and good service. Society will acknowledge that the PTO has a crucial role in contributing to socio-economic development in Luang Namtha from tourism related services.

### **Objectives:**

- By the end of 2006 the PTO has good organizational structure that is comprehensive and in line with the organizational structure of LNTA. The office structure is staffed with sufficient number of qualified staff as necessary. The tasks and responsibilities have been divided and reallocated accordingly.
- By 2009 the HRM&D system of the PTO has improved in a way that its staff been trained and upgraded according to their needs. The staff are more capable. By then the staff are even more committed and motivated, since the appropriate and performance based reward system is operational. Thus the staff are able to perform better, resulting in better service delivery. In other words, the HRM&D strategy designed in the section 4 and 5 below is well functioning and implemented.
- By 2008 the PTO's internal and external communication strategy, which is specified in details in section 3 below, is well functioning. There are systematic and effective working methods, which are easy to follow and enable staff to work and make decision faster. PTO by then has modern communication technology, enables staff to obtain more information. The new communication strategy and system enables the PTO to coordinate with stakeholders faster and gain more cooperation from them. With regard to external communication, the PTO is able to develop marketing materials and market tourism products of Luang Namtha in many ways and through different channels.
- By 2010 the PTO has sufficient equipment and working facilities and they are well maintained.
- By 2010 the success of district tourism offices in Muang Sing and Vieng Phoukha has been replicated in other districts, in other words, two new district tourism offices have been established and are functioning well.

### **Strategy:**

- Continue to maintain simple and effective internal communication
- Create Staff Performance Appraisal system
- Recruit staff suitable to the position
- Promulgate and implement civil servant's regulation
- Upgrade staff based on identified needs and their background
- Advertise and make more intensive marketing and communication externally about PTO's mandates
- Organize network meetings with stakeholders
- Disseminate information about tourism via mass media
- Organize annual events at the end of each year, whereby concerned stakeholders are invited to participate and share experiences

- Promote additional tourism businesses in three districts: Namtha district, Long district and Nale district by supporting the private sector to participate in tourism development. Once tourism in those districts has been developed the district and provincial authority will see the necessity of setting up the district tourism office and allocate staff to those offices.

## **II.2 Section 2: Structure and functions**

The team has documented the organizational structure of the PTO which is not very different from the previous one. The division of the units is now in line with LNTA guidelines. The structure is still hierarchical. Thus in order to ensure that the staff understand their functions and scope of their responsibilities, detailed job description and communication strategies have been identified below. The organizational structure of the PTO is shown in annex 3.

### **II.2.1. Job descriptions for all positions (existing and planned) within Luang the Namtha PTO**

Since October 2005, the PTO has changed the director and some other positions including a revision of roles and responsibilities of staff. In order to make the tasks and responsibilities adequate to staff capacities and experience, the new director of the PTO has revised the roles and job descriptions for all positions in accordance with the organizational guidelines of the Lao National Tourism Administration, adjusted to fit the current situation of the Luang Namtha PTO.

#### **The role of PTO:**

The main role of the PTO is to assist the governor in developing the tourism sector in the province. In addition, the PTO will provide technical support to the tourism industry under the guidance and supervision of Lao National Tourism Administration based on the existing rules and regulations.

#### **The main tasks and responsibilities of the PTO:**

- Implement the plans; follow laws and orders and guidelines on tourism administration and development set by LNTA.
- Coordinate and collaborate with key stakeholders involved and local authorities to conduct field surveys, data collection and compilation in order to develop and upgrade tourist attraction to
- Promote Lao culture and conserve the heritage and nature of the province.
- Coordinate with relevant stakeholders in considering applications for establishing a tourism business in the province and submit it to LNTA for permission based on the article No. 62 of the present law or make an approval themselves according to the division of management responsibilities.
- Conduct capacity development training activities for local personnel on tourism.
- Coordinate with relevant stakeholders in doing monitoring, giving warnings, imposing fines or canceling a tourism operation license.
- Provide a report to LNTA and the provincial governor about implementation of tourism management and development on a regular basis.
- Cooperate with international agencies and other stakeholders on tourism related work as assigned by the government.
- Undertake other tasks defined by the law or assigned by LNTA.
- Collection of provincial tourism data, such as statistics on tourist arrivals (both local and foreign), hotels, guesthouses, restaurants, tourist sites etc., to be used for the analysis and evaluation of the tourism development outcomes and future planning of the province.

## **II.2.2 Job description for all positions (existing and planned) within the Luang Namtha Provincial Tourism Police Unit (PTPU)**

- Referring to the definition of role and responsibilities of Provincial Tourism Police Unit (PTPU) No. 102 dated 06/12/2004;
- Based on the last two discussion meetings with the staff of PTPU in July and September 2006 about their existing job profile, work performance, organisational structure and coordination with PTO and other stakeholders concerned.

The study team and PTO, using the inputs received, has redesigned job descriptions for all existing positions in the Luang Namtha PTPU as follows:

### **Roles of the Luang Namtha PTPU**

PTPU reports to the provincial immigration, security and defense offices, takes care of tourism related activities, coordinates and collaborates with PTO and other government agencies on formulating a strategy and action plan, defines approaches and sets measures to ensure and maintain the social order, security and safety to promote the tourism industry.

### **Tasks and responsibilities of Luang Namtha PTPU**

- Facilitate and ensure safety of life and property of the visitors;
- Set policies, rules and regulations to ensure safety and security for promoting tourism industry;
- Have good understanding of the government policies, rules and regulations and action plans (short-term and long term) and apply it in practices;
- Conduct educational and political training for staff to make sure that they understand the government's policies and strategies clearly;
- Coordinate with key stakeholders to compile statistical information of tour companies, hotels, guesthouses, restaurants, entertainments and tourist sites in order to monitor the tourism and hospitality industry;
- Patrol at the tourism sites, border checkpoints, bus stations and other tourism related areas to ensure safety and order for visitors;
- Conduct initial investigations for incidents occurred in the tourism sector to address the problems based on the government's regulations and laws.
- Collect and provide information on the tourism policies to visitors, tourism businesses and communities;
- Coordinate with key stakeholders, conduct surveys, data collection and compilation, and develop plans for the protection, conservation and renovation of tourist sites (cultural, historical and natural) in the province;
- Participate in the business start up licensing process for tourism businesses (background check);
- Give a warning and fine or cancel the operation of tour operators, hotels, guesthouses, restaurants and resorts for violating the rules and regulations on tourism and in accordance with the Prime Minister's Office decree No. 1150, 625, 159;
- Invite tour operators, hotels, guesthouses, restaurants or other tourist businesses to participate in training courses, discussion meetings, planning workshops, forums and information sharing events organised by the PTPU.

## **II.3 Section 3: Internal and External Communication**

### **II.3.1 Internal communication**

Internal communication is an important element for achieving organization's goal and objectives, to ensure that all employees are motivated to perform better and put in maximum

effort, manager should clearly communicate the action plan to every individual on the regular basis.

### ***Method of communication***

The communication methods are as following:

- Organize meetings to inform action plans and activities to all staff
- Assign activities to each section in the organization to be responsible for
- Prioritize the activities and set implementation plans
- All sections should coordinate with each other when implementing activities to make sure that all activities are implemented smoothly
- PTO Director closely follows up and monitor implementation of the activities to achieve set goals
- Report progress of activities to the PTO Director
- Organize meeting to review the activities and share lessons learnt
- PTO's management should provide opportunities to the staff for consultation at any time when needed and should have participatory leadership style, willing to listen and accept comments and feedbacks from the staff.

### **II.3.2 External communication**

The external communication in the future should:

- Disseminate information to stakeholders through various forms of media
- Report progress activities to the provincial cabinet and the National Tourism Administration regularly

### ***Method***

- Organize stakeholders workshop on tourism related topics at least twice a year
- Coordinate with stakeholders when implementing the project activities
- Disseminate information about tourism through provincial meeting in order to improve the understanding and raise awareness about tourism.
- Report about tourism activities through local radio programme one a week
- Provide information on tourism development and promotion through mass media

## **II.4 Section 4: Human resource management for PTO**

### **II.4.1 Staff recruitment**

#### ***a) Staff recruitment issues***

- In the past, recruitment did not fit to the job description, resulting in low performance.
- The recruitment process did not follow the decree on government civil servants

#### ***b) Future staff recruitment strategy***

- The recruitment should be based on the requirements of the job description
- Try to recruit candidates with relevant educational background
- Try to recruit the right and qualified candidates, preferably who have talent, with good personalities and attitude.
- Provide opportunities for ethnic and female candidates
- Other additional criteria that have to be followed are of those indicated in the decree on civil servants.

### **II.4.2 Staff motivation and promotion**

#### ***a) Salary***

- Follow the decree on civil servants
- Observe the rule of the government on the terms of service

- Reduce the operational and administrative costs, for instance, water, electricity, telephone, petrol, printer ink and by using recycle paper; and utilize this budget to remunerate/reward the staff.
- Give equal opportunity for all staff to participate in field trip, workshop and seminar as a reward.

#### **b) Treating people fairly**

Treating employees fairly is one important strategy to motivate people. All employees prefer to work in a fair organization rather than in one where there is favoritism and bias. Fair treatment can be considered as one of motivational factors that influence work performance. PTO staff should feel that there is an atmosphere of fairness, facilitated by the PTO management.

In the future the PTO management should:

- Work closely with all staff, directing and helping when they face a problem
- Take care all employees equally and create family atmosphere to help them feel as a part of the PTO's family.
- Organize team building activities regularly, to strengthen internal relationship
- Encourage transparent working system and team work, avoiding any action that will cause internal conflict.
- Define and respect decision making authority of the subordinates and encourage them to participate in the decision making process when necessary.

#### **c) Career path support**

To retain valued employees in the organization, the PTO management should:

- Conduct regular training course for all staff to have them understand internal policy and to familiarize them with the government decree on civil servants and regulations as well as to understand their future roles.
- Organize regular tourism awareness workshop to increase staff understanding about the future trends of the tourism industry.
- Give equal opportunity for all staff to improve their skill, knowledge and ability.

#### **d) Working environment**

Working environment is another important dimension to look at. It has an effect on individual's performance, and should cover at least basic needs in the workplace, provide adequate security, promote self-fulfillment and comradeship. Furthermore it can also affect the morale of the group work and its achievement. To improve the working environment at the PTO, the management should set up sound policy to:

- Maintain good working atmosphere and team work, base on group making decision and put forward to individual responsibility.
- Control noise pollution within the office it self, especially during working hour
- Maintain cleanliness of the office space and office ground, and control office temperature and good access road to the office.
- Equip necessary office equipment and vehicle for staff
- Build up sense of ownership towards office equipment and office vehicle, to ensure proper use and good maintenance.

#### **e) Time flexibility**

The current situation at the PTO showed that employees are likely to choose their own working hours, within certain limitations. To solve this issues properly, managers should:

- Print out working hour and place it on the office' entrance or on the front door of each PTO building. Working hours should be based on the government's official hours.
- Inform all staff to switch on their mobile phone during working hours to help facilitate communication as well as to help solving problems that may arise during the day.

- The divisions or sections that have regular and direct contact with clients such as tour companies, hotels, guesthouses and restaurants, need to come to work on time, while other sections that do not have regular and direct contact with clients, employees may vary their working schedules, yet ensuring fulfillment/accomplishment of their tasks and responsibilities.
- Organize regular meeting to disseminate rules and regulations on government employee management.
- In case of urgent personal or office engagement that would cause significant lateness, the staff should inform administrative section or their respective section about their delay.

## II.5. Section 5: Human resource development

### II.5.1 Human resource development plan of the PTO

Base on the current organization structure, more staff is needed to fill up vacant positions. The number of staff needed is shown in the table below:

**Table 1. The existing and required number of staff by 2010**

No.	Section	Existing	Needed	Total
1	Board of Director	2	1	3
2	Administration & Finance	3	1	4
3	Planning & Cooperation	1	2	3
4	Tourism & Hotel Management	2	1	3
5	Tourism Promotion & Marketing	2	1	3
6	Tourism Training	1	2	3
	<b>Grand total:</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>19</b>

**Table 2: The existing and required educational background of staff**

No.	Section	Diploma		High Diploma		Bachelor & Master	
		Ext	Req	Ext	Req	Ext	Req
1	Board of Director	0	0	0	0	2	1
2	Administration & Finance	2	1	0	1	0	0
3	Planning & Cooperation	1	0	0	1	0	1
4	Tourism & Hotel Management	1	0	0	1	1	0
5	Tourism Marketing & Promotion	2	0	0	1	0	0
6	Tourism Training	1	0	0	1	0	1
	<b>Grand total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>

**Table 3: Luang Namtha Provincial Tourism Office's Equipment**

No.	Item	Quantity	Trademark	Quality (%)	Located in	Remarks
1.	Desktop	4	4.1 FUJITSU 4.2 PROVIEW 4.3 ACER 4.4 PROVISION	67 17 65 70	Small building Main building Main building Tourism Information	Useable Unused Useable Useable
2.	Laptop	2	2.1 DELL 2.2 FUJITSU	40 50	Director room Expert room	Very old Useable
3.	Telephone	4	4.1 GLG 4.2 GLG 4.3 GLG 4.4 GLG	70 70 70 70	Small building Tourism Information Expert room Main building	Useable Useable Useable Useable
4.	Fax machine	2	2.1 PANNASONIC 2.2 PANNASONIC	68 60	Main building Main building	Useable Useable
5.	Camera	2	2.1 CANNON 2.2 DIGITAL	60 80	Expert room Expert room	Useable Useable
6.	Photo copy machine	1	1.1 RICOH	80	Small building	Useable

**Table 4: LuangNamtha Provincial Tourism Office's Vehicle**

No.	Item	Chassis Number	Quantity	Quality (%)	User	Remarks
1.	Motorbike Dream	0795	1	100	Mr. Khamchanh	Useable
2.	Motorbike KOLAO	3640	1	70	Mr. Khamlay	Useable
3.	Motorbike KOLAO	0796	1	100	Ms. Sommala	Useable
4.	Motorbike WAVE	0410	1	60	Mr. Seangchan	Quite old
5.	Motorbike WAVE	413	1	60	Ms. Chanda	Quite old
6.	Motorbike KOLAO	0773	1	90	Mr. Suksanh	Useable
7.	Motorbike	0496	1	40	Ms. Khamsao	Out of order
8.	Motorbike	0648	1	60	Ms. La ongkham	Quite old
9.	Motorbike	2901	1	70	Ms. Alinda	Useable
10.	Car Hilux 28D	039	1	53	Office used	Useable

## II.5.2 Methods to develop PTO capacity

There are some alternative ways to improve the capacity of the human resources in the Luang Namtha Provincial Tourism Office. It depends on the individual employee. Hence, the following alternative ways are recommended:

- Support staff to study part time course at a Sayphathana Business School in Luang Namtha
- Support staff to study part time course at School of English special course in Luang Namtha
- Support staff to study at National University or abroad
- Organize training courses on a specific topic
- Conduct on the job and off the job training
- Conduct job rotation to perform new tasks in another position
- Follow up and support all staff regularly
- Organize study tour within the country or in the neighboring countries
- Provide opportunities for the staff to involve in the work of other sections as to enhance their knowledge and understanding about all areas of PTO's duties.

## II.5.3 Performance appraisal

To ensure the performance appraisal for the government employee is implemented correctly, the department of human resource management, Prime Minister Office has issued a standard form for government employee's performance appraisal as follows:

Technical staff: Level .....

from .....to .....

### 1. Staff profile

Name and Family

name.....

Date of entry to the government

employee.....

### 2. The indicators of performance appraisal

The indicator related to organization behavior	Rating scale				
	Excel. 10	Good 9 - 8	Aver-age 7 - 5	Poor 4 - 2	very poor 1
1. Knowledgeable of tourism policy					
2. Responsible and committed					
3. Able to express ideas, implement them and be take responsibility for the ideas					
4. Diligent, thrifty and honest					
5. Has discipline, respect rules and regulations					
6. Hospitable mind					
7. Have good vision					
8. Ability to set policy, strategy and plan					
9. Creative and innovative ideas					
10. Technical knowledge and capability					
11. Decision making skill					
12. Reliability					
13. Good listener					
14. Accomplishments					
Total score					

The results above can be classified into three rating scales as follow:

1. The one who gets highest score is considered to be an outstanding person. He/she should be proposed to receive an annual award from the Lao National Tourism Administration
2. The one who gets second highest score is considered to be an above expectations. He/she should be proposed to receive an annual award from the Provincial Governor.
3. The one who gets third highest score is considered to be meet expectations, he/she should be proposed to receive an annual award from the Provincial Tourism Office.

Apart from these awards, good performance can also result in the person receiving some additional tangible or intangible benefits from the organization.

Evaluating performance is to compare the achievement or progress against performance plan. This evaluation includes documentation of expected results, standards of performance, progress toward achieving of results, how well they were achieved, examples indicating achievement, suggestions to improve performance and how those suggestions can be followed. If the above steps in the performance management process are followed, the performance appraisal is usually quite straightforward to carry out.

## **II.6 Section 6: Training plan for the Provincial Tourism Office and Provincial Tourism Police Unit**

### **II.6.1 Training needs assessment (TNA) for the Provincial Tourism Office**

Based on SNV review in 2004 and a staff profile of the PTO, we found that, the previous organizational structure of the PTO needed to be revised to follow the present structure of the Lao National Tourism Administration. In addition, it is adjusted in a way to suit the provincial conditions and local context.

#### ***Methods utilized to conduct the training needs assessment***

- Organized first introductory meeting with PTO staff about the formulation process of a human resource management strategy and training plan for the PTO and the PTPU; and then
- Reviewed the organizational structure and job descriptions of the PTO (see Annex 1a);
- Compiled staff profiles (see Annex 2a);
- Conducted an interview with each individual staff (see Annex 3a);
- Distributed questionnaire to all PTO staff and PTPU;
- Conducted the second meeting to present a draft HRM strategy and training plan to the PTO and PTPU staff to gather their comments and feedbacks.

#### ***Future training needs***

Based on the interviews and discussions with the PTO staff and management, the team came to the conclusion that the future capacity building plan of PTO should focus on the following areas:

- Tourism management and planning
- Tourism business management (hotel, guesthouse, restaurant and tour services)
- How to develop promotional materials
- English language training
- Computer and IT skills training
- Tourism impact monitoring training
- How to draft regulations, procedures and guidelines
- How to write a report and proposal
- Tourism marketing and promotion
- Gender mainstreaming in tourism, HIV/AIDS and human trafficking prevention

➤ **Additional recommendations on the future training plans of Luang Namtha PTO**

After the presentation workshop on September 25, 2006 on next five-year plan (2006-2010) and in order to strengthen the capacity of PTO, the team found that, apart from the overall needs for training mentioned, the head and management of PTO needs to pay a special attention to new appointed division chiefs and deputy head of PTO with regard to the following specific training needs:

- Mr. Sengchanh Paseuthsack, Deputy Head of PTO: training on HR management and development (as his first priority)
- Ms. Alinda Phengsavath, Head of Planning and Cooperation Division. Currently, only one person in the division and two more staff need to be recruited in the future. The operational work of the division requires a more close coordination with all divisions and especially with the head of PTO compared to other divisions. Therefore, she needs to focus on the areas, such as tourism planning and management, and tourist data collection and analysis as the main priority. In addition, she would have to coordinate with Department of Planning of LNTA and other divisions within PTO regularly to get experience and lessons learned.
- Ms. Laongkham Vangsengyang, Chief of Tourism Business and Hotel Management, with one assistant. Both have limited knowledge about tourism business management, therefore, would need capacity building for them on that area via training. Besides, there is a need to coordinate with Department of Tour and Hotel Management of LNTA for learning and sharing experience.
- Mr. Souksan Phakasy, newly appointed Chief of Promotion and Marketing Division has limited knowledge and experience about his work so need to learn more about tourism promotion and marketing, tourism information services and English language as the key priority. In addition, they need to coordinate with Mekong Tourism Development Project (MTDP) of LNTA to seek opportunities for learning on various matters.
- Ms. Khamsao Souliya, Chief of Tourism Training Division (newly moved from Division of Tourism Business and Hotel Management). Currently, the division has only one person, but planned to recruit a few more in the future. She has limited knowledge and experience about work planning or training planning for village, district and provincial levels, tourism businesses and other stakeholders. Therefore, there is a need to have training on those areas as the main focus. Apart from that, it's necessary to coordinate with Tourism Training Center of LNTA and MTDP for further learning.

As mentioned, PTO has five divisions and three of them headed by female, therefore, it's important that the head and management of PTO continues to support for their capacity building in various ways:

- Short and long-term training or experiential learning within the PTO Office;
- Short and long-term training or study within the province in coordination with stakeholders concerned;
- Training or learning in coordination with LNTA and MTDP on a certain important topic;
- Study tours and exchange of lessons with relevant provinces or neighbouring countries;
- Other suitable and necessary training.

## II.6.2 Training needs assessment for PTPU

The PTPU was newly established in 2004, which is much later than Provincial Tourism Police Offices in Champassak, Luang Prabang and Khammouan Provinces. The unit has four staff and reports directly to the provincial immigration office. They work on a rotational basis, one person/week at the PTO office.

The team followed similar steps as the PTO to carry out the TNA of the police unit, and held two meetings with their staff to discuss and get into details on a number of issues related to capacity building issues, such as work profile and skills required, task allocations and organizational structure, work routines and procedures and policies. The results of interviews are presented in Annex 3b (attached). The main future training needs of PTPU are summarized below.

- Tourism management and planning
- Tourism business management (hotel, guesthouse, restaurant and tour services)
- Gender mainstreaming in tourism, HIV/AIDS and human trafficking
- Knowledge about community-based ecotourism;
- Study tours and knowledge sharing with other provinces and neighboring countries, especially on best practices and lessons learned;
- Basic English training;
- General knowledge about tourism;
- Tourism marketing and promotion;
- Computer and IT skills,

### ➤ ***Additional recommendations on future training plans of the Provincial Tourism Police Unit (PTPU)***

The PTPU was just set up two years ago and it recruited two staff in early 2006 and they don't have much experience in tourism. Therefore, apart from general training mentioned early the unit would need other types of learning, such as on-the-job-training and by having close coordination and cooperation with PTO. Meanwhile, the PTO has to provide close support to PTPU as much as possible based on the capability they have. On the other hand, PTPU needs to coordinate and work closely with Tourism Police Department in Vientiane Capital to learn lessons and experience from them because they have good experience in managing the police tasks on tourism.

## Part III: Promotion of gender equity

Based on the National Tourism Strategy of the Lao National Tourism Administration and based on socio-economic development plan of the Luang Namtha provincial government out to 2010, the promotion of gender equality is an important element in fighting against poverty, especially in the rural ethnic minority areas. However, in order to enable woman to participate and benefit on equal basis with men in the tourism sector, and achieve the government's goal of graduating from behind Least Developed Country status by the year 2020, Luang Namtha Provincial Tourism Office has prepared its action plan as follows:

- To establish gender focal points, which comprise equal numbers of women and men, to mainstream gender issues into tourism activities
- Promote women to improve their skills, knowledge and ability and to take higher positions in the future
- Provide more opportunities to women to attend training courses, seminars and workshops as well participate in field activities

- To involve women to participate in decision making process on tourism development and management and other related activities
- Create better environment to enable women in rural areas to participate and benefit from tourism activities

## **Part IV: Tourism Information Management**

### **IV. 1. Improvement of tourism information system management in LNT province**

In October 2005, LNTA restructured the Luang Namtha PTO and assigned a new head or Director of the office. Since then, the tourism information service center has been improved and two staff in charge were appointed to oversee the center and their role and responsibilities were also clearly defined. In addition, an appropriate labor fee scheme was put in place for them so each person will receive one US\$ per tourist and, on average, they will have about US\$40-US\$60 per month, while in the past they received only about US\$25 per month. As a result of the new incentive scheme, the staff were motivated and worked overtime (provide information services from 8 am to 9 pm everyday).

So far, Luang Namtha province has three tourism information service centers in three districts: Namtha, Sing and Vieng Phukha. Based on recent observations, almost 80 percent of tourists visiting Luang Namtha used information services from the centers.

#### **IV.1.1. Collection and reporting of tourism-related statistics**

The PTO regularly collects statistical information on the number of monthly tourism arrivals to the province, based on data provided by the immigration police and hotel occupancy rates. The PTO also collects information on the number of accommodation establishments, number of rooms, occupancy rates, number of restaurants and entertainment establishments and number of tour companies and registered guides in the province. With assistance from the MTDP and UNESCO projects, the PTO has developed a CBT monitoring protocol, and monitors the socio-economic and environmental impacts of tourism in target CBT villages. This data is compiled into monthly, bi-annual and annual reports, and submitted to the LNTA, Provincial Government and donor agencies. It is public information and available from the PTO or LNTA. PTO staff have been trained in the basic use of the statistical software program SPSS and record data electronically and manually.

#### **IV.1. 2. Training of tour guides from 2005 to 2006**

Since early 2005 until now, Luang Namtha PTO in collaboration with LNTA, MTDP and Nam Ha Tourism Development Project conducted a number of training for tour guides at provincial, district and village levels. Below is the number of tour guides trained since 2005:

- Tour guides at the provincial and district levels - about 46 people;
- Tour guides at the village level - about 55 people;
- English training for village tour guides - about 30 people;

In addition, on each day from 8am to 9 am there is a regular technical training session on various topics being held to upgrade the skills for the tour guides. Besides, an annual test for them is conducted to grade their quality and skills levels.

#### **IV.1.3 . Sharing of benefits**

In order to promote a sustainable development of tourism in the province, the PTO has put in place an appropriate income sharing scheme for all the stakeholders concerned as follows:

- Local communities: direct sharing of incomes from various services, such as tour, transport, food and guesthouse services, sales of handicrafts/souvenirs and other services.
- Conservation unit, Nam Ha National conservation project
- Tourism Promotion Fund. The fund is being used by PTO to publish tourism promotional materials, support traditional events, mass media and so forth with permission of LNTA.
- Local tax offices.
- Village development fund. The fund is used to construct and improve small basic village infrastructure with permission of the governor.
- Coverage of the administrative costs of the tourism information service center.

In order to maintain tourism business activities in the province in a good fashion, PTO has set up a communication system that directly links to PTO for villages that have community-based tourism activities. The villages can directly communicate and timely ask PTO for help when they face problems or disputes.

## **IV. 2. Recommendation**

To provide more enjoyable experiences for tourists through more meaningful connections with local people, and a greater understanding of local cultural, social and environmental issues of Luang Namtha and the Nam Ha National Protected Area.

*The tourism information center should:*

- Provide tourism information for tourists who are interested in any tourism activities within and around the protected area.
- Provide trekking and other tour services for visitors according to the tour programs set by the PTO
- Provide place for local tour guide to strengthen their capacity through on the job training

## **Part V: The Involvement of Local Stakeholders**

### **V.1 Public sector involvement in CBE development**

Tourism is a cross-sectoral activity and has links to many sectors such as the Agriculture and Forestry Office, Information and Culture Service Office, Communication Transport-Post and Construction Office, Planning and Investment Office, Industry and Commerce Office, Land Use Planning and the Provincial Tourism Police Unit. To develop tourism in sustainable way, tourism development should be coordinated among key stakeholders in all related activities to generate mutual benefits.

### **V.2 The involvement of the private sector and local communities**

The private sector plays a very crucial role in contributing to the local socio-economy, and can help protect cultural and the environment. Therefore, to ensure sustainable tourism development, the Provincial Tourism Office should encourage the private sector and local communities to participate in tourism development and conservation activities such as the conservation and preservation of cultural and environmental heritage, tourism product development, tourism services and marketing based on business agreements and contractual agreements acknowledged by the PTO, private tourism business and local communities. For examples of such agreements in Luang Namtha, see:

- Business agreement contract between PTO, Green Discovery and Nam Ha National Protected Area Unit (Annex 5a) and,
- Between Green Discovery and Local villages (Annex 5b)

## **Part VI: Conclusion and Recommendation**

This review of the organizational assessment of the Luang Namtha PTO was completed successfully with active participation from all PTO staff, especially the director of the PTO. The review found much progress in several areas. After the new director assumed his duties in the Luang Namtha PTO, he immediately started to improve the organization, its structure, reallocated the tasks and responsibilities, and integrated externally funded donor project plans into the PTO's plan. Although the new structure and division of tasks within the PTO have not been officially recognized by the LNTA, the assignments are relevant to staff competence and preference, thus it has resulted in the staff becoming more motivated and enthusiastic.

The main results of the study are that several strategies were developed. These include new more detailed job descriptions, internal and external communication strategies, a human resource management and development strategy, including a training programme for PTO staff and tourism police a gender equality promotion strategy a tourism information center management strategy, and a strategy for involving stakeholders in tourism development. The organizational structure of the PTO has also been documented. The strategies were drafted by the team based on the results of discussion with PTO's staff and stakeholders. These strategies have been presented to the staff and stakeholders, and have already incorporated the comments given by those parties.

### **Final Recommendations:**

Organizational development takes time and is considered one major task that brings along several changes to an organization. Therefore, the PTO director should be well aware of these changes and their possible impacts to the work of some staff. It is recommended that the director and deputy constantly and regularly motivate staff and be good role models in implementing the necessary changes.

The PTO should organize internal meetings for providing opportunity for consultation and clarification about the tasks and responsibilities newly allocated in case the staff face some difficulties during the implementation.

The staff at the middle management level should be trained and given advice regarding all management issue and they should get support for the training or on the job training or coaching in these areas. This is to help enhance their management skills. Once the middle management is strong, they can help shoulder the work of the directors and implement tasks in their absence.

The PTO has rather good internal relationship. Staff have high spirit of teamwork, job-rotation, sharing responsibilities and information sharing. The PTO's management should utilize this asset to further develop learning culture and institutionalize it in the organization. It can be start by making all training materials that every staff received from the training they attended available for every one. Periodically, when organize office meeting allocate couple of hours for sharing new knowledge and learning with each other. The management encourages learning by awarding the staff who could come up with new creative idea, better working method or using new creative training method that makes community understand better, for instance.

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## List of annexes

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

Annex 2: List of guiding questions

Annex 3: Results of SWOT

Annex 4a: Organizational Structure of PTO

Annex 4b: Organizational Structure of Provincial Tourism Police

Annex 5a: Job Descriptions of PTO

Annex 5b: Job Descriptions of Tourism Police

Annex 6a: Results of TNA interview (PTO)

Annex 6b: Results of TNA interview (PTPU)

Annex 7a: MOU between PTO and Green Discovery Company and NPA

Annex 7b: MOU between Green Discovery Company and community.

Annex 8a: PTO profile

Annex 8b: PTPU profile