

MEDIA RELEASE

AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY VIENTIANE



16 May 2013

Australia's International Development Assistance Program to Laos 2013-14

In financial year 2013-14, the Australian Government will provide an estimated A\$62.4 million (LAK474 billion) in official development assistance to Laos.

“Australia remains committed to assisting Laos to overcome poverty, as demonstrated by the increase in funding of A\$6.5 million (LAK42 billion) next financial year,” said Australia’s Ambassador to Laos, HE Lynda Worthaisong.

This is part of the Government’s overall commitment to increase the size of the Australian aid program to \$5.7 billion up from \$5.2 billion in 2012-13. This will increase Australia’s Official Development Assistance to 0.37 per cent of its Gross National Income.

Australia remains committed to increasing its ODA to 0.5 per cent of GNI, however the Government has decided to defer this scale up by one year to 2017-18.

Managed by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), Australia’s aid program in Laos is focused on: promoting opportunities for all by giving more children access to school; sustainable economic development by expanding financial services to the poor and by facilitating trade and investment growth. Australia also supports the Government of Laos and governments in the Greater Mekong Subregion effectively manage their water resources.

Among other things, Australian assistance to Laos in 2013-14 will construct 785 new classrooms and provide training to improve education quality standards to 6000 teachers, 2600 school principals and 7500 community members. This will help Laos move toward achieving universal primary education.

Australia’s major emphasis on supporting rural livelihoods will include a new program to provide around 17 000 poor people with increased access to financial services. Australia will expand and strengthen village banks and provide education on savings, loans and avoiding debt traps, as well as work with Lao regulators to make financial services more accessible for the poor.

The 2013-14 Budget continues to implement the Government’s *Comprehensive Aid Policy Framework*. The Framework enables the Australian Government to work together with Laos to better plan and implement aid investments more effectively, delivering better results for the people of Laos.

The 2011-12 Annual Review of Aid Effectiveness, which was released in January, demonstrated that Australian aid is effective and represents value for money. It also showed that Australia is making real progress towards the targets announced in the 2012-13 budget.

Media Enquiries:
AusAID, 353 800
