

TECHNICAL ADVISER – TOURISM/HOSPITALITY SCHOOL BUSINESS PLANNING AND MARKETING

Information

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Laos

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Please note that this post is published by LuxDev on behalf of the Lao National Institute of Tourism and Hospitality (LANITH). The Contracting Authority for the post will be LANITH.

Background

In order to take full advantage of the economic development and poverty alleviation opportunities that the expanding tourism sector in Lao PDR presented (and continues to present), the *Strengthening of Human Resources in the Hospitality and Tourism Industry in Lao PDR* project (Project LAO/020) was implemented between July 2008 and June 2016. The implementing agencies were the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) and Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism (MICT) of Lao PDR, together with Lux-Development (LuxDev), the Luxembourg Development Cooperation Agency.

The overall objective of Project LAO/020 was *to strengthen human resource capacity in the hospitality and tourism industry in Lao PDR thus contributing to sustainable economic development throughout Lao PDR by facilitating the development of the tourism industry and service sector*. The specific objective of the project was *to assist the Government of Lao PDR to operationalize a national Human Resource Development (HRD) Strategy for tourism in order to develop an industry service culture that will enable greater international competitiveness and profitability in the tourism sector*. Five key results were envisaged for the project:

1. to establish a HRD Strategy and Action Plan that underpins the requirements of the sector as indicated in the Lao PDR National Tourism Strategy 2006 – 2020, leading to a fully integrated approach to the development of human resources in the tourism sector;
2. to strengthen and upgrade the capacity of existing and new training providers/teachers to deliver quality training appropriate to the needs of the tourism sector;
3. to update hospitality and tourism curricula and ensure that new curricula with supporting teaching materials are developed;
4. to design, build, operate and transfer a National Tourism and Hospitality Training Centre;
5. to implement an outreach programme providing training and support services to key tourism training centres throughout Lao PDR, initially in key tourism provinces.

In the achievement of Result 4 above, Project LAO/020 worked with various government institutions and other relevant stakeholders to establish the Lao National Institute of Tourism and Hospitality (LANITH), with the main campus located in Vientiane and a satellite campus in Luang Prabang. The Vientiane campus comprises a classroom block, training kitchen, training restaurant,

accommodation/front office training rooms, and management, teaching and support staff offices. The campus is located on the grounds of the Pakpasak Technical College in the centre of Vientiane. The Luang Prabang campus is located adjacent to the Luang Prabang Technical College, and comprises a kitchen, restaurant and four bedrooms. LANITH serves as a Centre of Excellence for quality-driven tourism/hospitality education and training across the country, offering tailor-made programmes of study that meet regional and international standards, and match labour market needs. LANITH's vision is to *advance service quality in Lao PDR*, and its mission is to *build a tourism and hospitality Centre of Excellence to educate, train, innovate, communicate and unite*.

By Ministerial Decree, LANITH is governed by a Management Committee comprising seven members (four representatives of the Government of Lao PDR and three representatives of Luxembourg Development Cooperation). The LANITH Management Committee (LMC) has an assigned mandate, and ultimate responsibility for LANITH's performance. The membership of the LMC is currently being revised to include the private sector, and representation from Swiss Development Cooperation.

There are four LANITH Advisory Councils – a Financial Advisory Council, a Technical Advisory Council, an Economic Advisory Council, and an Academic Advisory Council. The Councils are non-permanent comprising representatives of the Government of Lao PDR, the private sector and development partners to advise LANITH management on the Institute's further development. The effectiveness and status of these Councils is unclear at present.

The management team of LANITH comprises one Director, three Deputy Directors, three Head of Unit/Department, and three Deputy Heads of Unit/Department. All members of the management team undertake teaching/training in addition to their management duties. At present, LANITH has a total staff of approximately 25 people. The management and staff are motivated and enthusiastic, but relatively inexperienced, particularly in relation to strategic and operational school management, and business development.

The current programmes offered by LANITH are:

- **LANITH Diploma** – a two-year programme of study offered at the LANITH Vientiane campus only. The Diploma comprises of four specialisms in Food and Beverage Production Operations, Food and Beverage Service Operations, Accommodation Operations, and Travel and Tourism Operations. Approximately 180 students are or were enrolled on the LANITH Diploma to date. Enrolment in the 2016/17 academic year is approximately 60 students in Year 1 and 60 students in Year 2.
- **LANITH Certificate** – a one-year programme of study offered at the Luang Prabang Technical College only. The Certificate comprises elements of the LANITH Diploma and the Passport to Success (see below). To date, 59 students have completed the LANITH Certificate programme.
- **Executive Training Programme (ETP)** – a management and leadership training programme for middle management level staff. The programme has been offered in both Vientiane and Luang Prabang. To date, 33 students have completed the ETP.
- **Passport to Success (PtS)** – an industry training programme for the tourism and hospitality sector. PtS currently has 40 units/modules covering a variety of skills and competencies. PtS is offered at locations throughout the country, subject to demand from industry. To date, 2,050 employees have completed units of the PtS, with 5 681 statements of attainment issued.
- **Pheun Than Heng A Sip (PTHAS)** – an industry training programme – based on the PtS model – specifically designed for micro, small and medium-sized (MSME) enterprises. To date, PTHAS has been offered in Champasak Province only. To date, 147 employees have completed units of the PTHAS.

Project LAO/020 supported the majority of LANITH's teaching staff to obtain an international education and training (in countries such as Singapore, Luxembourg, Belgium, France, Ireland, Italy, Korea and other Asian Countries), internship(s) in high-quality hotels in Lao PDR and overseas, and

ongoing in-service training/capacity development. Therefore, LANITH has the best educated/trained tourism and hospitality teaching staff in Lao PDR. LANITH has developed strong links with, and is highly regarded by, the tourism and hospitality private sector in Lao PDR. It has also forged good connections, and works directly with, international development agencies supporting tourism and hospitality technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and skills development in Lao PDR.

With the technical closure of the Project LAO/020 on 30th June 2016, a final evaluation was commissioned by LuxDev. The evaluation team concluded that, whilst LANITH is innovative in its approach, there are some gaps and weaknesses in terms of sustainability. As detailed in the Final Evaluation Report, *there is a lack of leadership, governance, management and marketing capabilities in LANITH...LANITH lacks a clear definition of roles and responsibilities with regard to the teaching staff and the Director...no adequately designed committee or equivalent management structure is in place that would be able to accompany the further development of LANITH.* To address these weaknesses, a number of steps were recommended for immediate action, including:

1. Adjustment and operationalisation of the LANITH Management Committee;
2. Development of a five-year strategic plan for LANITH;
3. Transparent external and internal communication of LANITH's future direction;
4. Ongoing technical coaching of LANITH management and staff.

With the support of the Governments of Luxembourg and Switzerland, a new project focused on skills development in the tourism and hospitality sector in Lao PDR is now being implemented. Project LAO/029 – Skills for Tourism began in September 2016. It is currently in its one-year inception phase, and implementation will continue until August 2021, giving a total duration of five years. Project LAO/029 envisages LANITH as both a beneficiary of, and an implementing partner for project activities. Whilst the specific tasks and activities to be undertaken have yet to be defined, LANITH is foreseen as fundamental to achieving a number of the outcomes of the project, in particular, improving the quality of skills development programmes in tourism and hospitality, and expanding the scale and variety of good quality skills development programmes in tourism and hospitality. LANITH is also specified as one of the organisations whose management capacities are to be strengthened with the support of Project LAO/029.

As result of the final evaluation of Project LAO/020, and in light of its envisaged role in Project LAO/029, LANITH is recruiting a **Technical Adviser – Tourism/Hospitality School Business Planning and Marketing**.

Responsibilities

The Technical Adviser shall report directly to the LMC and, with the support of two nominated LMC members – one representing the Government of Lao PDR and one representing Luxembourg Development Cooperation – will work side-by-side with the management and staff of LANITH to:

- Develop a five-year strategic business plan (aligned to the Institute's academic plan), and associated action and financial plans (with cash flow projections) for LANITH – including a review of its vision, mission, strategic objectives and organizational structure;
- Formulate a marketing/communication plan for LANITH that aligns with the strategic plan;
- Conduct a training needs analysis, formulate a capacity development plan, and provide initial training, coaching and mentoring to build the capacity of LANITH in business planning and marketing.

Skills Required for the Job

- The successful candidate will have an under-graduate degree in Education Management/Administration Tourism/Hospitality Management, Business Management, Finance, Marketing or equivalent.
- S/he will have demonstrable knowledge and experience in strategic and operational planning, ideally in an education and training setting.

- S/he will have demonstrable knowledge and experience in the development of marketing/communication plans, ideally in an education and training setting.
- S/he will have a strong appreciation/understanding of the tourism and hospitality private sector and the training needs of the sector.
- S/he will be a good networker and a persuasive negotiator.
- S/he will have excellent organizational skills, and be results-oriented.
- S/he will have an ability to communicate, write reports and make presentations in English. Ability to communicate in Lao language would be a distinct advantage.
- Ideally, s/he will have experience of working in Lao PDR or South-East Asia.