



Trading Food

For Sustainable Development

Traders and Buyers Meeting

20 – 21 January 2022, Vientiane Province, Lao PDR

Project Background

Maize is a very important agricultural commodity for Lao People's Democratic Republic. It is the second largest agricultural crop after rice by cultivation area, and its cultivation also provides upland farmers, many of which are below the poverty line, with a cash crop that can improve their living standards.

The importance of maize for development has also been explicitly recognized in the country's medium-term strategic frameworks, namely the "Agriculture Development Strategy to 2025 and Vision to the Year 2030" document of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry published in 2015, and the "8th Five-year National Socioeconomic Development Plan (2016–2020)" published in 2016. In these documents, the objectives of increasing production and value addition in the maize sector are explicitly mentioned, and the need for studying the value chain of maize in order to prioritize, coordinate and time policy interventions emerges.

For these reasons, Lao People's Democratic Republic participates in UNCTAD's project "Integrating Landlocked Commodity Dependent Developing Countries into Regional and Global Value Chains", funded by the United Nation's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sub-Fund. This project has the objective to support integrated value chain development in four landlocked commodity dependent developing economies (Ethiopia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, and Uzbekistan), focusing on the agri-food sector. It aims at enhancing the countries' capacities in formulating and implementing policies and strategies to promote better integration into Regional and Global Value Chains (RVCs and GVCs). In particular, the project's activities aim to improve the analytical and data capacity of beneficiary countries in effective policy formulation to promote the integration of local food industries into RVCs and GVCs, taking advantage of UNCTAD's expertise as the leading UN agency working in the area of trade for development.

In Lao People's Democratic Republic, the project has analyzed the maize value chain for export, using tailored survey data obtained from six districts (Beng, Houne, Kenethao, Parklai, Kham and Nong Het) in three maize-producing provinces (Oudomxay, Xayaboury, Xiengkhuang. This analysis resulted in the publication by UNCTAD of the study "Analyzing the Maize Value Chain for Export in Lao People's Democratic Republic", available in both English and Laotian at <https://unctad.org/webflyer/analyzing-maize-value-chain-export-lao-peoples-democratic-republic>



On the basis of the findings of this empirical-based study, a series of policy implications for improving the functioning of the chain and increasing benefits to stakeholders were identified and discussed with government officials, the private sector, development partners and other important sector stakeholders. These focus on improving information availability, enhancing farmer and trader access to finance, and potential measures to foster smallholder farmers' earnings.

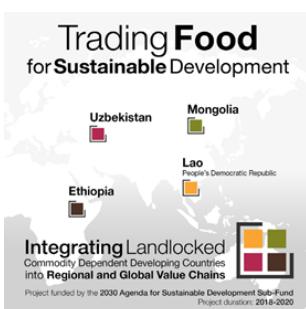
Objectives of the Traders and Buyers Meeting

The objective of this event is to will strengthen the capacity of maize traders in Lao PDR to improve their ability to do business, by putting them in contact with firms with operations in Lao PDR who buy maize for the animal feed business within the country or ASEAN region.

In this event, co-organized by UNCTAD and the Department of Trade Promotion of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce of Lao PDR, maize traders will meet with potential buyers in order to improve their capacity to assess market prospects, identify market opportunities and overcome market barriers such as quality issues. This will also support their prospects of better integrating into regional and global value chains in the future.

As indicated by the national study elaborated by the Project on the maize value chain for export in Lao PDR, a large share of maize is exported to the neighboring countries of China, Thailand and Vietnam. As a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, which has affected logistics and trade across the region, Lao maize traders could benefit from increasing sales domestically, including to firms producing animal feed, which have high quality standards. By learning more and meeting such quality standards, Lao maize traders could also foster their capacity to better integrate into regional markets post-pandemic, supporting the transformation of the sector towards resilient food systems through strengthening value chains and market access.

Contacts



For more information on the project, please contact the Commodities Branch:

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Programme of the meeting Thursday 20 January 2022

08:30–09:00 Registration

09:00–09:10 Opening remarks

Mr. Xaysomphet Norasingh, Director-General, Department of Trade Promotion

09:10–09:20 Welcome remarks

*Mr. Phayvanh Phathamavong, Director General, Vientiane provincial Department of Industry and commerce (DOIC)
(Group Photo session)*

09:20–11:30 Overview of Provincial Maize markets

09:20–09:40 Huaphan provincial DOIC

09:40–10:00 Oudomxay provincial DOIC

10:00–10:15 Coffee break

10:15–10:35 Xiengkhoung provincial DOIC

10:35–10:55 Xayyabouli provincial DOIC

10:55-11:15 Perspectives on Fostering the Integration of Agricultural Value Chains of Commodity-
Development Landlocked developing Countries in Lao PDR

Mr. Xaysomphet Norasingh, Director General, Department of Trade Promotion, MOIC

11:15–11:30 Discussion

11:30–13:30 Lunch break

13:30–13:50 Research Findings on the Maize Value Chain for Export in Lao PDR

Mr. Rodrigo Carcamo-Diaz, Economic Affairs Officer, Commodities Branch, UNCTAD

Trader representatives from maize-producing provinces - Presentation on their profiles and Maize supply capacity

13:50–14:10 Huaphan province

14:10–14:30 Oudomxay province

14:30–14:45 Coffee break

14:45–15:05 Xiengkhoung province

14:45–15:05 Xayyabouli province

Buyer Representatives from provinces - Presentation on business profiles and requirements of Maize

15:05–15:40 Xayyabouli province

15:40–16:20 Vientiane province



Programme of the meeting Friday 21 January 2022

08:30–09:00 Registration

09:00–10:10 Buyer Representatives from provinces - Presentation on business profiles and requirements of Maize

09:00–9:40 Oudomxay province

09:40–10:10 Xiengkhoung province

10:10–10:25 Coffee Break

10.25-11.30 Trade and buyer Group Discussion

Trader and buyers will be divided into 2-3 groups based on their requirements and DTP staffs will join to observe discussion in each group

11.45-11.55 Conclusions and Closing Remarks

Mr. Xaysomphet Norasingh, Director-General, Department of Trade Promotion

Mr. Rodrigo Cárcamo-Díaz, Economic Affairs Officer, Commodity Policy Implementation and Outreach Section, UNCTAD

11.55 Lunch

End of the Meeting