Supporting resilience of MSMEs in response to COVID-19

The micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSME) sector in Laos constitutes the backbone for job creation and employment, accounting for more than 80 percent of employment in the country.

The Lao economy, and the MSME sector in particular has been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Lao MSME sector can play a vital role in responding to the economic impact of the pandemic and in driving a sustainable and resilient recovery.

The ILO project will support Lao MSMEs to survive this period, sustain themselves and look towards growth opportunities as outlined in the Lao PDR SME Strategy.

**Expected Outcome**

MSMEs in Laos are more sustainable, resilient and generate economic and decent employment opportunities, contributing to Lao PDR’s recovery from COVID-19.

**Project Objectives**

Women- and men-owned MSMEs and aspiring entrepreneurs have

- Increased access to financial services
- Increased access to COVID-19 related information
- Increased access to Business Development Services

**At a glance**

- **Donor Contribution:**
  Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

- **Duration:**
  December 2020 - May 2022

- **Partner:**
  - Department of SME Promotion (DOSMEP) of the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MOIC)
  - Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the SME Service Center
  - Network of BDS providers and financial institutions

- **Target beneficiaries:**
  MSME owners and aspiring entrepreneurs, including workers and their families affected by the economic downturn post-Covid

- **Geographic focus:**
  Vientiane and Luang Prabang Provinces (with scope for expansion to one more province)

**This will be done through**

- Policy advice and recommendations on how to provide financial support to MSMEs during and after the COVID-19 crisis
- Support to financial institutions to enable increased access to finance for MSMEs
- A COVID-19 Business Resilience Helpdesk for MSMEs or support to existing platforms
- Dissemination of information on business resilience support available for MSMEs from various programmes
- Provision of needs based Business Development Services for business continuity and growth
- Lao Entrepreneurship Day to promote entrepreneurship to women and men in Lao PDR

**Contact Information**

Anjali Patel (Ms), Project Technical Officer
Supporting resilience of Lao MSMEs in response to COVID-19
LNCCI Building, Kaysone Phomvihane Ave, Ban Phonphanao, Saysettha District, Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR

Tel. +856 20 7633 2234
Email: patela@ilo.org
Web site: www.ilo.org/asia