



# Improvement of the District Level Local Administration in Lao People's Democratic Republic

Khanouthone Phetlasy<sup>(✉)</sup> and Waiphot Kulachai

SuanSunandha Rajabhat University, Bangkok, Thailand  
s65584944008@ssru.ac.th

**Abstract.** The district is a local administration that links the province and the village. It is directly responsible for protecting the common interests of the people according to the principles of governance, the strength of a particular country, or the strength of a specific state; it is precisely the resilience of the local administration. Due to its importance, this paper aims to study how to improve the local administration at the district level of the Lao PDR. The national strategy that turned into the government's policy on decentralization or 3-build began to be three points in 2013–2015 in some selected areas in each part of the country and implemented nationwide in 2016; it is a long-term strategy to decentralize in Laos. It is still being implemented, and every 5 years, there will be an evaluation to summarize the lessons learned and find the advantages to develop, the disadvantages to seeking solutions to comply with social and economic development and the overall situation of the country in each period. Data and information from 5 years evaluation report of 3-build policies to analyze the information to determine and find the best practice for decentralization efficiently and effectively. The improvement of the local administration at the district level of the Lao PDR is one of the strategies to decentralize local administration has encountered many challenges.

**Keywords:** local administration · district-level · improvement · 3-build policy

## 1 Introduction

In the past 40 years, the government has improved the regime to adapt to the economic and social situation within the country, and the ever-changing international context calls on the government to improve the administration continually.

After the country was established as the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) on December 2, 1975, it carried out two main strategies, namely the protection and building of the nation. Especially with establishing a unified system of government in the country and under the rule of law at present, Lao PDR has a suitable method of government throughout the country. It governs the state and society with the rule of law with the principle that a people's democratic state comes from the people, by the people, and for the benefit of the people.

The law on local administration of the Lao PDR promulgated in 2015 stipulates that: Local administration refers to the state administration at the local level, which consists of 3 levels: the provincial level, the district level, and the village level [1]. The government's efforts to decentralize the local administration started when Lao PDR declared independence. During this period, a strategy was to build provinces as strategic units, districts as overall strengthening units, and villages as development units. These are the policies of the government that are being implemented throughout the country. This policy is to improve the local government from the bottom to the top to build strength from the ground up. If the village is strong, the district will be strong, and the province will have the potential to develop its local area, strengthening the country. The improvement of the local government administration at the district level is one of the issues determining the success of the government's strategic implementation. It is the primary framework for creating the public to receive good services from the government. The Lao government is currently focusing on implementing the decentralization strategy, or the 3-build policy, especially to identify directions and methodology to make local government administration at the district level become a comprehensive and stable unit.

## **2 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Local Administration Theory**

Local administration means implementing decisions by local government institutions and national/provincial/state government units operating at the field level [2].

Local administration governs a local area by local agents appointed by, and responsible to the central (state) government. Local administration is the state government sets the people who run the affairs of the local areas, and these agents of the central government implement the political objectives of the central government rather than those of the local people; in other words, such state officials are accountable to the central government rather than the local people. Local administration can be seen as the intervention of the state government in local affairs to provide the amenities that would enhance the living conditions of the local people [3]. From the theory research above, it can be said that: The local administration is the administrative organization that has the role of managing state administration in politics, governance, economy, culture-social, national defense, national security, creating and using human resources, protecting and use natural resources, the environment and other local resources to maximize benefits for local people.

### **2.2 Decentralization Theory**

Decentralization is different at the bottom of the development distribution than in the middle or top. The purpose of this chapter is to provide some 'translation' by reviewing theory and international evidence on the ability of decentralization to address state weaknesses in ways that promote human and economic development in least-developed countries. In the following sections, we first review the various definitions of decentralization that researchers have put forward and examine the key theoretical arguments

favoring decentralization that is most relevant for least-developed countries. We then outline the methodological advances that have allowed researchers to place an order in this previously confused literature. We use these insights as a lens through which to review international evidence on decentralization's ability to overcome some of the critical obstacles holding back a three-country's development [4].

Political decentralization is the constitutional amendments and electoral reforms designed to open new or activate existing but dormant or ineffective spaces to represent subnational polities. Political decentralization policies are also intended to devolve electoral capacities to subnational actors. Examples of this type of reform are the popular election of mayors and governors (previously appointed), the creation of subnational legislative assemblies, or constitutional reforms that strengthen the political autonomy of subnational governments [5].

Decentralization could contribute to development by helping mobilize additional resources at the local/territorial level. This broader perspective on decentralization has emerged recently. It does not reduce decentralization to the central-local transfer of resources. Still, it understands it as an essentially political process of empowering people over the public sector through empowering their LAs that can help unleash the development potential of territories [6]. Decentralization is the central distribution of responsibilities to local government agencies and will not interfere. Each local government level is organized in the form of a council responsible for determining administrative policies for socio-economic development. For the sovereign work, the center is the monopoly.

### **2.3 Improvement Concept**

Improvement is a mindset whereby organizations strive to always look for better ways to do things. The evolution of the organization's products, services, workflows, and other aspects, so they become more optimal and efficient over time. It fosters a healthier culture in your workplace and helps to retain talent.

The mindset helps remove waste or inefficiencies from intangible processes like collaboration to create a better end product more efficiently [7]. Improving quality raises the standard of work to a higher level. This activity will start after the work system has a document as a working standard and a quality control system. Organizations must raise existing standards. Because the demands of customers are higher and competitors are constantly evolving. Raising the standard that is the implementation of quality improvement [8]. Improvement is the change from the old to the new, better, to upgrade the output to increase in quantity and quality; it is also the solution that hinders Development and will be reduced and eliminated gradually. In conclusion, Development means the growth, increase, strengthening, progress, growth, or evolution of something. Design the actions and results of Development. Development refers to an open process, whether physical, moral, or intellectual so that it can be applied to tasks, individuals, societies, countries, or other things.

### 3 Findings

The 3-build policy is a strategic practice of creating stability for the people's democratic state; it is a process to improve the protection mechanism for the state administration to extend the rights and exalt local responsibility, utilizing their strengths and abilities into the protection of political, economic, cultural-social administration, construction and use of human resources, utilization and preservation of natural resources and environment and other resources, national defense and local-foreign affairs for self-reliance, self-strength build and upgrade local administrative protection capabilities.

Moreover, it is to make the economy. Society of each locality and the region has continued to grow and expand, raising the standard of living for the people and alleviating the poverty of the people, especially the people in rural areas, far away from the backcountry to have a better living condition in the same time, increasing the division of labor and the coordination between localities and regional territories allows each locality to develop more quickly.

Furthermore, it brings state policies to establish local practice by encouraging the public and households to develop the village, the local itself, and the nation, strengthening the basic unit of the people's democratic system.

Follow-up this policy was trialed between 2013 and 2015 and was successful. Therefore, the government has implemented it continuously across the country since 2016, considering this policy a long-term strategy to strengthen local administration.

In 2022, 19 districts/cities implemented the 3-build policy, equivalent to 12.8%. In 2027, the number is expected to increase to 45 districts/cities, equal to 30.4%, making the total number 64 out of 148 districts/cities equivalent to 43% nationwide. Compared to 2022, the number will increase by 236%.

Building districts to be overall strengthening units is to create a district with the strength to have two higher abilities simultaneously. That is, one is the assembly of the province's construction to be a strategic unit, while the second is to be a direct force and help to support the construction of the village as the head of the development unit.

A district is a local administrative district encompassing urban and rural areas, consisting of many villages [9], the community is intermediate between the province and the district; is the leader of the policy guideline from the district, disseminating it to the villages and bringing the issues at the village's level to form a development plan and report to the community, at the same time districts must strengthen their administration and management including issuing government policies and services to the public.

Therefore, the policy of building the province as a strategic unit, making the district to be an overall strengthening unit, and creating a village to be a development unit which is the policy of the state; both are long-term national strategies in the distribution of power to the local to encourage local administration to have more rights, abilities, and self-government capabilities. It, therefore, requires the expansion of state policy, specifically expanding local policies, especially local governments at the district level, which directly connects the local administrative organization with the people. To strengthen the local administration, there is a frequent ask: What should be done for local governments at the district level? There is an appropriate form of policy to strengthen local governments at the district level, such as the 3-build policy.

One of the 3-build policies that are important and brought to analysis this time is to build districts to be overall strengthening units that have the following content and objectives:

1. Political, administrative aspects: Organizations in the political system of their level is vital in terms of organization, personnel, work plan, and guidance leadership; each organization implements according to its role effectively and can unite the unity of people and ethnic groups, both mobilizing and organizing to lead them as a strong force in building and developing well.
2. National defense-peace protection: the national defense-peace-defense forces have strong political thinking, strong organization, command guidance, with specialized skills, can be a robust independent fighting unit in the formation of fighting lines in the province defense area, able to train and organize complex, guide the command of the Village Security Unit in the activities of defense-maintaining peace and order at the village level.
3. Economic aspect: There is a transportation and communication infrastructure system that is easy to reach most of the villages, with the conditions to facilitate the growth of production capacity; The process of promoting products as a commodity and comprehensive rural development has been widely implemented; encouraged the use of new varieties, techniques and science in production related to the creation of model families and appropriate processing of agricultural products; ensure food security.
4. Cultural, social aspects: Infrastructure and materials for education, especially primary education, are sufficient to ensure that all children of primary school age are eligible for admission; Infrastructure and materials for public health, especially in terms of disease prevention, health promotion, and quality treatment at a certain level; The district has taken appropriate measures to solve the phenomenon in the society to reduce it and make society peaceful and orderly; The beautiful and uniqueness culture-traditions of the people of all 50 ethnic groups have been conserved and enhanced, the unity and reconciliation between ethnic groups and awareness of the tactics of dividing the agreement between ethnic groups and others have been strengthened and enhanced;
5. Foreign affairs: Having the ability to protect peace, order, and order along the border, create love, unity, cooperation, and exchange between the people of their city and the bordering cities of neighboring countries.

## 4 Conclusion

Lao people's democratic republic is a state of the people by the people and for the benefit of the people; all the authority of the state is the authority of the people. State administration is the process of carrying out various affairs of the state according to the mechanism, procedure, organization, and movement in a complex system; the principle of activity that is officially defined by organizations and units with government officials driving those mechanisms together to achieve the goals of the state as well as maintaining the common interests of the nation, the state administration is the efficient management of state administrative resources to create the highest value throughout society under the administration of state agencies.

Improving the local administration at the district level in the Lao PDR is improving the organization and improving the work plan of the government administration to be strong and more robust by speeding up the improvement of the organization, personnel, budget funding, equipment, services, moreover, is to improve working environments such as equip with adequate working space, appropriate management, coordination, and inspection-evaluation system.

In the future, the direction to improve the local administration organization at the district level to become a robust and comprehensive unit in the Lao PDR must focus on best practices of the outcome of the past five years' evaluation of the implementation of 3-build policy and the basis of 3-build policy must continue developing as well as create and improve a strategic plan for the development of the state administration to ensure that the administration of the state is strictly and highly sacred according to the laws, the local government administration organization at the district level is robust, transparent, modern and involves the people in society widely.

To achieve the goals, from my research, I would suggest: firstly, to improve the relevant legislation for more liberalization; secondly, to enhance the structure and strengthening the local governing body at the district level, thirdly is to use modern tools and technology to train personnel (human resource development) to implement it, and the last suggestion, to increase the budget funding for the local district level. These factors proposed and the four mentioned above will be important issues that will implement the decentralization policy and the government's strategy efficiently and effectively nationwide in the future.

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