

Background:

UN-HABITAT's Business Partnership for Sustainable Urbanization.

Since the UN reform engaged by Kofi Annan, the United Nations seeks new alliances with the business community that can help it fulfill its mission, by supporting the UN's work, directly or indirectly. In the process of unprecedented urbanization changes, UN-HABITAT acknowledges that sustainable urbanization cannot be ensured without help from the private sector. UN-HABITAT therefore looks for partnerships with entities that display corporate responsibility in the community or which make a positive contribution to the urban environment, particularly in slums. We also look to companies and business leaders with a track record of socially-responsive behaviour, especially in their labour and urban environmental practices. During the 21st Session of the Governing Council, the Business Partnership for Sustainable Urbanization was launched. Its objective is to offer a new platform for the private sector to exchange business practices and models in sectors such as construction, housing finance, water and sanitation, energy, transport, disaster management and reconstruction.

Oxiana/Lane Xang Minerals and CSR

Oxiana is an international mining and exploration company listed on the Australian Stock Exchange. It is based in Melbourne, Australia, with a focus on Asia and Australia. Oxiana owns and operates the Sepon gold and copper mines in Laos and the Golden Grove base and precious metals operation in Western Australia. In Laos, the company's primary focus is in the Sepon Mineral District, a highly mineralized 400 square kilometer area which encompasses the present Sepon gold and copper mines. This district lies central to the broader 1,250km² area covered by Oxiana's Sepon Mineral Exploration and Production Agreement (MEPA) with the Government of Lao PDR. In Laos, Oxiana is running its operations under its subsidiary, Lane Xang Minerals Limited.

This project will form part of Oxiana's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), aimed at mitigating against the effects of its exploration activities on the communities living around the mine. Through its 'Community Relations and Development Department', it maintains excellent relations with the neighbouring communities, as well as with relevant district and provincial officials of the Government of Lao PDR. Some of the projects that Oxiana has already undertaken as part of its CSR include: road construction around Sepon, building of a community school and hospital, as well as a Business Development Center, where they provide vocational training to community members.

UN-HABITAT has on-going robust programmes run by the Water and Sanitation Section II of the WSIB, under the Water for Asian Cities (WAC) and Mekong Region Water and Sanitation Initiative (MEK-WATSAN).