

Country WID Profile
(Lao P. D. R.)

December 1999

Japan International Cooperation Agency

Planning Department

Country WID Profile (Lao P.D.R.)

Table of Contents

Abbreviation	Page
1. Basic Profile	
1-1 Socio-Economic Profile.....	1
1-2 Health Profile.....	2
1-3 Education Profile.....	2
2. General Situation of Women and Government Policy on WID/Gender	
2-1 General Situation of Women.....	4
2-2 Government Policy on WID/Gender.....	5
2-3 National Machinery.....	5
3. Current Situation of Women by Sector	
3-1 Education.....	8
3-2 Health.....	10
3-3 Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries.....	13
3-4 Economic Activities.....	16
4. WID/Gender Projects by Other Donors.....	19
5. WID/Gender Information Sources.....	23
6. References.....	25
7. Definitions.....	27

Abbreviation
(Lao P.D.R.)

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
CEDAW	Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
DPT	Diphtheria, Pertussis, and Tetanus
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
DLA	Department of Land and Agriculture
EFA	Education for All
EPI	Expanded Program on Immunization
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization, UN
F/P	Family Planning
GAD	Gender and Development
GDP	Gross (Values of) Domestic Product
GRID	Gender Resource Information Development
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation Agency
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
ILO	International Labor Organization
IMCH	Institute of Mother and Child Health
LWU	Lao Women's Union
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
POWA	People Opposing Women Abuse
ORT	Oral Rehydration Therapy
OSW	Office on the Status of Women
PHC	Primary Health Care
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Program
STD	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
SEWU	Self Employed Women's Union
UNAIDS	United Nations AIDS Program
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WID	Women in Development
WEU	Women's Empowerment Unit
WDB	Women's Development Bank
WHO	World Health Organization

1. Basic Profile

1-1 Socio-Economic Profile

Socio-Economic Profile							Ref.
Population('97)		Total	% of urban population		Population growth rate('90-95)		
Total		5million	22.0%		2.60%		1)
Female		51.0%					1)
Poverty			National	Rural	Urban		1)
Population below the poverty line('93)			46.1%	53.0%	24.0%		
Ethnic diversity							7)
Ethnic groups (Major)		Lao	Phu Thai	Khmu	Hmong	Leu	Katang
		50.5%	12.4%	10.9%	6.5%	2.9%	2.0%
Languages		Official language: Lao					
Economic indicators		GDP/Capita	Growth rate of real GDP		Inflation Rate	Gini Index*1	
		('97) 8)	('97) 8)		('98) 8)	('92) 1)	
		US\$200	6.7%		90.11%	30.4	
Public sector expenditure		Health	Education	Defense			
('97-'98)(% of GDP)		2.6%	2.4%	4.2%	1)	Aid/GNP('96)	
Industry/GDP ('95)		Agriculture	Industry	Service			1)
		52%	18%	30%	9)		
Labor indicators							Minimum wage('97)
Proportion of workers		Agriculture	Industry	Service			26,000kip/Month
by industry Total('94)		86%	4%	9%	*2		
Female		54%	29%	44%			5)
				Unemployment Rate *3		Male	Female
Total labor force		2million	1)	Urban		6.7%	6.2%
Female		47%	1)	Rural		-	-
				Total Unemployment		2.4%	
Labor force in formal/informal sector		Formal		Informal		Urban formal sector	
(% of total labor force)		Urban	54.5%	41.90%	4)	Male	67%
('94)		Rural	-	-		Female	30%
Decision-making		Female/Total				Female/Total	
Member of National Assembly('99)		21/99 persons 8)		General managers or higher level ('94)		581/8873 persons	
Ministers('97)		0/16 persons		Technicians (Engineering)('94)		595/1996 persons	
Deputy ministers('97)		6/32 persons					
Law for Women			Ratified Year	Details			
Family Law			1990	Monogamy, freedom of marriage			
Labour Law			1994	Labor standard and prohibition of work for women during pregnancy, maternity leave for women			
Ratification and signature of international law for women					Ratification	Year	
CEDAW					Ratified	1981	
Policy of WID							
National Women's Congress (by Lao Women's Union): Evaluation and review of national plan for women							
Informal policy to promote the number of female leaders in all levels of government since 1995							
Governmental organization of WID							
National Machinery		Lao Women's Union					

References

- 1) WB 1999
 2) UNDP 1999
 3) Urban Labor Force Survey (ULFS) ('94) cited in Labour Market Issues, ADB 1999
 4) ADB 1999
 5) National Statistical Centre 1997a
 6) Labour Law 1994
 7) ADB 1996
 8) Embassy of Japan in Laos 1999
 9) WB 1997

Note

- *1 0=total equality, 100=perfect inequality
 *2 Estimates from Results from the Population Census (1995)
 *3 ULFS calculates 'Unpaid family worker' into the category of those employed.

1-2 Health Profile

Health Profile						Ref.	
Life expectancy('98)	Male 52	Female 55	1)	Population growth rate	2.5%('78-'98)	1)	
Immediate causes of mortality	1. Malaria 2. Diarrhea 3. Respiratory infections					2)	
Expansion of health service ('97)	Population/Doctor			Population/Nurse and Midwife			
	5,727/Doctor		8)	13,836/Nurse and Midwife	8)		
Government expenditure to health	2.6%		1)	Use of traditional medical practices	Prevalent		
Infant mortality rate(per1,000 live birth)							
	Total ('98)	93 persons	1)	Immunization coverage (12-23month-old children)		6)	
	Female ('94)	108 persons	4)	BCG('96)	61.6%		
Under-5 mortality rate(per1,000 live birth)('98)			1)	DPT (3 times)('96)	28.3%		
	Male	154 persons		Oral Polio(3times)('96)	32.9%		
	Female	146 persons		Measles('96)	61.5%		
Family planning							
	Total fertility rate('98)*1	5.80%	1)	Contraceptive method*7 ('94)	IUD	3.5%	4)
	Maternal mortality rate*2('90-96)	650 persons	1)		Pills	12.9%	
	Births attendance rate*3 ('94)	14%	4)		Periodic/abstinence	7.4%	
	Contraceptive prevalence rate*4 ('98)	11%	5)		Injection	6.6%	
	Age at first marriage*5 ('94)	17.1	4)		Withdrawal	4.0%	
	Infants with low birth weight*6 ('96)	about 20 %	2)		Female sterilization	3.6%	
					Condom	1.4%	
Reproductive Health Care							
	Antenatal care*8 ('94)	26.7%	4)	Tetanus injection during pregnancy(2x) ('94)	16%	4)	
	Maternal anemia rate*9	35%	2)				
Nutrition (% of population)							
	Iodine deficiency('96)	95%	6)	ORH use rate*10 (Oral rehydration therapy)	24%	2)	
	Iodized salt consumption('96)	59%	6)	Mainnutrition *11 ('95)	Male 48% Female 47%	1)	
	Vitamin A deficiency ('97)	Prevalent ; especially among women and children				8)	
Community health facility							
	Access to safe drinking water	44%	9)	Access to sanitation facility	18%	9)	
HIV/AIDS							
	Statistics('98)	HIV infected		AIDS cases	% of pregnant women		
		265 persons	10)	86 persons	Unavailable *12	10)	
Impact of government policy reform (NEM) on health sector: IDS (1995) points out that the economic reform and the decline of assistance from the socialist block heavily impacted on the health sector. However, the report argues, the problems in the health service lays within their management style: planning, decision making and management.							

References

- 1) WHO 1999
- 2) UNICEF 1996
- 3) WB 1999
- 4) National Statistical Centre & Lao Women Training Centre 1995
- 5) IMCH National Birth Spacing Programme 1991, obtained through interview
- 6) National Statistical Centre 1997b
- 7) UNAIDS 1997
- 8) Ministry of Public Health ('97)
- 9) UNDP 1998
- 10) Embassy of Japan in Laos 1999

Note

- *1 Births per women
- *2 Mortality rate per 100,000
- *3 % of women who were attended by medical personnel (except traditional birth attendants).
- *4 % of women aged 15-49, among 13 out of 18 provinces
- *5 Average age of first marriage But this data only includes women aged 15+.
- *6 Under 2500kg
- *7 % of ever-married women aged 15-49, contraceptive method ever used This data excludes abortion.
- *8% of women who made visit to antenatal care facility more than once in past five years.
- *9 Prevalence of postnatal anemia
- *10 Oral Rehydration Therapy use rate at the time of diarrhea
- *11 Stanting (height for weight) among children under 5
- *12 There are at least 2 cases of reported incidence of perinatal (vertical) transmission

1-3 Education Profile

Education Profile						Ref.
Education system		Compulsory education (5year), Primary education (5year)				1)
Public expenditure on education						
% of GNP(1995)		2.4%				2)
Adult literacy rate *1('95)						
by sex		Male 73.5%		Female 47.9%		3)
by ethnicity - Lao		75.2%		Hmong 26.5%		
Phutai		63.0%		Leu 59.7%		
Khmmu		40.9%		Katang 30.3%		
Primary education('97-98)			6)	University level ('97-98)		6)
Net enrollment ratio Male		79%		Net enrollment ratio Male		3%
Female		72%		Female		1%
Secondary education('97-98) (Lower secondary)			6)	Female ratio in higher education(University)		6)
Net enrollment ratio Male		46%		by faculty ('98-'99) Humanities		49%
Female		33%		Social sciences		37%
Secondary education('97-98) (Higher secondary)			6)	Natural sciences		33%
Net enrollment ratio Male		22%		Medical science		43%
Female		15%		Engineering & architecture		10%
<i>Education in general</i>						
Number of schools and teachers ('97-98)		Teachers (persons)		Schools (places)		6)
		26,382		Primary		7,866
		7,889		Lower secondary		737
		3151		Higher secondary		163
Access to primary school		4,000 villages lack access to primary school				3)
Access to text books		- Pupils at grades 1 & 2 have one set of new textbooks materials and curriculum available in primary schools		- Primary teaching		3)
Training for female teachers		- Some teacher training seemed to be provided by Ministry of Education regardless of sex. Government budget for teacher training is insufficient to upgrade quality of teaching.				3)
Literacy education for adults		- Only 2% of total government budget for education is allocated to non-formal education. Variety of non-formal education programs were set up with collaboration of various international organizations and NGOs.				3)
<i>Religious & cultural concerns on education: Family economy, family attitudes, distance to school, culture not foster much thinking about youth's future and family burdens and chores weighed on female educational attainment.</i>						3)
<i>Impact of government policy reform on education sector: 'With the new economic reforms, the family cost of education has risen and in some cases become an obstacle to participation in education.'</i>						3)

References

- 1) Through an interview with Ministry of Education
- 2) WB 1999
- 3) Unicef 1996
- 4) National Statistical Centre 1995
- 5) National Statistical Centre 1998
- 6) Ministry of Education

Note

*1 % of population aged 15 and above

2. General Situation of Women and Government Policy on WID/Gender

2-1 General Situation of Women

General Situation of Women in Laos

In Laos, most ethnic groups believe in animism and Buddhism and spend their religious life honoring spirits in nature. Most of the areas in Laos are mountainous and are divided into sub-geographic regions. Economically, the people run small-scale subsistence farming and socially, they adhere to community based village lives based on kinship. The gender role of each sex is differentiated and distinct.

Lao women in general are said to be gentle, conservative and patient. Most of them are shy to express themselves in public. Lao Women's Union reports that women are often perceived as being weaker than men¹. In general, they often carry out domestic work, child-care, production and processing of food stuffs both for the family and the market, going to work if employed, and engage in regional activities for the family and locality. More precisely, women's roles vary among the diverse 68 ethnic groups and cultural traditions. Development practitioners at all levels should carefully consider the characteristics of gender relations and women's work burden in each ethnic group. Nonetheless, these ethnic groups can be grouped into three rough categories according to the geographic locations in which they live;

Lowland Lao (Lao Loum): Ethnic origin of these people accounts for as much as 50% from Thai ancestry, and are engaged in rice paddy agriculture. They believe in Theravada Buddhism and reincarnation. The male population earns merit by serving a short period as novices or monks, and women by offering their produces to the monks. Lowland Lao maintains but not necessarily adhere strictly to matrilocality, (husbands live in wives' house and the youngest daughters succeed the lineage) and women's role as mothers is respected in the family and their position is comparatively high.

Midland Lao (Lao Theung): They are engaged in cyclical slash and burn cultivation and rice paddy farming at the skirt of mountains. They maintain a patriarchal family structure and inheritance system. *Kamus* and *Kaas* account for 30% of the population.

Highland Lao (Lao Sung): They are referred to as *Hmong*, *Yaos*, etc. They make a living by cyclical slash and burn cultivation, hunting and gathering of forestry products. Maternal and infant mortality rates are high due to geographically disadvantaged environment as they live in mountainous and remote areas, and women's participation in decision-making is limited due to patriarchal family structure. Many women of non-Lao speaking minorities in mountainous areas have difficulties in participating in development programs due to illiteracy and lack of Lao speaking ability, and thus receive little benefits from development. Polygamy is still customary with some mountain tribes.

¹ LWU 1995

Development process is slow in penetrating to remote rural areas where the need is most high. Poor infrastructure and geographic environment make most of the services inaccessible, and cause severe regional disparity in terms of economy, quality of life, and provision of social services including education and health. High fertility rate, lack of health service and lack of labor/time-saving devices directly weigh on women's health and life expectancy. Heavy work-burden both inside and outside of family and lack of education facility are obstacles to women's quality of life improvement.

2-2 Government Policy on WID/Gender

Government Policy on WID/Gender

<Law>

Article 22, Chapter 3 of the Constitution of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (1991) stipulates that "All Lao citizens, irrespective of sex, social status, education, religion or ethnic group, are equal before the law". Furthermore, Article 24 proclaims that citizens of both gender enjoy equal rights in political, economic, cultural, social, and family affairs.

The Lao Government also ratified the international convention on Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1981. However, in reality, the conditions for men and women and their relative roles in decision making are different.

<Government Policy>

No special chapter was allocated for Women in Development (WID) in the National Development Plan (1996~2000), but reference is made on the necessity for promoting education for women. Programs adopted by the Lao National Women's Congress held every five years by the Lao Women's Union, a national machinery, correspond to women's development program in Laos. At present, an independent national development program is prepared with the assistance from UNIFEM.

2-3 National Machinery

Lao Women's Union

<Background>

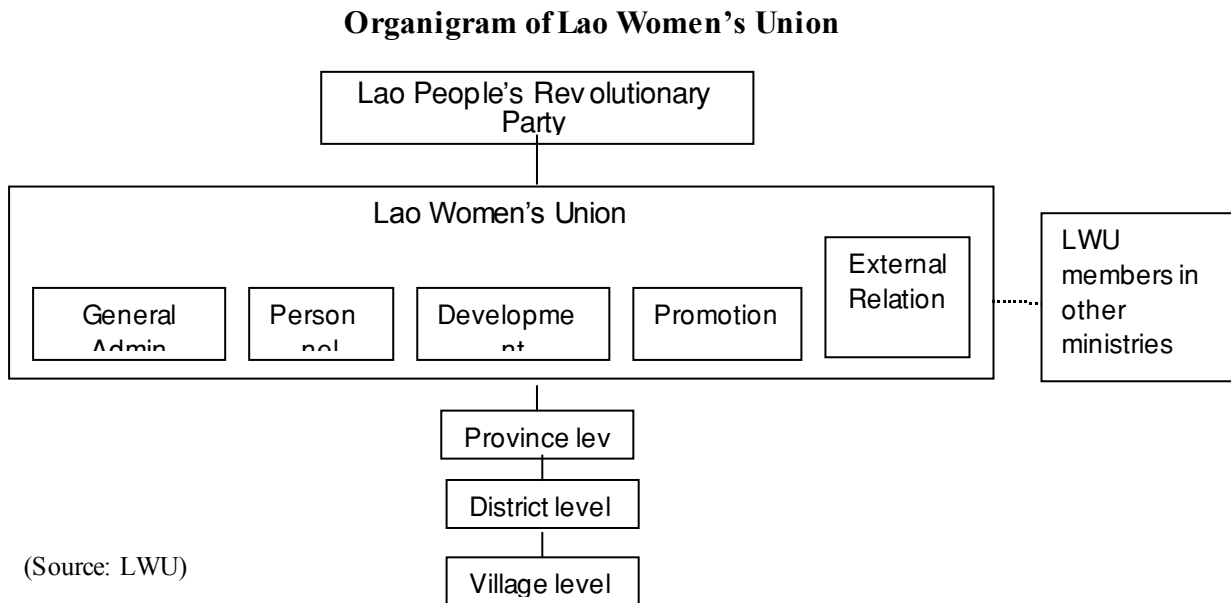
The Lao Patriotic Women Association, the predecessor to the current Lao Women's Union, was established in 1955 as a mass political mobilization organ of the socialist Lao People's Revolutionary Party (LPRP). In 1984 LPWA changed its name to Lao Women's Union at the national congress, restructured its top-down style centralized management into four-tiered management, comprising of central, province, district and village level. Since then, Lao Women's Union widened its scope to foster grassroots development and gender advocates². Lao Women's Union occupies equivalent status to a ministry. It has 20,000 members nationwide, but the members are not necessarily party members. 96% of all villages have members and they are reaching out to most of remote villages and diverse

² ADB 1996

ethnic groups.

<Organization >

The central headquarters of Lao Women's Union consists of general affairs division, personnel division, development division (education section, cultivation section, and training section), Promotion bureau and external relation division. (Cooperation section, liaison section) The organizational structure is shown as below.



<Main Activities>

- 1) Holding National Women's Congress and implementing matters decided.
- 2) Implementing resolutions of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party and policies of the government.
- 3) Promoting public relations and empowerment activities (issuing of LWU Journal, radio and TV broadcasting etc.).
- 4) Executing diverse programs such as quality of life improvement (education and literacy promotion, introduction of laborsaving devices etc.), rural development (income generation, promotion of small scale animal husbandry, various training and provision of credit schemes), environment and women, and family planning³.
- 5) Implementation of programs aiming at improving women's position.

Implementation and promotion of action plans of the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995, and extension of legal literacy, etc.

³ *ibid.*

<Constraints and limitations faced by Lao Women's Union>

Although Lao Women's Union has a constitutional mandate to advocate women's rights and gender issues, which is clearly merit, it also has constraints and limitations in several fields. According to the soft spots raised during its third Congress, it recognized several unmet gender needs and emerging trends:

- *Not achieving sufficient self-reliance*
- *Not sufficiently disseminating information and concerns to all levels, especially remote and minority areas.*
- *Not promoting development planning from the grassroots.*
- *Not recognizing changes created by the new market mechanisms.*
- *Not bringing enough intellectual and professional women into their ranks.*
- *Not urging the party to address women's concerns, so that women with ability do not give up their efforts.*
- *Not promoting the practice of equal status for women.*
- *Not encouraging women to speak out against corruption and social injustices.*
- *Not garnering enough financial assistance for development needs and training women in managing funds.*

Furthermore, several reports point out the problem of overload⁴ in Lao Women's Union's activities as a result of having many projects, as both the government institutions and international organizations rely on its members. The work overload caused serious under-performance in terms of other Lao Women's Union mandates and their own plan of action.

Moreover, some point out that if all women-related development activities are delegated to the Lao Women's Union⁵, mainstreaming women in managerial and technical positions in various organization could be seriously undermined.

⁴ UNICEF 1996, ADB 1996

⁵ UNIFEM and Schenk-Sandbergen, cited in ADB 1996

3. Current Situation of Women by Sector

3-1 Education

Education

<General Situation>

In 1990, the government started an Education for All (EFA) action plans that promote both formal and non-formal education. Although this action plan is not exclusively targeting women, all women may benefit from the plan. According to UNICEF (1996), the goals of the EFA are closely connected to the conditions set by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The women's education program section was established in the Ministry of Education in 1996, and is implementing programs dedicated to women.

Formal education consists of primary education (5 years), lower secondary education (3 years) and higher secondary education (3 years). Primary education is compulsory. As at 1995, public expenditure on education amounted to 2.4% of GNP⁶.

<Primary and Secondary Education>

Primary school enrollment rate for girls corresponds to approximately 90% of that of boys, and there is a severe regional disparity. Girls' enrollment rate is the highest in Vientiane Municipality and in Vientiane Province.

The present difficulties facing primary education in Laos consist of lack of schools (in absolute numbers), educational equipment and facilities, quality of educational substance (curriculums, teaching methods), textbooks and study materials, number and quality of teachers, and the adverse environment surroundings children (See Education Profile attached). However, the most apparent barriers to girls' education are domestic work load (helping housework and family business), lack of parents' awareness about education, and girls' role as supplemental labor to women's excessive work load. Necessity to amend school curriculums that fit into rural production cycle, especially during the busiest farming seasons, has also been pointed out.

Many children of non-Lao language minority groups drop out soon after enrolling in schools. The proportion of girls' enrollment becomes lower as they move higher up in grade, and this trend is more apparent for Midland Lao and Highland Lao than for Lowland Lao.

Pertaining to lower and higher secondary education, the number of female students accounts to about 60% of male students. Normal commuting distance to schools is about 8~20km, and due to lack of school facilities (no toilets, etc.) the attendance of female students after puberty is sometimes adversely affected.

⁶ WB 1999

Enrollment Ratio by Ethnic Group

Proportion of students by ethnicity	Lao Loum	Lao Sung	Lao Thung	Other	Total	
Primary school	72.6%	8.9%	18.0%	0.3%	100.0%	
% of female in enrollment by ethnicity	47.1%	36.3%	41.0%	44.6%	45.0%	
Lower secondary	88.3%	5.1%	5.9%	0.6%	100.0%	
% of female	42.1%	25.0%	28.0%	42.8%	40.4%	
Higher secondary	95.50%	1.90%	0.20%	2.40%	100.00%	*a)
% of female	38.70%	24.20%	10.50%	78.20%	37.90%	

*a) 1994-1995 data (Source: Ministry of Education)

< Literacy >

Women's illiteracy rate is 52% while that of men is 26%. In rural areas, female illiteracy rate is higher across all age groups due to economic conditions of the family, distance to school, heavy household work and low self-perception. The female illiteracy rate of non-Lao language minority groups between the ages of 36 to 55 is more than 70% and is much higher than the average female illiteracy rate, and the Lao language retention rate is low for those who learned Lao.

Since 1990, the government is promoting non-formal education with basic skill training in cooperation with international organizations including NGOs. Within the Ministry of Education, there is the Department of Non-formal Education and four other Non-formal Education Development Centers nationwide. They are carrying out programs such as curriculum development, training of leaders in the rural areas, extension of literacy, and life quality improvement and income enhancement. However, literacy curriculums and development of teaching materials for minority groups are behind.

As to promoting literacy in the future, there are needs for activities in functional literacy training that includes necessary information on life skills and economic activities.

<Multilateral Assistance >

Concerning multilateral assistance, UNICEF is engaged in implementation of training for teachers, promotion of educational programs for women and minority groups, development of study materials, and construction of schools. World Bank focuses its assistance in improving textbooks and evaluating educational effectiveness, and Asia Development Bank focuses mainly on strengthening secondary educational system and improving school curriculum. UNESCO is implementing programs for expanding literacy for minority groups.

<Impact of Economic Reform on Education Sector >

UNICEF (1996) argues that household budget for education has increased, and it becomes an obstacle to educational attainment of children in some cases.

3-2 Health



<Summary>

The condition of health and medical care in Laos is the worst when compared to neighboring countries and to income levels of developing countries relative to Laos. In Laos, the number of those who rely on traditional medical treatment (including treatment with herbal medicine and by sorcery) increases as the level of income drops. Population per doctor is as high as 5,727 and main causes for death are malaria, diarrhea, acute infectious disease of respiratory organs (ARI), etc. Since 1979, the Ministry of Health has been implementing the Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI) in cooperation with WHO, UNICEF and JICA, and has attained steady results as reflected in the percentage of vaccination for measles which reached over 60% in 1996. However, public hygiene in general is behind, and about 80% of the total population are living without proper sanitation (latrine), and more than 50% without access to safe drinking water.

Furthermore, due to lack of full medical attention in hospitals, women have to help take care of the sick despite the availability of space in hospitals. This leads to the problem of having to take the sick back home for care during the busiest farming seasons.

With regard to public expenditure, the government spent 2.4% of GDP on health sector in 1998. However, the government relies heavily on the expansion of health services assisted from overseas.

<Policy on Health and Reproductive Health>

As Laos is a country of small population, childbirth has been encouraged and family planning had been prohibited until 1990. The long-term pronatal population policy brought about high fertility rate, poverty and excessive work for women. However, since 1988, the government has been initiating promotion of birth spacing and in 1993, implemented the birth-spacing program with support from UNFPA, Lao Women's Union, and Mother and Child Health Institute(MCHI). The primary aim of birth spacing campaign is to cope with the problems of infant mortality rate, maternity mortality rate, and average life expectancy at birth, all of which are worse than other Asian countries.

However, the primary objective for the government in implementing birth-spacing is for mother and child health care improvement rather than for controlling population increase. Babies with low birth weight and malnutrition have started to decrease because of the national birth spacing program. The government is currently expanding this program aiming at decreasing infant and maternal mortality rates by at least 25% by the year 2000.

<Reproductive Health Service>

MCHI has its staffs at provincial and district level. Mother and child health facility is

often located in hospital compound⁷. Contraceptive advice and services are available from doctors, nurses, mid-wives and other medical assistants in public and private hospitals and clinics. These services are basically offered free of charge.

However, most villages do not have hospitals at locale, and thus many rural women have little access to such facility due to poor infrastructure and transportation system. The Fertility and Birth Spacing Survey conducted in 1994 showed that more than 70% of women never visited antenatal care facility during pregnancy. Only a few percent of women with access to such facility take regular check-ups. Lack of access to antenatal care caused low TT2 immunization rate. Limited access to reproductive health services lead many pregnant women to rely heavily on people with no training such as relatives and traditional birth attendants at the time of delivery.

More than 90% of childbirth take place at home. Those who use hospitals and clinic for giving birth is only 6.8%.

<Family Planning and Contraception>

Of those who are able to bear children, roughly 60% are those who do not wish to have children, and roughly 20% are those in need of birth spacing⁸. However, the availability of contraceptive methods is behind. The methods used for contraception are women's sterilization, pills, insertions and IUD. The use of condoms is still very low. Men's sterilization is rare.

<Nutritional Concern>

Animal protein intake is low for rural women and dependence on carbohydrates is high. The same holds for consumption of vegetables and fruit (lack of vitamins and iron) and necessary nutrition are not been secured. The poor diet condition heightens the mortality rate of mothers and infants. Although abortion is prohibited, there are many who have abortions discretely in forms of miscarriages, and this is one of the causes for women's fatalities.

<STD/HIV Infection>

As to STD infection, it is estimated unofficially that there are about seven times more people who are infected with STD than HIV. In reality, those who are infected with STD are left untreated, and there are many that suffer from nervous and optical disorders.

The number of those who are infected with HIV and those with AIDS in Laos is still low when compared statistically to neighboring countries. However, contrary to the official statistics, the estimates for those who are infected is different. There is a strong possibility for higher outbreak in the future due too the delays in availability of health and medical care.

Areas with high HIV infection and AIDS cases are Vientiane Municipality, Bokeo

⁷ UNICEF 1996

⁸ National Statistical Centre 1995

Province in the north and Champassak Province in the south. All of these areas border with Thailand.

The HIV blood tests are provided only at limited medical institutions and are not generally available. Last year NGOs and others conducted HIV/AIDS research on migrant workers returning from Thailand, and found that 10 of them were infected with HIV.

The National Committee for Control of AIDS (NCCA) was founded in 1988. Following the Midterm Program for Prevention of AIDS, The Lao National HIV/AIDS/STD Program (1996~2000) has been launched under the auspices of the National Institute of Epidemiology. Concrete measures have been laid out outlining the necessity to implement preventive measures involving each ministry concerned and also clarifying their responsibilities. Furthermore, they are also appealing to Lao Women's Union to incorporate promoting awareness on AIDS prevention to be included in this program.

Problems in reproductive health sector

- Lack of training for promoting health workers and volunteers at all levels.
- Lack of youths' interest in reproductive health.
- No physical or economic access to contraceptives.
- Necessity for communicating knowledge and information on health and health care (including HIV/AIDS/STD).

<Impact of Economic Reform (NEM) on Health Sector>

Institute of Development Studies (1995) points out that the economic reform since the end of '80s and the decline of assistance from the socialist block in the early '90s heavily impacted on the health sector in terms of financial resource and morale of workers. However, the report argues, the problems in the health service do not originated from the economic reform because the Lao health system accounted for the external resource rather than state subsidy.

3-3 Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

<Policy Stance on WID>

Little has done exclusively for women in this sector by the government. Lao Women's Union and international NGOs worked on providing village based revolving funds in order to make loan more accessible⁹.

<Agricultural Extension/Irrigation and Gender>

Among agricultural and irrigation extension workers who visit field sites, there are fewer women compared to men. The reasons can be for the fact that they need to work away from families in distant locations, etc. However, some international NGOs, recognizing the importance of women's role in agriculture, have trained women as agricultural extension workers and have offered them to contribute in improving livelihood at the village level.

Number of Agricultural Extension Workers (1994) (Unit: person)

	Total	Number of Female
Dept of Agricultural Extension (Central)	241	41
Provincial & District level	790	112
Total	1,038	153

Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

Number of Technical Level Staffs in Forestry Division (1997) (Unit: person)

	Total	Number of Female
Province & District level offices	1,381	259

Source: Dept of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture and forestry

<Utility Rights and Ownership of Agricultural and Forestry Land>

All land in Laos is considered nationally owned and thus, belonging to the government. However, women, mainly Lowland Lao women, have inherited more than 50% of the land following customary practices. Inheritance of land rights by custom practices is dominantly through maternal line.

The land law was enacted in 1990 and forests and communal land became subject to registration and taxation. Land that had been inherited previously through customary practices had to be registered through public procedures. Concerning ownership of land for agriculture and forestry, those who obtain the right to utilize land

⁹ UNICEF 1996

from the government by registering are entitled to have ownership of the land for three years, provided that they meet certain conditions and rules. (obtain sole income from land cultivation and no pending disputes exists as to the usage of land) However in reality, it is usually the men who often file with public proceedings without formal right to ownership (mainly due to lack of information, lack of knowledge, and illiteracy on the part of women) and proceed with obtaining land utility rights. As such, women end up losing land ownership they previously owned, and civil court cases have been increasing. It is feared that a new gender gap pertaining to land may occur if the new land bill is passed which has been proposed to the national assembly.

<Access to Micro Financing>

In 1993, the government owned Agricultural Promotion Bank (APB) started to subsidize the agricultural credit schemes and issued secured loans with joint obligations.

Although interest rates were 7~10%, slightly lower than those of commercial banks, people who procured funds from financial institutes were still few in Laos. Consequently, the actual lending level by the institutions was also low. In particular, women rarely used the loans since they required collateral.

The Lao Women's Union made use of village-based revolving funds for the provision of medical supplies, emergency procurement of food, and stock raising in cooperation with international NGOs, and found that such schemes were effective only when appropriate training had been implemented beforehand. The repayment rate of women in poor families was also high. However, the system lacked sustainability as a financing system since procurement of funds depended on outside funds. From such experiences, UNDP also reported that small scale financing schemes can only be sustainable, if they are combined with savings, close the interest rate gap with commercial banks, and make available appropriate accounting and managing capacity.

At present, conferences are held among government organizations, international organizations and NGOs regarding small scale financing in Laos. Members participating in this conference are the Central Bank, Lao Women's Union, Agricultural Promotion Bank (APB), Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Agriculture, and International NGOs. They are carrying out studies about the future methods of small scale financing.

Going forward, it is necessary to establish an effective low cost financing system with interest rates that are in line with commercial banks, give highest priority to utilizing savings, and to have a clear objective for and make better adjustments to the financing policy.

<Women's Participation in Production in Rural Areas>

In Laos, half of per capita intake for animal protein is taken from freshwater fish, and men carry out small-scale fishery. Women sell the family surplus on the market. Some large-scale commercial fishery is also conducted along the Mekong River and Nam Ngum River as well as around lakes.

In general, when irrigation facilities are constructed in villages, men take an active part in constructing and maintaining irrigation such as trenching work, (men) moving rocks and

bricks, (men) cutting woods, (men and women) cementing work, (men) maintaining water, (men) and controlling irrigation channel inlets, (men) and managing water resources.

The main agricultural activity of slash and burn cultivation is carried out in sequence from cutting (January - February), burning (April), shelving (March), seeding (May), to harvesting and weeding (September - October). The gender roles for work, although it differs by each minority group, mainly comprise of cutting (for men and women), burning (for men), seeding (for men and women), weeding (for women) and harvesting (for men and women). Men take care of the buffaloes and cattle and women sell the livestock they raised. Collection of firewood and water fetching are mainly women's work. Hunting for birds, deer and mice, etc. are done by men.

The government has set forth a resettlement program for those who are engaged in migratory slash and burn cultivation. The government targeted resettlement of 60% of such groups by the year 2000. The survey conducted by UNICEF reports that women who are engaged in slash and burn cultivation are strongly interested in programs for income improvement such as planting diverse crops in order to stabilize livelihoods. This is because slash and burn cultivation depends on the weather conditions, and production is unstable.

3-4 Economic Activities

Economic Activities

<Policy Stance on Women in Manufacturing and Mining Sector>

- Weaving sector: The government has a plan to promote preservation of traditional weaving skills and women's business opportunities in this sector.
- Labor standard:

Employment opportunities in the private sector have increased in urban area following the recent inflow of foreign-affiliated enterprises (the sewing industry, paper industry, etc.). However, problems in labor standard such as long working hours, low wages have also propped up. Although the Labor Law 1994 stipulates equal wages for men and women, minimum wage, provision of maternity leave, and right to form labor unions, such conditions apply only to public sector workers since there is no enforcement mechanism.

The Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare is currently gathering basic data on labor relations for future use in labor policy. However, there is no supervisory body for monitoring of labor standards, and labor unions are working on labor dispute mediations. Women workers tend not to claim their case in the event of nonpayment and delayed payment of salaries. Such trend is more apparent among women who migrates to urban areas in search for work.

< Informal Sector>

Percentage of labor force in urban informal labor sector is a little over 40% according to the Urban Labor Force Survey 1994. Out of total informal sector labor force, women occupy 70%.

<Labor Participation>

Laos's female labor force participation rate is as high as that of neighboring countries such as Cambodia, Vietnam, and Thailand. Women workers account for 47%¹⁰ of the total labor force. Women's condition of labor is generally worse than that of men.

Although it is said that those who work hardest are women, female representation for decision making when compared with that of men's at all levels of village, district, provincial and central government is less than 1%. Female ratio is low in managerial and technical position. Women account for 63.3% of total number of people who run small-scale business. Popular types of business among female entrepreneur are those in textile, food processing, retailing, etc.

Female ratio by sector (Urban, among the employed)

	Male	Female	Female Ratio
Public Sector	19,368	9,666	49.9%
Private Sector	12,082	6,231	51.6%

¹⁰ WB 1999

(Source: The Urban Labor Force survey 1994)

<Vocational and Technical Training>

There are three types of educational institutions for vocational training and technical training in Laos, namely, vocational training schools, technical training schools and higher technical schools. Many female students attend courses in food processing, sewing, secretarial skills and accounting skills. Many male students attend courses in woodworking, carpentry, machinery, electronics, electricity, ceramics, civil engineering and irrigation, etc. The higher the level of technical education, the rate of female enrollment decreases.

It is becoming increasingly more difficult for female graduates to obtain jobs in this sector generally due to less demand for workforce in the public sector. Less workforce demand in public sector is due to closure and/or privatization of state-owned enterprises.

Previously, there were three universities (Vientiane Teachers' College, Polytechnic School, and Medical School) in Laos but in 1996, they were merged with nine other higher vocational training institutions to form the Lao National University under the university reformation program of Asian Development Bank (ADB). According to the statistics of each former educational institutions, in FY1995~1996, women's enrollment rate in various fields excluding teaching and medical health care were limited as shown in the table below.

Technical School Enrollment (1998-1999)

Name of School	Total number of students		% of female
	Total	Female	
<i>Dong Khamxang -Agriculture dept.</i>	309	89	29%
<i>Irrigation school</i>	104	6	6%
<i>Communication school (Municipality)</i>	262	40	15%
<i>Public Health school (Municipality)</i>	540	355	66%
<i>Postal school</i>	40	12	30%

Source: Ministry of Education

<Provision of Childcare facility>

State-run nurseries that had been operating during 1975-1990 have been privatized. Parents who need childcare facility rely on their family, relatives, and neighbors.

<Other Social Development Indicators>

% of Household with electricity thru public net	20.90%			1)
Lighting within household	Gas	Electricity	Candle	2)
	59.00%	28%	10%	
Main source of energy for cooking	Wood	Charcoal	Electricity	1)
	92.70%	4.30%	1.90%	
Distance to public service	Post office	Public transportaion	Major road	2)
	22km	12km	10km	
Spread of media	Radio	TV	Video	2)
	56%	19%	2%	

1) *National Statistical Center 1997*

2) *Expenditure and Consumption Survey and Social Indicator Survey 1995*

4 WID/Gender Projects by Other Donors

Project/Programs	Implementing Agency	Donor	Duration	Budget (US\$)	Gender-related Issues	Reference
Education						
Women's Education Project (Vientiane)	Ministry of Education	ADB	1996-1998	75,000		1)
Non-formal Education for Women and Ethnic Minorities (Oudomsay, Sekong)	ESF	ESF	1997-1997	15,000	1) To provide and to increase opportunities for ethnic minorities and women to participate in basic education and to be active in their own development 2) To establish a non-formal education structure from provincial local human resources and to build a capacity to effectively manage NFE 3) To produce attractive reading materials relevant to community needs	1)
Distance Basic Education and Women's Literacy Basic Skills (Nationwide)	UNESCO	Norway	1997-1997	905,000		1)
Children and Adult Education Programme (Houaphanh, Phongsaly, Xieng Khouang)	MCC []	MCC ZOA-NET	1996-1998	12,000	Support village schools construction, non-formal education of villages and women's capacity building. Support new village initiatives for development	1)
Non-formal Education for Women and Ethnic Minorities (Luang Namtha)	ESF	ESF	1994-1998	687,000	1) To provide and to increase opportunities for ethnic minorities and women to participate in basic education and to be active in their own development 2) To establish a non-formal education structure from provincial local human resources and to build a capacity to effectively manage NFE 3) To produce attractive reading materials relevant to community needs	1)
Community Education in Saravane and Attopeu	WE []	WE	1993-1997	233,000	1) To design, implement, evaluate and refine a community education and action program in conjunction with community members, particularly women 2) To strengthen the capabilities and experience of government officials to support this process 3) To develop an approach among national, provincial and local agencies to support and expand the program	1)
Improvement in educational Administration and Ordinances (Nationwide)	Ministry of Education	IDA	1993-2000	19,176,000	Restructuring the education administration and the education act; improvement of the capacity of the information center within the Ministry of Education and Sport; development of curriculum and text books; improvement of non-formal education; establishment of project implementation unit within the Ministry of Education and	1)
Improvement in Capability of Information Center of Ministry of Education and Sports	Ministry of Education					
Quality Improvement in Primary Education and Women's Literacy (Nationwide)	Ministry of Education	UNICEF	1992-1997	4,778,000	Improvements in the quality of primary education through education reform, expanded access to primary education for school age children, and improving literacy rates amongst women.	1)
Non-formal Education Center-National Program	Ministry of Education	WE	1993-1994			
Comprehensive Non-formal Education Center Development including Income Uplift	Ministry of Education	WE	1993-1995			
Health						
Mother and Child Health Related rural Development []	Mother and Child Health Institute	SCF-UK	1996-2000	698,000	To improve the quality of healthcare and nutritional status of children and their mothers in the province through an integrated rural development approach. To improve health systems information and planning at all levels in the province and disseminate lessons to a wider audience	1)
Population/Reproductive Health and Sexuality Education Through Formal and Non-formal Education System (Nationwide)	UNFPA	UNFPA	1998-2000	303,000	Population/reproductive health and sexuality education through formal and non-formal education	1)
Pilot Project to Integrate Population Education in Formal and Non-formal Population (Champassak)	Ministry of Education	UNFPA	1995-1998	216,000	To have contributed to the government's policies and strategies, particularly those concerning Maternal and Child Health (MCH) and birth spacing to improve quality of life	1)
Mother and Child Health Care Project	[] *1 . Khammuan Province	SCF(UK)	1995-2000	697,965		2)
Mother and Child Health Care Cooperation Project	Ministry of Health	? *2	1996-1998	58,148		2)
Mother and Child Health Department Programme Support Khammouane Province	Mother and Child Health Institute	SCF-UK	1993-1997	684,000	Training and equipment to assist the MCH Institute in improving training standards, MCH services, and coverage in order to decrease infant and maternal mortality, and to promote good infant and maternal health.	3)
Health and Nutrition	Ministry of Health	UNICEF	1992-1997	11,254,000	Immunization, control of diarrhoeal diseases, malaria and acute respiratory infections; and mother and child health to accelerate the reduction of infant and maternal mortality rates.	3)
Situation analysis of Women and Children/Planning and Monitoring of Project	Ministry of Health	UNICEF				
Maternal Health	Ministry of Health	WHO				
AIDS Prevention	Ministry of Health	WHO				
Training of Health Worker at District Level	Ministry of Health	CIDSE				
Gravity Water for the Mitigation of Women and Children's Burden	Ministry of Health	MCC				
PHC Project	Ministry of Health	Japan/WHO				

Project/Programs	Implementing Agency	Donor	Duration	Budget (US\$)	Gender-related Issues	Reference
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery						
Small Scale of Rural Development Project in 20 Villages, Khoksa At, Sainthany District	LWU	Foundation for Integrated Agriculture Management	1997-1999	461,805		2)
Gender and Development Project	LWU	CAA	1995-1998	130,000	Project goal is to strengthen the status and role of rural women in Lao PDR by: 1) Strengthening the capacity of provincial and district LWU staff in participatory/community-based development approaches including PRA and gender analysis; 2) Supporting PRA and gender studies in target communities; 3) Supporting study trips and exchanges between women and men from different villages districts and provinces; 4) Providing revolving funds / micro credit for community initiatives; 5) Village trainings; 6) Documentation and networking	1)
Comprehensive Rural Development		Save the Children Fund (Australia)	1994-1998			
Organization of Women's Group for Agriculture Irrigation		Community Aid Program	1994			
Women in Rural Development (Vientiane)	JVC	JVC	1992-1997	112,000	1) To promote community development with gender concern at various administrative levels such as province, district and village 2) To improve the quality of life and sustainable agriculture in villages 3) To strengthen the capacity of provincial LWU for development	1)
Art and Craft Preservation and Promotion for Lao Women (Luang Prabang, Vientiane)	JVC	JVC	1992-1997	66,000	Textile Production Technology 1) Preserve the textile producing technique and design, patterns 2) to promote and upgrade training of the weaving groups on the appropriate technology marketing and knowledge transfer to the village 3) To share the experiences on dyeing technique, patterns and marketing between the weaving groups in the country and abroad 4) To support revolving fund for the weaving group for the promotion of traditional textile production	1)
Productivity Improvement Program for Minority People in Poverty		Quaker	1989-1994		Income Uplift	
Economic Activities						
Income Generating Activity in Sayaboury	[]	UNDP	1997-2001	1,145,000	Alleviate poverty in rural communities through the comprehensive development of off-farm/non-farm income generating activities and assistance through product development and marketing of on-farm income generating activities among the rural poor with a particular focus on women and ethnic groups.	1)
Income Generating Activity in Oudomxay	[]	UNDP	1997-2002	690,000	Alleviate poverty in rural communities through the comprehensive development of off-farm/non-farm income generating activities and assistance through product development and marketing of on-farm income generating activities among the rural poor with a particular focus on women and ethnic groups.	1)
Women's Employment Opportunity Training Research		Netherlands	1994	13,000		
Women in Small and Medium Enterprises in Lao (Nationwide)	LWU	UNESCO	1996-1997	1,000	Working document for a Regional Workshop on 'Women's Empowerment in Small and Medium Term Enterprise' to take place in Bangkok in June 1997. The Women in Small and Medium Enterprises in Lao is a case-study on the situation of women in economic life, particularly in regards to the quality of women's rights with men in small and medium enterprises	1)
Phongsaly Rural Women's Micro-Credit Project (Saravane)	SCA	SCA	1994-1997	24,000	Increase the income of rural women and improve living standards, improve skills in running small enterprises. Revolving loan funds provided for weaving, rice and cowbanks, fish and small animal raising and cash crops; one GFWS and small scale irrigation system	1)
Capacity Building for Development Administration						
Strengthening Lao Women's Union on Management and Public Awareness on Gender Sensitive Issues	LWU	Japan via UNDP	1998-2000	180,000	Capacity building of LWU in order to improve its ability to provide women the information and resources necessary for their equal participation in Lao society. Two pillars of focus: its human resource capacity and its communication capacity	1)
Gender Resource Information and Development Programme (GRID)	LWU	Norway via UNDP	1997-2000	892,000	Share information networking on gender and development lessons / Promote gender awareness / Train government officials in gather and use gender sensitive development planning	1)
English Skill Upgrading for Staff of Lao Women's Union Center	LWU	WFP	1997-1997	4,000		2)
Women's Opportunities for Income Generation	WE LWU	WE	1995-1997	29,000	1) Provide LWU staff at all levels with information to formulate strategies that support women's access to cash income; 2) Train LWU staff at all levels in designing, planning, implementation and reporting of future research that can contribute to the development of policies and programs in support of women's involvement in the economic sector	1)
Women in Action field Project		UNICEF	1995			
Training Center Construction of Lao Women's Union		Japan	1995			
Lao Women's Union Assistance		UNICEF	1994-1995			
Administrative Development for Promotion of Minority Women's Participation	Prime Ministers Office	UNDP	1993-1997			
Development and Women (Capacity Building for Lao Women's Union)	LWU	UNICEF	1992-1997	1,829,000	Equipment and other support to strengthen the administrative capacity of the Lao women's Union and the provincial women's unions; improvement in the welfare of rural women	1)
Lao Women's Union Assistance		SIDA	1991-1994			
Handicraft Industry Strengthening Program		UNDP	1984-1994	3.2 million		
Assistance for Lao Women's Union (Development and Women's Role)		CIDSE				

Project/Programs	Implementing Agency	Donor	Duration	Budget (US\$)	Gender-related Issues	Reference
Others						
Local Development Program		JICA	1997-1999		The project consists of four different sub-projects: 1) Community based environmental health improvement project; 2) Income generation activity project in Oudomxai; 3) Lao Red Cross Blood project; and 4) Project for supporting women's lives	
Children in Difficult Circumstances (Nationwide)	CWS Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare	CWS	1996-2000	32,001	Awareness building on child prostitution and trafficking in children	
Strengthening Rural Women's Socio-Economic Position (Saravane)	LWU	WE	1996-1997	38,000	To assist rural women to assess the impact of environmental socio-economic and infrastructural changes on traditional and existing sources of livelihood, and to evolve suitable strategies by which they can strengthen their economic capacity and control over livelihood sources.	1)
Women's Employment Development Project (Vientiane)	LWU	CARE	1996-1996	1,000	Building on a survey of 18000 young unemployed female high school graduates in vientiane preecture, conducted by the LWU, this pilot project provided training in computers to 10 women. Next, the women had a 2 and a half months period of work study and english, and finally they were assisted to find long-term employment.	3)
Men & Women's Roles Development Project	LWU	CAA	1995-1997	120,000		2)
Rural Women Development Project, Sayabury (Phase II)	LWU	SCA	1995-1997	503,844		2)
Rural Women Development Project, Bolikhamsay (Phase II)	LWU	SCA	1995-1997	259,072		2)
Family Planning and Socio-Economic Development Program		UNFPA	1993-1995			

*1 The implementing agency not specified in 'Directory of NGOs in Lao PDR 1997'

*2 As it is in 'Directory of NGOs in Lao PDR 1997'

Reference:

1) Development Co-operation Report Lao PDR 1998

2) Directory of NGOs in Lao PDR 1997

3) Development Co-operation Report Lao PDR 1997

5 WID/Gender Information Sources

	Name and Speciality	Past Records (Project, etc.)	Report and Writing	Contact Address
Government Organization	Lao Women's Union			Manthatoulath Road, Vientiane, P.O. BOX 59 Tel&Fax (856-21)-214306
	<i>Gender Resource Information and Development Centre (GRID)</i>			Ban Sapanthong Kang Vientiane, P.O. BOX 59 Tel (856-21)-413228 Tel&Fax (856-21)-416343 Email grid@pan-laos.net.la
	Ministry of Health			Simeuang Road, Vientiane Tel (856-21)-214006 Fax (856-21)-214001
	Ministry of Education			Lane Xang Avenue, Vientiane P.O. BOX 67 Tel (856-21)-214722 Fax (856-21)-216006
	Ministry of Industry & Handicraft			Nang Borne Road P.O. Box. 4708 Tel (856-21)-2141435
	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry			Lane Xang Road, Vientiane Tel (856-21)-212342-44
	Ministry of Justice			Lane Xang Avenue, vientiane Tel (856-21)-414102
	Ministry of Labour & Social Welfare			Pang Khan Road, Vientiane Tel & Fax (856-21)-314852
	National Statistic Center			Xiengve Section sikkhot Dist, VY
	Mother Child Health Institute			B P 2191 Tel (856-21)-214036
	National Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology			Km 3, Thadeua RD, Tel (856-21)-315500
	Lao National Camber of Commerce & Industry			Phonsay Road, Vientiane Road Tel (856-21)-412392 Fax (856-21)-414383
	The Lao Federation of Trade Union			87, Lane Xang Ave, P.O. Box 780 Tel (856-21)-212752 Fax (856-21)-212752
International Organization	UNDP			Phon Kheng Road, P.O.Box 345, Vientiane Tel (856-21)-213390-1, 94-97 Fax (856-21)-212029, 214819
	UNICEF			Quarter Wat Nak, KM-3 Thadeua Road, P.O.Box 1080, Vientiane Tel (856-21)-315200-01, 315203-04 Fax (856-21)-314852
	<i>UNFPA(United Nations Population Fund)</i>			Phon Kheng Road, P.O.Box 345, Vientiane Tel (856-21)-413467, or 213390 c/o UNDP Fax (856-21)-412398
	UNHCR			Phong Kheng Road, Vientiane Tel (856-21)-212038-9 Fax (856-21)-213385
	IMF			c/o Bank of Lao PDR, Yonnet Road, P.O.Box 19, Vientiane Tel (856-21)-213106 Fax (856-21)-214986
	FAO			Phonh Xay Road, Vientiane Tel (856-21)-414503 Fax (856-21)-414500
	WHO			That Luang Road, P.O.Box 343 Tel (856-21)-414264 Fax (856-21)-
	<i>WB Liaison Office</i>			Patou Xay, Nehru Road, P.O.Box 345, Vientiane Tel (856-21)-414209 Fax (856-21)-414210
	SIDA			Sokpaluang Rd. P.O. Box 230 Tel (856-21)-216489
	GTZ			PhongthanhRd. Sisangvone St. VT Tel (856-21)-412586 Fax (856-21)-412585

	Name and Speciality	Past Records (Project, etc.)	Report and Writing	Contact Address
NGO	Care International Lao PDR (<i>CARE</i>)			137/17 Thong Toum Road, Ban Thong Toum, Vientiane, P.O.Box.4328 Tel (856-21)-217988 Fax (856-21)-212991
	<i>Church World Service (CWS)</i> Community Aid Abroad (CAA)			082/1 Chao Anou Street, Vientiane P.O. Box. 2927
	Cooperation Internationale pour le developement et la Solidarite (<i>CIDSE</i>)			19/3 Chao Anou, Vientiane, P.O. Box. 2795 Tel&Fax (856-21)-219021
	Deutcher Entwicklungsdienst (<i>DE</i>) Ecoles Sans Frontieres (<i>ESF</i>)			P.O. Box. 2455, Vientiane 144/4 Chao Anou, Vientiane, P.O. Box. 3182
	<i>JOICFP</i>			Hoken Kaikan Shinkan Bldg. 1-10 Ichigaya Tamachi, Shinjyuku-ku, Tokyo 162-0843 Tel (81-3)-3268-5875 Fax (81-3)-3235-7090 Email joicfp@i.bekkoame.ne.jp
	JVC			342 Sisangvone Road, Vientiane Tel (856-21)-413942 Fax (856-21)-413083
	Mennonite Central Committee (<i>MCC</i>)			P.O. Box. 1118 Tel&Fax (856-21)-312901
	Norwegian Church Aid (<i>NCA</i>)			That Luang Road, P.O. Box. 4804, Vientiane Tel&Fax (856-21)-413867
	Oxfam			P.O. Box. 4723, Vientiane Tel (856-21)-212995
	Red Cross			Lao Red Cross Society, P.O. Box. 2948 Tel&Fax (856-21)-215935
	Save the Children Fund Australia (<i>SCA</i>)			082 Luang Prabang Road, Ban Nakham Sikhottabong, District, P.O. Box. 2783, Vientiane Tel (856-21)-212995
	Save the Children Fund U.K. (<i>SCF (UK)</i>)			BP1146, Vientiane Tel (856-21)-216286/216744 Fax (856-21)-216285
	SVA			P.O.Box 4561, Vientiane Tel (856-21)-216723 Fax (856-21)-216424 Email jsrca@pan-laos.net.la
	<i>Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP)</i> World Concern (<i>WC</i>)			P.O. Box P.O. Box 2938, Vientiane Tel (856-21)-413952 Fax (856-21)-414234
	World Education (<i>WE</i>) World Vision Lao PDR (<i>WV</i>)			P.O. Box. 4697, Vientiane Tel&Fax (856-21)-213059 41 Pangkham Road, P.O. Box. 312 Tel (856-21)-216184 Fax (856-21)-215306
	ZOA-Lao PDR			P.O. Box. 4224, Vientiane Tel (856-21)-313071

6 References

Title	Author	Year	Available at
General			
<i>Basic Statistics 98: About the Socio-economic Development in the Lao PDR</i>	National Statistical Centre, State Planning Committee	1999	GRID Centre
<i>Laos Gaikyo</i>	Embassy of Japan in Laos	1999	Embassy of Japan
<i>Development Co-operation: Lao PDR 1998 Report</i>	UNDP Laos	1999	UNDP
<i>National Human Development Report 1998</i>	UNDP/State Planning Committee/National Statistical Centre	1999	WHO
<i>The World Health Report 1999</i>	WHO, Geneva	1999	WHO
<i>The World Development Report 1998/99</i>	WB	1999	WB
<i>UNICEF Lao PDR: Annual Report 1998</i>	UNICEF Laos	1998	UNICEF
<i>The World Development Report 1997</i>	WB	1998	WB
<i>The World Health Report 1998: Live in the 21st Century</i>	WHO, Geneva	1998	WHO
<i>World Development Indicators 1997</i>	WB	1997	JICA
<i>UNICEF/Government of Lao PDR: Master Plan of Operation 1998-2002</i>	UNICEF Laos	1997	UNICEF
<i>Results from the Population Census 1995</i>	National Statistical Centre, State Planning Committee	1997	GRID Centre
<i>Gender in Development from Policy to Practice: Discussion Paper (unpublished)</i>	Hermien Rodenburg for UNDP	1996	JICA
Country Operational Strategy Study for Lao PDR	ADB	1996a	
Children and Their Family in the Lao PDR	UNICEF	1996	JICA
Country Profile with a Gender Focus: Lao PDR	GTZ	1996	
Country Report on Women in Lao PDR, National Committee for the Preparation for the 4th World Conference on Women (Beijing 1995)	Lao Women's Union	1995	UNDP, GRID Centre
<i>Economic Development in Lao PDR: Horizon 2000</i>	Chi Do Pham	1994	GRID Centre
<i>Labour Law of Lao PDR</i>	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare	1994	
<i>Statistical Compendium on Women in Asia and the Pacific</i>	United Nations, New York	1994	GRID Centre
Working Document for Lao Participants to NGO Forum on Women in Beijing, August, 1995	UNIFEM	1992	
Country Gender analysis for the Lao PDR	SIDA	1992	UNDP, GRID Centre
Education • Training			
<i>Lao PDR - Women's Education Project: Interim Report and Final Report</i>	ADB, Presented by Eduplus Management Group Inc.	1997	GRID Centre
<i>Technical Assistance to the Lao People's Democratic Republic for the Women's Education Project</i>	ADB	1996b	JICA
Health and Reproduction			
<i>A Demographic Perspective on Women in Development in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam</i>	ESCAP	1998	UNICEF
<i>Country Profile: Lao PDR</i>	UNAIDS	1997	JICA
<i>Report on Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS)</i>	National Statistical Centre, State Planning Committee	1997	GRID Centre
<i>Report on The Fertility and Birth Spacing Survey in Lao PDR</i>	National Statistical Center & Lao Women Training Centre	1995	GRID Centre
<i>Impact of Economic and Institutional Reforms on the Health Sector in Laos: Implications for Health System management</i>	Stephen Holland et al., Institute of Development Studies, Brighton, UK	1995	White Rabbit Consultant
<i>Women and Children in the Lao PDR: Results from the Lao Social Indicator Survey</i>	Ministry of Public Health & Mother and Child Health Institute	1994	JICA
<i>Report on Cultural Views on Reproduction & Main factors influencing contraceptive use in Lao PDR</i>	Ministry of Public Health	1994	GRID Centre
<i>Traditional Child Rearing Practices among Different Ethnic Groups in Houaphan Province, Lao PDR</i>	UNICEF, Presented by Somporn Phanjaruniti et al.	1994	UNICEF

Title	Author	Year	Available at
<i>Socio-Cultural and Economic Determinants of Contraceptive Use in the Lao PDR: Results of a National Survey in 7 Provinces</i>	Ministry of Public Health & Mother and Child Health Institute	1993	JICA
Economic Activities			
Microfinance Survey-Lao PDR Vientiane 1996	UNDP/UNCDF	1996	
Country Paper on Improving the Access of Women to Formal Credit and Financial Institutions in the Lao PDR	ESCAP	1994	
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery, Rural Areas			
<i>Gender and Land Documents: How Do Society's Perceptions of Gender Affect Women?</i>	LWU/GRID	1999	UNDP
<i>Gender, Culture and Land Rights in Rural Laos</i>	Asian Institute of Technology, presented by Loes Schenk-Sandbergen	1998	GRID Centre
<i>Land, Gender and Social Issues in Lao PDR: Towards Gender Sensitive Land Titling</i>	Loes Schenk-Sandbergen & Hermien Rodenburg, Chansamone Phengkay	1997	AusAID
<i>Special Report: Gender Development in Irrigated Agriculture, Sustainable Irrigated Agriculture Project (SIRAP)</i>	Mekong River Commission	1996	JICA
<i>Final Report: Gender Development in Irrigated Agriculture in SIRAP Irrigated Schemes June 1993 to December 1995</i>	Mekong River Commission	1996	GRID Centre
<i>Field, Forest, and Family: Women's Work and Power in Rural Laos</i>	Carol J. Ireson	1996	GRID Centre
<i>Report: Gender Development Evaluation Workshop Scheme Level, Sustainable Irrigated Agriculture Project (SIRAP)</i>	Mekong River Commission, Bangkok, Thailand	1995	JICA
Women in Rice Field and Offices Irrigation in Laos, Gender Specific Case-Studies in Four villages	Loes-Schenk-Sandbergen Outhaki et al.	1995	
Labor			
<i>Labour Market Issues: Lao People's Democratic Republic</i>	ADB	1999	GRID Centre
<i>Project Document: Women's Career Development Project in Vientiane</i>	CARE International	1995	UNDP
<i>Promotion of Equality of Opportunity and Treatment for Women Workers: An ILO Manual for Asia and the Pacific</i>	ILO Regional Office for Asia and Pacific, ILO EASMAT	1994	UNDP
Unemployed Women in Vientiane, Survey Result	CARE International	1994	
<i>Urban Labour Force Survey (ULFS)</i>	National Statistical Centre, State Planning Committee	1994	
Others			
<i>1997-1998 Vientiane Social Survey Project</i>	Institute for Cultural Research, Ministry of Information and Culture	1999	GRID Centre
<i>Needs Assessment on Cross-border Trafficking in Women and Children - the Mekong Sub-region-, Prepared for the UN Working Group on Trafficking in the Mekong Sub-region</i>	Therese M. Caouette	1998	GRID Centre
<i>Sexually Exploited and Sexually Abused Children: A qualitative Assessment of their health needs and services available to them in selected provinces and cities in Lao PDR</i>	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Department of Social Welfare	1998	GRID Centre
<i>Farmer, War-wife, Refugee, Repatriate: A Needs Assessment of Women Repatriating to Laos</i>	Dia Cha and Jacquelyn Chagnon	1993	GRID Centre
<i>Lao Women: Yesterday and Today</i>	Ngaosyvathn Pheuiphanh	1993	GRID Centre

7. Definition

<Technical Terms>

Gender

Analytical concept to clarify the social role of men and women and interrelation between them. Sex (biological) is basically impossible to change, while gender implying the role of men and women and their interrelationship is likely to change according to social notion and sense of values.

Informal sector

Part of economy consisting of small competitive individual or family firms listed in the labor indicators. According to the definition of ILO, those engaged in this sector have simple technology, insufficient amount of capital, unidentified business location, minimum number of employees (or none of them), lack of legality and registration, and no capability of bookkeeping.

WID (Women in Development)

Concept of development incorporating women's participation into development processes, taking it into account that women are active agents and beneficiaries of development.

Reproductive health/rights

Health/Rights concerning sex and reproduction. To be able to live safe and satisfied sex life, and to have freedom to decide whether, when and how many children to deliver.

National machinery

Administrative organization to promote equal participation between men and women, and to implement and strengthen policies related to women, and to supplement organization for women.

Empowerment

To empower individuals or groups in political, economical and social sense

Affirmative action

Prioritized positive measure to promptly correct the difference, in the case that discriminated groups are placed in extremely unequal conditions to other groups, due to the discrimination accumulated in the past

Access and control

Access is to be able to use resources and services for the economic activity, or to have a right to exercise them. Control is a right to decide how to manage resources and services or to own them.

Reproductive activity

Activity to reproduce for the next generation including to give a birth and raise the children, and to sustain the daily life, for instance, washing and cooking

<Indicators>

Inflation rate

Instead, GDP deflator is used.

Gini coefficient

Aggregate numerical measure of income inequality ranging from 0 to 1. 0 means perfect equality, and 1 perfect inequality. Larger than 0.4 are supposed to be high inequality.

Percentage of Women's Income

There are no appropriate data comparable to each country. UNDP works out that the women's income is 75% of men's in non-agricultural sector.

Total fertility rate

Average number of children whom a woman delivers in all her life

Under-one mortality rate

Annual number of infants who die among 1,000 newborn babies within 1 year after the birth

Under-five mortality rate

Annual number of infants who die 1,000 newborn babies within 5 years after the birth among
Maternal mortality rate

Annual number of mothers who die among 100,000 cases of delivery because of pregnancy

Percentage of births attended by trained health personnel

The rate of births with the help of doctors, nurses, midwives, trained health personnel,
or trained traditional midwives

Percentage of infants with low birth weight

The rate of newborn children of which the birth weight is less than 2,500 grams

Oral Rehydration Therapy (ORT) use rate

The rate of using oral rehydrate salt or substitute solution for
under-five infants having diarrhea

Enrolment ratio of primary and secondary school

Total enrolment ratio (or gross enrolment ratio) is the rate of pupils going to school
with no respect to school age against population at the school age. Net
enrolment ratio is the rate of pupils going to school at the school
age against the people at the school age.