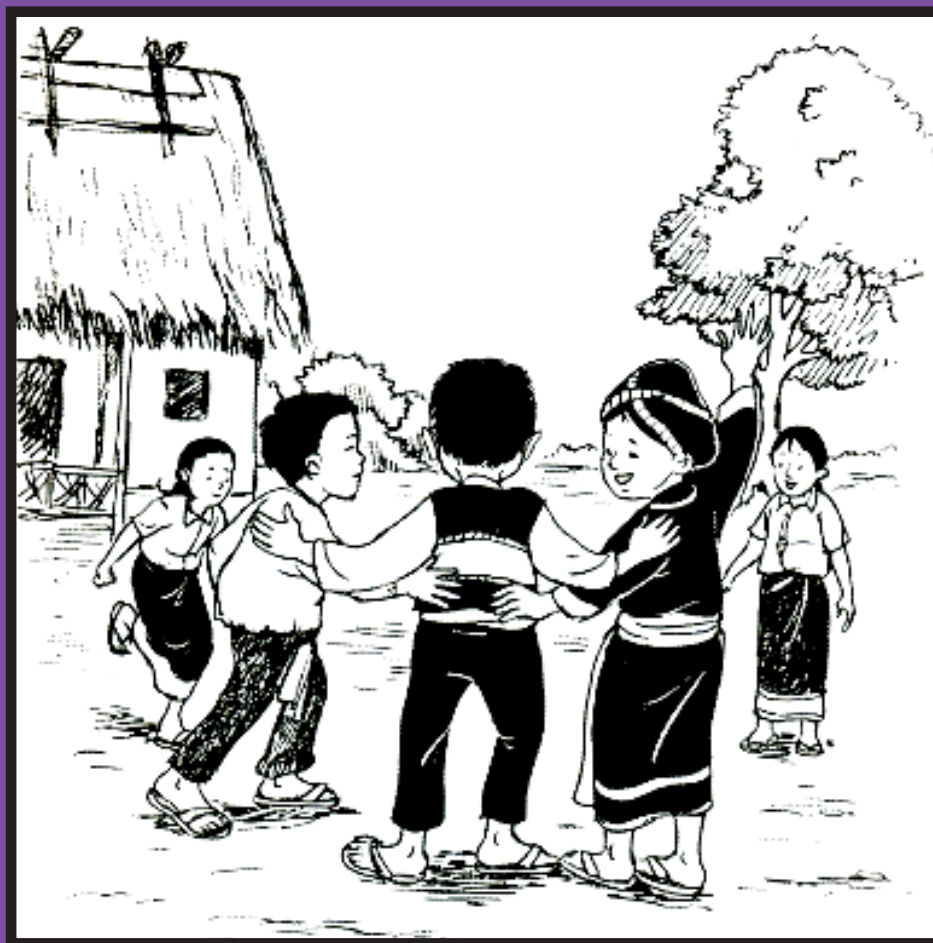




# Report

## *Human Rights in Education*



Ministry of Education

Center for Promotion of Education for Women-Ethnic-Disabled People

Supported by the World Human Rights and UNESCO

Vientiane Capital, LAO PDR

August 2008

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## **Executive Summary**

This study is a self evaluation on human rights in school. It has these objectives: 1. to study the implementation of the international convention on human rights in school, 2. to assess knowledge, understanding, behaviour and the need of a society to learn international law on human rights in school at the primary and secondary education, 3. to use data as a reference for the self-evaluation report on human rights in school. The main methodology applied in this study is desk research together with qualitative and quantitative research. Knowledge of teachers, directors, students and student guardians in 8 schools in 5 districts within Vientiane Capital and Vientiane Province were tested. Targets of the study include ethnic boarding schools, private and public primary and secondary schools, and students and teachers who are in urban areas with easy access to information and in rural areas.

### **The findings of this study are:**

1. Policy: Many laws and the constitution of Lao PDR are aligned with the international law on child rights and human rights. To implement the policy of the government under the constitution, laws and agreements on promoting gender equality in all aspects (both in quantity and quality), especially to achieve gender equality in the education sector; the government adopted the education strategy from now until 2020, Education For All Programme (2003-2015), the National Strategy for the Advancement of Women (2006-2010), and National Education Programme to promote girls' education and the advancement of women in the education sector (2006-2010). These programmes aim to development both quality male and female human resources for the socio-economic development of the country.
2. Implementation: Although the international laws on child rights and human rights are in line with the Constitution and Laws of Lao PDR. However, the dissemination of these laws is not widely, so the understanding and application of rights neither are taken into account for every citizen. In the past, there was not any specific guideline to solve the impact of education access, especially children in the remote areas. Furthermore, the Education Law does not adopt the meaning of discrimination that mentioned on Article

1 of the International Convention related to women discrimination concept, so it still causes more girls' discrimination of access to education. The implementation of the compulsory education and education law should be expanded and strict. Every primary school fee must be eradicated and community should be encouraged and mobilized to actively participate and cooperate in education to achieve the Education For All Goals by 2015.

The dissemination of the contents of the international conventions to schools or ethnic population is limited. This shows in the results of the evaluation of knowledge and understanding of the international law on human rights in school. In terms of the law, the students' knowledge is in the middle level (at the primary level 59.52 percent, at the secondary level 77.85 percent). For teachers, their understanding is only 47.62 percent. The low level of understanding is due to the lack of dissemination, communication, information, documents, textbooks for research purposes, training for teachers and materials on Lao laws on human rights and child rights to be used in mainstreaming into all subjects.

The Ministry of Education and some ministries have carried out important projects on justices and human rights in school, such as: Children Friendly School Project, Ethnic Boarding School Project, and Inclusive Education Project for the disabled students and students with special needs, SOS Project and Health Promotion in School Project. However, these projects are implemented in the limited area. They have not yet expanded to the whole country and private and public education systems.

Apart from these projects, the MoE has also implemented other projects which contribute to promote human rights in school indirectly: EQIP II, EDP II, BEGP and so forth. The three priority of education have also been implemented: improving the access to education, quality and relevance of education and education management. Therefore, building a school, creating a good environment and facilitating the involvement of students' guardians, a community and a society in promoting education are also a part of the aims to implement the international convention on human rights.

# Content

Topics	Page number
Research Team	i
Executive Summary	ii
Content	iv
<b>Historical context</b>	1
General Government Policies	6
Educational Policies and Projects	7
Policy Implementation	8
Gender Equality	8
Child Friendly School	9
Human Rights Teaching and Learning	10
Teaching-learning Materials	12
Evaluation of Knowledge and Understanding of Human Rights	20
<b>Analysis</b>	23
Analysis of Policies	23
General Policies and Human Rights	23
Educational Policies	24
Analysis of Policy Implementation	24
<b>Recommendations</b>	28
General Recommendations	28
Specific Recommendations	28
Policy Developers	28
Implementers	29
Stakeholders	29
<b>Reference</b>	31

# **National Report**

## **On**

# **Human Rights in Education in the Education System in Lao PDR**

## **Historical Context**

Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) is a small landlocked country located in the central Indo-China peninsula in Southeast Asia. It is bordered by China in the north, Cambodia in the south, Vietnam in the east, Myanmar in the northwest, and Thailand in the west.

Lao PDR gained independence and declared the country as the Lao People Democratic Republic on 2 December 1975. The Lao Government has always had a fair policy that protects and promotes the rights and benefits of Lao citizens. It also promotes gender equality as stated in the 1991 Constitution, "Lao citizens are all equal before the law irrespective of their gender, social status, education, beliefs and ethnic group." (Article 22) Article 24 of the Constitution states that "Citizens of both genders enjoy equal rights in the political, economic, socio-cultural and family affairs." In 2003, the National Assembly (NA) adopted revisions to the Constitution including an article that affirmed that "the State, society and families attend to implementing development policies and supporting the advancement of women, and to protecting the legitimate rights and benefits of women and children." To make sure that the Constitution is implemented, the NA enacted in 2004 the "Law on Development and Protection of Women." The President of Lao PDR issued a decree to enforce this law. Based on the law and policy mentioned, the Government pays attention to human rights as shown in its ratification of the human rights instruments of the United Nations (UN).

The UN was established in 1945, immediately after the World War II ended, with aims including the maintenance of international peace and security and international co-operation in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction of race, sex, language, or religion. Three years later, in 1948, the United Nations adopted The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) covering political, civil, social, economic and cultural rights. While the UDHR is not a legally binding document, it requires political and moral commitment from UN member-states to respect human rights. To implement this declaration, the UN saw the necessity of adopting human rights treaties, which were binding legal instruments, and have monitoring mechanisms. In 1966, the UN adopted the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) that were enforced in 1976. The UDHR has become the greatest inspiration and

aspiration of all human beings. On 7 December 2000, in line with the policy of the Lao People's Party and Constitution of the Lao PDR and to stress the importance of the international human rights instruments, Lao PDR signed the ICCPR and ICESCR.<sup>i</sup> The signing of these international human rights instruments was also meant to ensure respect for the rights of ethnic groups for their development and ultimately to lift the country out of the least developed status by 2020. In 1979, the Lao PDR ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and started to implement it in 1981.

Lao PDR acceded to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) on 8 May 1991 along with more than a hundred other countries. In 1992, the National Committee for Mother and Child was established to lead the implementation of the CRC in the country.

Lao PDR has sixteen provinces, one municipality and one hundred forty-two districts and 10,500 villages (Census 2005). There are 953,000 families in the total population of 5.6 million, with an annual population growth rate of 2.08 percent. Forty-seven districts have been identified as the poorest districts of the country. Majority of the Lao people believe in Buddhism. Lao PDR is a culturally diverse nation. Census 2005 categorizes the population into forty-nine ethnicities that can be grouped into four main language families, in which the Lao-Thai group accounts for sixty-four percent and Chinese-Tibetan accounts for the smallest percentage of the total population.

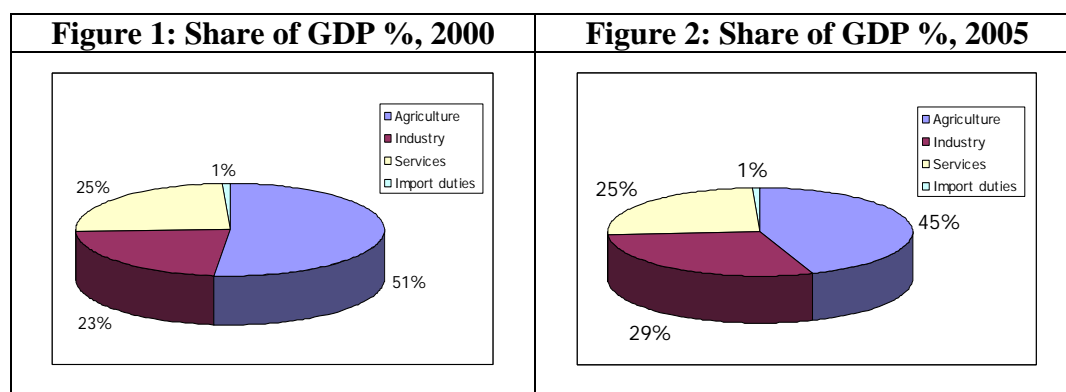
<b>Language family</b>	<b>No. of ethnic groups</b>	<b>% of population</b>	<b>% of population aged 0-16</b>
Lao-Thai	8	64.9	59.8
Mon-Khmer	32	22.6	25.1
Chinese-Tibetan	7	2.8	3.0
Hmong-Iu Mien	2	8.5	10.7
Other/no answer		1.2	1.5

Source: Census 2005

The 2005 Census also shows a large average family size in Lao PDR with an average rural family size of 5.9 members. Around 1,600 villages have no road access and 83% of the population live in rural areas and rely on subsistence agriculture. In order to improve the socio-economic situation, the Government places rural development as a key to poverty reduction and the improvement of living standards. Through rural development, Gross Domestic Product reached US\$ 511 in 2005.

With the New Economic Mechanism introduced in 1986 and based on a market-oriented economic system, the growth rate of the industrial and service sectors significantly increased, while the agricultural sector rapidly declined.

However, in 2005, the agriculture sector still accounted for forty-five percent of the national income, as shown by Figures 1 and 2. It covers seventy percent of the total working hours and eighty percent of the labor force.



High quality education plays an important role in socio-economic and rural development, and thus contributes to reducing poverty. Hence, the Government identified three main key programs in education, namely, (i) improving justice and access/opportunity, (ii) ensuring quality and relevance, and (iii) education management. Various programs, projects and activities have been launched under these three main programs.

The Government expanded the education program in remote and ethnic areas in order to ensure equal access to education by all school-aged students, and to reduce adult illiteracy in the whole country. Since 2000, improvement of private education (which is rapidly growing in all provinces and will extend up to tertiary level) gained more attention from the Government. The education system is gradually being developed and improved to meet the international educational standards, especially in terms of quality. Article 22 of the Constitution states that the Government shall make an effort to develop education, and implement compulsory education to equip Lao people with morality and capacity. The State promotes and supports private sector investment in the development of the education system in the country. There is a need to identify priority areas in education, especially for ethnic areas. In addition, Article 22 emphasizes the right to education for all Lao citizens, particularly those in remote areas, women, ethnic groups, children, and disadvantaged people.

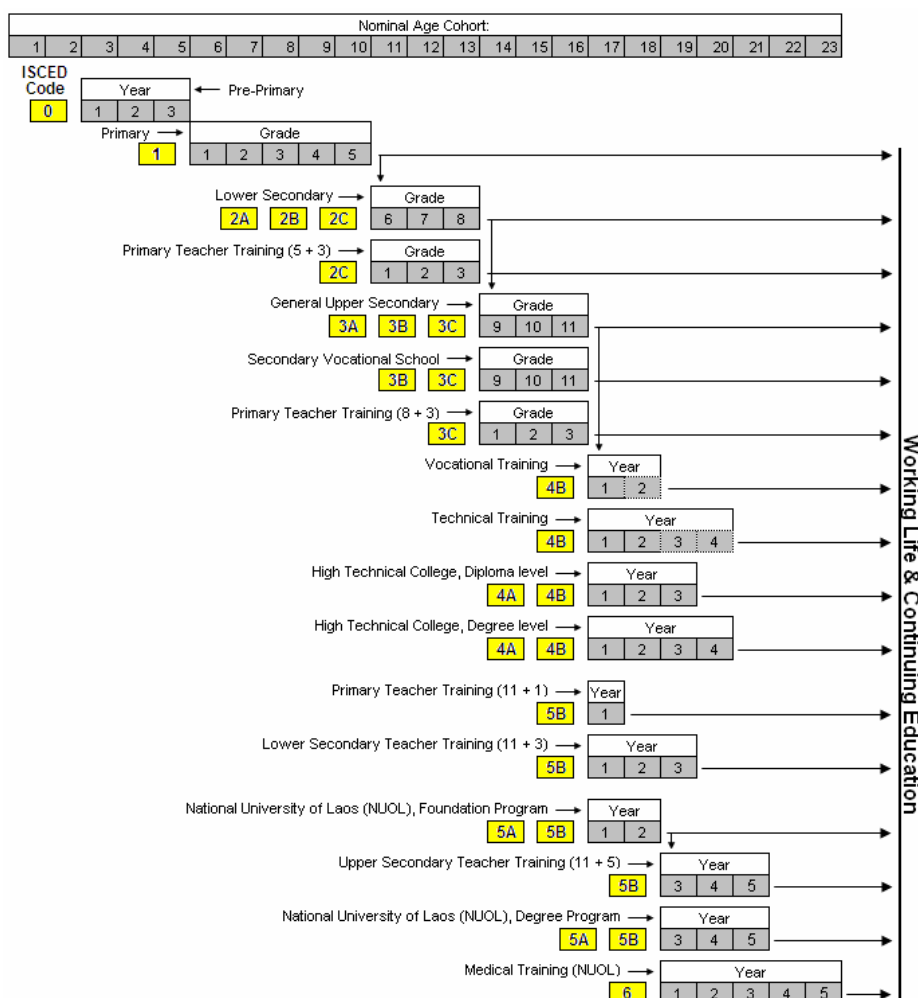
## The Formal Education System

The formal education system of Lao PDR comprises several levels:

1. Kindergarten and pre-school (three months old to six years old) - six-year duration.
2. Primary education (six to ten years old) - five-year duration.

3. Lower secondary education - three-year duration (the duration will be expanded to four years starting in 2011).
4. Upper secondary school - three-year duration.
5. Vocational training and higher technical college - three to four-year duration.
6. Undergraduate level - five-year duration.
7. Master degree, research and PhD – up to six years duration.

Graph of the Education System in Lao PDR:



The Ministry of Education (MOE) has the overall direct management responsibility for the education system. There is a vertical coordination from the ministry to the provincial, district and school education levels. The educational policy on decentralization is acknowledged and enforced by the Government since 2002 to increase the ownership and responsibility for each education level. At the same time, responsibilities of each level are clearly laid out. Training has been provided to education managers at all levels to ensure that they implement activities required by their responsibilities. The structure is revised and improved from time to time to reflect the developments and growth of international and domestic fields of education.

The Constitution and the educational strategies of the MOE provide the educational principles and goals in Lao PDR. The most recent educational strategy (2000-2010) provides that primary education should focus on five aspects of education: moral, intellectual, vocational, physical, and the arts. Primary education should develop students to become patriotic, to love people's democracy, and to acknowledge the national tradition and the revolution. It builds students' knowledge, skills and the capacity to continue to higher education. It develops the students' basic competency in general vocational skills to improve local living conditions. It also emphasizes the education of students to live in society by training the spirit of patriotism; loving their hometown, village, family and their school; admiring leaders, parents, seniors and friends; having patience to study; basic knowledge of nature, society and people; and having basic knowledge on social-natural sciences and humanity.

Secondary education, comprising of lower and upper levels, aims to enhance knowledge, capacity and talent of students. It generally emphasizes learning how to accurately use the Lao language and to have basic knowledge of mathematics, natural sciences and social sciences, laws, information system, international language, technology and vocational skills.

In line with the 2005 Education for All National Plan of Action, the Government is initiating education reform that will lead to more pre-school education, extension of basic education from eleven to twelve years, construction of more school buildings, teacher education, development of curricula and teaching-learning materials, empowerment of all universities, and establishment of technical and vocational colleges in all provinces.

There will also be specialized education centers for various purposes. One relevant center is the Centre of Education Promotion for Women, Ethnic Groups and People with Disabilities. The objective of this center is to gather all activities that are related to the promotion of education for women, girls, ethnic groups and people with disabilities. It aims to assure equality in education in society. This education reform also focuses on creating female and ethnic staff at all educational levels, a strategy that enhances equality, justice and fulfillment of human rights in the education sector.

The Government is working to achieve the educational objectives of international initiatives including the Education For All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). To implement and achieve the goals of EFA, the Government focuses on expanding education into rural, ethnic and remote areas to make sure that all ethnic groups, both sexes and all ages, have equal access to education, aligned with human rights in education. The Government has always seen the solidarity among ethnic groups as central to the peace and sustainability of society.

## **General Government Policies**

Based on the current situation and the current educational concerns, the Lao People's Party and Government give priority to the development of education and consider education as central to human development. To achieve the goals of EFA, MDGs and National Strategies for Growth and Poverty Eradication (which focuses on lifting the country out of the least developed status by 2020), the goal of the Government is to make sure that the Lao population from all ethnic groups and both sexes can read and write, achieve educational attainment, and have the knowledge to apply modern technology-sciences to the production process, so that they can participate in the development of the national socio-economy and can contribute to the competitiveness of the country at the regional and international levels. The promotion of education for women is also viewed as a priority. The National Strategy on the Promotion of Education for Girls and the Advancement of Women in the Education Sector (2006-2010) was adapted from the national policy of the Lao People's Party and Government under the Constitution, laws and agreements that ensure gender equality in terms of quantity and gender roles. In achieving equality in education, the development of quality human resources for both sexes to support the socio-economic development of the country is needed.

The Government views education as having a vital role in reducing poverty. Education can improve the living standards of the people and provide a basis for the growth of the economy. The National Strategy on Poverty Reduction states that education is a key feature to reduce poverty. Under this framework, illiteracy must be eradicated, and the people should have the opportunity to access modern technology that can be applied to agricultural production. Thus, it is significant to ensure equal access to education for all ethnic groups. The equal opportunity in education will allow Lao people to use their knowledge to improve their economic conditions that will then contribute to the reduction of poverty by 2020.

The resolution of the 5<sup>th</sup> National Conference of the Lao People's Party in 2007 requires the MOE in collaboration with the social sciences research center to conduct further research on the development of the Lao alphabet to match ethnic verbal languages and support quality teaching of the Lao language within ethnic groups. The MOE has implemented the resolution through different approaches. For example, the initial consultation meeting was organized in June 2008 to provide quality education to ethnic children and adults.

These policies and programs are based on the policy direction of the Government under the Constitution, laws and decrees that ensure qualitative and quantitative equality, particularly to ensure the achievement of equality in

education in order to supply quality female, male and ethnic human resources to the socio-economic development of the country.

## **Educational Policies and Projects**

To ensure that all Lao citizens receive education, the Government enacted the Law on Education through Decree number 149/LaoPDR dated 17 July 2007. Article 6 of the law states that Lao citizens, irrespective of their gender, social status, education, beliefs and ethnic group have the right to education. Article 17 states clearly that primary education is compulsory, consists of basic necessary knowledge, and is free of charge for Lao citizens who are six years or older and from all ethnic groups. Article 35 states that students have equal rights to study, conduct research, and seek personal development. Each school, education center and institute, and education management organization at all levels must ensure the implementation of rights to gender equality. Articles 36, 37 and 38 also identify the need to support and provide assistance to students who are from poor families, are disadvantaged, especially women, ethnic groups, talented students, people with disabilities, and people with special needs. Furthermore, private education has been expanded as part of the Government's policy stated in the Article 22 and Article 60 of the Constitution, Article 24 of the National Education Law provides that the Government has a role in promoting and supporting individuals, groups, and domestic and international private sectors in investing in building schools, centers and institutes at different levels.

The Education Strategic Vision (up to the year 2020) clearly points out that all Lao citizens must complete a compulsory basic primary education and continue their study at the lower secondary level. This is to ensure that the Lao people can participate in the socio-economic development of the country.

To apply the international human rights instruments into the Lao context, the Government in 2007 developed a Draft National Action Plan on Human Rights that consists of four main action plans as follows:

- Plan of Action I: The preparation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
- Plan of Action II: The implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as well as the other international human rights instruments to which Lao PDR is a party.
- Plan of Action III: The Human Rights in Education, including the dissemination of information about human rights.
- Plan of Action IV: The Promotion of Cooperation and Providing Information Related to Human Rights.

The basic purposes of the four main Plans of Action are under the responsibility of all parties in the public agencies to take into broad and effective practice. The MOE is responsible directly for Plan of Action III. There are two targets under the education plan of action which are (i) to ensure teaching and

learning for general education and higher education levels in both public and private sectors providing knowledge, understanding and basis awareness of Human Rights (ii) to develop a plan for the dissemination of the citizens' rights as adopted in the laws of the Lao PDOR and international human rights instruments for all citizens.

## ***Policy Implementation***

Due to increased investment in education by both government and private sectors, including international investors, children of all ethnic groups have increasingly been able to receive education and have increasingly seen the importance of education. As a result, the number of students and teachers in the final year report of the education sector, 2007-2008, has increased.

The mid-term evaluation in the EFA report illustrates that the adult literacy rate (aged 15+) in 2005-2006 was 72.7% (63.2% for females and 82.5% for males). The literacy rate for youths (aged 15-24) is 83.9% (females 78.7% and males 89.2%). The indicator on gender equality in literacy (aged 15+) is 0.76.

However, the expansion of education at all levels has mainly occurred in urban areas, especially for the pre-school education level. There is a need to fully implement the EFA program particularly in relation to early education for ethnic children, girls and children from the poorest families.

## ***Gender Equality***

The Government has a policy to promote the involvement of women in all sectors and in capacity development. In the past, a number of female educators have participated in training and capacity-building activities within the country and overseas. In addition, the promotion of the advancement of women in career development is one of the Government's priorities together with greater efforts of female officials in developing themselves. To date, a number of women have increasingly held a higher position in the education sector. Moreover, a number of females within the MOE have been upgraded in terms of technical expertise and capacity to be able to participate effectively in their career development. So far, a number of females have received training and technical upgrading in the country and overseas.

Although the Government has increasingly promoted the advancement of women in upgrading their knowledge and skills and in career development, the number of women in higher positions and receiving higher education remains low. In the MOE, only a small number of women hold decision-making positions. Another issue is the very few representatives of ethnic groups among officials in the whole education sector. Within the MOE, there are six Hmong

ethnic staff with only one female; and other ethnic groups have fewer or no representative.

To achieve the objectives of the Constitution, and the laws and decrees mentioned above, the MOE has implemented different projects supported by international organizations, non-governmental organizations and donors. These projects help construct schools, support teachers, support students from poor families, support girls and those in rural areas, establish facilities for ethnic students (such as boarding schools) and students with physical and visual disabilities (schools and dormitories), provide school feeding program to schools to ensure children have good health and are nourished food with nutrition, train communities to support education, promote women's empowerment, and develop curricula and teaching-learning materials. These projects have been implemented in many provinces in the country.

The MOE actively raises funds from various international organizations, such as UNICEF and UNESCO Bangkok to support several activities including the provision of training on gender to education managers from the ministry level to the provincial, district, school clusters, teachers and teacher training school management levels; and research on various topics for planning purposes related to gender equality. In every training workshop, "child rights" is a vital topic to increase the knowledge of the participants, and support the mainstreaming of child rights principles into the teaching-learning process and education management. The discussion of child rights focuses on the CRC (mainly the forty articles and the four basic rights such as the right to survive, the right to protect, the right to full development, and the right to participation) to make sure that the participants are aware of these rights, able to distinguish the differences between the rights and the responsibilities of the child, and can apply and mainstream them into the teaching and learning process as well as in education management as part of their daily work.

### ***Child Friendly School***

The Child Friendly School Project has been implemented for several years in the country in order to ensure that children receive equally similar education with the same appropriate school environment. The project focuses on improving the learning environment and quality of education by emphasizing six aspects, namely, i) access to schooling for all children, ii) effective teaching and learning, iii) children's health and protection, iv) gender responsiveness, v) participation of children, parents and the community, and (vi) effective leadership and administration. The project began as a pilot program from the second semester of the 2004-2005 school year in three primary schools in Salavan, Vientiane and Xiengkhouang provinces. With satisfactory results during the pilot period, the project was expanded to twenty-four more primary schools in seven provinces (Phongsaly, Oudumxay, Luangnamtha,

Luangprabang, Xiengkhouang, Vientiane and Salavan). The MOE and UNICEF cooperated in this project, which constitutes a significant component of the cooperation plan with them for the 2007-2011 period.

With effective results during the pilot period, the project was expanded to cover more schools. However, the implementation of the project has been limited for many years only to the primary level and in limited target sites in thirty-eight districts of nine provinces. At present, there are seven hundred and sixty-five Child Friendly Schools. Even if the project is expanded up to 80 percent of the total schools in the target districts as mentioned, there is still a huge need because there are a total 8,830 primary schools, of which 4,242 are complete primary schools in one hundred forty-one districts across seventeen provinces. When an evaluation is done at the end of the project in 2011, it will neither have covered all the primary schools in all provinces, nor expanded to secondary schools.

At the same time, the MOE also cooperates with Save the Children-Norway (SCN) to pilot the inclusive education for children with disabilities project in Bolikhamxay province. Training on human rights and child rights is provided under this project. The training program contains i) orientation on the child-friendly school project focused on the rights of the child to make sure that participants are able to distinguish the difference between rights and responsibilities of the child, (ii) school self-assessment by applying the school quality development standard which consists of six aspects and thirty-two indicators, iii) education administration and management, iv) school management information system, v) participatory teaching and learning and the classroom and school environment organization.

### ***Human Rights Teaching and Learning***

The Law on National Education (Article 28), National Education Reform Strategy (2006-2010) and the strategies of each department have a clear policy and direction on developing local curricula to ensure that the content of the teaching-learning material reflects the real need and situation of the local communities. The formal education curriculum specifies twenty percent for local curricular development, while the non-formal education curriculum sets aside forty percent for local curricular development to integrate into curriculums local knowledge related to economic and socio-cultural aspects of the communities and their important local persons. This is meant to teach the younger generation the spirit of patriotism and to love their hometown and respect their ancestors. However, in reality, no province or district has been able to develop a local curriculum due to limited technical capacity.

To make sure that education reflects the current socio-economic situation of the country and the world, teaching-learning curricula are vital in developing students who love peace and solidarity. At the tertiary level, students of the Faculty of Law, National University of Laos, learn both domestic and international law. They also have three hours per semester to learn the international human rights instruments that were ratified by Lao PDR. Lecturers are invited from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Experts in every two to three month period. Even though the two international human rights instruments (ICCPR and ICESCR) have not been developed as a specific curriculum, almost all teachers and lecturers of the Faculties of Law and External Relations attend different three week training workshops in Thailand supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), so that they gain confidence in lecturing and being able to mainstream the basis context of the two international human rights instruments into their different teaching topics. The curriculum will be revised and improved to ensure the International Conventions are completely integrated. Besides the regular learning schedule, to make sure students gain more awareness on the international human rights instruments, a special two-week workshop was conducted for students in which there are in total fifty participants, with half from the Faculty of Law and the other twenty five students are from the Faculty of International Relations.

At the primary school level, the curricula for Grades 4 and 5 mention human rights by integrating them into the General Knowledge subject (Lesson 46 for Grade 4 and Lesson 39 for Grade 5). At the upper secondary level, human rights are also taught to students at Grade 11 through a philosophy subject (Lessons 9-13), which is a compulsory subject for a national final examination and which has a focus on the rights of citizens, laws, and the Constitution. For example, the Grade 4 textbook of the World Around Us subject, topic 46 content focuses on the basic knowledge on the law that consists of (i) what is the law? (ii) laws affecting daily life (birth, death, migration, family registration, identity card and tax payment), (iii) how the roles and responsibilities of Lao citizens apply to the law, such as protection of the country from any domestic and outside security threat, being a volunteer soldier, receiving training, paying tax and guarding the country, exercising voting rights, and so on. As students and the country's youth, their main roles are to pay attention to education, being good citizens, respecting parents and teachers' advice. Another example is Topic 39 in Grade 5 of the World Around Us textbook that talks about the law and the roles of Lao citizens. It consists of some important content like (i) summary of Lao PDR Laws (Civil Law and Criminal Law) (ii) role of Lao citizens about responsibilities adopted by the Constitution of Lao PDR (iii) the role of students in society (roles in school, family, society and road traffic). An additional example of the Population Study subject of Grade 11 (M6) in Part III mentioned about Government and Laws, Topics 9 to 13 addressed the meaning of government and its role, law and its role in the Lao PDR Government

organizational structure, main contents of the Constitution adopted in 1991. The main objectives of the topics mentioned are to provide basic knowledge related to laws, roles, rights and responsibilities for Lao students and citizens, and to ensure they recognize the exact role of the laws and Constitution to be able to apply in their daily life; and also to be the foundation for their continuing education at higher and university levels.

## ***Teaching-learning Materials***

Although the education system is currently being reformed, teaching-learning curricula, such as the teacher training curriculum, teacher manuals and textbooks, have also been developed and improved through various projects. For instance, the Lao-Australian Basic Education Project developed supplementary curriculum (with twenty-two teacher guides and student textbooks) to specifically assist the teaching of ethnic students and which was distributed to all schools within the fifty-four districts across eleven provinces that have a large number of ethnic groups. The curriculum focuses on promoting gender equality and equality among ethnic groups. It also portrays the tradition and culture of each ethnic group. Extra-curricular activity focuses on the new teaching technique, which places students or learners at the center of the learning process. This is to ensure the involvement of both girls and boys in various activities and change in the attitude toward promoting the rights especially for girls and ethnic groups. For example, the Lao literature textbook for Grade 2, Lesson 6, page 2 mentions a game called “Tiger following pigs” played during class break and shows pictures of students from different ethnic groups. This shows the involvement of all ethnic groups in learning, and motivates them and creates solidarity among ethnic groups from a young age. An example of teaching and learning material is shown below:



Moreover, the Second Education Quality Improvement Project-Teacher Training Enhancement and Status of Teachers (EQIP II-TTEST) revised, improved and developed the teacher training curriculum, while the Education Development Project II (EDP II) projects revised, improved and published primary education textbooks. These projects also mainstreamed gender, culture of ethnic groups, human rights and HIV/AIDS protection concepts into the content of the textbooks. The EQIP II is an ongoing loan project from the Asian Development Bank (ADB). According to the original Agreement between the Government and ADB, the project ran from 2002 to early 2008. However, the project has been extended to 2010 to ensure all activities would be completed as planned. The long term goal is to contribute to poverty reduction in Lao PDR by assisting the Government in achieving quality education for children. The objectives of the project are (i) to improve the relevance, quality and efficiency of primary and secondary education (ii) to expand access to and improve retention in primary schools, especially of girls in poor, under served areas of the country (iii) to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Government at center, provincial, district and village levels to plan and manage the decentralized education system and implement the project. The project covers 61 districts in 9 provinces. The key activities of the project are to build Teacher Training Systems and Teacher Development Capacity, Teacher Educational Strategy (2006-2015) and Action Plan (2006-2010) Development, construction and upgrading of training facilities, primary and secondary education pedagogical advisors upgrading, delivering provincial and district level capacity on education management, new primary schools' construction and upgrading including furniture, existing primary education core textbooks reprinted for the targets schools and other non-target primary schools in sixty five districts of the country, and so on.

Similar to the EQIP II-TTEST, the EDP II is a loan project from the World Bank (WB). The Objectives of the project are to achieve universal completion of primary education for all in the long term. The short term objective is to increase primary school enrolment and completion. The project covers the nineteen poorest districts in the six poorest provinces of the country. The project implementation period is a five year cycle that started in 2005 until 2010. The main activities of the project are construction of new complete primary schools by applying a community-based contracting approach, providing school grant assistance to ensure children in poor families can complete primary education; strengthening the capacity for policy analysis and management; strengthening the information systems for data collection, analysis, reporting, filing, storing and maintenance; strengthening the capacity for building education management for all levels of the target areas; supporting key policy and institutional reforms; improving the educational quality by evaluating, revising, publishing and distributing new primary textbooks and teacher guides; training of trainers for applying multi-grade teaching classrooms and developing the use of the new curriculum; recruitment of teachers for remote areas, etc. The

new textbooks and teacher guides for Grades 1-3 will start to be used in the 2008-2009 school year and the new textbooks and teacher guides for Grades 4-5 will be used in the 2009-2010 school year.

The reproductive health project has also developed a curriculum. There was a pilot project on the implementation of the curriculum on HIV/AIDS, UXO (unexploded ordnance), and so forth. In general, the content of extra-curricular or additional curricular activities has been improved and incorporates pictures that portray equality in a better way. Under the new education reforms, all curricula (primary, secondary and partially the tertiary levels) require to be improved in terms of content in the sciences and to make sure that these curricula reflect the needs of students. In particular, the programs and projects for basic education development emphasize the revision of the curriculum for the upper secondary level. This curriculum will be implemented in 2011 and will incorporate various illustrations on gender equality, ethnicity and the right to education. In addition, non-formal education curricula have improved with the focus on the International Convention on the Eradication of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) to enhance understanding of learners on the implementation of gender equality. Students in the economics and law faculties also received information and knowledge on CEDAW that enhances their understanding and implementation of human rights in the future.



Up to now, the incorporation of human rights and child rights into teaching-learning curricula has been limited and the dissemination of knowledge on human rights and child rights to teachers, students and the media has not yet been widely involved. Since the Government has signed several international human rights instruments, it is necessary to disseminate the knowledge on human rights and child rights to all citizens, especially students in basic education as the basis for further education at university, or higher technical and vocational levels.

The National Committee of Human Rights was established under the Prime Ministerial Decree number 84/PM dated 9 December 2003 to implement the ICCPR and ICESCR, chaired by the Vice Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Committee consists of the Organization of Justice, Lao National Front, National Commission for the Advancement of Women, Lao Women's Union, Trade Unions, Youth Union, the National Commission for Mothers and Children and the line ministries. Then based on the guidance of the National Committee for the implementation of the ICCPR and ICESCR, an official meeting among different concerned stakeholders was held on 5 August 2004 to discuss coordination of their efforts to implement the international human rights instruments. As a result, the MOE was required urgently to develop a supplementary curriculum and teaching-learning materials on human rights and child rights. The Research Institute on Education Sciences was the key institution for this task.

Some content of the international human rights instruments was incorporated into the formal education curriculum that was piloted in the 2005-2006 school year. Hence, the development of curricular and teaching-learning materials in the content of the international instruments on human rights and the rights of the child became the urgent task for the MOE.

In March 2005, the MOE curriculum development, textbook and teacher manual development team collected information from three targeted provinces (Vientiane Capital, Champasak and Bokeo) and analyzed the knowledge of teachers and students on human rights and child rights. The results showed that teachers and students have a very general understanding of these rights. Thus, the team developed a textbook and teacher manual to be piloted in these three provinces. Seventy thousand textbooks and five hundred teacher guides were printed for the primary education level (Grades 4 and 5) and for the secondary education level (Grades 6 to 11). These textbooks and teacher manuals include the content of human rights issues in education. The content of the two human rights instruments and the history of their development are incorporated into these textbooks and manuals to embed the spirit of patriotism and solidarity among ethnic groups, neighboring countries and countries around the globe and thus ensure peace in the world.

Following are some contents of these textbooks and teacher guides:

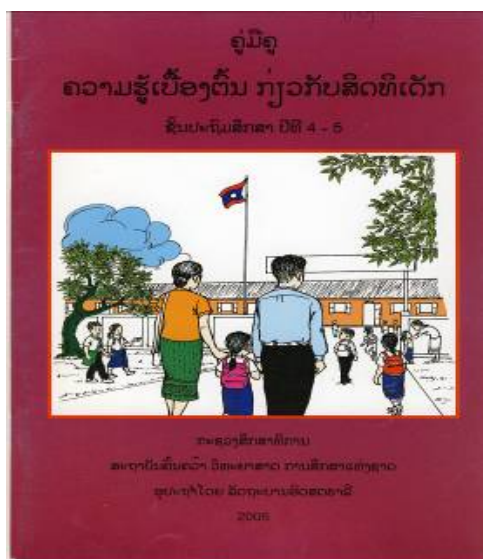
-  Student textbook for Grades 4 and 5: Topic 1: The protection of a child who has no family consists of these key items i) protection from abuse and neglect, (ii) protection of a child who has no family, (iii) child adoption, and (iv) a story of a twelve-year old boy named Phone who was abused while living with an aunt, and who was helped by the village committee.
-  Teacher guide for Grades 4 and 5: Topic 1: Protection of a child who has no family. The objectives of this topic are to make sure students are able to i) recognize and understand that all children have the right to protection and care, ii) know how to help a person who has no family. This topic also contains key content such as the protection of a child who is abused and neglected, a child without a family, and child adoption. The description of this content focuses on the role and function of the public in protecting children by setting appropriate social programs. Such programs should be guided by the rule that in protecting abused children and taking children to any institution for their care, the public agency should pay attention to the children's culture. Moreover, this topic also addresses the teaching and learning materials by discussing Articles 19, 20 and 21 of the CRC. There are also some activities using illustrations for discussion, etc.

✚ Student book for Grades 6 to 9 (Lower Secondary Education Level):  
Topic 2: Each child has the right to education, and a story entitled “My Dream.” This story is about a girl named Mai who has no opportunity to receive an education due to lack of school in her village, who tried to earn money in the city to be able to go to school but was abused, and who finally escaped with the help of two girls. This topic teaches the rights of all children to education, to development of oneself, to make their own decisions and propose ideas in a proper way. Students also discuss how the other two girls are going to help the poor girl, Mai. Moreover, Articles 28, 29 and 32 of the CRC, Article 42 of the Constitution of Lao PDR, revised version in 2003, and Articles 22 and 47 of the Education Law are discussed by the whole class.

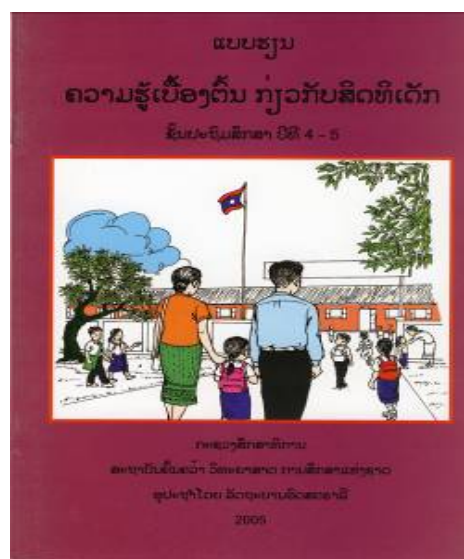
✚ Teacher guides for Grades 6 to 9 (Lower Secondary Education Level):  
Topic 2: Each child has the right to education and a story entitled “My Dream.” The guide mentions the objectives, key content, teaching and learning materials and activities, and some discussion questions. Finally, the topic is ended by an evaluation of students’ understanding.

Primary and secondary teachers were given training on these textbooks and teacher guides with the support of UNESCO and the Australian Government. In 2005, the project was put on hold due to lack of support.

Examples of the textbooks and teacher guides on the basic knowledge on the rights of the child, Grade 4, Grade 5, Grade 6 to Grade 8 at the lower secondary level, and Grades 9 to 11 at the upper secondary level.



**Student Textbook for Grades 4 and 5  
Basic Knowledge of Human Rights**



**Teacher Guide for Grades 4 and 5  
Basic Knowledge of Human Rights**



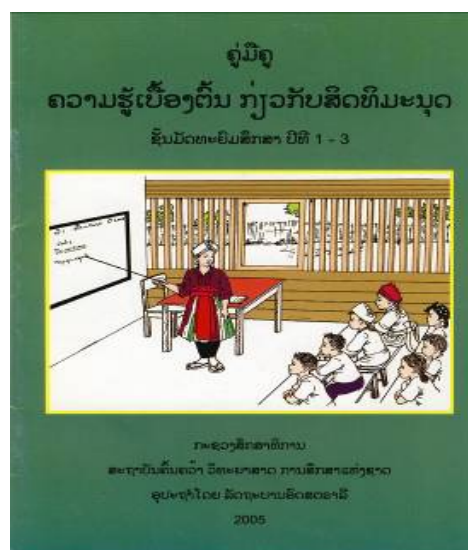
**Student Textbook for Grades 9-11 (M4-M6)**  
**Basic Knowledge of Human Rights**



**Teacher Guide for Grades 9-11 (M4-M6)**  
**Basic Knowledge of Human Rights**



**Student Textbook for Grades 6-8 (M1-M3)**  
**Basic Knowledge of Human Rights**



**Teacher Guide for Grades 6-8 (M1-M3)**  
**Basic Knowledge of Human Rights**

At the same time, to make sure that knowledge on the rights of the child are disseminated in society, the National Commission for Mothers and Children produced a training manual and a book on the rights of the children in Lao language, entitled *Our Rights*. The content of this manual and book are derived from the CRC. The content includes forty articles including several articles referring to “The right to education” (Article 28), “The goal of education” (Article 29), and “The rights of ethnic children” (Article 30). The inclusion of these articles illustrates the Government’s efforts to promote human rights and the rights of ethnic groups. To emphasize the rights of ethnic groups, pictures of

ethnic children are portrayed on the cover page and under Articles 4 and 30. *Our Rights* implements the project on “rights for all,” promotes the CRC to create awareness among education officials, teachers and students and ensures that they understand the content and principles of the rights of the child. It also applies to training programs as well, such as for the integration of human rights into the education program for each sector. The content of this manual include songs, plays and stories that are derived from real life childhood experiences and memorable stories related to the content of the CRC. The content helps teachers who have been trained to understand the manual easily. However, reconsideration or improvement of some aspects of the manual and textbook is still necessary. A number of pictures portray boys more than they portray girls. For example, pictures used in Article 32 “Protection of the Child from Child Labor” and in Article 33 “Protection of the Child from Drugs/Alcohol,” are only about boys.



Picture from the book *Our Rights*

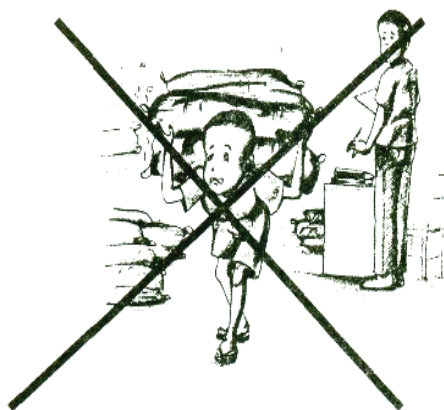


Article 30: The rights of ethnic children  
*Our Rights* (Vientiane, 2005)

An illustration in the manual *Our Rights*



*Our Rights*  
Vientiane, 2005



Article 32: The Protection from Child Labor



Article 33: The Protection of Children from  
Drugs/Alcohol

## **Evaluation of Knowledge and Understanding of Human Rights**

The Lao Committee for Human Rights Education in Schools, established by the MOE at the end of 2007 for this research, assessed during the June-July 2008 period the knowledge and understanding about the international instruments on human rights and the Convention of the Rights of the Child of students, teachers and parents in some primary and secondary schools in Vientiane Capital and Vientiane province. Following are the results of the survey.

### **a. Primary level, Grades 4 and 5**

Based on the responses to a survey questionnaire, 83.33 percent of the respondents (eighty-four male, forty-six female students) in Grades 4 and 5 at the primary school level answered that they would like to learn and understand the international law on child rights. Their responses reveal limited knowledge and understanding of the international law on the rights of the child.

The results show that respondents could not answer questions very well especially on a basic knowledge of child rights. The least understanding is of question 1 “The definition of a child” with only twenty respondents (23.8 percent) having the correct answer. Students might have difficulty in giving the correct answer since they might be confused between the words “child” and “infant” in Lao language. Based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, a child is a person below 18 years of age. Hence, there is a need to explain this provision to students.

There are three levels of understanding and knowledge on the rights of the child: the lowest level (nineteen people, 22.62 percent), middle level (fifty people, 59.52 percent), and highest level (fifteen people, 17.86 percent). Regarding sex differences and the understanding and knowledge of child rights: lowest level - nine girls (19.57 percent), ten boys (26.32 percent); middle level - thirty girls (65.22 percent), twenty boys (52.63 percent); highest level - seven girls (15.22 percent), eight boys (21.05 percent).

In general, primary students do not have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the rights of the child.

### **b. Lower secondary level (Grade 8 or M3) and the upper secondary level (Grade 11 or M6)**

The survey at the secondary level (one hundred forty nine respondents with sixty-seven females) shows that 80.54 percent would like to learn more about the international law on human rights. Their perspective on the law about

human rights is good but only in a very general sense as illustrated by the uncertain answers to many questions.

The knowledge on the international law on human rights is still low. Only eight questions out of fifteen were answered correctly by fifty percent of all respondents.

The levels of understanding and knowledge are as follows: lowest level - ten people, 15.44 percent, middle level - one hundred sixteen people, 77.85 percent, and highest level - twenty-three people, 15.44 percent. Regarding sex differences in the understanding and knowledge on child rights: lowest level – five girls (7.46 percent), five boys (6.10 percent), middle level - fifty girls (74.63 percent), sixty-six boys (80.49 percent), the highest level – twelve girls (19.91 percent), eleven boys (13.41 percent). In general, students’ understanding and knowledge of the law on human rights can be classified to be at the middle level. Students learn about the international law on human rights from social studies subjects.

### **c. School principals and teachers**

A total of seventy-eight respondents consisting of fifteen school principals (seven females) and sixty-three teachers (thirty-five females) participated in the survey. The results show a general understanding and knowledge on human rights by the respondent-principals and respondent-teachers. This is due to lack of information, materials and training on the subject. Their understanding of human rights is based on their knowledge of Lao law. All teachers (100 percent) see the necessity of incorporating international law on human rights into the teaching-learning curriculum.

Up to now, there is no specific school curriculum focusing on human rights. Teachers mainstream their basic knowledge on human rights (received from training in other subjects such as history, geography, political studies, literature and foreign languages) in different subjects to broaden the knowledge of students.

Teachers also apply human rights principles to address various issues involving students within the school, such as drug use, quarrels, and violation of school rules. Teachers often address the problems by talking with students, consulting with parents, issuing warnings and punishments according to school regulations. For students with a poor academic performance, teachers also set up extra tutoring classes after school, suggest peer study, provide emotional support, and set extra homework.

Teachers also organize additional activities within the school, such as promotion of girls' education and solidarity among ethnic groups. Girls and boys participate in these activities. There is also cultural exchange. Students can speak their own language; girls are encouraged to participate in these additional activities, and are seated together with boys.

#### **d. Parents and guardians**

Parents and guardians of students (forty-five respondents, thirty-three females) were interviewed. Through discussion, the parents and guardians expressed the view that education is important and beneficial to the improvement of the living standard of the individual, family and country. They stated that children receive various information and skills from school such as reading, writing, moral studies, good behavior and living with other people. Parents hope that their children continue to study up to the highest level. However, due to inadequate financial means, many parents are not able to support the further education of their children to the expected level.

The parents and guardians have a very broad understanding of the international law on human rights. According to them, children do not like the following aspects of schools: the behavior and personality of some teachers who sometimes use impolite and curse words to students, and express bad moods (caused by factors outside the classroom) to students. Parents would like teachers to lead the learning activities more and use polite words with students.

The majority of the parents and guardians hope for a healthy life, happy family, wealthy family, improved living standards, and better economic standing to be able to support the education of their children up to the highest level and have better prospects for good jobs in the future.

## **Analysis**

### **Analysis of Policies**

#### ***General Policies and Human Rights***

The Constitution and laws of Lao PDR have numerous provisions that are in line with the international instruments on human and child rights as in the following:

1. Article 32 of CRC on the right of the child to receive protection and care from family and society - also provided in Article 32 of the 1991 Lao Constitution (as amended in 2003), in Article 42 of family law (1997), and also in a labor law that protects minors, etc.
2. Article 28 of CRC on the right of the child to education - in line with Articles 6 and 53 of the Education Law of Lao PDR (as revised).
3. Article 26 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Articles 34 and 36 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) on the protection of the rights and the benefits for women and children – related to Article 29, 1991 Constitution of Lao PDR (as amended, 2003), the law on the development and protection of women (2004), and the labor law (1994)
4. Article 27 of the CRC on the right to care – related to Articles 43 and 45 of the family law (1997)
5. Article 28 of the CRC, Article 11(1) and Article 15(1,2,3) of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) - in line with Articles 29 and 37 of the 1991 Lao Constitution (as amended, 2003), and Article 35 of the Education Law (as amended).
6. Articles 1 and 2 of ICCPR and ICESCR on right to non-discrimination - reflected in Articles 8, 43 and 44 of the 1991 Lao Constitution (as amended).
8. Article 25 of ICESCR on the right to development, and Article 6 of the CRC on right to life, survival and development - in line with Article 6 of the Education Law (as amended).
9. Article 23 of the CRC on the rights of children suffering disabilities to receive care and education - reflected in Articles 37 and 38 of the Education Law (as amended).

In general, child and human rights are acknowledged by the Constitution and laws of Lao PDR.

## ***Educational Policies***

The Government as a policy considers education as central to human resource development, especially in terms of developing patriotism, intellectual and scientific vision; and continue to create human resource equipped with skills, ability to express perspectives and gain employment in order to shift step-by-step the society to a new society of learning, intellectual- and knowledge-based economy.

The Government pays attention to expanding pre-education and makes the effort to achieve the target of compulsory primary education. Furthermore, the Government has increasingly invested in education as a priority in the allocation of the government budget.

The Government together with the society has put great efforts in ensuring the quality of national education, creating education opportunities for the population, especially for those in remote areas, women, children and the disadvantaged, and creating a greater vocational education opportunity for the population. The Government has also promoted and encouraged the involvement of individual, domestic and international organizations in the development of national education through a credit policy, tax exemption or reduction.

To implement the policy of the Lao People's Party and the Government under the Constitution, laws and international agreements that ensure gender equality in both quality and quantity, especially in the education area, the Government has drafted the education strategy from the present to 2020, national education program for all (2003-2015), national policy on the advancement for women (2006-2010), the national education development program to promote the education of girls and promote the advancement for women in the education sector (2006-2010). These programs aim to develop both female and male human resources to ensure a quality input into the socio-economic development of the country.

## **Analysis of Policy Implementation**

Although the international agreements on child rights, human rights and eradication of all discrimination against women and children are reflected in the Constitution and laws of the Lao PDR, including the national education law and so forth, the dissemination of knowledge about them has not yet been widely undertaken. Some specific approaches to address issues such as the cultural practice of early marriage, that limit particularly women's opportunity and access to education are lacking. The national education law does not specify the meaning of discrimination as stated in Article 1 of CEDAW on eradication of all forms of discrimination against girls, particularly in rural areas, that affect their

access to education. The network of compulsory education should be expanded throughout the country. The Government should ensure that schools will not take advantage of students by collecting school fees and promote the involvement of local authorities to achieve EFA goals by 2015. In addition, people should become aware of their rights.

In implementing the education development program, the Government makes the effort of ensuring that all children of school age regardless of their sex, situation, status, geographic location and ethnicity are all equally enrolled in school. However, in reality, the ability to expand opportunities for both girls and boys is still unequal, there are either big disparities between urban and remote areas, province to province and ethnicities. At the higher level of education, there are only a small number of female students. This is due to the economic difficulty of families and some cultural practices (such as preference of boys over girls) which need to be addressed urgently by the Government.

The Lao-Australia Basic Education Project (LABEP-AusAID Project), which developed a supplementary curriculum, (particularly to help teach ethnic students and train ethnic teachers, especially females) identified several lessons learned, such as continuing the recruitment of ethnic teachers and building multigrade schools for children in remote and isolated areas. These measures are meant to prevent the high rate of dropout and improve retention. There are needs for training more ethnic teachers to teach in remote areas and to assist ethnic children who are not yet able to speak the Lao official language. However, the implementation of the recommendations has been a very slow process and the recommendations have not yet been included in the educational policy.

Proper promotion, learning and realization of human rights of the citizens are important in raising awareness of the law and ensuring effective enforcement of laws to administer the country. However, human rights are new to the Lao people. Thus, everyone has to learn about human rights to make sure that national and international the laws on human rights are implemented properly. The study of human rights will not only increase the understanding and knowledge of the individual rights, but also make sure that these rights are properly implemented and enable people to respect the rights of others and transfer the rights information to others. The dissemination of knowledge on human rights and the rights of the child, as a result of signing international human rights instruments, to all citizens, especially students in the formal education system, is a necessity.

The dissemination of the knowledge on human rights instruments to schools and to ethnic areas is limited. The research on the knowledge and understanding of international laws on human rights and the child rights confirmed that the understanding and knowledge of students on these rights are limited. The level of understanding for primary and secondary students is

classified in the middle level (Primary level - 59.52 percent, and secondary level - 77.85 percent). This means that students' understanding is only of a general nature and uncertain. Only 47.62 percent of teachers understand the laws on human rights, and their understanding is also of a general nature. This is due to lack of information, documents, materials and training, which could be used to increase their knowledge and understanding and mainstream the knowledge into other subjects. Hence, there should be teaching-learning texts on these rights and teachers should receive human rights training. Various methods will need to be applied in order to disseminate widely the information on these rights to villagers and students' parents.

The MOE has a number of projects that promote human rights, such as the child-friendly school project, a boarding school project for ethnic students, an inclusive education project for children with disabilities, and children with special needs, and a health promotion in schools project. Furthermore, there is a project developing a textbook and teacher manual on human rights and the child rights.

These projects, however, have been implemented only in a limited area of the country and have yet to expand to other parts the country and at all levels of the public and private educational institutions. They are in the following situation at present:

- The Child Friendly School project is about three years old and has just started to reach the provinces. Thus so far it has yet to reach all primary and secondary schools in the country.
- The inclusive education project for disabled children and children with special needs has been implemented for many years but only in limited targeted schools and the focus on the students with disabilities is not clear. While data from the targeted project schools are collected, the general data on people with disabilities in the country, especially data on people with hearing, vision and physical mobility and mental disabilities are not yet available. Services provided to people with disabilities, especially those who cannot help themselves are not widely available. At the present, it is difficult to tell the total number of children with different disabilities or children who would like special assistance. Furthermore, there is also a need for policy to guide this activity.
- The ethnic boarding school program is one of the Government's main strategies and has received continuing financial support. It is important to continue expanding the project to all provinces to make sure that ethnic children in remote areas and disadvantaged children can access education. However, the collection of data on ethnicity and sex-disaggregated data on ethnic linguistic groups is not sufficient. And so far, there has neither been any assessment or follow up on the implementation of the program to improve the teaching and learning process, and other aspects of the

program, nor any program to promote ethnic students to higher education or achieve needed professions.

- The project on the development of textbooks and teacher manuals about human rights and child rights, with the support of UNESCO and the Australian Government was put on hold in 2005.

Apart from the above projects, the MOE also implements activities that have an indirect link to human rights in school, such as EQIP II, EDP II and BEGP. Based on the development of education in three main prioritized areas, the construction of schools, the creation of the environment and provision of facilities to mobilize parents to send their children to school, and encouragement of the participation of the community in education are also approaches to reach the goals of the international human rights instruments.

Although there is a decree issued by the Prime Minister's Office (number 018/PM dated 10 January 2005) on the collection, dissemination and use of sex-disaggregated data, the implementation in some cases is not satisfactory. The data collection and use of sex-disaggregated data remains limited.

## **Recommendations:**

### **General Recommendations:**

1. The existing human rights curriculum for primary and secondary education should be applied in the teaching and learning process.
2. Teachers need to be trained in order to increase their knowledge and understanding of all the human rights instruments, and also ensure that the teachers can transfer the rights information and mainstream the content of the human rights instruments into all school subjects.
3. The content and concepts of human rights education, and the international human rights instruments should be mainstreamed into the teacher training curriculum, and training workshops should also be conducted for teachers to ensure they have a clear and in depth understanding of human rights to be able to transfer such understanding into every subject taught and the teaching and learning process.
4. There is a need to establish a Human Rights Committee at school level to ensure effective human rights education practice and concrete outcomes.
5. There is a need to allocate sufficient budget for producing different education communication materials on international human rights instruments, which can be used to raise the awareness of students at all levels of schooling.

### **Specific Sector Recommendations:**



#### **Policy Developers:**

1. Documents or research papers relevant to human rights education should be collected as reference materials for policy development.
2. The content of human rights should be mainstreamed into teacher training curricula and teacher manuals and textbooks at all school levels to help teachers teach. Separate supplementary materials may cause difficulties and has the risk of not getting integrated into teaching practice due to the length of the existing curriculum.
3. Effective activities and best practices in different projects related to human rights in education should be continued.
3. Effective activities under the projects related to human rights education should be continued.
4. Coordination between the MOE and other ministries, sectors and organizations, and donors, should be improved in order to implement human rights education throughout the education sector.

5. Policies related to human rights education should be disseminated by using various methods, such as radio, television, brochures and posters.
6. Information on model projects illustrating the implementation of human rights education should be made available.
7. Budget should be allocated for the implementation of specific activities related human rights education.
8. The MOE should discuss with development NGOs about support activities related to human rights education. The NGOs in Lao PDR are ready and pleased to support such programs.
9. School environmental organization is very important to provide a good environment and hygiene for children so that they have a good and warm feeling, and also to attract them to school. Different facilities could be arranged such as separate toilets for male and female students, covered playgrounds, places for reading, libraries, laboratories that are appropriate for boys and girls, etc. The MOE should apply a standard qualification for school construction for both public and private education.
10. Human rights education assessment should apply to all levels, not only for primary and secondary education.
11. All children should enjoy equal rights and opportunity to quality education within the same school environment as that of Child Friendly Schools. The concerned departments of the MOE should make this a practical policy to be mainstreamed into the education system, and used for strengthening the local capacity in applying it to other primary and secondary schools that are not covered by the Child Friendly Schools Project and ensure its expansion across the whole country.



### **Implementers**

1. There should be training for responsible people and implementers of human rights education programs to ensure that they understand the policies, content and direction of actual program implementation.
2. Curriculum developers in the formal and non-formal education system should have human rights training before developing curricula.
3. All teachers and education managers should receive a regular training on human rights education.
4. Parents and local authorities should receive training on human rights and child rights.
5. There should be an evaluation and monitoring of the progress made in the implementation of human rights education in schools.



### **Stakeholders:**

The Government of Lao PDR pays attention and respects its citizens' rights and has already implemented different projects, activities related directly to human rights, and matched with the two international human rights instruments in cooperation with different stakeholders, donors, international organizations and NGOs as follows: the Personnel

Administration-Priõme Minister's Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Information and Culture, Research Institute for Education Sciences, National University, UNICEF, UNESCO, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Australian Government Overseas Aid Program (AusAID), WB, ADB, Sida, SCN, CRS, and so forth.

1. There is a need to allocate specific budget to support and strengthen the educators' capacity in terms of human rights activities at all levels: policy and action plan development, training, advocacy, information dissemination, research, and so forth.
2. In general, human rights are a cross cutting issue. However, specific programs, projects and activities related to human rights in education still need to be developed and implemented to have concrete outcomes that can be measured and monitored for progress.

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### End note

<sup>i</sup> The ICESCR was signed by Lao PDR on 7 December 2000 and ratified on 13 February 2007. The ICCPR was also signed on 7 December 2000 and awaiting ratification.