

UNFPA Lao PDR November - December 2023 Newsletter

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Lao PDR and UNFPA Commit to Working Together to Achieve the ICPD and SDGs



What's up in Laos?

Towards achieving universal access to SRHR and
implementation of the ICPD PoA

For **People** - through **Progress** - with **Partners**

Bi-monthly Newsletter: November - December 2023

High-level Lao PDR delegation attends 7th Asian and Pacific Population Conference

The government of Lao PDR reiterated its commitment to achieving the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action (ICPD PoA) with [14 recommendations](#) adopted at the first National Conference on Population and Development in Laos and presented at the 7th Asian and Pacific Population Conference.



At the 7th APPC, Deputy Minister of Planning and Investment Phonevanh Outhavong delivered a national statement on progress towards implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Population and Development, the PoA of ICPD. Deputy Minister Outhavong, on behalf of the Lao delegation, recognized the importance of the PoA of ICPD, including its key achievements of integrating the Declaration and Programme of Action into the National

Policy on Population and Development and the National Socio-Economic Development Plan.

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Health Minister: “Impressive progress” on health challenges, but much work remains

Minister of Health Dr Bounfeng Phoummalaysith concluded a five-day visit to provincial and district hospitals to assess the progress and challenges in Bokeo Province, alongside Luxembourg Chargé d'Affaires and representatives from UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO.

We took the joint programme on SRH, nutrition and immunization services to new heights investing in quality care and human resources and supply chain management.



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Courtesy visit

The visit highlighted the importance of strengthening partnerships to improve access to SRH services and ensure that no one is left behind in receiving the care they need. Additionally, UNFPA congratulated the Ministry of Health for its good assessment result on supply chain management and last mile assurance, recognizing the government's efforts to improve the quality of care and services for the people of Lao PDR.

UNFPA Lao PDR @UNFPALaoPDR · Dec 20

Promote

Courtesy visit of @BakhtiorKadyrov to H.E Dr Bounfeng Minister of Health to discuss joint advocacy for scaling up & financing SRH programs, incl. #FP, supply chain management & skilled birth attendance with a special focus on climate change & SRHR, innovation & outreach to #LNOB



Celebration of International Days: Advocacy and Participation

Unite! Investing to prevent and respond to GBV in Lao PDR

Over 50 partners from the government, development partners, donors, civil society and the private sector joined UNFPA Laos to celebrate the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. During the 16DOA, the Government reiterated its commitment to end GBV through a strategic statement from the Prime Minister, the launch of the CEDAW report, the opening of two protection shelters and more activities.

Click [HERE](#) to link to 16DOA summary in Laos.

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PM voices support for ending violence against women

Prime Minister Sonexay Siphandone has delivered a speech to mark International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on November 25, which this year takes the theme "United Invest to Prevent and Respond to Violence against Women and Girls". People in Laos and many other countries mark this day, when governments reaffirm their commitment to preventing and responding to violence against women and girls.

Around the world, women are experiencing increasing violence, in various environments.

The physical and mental abuse of women has both economic and social consequences, for individuals, families and communities, as well as hindering the achievement of sustainable development goals.

The PM Sonexay said eradication of violence can be successful only through the prevention of the use of violence, especially the coordination of many parties, the commitment of leadership in promoting such work, the implementation of laws and policies that promote gender equality, investing in women's organisations, allocating resources to prevent and respond to discrimination in many forms that women are facing every day, empowering women and girls in all areas of society, ensuring services to help survivors of violence; create a safe environment for women and girls, reduce poverty by starting with women's economic empowerment or the family economy.

All over the world, women have experienced increasing violence in various environments, including in the workplace and remotely via the internet. The use of violence against women also has extensive socio-economic consequences for individuals, families, communities and society, as well as hindering

Prime Minister Sonexay Siphandone is shown speaking at a podium during a speech. He is wearing a dark suit and a blue tie. The podium has the Lao flag and the Vientiane Times logo on it. The background features a large screen displaying the Lao flag and the Vientiane Times logo.

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Quality of care and services

National University of Laos and UNFPA Launch the Country's First Preliminary Findings on Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence

The National University of Laos, UNFPA and the Faculty of Education, National University of Laos, released the country's first available qualitative findings on Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV), or online violence against women and girls, with a collective aim to shed light on this pressing issue.



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Health Standard Operating Procedure Rolled Out in Bolikhamxay Province

Health SOP rolled out in Bolikhamxay province, attended by 36 health service providers from the Provincial hospital, district hospital, and provincial health department. This training aimed to strengthen the capacities of health providers, raise their confidence, and ensure they assist gender-based violence survivors, using international standards, providing quality care and all the needed support and referrals.



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BEmOC Training in Xieng Khouang by the Lao Association of Midwives

The College of Health Science hosted a BEmOC (Basic Emergency Obstetric Care) training organized by the Lao Association of Midwives and the Ministry of Health with UNFPA support which benefited midwives, medical doctors, and nurses from different districts in Xieng Khouang to improve their capacities in responding to critical health situations during and after deliveries.



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Youth Empowerment

Celebration of World AIDS Day

A World Aids Day Seminar was organized at the National University of Laos, Vientiane - Hanoi Vocational School, Vientiane High School, and Xaysettha High School reaching 292 young people to raise their awareness on how to protect and advocate for their Sexual and Reproductive Health including protection from HIV/AIDS, mental health and prevention from violence.



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Youth Innovation Challenge 2023

UNFPA's Youth Innovation Challenge 2023, co-hosted with the National University of Laos and Lao Youth Union, brought together young innovators to present their innovative, impactful implementable ideas and technical solutions for addressing some of the key challenges faced by adolescents and young people in Lao PDR. The Hackathon was organized to identify and promote the role and voices of youth in shaping solutions for their ecosystem. The activity is in line with the implementation of the Lao Youth and Adolescent Development Strategy 2021-2030 and the Noi ecosystem.



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4th Brief: The 5th Population and Housing Census 2025

The 5th Population and Housing Census (PHC) of Lao PDR is scheduled for March 2025. The PHC is amongst the government's largest and most complex operations, requiring significant preparation. As such, the Lao Statistics Bureau (LSB) and the Ministry of Planning and Investment, in close collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and key development partners, have been preparing for the upcoming census since 2021.

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4th Brief: The 5th Population and Housing Census 2025 Lao PDR

December 2023

"Counting Everyone, Because Everyone Counts"

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Importantly, the 5th PHC 2025 will be notable as the country's first-ever digital census. An estimated 13,151 enumerators will collect data from approximately 1.4 million households in 18 provinces, within a three-week period in March 2025 via handheld devices (tablets), and using Geographic Information System (GIS)-based maps and cartography.

Humanitarian response - Flood and Landslide in Lao PDR

With UNFPA support and thanks to the generous financial contribution from the people of Japan. Lao Women's Union ran various activities for the humanitarian response to the flood-affected populations, especially women and girls. In Savannakhet, 150 Dignity Kits were distributed to respond to the unique needs of women and girls, in villages most affected by the floods.

Mrs Khek, aged 26 from Phondy village, Hinboun district, Khammouan province was one of the five women who benefited from the clean delivery kits distributed to midwives in Laokha Health Centre. This was her second child, and she was happy that she delivered safely with the help of skilled staff and clean equipment despite



[Read more](#)

the floods that affected the health facilities. Transportation of the clean delivery kits was supported by DFAT from Brisbane to Vientiane in August 2023.



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Khammoune Lao Women's Union ran outreach on Gender-Based Violence, providing mobile counseling and offering mobile Women Friendly Space and recreational activities for women and their children in flood-affected communities.



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How is it going?

The Government of Japan supports UNFPA, LWU to protect survivors of violence in Bolikhamxay and Champasak



The construction of the protection shelters initiated early this year has come to an end.

Lao Women's Union, UNFPA, and UN-Habitat, with generous contributions from the Government of Japan, officially opened two new "Counseling and Protection Centers for Women and Children" in Bolikhamxay and Champasak Province. These are the country's 5th and 6th protection centers for survivors of violence to seek accommodation and shelter, counseling, psychosocial support, legal advice, and vocational training. Staff can also refer survivors to additional health and justice services available in the province and nationwide.



HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT

**New Protection Centers
for Violence Survivors Open in Laos**



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Strengthening and expanding Partnerships

Media for Change: Strengthening Capacities for Ethical Reporting on Sexual and Reproductive Health in Laos!

To strengthen the capacity of media outlets from government and private media on ethical reporting and communication for behavior change, UNFPA and the Center for Health Statistics and Information (CHSI) organized two workshops and a media trip to observe ethical reporting on SRH and to start a dialogue on communication approaches for behavior change and how can media outlets play a role in changing social norms and attitudes.

Xieng Khouang Pioneers Tech Revolution in Reproductive Health

By Phommah Vongsa · December 9, 2019



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Mobile Outreach on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

Vientiane Women and Youth Center for Health and Development, supported by UNFPA visited various schools and factories on the occasion of the World AIDS Day Celebration to meet with the students and discuss reproductive health, menstruation, and how to prevent HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.



Sout-South Cooperation: UNFPA Laos and UNFPA Thailand

Exchange visit for Thailand experts, service providers and UNFPA staff working on the Gender-Based Violence (GBV) response to the Provincial Counseling and Protection Center for Women and Children and Bokeo Hospital in Lao PDR to testimony the leadership and engagement of Lao Women's Union in providing protection and assistance to survivors of GBV.



Inclusivity and Empowerment

UNFPA took a significant step towards championing inclusivity and empowerment. A memorandum of understanding was officially signed with the network of persons with disabilities (OPDs).



A forward-looking view of Lao PDR and UNFPA cooperation in 2024

All partners from line ministries, mass organizations, development partners, and civil society gathered to think together how to capitalize on the gains to replicate, scale up, and sustain the progress, ensuring full inclusion of women and girls, youth, people with disabilities, ethnic groups and other vulnerable populations applying the principle of leaving no one behind.

KPL (KPL) The Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) convened an annual review meeting and planning meeting to review progress towards achieving results of the UNFPA's 7th Country Programme for 2022-2026 and prioritize high impact interventions for 2024.



UNFPA Laos is grateful to the following donors for their assistance as we work towards delivering a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled:





From
the People of Japan

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