

UNFPA Lao PDR September-October 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: September - October 2023

National Conference on Population and Development



The first-ever high-level conference on population and development (NCPD) in Lao PDR took place in Vientiane Capital, late October 2023 and brought together various government institutions, civil society, private sector and development partners to strategize around key population and development issues and agree on sustainable solutions at a critical juncture for the country.

The NCPD has come with 14 consensus-based recommendations for accelerating the implementation of the Programme of Action (PoA) of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which will also inform a national statement at the forthcoming 7th Asia and Pacific Population Conference on 15-17 November, 2023.



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Govt, development partners step up cooperation in population, development

Times Reporters

The government and its development partners have pledged to intensify cooperation to meet development targets, during a two-day National Conference on Population and Development that took place in Vientiane.

At the conference, which ended on Tuesday, the government and development partners reached a landmark consensus on accelerating implementation of the 9th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDIP) for 2021-2025 and the National Population and Development Policy for 2019-2030.

This will be achieved by empowering adolescents and youth, investing in sexual and reproductive health and rights and gender-based violence response programmes, as well as data for development, according to a press release from the conference.

The conference has come with 16 consensus-based recommendations

Population and Development Programme of Action in 1994, Laos has made significant progress.

This includes a decline in the proportion of the population living below the poverty line from 48 percent in 1990 to 18.3 percent in 2019-2020, and a decline in the maternal mortality ratio from 530 per 100,000 live

expected to graduate from "least developed country" status by 2026, it requires a combination of meaningful policies and their steadfast implementation, backed by the continued collective support of all development partners, in order to rise to the promise of the Sustainable Development Goals."

UNFPA Representative,

Professor Dr Kikeo Khaykhamphouthoune.

Read more

Courtesy Visits

UNFPA Lao PDR and Ministry of Education and Sports join hands to advance education and mental health initiatives in Laos

UNFPA Representative Dr Bakhtiyor Kadyrov met with H.E. Associate Professor Dr Phout Simmalavong, Minister of Education and Sports to discuss enhanced partnership to scale-up investments in education, particularly Comprehensive Sexuality Education integration, expanding Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) and developing university advanced courses.



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Empowering Women and Youth: UNFPA and Ministry of Health invest in Sexual and Reproductive Health in Laos

UNFPA Representative Dr. Bakhtiyor Kadyrov met with H.E. Dr. Bounfeng Phoummalaysith, Minister of Health to discuss investments in Sexual and Reproductive Health especially in the health workforce, including midwives to end maternal deaths, reduce unmet need for family planning and ensure access to youth-friendly services.



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UNFPA & Lao Youth Union Unite to Empower Youth in Laos Through SRH and MHPSS education and care

UNFPA Lao PDR Representative Dr. Bakhtiyor Kadyrov met with Lao Youth Union Secretary General H.E Mr. Monexay Laomoaxong to discuss support for the implementation of the Youth and Adolescent Development Strategy focusing on Mental Health, Youth participation, Sexual and Reproductive health and rights, Education and Law on Young pioneer.



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Strengthen Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Lao PDR

UNFPA Lao PDR Representative Dr. Bakhtiyor Kadyrov paid a courtesy visit to the Minister of Home Affairs H.E Dr Thongchanh MANIXAY, and discussed strategies for Geographic Information System (GIS) support to Census, and strengthening Civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) in Lao involving line ministries & development partners, including a CRVS coordination platform with coordination and partnership arrangements involving various stakeholders for joint planning and funding.



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UNFPA and LWU Discuss Strategies to Strengthen GBV

Prevention and Response

UNFPA Representative Dr. Bakhtior Kadyrov paid a courtesy visit to Lao Women's Union (LWU) and discussed with the President of LWU, H.E. Dr. Inlavanh Keobounphanh, strategies for strengthening Gender Based Violence prevention & response through multisectoral coordination, involving health, justice, & social sectors.

[Read more](#)



UNFPA and Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry join hands for ICPD Program of Actions

UNFPA Lao PDR Representative Dr. Bakhtiyor Kadyrov met with the President of Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry, H.E. Oudet Souvannavong to discuss the value-added role and potentials of the private sector in accelerating the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals and International Conference on Populations and Development's Program of Actions in Laos.



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UNFPA & KOICA Collaborate to Create a Safer and Healthier Future for Women and Girls in Laos

UNFPA Lao PDR and KOICA Lao PDR Representatives met to discuss continued cooperation to operationalize the Essential services package for women & girls victims of violence and the innovative integrated agenda to prevent Gender Based Violence by promoting Sexual and Reproductive health and Nang Noi girls & boys groups.



[Read more](#)

UNFPA and the Embassy of the Republic of Korea discuss data on the LNOB

UNFPA Representative Dr Bakhtiyor Kadyrov met with H.E. Mr. Jung Yung-Soo, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Lao PDR and had an insightful discussion on centrality of data for development, including in the context of the preparations for Lao Census 2025 to inform social, health, Social and Reproductive Health and rights and education policies.



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Celebration of International Days: Advocacy and Participation

World Contraception Day



World Contraception Day was marked by the Ministry of Health, UNFPA and partners by gathering at That Luang Lake, the landmark of Vientiane Capital, for an early morning healthy walk, on the 7 October 2023.

Thousands of people enthusiastically participated to celebrate **"the Power of Options"** highlighting the crucial role that contraceptive choices play in empowering individuals to take control of and make informed choices about their sexual and reproductive health. Various celebrations took place in many provinces engaging health workers, midwives, community leaders and youth.



[Read more](#)

International Day of the Girl Child



The Ministry of Planning and Investment and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in collaboration with Plan International and partners celebrated all adolescents in Lao PDR, 7th Noi framework anniversary and Noi's 17th birthday under the theme: **"Invest in Girls' Rights: Our leadership, Our Well-being"**.

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Quality of care and services

Mentorship Programme for Midwife Graduates in order to support the Transition to a Quality Midwife Workforce

The transition from midwife student to qualified midwife practitioner can be challenging. New graduate midwives are expected to be able to provide safe and competent care to women and their families, but while they start handling this new role as fully employed midwives, they may feel overwhelmed and need support to accompany them in their first steps as certified midwives. The UNFPA mentorship program aims to ensure that new midwives graduates have the guidance and support they need to make a successful transition into the workforce contributing to improving maternal and child health in Lao PDR.



[Read more](#)

Youth Empowerment

New Project Aims to Improve Skills and Job Prospects for Rural Youth in Lao PDR

UNFPA, USAID, ILO, Ministry of Education and Sports, Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, Chamber of Commerce, Lao Trade Union and relevant departments of Luang Prabang Province get together at the provincial project advisory committee meeting to launch the Rural Employment Promotion Project targeting 25,000 youth in Laos.



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Organization of the 8th Annual Adolescent Research Day

The 8th Adolescent Research Day, co-organized by Lao Tropical Public Health Institute (LTPHI) and UNFPA Under the theme **"Contemporary Situation of Adolescent Health & Development"**, gathered experts from 7 countries to discuss issues faced by adolescent girls to inform policy and program for development in Lao PDR.



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Population Change and Data

Improving Disability Data In The 5th Population And Housing Census In Lao PDR

the Lao Statistics Bureau (LSB), Ministry of Planning and Investment, and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in collaboration with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the CBM/Global Disability Inclusion network, World Education and Humanity Inclusion organized a stakeholder consultation meeting on improving disability data in the 5th Population and Housing Census in Lao PDR. Organizations of Persons with Disabilities actively engaged in the consultation with key Ministries to ensure their meaningful representation.



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The first field testing of the census questionnaire

Lao Statistics Bureau & UNFPA held the first field test of the 2025 census questionnaire & Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing Apps as part of the preparation of the census, taking place in Laos in 2025.



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Humanitarian response - Flood and Landslide in Lao PDR

UNFPA and the Ministry of Health visited Khammouane province, the Most affected area by the recent floods that hit Laos to assess the needs of the local population and provide outreach on SRH.



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How is it going?

Nang Noi Girls continue to share their passion for life skills

In Sepone district of Savannakhet province, Nang Noi Girls Groups which were established in 19 villages to provide adolescent girls and boys with essential life skills, gender and sexual and reproductive health continue to operate and to share knowledge supported by the Ministry of Education and Sports and UNFPA.

[Read more](#)



Strengthening and expanding Partnerships

Building a better future: UNFPA and ADRA Laos join forces to empower grassroots levels

United Nations Populations Fund (UNFPA) Lao PDR and Adventist Development & Relief Agency (ADRA) Lao PDR signed a memorandum of understanding to reach the furthest behind first and to Leaving No One Behind by ensuring access to Sexual and Reproductive Health information and services also Comprehensive Sexuality Education for young people at the grassroots level.



Mekong training center, a private sector company building vocational and life skills of adolescent girls

Mekong Vocational Center and UTD are working together with UNFPA to support vocational skills building and life skills of adolescent girls out of school. They benefit from a great opportunity at Mekong Vocational Center to learn a job and they receive information and orientation on sexual and reproductive health rights and services.



Türkiye to support youth access to SRH

UNFPA Lao PDR Representative Dr. Bakhtiyor Kadyrov met with H.E Mr. Ishik Orhan, Ambassador of Türkiye and experts of Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) to discuss opportunities for partnership to support adolescents and youth empowerment including their access to Sexual and Reproductive Health.



The way to the 7th APPC: training media partners on ICPD

media partners from the private sector & line ministries in #LaoPDR joined the first media briefing on the upcoming Seventh Asian and Pacific Population Conference #APPC7 #ICPD30. Delivered by UNFPA Lao PDR, the workshop aims to strengthen media understanding of the International Conference on Population and Development Program of Action #ICPD and boost their active engagement to promote sexual and reproductive health and rights, women's rights, rights and choices, population and sustainable development in Lao PDR and to highlight the great progress achieved by the country under the ICPD commitments.



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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