



Lao People's Democratic Republic
Peace Independence Democracy Unity Prosperity

**The second Five-Year National Plan of Action on the
Prevention and Elimination of **Violence against Women**
and **Violence against Children** (2021-2025)**

Vientiane Capital, 2021

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Foreword

The National Plan of Action on the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Violence against Children (2014-2020) has been adopted and promulgated through the Decree No. 167/GoL, dated 15 May 2014, which consisted of 2 national plans of actions in one document as follows:

- The National Plan of Action on the Prevention and Elimination of Violence Against Women (2014-2020)
- The National Plan of Action on the Prevention and Elimination of Violence Against Children (2014-2020)

Over five years of implementation, there are numbers of outstanding achievements such as the adoption of the Law on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Children, December 2014. Other achievements include conducted workshops on strengthening capacity for officials in the field of justice for children at central and local levels, particularly, on topics such as how to improve their organizational structures, created manuals on how to provide remedy and conduct proceedings with children involved and juvenile procedures for the 4 organizations of the justice sectors. At the same time, training sessions were also organized to enhance capacity, especially, for village authorities, created manual on the monitoring and inspection of juvenile procedure for the people's prosecutors who handle juvenile cases, expanded legal aid and social welfare services for children, organized training for village mediation committees, training on how to handle cases with children involved for the legal aid staffs at provincial and district levels, training on child adoption, training on the prevention and remedy on cases of juvenile offenders for the provincial committees on juvenile offenders. From 2015-2019, across the country, there were 1,170 of juvenile cases that were brought to the people's court, of which there were 1,204 of child offenders, of whom 23 were girls and 1,183 were boys, 189 offenders were sentenced to deprivation of liberty, while others were fined and re-educated.

Conducted training for the healthcare workers who work on victim assistance on techniques of examination, treatment and consultation for victims who may have been emotionally impacted, coordination and referral of victims to relevant sectors. Established assistant units for victims of violence in 07 central hospitals. Between 2017-2019, number of assisted victims of violence were 170 persons, of whom 157 were female and 13 were male, out of those 140 persons were victims of sexual violence with 139 female and 1 male victims, and 24 victims of physical violence of which 7 were women and 17 were men.

Two State-owned temporary shelters were set up for victims of violence: the Counselling and Protection Center for Women and Children, and the temporary shelter in Luangnamtha. Additionally, there are also other centers that provided by international organizations, such as: the Village Focus International (VFI) centers in Vientiane Capital and Chamapask province, and Sengsavang Center in Savanakhet province. The Counselling and Protection Center for Women and Children provides 5 area of assistances for victims such as temporary safe shelter (which provides food, clothing, necessities, emotional rehabilitation); legal assistance; medical assistance; education and vocational training; and facilitate their return to family and society. Between 2014-2020, there were 558 persons who stayed at the shelters, from cases of domestic violence, sexual violence (rape), trafficking in person and those at risk of falling victim to trafficking in person. Which 154 out of the total persons who stayed were under 18 (138 girls and 13 boys), and 404 persons who were adults (334 women and 60 men).

Under the plan, we have provided life-skill trainings for 22,976 persons/count of youths in various communities; vocational training has been provided for youths and parents in a total of 210 persons, of which 89 were women; which lead to employment for 62 persons, 7 of whom were business owner; expanded the network for child safety to an increase of 423 persons, there were representatives from communities working in the tourism industry of 684 persons, and 197

were representatives from the self-employed communities such as Tuk Tuk drivers, roadside stall owners.

The new National Plan of Action on the prevention and Elimination of Violence Against Women and Violence Against Children II (2021-2025) are also divided into two main National Plan of action like the previous one:

- The National Plan of Action on the prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women II (2021-2025)
- The National plan of Action for Prevention and Elimination against Children II (2021-2025)

The National Plan of Action on the prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women II (2021-2025) has a total of 3 main targets as follows:

1. Outcome 1: Improve perspectives and behaviors of families, communities, workplaces, and society towards more support for combating violence against women and reduce the numbers of woman and girl victims of violence.
2. Outcome 2: Provide the necessary assistances for victims of violence
3. Outcome 3: Improve the management, coordination, assessment and reporting, and strengthen the assistance services for victims of violence and its monitoring and evaluation processes.

The National plan of Action for Prevention and Elimination against Children II (2021-2025) has a total of 4 main Targets as follows :

1. Priority 1: Expand the coordination and monitoring efforts to cover more sectors to end violence against children
2. Priority 2: Prevention and remedy of violence online, including sexual abuse and violation of children via online social media platforms
3. Priority 3: Prevention and remedy of violence in schools
4. Priority 4: Prevention and remedy of violence in families and communities

Part I: Summary of the implementation of the Five-Year National Plan of Action on the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Violence against Children I (2014-2020)

A. Summary of the implementation of the five-year National Plan of Action on the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women I (2014-2020)

I. Domestic, Regional, and International Circumstances

1. Regional and International Circumstances

In 2015, the United Nation General Assembly has adopted the New Global Framework for 2016-2030, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which provided for the prevention of children and violence against women, especially in the Goal 5.2, “Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation”

The violence against women and girls are originated from the unbalanced of power between men and women which is silently spreading. All over the world, numbers of hashtags have been created, to appeal for social responsibility and actions to prevent the violence against women and girl, providing an opportunity for women victims of violence to speak up about the violence as a sign to encourage women victims everywhere to break their silence against the on-going violence.

The data of violence against women and girls demonstrated that the violence against women and girls has impacted to women around the world in all socio-economic groups, all places and level of education. Recently, the data of violence against women from their partners and family from 106 countries indicated that 17.8% of women and children from age of 15 to 49, who used to be or currently in a marriage are facing physical or sexual violence from their partners at the moment or within the preceding 12 months of the survey. The numbers show that women experienced of violence from their partners up to 30% over the preceding 12 months of the survey, number of violence has mostly increased in the Least Development Countries (24.3%). However, due to limited availability of global and regional data on the violence against women and girls, this data could not be analysed accurately.

2. Domestic Circumstance

The result of the National Survey on Violence Against Women entitled “Lao Women’s Health and Life Experiences” in 2014 has pointed out percentage of violence against women from their spouse or partner as following: physical violence 11.6%; sexual violence 7.2%, sexual violence in youths age group of 15 to 19 covered 12.9%. In addition, women are regularly facing emotional violence which covered of 26.2%; the physical and sexual violence against women

from non-partner covered 15.3%. Women from the age of 15 covered 4.2% of those who experienced physical violence and 5.3% of sexual violence from non-partner.

At the same time, the national survey on “Estimated necessary expenditure from multi-sectors for providing assistance to women victims of violences in the Lao PDR” in 2016, the results were found that the most necessary investment in providing assistance for women victims and children’s victims of violence during 2015-2017 was to establish the 24/7 hot-line service, healthcare centers, emergency shelters, and counselling service which amount to \$669,942 USD which was 0.25% of the GPD. However, through the actual implementation, it was found that the targets could be yet achieved as planned due to many factors which will be provided in the Conclusion part.

II. The Achievements from Implementation of the National Plan of Action on the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women 2014-2020

1. Programme 1: Review of Policy and Legislations, Establishment a Database and Conduct Research Studies, and Capacity Building

1.1. Review of Policy and Legislations

The National Assembly has adopted the Law on the Protection and Prevention of Violence Against Women and Children No. 56/NA, dated 23 December 2014, and promulgated by the Presidential Ordinance, No. 031/PO, dated 30 January 2015. The Law aimed to protect, prevent, provide assistance and remedy to the violence against women and children in order to protect their legitimate rights and interests, elevating their roles in society, their dignity, aiming to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women and children, and to achieve gender equality.

In addition, there were other related laws such as: The Law on Anti-Human Trafficking (No. 73/NA, dated 17 December 2015); Law on Persons with Disabilities (No. 57/NA, dated 10 December 2018); Law on Criminal Procedure (Amended, No. 37/NA, dated 14 November 2017); and the Penal Code (No.26/NA, dated 17 May 2017); and Decree on Legal Aid No. 77/Gov, dated 28 February 2018; the National Plan of Action on the Combatting and Prevention on Trafficking in Person Phase I (2013-2015), No. 37/PM, dated 03 February 2014, and Phase II (2017-2020), and the National Strategy on the Social Protection.

1.2. Establishment of a Statistical Database and Researches

In order to assess the current situation of the violence against women in the Lao PDR, as a reference for creating policy, legislations, and work plans, researches and studies had been conducted at the national level in two topics: 1) the National Survey on Violence Against Women entitled “Lao Women’s Health and Life Experiences” in 2014, and 2) the National Study entitled “Estimated necessary expenditure from multi-sectors for providing assistance to women victims of violences in the Lao PDR”.

– the National Survey on Violence Against Women entitled “Lao Women’s Health and Life Experiences” in 2014 shows that the violence from the husband/partner: physical violence accounted for 11.6%; sexual violence 7.2%, sexual violence by the

partner among the age group of 15-19 accounted for 12.9%; emotional violence is a type of violence that women are facing on a regular basis, which accounted for 26.2%; the physical and sexual violence was 15.3%. physical violence by non-partner from the age of 15 was 4.2%, and 5.3% of sexual violence.

The National Study entitled “Estimated necessary expenditure from multi-sectors for providing assistance to women victims of violence in the Lao PDR” shows that the most necessary investment in providing assistance for women victims and children’s victims of violence during 2015-2017 was to establish the 24/7 hot-line service, healthcare centers, emergency shelters, and counselling service which amount to \$669,942 USD which was 0.25% of the GDP. However, through the actual implementation, it was found that the targets could be yet achieved as planned due to many factors which will be provided in the Conclusion part.

1.3. Capacity Building for all sectors involved in the process of prevention and remedy on violence against women

In the past five years, a number of training sessions have been provided to strengthen capacity for those involved in prevention and remedy on violence against women, for instance, healthcare workers who provide assistance to victims received training on techniques of detection, treatment and counselling to victims who were emotionally affected; coordination and referral of victims to the Counselling and Protection Center for Women and Children which is operated by Lao Women Union. Conducted workshops to disseminate the legislations related to combating violence against women, promoted access to the services for women victims, to the focal points of Ministry of Public Health.

There are counsellors appointed across the country: 7 counsellors at the Counselling and Protection Center for Women and Children, 85 counsellors at provincial divisions of counselling and protection for women and children, and 444 counsellors at district units of counselling and protection for women and children.

2. Programme 2: Prevention of Violence against Women

2.1. Societal awareness raising campaign

The awareness raising has been conducted in parallel with the celebration of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on 25 November of every year, for the government officials, UN staffs, civil society organizations, teachers and students, all multi-ethnic people, and the society to change their attitude not to view that violence against women as a “normal issue”, acknowledge that violence against women is unacceptable, and a violation of human rights, which deprives women’s dignity, obstructing women from participating, contributing and receiving benefits from development, by restricting their options and limiting their capacity to participate in activities. The campaigns were focused on dissemination of documents and conduct activities to encourage people engagement, such as the statements by the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister through televisions and radio broadcasts, newspaper, online and village community speakerphones.

Organized ceremonies across the country and distributed a number of documents related to the prevention of violence against women and girls, such as the history of the International Day for Elimination of Violence against Women, Law on the Preventing and Combatting

Violence against Women and Children, the National Plan of Action on the Prevention and Elimination of Violence Against Women and Violence Against Children, Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action, Declaration on Elimination of Violence against Women, the Survey on Violence against Women, and the Study on “Estimated necessary expenditure from multi-sectors for providing assistance to women victims of violence in the Lao PDR”, and also the Q and A activities on violence against women. Conduct the workshops, seminars, panel discussions for the high-ranking officials on the violence against women, the achievements in implementation of providing assistance for victims of violence, challenges and solutions, at national, central and local levels, a total of 120 events with 32,250 total participants, disaggregated to 22,575 women and 9,675 men; organized award ceremonies for excellent implementing agencies of violence prevention and remedy, and other activities such as aerobic dance, cycling for ending violence, short-film contest (10 minutes films), essays written contest on the topic of protection from sexual violence during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The awareness campaign for public to beware of many forms of lies and schemes for trafficking in person were conducted for those in the areas of the Laos-China Railways, the Laos-Thai Friendship bridges, the Department of Consular, bus stations along the Northern and Southern routes including the high-risk provinces such as Vientiane Capital, Bolikhamxay, Vientiane Province, Luangprabang, Oudomxay, Luangnamtha and Xiengkhuang. The activities were conducted in a total of 83 points, 451 villages with 17,247 participants (8,805 women and 8,442).

The awareness raising campaigns on preventing in schools, temporary shelters for the flood-disaster victims, and villages located near the railways, with a total of 9 events and 3,609 total participants. Contributed as a key-speaker for the dissemination workshop on the harmful effects and combatting violence against women and children organized by other related sectors, with a total of 66 events and 7,263 participants.

2.2. Implementation of Programmes on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment

The national campaign on patriotism and development with the gender equality practices, and free from domestic violence particularly violence against women and children in 2013-2015 which has been integrated into the Decree No. 309/GOV, dated 14 November 2013 which superseded the Decree No.201/GOV on Poverty and Development Criteria. In the said Decree, a developed household, village, and district criteria must include gender equality practices and free from domestic violence particularly violence against women and children which was defined as the criteria number 10 of the developed families, criteria number 18 of the developed villages, and criteria number 16 of the developed districts statuses. The creation of those criteria is resulted from the Lao People’s Revolutionary Party Resolution no. 03 on “Building the provinces to become strategic units, building the districts into comprehensive units, and building villages to become developed units”; and the Politburo of the Lao People’s Revolutionary Party Order no. 03 on Building villages into developed units, building big villages into small rural towns. Through its implementation, there were villages with strengthen organization, which promoted inclusiveness of men and women in its ranks, reflecting gender equality practices, appointed village coordinators for the advancement of women and mothers-children affairs: in 2014-2015, there were 6,662 of such certified villages

out of 8,514 total villages or equal to 78.65%; these villages were certified for practicing gender equality and are free from violence particularly violence against women.

The national campaign on patriotism and development in relation to building developed families, villages and districts to practice gender equality, promote child development and are free from domestic violence, particularly violence against women and children in 2017-2020 was integrated to the Decree no.348/GOV, dated 16 November 2017 on Poverty and Development Criteria, and Guidance no.0830/MAF, dated 06 April 2018 on the Implementation of the Decree on Poverty and Development Criteria. According to the National Assessment on Families with gender equality, promote child development and free from violence against women and children, in 2020 there were a total of 1,180,511 of such families (95.22%) from a total of 1,236,460 families across the country, which translates to 89.05% of the total villages, and 66.89% of the total districts.

2.3. Collaboration with Mass Medias

Advertisements were produced to promote gender equality and oppose violence against women and children through the National Radio Broadcasts channel, Lao Women's Radio channel, the National TV channel, Ministry of Public Security channel, Lao Women channel, Lao Star channel, and number of articles has been published on various newspapers.

In collaboration with the CAWMC, the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism has provided capacity building for the members' Lao journalist association, to increase their knowledge and news writing skills in order to promote and appeal to the society to oppose violence against women. The activity has received participation from 60 news editors and journalists from National television, radio and newspaper agencies. Trainings were organized on topics of gender equality and combating violence for officials of the Provincial Departments of Information, Cultural and Tourism, especially for officials of community programs in the three southern provinces, namely Xekong, Salavan, and Attapue. This activity is to promote correct understanding on news and article to promote combating of violence against women and thus further transmit through community radio programs for the people to be aware and have correct understanding which shall lead to change of attitude and move away from outdated traditions that believed in use of violence, also to promote gender equality and oppose use of violence.

2.4. Prevention of Violence Against Women in Educational Institutions

The gender equality manual has been created for secondary school students to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls in school. Training sessions on how to use various tools to appeal for ending violence against women were organized for the heads of informal education agencies and basic vocational training agencies, including heads and responsible committees of community learning centers from 04 provinces, namely, LuangPrabang, Xiengkhuang, Oudomxay, Xayyabouly and Huaphun. Provided the capacity building for the educational administrators and staffs at central and provincial levels on ending violence against women in educational facilities, and organized activities to commemorate the International Day on Ending violence against women and girl on 25 of November of every year.

From 2015 to 2020, NCAWMC in collaboration with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), development partners (DPs), financial institutions, civil societies from both domestic and

abroad, has conducted a number of activities at various venues such as: Chao Anouvong Statduim, Vientiane High School, Chao Anouvong High School, Phonmee High School, Dongkhamxang College of Education, Ban Kern College of Education, Savannakhet College of Education with total of 2000 participants. The purpose was to raise awareness and understanding on violence against women. A 1000 posters, entitled “ending violence against women” were distributed to the educational sector at central and local levels to disseminate and raise awareness on elimination of violence against women. Self-defense training were also conducted for teachers and students of Ban Kern College of Education and Phon Mee high school.

2.5. Prevention of Violence against Women at the workplaces and labor sites of Government and Private Sectors

Organized activities to raise awareness on promoting safe migration, protection of rights and interests of the victims of trafficking in person for communities, with a total 11,550 participants, 6,436 women; handed out 15,000 pamphlets with contact numbers and information on safe migration.

2.6. Prevention of violence against women in the community

Actively protecting migrant workers through the implementation of the projects of capacity Building and the protection of migrant worker under the support of IOM. The workshop on safe migration, protection of the rights and interests of the victims of human trafficking has been conducted for the Committee of the Protection and Assistance of Children (CPAC) at district and village levels for 35 districts and 78 villages across 6 provinces (Oudomxay, Xiengkhuang, Huaphan, Bokeo, and Luangprabang provinces) with total of 238 participants, 98 of whom were women.

Manual on protection and reduction of violence against women and girl was created for communities. The workshop on the relevant laws and legislations related to the protection and assistance for victims of violence against women and children has been conducted for district authorities and its people.

3. Programme 3: Responding for Violence Against Women

3.1. Healthcare, Support and Empowerment for Victims of Violence

1) Healthcare assistance: established units for providing assistances to victims of violence in 7 of central hospitals i.e., Mahosod hospital, Setthathirath hospital, Mothers and Children hospital, 103 hospital, hospital of Ministry of Public Security, and other hospitals all over 17 provinces in Laos. From 2017 to 2019, the number of assistances that have been provided to victims of violence was 170 persons in total (157 women), which can be categorized into various types of violence: 140 persons (139 women) were victims of sexual violence, 24 persons (7 women) were victims of physical violence, and 6 women (all women) were victims of human trafficking.

2) Social Assistance

- Provide temporary shelters:

Lao PDR has two State-owned temporary shelters for victims, which are the Counselling and Protection Center for Women and Children, and the temporary shelter

in Luangnamtha Province. Additionally, there were also 3 centers established by international organizations, namely, the Village Focus International centers in Champasak Province, and Vientiane Capital, and the Sengsavang center in Savannakhet Province.

The Lao Women Union provided necessary assistances for victims such as the safe shelters (including food, clothing, necessary goods, psychological-emotional rehabilitation), legal aids, medical treatment, education, and vocational training, facilitate their return to family and society. From 2014 to 2020, there were 81 victims of violence who stayed at the shelter (domestic violence and rape) has been secured in the shelter, out of those, 47 were adults (42 women and 5 men), and 34 children (19 girls and 5 boys).

- Provide Counselling services: there were counselling services available through the hot-line and 166 face-to-face counselling services located across 17 provinces and the Capital, covering 148 districts. They provide counselling on legal, health, and emotional aspects, all free of charge, for women and children who seeked counselling.

- From 2014-2020, the counselling in person (at the Counselling and Protection Center for Women and Children) and counselling through the hot-line registered a total number of 5,711 times, of which 4,170 times were conducted through the hot-line, and 1,555 times were in person counselling, which served a total of 2,627 persons, of which 158 persons were below the age of 18, and 2,469 were adults (2,062 women and 565 men).

- provided assistances to those who chose to remain at their own house, a total of 37 persons (30 women), 1 person was below the age of 18 and 36 were adults.

- In providing assistance and care for the children attached to the victims, the Counselling and Protection Center for Women and Children did not have any social worker, only official staffs who received training on social works for short-term and long-term, there were Only 17 trained officials at one point. In addition, some officials who have been trained on social works were assigned in the Lao Women Union at provincial and district levels, to provide assistance to women and children in communities. There were 11 (10 girls) child-victims and the children who were attached to the victims at the center, They were provided with education.

- Empowerment of victims in the long-term: Supported the vocational trainings to the women and children of push-back cases from Thailand through the Vang Tao – Song Mek border checkpoint in Champasak, which was a total of 83 persons, in this number, 27 persons have received grants support for their employment. The victims and vulnerable groups of human trafficking, domestic and sexual violence who stayed at the temporary shelters have been provided with short-term vocational training, for example, training on cosmetics, textile, food processing and hotel, and mechanic, for a total of 55 persons (39 females and 16 males), 18 of whom were under the age of 18 (17 girls and 1 boy).

- Returning victims to society: before sending them back to their families, both the victims and their families were assessed on their conditions and readiness for their returns. After it is deemed that They are both ready, Only then the victims would be returned to their families, or relatives or guardians, with assignment of relevant authorities and Lao Women's Union at various levels to continue to monitor and provide

assistance in terms of material and emotional support until They can re-adapt and integrate back to society. Through monitoring and evaluation, it is found that the victims were able re-adapt to living with their families and communities.

Assistances were provided to the victims who have been pushed back from Thailand the Vang Tao – Song Mek border checkpoint in Champasak, which was a total of 345 persons 93 women; 8 individuals (1 female and 7 males) out of those who were wither the victims or those considered as vulnerable groups to human trafficking, domestic and sexual violence have been provided with education.

3.2. Protection for Victims of Violence and the Legal Process

In 2019, there were some cases related to women and children that have been brought to the Family Court. The People's District courts as the First Instance level courts have received 459 of family cases which included of 296 of divorce cases which accounted for 64.48%. the People's Provincial and Capital Courts as the First Instance level courts have received 124 family cases, which included 61 of divorce cases which accounted 49.19%. the Criminal Courts have decided many cases with women offenders, but their data has not been disaggregated, the decisions made at Zonal Courts reached 1,224 of such cases, which included 404 cases of robbery, accounted for 33%. At the People's Provincial and Vientiane Capital Courts there were 4,015 of such cases [women offenders] in total, including 2,426 of drug related cases, which accounted for 60.42 %. The criminal cases with women as victims of human trafficking, and prostitution cases have not been disaggregated in the courts' database.

In Vientiane Capital, there were 111 cases that were related to women and children i.e., 50 cases of sexual assault, 25 cases of rape, 20 cases of human trafficking, 4 cases of murder, 3 cases of battery, 2 cases of taking property of other by force, 2 cases of forced prostitution, 1 case of indecent exposure. Out of those cases, there were prosecution orders issued and brought forward to the People's Vientiane Capital Court in a total of 86 cases, which 25 cases of out those are still on going. For cases that involved women and children, whether as the victim or the accused, the Vientiane Capital Office of People's Prosecutors has paid special attention in monitoring such cases, such as on the preventive measures, investigation methods, as well as the legitimate interests of the accused and victim, in order to ensure compliance with the law, and the Party and Government policy for women and children.

The free legal aid have been provided to 01 case of prostitution, which punished 2 offenders with 15 years imprisonment and fines of 15 millions Kip.

3.3. Coordination and connection

The assistance processes for victims of violence and human trafficking are a sensitive and complicated work, which covers all sectors at central and local levels. Therefore, in order to ensure effective implementation, there is a need for engagement with all stakeholders such as the lawyers, polices, healthcare workers, teachers, social workers and all relevant sectors including international organizations, to conduct fact-findings, management, rehabilitation, facilitate their return to communities, following up and prevention for both first instance and repeat victims.

B. Summary of the Implementation of National Plan of Action on Prevention and Elimination of Violence Against Children (2014-2020)

I Global, Regional and Domestic Context

1. Global and Regional Context

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) affirms that violence against children is a violation of human rights. The CRC prescribes that every child in the world, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity or any other status, has the right to survive, develop and be protected from violence, abuse and exploitation.

Lao PDR's commitment to ending violence against children stems from the CRC but has been galvanized by a global movement which has gained momentum since the release of the 2006 Report of the Independent Expert for the Secretary General's *Study on Violence Against Children* (the 'Report'). The Report constituted the first global study on violence against children, revealing its prevalence across countries, societies, cultures and contexts. The Report found that violence against children takes a number of forms, including physical, emotional, sexual, and neglect and that it occurs in a range of settings, including homes, communities, schools, worksites, sports and youth clubs, residential care, religious institutions, and during law enforcement and judicial procedures. The Report also underlines the long-term effects of violence against children which often continue into adulthood, such as social, emotional and cognitive impairments, as well as increased likelihood of mental illness, intimate partner violence and suicide. One of the recommendations of the Report was that countries develop a systematic framework in response to violence against children which is integrated into national planning processes.

Violence against children has also been a priority focus of ASEAN, of which Lao PDR is a member state. In 2011, the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) identified elimination of violence against children as one of the priority areas in its 2012–2016 Work Plan. A study on violence against children in East Asia and the Pacific in 2012 confirmed that sexual, physical and emotional abuse and exploitation (including child labour and violence in schools) is prevalent across the region, with no exception of country. In 2015, an ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence Against Children (2016-2025) was adopted by the ASEAN Summit of Heads of State and Government. Through this Plan of Action, member states commit to common principles, strategies and approaches in addressing violence against children.

2. National Context

Acknowledging the multisectoral and multi-level nature of violence against children and the need to implement the priority actions resulting from the Survey in a sometimes complex environment, Lao PDR has also worked to strengthen coordination among sectors, institutions, civil society, the private sector and communities and endeavoured to develop strategic approaches and plans.

Over the years, Lao PDR has translated its global and regional partnerships and commitments into national actions across a variety of sectors and areas. This has been evident in its efforts to progressively strengthen the legal and regulatory framework to address child rights, child protection and children's access to education, health care, social welfare and

UN General Assembly. A/61/299: UN Study on Violence Against Children. 2006.

justice. The main laws of reference are the Law on Protection of the Interests and Rights of Children (2007) and the Law on Preventing and Combatting Violence against Women and Children (2015). The Lao Generation 2030 Declaration also demonstrates Lao PDR's progress toward prioritizing child rights and the protection of children as key components for the further development of the country and maintaining a stable and prosperous society. The Declaration states that "investments in the generation of children and young people who will grow between now and 2030 are critical, urgent and fundamental for the development of country's human capital, which in turn will be crucial for the successful and sustainable graduation of the Lao PDR from Least Developed Country (LDC) status by 2024, and the achievement of SDG targets by 2030.

The implementation of this National Plan of Action led to notable achievements in addressing violence against children and coordinating efforts across social welfare, health, education, law enforcement and justice, as well as between the national, sub-national and community levels. A number of challenges and lessons-learned also emerged, revealing areas which require further focus and attention. This second National Plan of Action on Violence against Women and Children 2021-2025 will be informed by these achievements, setbacks and lessons-learned and therefore constitute an even more effective tool in addressing violence against children in the country in the next 5 years. The second National Plan of Action will also be supported by the concurrent formal adoption by the Government of a system's strengthening approach to child protection, which will further contribute to moving forward in a more coordinated, structured and strategic manner.

II The Achievements of the Implementation of the National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Children (2014-2020).

1. Programme 1: Policy and Legislative Review, Database Establishment and Research, Strengthening of the Capacity

1.1. Policy and Legislative Review

During the period 2014-2020, progress was made to ensure policies, legislation and regulations are compliant with the level of socio-economic development in the country, the contents of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international and regional conventions and agreements related to the protection of the rights and interests of the child.

1) Legislation

- The Law on Preventing and Combatting Violence Against Women and Children (No. 56/NA, dated 23 December 2014). The objective of the law is to define the principles, rules and measures for combating violence against women and children through prevention, protection, provision of assistance to victims of violence, and dealing with such violence in a way that protects the rights and legitimate interests of women and children. The Law ultimately aims at eliminating all forms of violence against women and children, upholding the rights and dignity of women and children, achieving gender equality, [and] contributing to developing a peaceful, civil, just and stable society, and developing the nation.
- The Law on Anti-Trafficking in Persons (No. 73/NA, dated 17 December 2015). The objective of the law is to define the principles, procedures and measures regarding the administration, monitoring and inspection of anti-human trafficking-related activities, including for children, in order to make such activities systematic, accurate

and efficient, aims to protect the rights, best interests, lives, health, dignity and freedom of movement of citizens (including children), the good national traditions and customs and a stable and safe society, which are essential for the development and defense of the nation.

- Law on Juvenile Criminal Procedure (No. 41/NA, dated 20 December 2013). The objective of the law is to define the principles rules and measures for the administration and monitoring of the administrative resolution and judicial proceedings of juvenile cases to ensure the accurate, justice and to protect the rights and interests of children, aim to assist and educate children to respect and implement the laws, eliminate and prevent juvenile crimes, in order to build a just and safe society, create conditions for children to adjust and reintegrate into society, ultimately contributing to the protection and development of the nation.

- Penal Code (No 26/NA dated 17 May 2017). The objective of the Penal Code is to safeguard the political, economic and social system of the Lao People's Democratic Republic; protect the interests of the State; the legitimate rights, interests, health, life, honor, dignity, freedom of citizens; national security and public order; to deter criminal conducts; and to educate all citizens to respect the laws. Rights of the child are also protected under the Penal Code. This includes coercion of children aged under 18 into marriage and marriage with person under the age of 18 are criminal offenses, prescribed in Article 268, Para 3 and Article 269 of the Penal Code.

- Law on Persons with Disabilities (No. 57/NA, dated 10 December 2018). The objective of this law is to define the principles, rules and measures for the administration and monitoring of activities to support people with disabilities, including children. The law aims to protect the rights and interests of people and children with disabilities; eliminate all forms of discrimination; create the conditions for people and children with disabilities to develop and become self-reliant, be able to participate in social activities, and attain political, legal, economic, cultural, social and family equality; be able to integrate with regional and international level development; and fully contribute to the socio-economic development of the nation.

- Labor Law (No. 43/NA, dated 24 December 2013) sets the minimum age of employment at 14 years and also introduces a new provision prohibiting hazardous work for all persons under 18 in compliance with ILO 182. This includes employment in activities, duties and locations that are unsafe, dangerous to the health, safety or morals of the child, forced labor, work to repay debts, human trafficking, trade or deception into the sex industry or solicitation of prostitution, photography or pornography, and trade or deception in the movement and production, transportation, possession of narcotics or addictive substances.

- Criminal Procedure Law (No. 37/NA of 14 November 2017). The objective of this law is to define the principles, regulations, and measures relating to the judicial correctness of criminal procedures and limit and eradicate misconduct in order to protect the interests of the State and organizations and the legitimate rights and interests of the public

- The Education Law (No.62/NA dated 16 July 2015). The new/amended Articles include:

- Article 28: which affirms that primary education and lower secondary education are compulsory, which citizens are obliged to attend and complete.

- Article 45: which affirms that the students from poor families, disadvantaged groups, the disabled, gifted or outstanding students, female and ethnic group students in particular receive support based on the regulation.
- Article 70: which prohibits students to create gangs to disturb and cause disorder in educational institutions and society.
- Article 71: which prohibits teachers to beat, scold, be cruel and biased against students.
- Article 74: which prohibits families to show behaviors prompting their children in improper ways.
- Decree on Legal Aid (No.77/Govt, dated February 28, 2018). The purpose of this Decree is to define the principles, regulations, and measures relating to the management and monitoring of legal aid work in order for every citizen to have access to legal aid and justice proceedings, aiming at protecting the legitimate rights and interests, the equality of every citizen before the law, contributing to building a peaceful, united, fair and prosperous society.
- Prime Minister Decree on the adoption and implementation of the National Social Protection Strategy, No.224/PM, dated 01 April 2020 endorses and declares the implementation of the National Social Protection Strategy ensuring that Lao people have access to basic social protection services, consisting of health insurance, social security and social welfare, in an equitable, adequate, effective and sustainable way. Strategic objectives of the National Social Protection Strategy include expanding social welfare's coverage and services to meet the needs of target groups, including child victims of violence, child victims of exploitation or sexual abuse, child victims of human trafficking, and children rescued from hazardous working conditions or labor exploitation.
- Decree No. 194/PM on Adoption was completed in 2014, which is the fundamental legislation related to both domestic and international adoption.
- Agreement on the Principles of the Management of High Schools (No.2060/MOES, dated 11 June 2013)). Article 18 defines the responsibilities of the unit / unit within the school, which comprises the student management unit which is responsible for educating and monitoring the performance of the grade-level teacher committee and classroom teachers, student behavior, enrollment, collect students' biography, organize school campus guarding, provide counselling/advice, coordinate with parents or guardians, students' parents associations, communities and others in societies.
- Agreement on Teacher and Student Management(No.2059/MOES, dated 11 June 2013) and specifically, Article 3 defines the duties of teachers to coordinate with parents or guardians of students to encourage and educate students, preserve peace, order, assess, praise and provide feedback to students according to the rules; Article 7 sets out the duties of students to strictly enforce school rules and the other rules issued by the concerned sectors; Article 8 sets forth the rights of students to be properly cared for and protected by teachers, organizations within the school, parents, guardians and society; and Article 10 prohibits students to use violence that impacts on physical and mental wellbeing of students and people in society.
- Agreement on Light Work for Young Workers aged between 14 and not lower than 12 years, No. 4183/MoLSW, dated 23/11/2016.

2) Policies

- National Plan of Action for Preventing and Combatting Trafficking in Persons (Phase I (2013-2015) No. 37/PM, dated 03 February 2014) and Phase 2 (2017-2020) No. 49/PM, dated January 23, 2018 are among other things expected to raise awareness in society, especially among women, children, and groups at risk, so they are aware of and understand the consequences and impact of human trafficking.
- National Plan of Action on Prevention and Elimination of Child Labor 2014-2020 aims to enhance policies in education, training, health, social protection and employment to improve access of child laborers and vulnerable children to services and interventions, improve the quality and quantity of educational services to keep children in school, and mainstream child labor concerns into agriculture sector policies and interventions.

3) Adoption of the declarations and a joint statement

- Declaration on the Protection of Children from All Forms of online Child Abuse and Exploitation adopted on 2 November 2019.
- Joint Statement on Reaffirmation of Commitment to Advancing the Rights of the Child in ASEAN adopted on 2 November 2019
- ASEAN Declaration on the Rights of the Child in the context of migration on 2 November 2019.
- Notification (No 475/PMO dated March 18, 2019) regarding Direction on the Implementation the Concluding Observations on CRC Combined 3rd - 6th Periodic Report and on CEDAW Combined 8th - 9th Periodic Report.

1.2. Establishing Data Collection System on VAC

The National survey on violence against children in the Lao PDR was completed in 2014. This was an important activity to understand the prevalence of the violence against children situation in the country, which is crucial in order to inform the development of relevant and effective policies, strategies, programmes and initiatives.

- Key indicators on violence against children and other child protection violations are integrated in Lao Social Indicator Survey (LSIS) which is conducted every five years to gather and monitor data on violence against children on a regular basis.
- Strengthened coordination in data collection by NCAWMC through consultations and annual work conferences.

1.3. Strengthening of All Sectors Involved in Preventing and Addressing Violence Against Children

Strengthening the capacity and understanding of the concerned actors, institutions and agencies involved in combatting violence against children is crucial in order to ensure that approaches, programmes and preventative/responsive services are relevant and effective. For this reason, capacity development across sectors was an important element of the 2014-2020 NPA on VAC. The major achievements during the 2014-2020 period include:

- **Strengthening the Child Protection Networks:** Child Protection Networks (CPN) were formally integrated into the child protection system under Ministerial Agreement on Establishment of Child Protection Networks in 2017. CPN are specifically designed to address the identified gap in child protection prevention and

response services at the local level and linking to the formal level. In 2020, there are CPNs in 1,248 villages, CPNs received training on prevention and response to abuse, neglect and child exploitation.

- **The Counseling and Protection Centers for Women and Children of the Lao Women's Union:** the centers at central and local levels received training on victim assistance, legal advice and counseling for victims of violence and human trafficking. This has resulted in the improvement of the counselling networks in 52 villages, 148 districts, 17 provinces, 1 capital city and the free of charge telephone counseling service for youth that has been available across the country since 2011, including in ethnic languages, such as Hmong.

- **Protection of children without adequate parental care:** The following initiatives were conducted

- Awareness raising activity to build understanding for the representatives from various sectors on the rights of children without parental care and the importance of protecting and assisting those children in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Committee of the Rights of the Child's concluding observations was organized.

- In 2014, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and Sports, Ministry of Public Security and the members of the Protection and Assistance of Children Committee to organize field visits to observe children's wellbeing and practices of child care facilities in Lao PDR including boarding schools, SOS villages and child protection networks in four provinces, namely Luang Prabang, Luang Namtha, Savannakhet and Champasak.

- Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in cooperation with the National University of Laos, developed a training manual on Strengthening Social Workforce for governmental para-professional social worker at provincial and district level working with and for children.

- Between 2018 and 2020, MoLSW provided trainings for social welfare workers in the priority provinces, namely Xiengkhuang, Attapue, Savannkhet, Saravane and Luang Prabang. The total number of participants was 141, including 38 females.

- From 2018 to 2020, with support from UNICEF national alternative care guidelines and minimum standards for residential care institutions in Lao PDR are being developed.

- **Justice for children**

- Strengthened the capacity of justice sectors, namely People's Supreme Court, Supreme People's Prosecutor, Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Public Security working on justice for children at the central and local levels, including adjusting organizational structures, improving the legal manual for handling legal proceedings of juvenile cases;

- Training was provided on child rights and law enforcement by Ministry of Justice to Village Mediation Unit (VMU) in 15 villages in Saythany district, Vientiane Capital, including the village volunteers, village organizations, village police officers, prosecutors, court officials, lawyers, social welfare staff and district Lao Women's Union, totaling 150 participants.

- The development of a manual on the monitoring of legal proceedings for the Child Prosecution Unit was completed.
- The project on Legal and Social Assistance to children in contact with the law was expanded to 5 villages of Khoun district and 5 villages of Pek District, Xieng Khouang province and to 5 villages of Kaysone Phomvihanh and 5 villages of Adsaphangthong district Savannakhet province between July 2018 and July 2019. The objective of the project was to ensure that child victims of violence, abuse and exploitation and child offenders in Vientiane Capital, Savannakhet and Xiengkhouang provinces have access to legal aid.
- The People's Supreme Court disseminated the Implementation Guidelines for Juvenile Criminal Procedure Law to staff of the Justice Department, police officials, prosecutors and judges from 8 provinces, in a total of 14 times, with the total 840 participants (209 females).
- Training delivered for 19,445 members of the Village Mediation Unit (VMU); 11,133 members of Village Mediation Unit (VMU) were trained on child related cases.
- Five trainings delivered, and laws disseminated to a total of 156 participants, including 59 females.
- Training delivered on legal aid for staff working and responsible for legal aid from the provincial justice department and district justice offices in 11 provinces.
- **Adoption:**
 - Training on adoption of children provided by Ministry of Justice for the members of the Adoption Committees in 12 provincial and 54 districts with the total of 177 participants, including 55 females.
 - Training on Community-based diversion provided by Ministry of Justice for members of the teams responsible for community-based diversion programmes from Savannakhet, Xiengkhouang and Vientiane Capital City and from Xayphouthong, Adsaphangthong, Kaysone Phomvihane, Xaysetha, Xaythany, Khoun, Pek, and 24 villages from the mentioned target districts, with a total 122 participants, including 45 females.

□ **Human trafficking (including children):**

- MoU Between the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic on Cooperation to Combat Trafficking in Persons, 12 July 2017 aiming at the prevention and suppression of transnational organized criminal groups and gangs directly engaged in trafficking in persons and desiring to enhance cooperation of mutual benefit between the two countries.
- Bilateral cooperation agreements on combatting human trafficking with Vietnam.
- Bilateral cooperation agreement on combatting human trafficking with China in 2014, which focuses on capacity building and establishing a mechanism for cooperation along the border.
- Approval of the ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons in 2017.

- **Integrated health services for victims of violence and human trafficking:**
 - Between 2017 and 2019, a team was set up to provide medical assistance to victims of violence and human trafficking, including children, in seven Hospitals at the central level (Mahosod Hospital, Friendship Hospital, Setha Hospital, Maternity and Newborn Hospital, Children Hospital, 05 April and 103 Hospital). Between 2018 and 2019, a provincial-level coordinating committee was established to develop a form for the screening and treatment of victims of violence and human trafficking.
 - Training was delivered to medical staff who provide services to victims of violence against women and children, on how to diagnose, treat and counsel victims who are mentally affected, and refer victims to the Lao Women's Union's Counseling and Protection for Women and Children.
 - Workshops and meetings were organized for the coordinators working for the Ministry of Health to disseminate information on legislation related to violence against children, promoting access to services for women and children victims and on the physical and mental consequences and impacts of violence.
- **Positive discipline:** The National Commission for Mothers and Children, with support of Save the Children International, has implemented a project on positive disciplines of children; published and disseminated a training manual on positive disciplines of children and provided trainings for government officials dealing with the issue of violence against children.
- **Legal aid: The following initiatives were conducted:**
 - Information about the laws related to violence against children was disseminated by Ministry of Justice through the provincial radio broadcasts (in Lao language 6,596 times, Hmong language 66 times, Khmu language 66 times); through public speakers at the village level 7,382 times; through TV 405 times; at village cluster level 1,784 times, and at the village level 29,246 times, in other places 1,542 times and in schools 6,210 times; with the total number of 6,063,668 people reached, including 1,897,963 women.
 - Legal aid service was established in 13 Provincial Justice Departments and in 3 districts and 1 Council, and the necessary materials and budget was provided for the operation of the services which are available for children victims.
 - Training on laws and basic counselling was provided by Ministry of Justice to members of the Village Meditation Unit, with a total of 14,878 participants.
 - A total of 18,494 cases of disputes including child related cases were solved and mediated successfully by VMU Committees at village level.

2. Programme 2: Prevention of Violence Against Children

2.1. Awareness-raising Campaign and Movements Throughout Society

Much progress was made in this area, including high-level campaigns involving prominent government figures and well-known citizens and role models, which strengthened the messaging and underlined the importance of the topic. Additionally, targeted campaigns were conducted in hotspots and vulnerable areas in order to reach at risk children. Some of the achievements included:

- Awareness raising campaigns throughout society were conducted in conjunction with the yearly commemorations of International Children's Day on June 1 and World Children's Day on November 20 targeting the civil servants; UN agencies, social organizations, international organizations; students, pupils, parents, people of ethnic and society. Messages focused on changing behavior and perceptions around violence being a common and acceptable behavior. Initiatives included: dissemination of the statement of the Prime Minister of Lao PDR and Deputy Prime Minister on International Children's Day through television, radio, newspapers, online and public speeches; publication of IEC materials such as posters on anti-violence against children, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the ASEAN Declaration on the Prevention and Elimination of Violence Against Children targeting public.
- Awareness raising campaigns on the negative impacts of human trafficking were conducted by Ministry of Public Security in the area along the Lao-China Railway, the Lao-Thai Friendship Bridge, the Department of Counsellor, South and Central bus Stations as well as provinces with high risks such as Vientiane Capital, Bolikhamxay, Vientiane Province, Luang Prabang, Oudomxay, Louang Namtha and Xiengkhouang Provinces, reaching 17,247 people including 8,805 females and 8,442 males (including children) from 83 sites and 451 villages.
- Further community awareness raising campaigns on the negative impacts of trafficking were conducted by the Ministry of Public Security along the newly constructed railways in five northern provinces (Luang Namtha, Oudomxay, Luang Prabang, Vientiane province and Vientiane Capital), reaching a total of 8,528 people, including 2,556 females. Children also participated in these events.
- Awareness raising and capacity building on safe migration and trafficking was conducted for 10 youth volunteers including 8 girls, who then led activities in the Children's Cultural Center in Adsaphone District, Savannakhet Province.
- Awareness raising on the rights of the victims of trafficking, including rights of children was conducted by Ministry of Public Security for community leaders and community members, with a total number of 11,550 participants, including 6,436 females.
- A manual on trauma and psychological recovery for the victims of human trafficking and domestic violence was drafted by MoLSW and used for training village child protection networks. CPN in some villages have received the training.
- In July 2020, under the leadership of MICT, MOLSW, LWU and LYU collaborated with UNICEF and technical support from UNFPA disseminated knowledge on child protection risks during COVID-19 via TV and radio programmes in Lao, Khmu and ethnic minority languages with Lao subtitle and sign language.
- Between July and August 2020, 4,800 USB sticks containing public speaking announcements were also disseminated to 4,800 villages to sensitize community members to child rights and protection issues during the COVID-19 pandemic, reaching approximately 3.4 million people or around 50 per cent of the entire population. Key child protection messages delivered include violence against children, stress management, positive parenting, online protection and available hotline and counselling services of LWU and LYU.

2.2. Prevention of Violence Against Children at Homes and in Families

Movements on mobilizing the patriotism and the national development in conjunction with the gender equality and elimination of domestic violence, especially violence against women and children were organized. The organized movements were related to the Decree No. 309/PM, dated 14 November 2013 on Poverty and Development Standards for 2012-2015 which set the criteria establishing a Development Village relating to implementing the equal rights of women and men and combating violence against women. No.348/Govt, dated 16 November 2017 on Poverty Alleviation and Development Standards.

2.3. Prevention of Violence Against Children in Schools and Educational Institutions

Schools and education institutions were very active during the period 2014-2020 and a number of awareness-raising and training initiatives were conducted on combatting VAC. These included:

- From 2010 to 2017, the curriculum on the subject of Moral Education in Primary Education and on the subject of Population Education in Lower Secondary and Upper Secondary school was adapted to cover the basic international conventions on human rights, including the International Convention on Political and Civil Rights; the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; Rights of Ethnic Minorities and others related information.
- A training manual on Youth Promoting Gender Equality and Preventing Violence against Women and Children was developed. The manual was used for a training for education administrators at central and local levels, including provincial and district education officials, school principals and female and male teachers in lower secondary schools from 18 provinces, one district per province and 2 schools per district (2015-2018).
- In 2019, two trainings on child protection and child safety were conducted by provincial Commission for the Advancement of Woman and Mother-Child for teachers and students in two schools: Salakham Secondary school and the Choa Anouvong secondary school (total of 90 participants, including 65 females and 25 males).
- In 2019, training was conducted on consent by provincial Commission for the Advancement of Woman and Mother-Child for 44 students (including 24 female and 20 male) from Salakham Secondary school and the Choa Anouvong secondary school.
- From 2018 to 2019, awareness raising campaigns were conducted by the Ministry of Education and Sports on ending violence in schools and in temporary shelters for the flood victims and in villages along the railway construction site (9 events with a total of 3,609 participants).
- Information on the impacts of violence and violence against women and children was disseminated through the invited speakers for the target audiences (66 times, with a total of 7,263 participants).
- Awareness raising activities for education administrators at the ministerial level, four provinces and seven schools on the impacts and consequences of human trafficking, domestic violence and available assistance and protection of victims, especially for

women and girl victims (with a total of more than 6,000 participants) was conducted by the Ministry of Education and Sports, in collaboration with the Lao Women's Union Counseling and Protection Centers for Women and Children.

- Awareness raising and dissemination of the National Plan of Action on the Prevention and Elimination of Violence Against Women and Violence Against Children in the Lao PDR was conducted for education administrators at all levels throughout the country from 2015 to 2019.
- Information on laws and legislation related to the harmful effects of drug abuse, ending violence against women and children and discrimination were disseminated through documents distribution during student gatherings at primary and secondary levels throughout the country each year.
- Disseminated information on the rights of children to students in five provinces: Phongsaly, Huaphanh, Savannakhet, Salavan, Attapeu with a total of 550 participants.
- IEC materials were developed for the campaign to end violence at school, including four posters, (1,000 copies of each poster were printed and distributed); and a video clip on 'No More Silence' was produced and posted on the website of the MOES and UN Women Asia-Pacific in 2015 to call for public attention on the need to break the silence about the issue of violence inflicted to women and girls in the country.
- Creative activities, such as drawing/painting, drama shows, song and story-writing and poems, were conducted in three lower secondary schools in Vientiane Capital City in order to promote messages about ending violence in early childhood.
- Provided information through meetings and distributed documents to education administrators at the central and provincial levels in four provinces and seven schools (with a total of more than 6,000 participants) on legislation related to the use of drug; CEDAW; the statement of the Prime Minister of Lao PDR on Ending of Violence against Women and Children; implementation decrees on Development and Protection of Women; the impact of human trafficking and domestic violence; and the assistance and protection of victims, especially women and children. The participants then passed on this information through awareness raising events.
- Training was conducted by Ministry of Education and Sports on combatting violence against women and children for teachers and students in at least 45 schools, with a total of at least 2000 participants.
- A drama was produced, and 100 posters developed on combatting violence and trafficking by students from Leoto secondary school to increase the understanding of students and parents on these issues and how to prevent them.
- IEC materials on combatting violence against women and children were developed, including 2,000 posters which were printed and distributed to education institutions and broader society across the country.
- A first drama “Ending Violence Against Women and Children” was produced, accompanied by the song “Let's talk” by the singer Alounna Thavonesouk— invited and supported by UN Women; and a second drama “Avoiding the use of violence is a development of school aged Children, care of children and mental health care is an empowerment of children” was produced, accompanied by the song "Stop Even Thinking" composed and directed by Lao author - Arnolad Phimvihanh.

2.4. Prevention of Violence Against Children in The Community

Communities have a crucial role in preventing and responding to violence against children. During the period 2014-2020, the following initiatives were conducted:

- Drama shows to advocate and reduce violence against children was produced, encouraging local authorities to take part in preventing violence in conjunction with the development of urban development and rural development plans
- 6 awareness raising activities were conducted for the village authorities and parents on forced child marriage and child pregnancy, with a total of 480 participants including 240 females and 240 males.
- Awareness raising campaigns on the negative impacts of human trafficking were conducted by Ministry of Public Security in the area along the Lao-China Railway, the Lao-Thai Friendship Bridge, the Department of Counsellor, South and Central bus Stations as well as provinces with high risks such as Vientiane Capital, Bolikhamxay, Vientiane province, Luang Prabang, Oudomxay, Louang Namtha and Xiengkhouang provinces, reaching 17,247 people including 8,805 females and 8,442 males from 83 sites and 451 villages. Target included children.
- Training of Trainer on safe migration, rights and interest of trafficking victims was conducted in Vientiane and Oudomxay Provinces, with a total of 200 participants, including 74 females.

2.5. Prevention of Violence Against Children in Working Sites

The attention was paid to protect children who may suffer violence and exploitation in work sites. The following initiatives were conducted:

- MoLSW and the Lao Trade Union monitored the management and the use of child labor through the inspection of the implementation of Labor Law and regulations related to labor units.
- Department of Labor Protection under MoLSW disseminated the Agreement on the Determination of the Minimum Age for Young Workers and the Agreement on the Determination of Dangerous Jobs for Young Workers to business sector. The agreements determine the employment of children from 12 years of age in 'light work', defined as work that is not harmful to the health or development of a child and does not obstruct attendance at school or participation in professional guidance or vocational training.
- Meetings were organised with relevant sectors such as Agriculture, Education and Sports, Industry and Commerce to comment on the study on the use of agricultural labor in Savannakhet and Saravan province, with a total of 32 participants, including 16 females.
- There is a total of 684 members of the child safety networks (423 persons are the community representatives; 197 persons are entrepreneurs representing working in the tourism industry/agents and 67 persons are self-business such as: tuk-tuk taxi drivers and street vendors who are community watch dogs and report any cases of child abuse they witness or become aware of).
- The project on Village Development Fund to combat trafficking of children and women was implemented from 2005 to 2015 under the ILO-IPEC / TICW partnership covered 5 provinces, 23 districts and 77 villages, reaching a total membership of 16,915, people, including 8,427 females.

2.6. Prevention of Violence Against Children in Childcare Facilities and in the justice Institution

- Three meetings were organized to disseminate information on the Decree on Adoption to the staff of the justice, health, labor and social welfare sectors in Vientiane Capital City (with a total of 170 participants, including 50 females);
- Eight trainings on adoption were conducted for members of the provincial Adoption Committee in 12 provinces and 54 districts with a total of 177 participants, including 55 females.
- Ministry of Justice completed consideration of 1,640 applications requesting domestic adoption, involving 277 females; and completed the consideration of 18 applications requesting for adoption of Lao children by foreign citizens.
- Orphanages were established in six provinces across the country by MoLSW, providing assistance to local needs such as the care of malnourished children or children whose parents/family cannot provide care and support to them. Friends International provided housing and education to 3,772 street children, including 1,887 females.
- The Committee for Protection and Assistance of Women and Children and village authorities monitored and reviewed the implementation of alternative care options for children to ensure that children receive adequate care and protection, and the child's rights are respected at all stages in the childcare facility, giving priority to the relationship between the child and his/her family and the community. The Committee for Protection and Assistance of Women and Children at the provincial and district levels monitored and inspected the childcare facilities regularly to prevent violence against children.
- The Research and Training Institute for Judges developed a training manual on legal proceedings of juvenile cases and integrated the child protection into the training curriculum for Assistants to the judges.
- Disseminated information on the rights of children to students in 5 provinces: Phongsaly, Huaphanh, Savannakhet, Salavan, Attapeu with a total of 550 participants.
- Training was organized to disseminate the Implementation Guidelines on the Juvenile Criminal Procedure Law to staff in the justice sector in 8 provinces by Ministry of Justice (14 times with a total of 840 participants, including 209 females).
- Field follow up, support and evaluation were conducted of the legal proceedings against juvenile cases at the court level in 8 Provinces by Ministry of Justice: Phongsaly, Bokeo, Xieng Khouang, Houaphan, Attapeu, Savannakhet, Saravan and Vientiane Capital with a total of 160 participants, including 33 females.

3. Programme 3: Addressing Violence Against Children

While prevention is of paramount importance in combatting VAC, when VAC does occur it is crucial to respond in an effective and appropriate manner. During the period 2014-2020, the following achievements were made in improving capacity and mechanisms to respond to VAC.

3.1. Addressing Violence Against Children in The Family

Protection and counselling for child victims of violence: The Counselling and Protection Center for Women and Children of the Lao Women's Union provided services on legal, psychological and health advice and 24-hours hotline service through the free 1362

hotline number to women and children who have encountered family and social problems or domestic violence, and the victims staying in a temporarily shelter. There are two types of counselling services provided: Face-to-face and telephone counselling services and follow-up, victim assessment after the victims have been reintegrated into family and society.

3.2. Addressing Violence Against Children in Schools and Educational Institutions

The Law on Anti-Trafficking in Persons strengthens measures to protect and provide assistance to victims. Children victims of human trafficking have the right to continue their study in the old school or in a new school, which fall into the rights (16 rights) under Article 39 of this Law. Victims who are unable to continue their education will receive free vocational training and health services.

NCAWMC has developed a guideline on Prevention and Response to Violence in Secondary Schools. The guideline serves as a reference for Committee on Conflict Resolution in schools to address violence against students.

3.3. Addressing Violence Against Children in the Community

Important progress was made in addressing violence against children at the community level, especially with the establishment of the Child Protection Networks which constitute the backbone of child protection response in communities. Achievements included:

- The village Child Protection Networks monitored the situation of children in the community and provided immediate assistance in 185 villages in 09 provinces: Luang Namtha, Luang Prabang, Xayaboury, Houaphan, Xieng Khouang, Saysomboun, Bolikhamxay, Sekong and Phongsaly, from where reports on child protection have been received.
- Between July 2019 and July 2020, during community awareness raising sessions on the legal and social assistance and key child protection issues, two staff from the provincial and zonal Prosecutor and Justice Department were designated to set up the desk to provide legal advice. 21 clients came for the legal advice in Xiengkhouang and Savannakhet. The cases reported were documented and 3 cases were referred to the LWU for counseling and some cases were referred to the village authorities.
- An assessment of the vulnerable or at-risk of labor exploitation and migration groups was conducted by the MOLSW in collaboration with the Village Focus International, in order to provide support on vocational training for them. From 2016 to 2020, 316 persons, all female, received vocational training.
- The project on “Protection and Empowerment of Victims and At-risk of Human Trafficking” was implemented from 2016 to 2019 by Counselling and Protection Centre for Women and Children under LWU. The results of the project include:
 - Providing assistance to 102 trafficking victims and at-risk children (all female) by providing safe temporarily shelter, legal counseling, education and vocational training on cooking, agriculture, sewing, and family business management.
 - Provided assistance to 345 people, including 93 females, who were pushed-back from Thailand through the Vangtao–Chongmek International Checkpoint; provided vocational training for 83 women and children, of which 27 have received funds to support their business.

- Provided legal assistance to one victim of prostitution, prosecuted and conducted legal proceedings against 2 offenders, as a result the offenders were sentenced for 15 years imprisonment and a fine of 15,000,000 Kip.
- Built the capacity of the staff working in the centers on gender, child protection, counseling and psychosocial support, with a total of 35 participants; improving staff's skills and capacity to provide services to victims staying in the temporary shelter and raise the awareness to the community members.
- Department of Social Welfare accepted a project on “Protection and Empowerment of the Victims and At- risk of Trafficking” phase II (from 2019 to 2021).
- Department of Social Welfare cooperated with SENGSAVANG to implement a project to help children and women victims of human trafficking and sexual exploitation, for the period 2016-2019. The results of the project include:
 - Assisted 104 children and women victims of human trafficking and sexual exploitation by providing the care and temporary shelter to the victims.
 - Supported on general education and special education systems to 23 victims, vocational training on sewing to 18 victims, beauty salons vocational training to 17 victims, and cooking vocational training to 3 victims and provided support to 7 families.
 - Provided care and basic health treatment for 320 children and women staying in the shelters.
 - Assisted 31 families of children and women on health, house repairs, and provided rice for 17 families.
 - Provided necessary equipment for running small business such as: 13 sets of accessories for beauty salon/shops, 9 sets of equipment for sewing, 1 set of food processing equipment and 44 bicycles to target groups.
- Department of Social Welfare accepted and approved a project on “Assistance of Disadvantaged Children and Women” phase IV (from 2019 to 2021).
- MoLSW Conducted follow up monitoring for 72 children after reintegration into their families in Oudomxay, Luang Prabang, Xayaboury, Vientiane, Vientiane Capital, Bolikhamxay, Khammouane, Champasak and Savannakhet Provinces; and collected the data and assessed the situation of the care of children without parental care in the provinces of Savannakhet, Champasak and Vientiane Capital.
- A victim assistance network was set up by the CAWMC of the Ministry of Health, coordinators at each hospital from the central to the local level were appointed; forms have been developed for medical checkups of victims; certification for police officers; and quarterly data collection on victims. In addition, MOH also provided medical assistance to victims such as: medical services, mental health rehabilitation, essential health education for the victims' families especially the victims of physical, psychological and sexual violence.
- MoLSW Conducted the monitoring of the implementation of child protection works, the work performance of the Child and Youth Centers and Child and Youth Centers members' activities in 5 target villages, with a total of 175 participants, including 88 females; conducted activities on questions and answers on child rights, violence, trafficking and migrations.
- Vulnerable children were supported by Friends International through:
 - Day-care was provided for 34 children, including 12 girls in the transit centre of Friends International in Vientiane Capital. Out of these children, 25 (8 girls) are staying at the

centre; while an additional 172 children (70 girls) come to work and join the activities in the centre.

- Education materials were provided to 670 children including 70 females.
- Life-skills education was provided to children and youth, with a total of 22,976 participants.
- First aid service was provided to 1,650 children and parents.
- Support and care were provided for 736 street children and vulnerable children in the community (336 girls).
- Vocational training was delivered to 210 youth and parents, including 89 females.
- Employment placement support was provided to 62 children and youth, of whom 7 self-employed.
- Additionally, there is a total of 423 members of the child safety networks, 684 community representatives working in the tourism industry/agents and 197 entrepreneurs (such as tuk-tuk taxi drivers and street vendors) who are community watch dogs and report any cases of child abuse they witness or become aware of.

3.4. Addressing Violence against Children in Work Sites

While progress in initiatives responding directly to child labour was slow (although it must be noted that important legislative frameworks were developed), key actions were conducted to address human trafficking and migration (which sometimes leads to child labour and exploitation). These included:

- 555 child trafficking victims were rescued and repatriated from Thailand, China, Malaysia and Indonesia by MoLSW. Assistance provided to the victims included temporary accommodation, food, clothing, primary health care, basic education and life skills counseling to 18 children at risk of being trafficked.
- In addition, it also provided vocational training to 242 victims of trafficking. At the provincial level, 134 child trafficking victims were provided with physical and mental rehabilitation assistance, vocational training and referral to families and schools.
- Vocational training for 210 youth and parents/caretakers (89 girls) was provided; employment-placement support for 62 children and youth, of whom 7 are self-employed.

3.5. Addressing Violence in Childcare Facilities and in the Justice System

- Completed the development of the training manual/curricula on child justice; established 8,347 VMU; trained 16,987 members of the VMU for the child cases; resolved juvenile cases (child offenders) through mediation involving 2,477 children (352 girls).
- The police rescued and provided assistance to human trafficking victims: This involved 329 victims, including 272 females and 57 males. Out of this number, 289 victims (284 females) were repatriated from Thailand, and 199 victims (198 females) were repatriated from China. Assistance was provided to the victims in Vientiane Capital City and 82 re-education sessions were conducted for at-risk of trafficking people who were sent back to their communities (207 people, including 159 females and 48 males). Officially sent Lao laborers to work in abroad by the labor supply

company 2,311 times, with a total of 36,260 persons, including 19,050 females and 17,210 males.

- Between 2015-2019, There were 1,170 juvenile cases sent to the People's Court nationwide, involving 1,204 child offenders (23 females and 1,183 males); and there were 189 children deprived of their liberty. The rest were fined and provided re-education sessions.

- Regarding child victims, from 2015 to the first six months of 2019, there were 132 cases of human trafficking nationwide, involved 217 suspects, including 104 females: 297 victims, including 236 females. Out of this, there are under the age of 18, 113 females, including 106 females. There were 123 cases completed the legal proceeding, involving 199 suspects, including 95 females, 280 victims, including 219 females, and 102 under 18 years old, including 95 females.

C. Challenges and Lessons Learned

I. Challenges

Despite having made much progress in terms of protecting the rights of the child and implementation of the National Plan of Action on Anti-Violence Against Children, there remains some problems and challenges in implementing the Plan and strategies in many sectors.

1. Challenges of the Prevention and elimination of violence against women

The discrimination of gender equality still exists as their remains of outdated traditions and beliefs related to the roles and responsibility of women and men in family and society which still contribute to the practices that are harmful to women and girls in society, such as child married, sexual violence against women and girl, including domestic violence.

There is no database with systemized data gathering, inspection, analysis and reporting, especially the data gathering process on access to the services for the victims of violence, on access to justice and health services for the victims.

Law enforcement and monitoring are still limited and ineffective. Especially, in bringing the offenders of violence against women and children to justice. The Law on Combating and Prevention of Violence Against Women and Children still allows for village mediation which is against the principles of providing assistance to women and children who are victims of violence, which calls for legal charges to be filed by the police and into the Court proceedings. The coordination mechanisms among personnel of law enforcement have yet to be establish, lacks a manual and proper training on how to investigate and preside over cases of violence against women and children.

There remains limitation on number of healthcare personnel who can identify the various types of violence against women and practice gender-sensitive services. Also, the availability of temporary shelters for providing assistances to women and children victims of violence, especially domestic violence, and for people in rural areas are still limited.

The referral process for victims of violence, the coordination among sectors still lacks comprehensiveness and systematization, and also the limitation of human resource, budget, and capacity.

2. Constraints and Challenges in Preventing and Eliminating Violence Against Children

Old attitudes and harmful traditions often constitute barriers to the attainment of the rights of children, especially their right to health, development and protection. In particular, gender inequality and the belief that girls are weaker than boys are harmful, as the idea that physical punishment is acceptable and useful in child-rearing and that physical violence is acceptable in conflict resolution. Also, discrimination against ethnic groups and children with a disability constitute barriers to the attainment of the rights of the child and places them at further risk of abuse and exploitation.

There is lack of comprehensive plans on prevention of violence against children at the community level and the support to vulnerable groups to prevent long-term emotional, physical and educational impacts is limited, ultimately affecting their socio-economic development and that of their communities.

The country lacks a comprehensive and reliable data management system, which is essential for the effective development and implementation of prevention and response plans and programmes to protect children. Data collection, monitoring, evaluations and reporting are not yet conducted in a systematic way; making it difficult to analysis and determine the causes of abuse, crime and violation of laws.

Financial, human and logistical resources allocated to violence against children are consistently inadequate, which compromises the ability to effectively implement plans and programmes, especially in the area of services for victims.

The integration of the NPA on VAC (and other relevant NPAs) into the plans, practices and programmes of ministries, agencies and sectors has been limited, and effective and meaningful inter-sectoral coordination has been a challenge.

Additionally, child protection issues have generally been addressed through thematic responses (for example, child labour, trafficking, child marriage, violence, abuse and exploitation). While some actions have worked, this has led to agencies and organizations operating in silos, with inconsistent overall results and impact.

The knowledge and capacity of child protection actors across sectors continues to be limited and is not widespread. Trainings and awareness-raising have not always been conducted in a systematic manner and following a structured plan or strategy and have mostly focused on individual rather than institutional capacity development.

II. Lessons Learned

1. Lessons Learned from implementation of Prevention and Elimination of Violence Against Women

The awareness raising among the Government officials, UN staffs, NGOs, CSOs, students and people in society to change away from the wrong attitude towards the violence against women and children is one of the successful measures, and should be continued, and expand further to reach specific groups such as men, boys, community leaders, ethnic group leaders.

The assistance services for women and girl victims of discrimination and violence with access to healthcare service, justice service and social service is very important and necessary for addressing of violence.

Increasing the effectiveness of the law enforcement and monitoring in parallel with strengthening mechanism and personnel in the work of prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls, to provide more concrete access to justice for women and girl victims of violence.

Establishing the reliable and systemized database is necessary for analysing and accurate planning for the preventing and assisting aspects for the victims of violence.

2. Lessons Learned on Prevention and Elimination Violence Against Children

Awareness-raising on child rights and child protection, and initiatives addressing harmful norms and practices need to be expanded in order to create the conditions for the rights of children to be met and develop a strong and stable society.

Increased focus and support are required for communities in developing plans and actions to prevent and respond to VAC and in establishing strong links with the formal system and referral pathways. The establishment of the Child Protection Networks is an important

step in this direction and the next NPA has the opportunity to determine how to better support the capacity and functioning of the Child Protection Networks, for the benefit of communities and children.

It is clear that addressing such a complex matter such as violence against children, increased financial, human and logistical resources are necessary across sectors. The aim should be to identify sustainable sources of funding, progressively reduce reliance on external/foreign resources, develop cost-efficient and cost-effective plans and human resource strategies, and accurately cost all plans of action and strategies.

Implementation of the NPA on VAC has shown that more effective intersectoral coordination is required in moving forward with national strategies and plans in combatting VAC. Additionally, rather than an issue-based approach, Lao PDR should adopt a system strengthening approach to child protection.

The capacity of actors involved in child protection needs to be strengthened in a more systematic and sustainable manner, through comprehensive plans focusing on institutional rather than individual capacity development. Additionally, creating a strong and professional social welfare workforce is a priority, since it is the backbone of any child protection system.

Developing a reliable and comprehensive information management system for the country is essential in moving forward. This will allow to develop more relevant and effective plans and programmes for combatting VAC and improve service provision across sectors.

Part two: The Five-Year National Plan of Action on the Prevention and Elimination of Violence Against Women and Violence Against Children II (2021-2025)

A. The Five-Year National Plan of Action on the Prevention and Elimination of Violence Against Women II (2021-2025)

I. Domestic, Regional and International Circumstances

1. Regional and International Circumstances

According to the Government reports from many countries, they identified that the ongoing implementation of the National Plan of Action on the Prevention and Elimination of Violence as an important framework in their effort to eliminate violence against women and children. The 68% of governments from all over the world reported that over the past five years, their National Plan of Action on ending of violence against women and children have been proposed, amended, and enhanced in their countries, especially the focal activities have been positively developed to address the violence against the group of women and girls in all aspects. However, due to insufficient funding, ineffective monitoring and implementation all lead to difficulty in achieving concrete results of the action plans.

To ensure the freedom from violence for women and girls, the Government of each country has prioritized 1) strengthening the law enforcement to address the violence against women and guarantee the access to justice of women; 2) increase access to necessary services for women victims of violence; 3) emphasize on prevention of violence against women and girls; and 4) acknowledge the impact of harmful medias and technology that might cause violence against women and children false attitude and misunderstanding towards the violence.

The United Nations recommended to the governments to be more determined and set the target plan, especially ensure the implementation of the target plans set by the government and partners at national and local levels; attach importance to the research and support to the national plan of actions such as 1) Promote a good governance and coordination, 2) attach importance to the national plan of actions and data gathering, 3) strengthen the legal framework, 4) use evidence-based approach to increase the effectiveness in prevention methods and the workplan on services, and 5) ensure the sufficient funding sources for implementation of the work plans.

2. Domestic Circumstance

The rate of violence against women and girls, especially domestic violence, is increasing and spreading, violence against women and girls are still one of the issues that society tends to shy away from and cover it up. Most people in society still think that violence against women and girls is a normal issue. The lasting obstacles including stigmatization, fear caused by violence itself, discriminative attitude stemming from out-dated tradition are still the fundamental issues of violence, and the limited legal awareness is also another barrier for women and girls in filing the complaint of violence and lack confidence to report the violence or ask for assistances from the relevant authorities.

Through the summary of the implementation in over past years, the Lao PDR has a lot of means that facilitate the prevention and assistance for women and girls' victims of violence, especially the Law on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Children, the mechanisms to provide the healthcare and social assistances, but still has limitations on law enforcement. The coordination mechanisms among personnel of law enforcement have yet to be establish, lacks a manual and proper training on how to investigate and preside over cases of violence against women and children. Increasing the effectiveness of the law enforcement and monitoring in parallel with strengthening mechanism and personnel in the work of prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls, to provide more concrete access to justice for women and girl victims of violence, access to assistance centres, psychological counselling, legal aid, and protection from offenders, and raise awareness, provide knowledge to encourage the women and children to report all cases of violence against women and girls that happened to them.

In addition, establishing the reliable and comprehensive data management system is necessary for the accurate analysis and planning on preventing and providing assistance to victims of violence, while also ensuring the accuracy of the National Report under the International Convention on the Elimination in All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Declaration, the Human Rights Declaration and Sustainable Development Goals to which the Lao PDR has adopted and is a party.

II. Overall Purpose and National Plan of Action

1. Overall Purpose

To protection the legitimate rights and interests of women, aimed at eliminating all forms of discrimination against women and girls, promote the roles, dignity of women and girl in order to promote the gender equality and without any discrimination and violence against women in society.

2. Expected Outcomes and Indicators

- The rate of violence against women from caused by their partner, in at least for one of three types of violence (physical, sexual, and emotional) has reduced from 30,3% to 15%.
- Rate of women victims of violence able access legal, health and social services has increased from 2% (in 2015) to 20% in 2025.
- The rate of women victims of violence reduced from 15,3% to 6%.

3. Goals

The National Plan of Action on the prevention and Elimination of Violence Against Women (2021-2025) has a total of 3 main targets as follows:

- 1) Outcome 1: Improve the attitudes and behaviors of families, communities, workplaces and societies towards violence against women to increase the support for prevention of violence against women and reduce number of women and girls' victims of violence.
- 2) Outcome 2: Provide the necessary assistances for victims of violence
- 3) Outcome 3: Improve the management, coordination, assessment and reporting, and strengthen the assistance services for victims of violence and its monitoring.

III. The Components of the Five-Year National Plan of Action on the Prevention and Elimination of violence against Women II (2021-2025)

1. Outcome 1: Improve the attitudes and behaviors of families, communities, workplaces and societies towards violence against women to increase the support for prevention of violence against women and reduce number of women and girls victims of violence.

- **Objective**

To prevent of violence against women, change the attitude and behaviour that supports double-standard towards women and violence against women; decrease the costs of assistances for women and girls who are victims of violence, particularly, in access to quality health, social and legal services.

- **Outcome**

Society is made aware, able to access information on violence against women and girls, and change from the violent attitudes and behaviors to those of respectful and upholding the dignity of women and girls.

- **Expected outcome and Indicator**

Violence against women from their spouse:

- Among women who experienced violence, those who experienced physical violence over a lifetime period decrease from 11,6% to 6% and those who experienced it within 12 months preceding the survey decreased from 4% to 2%.
- Among women who experienced violence, those who experienced sexual violence over a lifetime period to reduce from 7,2% to 5% and those who experienced it within 12 months preceding the survey decreased from 2.1% to 1%.
- Among women with spouse, those who experienced of emotional violence over a lifetime period to reduce from 26,2% to 15%, and those who experienced it within 12 months preceding the survey decrease from 10,5% to 6%.

Violence against women from non-spouse:

- Women from the age of 15 who experienced physical violence from non-spouse decreased from 5,1% to 3%.
- Women from the age of 15 who experienced some form of sexual violence to decrease from 5,3% to 3%, those who experienced forced sexual intercourse decreased from 1,1% to 0,5%.
- The rate of women in the age between 20-24 who did get married or co-lived since the age of 15 has decreased from 7,1% to 4%, and marriage before the age of 18 decreased from 32,7% to 20% of the total number of married women.

- The child marriage of children below the age of 15-19 decreased from 23,5% to 9% for girls, and decreased from 5,9% to 3% for boys.
- The social attitudes and standards that supports the gender equality increased by 50%.
- The social attitudes and standards against violence as means of disciplining women, increased by 30%

1.1. Output 1.1: Social Awareness and Movement Campaigns

• Indicators

- Number of awareness raising campaign activities on combating violence against women and girls at national, sector and local levels is increased.
- Number of participants of the awareness raising campaign activities on combating violence against women and girls at national, sector and local levels is increased.
- Number of mass media personnel that have been trained on combating violence against women and girls, on elimination of outdated cultural traditions and customs that hinders the advancement of women, is increased.
- Quantity and quality of mass media products related to combating violence, outdated cultural traditions and customs that posts danger and considered as violence against women, broadcasted through TV, radio and online platforms, are increased.

• Priority actions

- Organize celebrations on International Day for Elimination of Violence against Women on 25 November, and the International Women’s Day on 8 March.
- Extend the dissemination on violence and the prevention of violence against women and girls through online platforms i.e., Facebook, Youtube...
- Create a system to collect and analyze data on the values/attitudes toward the violence against women.
- Strengthening capacity for mass media on combating violence against women and girls, and eliminate of outdated cultural and customary traditions that discriminate against women and obstruct the advancement of women
- Create media tools i.e., short-film, radio spot, TV channel, newspaper article, magazine, village speaker, drama, movie, music, drawing with contents related to prevention of violence against women.
- Monthly broadcasts through radio spots and TVs programs about preventing and combating violence against women and girls
- Religious leaders, respected figures, leaders at each level to promote a more protective attitude towards women and girls from violence, and instigate change in society.

1.2. Output 1.2: Prevention of Violence Against Women at Educational Institutions

• Indicators

- Numbers/rates of schools/activities that contribute to prevention and elimination of violence against women, from kindergarten level to vocational-technical institutes, are increased.
- Number of schools that conduct the awareness raising activity on the prevention of violence against women and girl from kindergarten level to vocational-technical institutes, is increased
- Increased numbers of curriculums and learning and teaching tools on prevention of violence against women and gender equality, as well as the assessment and reporting mechanism that have been improved.
- Number of teachers that has been trained on prevention of violence against women is increased.

• Priority actions

- Increase the awareness raising campaigns on the fundamentals of gender equality, prevention of violence against women and girls for students from kindergarten level to vocational level and higher.
- Improve the curriculums, teaching and learning tools related to promotion of gender equality, elimination of discrimination and violence against women and girls.
- Disseminate and raise awareness for educational institutions on prevention of violence against women and girls, especially on premature marriage (before 18).
- Create and adopt guideline/protocols/principles to prevent violence against women, especially the sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.
- Training for teachers at all levels on prevention of violence against women at educational institutions.

1.3. Output 1.3: Prevention of violence against women in workplaces and labor sites in both the Government and private sectors.

• Indicators

- Increased number of migrant workers of both domestic and cross-border that have access to information on prevention of violence against women and trafficking in person.
- Increased numbers of dissemination activities and mechanisms for prevention of violence against women and girls, including sexual harassment in the workplace.
- Increased number of complaints receiving mechanisms in workplaces.

- **Priority actions**

- Dissemination for the labour force, including migrant workers, especially women workers, on prevention of violence against women and girls, including the sexual harassment.
- Create mechanisms to report on assistance services for women and girls who are victims of violence, especially the sexual harassment in the workplace, in both the Government and private sectors.
- Provide information on the violence against women and trafficking in person for migrant workers, especially for women workers of both domestic and cross-border.

1.4. Output 1.4: Prevention of violence against women in the community

- **Indicators**

- Numbers of community elders and leaders who gained more knowledge and understanding on prevention of violence against women and girls, elimination of outdated traditions, attitudes, cultural beliefs and practices that obstruct the advancement of women.
- Numbers of the village development plans with indicators that has integrated the prevention of violence against women and girls.
- Numbers of the community engagement activities that has been organized to promote gender equality and non-discrimination.

- **Priority actions**

- Disseminate to community elders and leaders who gained more knowledge and understanding on prevention of violence against women and girls, elimination of outdated traditions, attitudes, cultural beliefs and practices that obstruct the advancement of women.
- Strengthen the capacity on the advancement of women and children, for the village focal points and village mediation committees, and volunteers in order to further advocate for the prevention of violence against women and girls in their community.
- Integrate the prevention of violence against women and girls into the village and community development plans.
- Conduct awareness raising activities to the change of the discriminatory attitude and the negative impacts of violence that stemmed from the outdated attitude on gender roles, and harmful practices including early marriage.
- Facilitate communities to promote women and youth participation in monitoring and support for girls with high risks of early marriage and pregnancy.

1.5. Output 1.5: Encouraging specific groups to step-up to their roles in preventing violence against women

- **Indicators**

- Increased numbers of men, boys, and men in high positions, respected figures, religious leaders, revered elders, teachers, and executive leaders of the public and private sectors, as role models in the campaign on prevention violence against women and girls.

- **Priority actions**

- Create awareness among men and boys to participate in the prevention of violence against women, promote constructive attitudes and manliness, and gender equality practices.
- Encourage men in high positions, respected figures, religious leaders, revered elders, teachers, and executive leaders of the public and private sectors to participate in the campaigns to combat violence against women and girls.

1.6. Output 1.6: Addressing factors affecting violence against women

- **Indicators**

- Behaviors of violence against women and girls caused by alcohol and drugs, have been reduced.

- **Priority actions**

- Effectively implement and monitor the legislations related to alcohol and drugs, especially for the industry and commerce sector and public health sector.
- Raise social awareness on the impacts of alcohol and drugs.

2. Outcome 2: Victims of gender-based violence to receive necessary assistance and services

2.1. Output 2.1: Victims of gender-based violence to receive necessary health assistance and services

- **Objective**

For women and children victims of violence to have access to the necessary and quality health services such as first-instance assistance, treatment, and utilizing the data collected through the health assistance for the justice processes.

- **Expected Outcome**

- The victims of violence able to receive timely and effective first-instance assistance and treatment.
- Systemized data gathering on women and girls who are victims of violence for further medical treatments and the justice processes.
- The public health sector able to refer the women and children victims of violence to the relevant sectors in a systematic manner, such as: the r Counselling and Protection Center for Women and Children of the Lao Women's Union, Ministry of Public

Security, Prosecutors, Courts, and Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, as appropriate and in line with the regulations.

- The existing laws and regulations, which guarantees women aged 15-49 have access to sexual and reproductive health, information and education are enforced effectively.
- **Targets and Indicators**
 - The rate of women who lived with a partner who committed physical, emotional, and sexual violence against them throughout a lifetime or the past 12 months before the survey, who are able to access health services must increase from 2% to 20%.
 - The rate of girls aged 15 who experienced physical, emotional, and sexual violence against them throughout a lifetime or the past 12 months before the survey, who are able to access health services, must increase from 2% to 20%.

2.1.1. Screening/Identifying Victims of Violence from intimate partner/spouse

- **Indicators**

- Guidelines/regulations on how to screen and identify victims of intimate partner/spousal violence is developed.
- Number of doctors and nurses who received training on the guidelines/protocols on how to screen and identify victims of intimate partner/spousal violence.
- Designated facilities for victims of violence in hospitals at central, provincial and district levels are improved and used for medical examination, evaluation and treatment for women and children victims of violence.

- **Priority actions**

- Create guidelines/protocols, posters, pamphlets on how to screen and identify victims of intimate partner/spousal violence.
- Training for doctors and nurses working in divisions of external examination, admitted patients care, emergency, and those relevant to the guidelines/protocols on screening/identifying victims of violence including intimate partner/spousal violence.
- Improve dedicated facilities for victims of violence in hospitals at central, regional, provincial, and district levels.
- Establish one stop crisis centers as models, at central and regional hospitals.
- Organize seminars to create a model for combatting and preventing violence against women in the country.
- Exchange lessons with the international community on combatting and preventing violence against women

2.1.2. Early victim assistance

- **Indicators**

- Guidelines/protocols on early assistance, care and monitoring cases of women and children victims of violence is created.
- Numbers of doctors and nurses at central, provincial and district hospitals who have received training on the guidelines/protocols on early assistance, care and monitoring cases of women and children victims of violence.

- Numbers of women and children victims of violence who received early assistance at central, provincial and district hospitals.
- Coordination and referral system for women and children victims of violence from community to district, provincial and central hospitals, and to relevant agencies thereafter.

- **Priority actions**

- Create Guidelines/protocols on early assistance, care and monitoring cases of women and children victims of violence.
- Organize training sessions on the guidelines/protocols on early assistance, care and monitoring cases of women and children victims of violence, for central, provincial and district hospitals.
- Create a coordination and referral system for women and children victims of violence from community to district, provincial and central hospitals, and to relevant agencies thereafter.

2.1.3. Victim's care and emergency assistance

- **Indicators**

- Guidelines/protocols on victim's care and emergency assistance for women and children victims of violence is created.
- Numbers of emergency assistance teams in central, provincial and district hospitals who received training on the guidelines/protocols on victim's care and emergency assistance for women and children victims of violence.
- Numbers of women and girls victims of violence who received emergency assistance from central, provincial and district hospitals.

- **Priority actions**

- Create guidelines/protocols on victim's care and emergency assistance for women and children victims of violence.
- Training sessions on the guidelines/protocols on victims care and emergency assistance for women and children victims of violence, for the medical teams at central, provincial and district hospitals.

2.1.4. Medical examination and treatment for sexual violence cases

- **Indicators**

- Guidelines/protocols on medical examination and treatment for sexual violence cases is created.
- Numbers of doctors and nurses of central, provincial, and district hospitals who received training on the guidelines/protocols on medical examination and treatment for sexual violence cases.
- Numbers of women and girls who have been sexually violated, that received medical care, examination and treatment.

- **Priority actions**

- Establishing a One stop crisis center

- Creating the guidelines/protocols for medical examination and treatment for sexual violence cases.
- Organize training sessions for medical doctors and nurses at central, provincial, and district hospitals on the guidelines/protocols on medical examination and treatment for sexual violence cases.

2.1.5. Psychological health assessment and treatment

- **Indicators**

- Guidelines/protocols on psychological health assessment and treatment for women and girls' victims of violence.
- Numbers of medical doctors and nurses at central, provincial and district hospitals have received training on the guidelines/protocols on psychological health assessment and treatment for women and girls who are victims of violence.
- Numbers of women and girls who are victims of violence that received psychological treatment.

- **Priority actions**

- Creation of guidelines/protocols on psychological health assessment and treatment for women and girls who are victims of violence.
- Organize training sessions for medical doctors and nurses at central, provincial, district hospitals on the guidelines/protocols on psychological health assessment and treatment for women and girls who are victims of violence.

2.1.6. Medico-legal

- **Indicators**

- Guidelines/protocols on medico-legal based on the World Health Organization clinic policy guidelines on responding to intimate partner violence and sexual violence, is created and utilized.
- Numbers of trainers from provincial and district hospitals across the country and early care procedures for central and provincial levels have been training on how to use the guidelines/protocols on medico-legal based on the World Health Organization clinic policy guidelines on responding to intimate partner violence and sexual violence
- The guidelines/protocols on medico-legal based on the World Health Organization clinic policy guidelines on responding to intimate partner violence and sexual violence, is implemented at a pilot province.

- **Priority actions**

- Integrate the guidelines/protocols on medico-legal based on the World Health Organization clinic policy guidelines on responding to intimate partner violence and sexual violence, into the work plans and programs of the Public Health Sector.
- Training of Trainers on the handbook regarding the guidelines/protocols on medico-legal based on the World Health Organization clinic policy guidelines on responding to intimate partner violence and sexual violence against women and children, for health service providers at the provincial and district hospitals across the country, and on the early care from central to provincial levels.

- Trial implementation on the guidelines/protocols on medico-legal based on the World Health Organization clinic policy guidelines on responding to intimate partner violence and sexual violence, at the selected pilot province.

2.2. Output 2.2: Victims of gender-based violence received the necessary justice assistance

• Objective

Women and girls who are victims of violence to be able to access the necessary and effective justice assistance services, for instance, free legal aid services, investigation process by the police authorities, prosecutors, and court decisions, and able to bring the perpetrators to justice.

• Expected Outcome

- Victims of violence received legal aid, with disaggregated data collection based the types of violence and victims and perpetrators and gender, age, ethnicity, residency, and social strata.
- Numbers of perpetrators who received administrative remedy/punishment, and brought to civil and criminal punishment by police officers, prosecutors and through Court proceedings, with disaggregated data collection based on the types of violence and victims and perpetrators and gender, age, ethnicity, residency, and social strata.
- Data gathering on women and girls who are victims of violence is conducted systematically to be used for the investigation process and pass on to the Courts.

2.2.1. Legal aid and support

• Indicator

- Numbers of legal aid officials and lawyers who have the have the specific skills for providing justice assistance for the victims of violence.

• Priority actions

- Create handbooks and organize training sessions for legal aid officials and lawyers on the specific skills required to providing legal assistance for victims of violence.
- Provide legal advice from the legal aid offices for the victims of violence.

– Administrative Remedy

• Indicators

- Number of cases of violence that result in administrative remedy/punishment, disaggregated into the types of violence and victims' age, ethnicity, residency, and disability.
- Numbers of Trainers on specific mediation skills for cases of violence against women.
- Numbers of Village Mediation Unit members who participated in the said training.

• Priority actions

- Create a handbook on how to mediate a case of violence against women

- Create a TOT handbook on how to mediate a case of violence against women
- Train the Village Mediation Unit members
- Monitor the VMUs implementation (by the District Justice Offices)

2.2.2. Investigation and prosecution procedures

- **Indicators**

- National Protocol and Handbook for police officers and prosecutors on how to conduct investigations and prosecutions on cases of violence against women and girls with victim-centered approach are developed and used.
- Standard Operating Procedures of the police officers and prosecutors are developed and used.
- Numbers of police officers and prosecutors who received training on the National Protocol and Handbook on how to conduct investigation and prosecute cases of violence against women and girls with victim-centered approach.
- The specific units of the police and prosecutors who are responsible for handling cases of violence against women and children is improved.

- **Priority actions**

- Create protocols, handbooks and guidelines on how to conduct case proceedings of violence against women and girls, with a victim-centered approach for police officers and prosecutors.
- Improve the specific units of the police and prosecutors on violence against women and children with their team composition of at least 30% women.
- Conduct capacity training for the police officers and officials of the office of prosecutors on how to use the protocols, handbooks and guidelines on investigation and prosecution cases of violence against women and girls, with victim-centered approach.

2.2.3. People's Court procedures

- **Indicators**

- National Guidelines on how to examine and make decisions on cases of violence against women and girls with victim-centered approach are developed and used.
- Numbers of judges and Court Chambers that received training on the National Guidelines on how to examine and make decisions on cases of violence against women and girls with victim-centered approach.
- Numbers of judges and Court Chambers who have the knowledge on combatting violence against women and girls.

- **Priority actions**

- Create the National Guidelines on how to examine and make decisions on cases of violence against women and girls, with a victim-centered approach for judges and Court Chambers.

- Conduct trainings on how to use the National Guidelines in examining and deciding cases of violence against women, with victim-centered approach for judges and Court Chambers.
- Conduct capacity training for judges and Court Chambers who preside over cases of violence against women and girls.
- Create a team of trainers on how to use the protocols, handbook and guidelines in combatting violence against women and girls.

2.2.4. Statistical database of the cases and case files

- **Indicators**

- Data gathering system of case files are created and used in each sector.
- Numbers of officials/staffs responsible for data gathering who have been trained

- **Priority actions**

- Create data gathering systems of the cases that are safe and confidential on violence against women and children, with disaggregation on the types of violence (sexual, physical, psychological, and economical) and collaboration among the relevant sectors.
- Create data gathering system that can be linked among the 4 sectors (justice, public security, prosecutor, and Court)
- Build capacity through TOT
- Create the data gathering system for the justice sector

2.3. Output 2.3: The Victims of gender-based violence to receive the necessary social services and assistance

- **Objective**

- For women and girls victims of violence to be able to access the necessary and effective social services and assistance such as counselling, shelter, vocational training and return to safe origins.

- **Expected Outcomes**

- Victims of violence received social assistance, with collected data disaggregated based on types of violence, types of victims and perpetrators, their gender, age, ethnicity, residency, and social strata.
- A systemized database on women and girls victims of violence.

2.3.1. Crisis Counseling and Assistance

- **Indicators**

- Numbers of victims who received emergency counseling, information, and emergency rescues, both short and long term, free of charge.
- Numbers of counselors that have been enhanced and those newly created.
- Preparatory plan for providing the necessary services in terms of welfare, healthcare, emotional support, counseling and safety, is created.

- Rate of women and girl who were impacted by natural disasters, who were then able to access assistance, basic survival necessities (relief-goods bag).
- **Priority actions**
 - Provide counseling, information, and emergency rescues, both in short and long term, with victim-centered approach and free of charge.
 - Improve and expand the counseling service network across the country, in order to serve the victims of violence, aiming at free-of-charge assistance and counseling, including access to information on their rights.
 - Create a preparatory plan for providing the necessary services in terms of welfare, healthcare, emotional support, counseling and safety, such as a women-friendly facilities, justice and legal service facilities [with women-friendly environment and approach].
 - Distribute the survival necessities (relief-goods bag) to women and girls affected by various pandemics and disasters.

2.3.2. Hotline services

- **Indicators**
 - Hotlines with quality services throughout 24 hours or 4 hours per day including during public holidays.
 - Numbers of hotline users.
- **Priority actions**
 - Create and improve the hotline service system with 24 hours or 4 hours per day service, including public holidays, free-of-charge, that can provide information and counselling for the victims, in both official and local languages, and able to link with service units that can provide emergency rescue services.
 - Improve the capacity in terms of counselling and information services for the hotline staffs.

2.3.3. Provide Safe Shelters

- **Indicators**
 - Handbook on the standards of safe shelters is created
 - Numbers of safe shelters that have been improved
 - Numbers of victims of violence who stayed at the shelter temporarily, short term and long term.
- **Priority actions**
 - Improve the Handbook on the standards of a safe shelter for the victims of violence.
 - Improve the facilities at the existing shelters of each organization, to be able to accommodate victims of violence, ensuring their safety and able to receive emergency cases, short-term shelters for the victims and their children.
 - Expand the safe shelters services for emergency cases, provide short-term accommodation for the victims and their children, including aiding women victims who can safely stay at their own homes.

2.3.4. Provide material or financial assistance, capacity building for the victims and facilitate their return to society

- **Indicators**

- Numbers of victims who returned to society and able to provide economically for their families.

- **Priority actions**

- Ensuring the victims of violence can provide for themselves economically and no longer having to rely on their perpetrators.
- Facilitate the vocational training and returning of victims to society, ensuring they can make their own life decisions based on stable economic, social and emotional factors.

2.3.5. Creating, recovering of identity documentations and compensation documents (actual implementing agency is the National Commission on Anti-Human Trafficking)

- **Indicators**

- Numbers of service units for people's identification that have been improved to facilitate victims of violence and internal and cross-border migrant workers.
- Numbers of victims who were able to access the identity confirmation services.

- **Priority actions**

- Improve the people's identification service units, to better facilitate the victims of violence and internal and cross-border migrant workers.
- Assist victims of violence and internal and cross-border migrant workers, for them to be able to have documentations confirming their identity and access to the labor market, and receive benefits from the State and private services, including the banks.
- Assist foreigners who fell victim to gender-based violence to receive identity confirmation.

2.3.6. Socio-Psychological assistance and counseling

- **Indicators**

- Number of social workers with knowledge, expertise, and socio-psychological counseling ability for women victims of violence.

- **Priority actions**

- Revise the curriculum of the National University on social workers course, with integration of violence against women elements into the curriculums.
- Capacity building for social workers (psychology, rehabilitation therapies for victims of violence) for the staffs who work in the social services sector.
- Create more social workers with knowledge, expertise, and socio-psychological counseling abilities for women victims of violence and facilitate the establishment of a network.

2.3.7. Assistance and Care for the children attached to the victims

- **Indicators**
 - Number of children attached to the victims who received services as standard.
- **Priority actions**
 - Provide socio-psychological counseling, free-of-charge, facilitate their access to various public services for the children attached to the victims.
 - Ensure the safety of the women and girls as a priority over the rights of the father, especially in cases of domestic violence.

3. Outcome 3: Improve and Strengthen Management, Coordination, Assessment and Reporting on services for the victims and Monitoring and Evaluation

- **Objectives:**
 - In order to guarantee the policy and laws and their implementation for protection of the rights of women and girls who are victims of violence.
 - To designate responsibilities and create a mechanism for coordination and referral of women and children who are affected by violence, for the multi-sectors to join together and ensure that the women and girls who are victims of violence will receive the necessary medical, social and justice assistances.
- **Expected Outcomes:**
 - Create and implement the policy and laws on protection of the rights of women and girls who are victims of violence.
 - Established designated responsibilities for each sector involved and a mechanism for coordination and referral of the women and girls.
- **Target Indicator:**
 - Achieve at least 80% of the indicators of prevention and elimination of violence against women that have been integrated and implemented into and through the said Work Plan.

3.1. Output 3.1: Legislations and Policy are reviewed, improved and created, aimed at

- **Targets**
 - The relevant laws of respective sectors are improved by integrating the elements of prevention and elimination of violence against women into 30% of their amended laws.
 - The lower legislations of relevant sectors are improved by integrating the elements of prevention and elimination of violence against women into 50% of the respective sectors.
 - Temporary special measures of each sector are created specifically for prevention and elimination of violence against women, covering 70% of the temporary special measures as recommended by the UN CEDAW Committee.

- The respective sectors have integrated prevention and elimination of violence against women into their sector’s 5-year development plan, aimed at 80% and able to create specific work plans by 60% of all the sectors, with actual implementation.
- The local authorities have integrated prevention and elimination of violence against women into their sector’s 5-year local socio-economic development plan, aimed at 40% and able to create specific work plans by 60% of all the locals, with actual implementation.

- **Priority actions**

- Monitor and encourage the implementation of the Law on Combatting and Preventing Violence Against Women and Children
- Evaluate the implementation of the Law on Combatting and Preventing Violence against Women and Children.

3.2. Output 3.2: Improved Database is used domestically and internationally

- The database on combatting and preventing violence against women of all sectors is created.
- The National Survey on Women’s Health and Life Experiences II is conducted.

- **Priority actions**

- Create main indicators and the database on combatting and preventing violence against women and children at levels of national, sectorial and locals.
- Conduct The National Survey on Women’s Health and Life Experiences II.

3.3. Output 3.3: Resources and Budget for this work is appropriately allocated

- **Targets**

- Number of personnel who possess’ expertise in implementation of prevention and elimination of violence against women
- Percentage of budget of each sector that has been allocated for implementation of combatting and preventing of violence against women and children

- **Priority actions**

- Each sector is to allocate resources and budget appropriately for the implementation of combatting and preventing violence against women and children, especially for the implementation of the National Plan of Actions and the Law on Combatting and Preventing Violence against Women and Children
- Cooperate with friendly countries, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, individuals, and legal entities of both domestic and abroad for exchange of information and lessons learned on prevention and elimination of violence against women and children, including gathering of support both financially and technically.
- Organize events to gather involvement of the entire society into the prevention and elimination of violence against women and children.

3.4. Output 3.4: Improved and Effective Coordination and Capacity at Central and Local Levels in Providing Remedy for Violence Against Women and Girls

- **Targets**

- The coordination mechanism and the personnel responsible for aiding women victims of violence
- Numbers of policy and decision makers in the relevant sectors who have their capacity strengthened
- Number of CAWMCs that have been enhanced and monitor the implementation of the National Plan of Action on Combating and Preventing Violence Against Women and Children
- Number of Model programs in combating and preventing violence against women

- **Priority actions**

- Create a Coordination Mechanism on providing remedy for women and children victims of violence, attached with designated roles and responsibilities of each sector in details
- Provide capacity building for policy and decision makers in relevant sectors
- Enhance the capacity of CAWMCs on encouraging, monitoring the implementation of the National Plan of Action on Combating and Preventing Violence Against Women and Children
- Organize seminars and workshops to exchange the lessons learned in order to create model programs for combating and preventing violence against women domestically
- Exchange lessons with other countries on combating and preventing violence against women

3.5. Output 3.5: Monitoring and Evaluation and Reporting at National and Local Levels

- **Targets**

- Numbers of periodic reports on the implementation of the National Plan of Action on Combating and Preventing Violence Against Women from each sector

- **Priority actions**

- Encourage, monitor, evaluate and report on the implementation of the National Plan of Action on Combating and Preventing Violence Against Women.
- Create a framework for monitoring and evaluation on the implementation of the National Plan of Action on Prevention and Elimination of Violence Against Women.

B. The Second Five-Years National Plan of Action for Prevention and Elimination of Violence Against Children (2021 – 2025)

I. Objective and National Plan of Action

1. Objective

To reduce violence against boys and girls in Lao PDR through a strengthened multi-sectoral coordination with comprehensive preventive and responsive interventions targeting at violence in schools and online.

2. Strategies

To implement this objective, the National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Children uses a blended approach drawn and contextualized from the Multi-sectoral Response to the National Violence against Children Survey in Lao PDR (2018) and the INSPIRE Strategies for Ending Violence against Children, including:

- Implementing and enforcing laws
- Strengthening coordination and monitoring
- Creating safe environments including schools and online
- Supporting parents and caregivers in addressing social norms and values
- Promoting service uptake
- Strengthening responsive services

It is noteworthy that Lao PDR has developed a new National Plan of Action for Child Protection System Strengthening (2021-2025) which focuses on child protection system strengthening and social service workforce development with comprehensive interventions to strengthen various components of the child protection system to address all forms of violence, abuse, and exploitation of children. The National Plan of Action for Child Protection System Strengthening (2021-2025) identifies five key strategic areas for strengthening the child protection system in Lao PDR:

- Legal and regulatory framework
- Leadership, planning and coordination
- Human resource development
- Services including prevention, response and case management
- Monitoring, data collection and learning

3. Goals

The Second National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Children (2021-2025) consists of four main goals:

1. Goal 1: Enhancing the multi-sectoral coordination and monitoring to end violence against children in all settings.
2. Goal 2: Preventing and responding to online violence, including child online sexual exploitation and abuse
3. Goal 3: Preventing and responding to violence in schools
4. Goal 4: Preventing and responding to violence in homes and communities.

II. Programme Areas of the Second National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Children (2021-2025)

1. Goal 1: Enhancing the multi-sectoral coordination and monitoring to end violence against children in all settings.

- **Outcome 1:**

The coordination, data sharing and monitoring between sectors, including Social Welfare, Justice, Education, Health and ICT, is enhanced at all levels to effectively implement interventions addressing violence against children in all settings in alignment with the framework for child protection system strengthening.

- **Indicator**

Number of annual national meetings taken place to monitor the implementation of the Second National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Children (2021-2025) with all relevant stakeholders.

1.1. Programme area 1.1: Systematic management, coordination and monitoring of violence against children interventions in the country

- **Indicator**

- Standard Operating Procedures on multi-sectoral violence against children response management and referral across sectors is available.

- **Priority actions:**

- Conduct annual national meetings to monitor the implementation of the Second National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Children (2021-2025) with participation from provincials, multi-sectoral stakeholders, CSOs, etc.
- Organize a meeting with national and local partners to disseminate the Second National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Children (2021-2025) and explain their roles and responsibilities to implement and monitor it in conjunction with the NPA on Child Protection System Strengthening.
- In collaboration with health, education, social welfare, law enforcement and justice sectors, establish Standard Operating Procedures for clear reporting and referral protocols and for the management of cases of violence against children in each sector and across sectors.

1.2. Programme area 1.2: Strengthened data on violence against children through the development of a national data collection system

- **Indicators:**

- Collection of regular data on child violence through a child protection information management system (CPIMS).
- Data gathered from the helplines and protection centres operationalized by LWU, LYU and other organizations are disaggregated by types of violence, age, gender, ethnicity and location.
- Synchronized reporting form on cases of violence against children are used across Health, Education, Justice and Social Welfare sectors.

- **Priority actions:**
 - Strengthen data collection of violence against children in Lao PDR in alignment with the implementation of the National Plan of Action for Child Protection System Strengthening in exploring different options to establish a child protection information management system (CPMIS) to collect and manage data in a timely and sustainable manner.
 - Design and apply tools for collecting administrative data from LWU helpline and LWU protection centres disaggregated by types of violence, age, gender, ethnicity and location.
 - Review and synchronize reporting forms used by Health, Education, Justice and Social Work for cases of violence against children.

2. **Goal 2: Preventing and responding to online violence, including child online sexual exploitation and abuse.**

- **Outcome 2**

Children in Lao PDR are better protected from all forms of online child protection risks and are capacitated to use the Internet safely in an enabling environment.

- **Indicators:**

- The Law on cybercrime and the Decree on Internet information management incorporate the use of the Internet to commit crimes against children updated and issued
- Central information system established for monitoring, analysis and sharing of data and trends on online violence
- Number of victims of violence, including online violence, received legal, medical and psychosocial supports

2.1. **Programme area 2.1: Stronger institutional capacity to address online violence through strengthened planning, evidence generating, monitoring and enforcing laws and policies.**

- **Indicators:**

- National Plan of Actions on Online Protection developed
- Number of consultation workshops with the private sector on child online protection
- A national study on the children's lives online in Lao PDR conducted.

- **Priority actions:**

- Working together with the ICT, Telecommunication, Justice and Social Welfare sectors, develop the National Plan of Actions on Online Protection considering recommendations from the Online Protocol to the CRC on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, with focuses on addressing online child sexual abuse and exploitation.
- Review the Law on cybercrime and the Decree on Internet information management to include clauses related to the use of the Internet to commit crimes against children.
- Organize consultation workshops with the private sector working in the ICT area to advocate for their roles and responsibilities in combating online protection and promoting child rights. Specific action plans should be included in the National Plan of Actions on Online Protection for accountability of the private sector.

- Strengthen corporate social responsibilities involving Internet service providers, telecommunication companies, online payment companies and the media to ensure child safety online.
- Conduct a national study on the children’s lives online in Lao PDR to understand their Internet experiences, opportunities and risks to inform policy and programme interventions to ensure online protection.

2.2. Programme area 2.2: Strengthened regional and international cooperation to combat transnational online violence

• **Indicators:**

- Joining of the WeProtect Global Alliance for effective cooperation in the investigation and prosecution of criminal networks and perpetrators
- New or amended cross-border agreements or forms of collaboration on violence against children, including online protection, with ASEAN countries
- Number of international and regional exchange and exposure visits conducted on sharing lesson-learned on violence against children, including online violence

• **Priority actions:**

- Support initiatives such as the Virtual Global Taskforce and the WeProtect Global Alliance for effective cooperation in the investigation and prosecution of criminal networks and perpetrators.
- Increase collaboration with neighboring countries, including within regional frameworks such as the ASEAN Plan of Action on Online Protection.
- Strengthen and expand cross-border collaboration among ASEAN Member States through bilateral and multilateral agreements and cooperation programmes/mechanisms to monitor, prevent and respond to cross-border violence against children, including online violence.
- Conduct exchange and exposure visits to foreign countries on prevention and elimination of violence against children in order to share lessons and experience.
- Strengthen cooperation with international law enforcement agencies, share and update information relating to child victims and offenders and obtain digital evidence to effectively investigate and prosecute perpetrators and criminal networks responsible for the sale and sexual exploitation of children, including online.

2.3. Programme area 2.3: Enhanced capacity of service providers and law enforcement actors to respond to online violence against children and provide timely responses

• **Indicators:**

- Number of police officers trained on child-friendly investigation of online child sexual crimes
- Number of prosecutors trained on prosecution of online offenders, exploiters and traffickers
- Reporting mechanism developed for monitoring of online child sexual abuse material
- Number of national and sub-national social service workforce (MOLSW, LWU and LYU) trained on how to identify, report and assist victims of online violence

- Number of teachers trained on how to identify children affected by online violence, including cyber bullying among students, and their roles and responsibilities to report and assist the victim
- Child rights and justice module updated to include the support to child witnesses and victims of online violence and crime.
- Number of child helpline staff trained to provide safe, confidential, child-friendly, gender-responsive and inclusive responses

- **Priority actions:**

- Develop a capacity building module and train the police to investigate online child sexual crimes and monitor dark webs, including child-sensitive approaches during criminal investigations.
- Develop a capacity building module and train the prosecutors to prosecute offenders, exploiters and traffickers, including online.
- Establish referral and reporting mechanisms among the Justice, ICT and Social Welfare sectors to monitor data on online child sexual abuse materials.
- Establish a centralized and reliable information system that enables better monitoring, analysis and sharing of data and trends on online violence between relevant entities at the national level.
- Provide training to national and local social service workforce (MOLSW, LWU and LYU) trained on how to identify, report and assist victims of online violence.
- Provide training to teachers on how to identify children affected by online violence, including cyber bullying among students, and their roles and responsibilities to report and assist the victim.
- Review the child rights and justice module to include child-friendly mechanisms to ensure the protection of child victims and witnesses of online violence and crime.
- Train child helpline staff on how to provide safe, confidential, child-friendly, gender-responsive and inclusive responses.

2.4. Programme area 2.4: Ensure accessibility and utilization of timely and quality service and assistance to victims of online violence

- **Indicators:**

- Number of Village Mediation Units and Child Protection Network trained on referring cases of online violence to the formal justice and child protection system
- Number of centres and safe spaces exist for victims of violence, including online violence
- Number of victims of violence, including online violence, received rehabilitation supports, including education, vocational and life skills training, socioeconomic support, sport and leisure activities and religious and cultural supports

- **Priority actions:**

- Create and maintain helplines running 24 hours/7days/week to report child sexual abuse and exploitation, including online violence.
- Ensure easy access to child-sensitive complaints and reporting mechanisms and ensure the Village Mediation Units and Child Protection Network appropriately refer cases of online violence to the formal justice and child protection system.
- Ensure access to remedies for child victims, including legal, medical and psychosocial supports.

- Adopt standard operating procedures to coordinate, report and assist to address online violence in linkage with the child protection system.
- Ensure that child victims have access to safe and secure space, medical and psychosocial care, legal assistance, education, vocational and life skills training, socioeconomic support, sports and leisure activities and religious and cultural practices to promote recovery and rehabilitation.
- Ensure child-sensitive investigation and legal procedures are in place to assist child victims of online violence.

2.5. Programme area 2.5: Effective prevention of online violence through targeted education, community mobilization, awareness raising, skills training and social norm changing interventions at all levels.

• Indicators:

- Number of children and adults reached by online protection communication messaging through TV, radio programme, community loudspeakers, in-person sessions, social media campaign billboards and posters
- Number of parents and caregivers reached by parenting education programmes that integrate online protection messages
- Number of children and young people received life skills training that incorporates messages and skills on the use of new technologies and social media, encouraging them to share ideas and knowledge of exploitative behaviour and ways to stop online protection risks, and to report suspicious behavior

• Priority actions:

- Disseminate the National Plan of Actions on Online Protection and the National Guideline on Cyber Security as well as relevant laws in child-friendly language.
- Develop and implement a structured behaviour change communication strategy targeting society at all levels and communities (including community leaders) to build people's understanding on the nature, scale and impact of online protection issues, including sexual exploitation, abuse, online grooming, cyberbullying, etc. and practice values of respect and non-violence, report cases and seek services.
- As part of Lao PDR's #ENDviolence against children initiative, continue implementing a public information campaign to raise awareness about violence against children, including online violence, and sensitize the public about the harmful effects that violence has on children through TV, radio, community speakers, social media and outreach activities.
- Develop and implement a capacity building plan and guidelines for media personnel to improve their capacity and understanding of their roles and responsibilities to promote non-violent values and address online protection in full respect for the rights of the child in all media coverage.
- Implement parenting education that integrates messaging on online protection, including how to identify children at risk, how to guide children on the safe use of Internet, where to seek help and how to support when a child was exposed to online protection risks.
- Provide life skills training to children and young people on the use of new technologies and social media, encouraging them to share ideas and knowledge of exploitative behaviour and ways to stop online protection risks, and to report suspicious behavior

- Raise awareness of men and boys to participate in preventing violence against women, promote a constructive attitude and expression of a positive masculinity and practice gender equality in both off-line and online settings.
- Mobilize the participation of high-ranking men, elderly, religious leaders, ethnic group leaders, teachers, senior public and private executives in combating violence against children, including online protection.

3. Goal 3: Preventing and responding to violence in schools

- **Outcome 3:**

Girls and boys in all schools of Lao PDR have equal access to learn in a safe and enabling environment free from all forms of violence.

- **Indicators:**

- Education policy created or updated to improve systems, capacity and skills to prevent and respond to violence in schools
- Number of schools with school-based child safeguarding policies and procedures developed and use
- Educational package on the prevention of violence against children developed and integrated into the Lao teaching curriculum

3.1. Programme area 3.1: Implementation and enforcement of laws, policies and guidelines on ending violence in schools

- **Indicators:**

- Number of people reached by the publicity campaign on laws, policies and guidelines related to violence against children in schools
- Number of copies of the relevant laws, policies and guidelines disseminated

- **Priority actions:**

- Review existing education policies and update/develop a policy to improve systems, capacity and skills to prevent and respond to violence in schools across the education system.
- Conduct publicity campaigns on relevant laws and policies especially the Penal Code that prohibits corporal punishment in schools and promote positive discipline.
- Disseminate the National Guideline on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children in Secondary Schools in Lao PDR and monitor implementation status of the guideline
- Join Safe to Learn initiative, a global initiative dedicated to ending violence in schools, for knowledge sharing, learning best practices and creating partnerships to end violence in schools.

3.2. Programme area 3.2: Strengthen capacity environment to prevent and respond to all forms of violence at the school level

- **Indicators:**

- Number of school authorities, staff and teachers trained on the implementation of National Guideline on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children in Secondary Schools in Lao PDR
- Number of school authorities, staff and teachers trained on providing mental health and psychosocial supports to children
- Number of cases of violence in school reported and followed up by school authorities

- **Priority actions:**
 - Develop curricula and teaching approaches that are sensitive to gender norms and inequalities and prevent violence, aggression and bullying, incorporating skills to provide mental health and psychosocial supports.
 - Ensure the physical environment in and around schools is safe and designed with the well-being of all children, including children with disabilities, in mind.
 - Conduct training to teachers and other key school staff on prevention of and response to violence against children underlining their responsibilities as mandatory reporters and how to intervene.
 - Train teachers on psychosocial care, support and protection in order to enhance their knowledge and skills in enhancing school environments, foster psychosocial support and facilitate school-community relationships.
 - Implement the National Guideline on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children in Secondary Schools in Lao PDR based on the use of non-violent teaching and learning methods among education staff, as well as child safeguarding approaches and procedures.
 - Link students at risk with health, nutrition and social protection services to increase several factors that protect against youth violence.

3.3. Programme area 3.3: Increased knowledge and skills of children to protect themselves from violence in and around schools

- **Indicators:**
 - Number of adolescent girls and boys received life and social skills training education that focuses on reducing violence, building safe environment and promoting kindness, equality and respect
 - Number of child participation activities in schools and communities to encourage and empower children to share their experiences, express their views and develop a school policy on violence prevention
- **Priority actions:**
 - Raise awareness of students on physical and verbal violence, with a focus on peer violence, aggression and bullying in schools to build a safe and equitable school environment and foster positive relationships between students.
 - Offer life and social skills training to girls and boys to recognize and protect themselves against violence and reduce bullying behaviours.
 - Conduct a school-based kindness, respect and equality campaign to promote positive relationships between students, peers and authority figures.
 - Educate students, parents, teachers and other people working in schools on concepts and impact of physical, sexual and verbal violence, and raise awareness on support services available for children to report violence and where to seek support in schools.
 - Ensure children are included in the school policymaking and activity design process to stop violence in schools.
 - Continue to strengthen the participation of children to prevent, address and monitor violence against children in schools and communities.

4. Goal 4: Preventing and responding to violence in homes and communities

- **Outcome 4:**

Vulnerable girls and boys in Lao PDR have access to and benefit from community-based prevention and response services to violence against children

- **Indicators:**

- Number of cases of child victims of violence reported and followed up by social service workforce
- Number of children, parents and caregivers reached on community mobilization activities to promote service uptake and practice positive social norms to tackle violence in homes and communities

4.1. Programme area 4.1: Provision of quality response services to child victims of violence.

- **Indicators:**

- Number of frontline workers trained on multi-sectoral referral pathway developed for violence against children
- Number of counselling sessions conducted through LWU and LYU helpline
- Number of provinces conducted service mapping and developed a referral pathway.

- **Priority actions:**

- Disseminate the National Guideline for the Protection and Assistance and Referral for Victim of Trafficking and train relevant authorities.
- Support Government protection shelters and CSO partners' safe homes which provide counselling, case management, legal supports and rehabilitation services for women and child survivors of violence, abuse, exploitation and trafficking.
- Expand the LWU and LYU helpline services to operate in all provinces.
- Ensure timely reporting of cases of violence against children and provide case management supports through trained social service workforce (MOLSW and LWU)
- Support provinces to conduct service mapping and develop a referral pathway.
- Train health staff, teachers, social service workforce (MOLSW and LWU) and other relevant people on the multi-sectoral referral pathway developed for violence against children

4.2. Programme area 4.2: Improved understanding and practice of children, parents and community members on prevention of violence against children

- **Indicators:**

- Number of adolescent girls and boys received life and social skills training education that focuses on reducing violence, building safe environment and promoting kindness, equality and respect.
- Number of people learned on prevention skills to end violence against children through TV/Radio, audio messages, PSAs, campaign activities

- **Priority actions:**

- Launch the LWU parenting education package in pilot provinces, including messages on positive parenting and use of non-violent disciplinary measures.
- Implement a life skills development training for adolescents on reducing violence, building safe environment and promoting kindness, equality and respect.

- Establish a child-friendly reporting mechanism for cases of violence, within communities and through schools.
- Conduct awareness raising targeting children, parents and community members on services available for victims of violence and GBV.
- Develop child-friendly IEC materials in Lao and ethnic minority languages to raise awareness on child rights and services available, including helpline services.
- Disseminate TV/Radio programmes and audio messages through community loudspeakers on child protection PSAs, including but not limited to mental health and psychosocial supports (MHPSS), child online protection, prevention of sexual exploitation, trafficking, violence and abuse.
- Conduct an evidence-based behaviour change campaign on ending child marriage and violence in all settings.

Part Three: Principles, Funding and Mechanisms for the Implementation of the Five-year National Plan of Action on Combating Violence Against Women and Children II (2021-2025)

I Principles

1. Principles on assisting women who experienced violence

1) Fundamental Rights

In providing effective services the State has the responsibility to respect, protect and implement the rights of women and girls. Violence against women and children are violations of the human rights of women and children. Especially, as they have the right to live without fear of and violence. Human rights demand for services that prioritizes safety and wellbeing of women and children, and conduct towards women and children with dignity, respect, and sensitivity. Furthermore, it also calls for highest level of standard in terms of health, social, and justice services. The services must be effective, accessible, and acceptable for women and girls.

2) Advancement in Gender Equality and Women's development

Inequality between genders and discrimination are the core causes and effects of violence against women and children, it calls for the services to ensure both the policy and actual implementation to sensitively respond to gender equality. The services must guarantee that violence against women and children is unforgivable and no longer tolerated or accepted. The services must promote the organizations of women, especially those with women and children as decision makers, including the decisions to refuse the necessary services.

3) Culture and Age Sensitivity and Appropriate

The necessary services that are cultural and age sensitive and appropriate must be able to respond to the individual conditions and experiences of the women and children with due considerations on their age, identity, culture, gender, status in terms of gender equality, ethnicity, and language. The necessary services must respond appropriately to the women and children who have to face many forms of discriminations that are not only based on the gender, but also race, ethnicity, social strata, sexual orientation, religion, disability, marital status, occupation, or any other characteristics, or even because they were victims of violence.

4) Victim/Survivor-Centered Approach

Victim/survivor-centered approach is to provide for the existing rights, needs and aspirations of the women and children at the core of the services; which calls for due considerations on the diverse needs of the victims and survivors, their risks and vulnerabilities, effects of the decisions and actions, and ensuring the most suitable services matching the demands that are unique to each woman and girl. The services should also respond to the aspirations of the women and girls.

5) Safety as Top Priority

The safety of the women and girls is the most important element of the services. The services must prioritize safety of the service users and avoid any act that may potentially post danger to the women and girls.

6) Accountability of Perpetrators

It is necessary to make the perpetrators accountable for their actions, effectively and at the same time ensuring justice redress. The services must support and facilitate the victims/survivors to participate in the justice process, promote their ability to bring forth legal proceedings and use their rights while also ensuring that the burden and duty to seek justice does not fall on them but rather on the Government officials.

2. Principles on assisting children who experienced violence

1) Prevention, redress, return to family

Despite the importance of prevention aspects, it is also necessary to acknowledge that the prevention, redress, and return of the child back to his/her family need to be acknowledged altogether.

2) Gender dimension of violence against children

It must be taken into consideration, the different risks boys and girls face in various places and the type of violence, also aiming at addressing all forms of gender discrimination that may lead to violence against children.

3) Child's rights-based approach

There needs to be an acknowledgement that children are rights holders and the Government are bearers of responsibilities, including the responsibility to create enabling conditions for implementation of the rights of the child.

4) Non-discrimination

All methods, strategies and initiatives are based on the concept of unity and non-discrimination on all basis, including gender, disability, ethnicity, or any other status.

5) Joint responsibility

Even though the Government bears a large portion of the responsibilities, to end violence against children, it calls for involvement and contribution from everyone in society, including civil society organizations, communities, families, the private sector, mass media and all citizens.

6) Coordination

Due to the fact that there are many types of violence against children, the coordination across all the sectors, all levels (from central to local), communities and society are all significant.

7) Uphold the child's interests

As stated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the interests of the child must be considered above all others, in all situations.

8) Information and research

It is acknowledged that credible information and research are necessary for advocacy, creation of effective policy and work plans on violence against children.

9) Rescue of survivor

There needs to be a commitment to ensure that the survivors of violence against children receive timely support, which is child-friendly, good understanding of gender equality, harmonized effort, and with confidentiality.

10) Resources, financial and technical

It is accepted that resources should be allocated in every sector, in order to optimize the outputs, together with a robust monitoring mechanism to guarantee accountability in terms of budget allocation and expenditure.

3. Principles on implementation of the National Plan of Action

- 1) Prevention and elimination of violence against women and children are duties of responsibilities of everyone in society.
- 2) Prioritize the prevention tasks as the primary tasks, along with upholding the protection and assistance to women and children victims and punishment of perpetrators in accordance with the laws and regulations.
- 3) The implementation of the National Plan of Action involves many sectors, thus there must be a synergized management and leadership across the country, allocating the responsibilities to the sectors, organizations, local authorities, and other stakeholders to implement in accordance with their roles, with the NCAW and NCAMC as the focal coordinating agencies, to encourage, monitor and periodically report on the results.
- 4) The sectors and local authorities must implement, monitor and make assessment of the policy, legislations, and work plans to prevent and redress violence against women and children. This must be done with providing the necessary personnel and budget, together with contribution from the society, friendly countries, and development partners of Lao PDR.

II Funding

The source of funding for the implementation of this Plan of Action shall be from the internal sources and external assistances.

1. Internal sources

The Ministry of Planning and Investment in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance shall research and provide the funding for each sector and local authorities as appropriate for implementation of the Five-year National Plan of Action on Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Children II (2021-2025).

2. External assistance

The funding can come from cooperation with friendly countries, international organizations, financial institutions, CSOs, individuals and legal entities of both domestic and abroad, in order to gather support in terms of technical and financial.

III Implementation Mechanisms

1. NCAWMC

NCAWMC has the duty to take lead and manage the implementation of the Five-Year National Plan of Action on Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Children II (2021-2025) in order to further expand into respective sectorial and local work plans, programs and activities in details.

The Secretariat to NCAWMC has the role to coordinate and encourage the CAWMC of the line ministries and local authorities to further integrate the Five-Year National Plan of Action on Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Children II (2021-2025) into their respective sectorial and local work plans, programs and activities in details. At the same, there is a need to further encourage financial contribution from other sources, in addition to the State funding, thus ensuring the implementation of the strategic plan and its targets.

2. Responsibilities of each sector

The Five-Year National Plan of Action on Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Children II (2021-2025) is significant at the national level and is a cross-cutting with many sectors to be involved. Therefore, in implementing this Plan of Action which shall involve many sectors, with harmonized leadership and management across the country and assigned responsibilities to each sector, organization, local authority and stakeholder to carry out their respective roles, with the NCAWMC as the focal coordinator with all sectors involved in terms of implementation, motivation, monitoring and evaluation, assessment, concluding lessons learned and propose for promotional honors to be awarded for excellent achievements under this Plan of Action. It shall also handle cooperation with international organizations, NGOs, CSOs that are working both domestically and abroad, to share the information and lessons learned, and gathering of support in both technical and financial aspects and contribute to the realization of this National Plan of Action.

The relevant sectors, organizations, and local authorities are the implementing agencies of the National Plan of Action, with the CAWMCs of line ministries, organizations, provinces/Capital city as the advisory agencies who shall break down the National Plan of Action into work plans, budget plans, personnel plans in conjunction with their respective work plans and budget plans systems.

Planning and Investment Sector is responsible for integrating the Five-Year National Plan of Action on Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Children II (2021-2025) into the Socio-Economic Development Plan and the periodic State Budget Plans; in collaboration with the bureau responsible for data gathering and database creation which shall reflect the current situation and future trends of violence against women and children periodically, with the data disaggregated based on gender, age, disabilities, development level, and socio-economic status. This data shall then be disseminated to society and relevant sectors as the baseline information for further formulations of policy, strategies, and legislations to tackle violence against women and children.

Financial Sector is responsible for organizing and allocation of the State Budget as appropriate, to successfully implement the Five-Year National Plan of Action on Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Children II (2021-2025).

Public Health Sector is responsible for the health aspects of women and children, improve the counselling rooms, provide medical examination and treatment for the victims at

all health services facilities and hospitals from central levels, to provide emergency and long-term physical and psychological treatments for women and children who are victims of violence, develop handbooks on necessary services for women and children who are victims of violence. Organize trainings on how to provide the necessary services for women and children who are victims of violence to the healthcare workers, also for them to be able to provide necessary education to the family, parents, and guardians for them to be able to understand better about child protection, especially the on cases of children who experienced violence physically, psychologically, and sexually.

Education and Sports Sector is responsible for the educational aspects, by providing enabling conditions for girls to access schools at every level, same as the boys, including access to preschools, compulsory primary schools, secondary schools, which are necessary foundation for their further vocational studies. Provide knowledge on the law and fine national traditions to students, both during school hours and outside, including community learning sessions, especially for those who may be in the group at risk of violence against children, to provide conditions for children and their families to have employment and better living conditions; provide condition for women to access education at all levels, develop curriculums that guarantees gender equality, non-discrimination based on gender, and non-violent relationships and dispute resolutions.

Labour and Social Welfare Sector is responsible for implementing the Work Plan on prevention, assistance and return to society and family of the victims. Emphasizing on providing assistance, vocational training, labor skill development, employment for the women and children at risk and families, guardians of children who are victims. At the same time, in terms of social welfare and continuous care of children such as: prevention (including visits to the child's family and reeducate the parents), first instance identification, evaluation and registration, referral, and other services. Reviewing of the prevention case, completion of the assistance and return of victims to their families.

Foreign Affairs Sector is responsible for cooperation with the relevant domestic sectors and relevant international organizations, such as the processes of interrelations, negotiations, Memorandums, signing agreements, monitor, support the prosecution of perpetrators and return of victims to country of origin, while also gather financial and technical support, and good lessons learned from other countries.

Home Affairs Sector is responsible for wide and in-depth dissemination on birth certificate registration, marriage registration, especially on children under 18, and death certificates, registration of women as head of household for protection of rights and the interests of the women and children.

Information, Culture, and Tourism Sector is responsible for advertising and disseminating the policy of the Party, laws of the State, the inherent fine national cultures, of Lao women, the Five-Year National Plan of Action on Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Children II (2021-2025), the ill-effects of violence and risks of violence towards women and children, bad effects of premature pregnancy, suppress the production and spreading of pornographic materials that are against the laws of the State and the fine national traditions.

Post and Telecommunications Sector is responsible for planning, implementing, monitoring cybercrimes, and protecting children on online social media within the Lao PDR, and with cooperation at regional and international levels. This sector must closely cooperate with the Justice Sector to come up with activities for children to have the knowledge on how to safely use the internet and online social medias, combat violations on social media platforms, protect and assist the victims from crimes in the cyberspace, including abuses and sexual violations of children, in collaboration with the social welfare sector.

Agriculture and Forestry is to monitor, support, annually assess and report on the implementation of family building, village building, and district building in connection with gender equality and without violence in families, especially against women and children.

Justice Sector is responsible for coordinating with all sectors in reviewing, creating, and amending laws, ensuring that they are most suitable with realities of the country and in line with international treaties that are related to prevention and elimination of violence against women and children; advertise and disseminate laws and legislations widely and in-depth from central to local levels with an aim to further strengthen legal awareness and respect towards the laws and regulations.

Public Security Sector is responsible for monitoring, investigation, apprehend perpetrators to file charges of violence cases in a clear, accurate, timely manner and strictly control immigration in the aspect of preventing violence; rescue and assist the victims and cooperate with relevant sectors in other countries to apprehend the perpetrators, assist and return the women and children who are victims of violence back to the country and refer to relevant sectors.

Office of Supreme People's Prosecutor and People's Supreme Court is responsible for conducting case proceedings of violence against women and children and persons with disabilities in a timely manner; cooperate with relevant sectors to organize law training for relevant officials and strengthen the monitoring and enforcement of the law especially on violence.

Lao Women's Union (LWU) is responsible for preventing violation of the rights and ensuring that women can receive the rights and interests equally to the men; has the duty to raise awareness on the Party's policy, laws of the State, inherent fine culture of the nation, treaties relating to women and children, gender equality for the multiethnic Lao women and society at large; implement the activities to combat violence against women and children, protect and assist women and children who are victims of violence, including issues relating to the after-effects of violence through psychological counselling, health, legal aid and also carry out its role as protectors of the victims (free-of-charge) in case proceedings, provide safe temporary shelters for the victims; provide short-term vocational training and return the victims of violence back to society through its network of Counselling and Protection for Women and Children centers from central, Capital City, provincial, district and village levels.

Lao Front for National Development is a political relations organization for the entire society, shall educate and train and ensure unity and harmony for the Lao multi ethnic people, especially those living in report areas; through integrating the prevention and elimination of violence against women and children into its strategic plans from central to grass root levels.

- Educate and train, ensure social unity and harmony among the Lao multiethnic people, promote gender equality, support protection of the rights and interest of the multiethnic women and children.
- Gather information, create a database with disaggregation on gender, gather comments and grievances of the Lao multi-ethnic people and report to the Government and relevant sectors to consult and provide resolutions as appropriate.
- Create documents, handbooks, and train on advancement of women and mothers and children affairs (with attachment of preventing and eliminating violence against women and children) within its scope of mandate across the country.

- Actively lead and support the initiatives for the multiethnic women to be included in its leading commissions across the country; support the multiethnic children; especially for girls to receive encouragement and education at all levels.

Lao Federation of Trade Unions and Lao Youth Union are mass organizations of the Party, responsible for dissemination and awareness raising on the policy of the Party, laws of the State, Treaties relating to the rights of women and children, including prevention and elimination of violence against women and children, along its vertical organizational chains from central to grassroot levels.

All relevant sectors, local authorities of all levels, CSOs, business units both domestic and abroad and the Lao multiethnic people in general can participate and contribute to the implementation of the National Plan of Action on Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Children at their respective capacity and roles.

IV Monitoring and Evaluation, Support and Report

The Commission for Advancement of Women and Mothers-Children at all levels and all sectors must be involved in monitoring and evaluate the progresses made on the implementation of the Five-Year National Plan of Action on Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Children II (2021-2025) as follows:

1. The Secretariat of the NCAWMC shall be responsible for reporting to the NCAWMC on the progresses made on the implementation of the Five-Year National Plan of Action on Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Children II (2021-2025) at the national level;
2. Create the system and tools for M&E of the National Plan of Action on Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Children in a comprehensive manner, while also advertise and disseminate and train on how to implement the Plan;
3. CAWMC at ministry, organizational, and provincial/district level must monitor the implementation of the Five-Year National Plan of Action on Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Children II (2021-2025) with in its respective sector and locals with the Departments, Offices and Units for Advancement of Women and Mothers-Children as the advisory agencies and provide regular reports to the NCAWMC;
4. CAWMCs at all levels shall organize periodic meetings to exchange the lessons learned from its implementation and summarize the information in a comprehensive and clear as well as systematic manner to report to the Secretariat of NCAWMC;
5. NCAWMC shall cooperate with the Ministry of Planning and Investment to ensure that the prevention and elimination of violence against women and children is linked to the National Socio-Economic Development Plans;
6. Departments, units and offices for Advancement of Women must organize quarterly meetings;
7. Secretariat Office of the NCAWMC organize meetings for CAWMCs of line ministries and other organizations every 3 months and 6 months;
8. NCAWMC shall organize its open plenary meeting once a year;
9. Secretariat Office of the NCAWMC shall coordinate with all relevant sectors to conduct mid-term (2023) and final (2025) evaluations on implementation of the Five-Year National Plan of Action on Prevention and Elimination of Violence against

- Women and Children II (2021-2025), including implementation of the CEDAW, CRC and its Ops, Beijing Declaration and its Plan of Action, and SDGs relating to women;
10. CAWMCs must summarize and report on implementation of the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women and Children within its scope of mandate and locals to the NCAWMC every 6 months, annually, mid-term, and the 5-year report;
 11. The reports from the sectors and local authorities must utilize the disaggregated statistical data based on gender, age, ethnicity, disability, residence, and socio-economic status;
 12. NCAWMC summarizes and reports on the progress of the prevention and elimination of violence against women and children to the Government on a regular and periodic basis.

Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

Implementation of the Second Five-Year National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Children (2021-2025)

Indicator	Baseline	Target 2025	Data source	Frequency of collection	Responsible ministry
Overall Objectives: To reduce violence against children in all settings, including at home, in communities, online and in schools as well as other institutions, through a strategic multi-sectoral and systems approach based on an enhanced enabling environment with focuses across prevention and response.					
% of children age 1-14 years who experienced any discipline measures, including psychological aggression and physical punishment during the last one month	69%	48%	LSIS	Every 5 years	LSB
% of mothers/caregivers of children age 1-14 years who believe that physical punishment is needed to bring up, raise or educate a child properly, Lao PDR, 2017	25.3%	13%	LSIS	Every 5 years	LSB
Programme Area 1: Enhancing the multi-sectoral coordination and monitoring to end violence against children					
Outcome 1: The coordination, data sharing and monitoring between sectors, including Social Welfare, Justice, Education, Health and ICT, is enhanced at all levels to effectively implement interventions addressing violence against children in all settings in alignment with the framework for child protection system strengthening.					
# of annual national meetings taken place to monitor the implementation of the Second National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Children (2021-2025) with all relevant stakeholders	1	5	NCAWMC annual report	Annual	NCAWMC
Output 1.1: Systematic management, coordination and monitoring on VAC interventions in the country					
Availability of the Standard Operating Procedures on multi-sectoral VAC response management and referral across sectors	No	Yes	MOH, MOES, MOLSW, LWU reports	Annual	NCAWMC
Collection of regular data on child violence through CPIMS	No	Yes	MOLSW reports	Annual	MOLSW, NCAWMC, LWU
Data gathered from LWU helpline and protection centres are disaggregated by types of violence, age groups, gender and location.	No	Yes	LWU reports	Annual	LWU

Synchronized reporting form on cases of violence against children for Health, Education, Justice and Social Work	No	Yes	NCAWMC, LWU, MOES, MOJ, MOLSW reports	Annual	NCAWMC, LWU, MOES, MOJ, MOLSW
Programme Area 2: Preventing and responding to online violence, including child online sexual exploitation and abuse					
Outcome 2: Children in Lao PDR are better protected from all forms of online child protection risks and are capacitated to use the Internet safely in an enabling environment.					
The Law on cybercrime and the Decree on Internet information management incorporate the use of the Internet to commit crimes against children	No	Yes	MOJ reports	Annual	MOJ, MPT, MICT, NCA WMC
# of victims of online violence received legal, medical and psychosocial supports	Unknown	100	MOLSW, MOJ, LWU, MOH reports	Annual	MOLSW, MOJ, LWU, MOH
Central information system established for monitoring, analysis and sharing of data and trends on online violence	No	Yes	MOJ reports	Annual	MPT, MICT, NCA WMC
Output 2.1: Stronger institutional capacity to address online violence through strengthened planning, evidence generating, monitoring and enforcing laws and policies.					
# of consultation workshops with the private sector on child online protection	0	2	NCAWMC reports	Annual	MPT MICT NCA WMC Private sector
National Plan of Actions on Online Protection developed	No	Yes	MPT reports	Every 5 years	MOJ MPT MICT NCA WMC
A national study on the children's lives online in Lao PDR conducted	No	Yes	NCAWMC reports	Annual	MPT MICT NCA WMC
Output 2.2: Strengthened regional and international cooperation to combat transnational online violence					
Joining of the WeProtect Global Alliance for effective cooperation in the investigation and prosecution of criminal networks and perpetrators	No	Yes	MPT reports	Every 5 years	MPT MICT NCA WMC

# of new or amended cross-border agreement(s) or form(s) of collaboration on violence against children, including online protection, with ASEAN countries	0	1	MPT reports	Annual	MPT MICT NCA WMC
# of international and regional exchange and exposure visits conducted on sharing lesson-learned on violence against children, including online violence	1	3	NCAWMC reports	Annual	MPT MICT NCA WMC MOJ
Output 2.3: Stronger capacity to respond to online violence against children and provide timely and quality assistance responses					
# of police officers trained on child-friendly investigation of online child sexual crimes	0	50	MOPS report	Annual	MOPS
# of prosecutors trained on prosecution of online offenders, exploiters and traffickers	0	50	Prosecutor's Office report	Annual	Prosecutor's office
Child-friendly reporting mechanism developed for monitoring of online child sexual abuse material	No	Yes	MOPS report	Annual	MOPS
# of national and local social service workforce (MOLSW, LWU and LYU) trained on how to identify, report and assist victims of online violence	0	200	MOLSW, LWU, LYU report	Annual	MOLSW LWU
# of teachers trained on how to identify children affected by online violence, including cyber bullying among students, and their roles and responsibilities to report and assist the victim	0	100	MOES report	Annual	MOES
Output 2.4: Ensure accessibility and utilization of timely and quality service and assistance to victims of online violence					
# of child helpline staff trained to provide safe, confidential, child-friendly, gender-responsive and inclusive responses to victims of online violence	0	150	LWU, LYU report	Annual	LWU/LYU

# of Child Protection Network trained on referring cases of online violence to the formal justice and child protection system	0	150	MOLSW report	Annual	MOLSW MOJ
Child rights and justice module updated to include the support to child witnesses and victims of online violence and crime	No	Yes	JJCC report	Annual	JJCC
# of centres and safe spaces exist for victims of violence, including online violence	2	5	LWU report	Annual	LWU
# of victims of online violence received rehabilitation supports, including education, vocational and life skills training, socioeconomic support, sport and leisure activities and religious and cultural supports	Unknown	100	MOLSW, LWU report	Annual	LWU MOLSW
Output 2.5: Effective prevention of online violence through targeted education, community mobilization, awareness raising, skills training and social norm changing interventions at all levels					
# of children and adults reached by online protection communication programme, community loudspeakers, in-person sessions, social media campaign billboards and posters	3.4 million	8 million	MICT report	Annual	MICT
# of parents and caregivers reached by parenting education programmes that integrate online protection messages	100	2,000	LWU report	Annual	LWU
# of children and young people received life skills training that incorporates messages and skills on the use of new technologies and social media, encouraging them to share ideas and knowledge of exploitative behaviour and ways to stop online protection risks, and to report suspicious behavior	126	1,000	NCAWMC report	Annual	NCAWMC

Programme Area 3: Preventing and responding to violence in schools

Outcome 3: Girls and boys in all schools of Lao PDR have equal access to learn in a safe and enabling environment free from all forms of violence.

Education policy created or updated to improve systems, capacity and skills to prevent and respond to violence in schools	No	Yes	MOES reports	Annual	MOES
# of schools with school-based child safeguarding policies and procedures developed and use	Unknown	18	MOES reports	Annual	MOES
Educational package on the prevention of violence against children developed and integrated into the Lao teaching curriculum	No	Yes	MOES reports	Annual	MOES NCAWMC
Output 3.1: Implementation and enforcement of laws and policies on regarding ending violence in schools					
# of copies of the relevant laws, policies and guidelines disseminated	Unknown	10,000	NCAWMC and MOES reports	Annual	MOES NCAWMC MOJ
Joining of the Global Safe to Learn initiative	No	Yes	MOES reports	Every 5 years	MOES NCAWMC
Output 3.2: Strengthened prevention and response to all forms of violence at the school level					
# of school authorities, staff and teachers trained on the implementation of National Guideline on Prevention and Response to Violence Against Children in Secondary Schools in Lao PDR	2	18	MOES reports NCAWMC reports	Annual	MOES CAWMC of MOES
# of cases of violence in school reported and followed up	Unknown	TBD	MOES reports	Annual	MOES CAWMC of MOES
# of school authorities, staff and teachers trained on providing mental health and psychosocial supports to children	Unknown	TBD	MOES reports	Annual	MOES CAWMC of MOES
Output 3.3: Children and their parents have adequate knowledge and skills to protect themselves from violence in and around school					
# of adolescent girls and boys received life and social skills training education that focuses on reducing violence, building safe environment and promoting kindness, equality and respect	126	1,000	MOES reports NCAWMC reports	Annual	MOES CAWMC of MOES

# of child participation activities in schools and communities to encourage and empower children to share their experiences, express their views and develop a school policy on violence prevention	Unknown	TBD	MOES reports NCAWMC reports	Annual	MOES CAWMC of MOES
Programme Area 4: Preventing and responding to violence in homes and communities					
Outcome 4: Vulnerable girls and boys in Lao PDR have access to and benefit from community-based prevention and response services to violence against children					
# of cases of child victims of violence reported and followed up by social service workforce	100	1,000	LWU, MOLSW reports	Annual	LWU MOLSW
# of children, parents and caregivers reached on community mobilization activities to promote service uptake and practice positive social norms to tackle violence in homes and communities	10,000	50,000	NCAWMC reports	Annual	NCAWMC
Output 4.1: Provision of quality response services to child victims of violence					
# of frontline workers trained on multi-sectoral referral pathway developed for violence against children	100	500	MOLSW, LWU reports	Annual	MOLSW, LWU, LYU, MOES, MOH
# of counselling sessions conducted through LWU and LYU helpline	2,000	10,000	LWU and LYU reports	Annual	LWU LYU
# of provinces conducted service mapping and developed a referral pathway.	1	18	MOLSW reports	Annual	Province
Output 4.2: Improved understanding and practice of children, parents and community members on prevention of violence against children					
# of adolescent girls and boys received life and social skills training education that focuses on reducing violence, building safe environment and promoting kindness, equality and respect.	126	1,000	NCAWMC reports	Annual	NCAWMC
# of people learned on prevention skills to end violence against children through TV/Radio, audio messages, PSAs, campaign activities	3.4 million	8 million	MICT reports	Annual	MICT

