

Pledge by Lao People's Democratic Republic

Acceded to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on 08 May 1991

Acceded to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict on 20 September 2006

Acceded to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children child prostitution and child pornography on 20 September 2006



Pledges

1. The government commits to endorse by 2020 and implement by 2025 a plan of action to strengthen the child protection system and make the reduction of multi-dimensional child poverty a part of the 9th National Socio- economic development plan.

In light of the commitments we have made under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols, as applicable, we have undertaken the following to highlight our commitment to the promotion, protection and realization of the rights of the child in celebration of the 30th anniversary of the Convention:

Reaffirming its commitment to protecting children, the government commits to endorse by 2020 and implement by 2025 a plan of action to strengthen the child protection system and make the reduction of multi-dimensional child poverty a part of the 9th National Socio- economic development plan.

This action ensures key child protection concerns will be addressed, along with strengthening child protection systems and ensuring the implementation of the Concluding Observations on the Conventions on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and Lao PDR's achievement of SDG targets.

- Birth registration: The overall birth registration rate of children under 5 remains the lowest in the region at 73%.
- Violence against Children: 7 in 10 children aged 1 to 14 years are subject to at least one form of psychological aggression or physical punishment from an adult in their household.
- Child Marriage: Child marriage rate remains one of the highest in the region with 8% of women aged 20 to 49 years married before the age of 15; and 33% of women married before the age of 18.
- Children with disabilities: There is a lack of data on children with disabilities. Children with severe disabilities are usually kept at home or placed in institutions, and often 'hidden' to the outside world, due to stigma and discrimination. Children with disabilities are less likely to access education and other social services.

- Children deprived of a family environment: Culturally, children without parental care are placed in informal and undocumented kinship care, hindering a systematic monitoring of their well-being in all settings, especially during emergency.

The child protection system needs to be strengthened as it is burdened by institutional, human and financial constraints which hinders progress of providing preventive and responsive child protection services. In addition, the number and quality of social service workforce pose a major bottleneck, leading to a lack of case management and referral mechanisms.

Finally, this action ties into the implementation of the Concluding Observations on the Conventions on the Rights of the Child (CRC) issued by the UN CRC Committee and the recommendations from the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, recommended the State party to build a child protection system that provides care and recovery for vulnerable children and disadvantaged children ensuring their access to social and justice services.

To contribute the achievement of the following SDG targets:

4.a - build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive; and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all;

4.2 - ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education;

5.c - adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels;

5.1 - end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere;

5.3 - eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage, and female genital mutilation

16.a - strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime.

16.1 - significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.

16.2 - end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children' etc.

16.3 - promote the rule of law at national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.

The MODA report shows that despite considerable progress, the majority of children age 0-17 years in Lao PDR are multidimensionally deprived, and they experience a high deprivation intensity. Only 12 percent of children experience no deprivation at all, 70 percent suffer from at

least two deprivations and 50 percent of children are suffering from three or more deprivations at the same time. Stunted children have a higher rate and intensity of deprivation in all dimensions. At provincial level, the highest rates and intensity of multidimensional deprivation are concentrated in Savannakhet, Saravan, Sekong, Phongsaly and Xaysomboun. The lowest rates and intensity are in Vientiane Capital.

The current generation of children will be the backbone of the future economic growth and social development of Lao PDR. Therefore, timely and strategic investments in children and young people will be made a priority for the 9th NSEDP. Such investments will maximize the cognitive and human capital of Lao PDR's 'generation 2030', who will drive the development of a country that aims to successfully graduate from the list of Least Developed Countries (LDC) and achieve the SDGs.

Reduction of multi-dimensional poverty among children will be achieved through promoting province-specific investments coordinated across sectors are needed in:

- o Improved nutritional outcomes
- o More coverage of early childhood development
- o Higher quality in primary and secondary education
- o Sustained improvements in water and sanitation
- o Capacity building at provincial, district and village level for better planning, implementation and monitoring of initiatives to address multi-dimensional poverty among children.

In order to strengthen the child protection system, the following actions would be undertaken:

- Conduct a mapping, visioning and planning exercise to develop a national strategic plan for the child protection system with the aim to strengthen the social welfare workforce with a costed investment case model by end of 2019.
- Test the model in two provinces and generate evidence-based documentation for policy development during 2020-2024.
- Develop a social welfare workforce including professional and para social workers through the development of training manual and Standard Operation Procedures; pre-service and in-service training and establishment of an accreditation system to assess and monitor the quality.
- Apply systematic case management procedures in providing child protection services for children at risk or victimized by violence, neglect, abuse and exploitation.
- Compile a documentation report with evidence from the test model for scaling up of the child protection system strengthening across the country by end of 2025

Lead by National Commission for the Advancement of Women, Mothers and Children (NCAWMC), Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW), Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) and associated line ministries.

2) We have made the following plans to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Convention:



Key Government Participants:
H.E. Sonexay Siphandone,
*Deputy Prime Minister and President of NCAWMC**
H.E. Alounkeo Kittikhoun,
Minister to the Prime Minister's Office and Vice President of NCAWMC

Key Results:

High level commitment to the realization of child rights in Lao PDR were reiterated. Audience were informed of CRC30 plans.



Purpose: to engage the private sector in realizing child rights and coming to agreement on aligning business principles with child rights

Expected date: a 1-day workshop in October

Participants: around 50 participants representing a range of private sector business and civil society



unicef
for every child

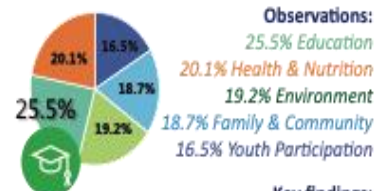


Purpose: To listen to children's voices and opinions on their own rights
Partners: Global Shapers
Participants: Children representatives (11-18 yrs) from all 18 provinces

- April 24-26: Bokeo consultation, 28 Childrens
- May 7-9: Savannakhet consultation, 52 Childrens
- May 28-30: Vientiane Capital consultation, 46 Childrens
- May 31: Advocacy event with Deputy Prime Minister, 346 Childrens

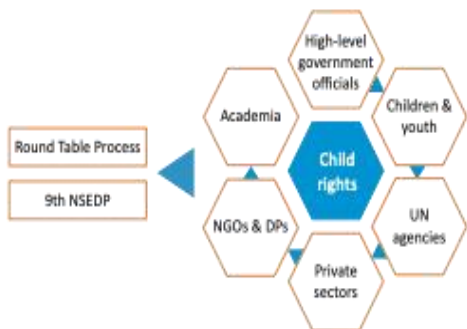
Timeline

- Mar 19 Consultation Workshop on Implementation of CRC Concluding Observations
- April-May Children-Youth Consultations
- Aug/Sep Civil Society Organizations consultation
- Aug-Oct Draft National Plan of Action
- Sep Provincial planning and involvement of vice-governors in CRC30 discussions at provincial level
- Sep-Oct Situation Analysis – Children in Lao PDR
- Oct Private Sector Consultation
- Late Oct Development Partners' Consultation
- Nov 11 Lao Generation 2030 Forum
- Nov 20 World Children's Day – 30th Anniversary



Key findings:

- Children expressed a desire to have better education, to have more educational materials in the classrooms and to have access to IT in their school curriculum.
- Children in all three regional consultations mentioned that they would like to see a more supportive and encouraging community that is open to their future life decision, particularly in their education.
- There was a significant number of children who would like to increase their knowledge and awareness on health and nutrition.
- Children hope to see more trees being planted, and more public parks being included in the urban development of their communities, as well as a reduction of single plastic use that pollutes the environment.



* NCAWMC - National Commission for the Advancement of Women, Mothers and Children