

Family Planning Situation Analysis

Lao People's Democratic Republic

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FOREWORD

The United Nations Population Fund - UNFPA, together with other development partners, has been supporting the Ministry of Health to implement its Family Planning programme over the past two decades. This programme has been mainly implemented as part of a larger maternal health programme and has not been specifically assessed, thus highlighting the need for updated an analysis on the situation of Family Planning in the country. In response to this need, UNFPA commissioned analysis with the specific purpose of assessing the current situation of family planning in Lao PDR, so that it would provide an evidence base to inform UNFPA's support, as well as the Government's future programming in the area. The analysis is also expected to assist UNFPA in developing a more integrated approach to family planning in the country in line with the global UNFPA Family Planning Strategy "Choices not Chance", and the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Action Plan, which emphasise the broadening of contraceptive choices, improving quality of care, and ensuring reproductive rights.

The report outlines the current landscape of Family Planning in the areas of policy, service delivery and resources. It notes the gains that have been made in increasing the contraceptive prevalence rate and in the reduction of maternal mortality and unmet need for family planning, and highlights remaining challenges and disparities by region, age and ethnicity. A key conclusion of the analysis is that efforts to increase awareness and knowledge about contraceptive methods have paid off. It notes that targeted programmes such as the Vientiane Health Centre for Youth and Development have achieved success in terms of responding to SRH needs of young people for accessible and affordable information and counselling on sexual and reproductive health matters, including clinic services. Similarly, it acknowledges that Community-based Distributors (CBDs) of contraceptives who bring information, contraceptives and supplies to rural communities with limited access to clinic-based services have allowed women to access services which they otherwise would not have. However, the report also highlights an over-reliance on short-acting methods which puts women in a vulnerable position, especially when stock-outs occur which will increase the risk of unplanned pregnancy and unsafe abortion. On the other hand, it notes that joint work between the Maternal and Child Health Centre (MCHC), UNFPA and the Population Services International (PSI) in addressing misconceptions about the use of Long Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) in selected provinceshas lead to a four-fold increase in IUD users and implant uptake. In addition, the report finds a high variance in service delivery, predominantly in communication and clinical skills of service providers and contraceptive security which affects the quality of services. Consequently, a key recommendation of the report is to strengthen the rights-based approach to Family Planning programming in Lao PDR.

We hope the findings and analysis of this report will be utilized in policy and programme planning enabling Lao PDR to achieve the next MMR target of 120/100000 live births, CPR goal of 70% and reduced unmet need for family planning to 10% by 2020.

On behalf of UNFPA, I would like to extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to all of our partners who provided invaluable inputs to the Situation Analysis on Family Planning in Lao PDR, in particular the team of the Ministry of Health, especially staff of the Mother and Child Health Centre and the two consultants, Dr. Katharine Ba-Thike and Ms Vimala Dejvongsa.

> Dr Hassan Mohtashami **UNFPA** Representative

List of Acronyms

AAAQ	Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability, Quality of care
AEC	ASEAN Economic Community
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
ASFR	Age-specific Fertility Rates
BCC	Behaviour Change Communication
BS	
	Birth spacing
CBD	Community-Based Distribution
CBO	Community-based organization
CIEH	Centre of Information and Education for Health
CHAS	Centre for HIV/AIDS STI
CPR	Contraceptive Prevalence Rate
DHIS 2	District Health Information Software 2
DLI	Disbursement Linked Indicator
DMT	Decision-making Tool for FP Clients and Providers
DRF	Drug Revolving Fund
EC	Emergency contraception
EPI	Expanded Programme of Immunizations
FP	Family Planning
FPSA	Family Planning Situation Analysis
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoL	Government of Lao People's Democratic Republic
GGHE	General government expenditure on health
GPRHCS	Global Programme for Enhancement of Reproductive
	Health Commodity Security
HEF	Health Equity Fund
HIS	Health Information System
HMIS	Health Management Information System
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IPC	Interpersonal communication
IT	Information Technology
IUD	Intra-Uterine Device
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
LAM	Lactational Amenorrhoea Method
LARC	Long-acting reversible contraception
Lao NCAW	Lao National Commission for the Advancement of Women
Lao PDR	Lao People's Democratic Republic
LDC	Least Developed Country
LSIS	Lao Social Indicator Survey
LWU	Lao Women's Union
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MCHC	Maternal and Child Health Centre
MNCH	
	Maternal, Newborn and Child Health
MoH	Ministry of Health
MMR	Maternal Mortality Ratio
MRA	Mutual Recognition Arrangements
MSM	Men having sex with men
NERI	National Economic Research Institute
NSEDP	National Socio-Economic Development Plans
INGOs	International Non-Government Organizations

NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
NPA	Non-Profit Association
NPDP	National Population and Development Policy
NRHP	National Reproductive Health Policy
OCP	Oral contraceptive pills
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
PNC	Postnatal care
PoA	Programme of Action
QIQ	Quick Investigation of Quality
RCN	Referral and Counselling Network
RH	Reproductive Health
RHC	Reproductive Health Commodity
RMNCH	Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn and Child Health
RTI/STI	Reproductive Tract Infection/Sexually-Transmitted
	Infection
SAS	Stock Availability Survey
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SOMHD	Senior Officials Meeting on Health and Development
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SWC	Sector Wide Coordination
THE	Total Health Expenditure
TMA	Total Market Approach
TFR	Total Fertility Rate
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VHCYD	Vientiane Health Centre for Youth and Development
VHW	Village Health Worker
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organization

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