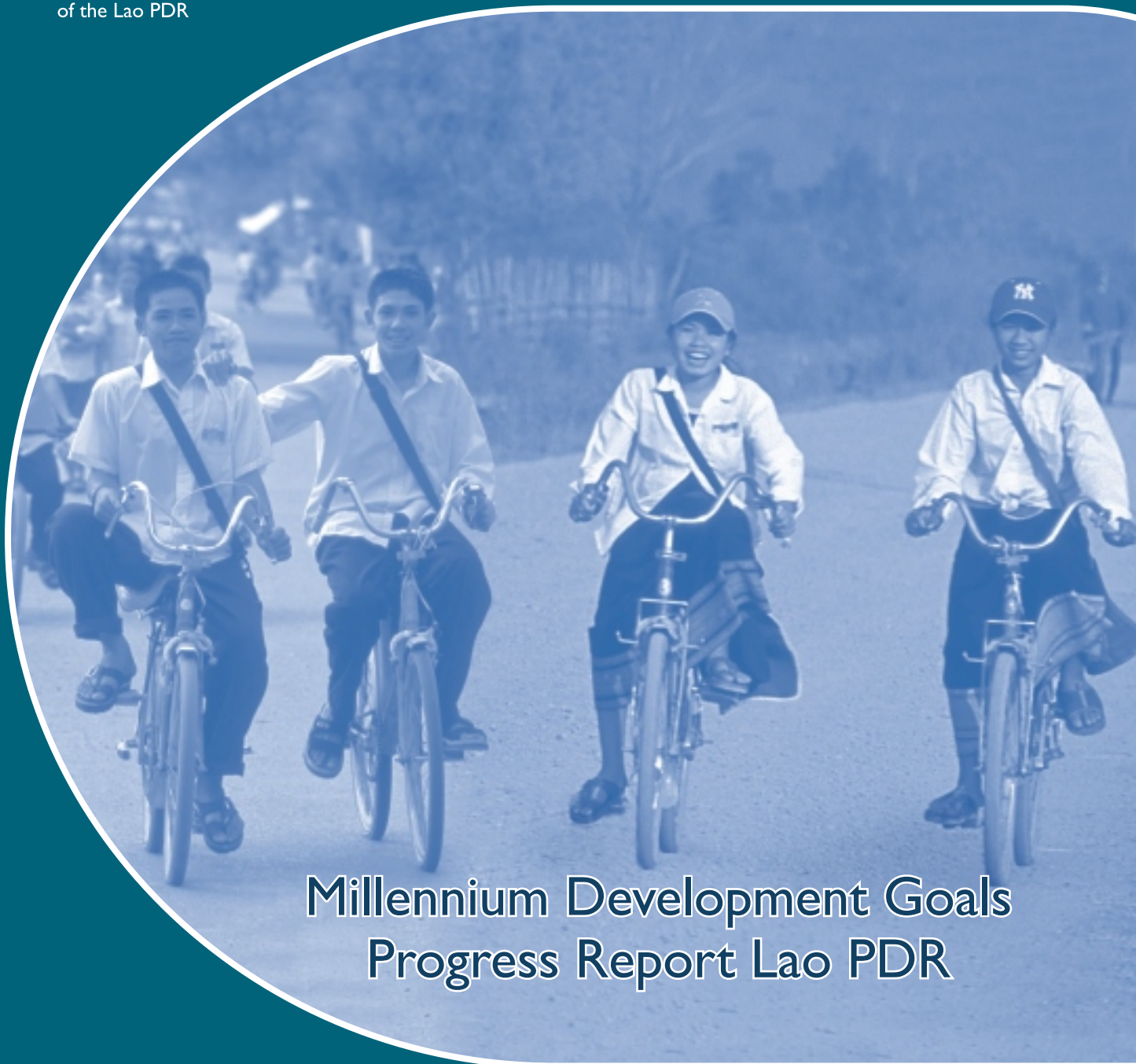




Government
of the Lao PDR



United Nations



Millennium Development Goals Progress Report Lao PDR



Jointly prepared by the Government of the Lao PDR
and the United Nations



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Millennium
Development Goals
Progress Report
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January 2004



In the Lao PDR, rice production is a main staple of the household and national economy

Foreword

The Government of the Lao PDR endorsed the Millennium Declaration at the UN Millennium Summit in September 2000. The Declaration sets out the overall goals and specific targets with a view to reducing human poverty in the world. Towards their attainments, the Government of the Lao PDR is strongly committed to implementing its National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy with an ultimate goal to exit the Least Developed Country Status by 2020.

The First Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Report of the Lao PDR assesses the current situation and progress made in implementing the specific targets of the Millennium Development Goals in the country. Prepared with joint effort by the National Technical Working Group and UN Theme Groups under the guidance of the National Supervisory Committee on the Millennium Development Goals, it identifies trends, supportive environment and conditions, challenges, as well as priorities for development assistance in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals in the Lao PDR.

Despite some significant progress made in many areas as described in the report, the Lao PDR is yet to overcome obstacles and challenges encountered in the course of implementing the MDGs. I am convinced that with continuous support and close collaboration rendered by the international community, the UN agencies, as well as the donor countries, the Lao PDR will undoubtedly reach the Millennium Development Goals and targets by the year 2015 and ultimately graduate from the Least Developed Country Status by 2020.



Somsavat Lengsavad
Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs,
Chairman of the National Supervisory Committee on the
Millennium Development Goals in the Lao PDR

List of Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
CEDAW	Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CPC	Committee for Planning and Cooperation
CPR	Contraceptive Prevalence Rate
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DEB	District Education Bureau
DOTS	Directly Observed Treatment Short Course (TB)
EFA	Education For All
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoL	Government of Lao People's Democratic Republic
HDI	Human Development Index
HIV	Human Immunodeficient Virus
ICPD	International Conference of Population & Development
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IMR	Infant Mortality Rate
LDC	Least Developed Country
LECS	Lao Expenditure and Consumption Survey
LLDC	Landlocked Least Developed Country
LNLS	Lao National Literacy Survey
LOS	Laos Opium Survey
LWU	Lao Women's Union
LYU	Lao Youth Union
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MMR	Maternal Mortality Ratio
NCAW	National Commission for the Advancement of Women
NGPES	National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NHDR	National Human Development Report
NHS	National Health Survey
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Products
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PIP	Public Investment Programme
PM	Prime Minister
PPA	Participatory Poverty Assessment
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
STD/I	Sexually Transmitted Disease / Infection
STEA	Science Technology and Environment Agency
U5MR	Under-five Mortality Rate
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance

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The Mekong river represents a major livelihood, trade, and transportation link for the Lao PDR which is a landlocked and least developed country

Introduction

In September 2000, the world's leaders, including those of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, met at the United Nations and adopted the Millennium Declaration, laying out the key challenges facing humanity. They also set a series of specific objectives for the global community, which, together with those established at previous international conferences during the 1990s, were subsequently presented as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These goals, which include 18 targets and 48 indicators, are to:

1. Eradicate poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

Each country has undertaken to produce periodic reports on progress towards these goals. This is the first report from Lao PDR and is intended not only to monitor the achievement of the goals in Lao PDR but also help raise awareness of the MDGs among political leaders, the media and local communities.

This report is prepared by the National Technical Working Group and MDG/UNDAF theme groups using information and data provided by the Statistical Indicators Theme Group, which is co-chaired by the National Statistics Centre and the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator. Through an extensive participatory process the report was reviewed by, and substantive input provided by, the UN Country Team and National Supervisory Committee on the MDGs. The final report is endorsed by both; Government and the UN Country Team.

Development in the Lao PDR

Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) is a small landlocked country in South East Asia with a population of over 5 million and an annual growth rate of 2.8 percent. It has a land area of 236,800 square kilometres, stretching more than 1,700 km from north to south and between 100 km and 400 km from east to west. The nation has long borders with the Kingdom of Thailand to the west and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam to the east. It also has shorter common borders with the People's Republic of China, the Union of Myanmar to the north, and the Kingdom of Cambodia to the south.

Since the liberation of the country in 1975, the Government of the Lao PDR has aimed to heal the wounds of war and steadily improve people's living conditions. In 1986 the Government adopted the New Economic Mechanism, moving economic activity away from a central command system towards a market-based approach - allowing the private sector an active role in socio-economic development. Since then there has been considerable progress, with steady improvements in key social and economic indicators. Economic growth rates have also been strong. Despite the Asian financial crisis, for

example, the macro-economic climate has remained stable and growth was maintained throughout the 1990s and through the first years of the new millennium. At the same time, the Lao PDR has become an active partner in ASEAN and in other initiatives for regional co-operation.

Over 60 percent of the population are under the age of 25 and the Government's over-arching concern is to pursue national development strategies that will create a positive future for them. One clear success has been in poverty reduction. As a result of efforts by both the Government and the people, between 1993 and 1998, the proportion of people living below the national poverty line fell from 45 to 39 percent. First estimates for 2002-03 suggest that the proportion of people below the poverty line will reduce further.

The Government has also put an increasing emphasis on the social sector. Between 2000-01 and 2002-03, it increased the proportion of the budget spending on education from 7.0 to 11.2 percent, and the proportion going to health from 3.5 to 8.7 percent. It will also increase the proportion going to the social sector in the years ahead. Between 2003-04 and 2005-06 this will increase from 28 to 34 percent, by which time health and education will account for three-quarters of social investment. With the rise of the social sector allocation over this period, the proportion going to the economic sector will decline slightly - from 59.7 to 56 percent. Because of its importance, investment in the economic sector will remain a strategic priority for the government.

Nevertheless the Lao PDR still has some way to go if it is to sustain economic growth and to eradicate poverty. With an annual per capita income of US\$331, the Lao PDR is classified by the UN as a 'least developed country' (LDC). Its economy is essentially agrarian: agriculture accounted for more than 50 percent of GDP in 2002, while services accounted for 26 percent and industry for 24 percent. Agriculture is even

more significant when it comes to employment - approximately 80 percent of people depend for their livelihood on agriculture and the rearing of livestock. The Lao PDR is also classified by UNDP as a 'medium human development' country, ranking it as number 135 out of 175 countries in the 2003 Human Development Index.

The Lao PDR's longer term development goal is to exit the group of LDCs by the year 2020. This will be achieved through:

- Moving consistently towards a market-oriented economy.
- Building up essential infrastructure.
- Improving the well-being of the people by providing greater food security, extending social services and conserving the environment, while enhancing the spiritual and cultural life of the country's multi-ethnic population.

The Party Congress sets the guidelines and defines the way forward. Through its 5-year National Socio-Economic Development Plans, the Government then translates these into specific targets and objectives and for each sector identifies the necessary strategic programmes and priorities. In March 2001, the 7th Party Congress further refined its 2020 vision for the country by specifying poverty reduction targets for 2005, 2010 and 2020 and highlighted priorities for industrialization and modernization.

To achieve these objectives, the Government of the Lao PDR has outlined the following strategic priorities:

- Maintain an appropriate level of economic growth for the medium and long-term taking into consideration demographic trends.
- Enhance human resource development through education, particularly basic education at all levels - including the formal and informal sectors as well as vocational training.
- Develop and modernize social and economic infrastructure in order to facilitate economic development in each region of the country

while accelerating the Lao PDR's regional and international economic integration.

- Facilitate access to electricity for people in all areas and regions of the country in order to foster integrated economic development.
- Promote industries utilizing domestic natural resources, and actively promote small and medium-sized enterprises and the production of handicrafts.
- Develop and promote all economic sectors, particularly the private sector, including foreign direct investment, in order to expand business opportunities - emphasizing the export-oriented sectors in which the Lao PDR has a comparative advantage.
- Enhance market linkages and trade facilitation.
- Strengthen existing legal and regulatory frameworks.
- Create favourable conditions and mechanisms for improving financial institutions and further capital market development.
- Promote economic cooperation with all partners and countries.

This refinement of strategic priorities has helped the Government implement its eight priority programmes: food production; commercial production; shifting cultivation stabilization; infrastructure development; rural development; human resource development; service development, and foreign economic relations. The National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy (NGPES, the localized Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper) was presented at Round Table Meeting 8 in September 2003 and forms the centre of the national development agenda. In October 2003 the Lao National Assembly mandated the Government to implement the NGPES.

The NGPES is a comprehensive framework for growth and development, and has a particular focus on the improvement of the poverty situation in the poorest districts. It has a dual objective: enhancing growth and development,

and reducing poverty. Importantly, the MDGs are well represented and mainstreamed in the NGPES. In most cases the Government's targets are more ambitious than the global MDG targets.

Most of the social indicators used in the Lao PDR are also used in the MDGs. Monitoring progress in implementing the NGPES objectives and programmes will serve ipso facto to help the Government monitor progress in implementing its international commitments. It is in achieving the NGPES that the Government will respond to its international commitments.

Achieving the MDGs in the Lao PDR is going to take significant investment in resources - technical, financial and human - as well as greater coordinated efforts across development partners. For the time being it has not been possible to fully estimate the cost of achieving the NGPES goals. An estimation of the full implementation cost of the NGPES will be made over the next two years. As the NGPES is a comprehensive framework for sustainable growth and poverty eradication, and as the implementation of the NGPES as such will coincide with the achievements of the MDGs, the Government is not undertaking a costing exercise specifically for the MDGs; the MDGs will be reached once the NGPES is implemented.

Key Development Indicators for the Lao PDR

Indicators	Value	Year
Total population	5,525,000	2002
Population density	23.3 people per square kilometre	2002
Population growth rate	2.8% per year	2002
Population living in rural areas	80 %	2000
GDP per capita	USD\$ 331	2002
Human development index	0.48	1999
Infant mortality rate	82 deaths per 1,000 live births	1999
Life expectancy at birth	59 years	2000
Under-five mortality rate	106 deaths per 1,000 live births	1999
Maternal mortality ratio	530 deaths per 100,000 live births	2000
Net enrolment ratio in primary education	83 %	2002
Literacy rate in the age group 15 to 24 years old	79%	2001

Sources: Basic Statistics 2002 Statistical Yearbook, National Statistics Centre; National Human Development Report, UNDP Lao PDR 2001; Lao Reproductive Health Survey, 2000 State Planning Committee; Annual Report 2002, Ministry of Education; Lao National Literacy Survey 2001, Final Report by MinE - NFED, UNESCO, UNICEF (2004 forthcoming).



In the Lao PDR, 80 percent of the population of 5 million live in rural areas; an estimated 39 percent live below the national poverty line

Goal**1****Eradicate Extreme Poverty & Hunger****Target 1****Halve between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people living in poverty**

Indicator	Baseline for Lao PDR	Most Recent Status	2015 Target for Lao PDR
001a: Proportion of people living below the national poverty line	48% (1990)	39% (1997)	24%
002: Poverty gap ratio (incidence times depth of poverty)	12% (1990)	10% (1997)	6%
003: Share of poorest quintile in national consumption	9.3% (1992)	7.8% (1997)	

Data Sources: 001a, 002 & 003: ADB et al. (2002); ADB, Kakwani, N., Sisouphanhthong, B., and Souksavath, P: *Poverty in the Lao PDR, Vientiane.*

Status and Trends

The Lao PDR has a population of approximately 5 million, 80 percent of whom live in the rural areas, mostly dispersed in small villages that are difficult to access. It also comprises more than 49 ethnic groups from four ethno-linguistic families, with distinct cultures and attitudes, as well as widely differing livelihood systems. Few other countries can boast this cultural wealth per capita. This makes it difficult to identify a common poverty measure, but in 2001, the Lao Government declared:

"Poverty means the lack of essential needs of daily life such as the lack of food (inability to provide 2,100 calories per person per day), the lack of clothing, the lack of permanent accommodation, the inability to afford fees for medical treatment in case of illness, the inability to afford payment for education of members of the family and the lack of conditions for convenient communications."
[Prime Minister's Instruction No. 010 of June 25th 2001]

This is the general definition that will be used to measure progress towards the first MDG goal - though with the calorie requirement reduced to 1,983 calories per day, as established in the National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy (NGPES). On this basis, between 1992-93 and 1997-98 the proportion of people living in poverty fell from 45 to 39 percent. As indicated in figure 1.1 the Lao PDR must reduce poverty from the implied level of 48 percent in 1990 to less than 24 percent by 2015.

Figure 1.1

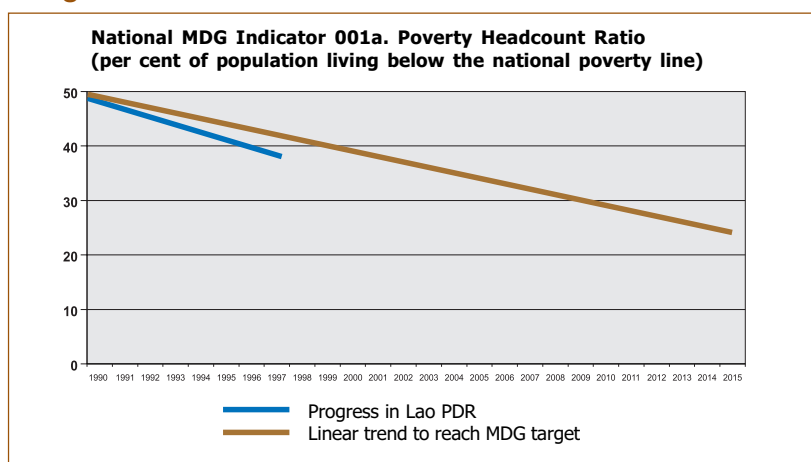
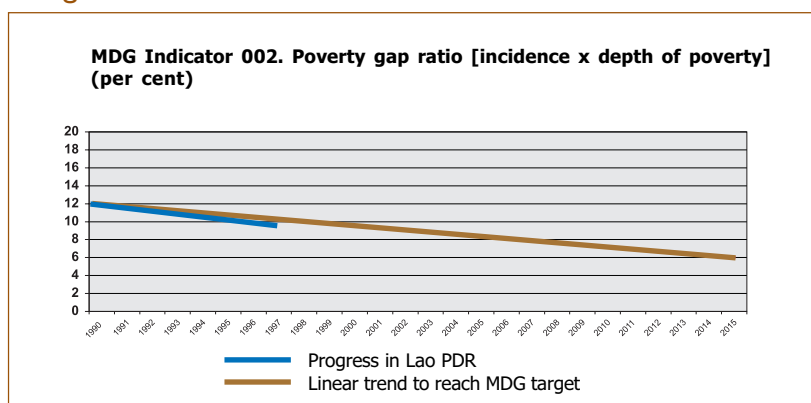


Figure 1.2



Through a range of strategic national initiatives, the Lao PDR is investing in poverty reduction. However there are clearly wide disparities across the country. Poverty is much more widespread in the rural and mountainous areas, where most of the ethnic groups live, than in the urban and

lowland areas. The proportion of people living in poverty in 1997 ranged from 12 percent in Vientiane to 75 percent in Huaphanh Province. Unfortunately there are no data disaggregating poverty by gender at the time of writing this first report.

Another issue of concern is inequality. The conventional measure of inequality is the Gini-index, which varies from 0 (absolute equality) to 1 (one person owns everything). Between 1992-93 and 1997-98, the Lao PDR's Gini-index rose from 0.29 to 0.36. The increase in inequality is also evident from the share of the poorest quintile of the population in real national consumption. Over the same period their share declined from slightly over 9 percent to below 8 percent. This means that although economic growth did reduce poverty, it appears to have benefited the rich more than the poor.

The headcount poverty rate shows how many people are living in poverty, but it does not measure how poor they are: some may be just below the poverty line; others may be far below it. A better sense of this comes from the 'poverty gap ratio'. As Figure 1.2 (Poverty Gap Ratio) indicates, the poverty gap fell slightly between 1992 and 1997, however there are considerable contrasts between the urban and rural areas as well as between different provinces.

The rapid growth rate of the Lao population - 2.8 percent per year - is an important contributing factor to poverty. Recent development initiatives have also contributed to poverty - such as the effort to stabilize pioneering shifting cultivation, limit the number of plots per family, and to relocate villages. Apart from reducing people's traditional capacity to survive, the relocation of villages is reportedly leading to a loss of identity, causing social stress and producing what may be called 'social poverty'.

In a very difficult environment, the Lao PDR has achieved a commendable reduction in poverty. Nevertheless it still faces the challenges of re-

UXO & Poverty

Few countries in the history of warfare have withstood the kind of aerial bombardment that the Lao PDR did from 1964 to 1973. Approximately 580,000 aerial bombing missions dropped over two million tonnes of explosive ordnance. Around 30% of explosives failed to function and as a result have contaminated the Lao PDR with huge quantities of unexploded ordnance (UXO).

A study in 1997 found that 15 of the country's 18 provinces were significantly contaminated and that 25% of villages reported the presence of UXO.

Apart from causing fear, injury, and death, this has also stunted socio-economic development. Digging, clearing undergrowth or making a fire, all become potentially lethal activities. Since the end of the conflict in 1975 there have been close to 12,000 UXO related accidents, including 6,000 deaths. Even now, on average there is a documented UXO accident somewhere in the country every two days. Most alarming, accidents involving children appear to be on the increase.

For an essentially agricultural economy having more than half land mass contaminated by UXO is a crippling development handicap - preventing farmers from using arable land and limiting expansion into new agricultural areas. UXO are also a major impediment to the construction of infrastructure and to economic development projects that Lao PDR urgently needs.

National Human Development Report 2001

create an environment in which individuals, families and villages can fight poverty themselves.

One major contribution to this effort has been the recently approved National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy (NGPES), which represents the Lao PDR's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). This has provided a valuable national framework, combining actions to create an enabling environment for poverty reduction with specific targeted measures in the poorest districts - striking a balance between those actions that are desirable and those that are feasible. With support from the international development community, the NGPES is expected to have a major impact on poverty in the most vulnerable areas.

Another factor contributing to poverty reduction has been the improved quality of data collection. A series of qualitative studies have also provided greater social insight into poverty issues.

Importantly, as part of the Government's efforts towards public sector reform, strategies have been put in place to improve the efficiency of the Government structure and organization. In particular, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has been prioritized as an important tool to enhance productivity and transparency in the government. ICT expansion will help create conditions that will advance the socio-economic development of the Lao PDR by improving the quality of education, aiding the reform of the public sector, encouraging e-commerce in the private sector, and providing Lao industry and government easy access to global knowledge and markets.

ducing inequality and of designing development initiatives that take full account of people's well-being, not just physical but also psychological and social, as well as cultural and traditional dimensions of well-being.

Supportive Environment and Conditions

During the late-1990s the Government set very challenging development targets focusing strongly on poverty and inequality, taking specific measures to reduce them. This has involved not just government investments but also efforts to

Challenges

The poverty reduction trends are promising and the Government has a well-elaborated set of policies. However the Government has put forward an even more ambitious goal, that of eradicating poverty completely. This is a major undertaking and will face a number of challenges. These include:

- Integrating national development priorities - an important focus will be ensuring im-

portant strategies such as the NGPES are incorporated into national planning frameworks.

- Providing sufficient resources - Most rural areas, particularly the regions where opium is cultivated, are remote and inaccessible and lack basic infrastructure. Providing these areas with services will require not just major capital expenditure, but also the allocation of sufficient funds for running costs

and for staffing. The Lao PDR macro-economic framework does envisage an increase in government revenue for this purpose, but it will also need assistance from the international development community.

- Improving government structure - Effective investment in services will require a well functioning structure. Many functions are now being decentralized to the district and provincial levels whose capacity will need to be strengthened if they are to provide high-quality services. This will be difficult given the limited resources and the low level of development of the national workforce as well as the lack of a strong regulatory framework. The NGPES proposes to tackle these issues, but this will require both significant investment and sufficient time.

Opium & Poverty

The Lao PDR is the third largest producer of illicit opium (after Afghanistan and Myanmar). More than 50% of the opium produced is consumed locally. Illicit opium production is linked to consumption, the financing of which leads to a reduction of household assets and poverty. More than two thirds of the poorest districts in the Lao PDR are opium poppy growing.

One of the main reasons that opium is produced is to purchase rice and ensure household food security during rice deficit months. Opium poppy has been traditionally grown in ten northern provinces and one special region, mostly by ethnic minorities. These areas also have significantly higher levels of poverty than in the urban and lowland areas.

The Seventh Party Congress has established the policies and programmes for the elimination of poverty, opium and shifting cultivation as national priorities. According to the latest official Opium Survey from early 2003, approximately 12,000 hectares had been planted with opium poppy. However, the Government reports that only 7,847 hectares were actually harvested due to voluntary eradication in many areas.

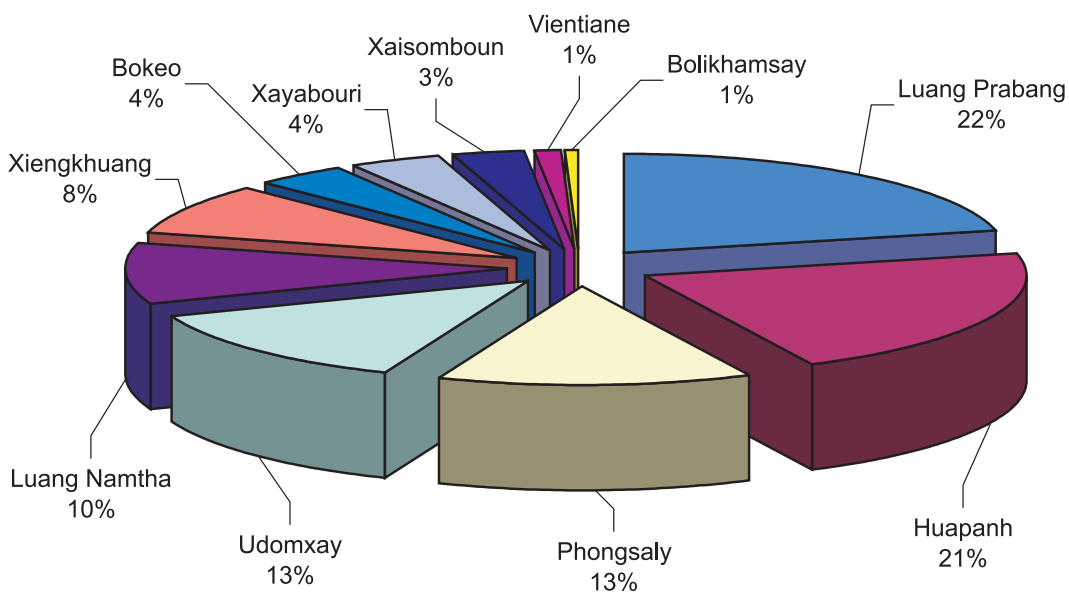
Illicit opium production and trafficking linked to organized crime may lead to situations that undermine national security, stability and peace. These are themselves pre-conditions for the reduction of poverty and ensuring food security.

More than two thirds of the districts classified as poor or poorest are opium-growing areas. In the absence of health services, the northern mountainous ethnic groups use opium as a medicine. In per capita terms the Lao PDR is the world's second largest consumer of opiates.

Opium communities are vulnerable because of poor health and low levels of education, so a sustainable national opium elimination programme would thus depend on a package that includes delivery of education and health services, as well as efforts towards ensuring food security. These combined would assist to alleviate poverty in the Lao PDR and would contribute to the sustainable elimination of illicit opium production.

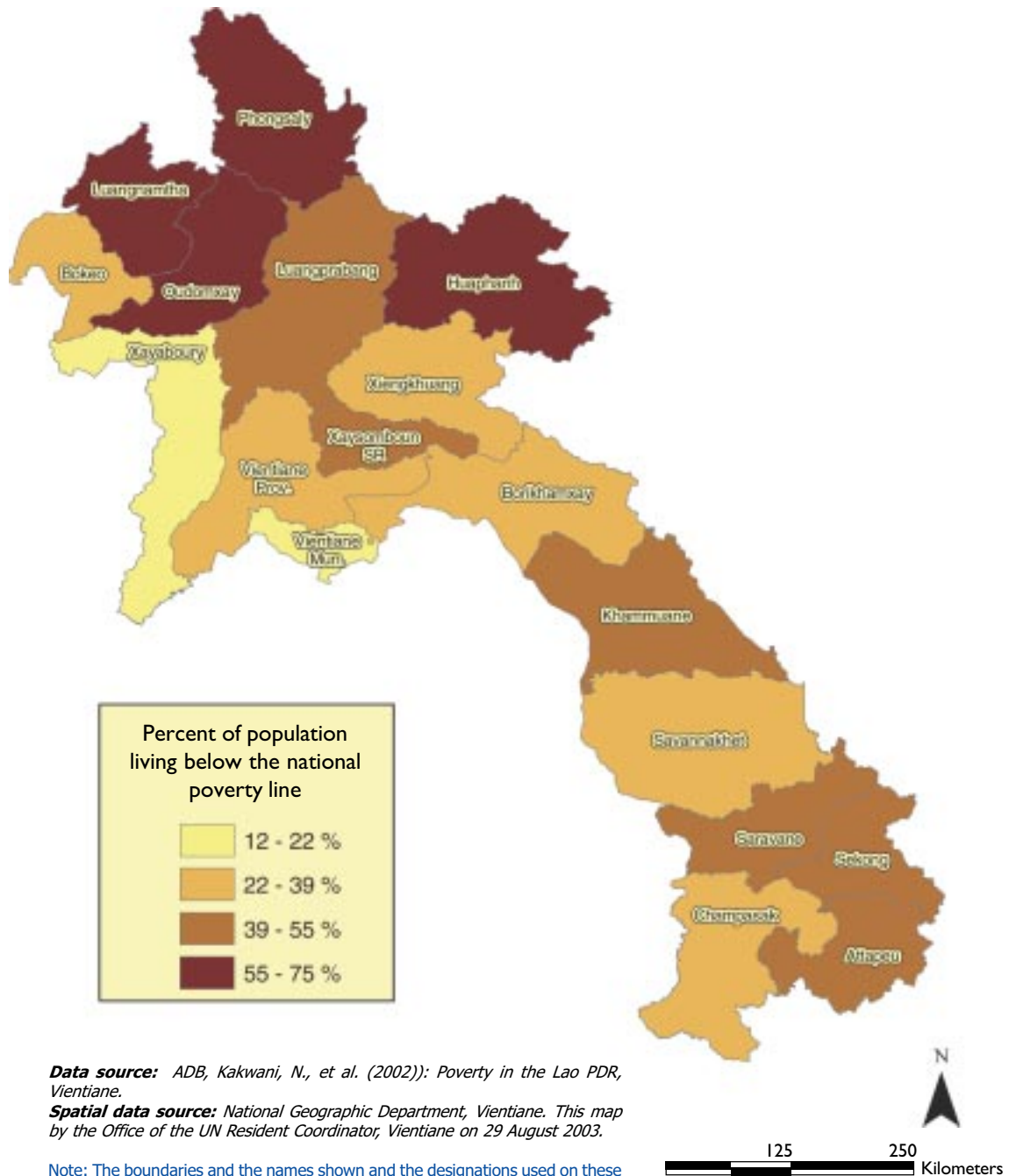
- Reducing inequality - The worrying increase in inequality will need to be reversed. The targeted investments in the poorest districts under the NGPES are important steps in this direction. However the Government will also need sharper policies, based on a better understanding of the dynamics of poverty reduction, including the interlinkages with population growth, high fertility, and gender inequality and women's empowerment. For this purpose several research activities are underway that should be completed by the end of 2004.
- Sustaining the natural environment - In the rural areas poor people depend for their livelihoods almost entirely on natural resources. Over the past decade the Government has adopted progressive and sound environmental policies. However the idea that environmental governance is important for poverty reduction is relatively new and its insights will need to be integrated gradually into sectoral policies.
- Participation - The Government will also want to encourage greater popular participation, allowing for greater voluntary efforts in support of development.
- Application of ICT - In the Lao PDR, ICT is in its early stages of development. The hindrances to wider usage include lack of coordination leading to duplication and inefficiencies, lack of standards in both public and private sectors (eg: related to Lao script, software and hardware for LAN, Wan and Intranet), lack of expertise, lack of telecommunications infrastructure, costs of ICT, and lack of resources in Lao language and ethnic minority languages.

Opium Cultivation by Province 2003



Source: UNODC, Government of Lao PDR (2003): Laos Opium Survey 2003, Vientiane

National MDG Indicator 001a: Poverty Headcount Ratio Lao P.D.R. 1997 (percent of population living below the national poverty line)



Priorities for Development Assistance

- The NGPES establishes the broad priorities for development assistance. Action for the next three years will focus on the four key sectors in poverty alleviation - agriculture, health, education and transport - as well as on a number of cross-cutting areas including gender, governance, drug control, population issues, and environment. This will involve a certain amount of capital investment, particularly in basic infrastructure, along with human resource development, knowledge management and ensuring people's participation.
- It will be important to ensure that follow up planning and coordinating of the NGPES are priorities ensuring poverty reduction initiatives are integrated and sustained.
- The Government has a double focus - creating a favourable environment for poverty reduction and making direct investments in the poorest districts. The international development community needs to support both these activities with financial and technical resources.
- Elimination of opium cultivation will continue to be prioritised by the Government in its efforts to eradicate poverty.
- ICT will increasingly become a priority factor for socio-economic development, particularly in support of all governance activities at the central and local levels. Prioritization will include extension of telecommunications networks, ICT in education, and standardizing systems (scripts, hardware and software) to facilitate capacity building.
- Regular surveys, especially the five-yearly Lao Expenditure and Consumption Survey (LECS), should provide sufficient quantitative information for monitoring progress. The NGPES also envisages specific exercises to monitor the impact of poverty alleviation actions in the poorest districts. At the same time, however, the Lao PDR will also need better qualitative information. This will require more research, especially in the rural areas - not just profiling the poor and investigating the causes of poverty but also discovering how local inhabitants perceive poverty and the best ways to tackle it. In addition the research should also ask about their needs for support from the government and the international community.

Tracking Progress

ELEMENTS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION	ASSESSMENT		
Data collection capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Quality of recent survey information	Strong	Fair	Weak
Statistical tracking capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Statistical analysis capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanism	Strong	Fair	Weak
Monitoring and evaluation mechanism	Strong	Fair	Weak



Target 2

Halve, between 1990 and 2015 the proportion of people who suffer from hunger

Indicator	Baseline for Lao PDR	Most Recent Status	2015 Target for Lao PDR
004: Prevalence of under-weight in children under five years of age	40% (1990)	40% (2000)	20%
005: Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption	31% (1990)	29% (1998)	16%

Data Sources: 004: FAO (1995): LNAS 1994 and MinH (2001) see also FAO (2003) NCP-Laos: NHS 2000; FAO, Government of the Lao PDR (1995): *Diagnosis of the Nutrition Situation and Food Consumption in Lao PDR - Final Report - and Ministry of Health, State Planning Committee (2001): Health Status of the People in Lao PDR. Report on the National Health Survey*, FAO (2003): *Nutrition Country Profiles - Laos, Rome*.
005: FAO (1995): SOFI 2000; FAO (2000): *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2000, Rome*.

Status and Trends

The second target under the poverty goal is concerned specifically with hunger, using indicators related to child malnutrition and dietary energy consumption. As is evident from Figures 1.3 and 1.4, significant efforts are required in order for the Lao PDR to meet this target, using either indicator.

Some valuable insights into people's perception of poverty and its causes emerged in 2000 from the Participatory Poverty Assessment. In the eyes of farmers in the Lao PDR, rice sufficiency is perceived as an indicator of poverty. The production of rice at the household level in the more remote upland rural areas is not always sufficient to cover annual needs. People in these poorer areas might experience rice deficiencies for up to eight or nine months of the year - however this figure varies on an annual basis according to seasonal weather patterns. They do not generally go hungry, however, because they can usually make up for this with non-timber forest products (NTFPs). But this option is narrowing. Forest resources have come under increasing stress as a result of population increases, a decrease in the quality of forests, and increasing sales of NTFPs to other areas. As a result, rural people are now in a more precarious situation.

The extent of child malnutrition is especially worrying, with little progress since 1990. Despite the efforts of the Government and the international development community, around 40 percent of children under-five are underweight. Indeed the true figure may be even higher, since nutrition surveys tend to under-sample the most remote rural areas.



Traditional food preparation in a Lao village. Malnutrition remains a big obstacle to overcoming poverty, with 40 percent of children under five being underweight

Figure I.3

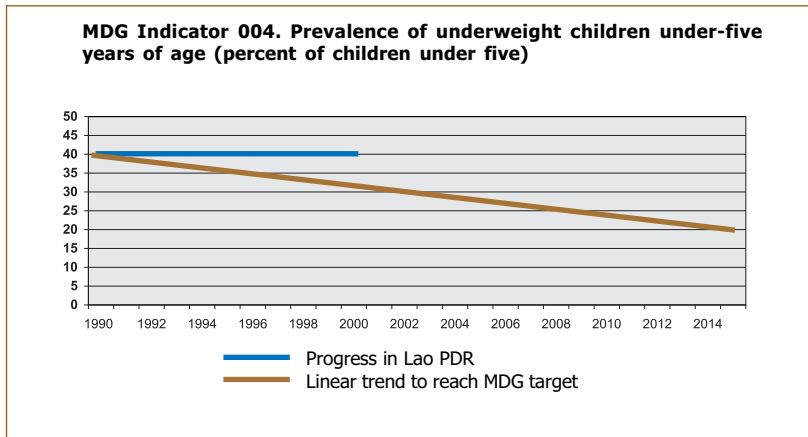
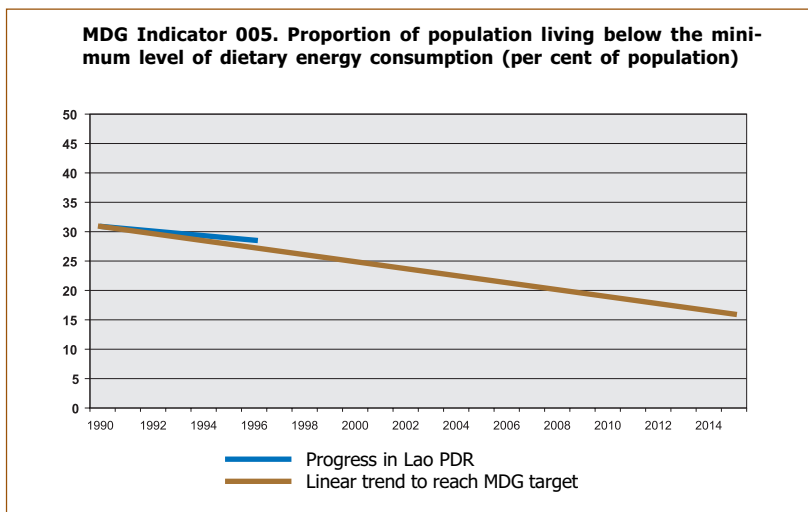


Figure I.4



In the case of dietary energy consumption there is little difference between the proportion of the population recorded as living below the minimum levels in 1990 and 1998, with the figure dropping only from 31 to 29 percent. On this trend, the target for 2015 would be missed.

Supportive Environment and Conditions

The main efforts to increase food-security in the Lao PDR have been in the agricultural sector - introducing improved varieties of rice and increasing the productivity of the paddy fields. There have also been moves to diversify agricultural production and improve marketing, allowing farmers in certain regions to specialize in certain crops and exploit their comparative advantages. More recently, there have also been targeted interventions in food-deficit areas through school-feeding programmes.

Lao diets are generally inadequate in quantity and quality, usually consisting of glutinous rice and a small proportion of vegetables and fish. People in the rural areas, also eat quite a diverse range of other foods, including forest foods. In many cases, however, the nutrient composition of these has yet to be scientifically documented, or even identified. For the youngest children, however, it is clear that one of the main reasons for malnutrition, is that they are usually weaned with rice-based foods that are insufficiently dense in energy and nutrients.

It should be emphasized that in the Lao PDR malnutrition is less a matter of household food insecurity and more a reflection of overall poverty and lack of education. Nutrition tends to improve rapidly when certain thresholds in community well-being have been achieved and the Lao PDR has yet to reach these thresholds. School feeding programmes will help to some extent but long-term progress in levels of nutrition will require improvements in socio-economic development generally - not just boosting agricultural productivity and having a more diverse range of



foods in the markets but also increasing incomes and improving general levels of health and education so people can make better use of what is available.

Challenges

To reach the targets for 2015 the Lao PDR will face a number of challenges:

- Calorific intake - Increasing food intake will largely require higher incomes.
- Dietary practices - In addition to achieving more diverse diets, there will also have to be more education to encourage mothers to feed colostrum to newborn babies and to educate women (especially pregnant and post-partum women) about potentially harmful food taboos.
- Dispersed population - It is difficult to carry out targeted programmes when the population is so thinly spread in rural areas that have only rudimentary infrastructure and that experience a long rainy season. Ethnic diversity also demands specific skills in language and cultural communication.

Priorities for Development Assistance

There should be two main areas of support:

- Targeted support programmes - Chiefly in remote rural areas where malnutrition and dietary insufficiencies are high.
- Rural development - This will require a long-term integrated approach with complex programmes that improve health and education services, while boosting agricultural productivity and improving systems of marketing and access to markets and services.

In addition to collecting the conventional data on nutrition at national and household levels, there should also be efforts to learn more about traditional patterns of dietary intake. People in the Lao PDR eat many products whose nutritional composition is only just beginning to be analysed - making it difficult to design effective programmes to improve the situation. They have also learned to survive in the midst of extreme financial poverty using indigenous resources and local knowledge.

Tracking Progress

ELEMENTS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION	ASSESSMENT		
Data collection capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Quality of recent survey information	Strong	Fair	Weak
Statistical tracking capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Statistical analysis capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanism	Strong	Fair	Weak
Monitoring and evaluation mechanism	Strong	Fair	Weak



Providing schools in rural and remote areas will be a critical factor in the Lao PDR achieving MDG 2

Goal**2****Achieve Universal
Primary Education****Target 3**

Ensure that by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling

Indicator	Baseline for Lao PDR	Most Recent Status	2015 Target for Lao PDR
006: Net enrolment in primary school	58% (1991)	83% (2002)	98%
007: Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5	48% (1991)	62% (2001)	95%
008: Literacy rate in the age group 15-24 years	79% (2001)	79% (2001)	99%

Data Sources: 006 & 007: 1991-1997: MinE (2000): EFA 2000 and 1998-2002: MinE (2002/3): Annual Reports; Ministry of Education (2000): Education for All - The Year 2000 Assessment - Final Country Report, Lao PDR, Vientiane and Ministry of Education (2002/3): Annual Reports, Vientiane.
008: MinE (2004): LNS 2001, Ministry of Education - NFED, UNESCO, UNICEF (2004): Lao National Literacy Survey 2001, Final Report, Vientiane.

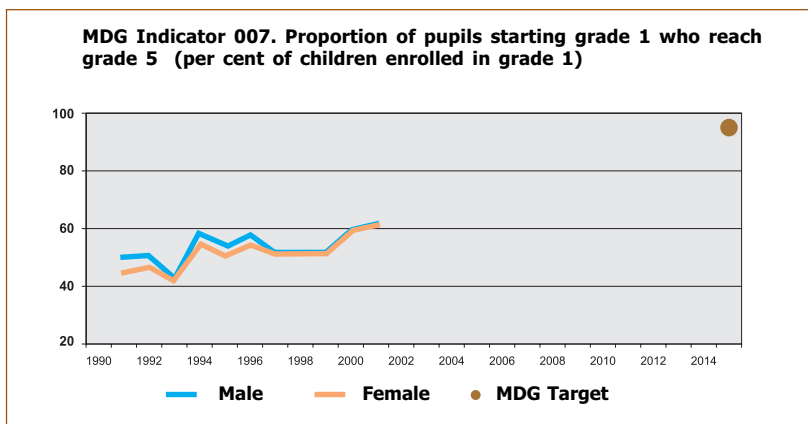
Status and Trends

The Lao PDR appears to have made steady progress in primary education. Between 1991 and 2001 the net enrolment ratio increased from 58 to over 80 percent. Nevertheless this still means that 135,000 children are being deprived of their right to education. This overall improvement also disguises wide disparities between girls and boys as well as between provinces. Thus while the rates are over 95 percent in both Vientiane municipality and Vientiane province, in Phongsaly and Attapeu provinces, they are as low as 56 percent. The provinces with the lowest ratios tend to have higher proportions of rural, poor and ethnic minority children.

The net enrolment ratio grew on average by two percentage points annually between 1991 and 2001, but in fact over the final five years of that period it grew only by one percentage point

annually. If this latter trend continues, the MDG target of universal primary education by 2015 is unlikely to be achieved. A further problem is that although higher numbers of children are enrolling, many have to repeat grades.

Figure 2.1



There has also been some progress in retention. Between 1991 and 2001, the proportion of pupils starting grade one who eventually reached grade five increased from 48 to 62 percent - an average rate of improvement of 1.4 percentage points per year. However, as figure 2.1 shows, the improvement has been very uneven: slower over the period 1996-99 and accelerating during the final two years.

The Lao National Literacy Survey (LNLS) provides literacy rates for 2001. For the age group 15 to 24 declared literacy rates are 79 percent including 83 percent for males and 75 percent for females. Overestimation of literacy is extremely high though (23 to 24 percentage points). Results from the LNLS indicate that only 51.2 percent of the adult population (age 15 - 24) may be considered literate at a basic level when tested, instead of 68 to 70 percent as from other sources. This includes about 60 percent of males and 45 percent of females - disclosing a considerable gender gap. The LNLS found out that primary education does not guarantee the acquisition of functional literacy. Similarly, only 38 percent of non-formal education (NFE) level III completers attain basic literacy. This finding

raises serious concern about the achievements of primary education.

Supportive Environment and Conditions

The Government of the Lao PDR has consistently placed special emphasis on the education sector. The Constitution and supporting laws and decrees clearly stipulate that all Lao citizens, regardless of race, sex, ethnicity, or social or economic status, have the right to education. The Prime Minister's Decree of 1996 also said that primary education should be provided to all citizens free of charge.

The MDG target has thus been incorporated in the Government's major documents on education - the Strategic Vision up to the Year 2020 and the Education Strategic Planning: 20 years, 10 years and 5 years. These emphasize the universalization of primary education and the continued expansion of lower secondary education, as well as the eradication of illiteracy.

The NGPES also identifies education as a medium-term priority. In addition, the Dakar Framework for Action adopted by the World Education Forum has two goals (2 and 4) that are identical to MDG goal 2. The Education for All Action Plan (EFA) under preparation is expected to outline the road maps towards the MDG target.

The Government's deconcentration initiative, started in 2000, should also help accelerate progress towards the goal. While the Ministry of Education takes overall responsibility for both formal and non-formal education at all levels, both the provincial education services and the district education bureaux now share a wide range of management responsibilities, especially at primary and secondary levels. Individual communities are also becoming involved in school management. Over time this should make the education system more relevant and responsive to local needs, improving both access and quality, especially in disadvantaged areas.

Implementation of these education policies will, however, require substantial investment. The education sector has received 8-10 percent of the consolidated Government budget, but the Government hopes to increase this to 18 percent by the year 2015.

Challenges

Experiences in other countries show that the last 15-20 percent of the population is always the hardest to reach. Data used in this report are national averages, which hide strong disparities between gender, ethnic minorities, poor and less poor, rural and remote areas. In order to reach these most disadvantaged out-of-school children, the Government of the Lao PDR faces a number of challenges and obstacles:

- A lack of resources - an insufficient allocation of resources to primary education. Around 70 percent of all investment expenditure in the education sector is externally financed. Also there is an acute imbalance between investment expenditure and recurrent expenditure; the latter accounts for only 50-60 percent of the total.
- A shortage of schools - The Lao PDR does not have enough primary schools and only 35 percent of existing schools offer the full cycle of grades 1-5. All the rest are incomplete schools, offering only grades 1-2 or grades 1-3. As a result, many children, especially girls, fail to complete their basic education.
- Poor quality of education - Over one-quarter of primary school teachers lack formal training, while nearly 8 percent have not even completed primary school. The salaries of teachers (and civil servants in general) are low, there is an acute shortage of teaching and learning materials, and the curriculum is often inappropriate to children's needs. When the quality of teaching is low and parents do not recognize the importance of education they may not see the benefit of sending children to school.

- Cost of schooling - Although parents do not have to pay fees they do have to find money for uniforms, books and supplies. Even more important for poor families is the opportunity cost of children's time. Parents often leave child-rearing responsibilities and household chores to elder siblings, usually girls, making it difficult for them to attend school.
- Language - Education is in the Lao language. This can be very difficult for children in non-Lao speaking ethnic minority groups especially those from opium-addicted families who often have to repeat the same grades, drop out of school, or may even be dissuaded from enrolling.
- Early childhood development - Children whose physical and psychosocial development has been inadequate can also find it difficult to adjust to school. And in some cases, children are prevented from attending school by hunger.
- Coordination and Administration - conflicting lines of decision and coordination at Provincial Education Service and District Education Bureau, and poor staff capacity especially at District Education Bureau (DEB) level, prevent them from accomplishing the tasks devolved to them under the deconcentration process.

Achieving universal primary education will therefore require a balanced sector development and increased resource allocation for education to cover the expansion of educational opportunities for poor, rural, female and ethnic minority children - through innovative and strategic interventions that tackle both school, as well as family and community constraints.



Priorities for Development Assistance

- Policy-based assistance - This should guarantee medium-term capital and recurrent expenditure for a balanced sector development strategy.
- Education management - In the context of the Government's deconcentration policy this needs to be strengthened at all levels, while building capacities for school management at the DEB and school level and community involvement.
- Disadvantaged groups - Special attention should be paid to the most vulnerable, including opium addicted groups, so they have opportunities for alternative livelihoods. This should also include basic education programmes for all out-of-school children and youth, including children with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and especially females.
- Improving quality - Assistance should aim for all primary schools to offer a complete course of primary education, ensuring minimum learning conditions, including sufficient textbooks and other materials, along with adequate buildings, furniture and water and sanitation. Teachers' skills will also need to be upgraded through better training and systematic teacher support initiatives.
- Early Childhood Development - Programmes of early childhood care and development should be expanded.
- Secondary education - Strategies need to be put in place to develop secondary education opportunities in a balanced way that ensures increased access for girls and other disadvantaged population groups.
- Life skills - Ensuring that subjects such as population, reproductive health and family planning, HIV/AIDS and life skills are included in the national curriculum.

Tracking Progress

ELEMENTS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION	ASSESSMENT		
Data collection capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Quality of recent survey information	Strong	Fair	Weak
Statistical tracking capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Statistical analysis capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanism	Strong	Fair	Weak
Monitoring and evaluation mechanism	Strong	Fair	Weak



More than 42 percent of the Lao population are young people under the age of 15. Access to education poses a big challenge to meet the demands of the MDGs



Although the Lao PDR has one of the highest representation of women in parliament in the region, Lao women and girls experience a general lower status of living than men

Goal

3

Promote Gender Equality
& Empowerment of
Women

Target 4

Eliminate gender disparity in primary & secondary education, preferably by 2005, & to all levels of education no later than 2015

Indicator	Baseline for Lao PDR	Most Recent Status	2015 Target for Lao PDR
009: Ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary, and tertiary education (number of girls per 100 boys enrolled)	1991: Primary: 77 Lower Secondary: 66 Upper Secondary: 56 Tertiary: 49	2002: Primary: 84 Lower Secondary: 74 Upper Secondary: 68 Tertiary: 58	100%
010: Ratio of literate women to men, 15-24 years old	81 (1995)	90 (2001)	100%
011: Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector	38% (1995)	38% (1995)	
012: Proportion of seats held by women in the national parliament	6.3% (1990)	23% (2003)	

Data Sources: 009: MinE (2002/3): Annual Reports; [Ministry of Education (2002/3): Annual Reports, Vientiane. 010: CPC (1995): Census '95 and MinE (2004): LNL5 2001; Committee for Planning and Cooperation, National Statistical Center (1995): Results from the Population Census 1995, Vientiane; and Ministry of Education - NFED, UNESCO, UNICEF (2004): Lao National Literacy Survey 2001, Final Report, Vientiane. 011: CPC (1995): Census '95; Committee for Planning and Cooperation, National Statistical Center (1995): Results from the Population Census 1995, Vientiane. 012: NA (2002); Lao PDR National Assembly (2002): Number of Women in the National Assembly, Vientiane.

Note: 2015 targets for indicators 011 and 012 are being considered by the Government of the Lao PDR and will form the basis of further consultation and discussion.

Status and Trends

The Lao PDR still has many gender disparities. Women and girls continue to be disadvantaged in terms of access to educational opportunities. Fewer girls than boys are enrolled in school, and the proportion falls steadily as the level of education increases. Thus the number of girls enrolled per 100 boys is 84 at primary level, 74 at lower secondary, 68 at upper secondary, and 58 at tertiary level.

Gender disparities have certainly been closing at all levels over the past 10 years - at an average rate of 0.6 to 1.0 percentage points per year - but this rate would still not be sufficient to achieve gender parity at any level by 2015. On the other hand, the girls who do attend school are more likely to stay there than boys. The key therefore

is to boost girls' enrolment in primary school and ensure that they transfer to secondary school. This would also eventually improve their access to post-secondary non-tertiary education, though achieving gender parity at this level by 2015 seems unlikely.

The gender gaps in schooling clearly result in gender gaps in literacy. For the age group 15-24, the ratio of literate women to men is only 90. Here there does seem to have been an improvement. Accelerating equality in literacy will require higher levels of enrolment, supplemented by non-formal education for children who are out of school.

Low educational levels also affect women's health. Girls who leave school early also tend to marry at an early age and immediately start childbearing with corresponding risks to their health, especially since maternity care is often poor. These women also tend to have larger families in which standards of nutrition are lower. They have little decision-making power to decide when and how many children to have within the families.

In addition, poorly educated women also have fewer opportunities for social, economic and political participation.

The Lao PDR remains primarily a rural subsistence economy. Urban areas are developing only slowly and women have few opportunities for waged employment. In 1995 only 38 percent of those in waged employment in the non-agricultural sectors were women and the proportion is not thought to have changed much since then.

Lao cultural values often put an emphasis on women as nurturers, biasing them towards the domestic and household sphere. This can create attitudes where it is acceptable and even 'natural' for men to migrate while women stay at home.

Human trafficking is an emerging issue in the Lao PDR. Women, men and children, are

Figure 3.1

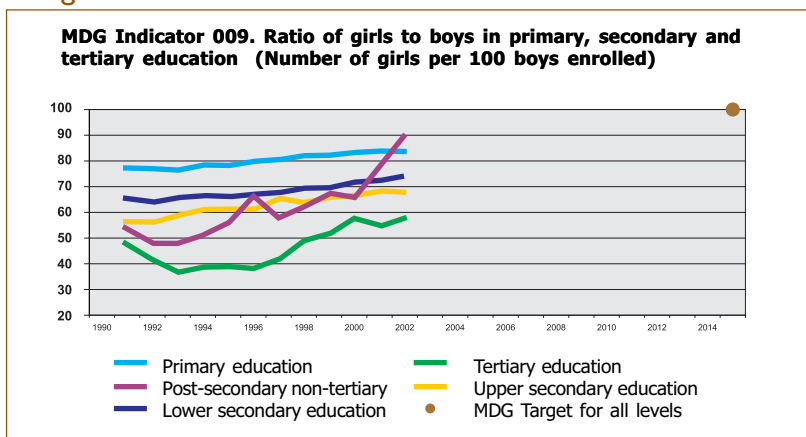


Figure 3.2

Percentage of women in job types

Type of work	Total	Female	Male	% Women
Legislators/Senior officials	9,454	581	8,873	6.2%
Professionals	26,861	8,983	17,878	33%
Technical & Associate professors	62,568	24,051	38,517	38%
Clerks	5,249	2,871	2,378	55%
Service Workers	85,713	48,814	36,899	57%
Operators & Assembly Workers	21,195	766	20,429	3.6%

Data Source: 1995 National Census

vulnerable to trafficking into neighbouring countries particularly for exploitative work. The issue is further compounded when women and girls return to their villages, where they may face social stigmas that may prevent them from accessing a range of services and opportunities.

Opium also creates serious problems for women, particularly those in ethnic minorities in the northern mountainous areas. As well as bearing a heavy load in opium production they also suffer in the household, since addiction, primarily of men, reduces household assets.

In terms of political representation of women, the Lao PDR compares favourably with other countries in the region. Of the 109-member

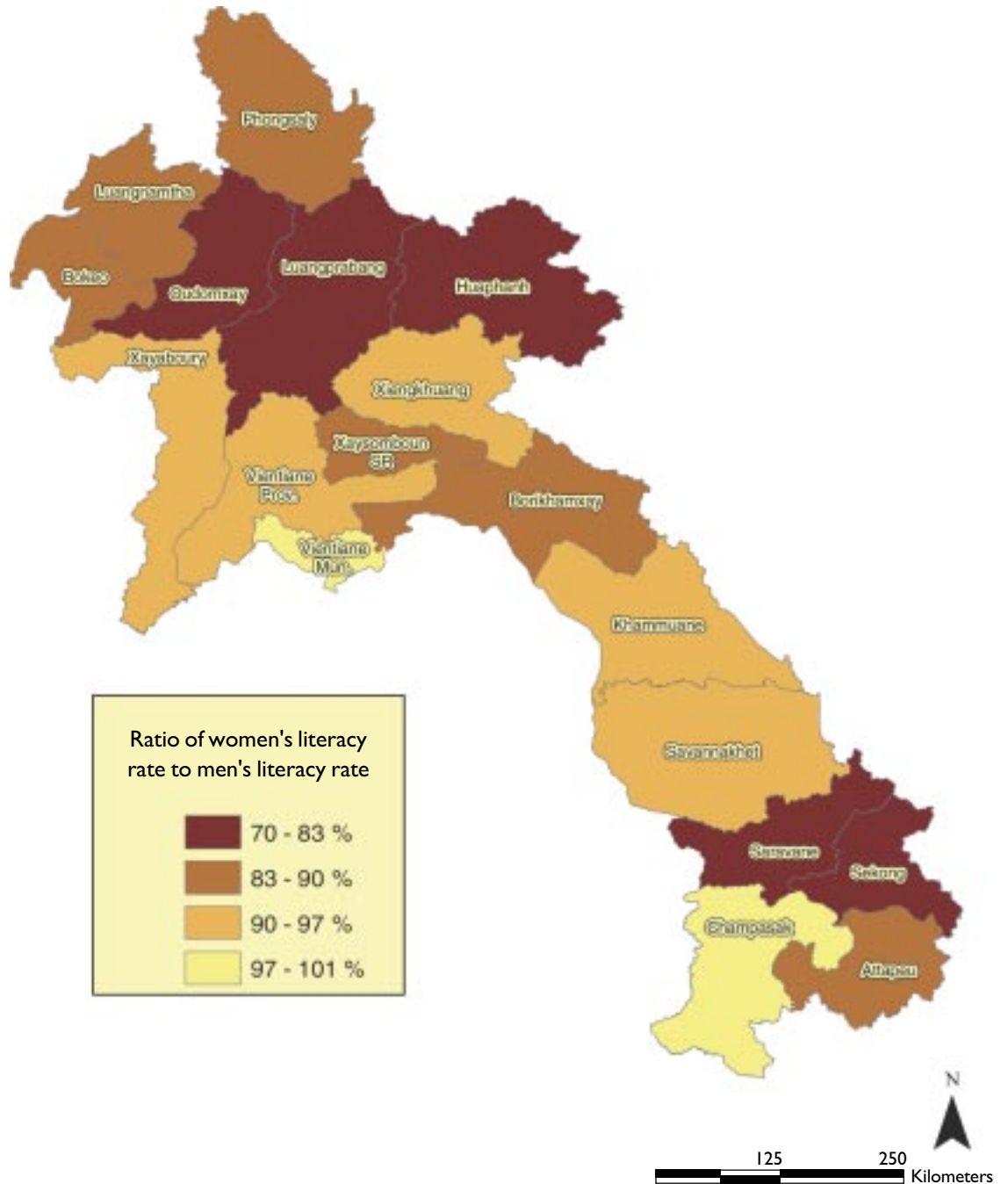
legislature, 23 percent are women - a proportion that tripled between 1995 and 2003, and should increase further as women get more educational opportunities. In September 2002 these women formed a Women's Parliamentary Caucus through which to identify issues of concern for subsequent consideration by the National Assembly.

To promote greater gender equality in parliament over the medium to long-term the National Assembly is developing a gender mainstreaming strategy and action plan that encompasses the National Assembly, the Women's Parliamentary Caucus and the Secretariat, and is scheduled for consideration by the Standing Committee in early 2004.



Providing an enabling environment for women and girls, particularly ethnic groups and communities in remote areas, remains a challenge to achieving MDG 3

MDG Indicator 010. Ratio of literate women to men, 15 to 24 years old
(ratio of women's literacy rate to men's literacy rate), Lao P.D.R. 2001



Data source: MinE-NFED, UNESCO, UNICEF (2002): Lao National Literacy Survey 2001, Final Report Vientiane).

Spatial data source: National Geographic Department, Vientiane.

This map by the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator, Vientiane on 23 September 2003.

Note: The boundaries and the names shown and the designations used on the map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations

Supportive Environment and Conditions

The Constitution of the Lao PDR (Article 22) says that all Lao citizens are equal before the law, irrespective of their sex. The Education Law (Chapter I, Article 3) also stipulates that all Lao citizens shall have the right to education.

The Lao PDR ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1981 as well as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1991 and has been a signatory to important international conferences such as the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing 1995) and the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD, Cairo, 1994). The Plan of Action of the ICPD is reflected in the National Population and Development Policy (1999), which specifically refers to the improvement of the status of women and children through increased girls' education.

Recently the government established the National Commission for the Advancement of Women (NCAW) chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs. The NCAW is an institution and mechanism for facilitating and monitoring gender equality and women's empowerment process through gender mainstreaming/gender planning at all levels. Furthermore, the Lao Women's Union, one of four mass organizations of the Lao Government has established national and provincial gender centres (GRID Centres: Gender Resource and Information for Development Centres) to provide information, resources, training and capacity building on gender issues.

The NGPES also takes account of gender issues. One of its major objectives is to increase equitable access and it highlights the importance of education for both girls and boys. In addition, the Education for All Action Plan under preparation will have specific strategies and actions for the achievement of EFA Goal 5 in the

Dakar Framework for Action, which is virtually identical to the MDG target 3. There are also specific pro-girl strategies and activities incorporated into a number of development projects, including the Basic Education (Girls) Project, Lao-Australia Basic Education Project, and the Education Quality Improvement Project II (EQIP II) and the Education Development Project II (EDP II).

The opportunities for women's waged employment in the non-agricultural sector should be improved by access to credit and training in small enterprise development, though this is more likely to increase women's employment in the informal than in the formal sector. On the other hand, if the Lao PDR is successful in negotiating trade agreements some women could have more opportunities for employment in sectors such as food processing, garments and textiles, wood products and handicrafts.

With regard to women in parliament, Lao Women's Union provides training to candidates to help them develop the necessary skills for election.

Challenges

There are a number of factors that affect girls' access to schooling:

- Distance - Many children have to walk long distances to primary school, this is particularly crucial for girls, as parents worry about the safety and security of their daughters, who may drop out of school if it is too far away.
- Facilities - The lack of separate latrines for boys and girls also discourages girls who worry about the presence of others, notably boys and male teachers, particularly at secondary and higher levels of education.
- Cost - When families are poor, girls tend to be the first to be pulled out of school. Sometimes this is because parents believe that investment in boys' education will bring higher returns in the form of better

employment. In other cases it is because there are higher opportunity costs in the education of girls who may be needed to do household chores and look after younger siblings or work outside the household on a farm or in a business. Some parents, especially those in some ethnic minority groups, also see little advantage in sending their daughters to school, since after they marry this investment will only benefit their husbands' families.

- Quality - Parents may also consider that what children learn at school will have little relevance to their daily lives. The Government does allow 20 percent of the primary curriculum to be developed locally to take into account local conditions, but few areas take advantage of this. In any case, given the lack of trained teachers the quality of teaching of all subjects, however relevant to girls, is often poor.
- Lack of women teachers - Except for the pre-primary level, male teachers outnumber female teachers, especially among ethnic minority groups.

There is no magic formula for improving girls' education. However, thorough and practical studies on the problems faced by girls, especially those in ethnic minorities should help guide effective policies and strategies.

The challenges to improving wage employment for women in the non-agricultural sector include:

- Wages - Women may get more security working in the civil service, but they will earn much less than they would in the informal economy, from small businesses and trading.
- Job opportunities - Trade agreements and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) may offer more jobs to women in the formal sector particularly in the garment and textiles industries. However the quality of this employment, with regard to job security, working conditions, skills development and incomes, is uncertain.

The challenges to improving the political representation of women include:

- Tradition and knowledge - Women tend to be less vocal during parliamentary sessions perhaps reflecting their traditional roles in communities, as well as the gaps in skills and knowledge.
- Imbalances in government posts - In line ministries and local authorities (provincial and district levels) men occupy most of the senior roles. The same situation is observed in the National Assembly where men occupy the majority of positions within the economics, law and security committees. Women take social and cultural affairs portfolios. "Gender" is generally viewed as being the domain of women, requiring little input or commitment from men.

Priorities for Development Assistance

- Awareness - Raising awareness among parents, local leaders and communities of the importance and benefits of girls' education and promoting gender responsive education management and position.
- Early Childhood Development - Expanding early childhood care and development programmes, particularly in community development, to reduce the child-rearing burden for older girls.
- Girl-friendly schools - Developing a girl-friendly school environment with more female teachers, along with mechanisms for better counting and tracking of girls' school attendance.
- Skills - Investment in women's skills development including training in managerial roles, post-secondary and tertiary education (both formal and non-formal sectors), nutrition, sexual and reproductive health and rights, family economics, and environmental sanitation.

- Participation - Encouraging more participatory assessment processes to enable women to be equally represented in decision-making at all levels.
- Economic policy - Ensuring more systematic consideration of gender issues in economic policy development and in institutional mechanisms, to address gender issues.
- Parliament - Foster the development of skills and knowledge amongst women members

of the National Assembly, along with international linkages with other women parliamentarians. There should also be gender-awareness initiatives for male members and staff, along with the skills needed by both men and women for gender analyses of legislation and for gender budgeting.

Tracking Progress

ELEMENTS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION	ASSESSMENT		
Data collection capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Quality of recent survey information	Strong	Fair	Weak
Statistical tracking capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Statistical analysis capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanism	Strong	Fair	Weak
Monitoring and evaluation mechanism	Strong	Fair	Weak





Although the Lao PDR has shown significant progress in reducing child mortality, the rate is still high compared to neighbouring countries

Goal**4****Reduce Child Mortality****Target 5****Reduce by two-thirds the under-five mortality rate**

Indicator	Baseline for Lao PDR	Most Recent Status	2015 Target for Lao PDR
013: Under-five mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 live births)	170 (1990)	106 (1999)	55 deaths per 1,000 live births
014: Infant mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 live births)	134 (1990)	82 (1999)	45 deaths per 1,000 live births
015: Proportion of one-year old children immunized against measles (per cent of 12-23 months old children surveyed)	62% (1996)	42% (2000)	90 %

Data Sources: 013: NSC (1996): FBSS 1994 and SPC (2001): RHS 2000; [National Statistical Center, Lao Woman Training Center, UNFPA (1996): Report on the Fertility and Birth Spacing Survey in Lao PDR and State Planning Committee, National Statistical Center, UNFPA (2001): Lao Reproductive Health Survey 2000, Vientiane.

014: 1996: SK (1006) FAIM and NSC (1996): FBSS 1994 and SPC (2001): RHS 2000; Sawady Kingkeo (1996): Factors affecting Infant Mortality in Lao PDR, Mahidol University and National Statistical Center, Lao Woman Training Center, UNFPA (1996): Report on the Fertility and Birth Spacing Survey in Lao PDR and State Planning Committee, National Statistical Center, UNFPA (2001): Lao Reproductive Health Survey 2000, Vientiane.

015: SPC (1997): MICS I '96 and SPC (2001): MICS II '00; State Planning Committee, National Statistical Center, UNICEF (1997): Report on Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, Vientiane and State Planning Committee National Statistical Center, Ministry of Health, National Institute of Public Health (2001): Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2000, Vientiane.

Status and Trends

Child mortality indicators in the Lao PDR, though gradually improving, are still among the poorest in the region. Between 1990 and 2000, infant mortality fell from 134 to 82 per thousand live births and under-five mortality fell from 170 to 106 per thousand live births. The rates are, however, much higher in rural than urban areas and in the more remote provinces. Most of these children are dying from communicable diseases, primarily malaria, acute respiratory infections, diarrhoea, and epidemics such as dengue fever, measles or meningitis.

The trends in the last 10 years might suggest that the Lao PDR is on track for achieving the child mortality target. However success will be severely hampered by the low coverage of the expanded programme on immunization, children's poor nutritional status, and services that are poor in terms of both access and quality.

Supportive Environment and Conditions

The Government has established a number of supportive policies and programmes to reduce child mortality. It has ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on

the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and has accelerated progress towards ensuring the rights of children and women. It has also established the National Commission for Mothers and Children, under the leadership of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs. Each province also has a provincial commission for Mothers and Children chaired by the provincial governor or vice-governor.

At the national level, the Mother and Child Health Centre is responsible for implementing programmes and co-ordinating the nationwide provision of maternal and child health services. The Centre also has a number of specialized programmes: Reproductive Health including Safe Motherhood, Family Planning and Breast-feeding Promotion; Control of Diarrhoeal Disease and Acute Respiratory Infection; and Immunization and Integrated Management of Childhood Illness. In addition there is a network that aims to ensure the smooth implementation of child health programmes throughout the country.

Figure 4.1

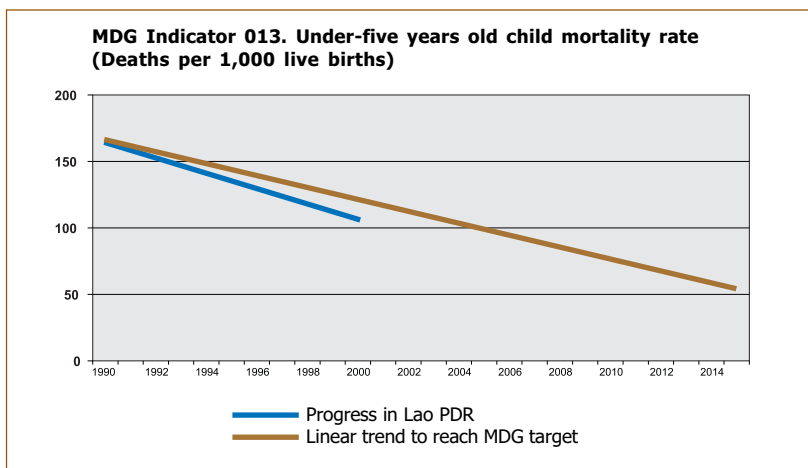
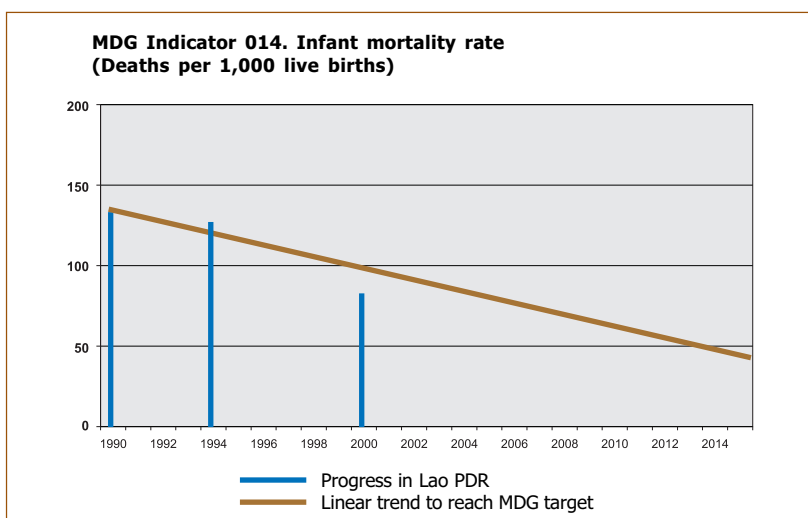


Figure 4.2



Challenges

The main challenges in attaining further reductions in child mortality are:

- Access to Mother and Child Health (MCH) services - Access to mother and child health services is inadequate, and there are wide disparities between different economic, social and cultural groups, with opium-addicted groups particularly disadvantaged.
- Quality - Child-directed programmes need to be of a higher quality, more comprehensive and better integrated
- Lack of resources - In child health care, both financial and human resources are inadequate.

Priorities for Development Assistance

- Quality improvement - Improving both the quality and management of services, including reproductive health services, mother and child health care and essential obstetric care, and strengthening outreach activities.
- Supplies - Ensuring the availability of essential drugs, vaccines, and contraceptives.
- Participation - Mobilizing communities for mother and child health.
- Coordination - Strengthening coordination and collaboration with donors.

Tracking Progress

ELEMENTS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION	ASSESSMENT		
Data collection capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Quality of recent survey information	Strong	Fair	Weak
Statistical tracking capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Statistical analysis capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanism	Strong	Fair	Weak
Monitoring and evaluation mechanism	Strong	Fair	Weak





Goal**5****Improve Maternal Health****Target 6****Reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio**

Indicator	Baseline for Lao PDR	Most Recent Status	2015 Target for Lao PDR
016: Maternal mortality ratio (deaths per 100,000 live births)	750 (1990)	530 (2000)	185 deaths per 100,000 live births
016a: Contraceptive prevalence rate	13% (1990)	32% (2000)	55%
017: Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel	14% (1994)	17% (1999)	80%

Data Sources: 016: CPC (1995): Census '95 and SPC (2001): RHS 2000; Committee for Planning and Cooperation, National Statistical Center (1995): Results from Population Census 1995, Vientiane and State Planning Committee, National Statistical Center, UNFPA (2001): Lao Reproductive Health Survey 2000, Vientiane. 016a & 017: NSC (1996): FBSS 1994 and SPC (2001): RHS 2000; National Statistical Center, Lao Woman Training Center, UNFPA (1996): Report on the Fertility and Birth Spacing Survey in Lao PDR and State Planning Committee, National Statistical Center, UNFPA (2001): Lao Reproductive Health Survey 2000, Vientiane.

Status and Trends

The Lao PDR has made remarkable progress in reducing the number of women dying as a consequence of childbirth. Between 1990 and 2000, the maternal mortality rate (MMR) fell by almost one-third - from 750 to 530 deaths per 100,000 live births. However it is doubtful that this trend can be sustained since it would require significant improvements in health infrastructure, access, and services, particularly in the rural areas - improvements that will not be possible at the current level of investment in the health sector.

Most of the reduction in maternal mortality has been the result of improved access to family planning services and maternal health care. The staff in maternal and child health services are now better trained and can provide more information on family planning methods. Women also benefit from safe motherhood programmes and from immunization against tetanus as well as from the widespread distribution of iron and folic acid tablets to reduce anaemia. In all of this,

the village health volunteers and traditional birth attendants have contributed to raising awareness on the importance of reproductive health services.

Although the maternal mortality rate has been reduced, it is still quite high. Many women continue to be vulnerable because they suffer from anaemia and nutritional deficiencies, malaria, and hypertensive disorders. During delivery most of the deaths are the result of haemorrhage, obstructed labour, retained placenta and toxæmia. A number of women also die following illegal abortions. The younger women who marry and give birth early as well as the women who have frequent pregnancies are particularly vulnerable. Between 1995 and 2000, the total fertility rate decreased from 7.1 to 4.9 births per woman of reproductive age. However this is still one of the highest rates in the region. Rural women have particularly high rates: 5.4 births compared with 2.8 births for urban women.

The high fertility rates reflect low use of contraceptives, although there has been an improvement. Between 1990 and 2000 the contraceptive prevalence rate rose from 13 to 32 percent, however it needs to increase much further, particularly in the rural areas where the prevalence is only 28 percent compared with the urban areas where it is 54 percent. The majority of these women are using modern methods: 29 percent of women use modern methods of contraception while only 3 percent use traditional methods. Achieving the MDG target of a contraceptive prevalence of 55 percent by the year 2015 will only be possible with sufficient investment in reproductive health services and information as well as in commodities including contraceptive supplies.

Another hazard to the reproductive health of girls and women is trafficking. Victims of trafficking experience sexual and gender violence that damages not just their physical health and but also their emotional health. And if they are forced into unprotected intercourse they will have early

Figure 5.1

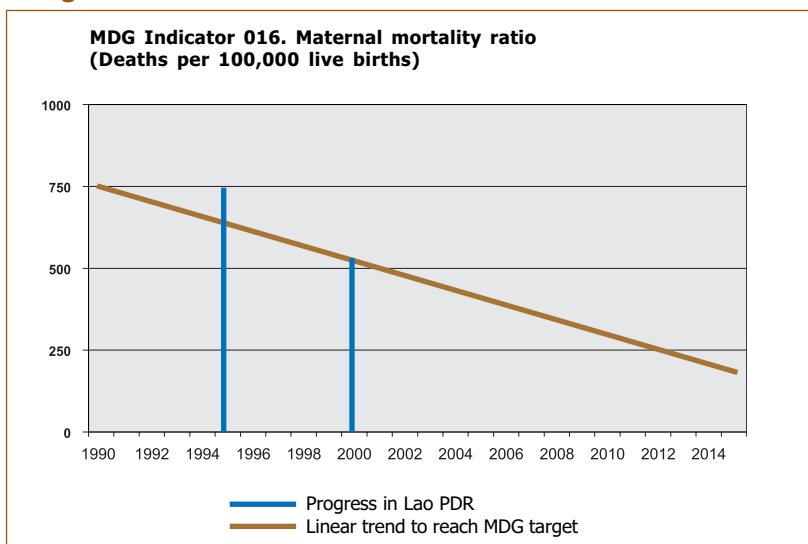
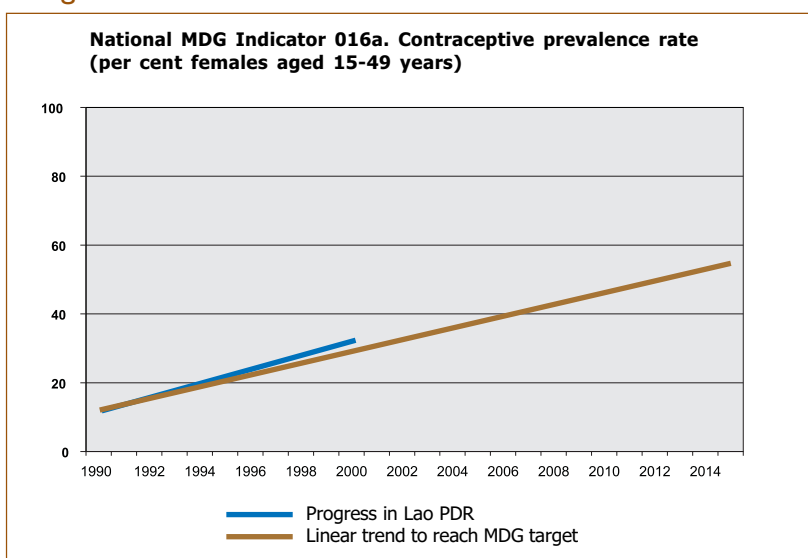


Figure 5.2



and unwanted pregnancies, often followed by unsafe abortion and STI/HIV infection.

In principle, most maternal deaths are preventable if women give birth in the presence of trained personnel who can if necessary refer them to effective emergency obstetric services. At present most women, particularly the less educated and those in the rural areas, give birth at home, and they often do so without skilled help. Between 1994 and 2000, the proportion of deliveries attended by skilled health personnel increased slightly from 14 to 17 percent, but this is still very low. And even when births are supervised, women may still not have access to emergency obstetric services. Furthermore, some traditional practices related to childbirth can be harmful to both mother and child.

Overall, the trend in maternal mortality is certainly encouraging, but the MDG target will be missed without further investment, particularly in the rural areas, in antenatal care, in the training of more birth attendants, in the promotion of maternal health at the community level, and the development and better use of emergency obstetric services.

Supportive Environment and Conditions

For the achievement of maternal health goals, the supportive conditions are good. The Government is committed to the Programme of Action of the International Conference of Population and Development (ICPD) and to a reduction in maternal mortality, and has correspondingly given a high priority to improving reproductive health services. In 2004, for example, the Government will develop a comprehensive National Reproductive Health Policy that will also address Reproductive Health Commodity Security. This will incorporate a number of existing policies including:

- The National Birth Spacing Policy (1995), which recognizes the importance of family planning as a means of child spacing for

overall reduction of maternal mortality and morbidity.

- Safe Motherhood and Safe Deliveries and Neonatal Care (1997), which focuses on nutrition and the provision of family planning information and services, as well as on antenatal care, clean and safe attended deliveries, the management of complications in pregnancy, emergency obstetric care, and post-partum care.
- The National Population and Development Policy (1999), which reflects the Government's commitment to the ICPD programme of Action, gives priority to extending primary health care, and reproductive health services including family planning to all areas of the country, with a reduction in maternal mortality as one of its specific objectives. This policy has a strong information, education and communication (IEC) component and envisages cooperation between the public and private sectors.
- The NGPES which highlights a number of measures that are needed to achieve the MDG targets on maternal health, including organizing mobile teams to reach remote areas, improving referral systems and increasing female service providers.

Challenges

If the Lao PDR is to reach this goal, it faces a number of major challenges:

- Poor health services - the Lao PDR lacks skilled health personnel, including trained birth attendants. Health facilities are also often inadequate and inaccessible, particularly for ethnic minorities and those in opium-addicted groups. The remoteness of much of the population makes it necessary to either bring services to women or bring women to services. Many people are also discouraged from using services because of the low quality of care and the unavailability of commodities. Other factors inhibiting the use of health services include language barriers, poverty, malnutrition,

illiteracy, superstition, non-hygienic lifestyles and the use of opium.

- Inadequate services for maternal health - Reducing maternal mortality will depend to a great extent on better provision and utilization of antenatal and postnatal services, and better referral systems as well as effective emergency obstetric care, consultations, monitoring, and prophylaxis. These services are not adequately available in Laos and where available, utilization is low.
- Low awareness - Many Lao women lack information on reproductive health, safe motherhood and modern contraceptive methods, as well as on the risks of early pregnancies, and unsafe, illegal abortions. There are also a range of cultural factors that influence women's health.

Priorities for Development Assistance

- Better services - Improving access to quality reproductive health services, including family planning services and commodities, and their integration into a nation-wide primary health care system that includes antenatal, delivery and postnatal care, emergency obstetrics services and better referral systems. This should also include the training and distribution of sufficient personnel.

- Maternal health - Increasing the proportion of deliveries that are supervised by skilled birth attendants or that take place where there is access to emergency obstetric care.
- Awareness raising - Promoting education and awareness on reproductive health including family planning, safe motherhood, STI and HIV /AIDS for adolescents, women and men. This should also include advocacy and communication for behavioural change targeted at different groups including drug users.
- Finance and delivery - Ensuring sustainable health care financing, and enhancing decentralized and sector-wide approaches to health care delivery.
- Data and management - Improving data collection and research, health management and information systems, and the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

The second Reproductive Health Survey due to be conducted in 2005 is expected to show whether the Lao PDR is still on track to reach the maternal mortality targets.

Tracking Progress

ELEMENTS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION	ASSESSMENT		
	Strong	Fair	Weak
Data collection capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Quality of recent survey information	Strong	Fair	Weak
Statistical tracking capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Statistical analysis capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanism	Strong	Fair	Weak
Monitoring and evaluation mechanism	Strong	Fair	Weak



Given the current population growth rate, the Lao population of approximately 5 million is expected to double in 25 years, as persons under 20 years of age, who currently comprise 54 percent of the population, enter their reproductive years

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Becoming
a partner
to prevent
HIV/AIDS
in Lao PDR

NCCA



Ffi



JAPAN

Official Development Assistance



UNAID
UNICEF • UNDP • UN
UNESCO • WHO • WORLD B

Public awareness, understanding, acceptance, and action, are the key to preventing the Lao PDR from becoming a high prevalence HIV/AIDS nation

Goal

6

Combat HIV/AIDS,
Malaria & other diseases

Target 7

Have halted by 2015, and begun to reverse, the spread of HIV/AIDS

Indicator	Baseline for Lao PDR	Most Recent Status	2015 Target for Lao PDR
018a: HIV prevalence among 15-24 year old commercial service women ¹	No data earlier than 2001	0.4% (2001)	<1%
019a: Proportion of 15-24 year old women who have ever used a condom during sexual intercourse	0.9% (1994)	0.7% (2000)	20%
019b: Proportion of 15-24 year old commercial service women reporting consistent use of a condom with non-regular sexual partners in the past 12 months	No data earlier than 2000	45% (2000)	70%
020a: Proportion of 15-24 year old women who know how to prevent RTIs/STDs	No data earlier than 2000	32% using a condom (2000)	70%
020b: Proportion of 15-24 year old commercial service women who correctly identify ways of preventing sexual transmission of HIV and who reject major misconceptions about HIV transmission or prevention	No data earlier than 2000	20% using a condom consistently (2000)	70%

¹ Defining and identifying women who sell sex for money in Lao PDR can be particularly difficult. The term "service women" refers to women, usually working in small drink shops and nightclubs, who may engage in commercial sex transactions, but their employment in these venues does not automatically signify that they are selling sex.

Data Sources: 018a: 1990: NCCA (2001) CP 2000 and 2000: FHI (2003): HSS-SPPS; National Committee for the Control of AIDS (2001): HIV/AIDS Country Profile Lao PDR 2000, Vientiane and Family Health International (2003): HIV Surveillance Survey and Sexually Transmitted Infection Periodic Prevalence Survey Lao PD 2001, Arlington.
019a: NSC (1996): FBSS 1994 and SPC (2001): RHS 2000; National Statistical Center, Lao Woman Training Center, UNFPA (1996): Report on the Fertility and Birth Spacing Survey in Lao PDR and State Planning Committee, National Statistical Center, UNFPA (2001): Lao Reproductive Health Survey 2000, Vientiane.
019b & 020b: FHI (2003): BSS 2000; Family Health International (2003): Behavioral Surveillance Survey Lao PD 2000-2001, Arlington.
020a: SPC (2001): RHS 2000; State Planning Committee, National Statistical Center, UNFPA (2001): Lao Reproductive Health Survey 2000, Vientiane

A high proportion of the disease burden in the Lao PDR is accounted for by malaria and tuberculosis. The prevalence of HIV/AIDS remains low but this is still a nation at risk.

HIV/AIDS Status and Trends

The prevalence of HIV is 0.06 percent. The first case was detected in 1990 and by April 2003 the total number of reported cases had reached

sexually transmitted diseases. Although only 20 percent are aware of the common misconceptions about HIV/AIDS, 65 per cent know that the best form of prevention is consistent condom use. Among the population as a whole, use of condoms is low - at 0.7 per cent of women.

Low HIV prevalence is probably due to a combination of factors. Lao culture emphasizes monogamy and faithfulness and those people who

do have multiple partners tend to have fewer than in some other countries. In addition, levels of travel and migration are low, both inside and outside the country, injecting drug abuse is rare, and prostitution is illegal, although there is some commercial sex. There have also been efforts at prevention through health education and the promotion of condoms. However complacency is common and the Lao PDR faces a number of risk factors, including proximity to countries with higher HIV/AIDS prevalence, increasing levels of travel both within and outside the country, a high incidence of poverty, a rise in the use of alcohol

HIV & Drugs

The drugs abused in Lao PDR include opium and amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS), which in recent years have been spreading rapidly among young people, in both urban and rural areas, and among different population groups.

Although injecting drug use appears still to be low, ATS abuse may encourage high-risk behaviour - thus increasing vulnerability to HIV/AIDS, STIs and unwanted pregnancies. The prevention of drug abuse could be carried out simultaneously with the prevention of HIV/AIDS at little additional cost while considerably reducing the risk of HIV infection. Alcohol consumption also contributes to unsafe sex, especially among service women (BSS 2000).

1,089, although the actual figure is likely to be higher since neither detection nor reporting are complete.

Because the prevalence is low the best way to monitor HIV is through surveillance of high-risk groups, which in the Lao PDR is felt to include commercial service women and their partners. Another group at higher risk are migrants. A generalized epidemic would probably be preceded by a concentrated epidemic in these high-risk groups. In 2001, among 15-24 year-old service women the HIV AIDS prevalence was still quite low, at 0.4 percent, but they remain at high risk, especially since around half suffer from sexually transmitted diseases. Only 45 percent of these women use condoms with non-regular partners, and 32 percent know how to prevent

and illicit drugs, and an increase in sexual behaviour. People also have limited access to health services and effective STD treatment, and some groups know relatively little about HIV/AIDS.

HIV/AIDS Supportive Environment and Conditions

The Lao PDR's National AIDS Programme, which takes a multi-sectoral approach, works with an increasing number of partners, national and international. At the central level, the National Committee for the Control of AIDS, which is chaired by the Minister of Health, has recently been reorganized and consists of 14 members from 12 line ministries and mass organizations. Each province also has a provincial committee

Human Trafficking

Increasing socio-economic disparities can create a feeling of relative deprivation at the village level, and trigger out-migration in search for improved livelihoods and income. However, it is questionable to what extent poverty itself fuels human trafficking. In fact, limited research to date suggests that human trafficking does not necessarily hit the poorest areas of the Lao PDR, or the poorest members of a village. (Ministry of Labour & Social Welfare 2001).

Although poverty might explain out-migration, it does not explain why people get trafficked. However, poverty in its widest sense can make people generally more vulnerable and thus more at risk from traffickers. But human trafficking is also the result of demand for exploitative labour - especially in the absence of efficient regulatory frameworks and law enforcement.

vate sector to integrate HIV prevention into different development and health programmes.

- **Capacity** - The National Committee for the Control of AIDS and its partners will need to increase their capacity for effective management and implementation of programmes. They will also need to strengthen the National Monitoring and Evaluation system, including surveillance.

- **Marginalized groups** - The Government will need to encourage open discussion on sensitive issues such as sexual behaviour, as well as recognise the needs of marginalized groups including homosexuals, sex workers and drug users. At the same time it should also try to lower drug use.

for the control of AIDS chaired by the provincial governor or vice-governor.

The Government has also initiated a National Policy on HIV/AIDS/STI, as well as a National Strategic Plan and Action Plan on HIV/AIDS 2002-2005, and has introduced a second-generation surveillance system. Activities both for the vulnerable groups and for the general population include peer education and life-skills training. One province has introduced a 100 percent condom use programme. In addition the Lao PDR benefits from cooperation with ASEAN countries and other countries in the region.

HIV/AIDS Challenges

Given the extensive risk factors, controlling the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015 will require continued vigilance. Challenges include:

- **Commitment and resources** - the Lao PDR will have to sustain political commitment and mobilize sufficient resources, internal and external, despite many other pressing problems.
- **Coordination** - The National AIDS Committee will need to strengthen coordination with donors, international NGOs and the pri-

HIV/AIDS Priorities for Development Assistance

The National Strategic Plan has identified the main priorities. These include:

- **A multi-sectoral response** - involving advocacy, policy development, strengthening institutional arrangements, capacity building, surveillance, research and monitoring and evaluation.
- **Strengthening laboratory services** - for STI and HIV/AIDS diagnosis, and ensuring safe-blood transfusions.
- **Enhanced donor coordination** - Donors should also contribute to the prevention and treatment of HIV and STDs, along with education and counselling, especially for the high-risk groups, including the mobile population, homosexuals, and drug users, along with effective care and support. Cooperation with agencies concerned with human trafficking will also be important, as will strong community involvement.

Tracking Progress

ELEMENTS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION	ASSESSMENT		
	Strong	Fair	Weak
Data collection capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Quality of recent survey information	Strong	Fair	Weak
Statistical tracking capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Statistical analysis capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanism	Strong	Fair	Weak
Monitoring and evaluation mechanism	Strong	Fair	Weak

The key indicators will be tracked through periodic second-generation surveillance. The first round was held in 2000-01; the second round will be in 2004. If this suggests an increase in HIV among high-risk groups interventions will have to be re-evaluated.



Photo by PHONEPHASE

According to a study on HIV/AIDS risk factors in the Lao PDR, factory workers, service women, and youth are among the high risk groups

Target 8

Have halted by 2015 & begun to reverse, the incidence of malaria & other major diseases

Indicator	Baseline for Lao PDR	Most Recent Status	2015 Target for Lao PDR
021: Death rate associated with malaria (per 100,000)	9 (1990)	3.5 (2002)	0.2 per 100,000
021a: Morbidity rate due to malaria (suspected cases per year per 1,000)	44 (1990)	48 (2002)	15 per 1000
022: Proportion of population in malaria risk areas using effective malaria prevention and treatment measures	no data earlier than 2000	24% treated bed nets (2000)	100%
022a: Proportion of population in malaria risk areas protected by impregnated bed nets	25% (1999)	60% (2002)	100%
023: Prevalence rate associated with tuberculosis (per 100,000)	144 (1990)	144 (1990)	50 per 100,000
024.1: Proportion of tuberculosis cases detected under directly observed treatment short course (DOTS)	24% (1996)	47% (2002)	70%
024.2: Proportion of tuberculosis cases cured under directly observed treatment short course (DOTS)	72% (1996)	83% (2002)	85%

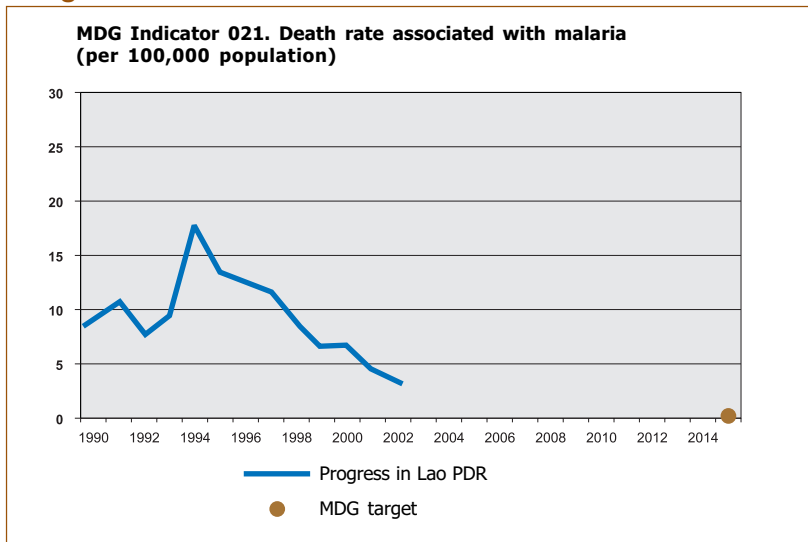
Data Sources: 021, 021a & 022a: CMPE (2003); National Center for Malaria, Parasitology and Entomology (2003): Official Malaria Data from Lao PDR, Vientiane.
022: MinH (2001): NHS 2000; Ministry of Health, State Planning Committee (2001): Health Status of the People in Lao PDR, Report on the National Health Survey, Vientiane.
023, 024.1 & 024.2: NTBC (2003): Annual Report; The National Tuberculosis Centre of Lao PDR (2003): Annual Report 2003, Vientiane.

TB & Malaria Status and Trends

In the Lao PDR, malaria has consistently been among the top three causes of reported morbidity and mortality, and around 70 percent of the population live in areas where they are at risk. During the early 1990s, the number of people suffering from the disease appeared to rise, perhaps due to better reporting, but at any rate it began to fall in the late 1990s, as malaria control projects were started.

During the 1990s the death rate due to malaria appeared to drop, though this conclusion is based on data from hospitals and may not reflect the entire situation. By 2000, 24 percent of the population were sleeping under treated bed nets though only 10 percent of children in rural areas, who are at the highest risk of death from malaria, were receiving appropriate treatment.

Figure 6.1



In relation to TB a national sputum-positive tuberculosis prevalence rate has been estimated at 144 cases per 100,000 population, based on a single survey of secondary school students - which makes the Lao PDR a high-prevalence nation. The Lao PDR initiated the Directly Observed Short Course Treatment (DOTS) in 1995 and the National TB programme now

reaches 16 out of 18 provinces and 89 out of 141 districts. Around 78 percent of the population live in a district that has at least one treatment centre. On this basis, the current programme is reaching 47 percent of cases. The number of cases detected has varied: rising between 1995 and 1999, then falling until 2001, but rising again in 2002. Since 1997, between 81 and 83 percent of treatments have been completed - slightly below the acceptable international standard of 85 percent.

In the Lao PDR the control of malaria is based on two key strategies: first, the use of insecticide-treated bed nets; second, the early detection and treatment of clinical malaria. The more extensive use of treated bed nets will have helped reduce morbidity and mortality. But early detection and treatment of malaria, particularly for children, is still too low - largely because the population is very scattered, and remote communities have little access to functional health facilities. The Lao PDR is, nevertheless, making progress and if funding can be maintained and expanded, the country should be on track for controlling malaria, although it is unlikely that malaria will be eradicated before 2020 so control efforts will need to continue for the foreseeable future.

In determining TB case detection, the Lao PDR made good progress between 1996 and 1999 towards the international target of 70 percent case detection. Progress stalled in 2000-01 but may subsequently have revived perhaps due to increased donor support. Sufficient funds have now been secured to expand the TB programme to cover the whole country and to intensify case detection.

Determining TB prevalence, which requires surveys that include chest X-rays, is difficult in a country as remote and mountainous as the Lao PDR, and there are also problems in making the estimates indirectly. More accurate estimates should be available by 2006, however, since donor funding has been secured for TB surveying. When it comes to treatment, the Lao PDR is



In the Lao PDR, malaria has consistently been among the top three causes of reported morbidity and mortality, and around 70 percent of the population live in areas where they are at risk

slightly below the international standard, but having secured additional donor funds the Government should be on track to increase the quality of the programme, aiming for the target of 85 percent of cases cured well before 2015.

TB & Malaria Supportive Environment and Conditions

The Lao National Malaria Control Programme was started in 1980 and is spearheaded by the National Centre for Malaria, Parasitology and Entomology in the Ministry of Health. The Government also has a National Policy for Malaria Control and a Malaria Strategic Plan for 2000-05, and in addition has benefited from cooperation with other ASEAN countries.

The Lao PDR has a National Plan of Action to Stop TB, a National TB Programme Manual, and a National TB Programme Planning Matrix already in place and is also developing a National TB policy. In addition, the Government has also secured donor funding for tuberculosis through 2005.

TB & Malaria Challenges

- **Drugs** - The malaria parasite is becoming resistant to common anti-malarials, requiring new drugs that are more expensive and more complicated to deliver.
- **Integration** - To improve sustainability, malaria control needs to be better integrated into primary health care.
- **Funding** - The programme is heavily reliant on external funding and thus on donor interest; two major donors have recently ended their support or are about to do so. The Global Fund has committed support for two years, but if this cannot be extended there will be a crisis in malaria control.
- **New strains of TB** - The emergence of multi-drug resistance, and TB associated with HIV infection, are making treatment more difficult and expensive, since they are not susceptible to traditional forms of tuberculosis control.

- **Funding** - Because it relies on donor funding, the TB programme is vulnerable, and unless funding can be secured for beyond 2005, progress is likely to be reversed.

TB & Malaria Priorities for Development Assistance

One overall priority must be to diversify donor support. This is needed for:

- **Control** - Maintaining preventive activities for 1.5 million people currently covered and expanding to the 2.1 million who are not yet well covered, with particular attention to the high risk and vulnerable groups: women, children, migrant workers, ethnic minorities and other poor groups. This will involve expanding the availability of insecticide-treated bed nets through both Government distribution and social marketing. There should also be efforts to strengthen cross-border malaria control.
- **Treatment** - Detecting malaria early and treating it with effective drugs - through comprehensive primary health care approaches.
- **Funding** - It is vital to secure funding beyond 2005, but it is also important to sustain political commitment to increase human and financial resources.
- **Directly Observed Short Course Treatment** - Expand DOTS coverage and standardized short-course chemotherapy. This should also include access to quality-assured TB sputum microscopy, and reliable procurement and distribution of high quality drugs.
- **Technical support** - Donors should provide technical support for the National Tuberculosis control programme. They should also support operational research and recording and reporting systems.
- **Community participation** - Communities need to be closely involved to ensure early case detection. This will require training and regular supervision for voluntary health workers.

TB & Malaria Tracking Progress

ELEMENTS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION	MALARIA ASSESSMENT			TB ASSESSMENT		
	Strong	Fair	Weak	Strong	Fair	Weak
Data collection capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak	Strong	Fair	Weak
Quality of recent survey information	Strong	Fair	Weak	Strong	Fair	Weak
Statistical tracking capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak	Strong	Fair	Weak
Statistical analysis capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak	Strong	Fair	Weak
Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanism	Strong	Fair	Weak	Strong	Fair	Weak
Monitoring and evaluation mechanism	Strong	Fair	Weak	Strong	Fair	Weak

The malaria reporting system requires considerable strengthening. The rates for detection and treatment are reliably available from the TB programme. Measuring the prevalence, however, is difficult in such difficult mountainous territory, but there should be more accurate data by 2006.



While the Lao PDR is rich in natural resources, the rugged terrain makes accessibility to rural and remote communities difficult



Environmental management is a core issue in poverty reduction

Goal

7

Ensuring Environmental Sustainability

Target 9

Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies & programmes, & reverse the loss of environmental resources

Indicator	Baseline for Lao PDR	Most Recent Status	2015 Target for Lao PDR
025: Proportion of land forest cover	47 % (1990)	47 % (1992)	
026: Area protected to maintain biological diversity as proportion of total surface area	12% (1993)	14% (2000)	
028.1: Carbon dioxide emissions from fossil fuels (metric tons per capita)	0.1 (1990)	0.1 (1998)	n/a
028.1a: Carbon dioxide emissions from all emission sources (metric tons per capita)	4.1 (1990)	4.1 (1990)	n/a
028.2: Consumption of ozone-depleting chlorofluorocarbons (metric tons of ozone depleting potential)	50 (1999)	42 (2002)	0
029: Proportion of population using solid fuels	97% (1995)	96% (2000)	n/a

Data Sources: 025: DoF (1992); NRS; Department of Forestry, National Office of Forest Inventory and Planning (1992): Forest Cover and Land Use in the Lao P.D.R. - Final Report on the Nationwide Reconnaissance Survey, Vientiane.

026: STEA (2000); NEAP 2000; Science Technology and Environment Agency (2000): National Environmental Action Plan 2000, Vientiane.

028.1 & 028.1a: GoL (2000); FNCCC and WB (2002) WDI 2002; Government of Lao PDR (2000): First National Communication on Climate Change Convention, Vientiane and The World Bank (2002): World Development Indicators 2000, Washington.

028.2: STEA (2000): ODS Unit; Science Technology and Environment Agency Lao PDR (2003), ODS Unit data, Vientiane.

029: CPC (1995): Census '95 and SPC (2001): RHS 2000; Committee for Planning and Cooperation, National Statistical Center (1995): Results from the Population Census 1995, Vientiane and State Planning Committee, National Statistical Center, UNFPA (2001): Lao Reproductive Health Survey 2000, Vientiane.

Note: 2015 targets for indicators 025, 026, are being considered by the Government of the Lao PDR and will form the basis of further consultation and discussion.

2015 targets for 028.1, 028.1a and 029 are not applicable because the Lao PDR has a very small amount of Carbon dioxide emissions and are therefore not committed to reduce as obligated under either Climate Change Convention and the Kyoto Protocol.

Status and Trends

The Lao PDR is endowed with a diverse, productive and ecologically unique forest that is a vital economic resource contributing to both the Lao GDP as well as non-agricultural GDP. Forest products include processed wood and handicrafts made of natural materials. The forests also make essential contributions to nutrition, income, energy and shelter for the 80 percent of the Lao population who live in rural areas and rely on non-timber forest products for subsistence for around half of their cash income and to offset seasonal food shortages. However, the forest cover has declined significantly and continues to do so, with grave consequences for wildlife and plant diversity, as well as for livelihoods. This is partly due to an extension of pioneering shifting cultivation as a result of increasing population pressure on scarce arable land and illegal logging.

In recognition of the importance of forestry and biodiversity conservation, the Lao Government has established 20 National Biodiversity Conservation Areas, plus two corridor areas, that cover 14.3 percent of the country's area. The objective is to maintain a stable flow of goods and services through the ecosystem while also preventing natural disasters such as flooding, landslides and drought.

The Lao PDR does not contribute significantly to climate change and in fact it has more to fear from ecological problems beyond its borders. CO² emissions are mainly from the energy and forestry sectors, including the burning of firewood. CH⁴ emissions are primarily from agriculture and forestry. Of the ozone-depleting substances (ODS), more than half in 1999 were the result of flexible foam production by one company which is expected to eliminate the use of ODS before 2005. The Lao PDR will in future limit its consumption of ODS to service currently installed equipment and hopes to phase out the import of ODS by 2010 - though this will entail some economic impact on Lao citizens. Moreover, control measures are complicated by the long

and porous borders with Thailand and Vietnam. The Lao PDR will have to carefully evaluate its potential for implementing control measures, including import and export licensing, as well as economic instruments to encourage phase-out.

Supportive Environment and Conditions

The Government of the Lao PDR has taken significant steps to ensure that the country's environment and natural resources are sustainably managed. The First National Forestry Conference in 1989 defined the steps needed to conserve and extend forest cover and subsequently the Government has promulgated numerous decrees and laws relating to sustainable management and the use of natural resources - concerning pioneering shifting cultivation, hunting, and forest management, as well as environmental management in the industrial and mining sectors.

In 1993 it established the Science Technology and Environment Agency (STEA), and in 1994 it approved the National Environmental Action Plan. In 1999 the Government issued an Environmental Protection Law, and in 2002 established an inter-ministerial National Environment Committee. Currently the Government is considering a National Forestry Strategy 2020, a Sustainable Forestry and Rural Development Programme, a National Environment Strategy, and a National Biodiversity Action Plan and Strategy. It is important to note that the NGPES places priority on environmental strategies to support poverty alleviation efforts.

The Government has established a high-level institutional structure and mechanism to address environmental and sustainable development concerns. It has also provided opportunities for greater participation of stakeholders, particularly civil society and the private sector, and carried out a number of education and awareness activities. In addition, the Government has received support from international development institutions.

Challenges

Though the Government is strongly committed to conservation of forests, it still faces a number of challenges:

- Forest conversion - As population increases, so does the demand for land and raw materials from natural resources. Forests are commonly converted to cropland, paddy and pasture. At the same time more forest is being lost as infrastructure, as urban centres expand and roads and reservoirs are built.
- Demand for forest products - Population and income growth, both domestically and internationally, are increasing the demand for forest products, such as timber for house construction, and other plants for medicines and food.
- Inter-agency cooperation - Protecting and sustaining the country's rich biodiversity will require stronger cooperation between international agencies for a better use of financial and human resources.

Effective achievement of the MDGs (as well as the multilateral environmental agreements) will be hampered by a number of factors including:

- Institutional capacity - Coordination among the relevant agencies, national and international, is weak. Responsibilities between different agencies overlap and authorities and lines of accountability are unclear. National institutions also lack financial resources and have limited access to technology.

- Legal weaknesses - The legal framework is fragmented and many existing laws and policies are not fully implemented, though the Government is developing implementation and monitoring strategies to monitor compliance.
- Limited participation - There is little meaningful participation from businesses or non-governmental organizations.
- Lack of data - Data is scarce and unreliable.

Priorities for Development Assistance

- Protected Areas - The Lao PDR's system of Protected Areas is one of the best in Southeast Asia, although it still requires funding, management, monitoring and research. Support will also be needed for a formal review and consolidation system to include areas representative of Lao habitats and constituent wildlife communities not yet under conservation management.
- Capacity building - Improving the institutional capacity in environmental management for integrated planning, effectively supervising, controlling and monitoring the implementation of such plans, to improve law enforcement and to enhance cooperation with local authorities.



Building technical as well as management capacity. This will involve strengthening capacity for environmental management and monitoring institutions at all levels.

- Awareness - Developing and decentralizing the implementation of the National Environmental Education and Awareness Strategy and Action Plan.
- Income generation - Donors should also promote the sustainable use of forest products to generate production and income for the rural poor. This should include the domestication and processing of non-timber forest products.
- Legal framework - Develop the policy and

legal framework with a view to improving compliance and enforcement.

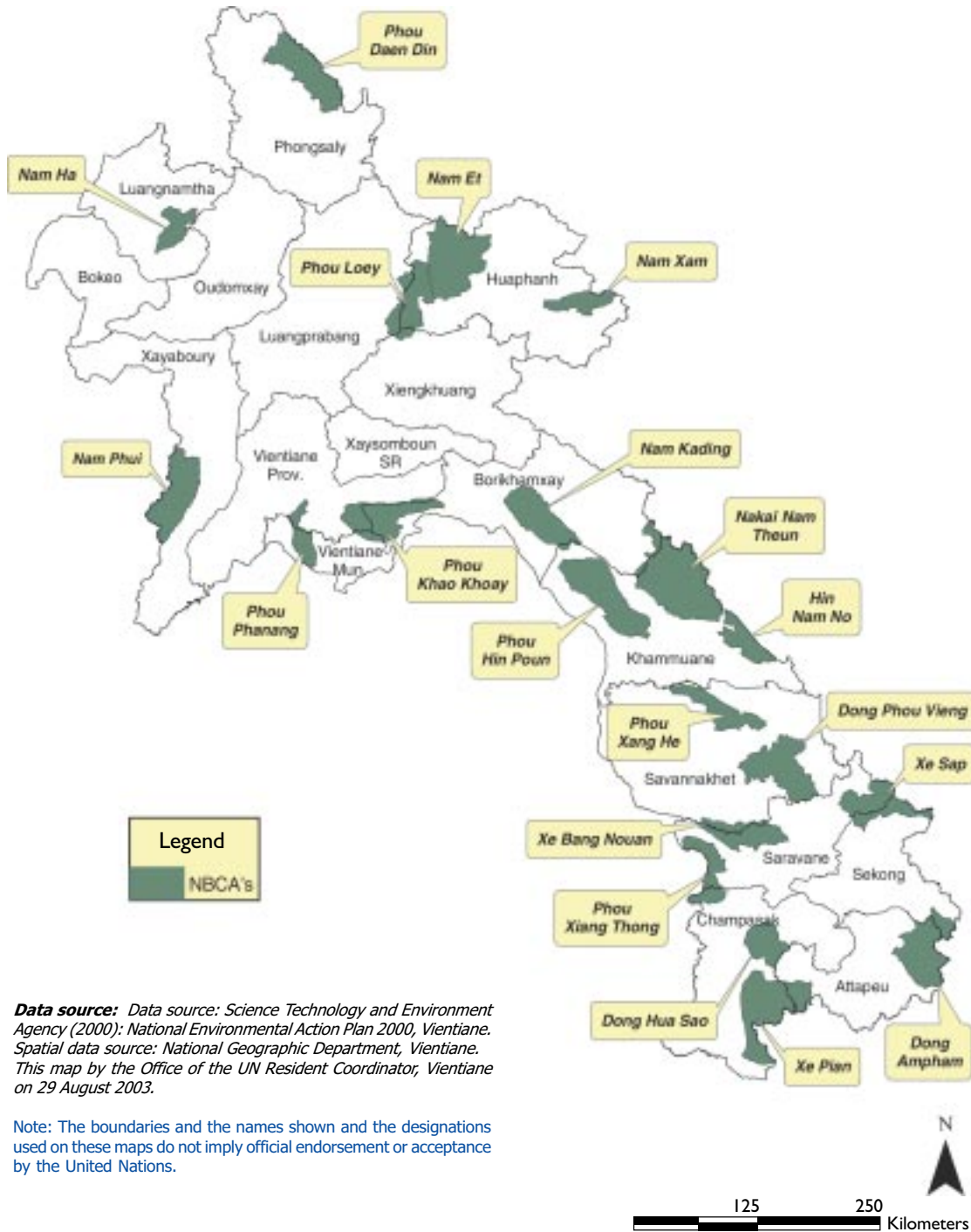
- Technology and research - Encourage the research institutes and the National University and improve data collection, while promoting the development and transfer of environmentally sound technology.
- Funding - Establishing the Environmental Fund to support environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources.

Tracking Progress

ELEMENTS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION	ASSESSMENT		
Data collection capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Quality of recent survey information	Strong	Fair	Weak
Statistical tracking capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Statistical analysis capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanism	Strong	Fair	Weak
Monitoring and evaluation mechanism	Strong	Fair	Weak



MDG Indicator 026. National Biodiversity Conservation Areas (NBCAs) in the Lao P.D.R. 1997



Target 10

Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water

Indicator	Baseline for Lao PDR	Most Recent Status	2015 Target for Lao PDR
030: Proportion of the population with sustainable access to an improved water source	28% (1990)	58% (2000)	80%
031a: Proportion of [urban] population with access to improved sanitation	11% (1990)	42% (1998)	70%

Data Sources: 030 & 031a: NCEHWS (2003), National Center for Environmental Health and Water Supply [Nam Saat]; Provincial Data Analysis 2001-2002.

Status and Trends

A high proportion of the population throughout the country suffer from diseases related to deficiencies in water supply and sanitation. Nevertheless, there has been significant progress. Between 1990 and 2002 the proportion of the population with access to a safe source of water increased from 28 to 58 percent - though access in 2002 varied considerably across provinces, from 38 to 86 percent. The more remote provinces and districts with poor roads tend to have lower coverage than those located on major national roads.

In the mountainous areas, water supplies are taken from springs and streams while in the low-lying areas they come from shallow tube wells and dug-wells. In the urban areas, on the other hand, water is increasingly being delivered through pipes, from streams, rivers and groundwater.



An increasing proportion of households in Vientiane are gaining access to a piped water connection however there are significant inequities in secondary towns and rural areas. Many of the smaller provincial towns do not have a continuous supply, lack the required pressure to serve the entire network, or show signs of deterioration.

Although the quality of the original water sources is good due to the low level of industrial and agricultural activity, water is often subsequently contaminated at collection and network points and in households. As a result, most urban households boil water before drinking, though those in rural areas do not, and as a result they suffer from a high incidence of diarrhoeal diseases.

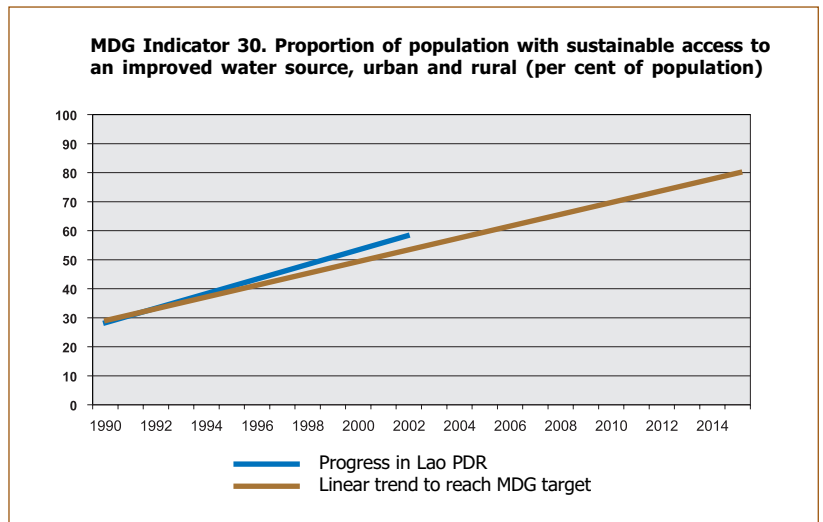
Rural water supplies are the responsibility of the National Centre for Environmental Health and Water Supply (Nam Saat) while the urban water supply is the responsibility of the Ministry of Communication, Transport, Post and Construction. However, it is often unclear who is responsible for water supplies in the small towns, or for sanitation in the urban areas - an ambiguity that the Government is currently trying to address.

Supportive Environment and Conditions

With the assistance of external agencies, the Government has developed sound policies, strategies, investment plans and other regulations to assure sector sustainability and growth. In 1996 the Government introduced a Law on Water and Water Resources, in 1997 it presented a National Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Strategy and in 1999 it established the Water Supply Authority (WASA). In 2001 the government introduced a law on Hygiene, Disease Prevention, and Health Promotion.

In an effort to meet the Government's objective to provide 80 percent of the population with access to safe water by the year 2015, Nam Saat

Figure 7.1



has concentrated mainly on increasing coverage, and is now giving priority to the poorest, least accessible and most vulnerable zones. This involves delivery of sustainable services through community participation, cost sharing and the decentralization of planning and implementation processes.

To date, most investment in water supplies has been through external assistance through grants or soft loans. While this situation is expected to continue for the foreseeable future, there are also early signs of greater involvement from the private sector.

Challenges

- **Equity** - The Lao PDR needs a better balance of public investment between the urban and rural areas. While decentralization is a step forward, poverty and the lack of infrastructure and human resources at provincial and district levels, and particularly in the more remote areas, remain serious obstacles.
- **Funding** - The water supply sector will continue to depend on external financial support. Although ultimately water tariffs will need to be set to achieve full cost

recovery, this is not yet possible for the poorest areas where few people can pay for water. Most external support has gone to the urban rather than the rural areas, and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency's decision to conclude their long-term support to Nam Saat in 2004 is a matter of concern.

- Water shortage - There is a shortage of water in the dry season, and deforestation and land clearing is leading to reduced spring flow, higher run-off and increased turbidity in streams.

Priorities for Development Assistance

- Rural water supplies - Continued technical and financial support for the rural water supply sector to ensure continuation of sector reform processes and expand coverage to the most vulnerable and remote areas.
- Investment plans and strategies - Development of medium and long-term

water supply investment plans for rural areas and also for the small town areas, particularly for the 80 or more towns currently without piped water.

- Existing systems - Development and implementation of strategies that will ensure effective operation and maintenance of existing water supply systems.
- Private sector - Establish an appropriate regulatory framework for private-sector participation.
- Monitoring - Establishing a national water sector monitoring system, including a national water standard, to improve data collection, with a system for tracking access to drinking water at the community level, along with community-based water quality monitoring.
- Social marketing - Development of an effective social marketing strategy to improve financing and utilization of water supply services

Tracking Progress

ELEMENTS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION	ASSESSMENT		
	Strong	Fair	Weak
Data collection capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Quality of recent survey information	Strong	Fair	Weak
Statistical tracking capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Statistical analysis capacity	Strong	Fair	Weak
Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanism	Strong	Fair	Weak
Monitoring and evaluation mechanism	Strong	Fair	Weak

Target 11

By 2020 to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers

Indicator	Baseline for Lao PDR	Most Recent Status	2015 Target for Lao PDR
032: proportion of households with access to secure tenure, urban areas	no data earlier than 1995	91% (1995)	n/a

Data Sources: 032: Committee for Planning & Cooperation, National Statistics Centre (1995): National Census 1995

Note: The Lao PDR does not currently face a significant slum dweller issue, thus a national target has not been set.



The ancient kingdom of Laos was known as “Lane Xang” or “Land of a Million Elephants”. Today elephants are an important part of rural life

Summary of MDG Targets and Lao National Goals

Goal 1	<i>Eradicate Extreme Poverty & Hunger</i>			
	Target 1: Halve between 1990 - 2015, the proportion of people living in poverty	1990 Baseline for Lao PDR	2015 Target for Lao PDR	Lao National Targets¹
	001a: Proportion of people living below the national poverty line	48%	24%	Lao National Target is to halve incidence of poverty by 2005 and to eradicate poverty by 2010 (note that this refers to the national poverty line)
	002: Poverty gap ratio (incidence times depth of poverty)	12%	6%	
	003: Share of poorest quintile in national consumption	9.3% (1992)	Target under consideration by Lao Government	
				There is no national target on underweight children, but there is a national target on malnutrition; to reduce by 40% the number malnourished children by 2005.
	Target 2: Halve between 1990 -2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger	1990 Baseline for Lao PDR	2015 Target for Lao PDR	
	004: Prevalence of underweight in children under five years of age	40%	20%	
	005: Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption	31%	16%	
Goal 2	<i>Achieve Universal Primary Education</i>			
	Target 3: Ensure that by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling	1990 Baseline for Lao PDR	2015 Target for Lao PDR	Lao National Targets
	006: Net enrolment in primary school	58% (1991)	98%	Lao National Target is to increase primary net enrolment rate to 80% (by 2000) and then to 85% (by 2005)
	007: Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5	47.7% (1991)	95%	
	008: Literacy rate in the age group 15-24 years	78.5% (2001)	99%	Lao National Target is to increase adult literacy rate (persons aged 15-40) to 85% (between 2001-2005)

¹ **Sources of Lao National Targets** : Socio-Economic Development Plans 1996-2000, Socio-Economic Development and Investment Requirements 1997-2000, the Education Strategic Vision 2000, the Macro-Economic Policy and reform Framework 2000, Health Strategy up to the Year 2020, and the Framework of Strategic Vision on Forest Resource Management to the Year 2020.

Goal 3 *Promote Gender Equality & Empowerment of Women*

Target 4: Eliminate gender disparity in primary & secondary education, preferably by 2005, & to all levels of education no later than 2015	1990 Baseline for Lao PDR	2015 Target for Lao PDR	Lao National Targets
09: Ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary, and tertiary education	62.2% (1991)	100% number of girls per 100 boys enrolled	Gender is among the four cross-sectoral policy priorities in the NGPES. No specific national gender targets have been set except those in the MDG Report
10: Ratio of literate women to men, 15-24 years of age	81.5% (1995)	100% Target under consideration by Lao Government	
11: Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector	37.5% (1995)		
12: Proportion of seats held by women in the national parliament (percent)	6.3%	Target under consideration by Lao Government	

Goal 4 *Reduce Child Mortality*

Target 5: Reduce by two-thirds the under-five mortality rate	1990 Baseline for Lao PDR	2015 Target for Lao PDR	Lao National Targets
13: Under-five mortality rate	170 deaths per 1,000 live births	55 deaths per 1,000 live births	Lao National Target is to reduce U5MR to 100 per 1000 live births (by 2005) and then 30 per 1000 live births (by 2020).
14: Infant mortality rate	134 deaths per 1,000 live births	45 deaths per 1,000 live births	
15: Proportion of one-year old children immunized against measles	62% (1996)	90 %	Lao National Target is to reduce IMR to 75 per 1000 live births (by 2005) and then 20 per 1000 live births (by 2020).

Goal 5 *Improve Maternal Health*

Target 6: Reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio	1990 Baseline for Lao PDR	2015 Target for Lao PDR	Lao National Targets
016: Maternal mortality ratio	750 deaths per 100,000 live births	185 deaths per 100,000 live births	Lao National Target is to reduce maternal mortality rate to 355.5 per 100,000 live births (by 2005) and then 130 per 100,000 live births (by 2020). Increase the contraceptive prevalence to 35% (by 2005) and then 60-65% (by 2020).
016a: Contraceptive prevalence rate	13%	55%	
017: Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel	14% (1994)	80%	

Goal 6 *Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases*

Target 7: Have halted by 2015, and begun to reverse, the spread of HIV/AIDS	1990 Baseline for Lao PDR	2015 Target for Lao PDR	Lao National Targets
018a: HIV prevalence among 15-24 year old commercial service women	0.4% (2001)	<1%	Lao National Targets for HIV/AIDS were recently agreed to be aligned with MDG targets
019a: Proportion of 15-24 year old women who have ever used a condom during sexual intercourse	0.9% (1994)	20%	
019b: Proportion of 15-24 year old commercial service women reporting consistent use of condom with non-regular sexual partners in the past 12 months	44.7% (2000)	70%	
020a: Proportion of 15-24 year old women who know how to prevent RTIs/STDs	32.3% (2000)	70%	
020b: Proportion of 15-24 year old commercial service women who correctly identify ways of preventing sexual transmission of HIV and reject major misconceptions about HIV transmission or prevention	20% (2000)	70%	

Target 8: Have halted by 2015 & begun to reverse, the incidence of malaria & other major diseases	1990 Baseline for Lao PDR	2015 Target for Lao PDR	Lao National Targets
021: Death rate associated with malaria	9 deaths per 100,000	0.2 deaths per 100,000	Lao National Target is to reduce major diseases such as malaria, diarrhea and respiratory infections (1996-2000).
021a: Morbidity rate due to malaria	44 suspected cases per year per 1,000	15 suspected cases per year per 1,000	
022: Proportion of population in malaria risk areas using effective malaria prevention and treatment measures	23.9% (2000)	100%	
022a: Proportion of population in malaria risk areas protected by impregnated bed nets	25% (1999)	100%	
023: Prevalence rate associated with tuberculosis	144 per 100,000	50 per 100,000	
024.1: Proportion of tuberculosis cases detected under directly observed treatment short course (DOTS)	24% (1996)	70%	
024.2: Proportion of tuberculosis cases cured under DOTS	72% (1996)	85%	

Goal 7 *Ensuring Environmental Sustainability*

Target 9: : Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies & programmes, & reverse the loss of environmental resources	1990 Baseline for Lao PDR	2015 Target for Lao PDR	Lao National Targets
025: Proportion of land forest cover	47% (1990)	Target under consideration by Lao Government	Lao National Target is to eliminate opium eradication totally by 2005 and put an end to slash-and-burn cultivation by 2010
026: Area protected to maintain biological diversity as proportion of total surface area (percent)	11.9% (1993)	Target under consideration by Lao Government	Lao National Target is to establish 500,000 hectares of new tree plantation (2000-2020) and reduce the area of shifting cultivation to a minimum level (up to 2005)

028.1: Carbon dioxide emissions from fossil fuels (metric tons per capita)	0.1 metric tons per capita	Target not set. Lao PDR does not produce enough CO2 emissions
028.1a: Carbon dioxide emissions from all emission sources (metric tons per capita)	4.1 metric tons per capita	Target not set. Lao PDR does not produce enough CO2 emissions
028.2: Consumption of ozone-depleting chlorofluorocarbons	50.1 metric tons of ozone depleting material	0 metric tons of ozone depleting potential
029: Proportion of population using solid fuels (percent)	97% (1995)	Target not set. Lao PDR does not produce enough CO2 emissions

Target 10: Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water	1990 Baseline for Lao PDR	2015 Target for Lao PDR	Lao National Targets
030: Proportion of the population with sustainable access to improved water source	28%	80%	Lao National Target is to improve accessibility to clean water to 70% of all villages and to sanitary latrines to 50% (1996-2000)
031a: Proportion of [urban] population with access to improved sanitation	11%	70%	
Target 11: By 2020 to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers	1990 Baseline for Lao PDR	2015 Target for Lao PDR	
032: proportion of households with access to secure tenure, urban areas (percent)	90.7% (1995)	Target not set as not considered to be a major issue for Laos	Lao National Target is to increase the supply of clean water to 75% of urban households (1996-2000)

Goal 8 *Develop a Global Partnership for Development*

Target 12: Develop further an open, rules-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system. Includes a commitment to good governance, development, and poverty reduction - both nationally and internationally

Target 13: Address the special needs of the least developed countries. Includes: tariff and quota free access for least developed countries' exports; an enhanced programme of debt relief for HIPC and cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous ODA for countries committed to poverty reduction

Target 14: Address the special needs of landlocked countries and small island developing States through the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly

Target 15: Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term

Target 16: In cooperation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth

Target 17: In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries

Target 18: In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications

2015 Target for Lao PDR

Goal 8 is being measured at the global level. No national MDG targets have been set.

Lao National Targets

Lao National Target is to sustain economic growth with equity at the moderate rate of about 7%, for tripling per capita income by 2020

Increase gross service production by 10-11% per year (1996-2000)

Reduce fiscal deficit to no more than 10% of GDP (1996-2000)

Increase budget revenues to 16-16.5% of GDP(1996-2000)

Reduce external trade deficit to no more than 12% of GDP (1996-2000)

Increase exports by 12% and imports by 10.5% per year (1996-2000)

Attract US \$2 billion in foreign investment (1996-2000)

Achieve an average annual increase in gross retail distribution of 13% per year(1996-2000)

Increase investments in socio-cultural sectors to 25% of total investments (2000-2001)

Limit the inflation rate to less than 20% and then to less than 10% per year (2001-2002)

Increase budget revenue to 14-18% of GDP (average growth of 1.0-1.5% per year) (2000-2005)

Reduce budget deficit to less than 5% of GDP (average of 0.5-1.0% per year) (2000-2005)

Increase public savings to 10% of GDP (2000-2005)

Increase investments from domestic resources to 10% of GDP (2000-2005)

Appendix II

Statistics at a Glance

To ensure national ownership, national data sources were used in reporting on the MDG progress in the Lao PDR. The credibility of the report will depend on the use of reliable and timely data. The Theme Groups assessed the 'Tracking Progress' for each MDG target area in Laos. This table summarizes the assessment made by the Theme Groups. The decisions are inevitably subjective, but the main purpose is to give a sense of relative use in making policy and the reliability of data so as to prioritize interventions for statistical capacity building.

Indicators and Data Sources	Institutions responsible	Latest year	Periodicity	Coverage	Data Disaggregation	Data collection capacity	Quality of recent survey information	Statistical tracking capacity	Statistical analysis capacity	Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanism	Monitoring and evaluation mechanism
Poverty Indicators calculated with support from WB and ADB from the Lao Expenditure and Consumption Survey (LECS)	SPC, NSC; ADB, WB	1997	5 years	Nationwide, 8882 households including 57624 persons from 450 villages	Urban/rural, since 1997 also province (and district with limited interpretation)	Fair	Strong	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair
Hunger For children under five: National Health Survey (NHS)	MoH, SPC; FAO, WFP, UNICEF, WHO	2000	5 years	Nationwide, 1347 children under 5 from a 30% sub-sample of cluster villages	Sex, urban/rural	Fair	Fair	Fair	Weak	Fair	Weak
For entire population: FAO estimates (SOFI)	FAO	1998	Every year	Nationwide, Estimates for the total population based on a 3 year food balance	No	Fair	Fair	Fair	Weak	Fair	Weak

Education Annual reports by the MoE	MoE	2002/3	Every year	Nationwide, all administrative levels	Sex, education-level (age-group), province, district, school							
Lao National Literacy Survey (LNLS)	MoE, UNESCO, UNICEF	2001	5 years	Nationwide, 8100 households including 5976 individuals tested	Sex, age, urban/rural, province, 4 main ethnic groups	Fair	Fair	Fair	Weak	Weak	Fair	
Gender equality Education: Annual reports by the MoE	MoE	2002	Every year	Nationwide, all administrative levels	Education level (age-group), province, district, school							
Literacy: Lao National Literacy Survey (LNLS)	CPC, NCS, MoE; UNESCO, UNICEF	2001	5 years	Nationwide, 8100 households including 5976 individuals tested	Age, urban/rural, province, 4 main ethnic groups	Weak	Fair	Fair	Fair	Weak	Fair	
Wage employment: Census	CPC, NSC	1995	10 years	Nationwide, total population	Sex, age, urban/rural, province, district							
Seats in parliament: National Assembly	NA; UNDP	2002	5 years	Seats in the National Assembly	Age, education							
Child Health Mortality: Reproductive Health Survey (RHS)	CPC, NSC; UNFPA	2000	5-6 years	Nationwide, 12759 women and 3060 men from 720 sample villages	Age, urban/rural, education, province							

Indicators and Data Sources	Institutions responsible	Latest year	Periodicity	Coverage	Data Disaggregation	Data collection capacity	Quality of recent survey information	Statistical tracking capacity	Statistical analysis capacity	Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanism	Monitoring and evaluation mechanism
Immunization coverage: Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS)	MoH, SPC, NSC; UNICEF, WHO, WFP	2000	4 years	Nationwide, Sample survey of 124 districts, 264 villages and 6600 households	Sex, age, urban/rural	Weak	Strong	Fair	Weak	Weak	Weak
Maternal Health Reproductive Health Survey (RHS)	CPC, NSC; UNFPA	2000	5-6 years	Nationwide, 12759 women and 3060 men from 720 sample villages	Age, urban/rural, education, province	Fair	Fair	Weak	Weak	Fair	Weak
HIV/AIDS Risk population: Behavioral Surveillance Survey (BSS), HIV Surveillance Survey and Sexually Transmitted Infection Periodic Prevalence Survey (HSS-SPPS)	MoH, NCCA, PCCA; UNAIDS, FHI	2001	5-6 years	In the five most populous provinces along Route 13, the main land transport route, a two-stage cluster sampling methodology was employed for all populations where a 'take all' selection was not possible	Age, risk-groups						
General population: Reproductive Health Survey (RHS)	CPC, NSC; UNFPA	2000	5-6 years	Nationwide, 12759 women and 3060 men from 720 sample villages	Age, urban/rural, education, province	Fair	Strong	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair

Malaria Annual reports and National Health Survey (NHS)	MoH, CMPE; WHO, UNICEF	2002	Every year	Nationwide administration data (estimates) collected within the public health service; Survey data from the National Health Survey	No	Fair	Fair	Fair	Strong	Strong	Fair
Tuberculosis Annual Reports	MoH, NTBC; WHO	2002	Every year	Nationwide administrative data from the DOTS plan	No	Strong	Weak	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair
Environmental resources Forestry: Nationwide Reconnaissance Survey (NRS)	MoAF-DoF	1992	10-12 years	Nationwide	No	Strong	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair
Biological diversity: National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP)	PMO, STEA; UNDP, UNEP	2000	1-3 years	Nationwide	Province, district						
Carbon dioxide: First National Convention on Climate Change (FNCCC)	PMO, STEA; WB, UNDP	1998	To be determined	Nationwide	No						

Indicators and Data Sources	Institutions responsible	Latest year	Periodicity	Coverage	Data Disaggregation	Data collection capacity	Quality of recent survey information	Statistical tracking capacity	Statistical analysis capacity	Capacity to incorporate statistical analysis into policy, planning and resource allocation mechanism	Monitoring and evaluation mechanism
Ozone depleting potential: Administrative reports of the ODS Unit at STEA	PMO, STEA, ODS Unit; WB, UNDP	2002	Yearly	Nationwide	No						
Solid fuels: Census	SPC, NSC	1995	10 years	Nationwide, total population	Urban/rural, province, district						
Drinking water and sanitation Administrative reports from the National Centre for Environmental Health and Water Supply	MoH, NCEHWS; UNICEF	2002	10-12 years	Nationwide administrative data from the National Centre for Environmental Health and Water Supply (Nam Saat)	Province; Urban/rural is required, but not available	Fair	Fair	Fair	Weak	Weak	Fair
Secure Tenure Census	SPC, NSC	1995	10 years	Nationwide, urban population	Urban/rural, province, district
Partnership for Development	Not covered in Lao PDR

Appendix III

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