



Regional Workshop

“Promoting the presence and leadership of women within public institutions at the national and local levels in Asia and the Pacific”

22-25 April 2024

Manivone Luangsombath

Director Permanent Secretary Office of the National Commission for the Advancement of Women, Mothers and Children (NCAWMC)

Lao PDR

- Committed to promoting gender equality in public administration (GEPA)
 - Five-year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDP) (2021-2025) and the NPAGE have targets to achieve a minimum of 25–30% of women at the leadership/decision-making level in public administration at both the national and subnational levels
 - National review was conducted to understand challenges and opportunities, and to provide a roadmap for the development of a National GEPA Action Plan (2025-2030)
 - Details of the National GEPA Action Plan (2025-2030) is expected to be drafted by May – June 2024
- The Action Plan aims to address the needs of men and women in the public sector and create an enabling environment for women, ethnic groups and persons with disabilities. It will cover:
 - (i) Policy improvement, (ii) HR and women’s career development, (iii) Institutional culture and work-life balance, and (iv) Database improvement.



Lao PDR's Legal Framework to Promote Gender Equality

Challenges:

- Existing laws/policies **do not** adequately address the distinct needs of women and men and therefore often fail to respond to the needs of female civil servants:
 - Parental leave and childcare
 - Work-life balance
 - Training/capacity development
 - Protection (from harassment)

Current Laws:

- Law on the Lao Women's Union (2013) addresses the development, protection and advancement of women, their participation and decision-making;
- Law on Gender Equality (2019), addresses equality in elections, and requirements for appointment to positions;
- Law on Civil Servants (2017) addresses equality in obtaining civil servant positions and the code of conduct.

Gender Equality Action Plan proposes the following:

1. Revise existing laws/regulations with a gender lens and incorporate gender-related aspects and responses to women and men's needs.
2. Develop instructions on GEPA towards women in leadership positions; and HR policies, including policies on recruitment, retention, work-life balance, protection against all kinds of harassment at the workplace, etc.

Strategies and Accountability to Promote Gender Equality at the National and Subnational Levels

Lao PDR periodically formulates five-year strategies & the 10-year National Strategy for Gender Equality (2016–2025), and the Gender Vision 2030. All align with the 9th NSEDP and SDG 5.

Challenges:

- There is a lack of clarity at the administrative level, especially related to the roles and responsibilities of sectors, which leads to ***unclear coordination mechanisms*** on issues related to GEPA

ຂໍ້ປຽນ(ເຖິງແມ່ນວ່າ ໃນແຜນດຳເນີນງານແຫ່ງຊາດ ໄດ້ກຳນົດຈະແຈ້ງພະລະບົດບາດ ແລະ ຄວາມຮັບຜິດຊອບຈະແຈ້ງໃຫ້ລະແຫນງການ ແລະ ທ້ອງຖິ່ນ ເພື່ອ ນຳໄປຜັນຂະຫຍາຍ ເປັນແຜນວຽກອັນລະອຽດຂອງພາກສ່ວນ ຕົນ. ແຕ່ງເນື່ອງຈາກ ຄະນະນຳຫລາຍພາກສ່ວນຍັງ ຄິດວ່າວຽກຄວາມສະໝັພາບພາບຍິງ-ຊາຍຍັງເປັນຄວາມຮັບຜິດຊອບຂອງແມ່ຍິງ ຈຶ່ງເຮັດໃຫ້ການຜັນຂະຫຍາຍການຈັດຕັ້ງປະຕິບັດວຽກ ງານດັ່ງກ່າວຍັງບໍ່ທັນເຮັດໄດ້ດີແລະເປັນລະບົບ.

- Lack of ***implementation and monitoring*** of the 9th NSEDP and NPAGE (key target indicators for GEPA).

Gender Equality Action Plan proposes the following:

- Establish practical coordination and accountability mechanisms
- Establish institutional-level monitoring mechanisms



Actions to Promote Gender Equality at the National and Subnational Levels

The NPAGE consists of 11 Goals and 4 Workplans and sets out specific targets for women's leadership:

- Increase the representation of women in leadership and decision-making positions within government organizations to 25-30%
- Increase the proportion of female civil servants to 50%.

However, current statistics indicate that the average proportion of women holding leadership positions is between 17% - 18%, highlighting that men hold over 80% of leadership positions in the public sector.

Gender Equality Action Plan proposes the following:

- Increase the number of women holding management/leadership positions and create an enabling environment for women's advancement in the public sector via:
(1) Policy improvement **(2)** HR and women's career development **(3)** Institutional culture and work-life balance **(4)** Database improvement

Policy Commitments at the National and Subnational levels

1. The NPAGE, the 9th NSEDP (2021–2025) specific targets for women include:

- 50 % women across the civil service
- 30% in leadership positions at the central level
- Subnational level:
 - 20% in leadership positions at the provincial level
 - 20% in leadership positions at the district level
 - 10% in leadership positions at the village level
 - 30% among members of the National Assembly and Provincial People's Assemblies (Parliaments).

2. The Central Party Committee (CPC) No. 029/CPC and No. 030/CPC instructs to create conditions for women to participate in leadership positions and decision-making.



Current Status on Women Leadership in Public Administration at National and Subnational Levels

At the national level, there are:

- 29 Ministers or equivalent, 7 women (24%)
- 104 Vice Ministers or equivalent, 24 women (23%)
- 6 Assistant Ministers, 2 women (33%)
- 582 Directors General or equivalent, 110 women (19%)
- 416 Chief Military officers, 6 women (1%)
- 154 Chiefs of Police, 6 women (4%).

At the subnational level, there are:

- 18 Provincial Governors or Mayors, (no female officials)
- 36 Deputy Governors/Mayors, 4 women (8%)
- 148 District Governors, 3 women (2%)
- 8,406 Village Chiefs, 269 women (3%)



The Way Forward for Lao PDR

Lao PDR is committed to implementing a National Gender Equality Action Plan (2025 - 2030) with a macro-level management plan with specific subnational implementation targets and key indicators

- The Plan is being finalized by MoHA, the NCAWMC and Lao Woman's Union (LWU) with support from the UN and other stakeholders, including line government agencies at both national and subnational levels
- It will be managed/overseen by MoHA as the implementing agency
- It will be coordinated and monitored by the NCAWMC and MoHA.
- It will be executed on the ground at both national and subnational level by LWU, and by each sector.
- It requires support from the central government and development partners, including the UN, and bilateral and regional development partners.





United Nations

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs



THANK YOU