

# Lao National Lifelong Learning Policies and Strategies

## National Educational System

### *Formal Education*

- **General Education:**  
Pre-school which consists of crèche for children aged 0-2 years, and kindergarten for children aged 3-5 years. Primary education consists of 5 years of schooling for children aged 6-10 years and is compulsory. Lower secondary education covers 3 years of schooling and for children aged 11-13 years. Upper secondary education is three years of schooling for children aged 14-16 years.
- **Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET):**  
Vocational education students are admitted after they have completed either grade 8 or 11. They study at this level for 3 years in order to receive certificates. Students who have completed 8th grade attend classes to receive technical certificates in three years (8+3). Students who have completed 11th grade can receive technical certificates in two years (11+2) or higher level certificates in special areas in three years (11+3).
- **Teacher Training:**  
Secondary students who want to become teachers have five options. To become a preschool teacher, they can enroll in a one-year programme at the end of upper secondary school (11+1). To become a primary teacher they can enroll in a three-year training course at the end of lower secondary school (8+3 option) or they can enroll in a one-year training programme at the end of upper secondary (11+1 option). To teach at the lower secondary level, they can enroll in a three-year training programme upon completion of the upper secondary school (11+3 option). To teach upper secondary, they must enroll in the Faculty of Education at the University of Laos (11+4 option).

In the strategic plan 2008-2015 of TVET:

- Improving TVET system in connection with the national Education Reform by applying different types of training.
  - Developing and improving curricula, instructional media, manuals and training equipments.
- **Higher Education:**  
Students who are admitted to higher education courses have completed grade eleven. They study in each faculty for 4-7 years depending on the subject area. For example, engineering takes 7 years and to become a medical doctor takes 6-7 years.

### *Non-formal education*

The Department of People's Education officially became the Department of Non-Formal Education in 1993, with expanded roles and responsibilities for the eradication of illiteracy and continuing education for ethnic groups nationwide, especially for women and disadvantaged populations in remote areas, and to provide basic education for all.

### Policy of Non-Formal Education

- To raise consciousness in all people of non-formal education and its benefits to the development of self, society and nation;
- To develop non-formal education staff to have high quality, knowledge, abilities and expertise in non-formal education work in order to develop curricula and instructional materials that are suitable to the economic and social conditions, and to protect national tranquility at present and in the future;
- To provide universal and equitable education for educationally disadvantaged people, especially ethnic women and those in remote areas;
- To enhance conditions to facilitate and create interest among populations to receive continuing education, and education equivalent to that of the formal system;
- To organize non-formal education activities in many modalities and broad methods that are of high quality and are appropriate to the economic and social needs and priorities of various localities;
- To include many sectors including government agencies, private agencies, populations, etc., in the implementation of non-formal education; and
- To organize non-formal education with the content and attitudes of love of family, home, community and nation, respect for rules, laws, national culture and good traditions, and modern international thinking.

### **Structure of Non-Formal Education**

The largest service provided by the DNFE (Department of non-formal Education) of NOE is the literacy programmes, which each year enrolls some 70,000 youth and adults in a 3-stage course, which leads to equivalency with completion of the 5years primary school course. DNFE also organizes non-formal skill development, but the two programmes systematically linked or mutually supporting. There is an estimated approximately 1.6m. people illiterate, of whom MOE DNFE( Department of Non-formal Education) gives priority in training courses to woman, rural groups, ethnic minority communities, and villages that have poor access to facilities for

For the development of livelihood skills, DNFE end the district education bureaux currently train some 4,000 people per year on a standard range of vocational courses, whereas it is estimated that the huge potential available clientele for such courses could be over 1.3m. people<sup>30</sup>. The main vocational courses currently relate to sewing, carpentry, cooking, planting mushrooms, small animals and fishing, and tree growth, etc.

Literacy courses are organized by three levels:

- Level 1 course: total of 340 hours, leads to equivalency with primary school grade 2,
- Level 2 course: total of 180 hours, leads to equivalency with primary school grade 3 and
- Level 3 course: total of 120 hours, leads to equivalency with primary school grade 5.

To complete the full programmed should require a total of 8 months. It is approximately 4 hours per school day.

For NFED courses, the target population has related primarily to rural people mainly farmer of one crop or another. The intention was that for courses related to mushroom production, poultry, small livestock and fish culture such people would be likely to have the land and capacity to undertake additional part-time vocation work to supplement either their food security or incomes, or both. On the other hand, the crafts of food processing waving, tailoring, carpentry and construction could fill gaps in the services readily available to rural resident and at the same time enable member of rural household to diversify their sources of income.

- Non-Formal Education (e.g., accreditation and equivalency)
- Livelihood and entrepreneurship programs
- Community development
- Continuing education/Professional development

#### Reported Adult Literacy Rates (15+) between 1995 and 2009

Source of information	Total	Male	Female
Population Census 1995	60.2%	73.5%	47.9%
LECS 2 (1997/98)	-	82%	55%
MICS II 2000	70.0%	81.7%	59.1%
LNLS 2001	68.7%	77.0%	60.9%
LECS 3 (2002/03)	74%	85%	64%
Population Census 2005	72.7%	82.5%	63.2%
Ministry Line Report 2007/08	77.09%	-	-
Ministry Line Report 2008/09	78.51%	-	-