

<p>Challenges</p>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Lao PDR Country Profile: Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD)</p> </div>
<p>Photo</p>	<p>General information about ECCD in Lao PDR ^{i ii iii}</p> <p>Lao PDR utilizes a sector-specific approach and presently does not have a holistic national ECD policy.</p> <p>Early Childhood Education (ECE) is prominent within the Education Law of 2007 Articles 14 and 15. Three types of ECE programs are officially recognized by the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) with each respective national curriculum, including: 1) kindergarten; 2) pre-primary schools; and 3) community-based school readiness program. The National Early Learning Development Standards (ELDS) or “School Readiness Competencies” is available which feeds into the pre-primary curriculum.</p> <p>Improvements in immunization can be observed in Lao PDR with increases in vaccination rates by more than 50% to its current rate of 82%. However, the country accounts for a large share of under-5 mortality rates within the Asia Pacific region at 64%. The under-5 stunting rates remain high at 44%.</p>
<p>Priorities</p>	<p>Key policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised National Education Law 2014, Articles 13-15 • Education for All (EFA) National Plan of Action 2003-2015 • Education Sector Development Plan 2011-2015 • Law on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of Children

	Ministry in charge																																	
<p>For more information, please contact: ARNEC Communications Manager</p> <p>Ms. Silke Friesendorf ✉ silke.f@arnec.net 🌐 www.arnec.net/country-pages/</p>																																		
<p>Key data: A life cycle approach for ECCD</p> <p>Demographics</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Indicator</th> <th>Data</th> <th>Source (year)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Total population (thousands)</td> <td>6,758.35</td> <td>World Bank Open Data (2016^w)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rural population (%)</td> <td>60</td> <td>UNICEF SWOC (2016^v)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Under-5 population (thousands)</td> <td>766</td> <td>UNICEF SWOC (2016)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Population below the global poverty line of US \$ 1.90/day (%)</td> <td>17</td> <td>UNICEF SWOC (2016)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Population growth rate (annual %)</td> <td>1.8</td> <td>UNICEF SWOC (2016)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total fertility rate (births per women)</td> <td>2.7</td> <td>UNICEF SWOC (2016)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Prenatal</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Indicator</th> <th>Data</th> <th>Source (year)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Annual number of births (thousands)</td> <td>163</td> <td>UNICEF SWOC (2016)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Birth registration (%)</td> <td>75</td> <td>UNICEF SWOC (2016)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births)</td> <td>210</td> <td>UNICEF SWOC (2016)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Indicator	Data	Source (year)	Total population (thousands)	6,758.35	World Bank Open Data (2016 ^w)	Rural population (%)	60	UNICEF SWOC (2016 ^v)	Under-5 population (thousands)	766	UNICEF SWOC (2016)	Population below the global poverty line of US \$ 1.90/day (%)	17	UNICEF SWOC (2016)	Population growth rate (annual %)	1.8	UNICEF SWOC (2016)	Total fertility rate (births per women)	2.7	UNICEF SWOC (2016)	Indicator	Data	Source (year)	Annual number of births (thousands)	163	UNICEF SWOC (2016)	Birth registration (%)	75	UNICEF SWOC (2016)	Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births)	210	UNICEF SWOC (2016)	<p>Noteworthy practices^{vii}</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research on early childhood education practitioners' status and professional development <i>Noteworthy aspects:</i> This research helps increase the evidence base for effective policies and programs that support training of early childhood teachers, as well as raise practitioners' status – thereby motivating them to be more effective in their work. <i>Achievements:</i> Expected improvement in the quality of ECCD in Lao PDR, especially towards the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children. 2. Community-based school readiness <i>Noteworthy aspects:</i> Preparing children in remote, hard-to-reach villages for primary school through various strategies, including development of curriculum and teachers' guide books, training for village teachers, and monitoring and supervision to strengthen village teachers' capacity on community-based school readiness management. <i>Achievements:</i> Children who participate in this program benefit from being more emotionally and socially developed upon entrance to primary school. 3. My Village TV series for children in Lao PDR (Produced by UNICEF Laos, various TV channels, and the Ministry of Information, Culture, and Tourism) <i>Noteworthy aspects:</i> Educational and creative TV series aimed at young children between 3-6 years. The series are based on holistic and supportive method for building preschool readiness and life skills.
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Birth to 5 years

Indicator	Data	Source (year)
Infant mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 live births)	49	UNICEF SWOC (2016)
Exclusive breastfeeding under-6 months (%)	40.4	ARNEC Regional ECD Data Portal (2012)
Under-5 stunting prevalence (moderate and severe) (%)	44	UNICEF SWOC (2016)
Under-5 mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 live births)	64	UNICEF SWOC (2016)
DTP3 national immunization coverage (%)	82	UNICEF SWOC (2016)
Violent discipline (Children aged 1-14 exposed to violent disciplinary methods during the last month) (%)	76	UNICEF SWOC (2016)

School readiness

Indicator	Data	Source (year)
Early Childhood Development Index or ECDI (%)	N/A	N/A
Father's support for learning (%)	52	UNICEF SWOC (2016)
Availability of children's books (%)	5	UNICEF SWOC (2016)

Achievements: Broadcasting and production of multiple locally-produced seasons backed by government's commitment. Through involvement of local talents and creative local media, the episodes produced are developmentally-appropriate, culturally sensitive and inclusive.

Gross enrollment ratio or GER in pre-primary (%)	35.35	UIS (2015 ^{vi})		
Gender parity index of GER; F/M (%)	1.04	UIS (2015)		
Children entering Grade 1 with ECD experience (%)	15.44	UIS (2014)		
Gender parity index of children with ECD experience; F/M (%)	1.03	UIS (2014)		
Grade 1 repetition rate (%)	13.55	UIS (2014)		

Testimonies

“Education is vital to break the cycle of under-nutrition: educated children grow into adults who produce and earn more, and are more likely to be able to provide enough of the right food to their own children.” – Eri Kudo, World Food Programme, Representative and Country Director to Lao PDR.

“Expanding access to, and more importantly, improving the quality of education for the most disadvantaged and poor children is a critical investment for the future of Lao PDR.” -- Keiko Miwa, World Bank Manager in Lao PDR.

“In the past most attention was given to primary education as it is compulsory while early childhood care and education was overlooked. When children are not properly developed during this critical period, it affects their later performance and results in a high repetition rate in primary school.” -- Vila Sengsavang, Director of the Dongkhamxang Teacher Training College in Laos’ capital of Vientiane.

ⁱ ARNEC. [Asia Pacific Regional ECD data portal: Enabling environments](#).

ⁱⁱ UNESCO. (2017). [ECCE country profiles](#).

ⁱⁱⁱ UNESCO. (2016). [New Horizons: A review of early childhood care and education in Asia and the Pacific](#)

^{iv} World Bank Group. (2016). [World Bank Open Data](#). (Accessed 15 January 2018)

^v UNICEF. (2016). [The State of the World’s Children 2017 Statistical Table](#).

^{vi} UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). (2018). [Education dataset](#). (Accessed 15 January 2018).

^{vii} SEAMEO INNOTECH. [Regional consultation forum on early learning frameworks, policies and programmes: A completion report](#)