

## **Universal Periodic Review Report by VYDA**

This report has been prepared by Vulnerable Youth Development Association and Women's Rights Study Association.

### **Vulnerable Youth Development Association (VYDA)**

Vision: VYDA will be leading civil society organisation (CSO) in assisting vulnerable children, youth specifically young ethnic females to have better lives

Mission Statement: To disseminate the information to young vulnerable generation in remote areas through interested media and to enable them to access vocational training.

VYDA is a non-profit civil social organization devoting its variety of professional experiences with common interest by its vision in assisting and motivating the vulnerable youth to happily and prosperously pursue their lives with no harms to society. VYDA is settled at House No. 158, Ban Nonesengchanh, Xaythany District, Vientiane Capital formerly called 'Ban Nonsengchanh Vulnerable Youth Development Center' in 2001 approved its establishment by Vientiane Capital Department of Education. From 2001 to 2005, VYDA initiated its project in assisting vulnerable youths to access compulsory and vocational education by providing them appropriate, useful and informative documents about their livelihood and life styles in 5 villages: Ban Nonesengchanh, Ban Huayteuy, Ban Nathom and Ban DongDok in Vientiane Capital under the coordination with Vientiane Capital Education Department supported/funded by Vai Dek printing House. VYDA initially received financial grant from GEF/UNDP to produce puppetry materials and drama scripts to raise public awareness on environmental protection; planted the trees, vegetables and fish raising was implemented 3 provinces: Vientiane Capital, Vientiane Province and Bolikhamxay Province in 2010. By implementing new green school project on environmental awareness dealing with climate change, VYDA also obtained financial support from UNDPF/K.I. Asia in 2014. This project has been implemented in Saravan Province at SARAVAN ethnic school. The main objective of the project is to build 60 students and teachers' capacity on how to keep school green, equipped with good environment and food and nutrition, including literatures on drama, song, poem compositions and mobile to be performed in important events and at ethnic schools.

To do this report, Vulnerable Youth Development Association has invited 40 civil society organisations (CSOs) based in Vientiane Capital. The survey was carried out by organising workshop on the universal periodic review with 71 recommendations in full support of the government and 15 recommendations in part support. The data collection for this survey was based on the information given by the 32 CSO members answering the questionnaires in the workshop as well as those answering the questionnaire by email. The data analysis was run by Statistic Package for Social Science 19 to seek for means and standard deviation.

### **Women's Rights Study Association (WRSa)**

Vision:

WRSa is a leading association in maximising the implementation of CEDAW to raise public awareness on vulnerable women's development and protection.

**Mission:**

WRSA plays a critical role in capacity building for individual and organisation by integrating all parties involved in the implementation of laws to maximise women's rights awareness across organisations throughout the country.

**Major activities:**

WRSA activities are to firstly conduct campaign on gender rights and knowledge of related laws, to secondly cooperate with legal experts and students of faculty of laws and political administration, National University of Laos to organising practical workshop on CEDAW and Lao laws on women's rights and protection.

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## **I. Acknowledgement**

The survey team of Vulnerable Youth Development Association (VYDA) would like to express our sincere thank to all Lao civil society organisations (CSOs) in providing us the informative data useful for our data analysis without your auspices this survey would not be completed on time.

We feel very grateful to CSO members in giving productive feedback in leading to reasonable changes in our recommendations including the limitations, namely: APLA, BCA, GDA, FHA, RDPA, SODA, VYDA, NORMAI, Lawyer Council, ADWLE, Vulnerable People Aid Association, AFESIP, CADPA, CIDEA, LHD, LPPA, SAEDA, LDWDC, MJA, LSDA, ACDA, ACTD, CLICK, LSMP, CODA, Value Lao, ECCDA, Foundation of Operation for Action, EDL, LBA, EPA, GCDA, HEOA.

## **II. Methodology**

1. This survey is conducted in order to report the CSOs' contributions and the government progress in implementing the UPR in the Lao PDR.
2. To do this report, Vulnerable Youth Development Association has conducted survey among 40 civil society organisations (CSOs) based in Vientiane Capital. The survey was carried out by organising workshop on the universal periodic review with 71 recommendations in full support of the government and 15 recommendations in part support. The quantitative research methodology was employed by using the rating scale of five to measure the CSOs' contribution and the government progress in full support while the 15 recommendations in part support were used as prioritized implementation. Five of them were selected as prioritised implementation for CSOs' contribution and the government progress.
3. The data collection for this survey was based on the information given by the 32 CSO members answering the questionnaires in the workshop as well as those answering the questionnaire by email.
4. The data analysis was run by Statistic Package for Social Science 19 to seek for means and standard deviation as measured below:
  - (1) 00-0.80: There is the lowest contribution made by the CSOs or the lowest progress made by the government;
  - (2) 0.81:1.60: There is a low contribution made by the CSOs or low progress made by the government;
  - (3) 1.61-2.40: There is a neutral contribution made by the CSOs or a neutral progress made by the government
  - (4) 2.41-3.20: There is a high contribution made by the CSOs or a high progress made by the government
  - (5) 3.21-4.00: There is the highest contribution made by the CSOs or the highest progress made by the government.
5. The Social Package for Social Science 19 was used for data analysis by identifying the rating scales mentioned in paragraph 3 of this section.

## **III. Background Information**

6. The Lao PDR has been participating in the process of the UN Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review (UPR) since 2009. The Lao delegation attended the 8th Session of the UPR Working Group in May 2010 and in September 2010 the Human Rights Council adopted the UPR Outcome Report of the Lao PDR at its 15th Plenary Session. The result of the review process is that the Lao PDR supports 71 recommendations in full and supports in part 15 recommendations in part, out of the total 107 recommendations.
7. The Universal Periodic Review (UPR), established by General Assembly resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006, is a new human rights mechanism. Through the UPR, the Human Rights Council (HRC) reviews, on a periodic basis, the fulfilment by each of the United Nations'

192 Member States of their human rights obligations and commitments. Resolution 60/251 provides that the UPR shall be based on objective and reliable information of the fulfilment by each State of its human rights obligations and commitments; be conducted in a manner which ensures universality of coverage and equal treatment with respect to all States; be a cooperative mechanism, based on an interactive dialogue, with the full involvement of the country concerned and with consideration given to its capacity-building needs; and complement and not duplicate the work of treaty bodies. HRC resolution 5/1 of 18 June 2007 provides that the UPR should 'ensure the participation of all relevant stakeholders, including non-governmental organisations and national human rights institutions, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996, as well as any decisions that the Council may take in this regard.

8. Vulnerable Youth Development Association (VYDA) is one of the civil society organisations considered as a stakeholder of the universal periodic review apart from the Government of the Lao PDR and the UNDP based in Vientiane, Lao PDR.

#### **IV. Findings**

##### **4.1. General Information about Key informants**

9. This survey was carried out among 32 members of civil society organisations (CSOs) in Vientiane Capital. These CSOs have major in contribution the universal periodic review implementation in the Lao PDR. The majority of these CSOs, 22 organisations, participated in the development, poverty reduction, education and public health while there was only 1 organisation took part in religion. It is important to note that these CSOs participated in multi-specialised areas. It is indicated that 11 CSOs implemented in the area of gender, women and children and 9 in justice and public security. It was also found that there were 9 CSOs specialized in international conventions, human rights conventions reporting obligations, cooperation with UN Special Procedures, anti-human trafficking, religion and freedom of expression and political participation and only 3 CSOs contributed to governance - public administration, law enforcement and international cooperation (see Appendix 1)
  10. It was found that the majority of CSOs experiences was on development, poverty reduction, education and public health as they outnumber of other issues 1-5 year, 8, 6-10 years, 4,, 11-15 years, 8, and over 15 years, 1, whereas it was found that other areas such as: International conventions, human rights conventions reporting obligations, cooperation with UN Special Procedures; ethnics, Governance - Public Administration, Law enforcement; Religion; Freedom of expression and political participation have one year experiences, except for gender, women and children, which CSOs has more than 5-year experiences.
- ##### **4.2. Civil Society Organisations' Contribution (see appendix 2 as reference)**
11. There were the lowest contribution of the CSOs in international conventions, human rights conventions reporting obligations, cooperation with UN Special Procedures, except for recommendation 10: Continue to cultivate its cooperation and interaction with the human rights mechanisms in seeking the support and technical assistance that will enable the Lao

People's Democratic Republic to develop and implement its policies consistently and effectively (Indonesia); the contribution was rate at 1.00, low contribution

12. The lowest contribution from CSOs in anti-human trafficking.at the scale of 0.60-0.67.
13. There was a low contribution from CSOs in gender, women and children at 1.13-1.40, except for recommendation 17: Continue to strive for the inclusion of a gender perspective in all of its development plans and programmes, with positive measures to achieve the effective promotion and protection of the rights of women (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) ; pay special attention to the promotion of the rights of women and girls by adding a gender perspective to all national strategies and action plans, including development projects (Kazakhstan); incorporate gender policies in all development plans and projects (Belarus) was in neutral contribution at 1.67.
14. There was a low contribution from CSOs in recommendation 21: Continue its policies and efforts to enhance the solidarity and equality among its multi-ethnic population (Pakistan) while there were no contributions in recommendation 22 and 23.
15. There were a low contribution from CSOs in recommendation 26 in Governance - Public Administration, Law enforcement: Continue efforts to further strengthen its capacity to effectively implement domestic laws (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) at 0.87 while there were not contributions in recommendation s 24, 25 and 27.
16. There was the lowest contribution from CSOs in recommendations, 28-35, in justice and public security.
17. There were neutral contributions in Recommendations 36, 37 and 39 in development, poverty reduction, education and public health at 1.97, 1.80 and 1.63 respectively while there were low and the lowest contributions in Recommendations 38, 40-54 from CSOs from 0.70 to 1.43.
18. There was neutral contribution in Recommendation 59 in International Cooperation while Recommendations 56 was still in low contributions at 0.83 and other recommendations 55, 57, 58 and 60-64 were the lowest.
19. There was the lowest contributions in Recommendation 65-66 in freedom of expression and political participation.
20. There was the lowest contributions in Recommendation, 67-71, in media contribution.
- 4.3. Lao Government Progress in UPR implementation (see appendix 3 as reference)
21. There was low progress in the implementation of UPR of the government in all Recommendations in International Convention, human rights conventions reporting obligations, cooperation with the UN Special Procedures (Special Rapporteurs), 1-13.
22. The government had made low progress in anti-human trafficking, recommendations 14-16, at 1.10.
23. The government had made neutral progress in recommendation 17(gender, women and children): Continue to strive for the inclusion of a gender perspective in all of its development plans and programmes, with positive measures to achieve the effective

promotion and protection of the rights of women (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) ; pay special attention to the promotion of the rights of women and girls by adding a gender perspective to all national strategies and action plans, including development projects (Kazakhstan); incorporate gender policies in all development plans and projects (Belarus), at 1.73 while there was low progress in recommendations 18,19, 20, at 1.30 .

24. The government had made low progress in recommendation 21 (ethnics): Continue its policies and efforts to enhance the solidarity and equality among its multi-ethnic population (Pakistan); while the lowest progress in recommendations 22 and 23.
25. The government had made low progress in recommendations 24, 25, 26, 27 in Governance - Public Administration, Law enforcement.
26. The government had made low progress in recommendations 28-33 while the lowest progress in recommendations 34 and 35 in justice and public security.
27. The government had made neutral progress in nearly all recommendations in Development, poverty reduction, education and public health, except for the low progress made in recommendations 40 : Continue efforts to provide basic health and education services for vulnerable segments of its population, and continue its commitment to a people-oriented development policy by tackling poverty-related issues through investment in social infrastructure and by addressing the probable shortcomings in this regard (Myanmar); and 48: Increase the budget for health so as to strengthen primary care, in particular in rural areas, including sexual education, and ensure that programmes for family planning and awareness duly take into account the traditions and physical obstacles faced by women in rural areas (Luxembourg), at 1.53.
28. The government had made low progress in international cooperation, recommendations 55-59, at 1.10.
29. The government has made low progress in religion, recommendations 60 and 61, at 0.83 while the lowest progress has been made in recommendations 62-64.
30. The lowest progress in Freedom of expression and political participation has been made in recommendation 66, at 0.73 while there was the lowest progress in recommendation 65.
31. The government has made the lowest progress in media, recommendations 67-71, at 0.73.

## **V. Conclusion and Recommendation**

32. The majority of CSOs' contribution was made along with the government five-year master plan.in order to find financial support to contribute to the UPR implementation. However, since one CSO specialises in many areas of the UPR recommendations. Their contribution also depended upon financial support which was still limited for them to implement. Therefore, their contribution was primarily low.
33. The government progress in UPR implementation observed by CSOs were mainly from low to neutral progress. It was observed that although the government has made five-year national master plan and Millennium Development Goals(MDG), many government program could not be well operated due to the shortage of financial and technical resources, especially in rural remote areas.



## **VI. Recommendations**

34. Although the government has made progress in many areas in the UPR, there should be nationwide dissemination of the five-year national master plans and the MDG to CSOs and other stakeholders. Hence, they are able to put the national master plan into action or practice where it is appropriate for the CSOs' specialists.
35. It is also recommended that the dissemination of the UPR shall be widely made among the CSO members across the country.
36. International non-government organisation shall also provide the financial and technical assistance to Lao CSOs in order to enable them to implement activities related to the UPR.
37. From the survey, it was recommended that the following areas should be prioritised implementation in the next five years: (1) Ottawa Convention on Landmines; (2) Develop a national human rights plan of action to improve awareness of the conventions to which the Lao People's Democratic Republic is a party, encourage civil society engagement on human rights issues (Germany); (3) Adopt and implement a national action plan to combat trafficking in persons, emphasizing the protection of indigenous women and migrants (Mexico); (4) Ensure equitable treatment of all groups in society and, as a first step, invite the Independent Expert on Minority Issues to undertake a country visit (New Zealand); (5) Adopt and implement the measures necessary to grant the Hmong the same rights and freedoms as the other members of the Lao population in accordance with international human rights standards, including through genuine engagement with the international community on the issue (Slovakia).

## **VII. Limitations**

38. While conducting this survey, the team has faced difficulty in time constraints and financial shortage. The team could not get all 140 civil society organisations including 9 foundations to answer the questionnaire. The team found that the data collected were not enough to make the representatives of all CSOs throughout the country. However, the CSOs in Vientiane Capital may represent some practical comments in many areas.