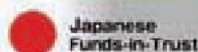




United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Secondary Education Regional Information Base: Country Profile

Lao PDR





United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



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**Secondary education regional information base: country profile –
Lao PDR.** Bangkok: UNESCO Bangkok, 2008.
23 pp.

1. Secondary education. 2. Educational Policy. 3. Lao PDR.

ISBN 978-92-9223-172-9 (Print version)
ISBN 978-92-9223-173-6 (Electronic version)

Chief Editor: Caroline Haddad
Editor: Takayo Ogisu and Yoko Sato
Design/Layout: Pongsuda Vongsingha
Cover photo: © Inthasone Phetsiriseng

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Published by the
UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education
920 Sukhumvit Road, Prakanong
Bangkok 10110, Thailand

Printed in Thailand

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Acknowledgement

This Lao PDR Country Profile has particularly benefited from inputs provided by consultants Mr. Claude Tibi and Mr. Inthasone Phetsiriseng. The most recent data/information included within this report has been collected thanks to the collaboration of relevant offices/departments at the Lao PDR Government's Ministry of Education.

This publication is part of a series of Secondary Education Regional Information Base Country Profiles developed by the Education Policy and Reform (EPR) Unit in collaboration with the Assessment, Information Systems, Monitoring and Statistics (AIMS) Unit and other relevant UNESCO Field Offices.

The project receives a generous financial contribution from the Japanese Government.

Reader's Guide

The following symbols are used in the statistical tables:

... No data available

na Not applicable

* National estimation

** UIS estimation

- Magnitude nil or negligible

⁺ⁿ Data refers to the school or financial year (or period) after the reference year (or period)

⁻ⁿ Data refers to the school or financial year (or period) before the reference year (or period)

General Notes:

The Secondary Education Information Base: Country Profile uses statistics from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) and national sources. Although, in principle, UIS statistics are used as the primary data source to facilitate comparison with other countries, nationally available statistics are used extensively where specific data is not available from UIS.

All data indicated as UIS data was retrieved from the UIS Education Database (<http://www.uis.unesco.org>) on January 30, 2008. Statistics from national sources were collected through questionnaires, and the original sources are indicated under each table/figure.

All tables and figures have been compiled by UNESCO Bangkok.

Definitions:

A comprehensive list of education indicators, including their definition, purpose, calculation method, and formulas used in their calculation, is available from the UIS Glossary of [Education Indicators](#).

Levels of education in UIS statistics are defined according to the International Standard Classification of Education ([ISCED97](#)).

The year cited in tables and figures refers to the year in which the academic or financial year ends. Therefore, wherever the given year is spread across two calendar years, the year is cited according to the later year (e.g. academic year 2003/04 is presented as 2004). As for the statistics retrieved from national sources, the reference year is reserved as presented in the original source.

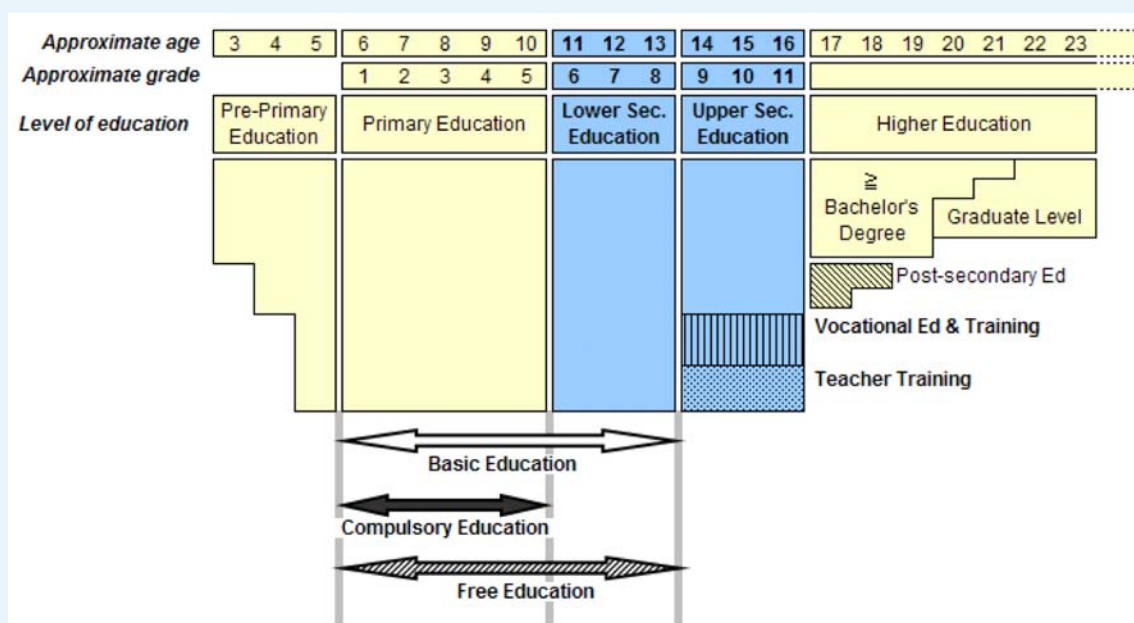
Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
APEL	Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning
BEGP	Basic Education Girls Project
CPI	Committee for Planning and Investment
DEB	District Education Bureau
DGE	Department of General Education
DOF	Department of Finance
DOP	Department of Personnel
DRS	Data-base Reporting System
DTE	Department of Teacher Education
EFA	Education for All
EFA NPA	Education for All National Plan of Action
ESITC	Education Statistics and Information Technology Center
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GPI	Gender Parity Index
IBE	International Bureau of Education
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LAK	Lao Kip (currency)
MOE	Ministry of Education
NPA	National Plan of Action
MOF	Ministry of Finance
NGPES	National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy
NSEDP	National Socio-economic Development Plan
PDR	People's Democratic Republic
PES	Provincial Education Service
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
PTR	Pupil-teacher Ratio
QA	Quality Assurance
RIES	Research Institute for the Educational Science
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
TA	Technical Assistance
TESAP	Teacher Education Strategy and Action Plan
TTC	Teacher Training College
TTS	Teacher Training School
TVE	Technical and Vocational Education
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
USD	United States Dollar (currency)

1 Secondary Education at a Glance

1.1 Education System

Figure 1. Education Structure: Approximate Starting Age and Duration



1.2 Size of Schooling Sector

Table 1. School-aged Population, 2006

	School-aged population	Ave. Annual Growth Rate, 2001-2006
Primary	768,885	-0.18%
Secondary	909,875	2.93%
Lower secondary	469,977	2.31%
Upper secondary	439,898	3.62%

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics. 2008a.

Table 2. Enrolment, 2005

	Enrolment	Ave. Annual Growth Rate, 2000-2005
Primary	890,821	1.38%
Secondary	393,856	7.96%
Lower secondary	243,757	5.66%
Upper secondary	150,099	12.36%

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics. 2008a.

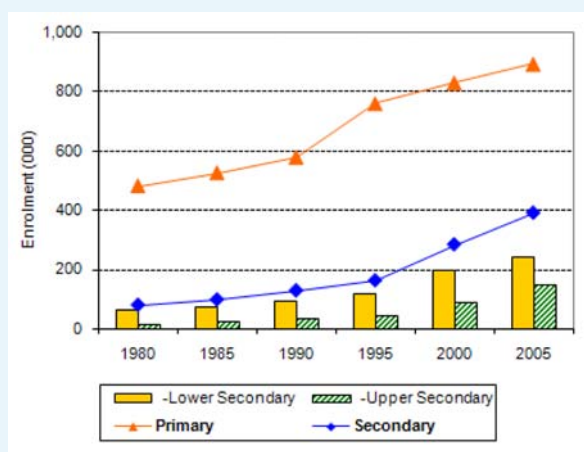
Table 3. Number of Teaching Staff (full and part-time), 2005

	Number of teaching staff	Ave. Annual Growth Rate, 2000-2005
Primary	28,299	0.51%
Secondary	15,891	4.96%
Lower secondary	10,580**	4.38%
Upper secondary	5,311**	6.17%

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics. 2008a.

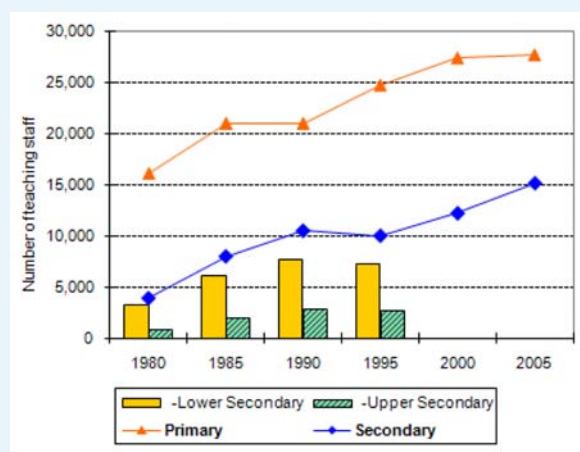
Note: Average annual growth rate was calculated by UNESCO Bangkok on the basis of UIS statistics.

Figure 2. Change in Number of Enrolment, 1980-2005



Source: ESITC, 2007.

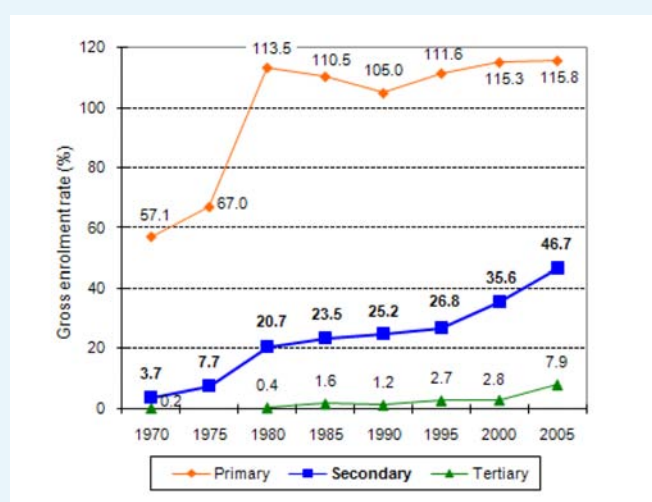
Figure 3. Change in Number of Teaching Staff, 1980-2005



Source: ESITC, 2007.

1.3 Access and Participation

Figure 4. Change in GER by Level, 1970-2005



Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2008a.

Table 4. GER in Secondary Education, 2005

	Total	Male	Female	GPI
Secondary	46.7%	52.9%	40.4%	0.76
Lower secondary	56.2%	62.5%	49.6%	0.79
Upper secondary	36.7%	42.6%	30.6%	0.72

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2008a.

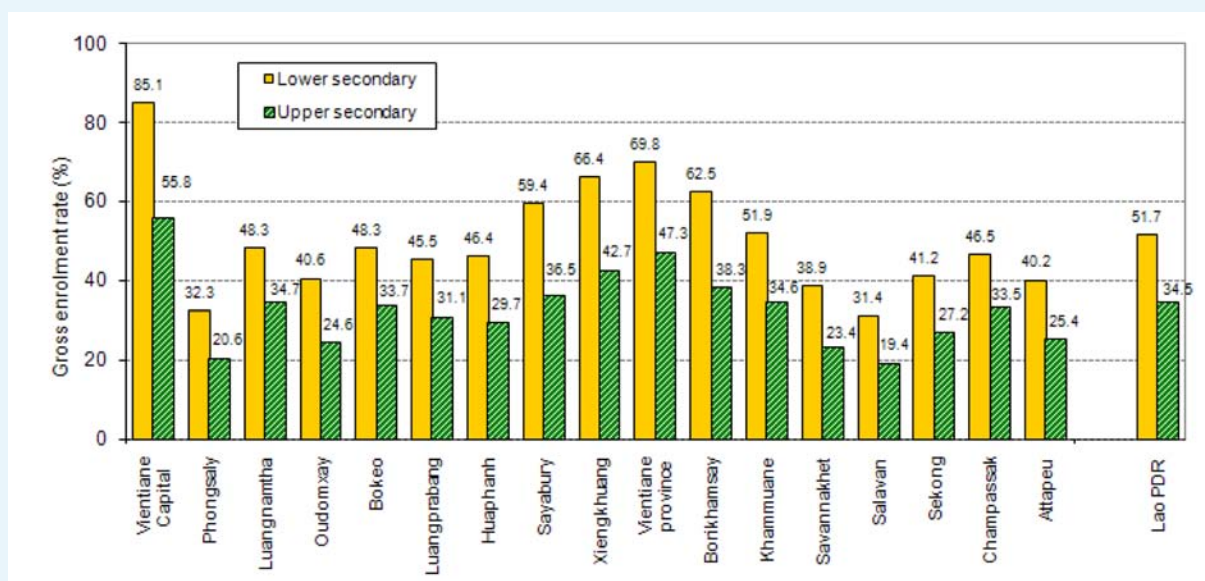
Table 5. NER in Secondary Education, 2005

	Total	Male	Female	GPI
Secondary	37.7%	40.6%	34.7%	0.85

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2008a.

1.4 Geographical Distribution of Access

Figure 5. GER by Province, 2005/06



Source: ESITC, 2007.

Table 6. GER by Province and Sex, 2005/06

	Lower Secondary			Upper Secondary		
	Male	Female	GPI	Male	Female	GPI
Vientiane Capital	82.5%	87.6%	0.94	52.7%	59.1%	0.89
Phongsaly	31.8%	32.6%	0.98	21.1%	20.2%	1.04
Luangnamtha	42.2%	54.0%	0.78	29.1%	40.1%	0.73
Oudomxay	33.0%	48.0%	0.69	18.1%	30.9%	0.59
Bokeo	39.8%	56.6%	0.70	27.0%	40.4%	0.67
Luangprabang	38.0%	52.5%	0.72	24.7%	37.3%	0.66
Huaphanh	38.9%	53.5%	0.73	24.4%	34.6%	0.71
Sayabury	52.4%	65.9%	0.80	29.3%	43.5%	0.67
Xiengkhuang	61.1%	71.4%	0.86	37.8%	47.3%	0.80
Vientiane province	63.3%	76.1%	0.83	39.2%	54.8%	0.72
Borikhamxay	54.2%	70.3%	0.77	31.7%	44.6%	0.71
Khammuane	45.6%	57.9%	0.79	28.4%	40.8%	0.70
Savannakhet	36.0%	41.7%	0.86	20.5%	26.2%	0.78
Salavan	24.9%	37.5%	0.66	15.9%	22.8%	0.70
Sekong	35.5%	46.8%	0.76	21.1%	33.3%	0.63
Champassak	41.3%	51.6%	0.80	27.7%	39.0%	0.71
Attapeu	34.7%	45.4%	0.76	19.4%	31.7%	0.61

Note: Gender Parity Index (GPI) was calculated by UNESCO Bangkok on the basis of ESITC.

Source: ESITC, 2007.

1.5 Student Progression

Table 7. Progression Indicators, 2005

Gross Primary Graduation Ratio	68.0% ⁻¹
Transition rate from Primary to Secondary	78.0% ⁻¹
Gross Enrolment Ratio in Total Secondary	44.1%
Percentage of Repeaters in Total Secondary	2.7%
Upper Secondary Gross Graduation Ratio (General)	...
Upper Secondary Gross Graduation Ratio (TVE)	...

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics. 2008a.

1.6 PTR and Average Class Size

Table 8. Pupil-teacher Ratio, 2005

Lower secondary	23.0
Upper secondary	28.3

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics. 2008a.

Table 9. Average Class Size, 2005/06

Lower secondary		Upper secondary	
Grade 6	47.8	Grade 9	54.0
Grade 7	45.1	Grade 10	53.4
Grade 8	43.7	Grade 11	52.7
LS total	45.7	US total	53.4

Source: ESITC. 2007

2 Institutional Context of Secondary Education

2.1 Education System

Formal education in Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) consists of primary education (five years), secondary education (six years), post-secondary education (one or two years), and tertiary education (three to seven years).

The level of education after primary education, referred to as secondary education, caters to children and adolescents who range in age from 11-16 years old, and it is divided into two stages: lower secondary education and upper secondary education. Lower secondary education caters to 11- to 13-year-olds (Grade 6-8), whereas upper secondary education to 14- to 16-year-olds (Grade 9-11). This 3-3 system in secondary education has been in the reform process since 2007 under the National Education System Reform Strategy (NESRS). After the completion of the reform, lower secondary education will be extended to four years, catering to 11- to 14-year-olds. Upper secondary education is further divided into two streams, namely, general education and vocational education (which includes teacher training).

The Education Law issued in 2000 stipulates that all levels of education should be provided free of charge to all children. Article 3 in particular has a statement on free secondary schooling and Article 4 on technical vocational education (TVE). The country's Education for All National Plan of Action (2004) has a target to expand the definition of basic education up to lower secondary education by 2015.

(See Figure 1. Education Structure: Approximate Starting Age and Duration on page 1.)

2.2 Legislative Framework and Key Policy Documents

A number of reports regarding the logical framework of the education system and policy suggestions have been prepared. The policy documents and reports that are currently in effect are presented below.

The Resolution of the Fifth Party Congress, 1991-1996 (1991)

The Resolution of the Fifth Party Congress sets the following seven goals on education: (a) to enforce compulsory education for children and youth, using mainly state funds; (b) to eradicate illiteracy; (c) promote private education in both general and vocational areas; (d) to reorganize secondary and vocational education in the provinces to meet the needs of the country; (e) to raise the quality of education to international standards; (f) to expand education to reach the remote, isolated, and mountainous areas and build ethnic boarding schools; and (g) to improve the system of monks' education and outline its policies.

The Lao PDR Constitution (1996)

Article 19 of the Lao PDR Constitution states that "Education, culture and scientific activities are the means to raise the level of knowledge, patriotism, love of the people's democracy, the spirit of solidarity between ethnic groups and the spirit of independence. The pursuit of compulsory education is important. The state permits private schools that follow the state curriculum."

The Education Law (2000)

The Education Law, issued in April 2000, stipulates that all Lao citizens have the right to education without discrimination based on their ethnicity, origin, religion, gender, or social status. In regards to secondary education, the Education Law also establishes that "the government has the duty to expand secondary education as appropriate for creating conditions for the development of Lao citizens' necessary knowledge and capacity for their occupation or further study"; "the government carefully plans the expansion of vocational education according to the needs of the labor market and individual occupation"; and "the development of vocational education has to get support and contribution from all concerned sectors of the government and the involvement of state-owned and private enterprises."¹

1 Lao People's Democratic Republic. 2000. Education Law, p. 3.

The Education Law, amended in 2006/07, states that all individuals and organizations have obligation to invest and contribute to education and stipulates the introduction of 4-year lower secondary education system.

The Educational Strategic Planning by 2010 and 2020 (2001)

The Educational Strategic Planning by 2010 and 2020 recognizes the need for lifelong educational opportunities and considers education as a core component in overall human resource development. Based on the Strategic Planning, a five-year education development plan is developed every five years.

(See description on *the Sixth Five-Year Plan of Educational Development 2006-2010* below.)

The Education For All National Plan of Action, 2003-2015 (2004)

The Education for All National Plan of Action (EFA NPA) recognizes EFA as the key plank of the Government's education strategy. In addition to primary education, the EFA NPA is meant to promote lower secondary, non-formal, and adult education. The three principles of increased equitable access, improved quality and relevance, and strengthened decentralized management provide the framework for achieving EFA. The EFA NPA recommends that an increased share of the government budget goes toward education in order to improve the balance between the investment and recurrent budget, and to significantly increase teachers' salaries.

The EFA NPA Programme 3, which calls for increasing access to and participation in lower secondary education, identifies the following priority goals: 1) achieving parity between girls and boys in access to lower secondary education, particularly among ethnic groups and the poorest areas; and 2) reaching a national transition rate from Grade 5 to Grade 6 of 82.5 percent in 2010/11, and 85 percent in 2015/16. In addition to these two priority goals, EFA NPA sets quantitative targets in terms of number of enrolments, number of teachers to be recruited, and number of classrooms to be constructed.

Most importantly, EFA NPA states that the general education system should be reformed to a 12-year system by adding one additional year to the lower secondary education, i.e. 5+4+3, in order to lead to better growth, meet international standards, and contribute to the socio-economic development of the country.

(See *7 Recent Reforms* on page 19 to get more detailed information about the educational reform.)

The Sixth Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan, 2006-2010 (2006)

The current National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSED) sees education as a crucial priority area and one of the four pillars of the country's poverty reduction strategy. The NSED emphasizes the development of quality human resources in order to meet the nation's socio-economic development needs. The measures to achieve education objectives include universalizing compulsory education at the primary level and increasing participation at the lower secondary level, "ensuring that all people have the opportunity to apply their education to serve the socio-economic development programme."²

The Sixth Five-Year Plan of Educational Development, 2006-2010 (2006)

The Sixth Five-Year Plan of Educational Development shows the directions of educational development in Lao PDR during 2006-2010, specifically in regard to access, quality, and administration and management.

In terms of development in secondary education, the plan focuses on expanding access to lower secondary education as one of the major targets. It aims to improve the enrolment ratio during 2005-2010 from 54.4-68.4 percent for lower secondary, and from 34.2-40.2 percent for upper secondary education.

General education structural reform as described in the EFA NPA is also outlined in this plan.

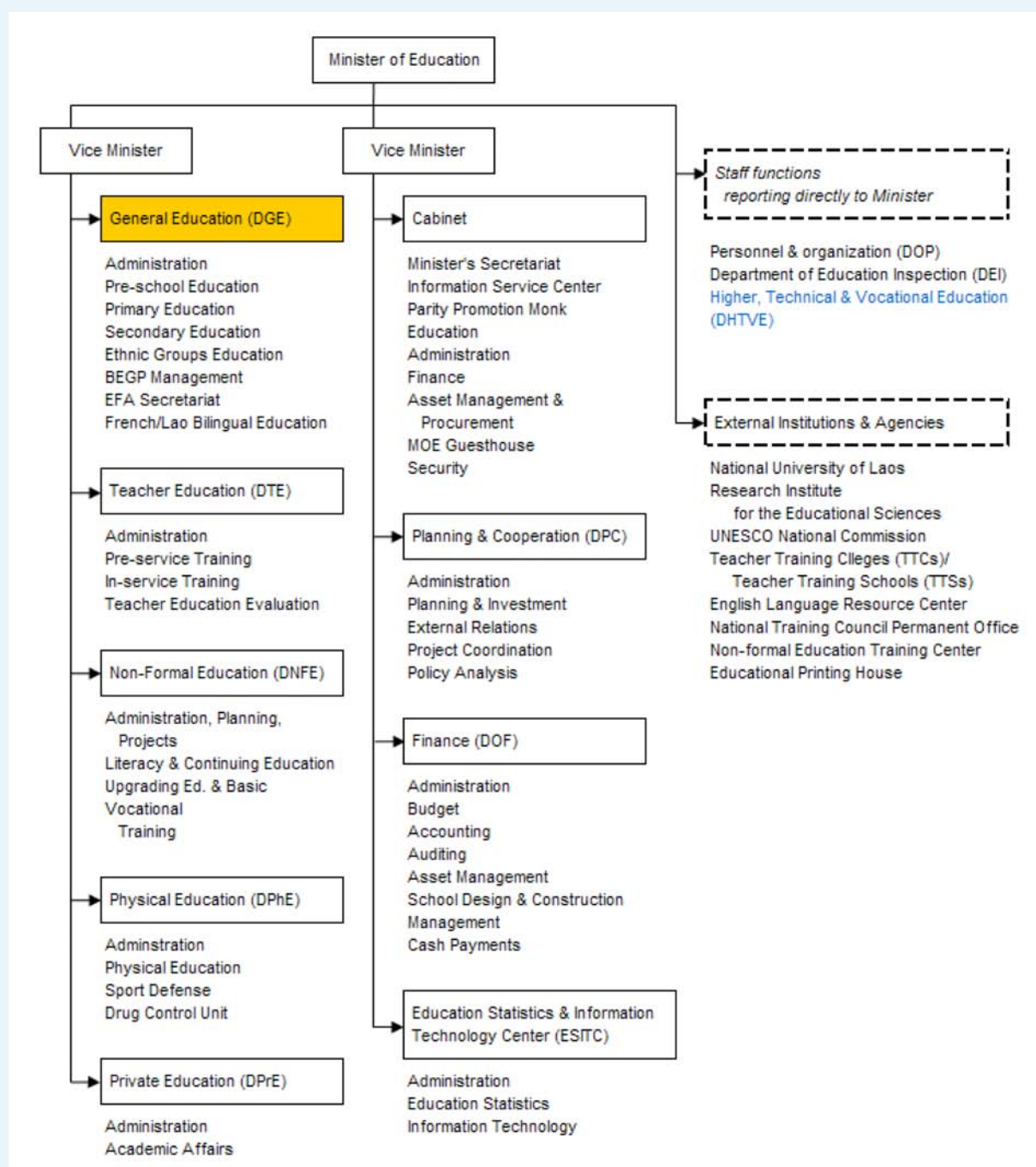
2 Lao People's Democratic Republic. 2006. National Socio-economic Development Plan (2006-2010), p. 145.

2.3 Administrative Structure

The education system in Lao PDR is managed by the Ministry of Education (MOE) in association with the attached departments and institutions/agencies. The MOE takes management responsibility for the following areas: (i) planning, (ii) budgeting and financing, (iii) personnel and human resources, (iv) academic affairs, and (v) properties and procurement (including school construction).

The Department of General Education, attached to MOE, takes responsibility for administration on pre-school, primary and secondary education, education for ethnic groups, French/Lao bilingual education, basic education for girls, and EFA-related matters. Technical and vocational education and private education are under the administration of the Department of Higher, Technical & Vocational Education and the Department of Private Education, respectively.

Figure 6. MOE's Organization Chart



Lao PDR is in the process of decentralization across all sectors involved in socio-economic development, and the Deconcentration Decree issued by the Prime Minister Office in March 2000 outlines the specific roles and responsibilities played by provinces, districts, and villages as follows: the province acts as the strategic unit for development, capable of supervising and leading management in all areas; the district acts as a planning and budgeting unit, with responsibility for the preparation of plans and projects, and monitoring and evaluation of their implementation; and the village acts as a basic implementation unit. In the context of the Education sector, MOE shares its responsibilities with Provincial Education Services (PES) and the District Education Bureaus (DEB). Each PES is responsible for (1) secondary level institutions and (2) vocational institutions that are delegated by the MOE. Each DEB takes responsibility for pre-school, primary and non-formal education institutions within its own district.

In addition to the roles and responsibilities of MOE, PES, and DEB, communities often take initiative in support of primary and secondary education. In some cases, this initiative extends to construction and maintenance of school facilities, employment of teachers, and part of payment for salaries to teachers who are contracted by communities.

The following offices/departments are responsible for different functions of secondary education management:

Table 10. Secondary Education Management by Office/Department

Functions	Responsible body
General secondary education	Department of General Education, MOE
TVE at the secondary level	Department of Higher, Technical and Vocational Education, MOE
Secondary teacher in-service training	Department of Teacher Education, MOE
Personnel management and development	Department of Personnel, MOE
Curriculum development and research	Research Institute for Educational Science
Learning assessment	Research Institute for Educational Science
Budgeting	Department of Finance, MOE Provincial Education Services Ministry of Finance Committee for Planning and Investment
Planning	Department of Planning and Co-operation, MOE Committee for Planning and Investment
Private education	Department of Private Education, MOE
Non-formal education	Department of Non Formal Education, MOE
EMIS	Educational Statistics and Information Technology Centre, MOE
Testing	Department of General Education, MOE
Learning/teaching materials and equipment	Research Institute for Educational Science

2.4 Financing

The resource management mechanism in Lao PDR is undergoing a process of decentralization. Overall, the recurrent budget is funded out of domestic resources from the Ministry of Finance (MOF), and the investment budget is to a large extent funded by external resources and managed by the Committee for Planning and Investment (CPI) with MOF's involvement.

The formal budget preparation process takes place within the framework of decentralized planning and involves both central ministries and provincial governments. There is both a "bottom up" and a "top down" process. Budget requests move from schools to the district (DEBs) and from the district to the provincial governments (PESs). PESs submit their budget requests in the second quarter of the year, and they are finally

consolidated within MOE's budget proposal to be submitted to MOF and CPI at the same time of the year. The "top down" phase starts with review by MOF and CPI, followed by regional conferences mid-year to establish the overall budget limits for each province, the shares for each sector, and recurrent and capital shares. After a series of revisions and further negotiations the recurrent budget is finalized by MOF, and the capital budget by CPI. Both are submitted to the National Assembly during October-November.

Fiscal year is October 1 – September 31.

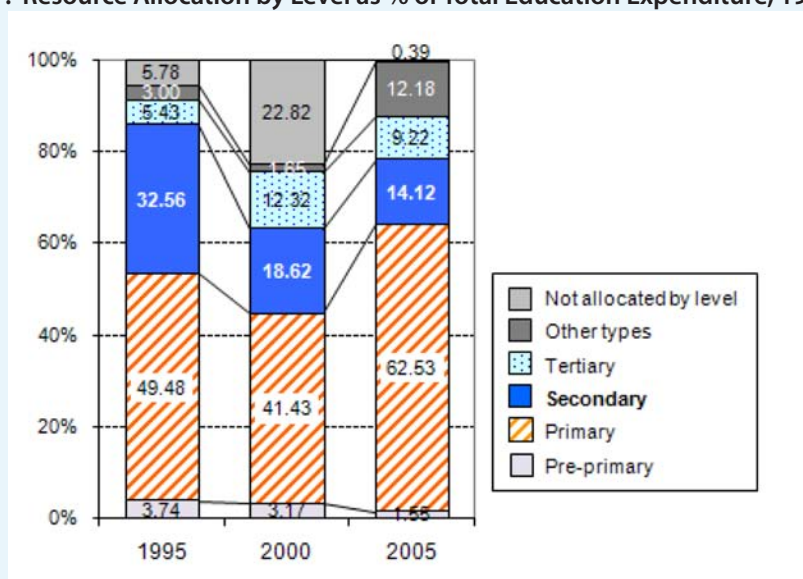
School year is September 1 – June 30.

Table 11. Public Expenditure on Education, 2006/07

As % of GDP ⁽¹⁾	2.29%- ²
As % of total govt. expenditure ⁽¹⁾	11.71%- ²
Per pupil as % of GDP per capita ⁽²⁾	
Pre-primary education	1.23%
Primary education	38.19%
Lower secondary	8.37%
Upper secondary	5.30%
Tertiary education	24.90%

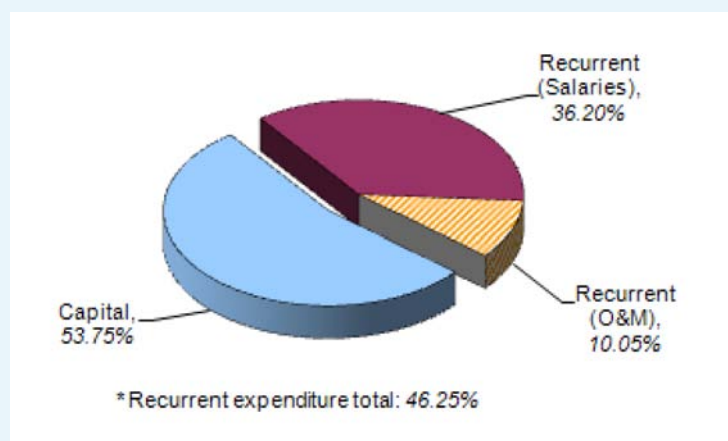
Source: ⁽¹⁾ UNESCO Institute for Statistics. 2008a. ⁽²⁾ DOF, MOE.

Figure 7. Resource Allocation by Level as % of Total Education Expenditure, 1995-2005



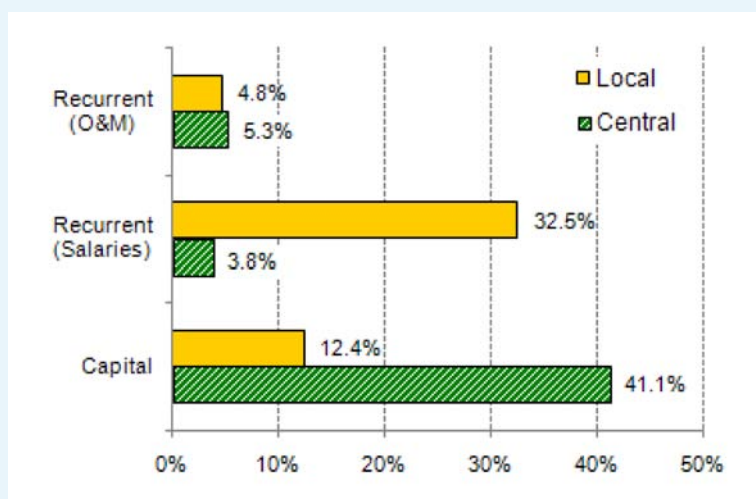
Source: CPI. 2006.

Figure 8. Resource Allocation by Nature of Spending as % of Total Education Expenditure, 2004/05



Source: CPI. 2006.

Figure 9. Educational Expenditure by Nature of Spending and Source, 2004/05



Source: CPI. 2006.

3 General Secondary Education (GSE)

3.1 Types of Schools

There are three different types of institutions offering secondary education: lower secondary schools, upper secondary schools, and complete secondary schools, which provide education at both lower and upper levels. All institutions offering general secondary education are under the authority of the Ministry of Education.

Table 12. Types of Secondary Schools, Administrative Authority, and Enrolments, 2006

	Grade						Administrative authority	Number of Institutions	Enrolments
	6	7	8	9	10	11			
Lower secondary							DEB	642	126,573
Upper secondary							PES	28	27,222
Complete secondary (LS+US)							PES	310	238,090

LS = Lower secondary; US = Upper secondary

Source: ESITC. 2006.

Table 13. Number of Institutions by Levels of Education, 2006

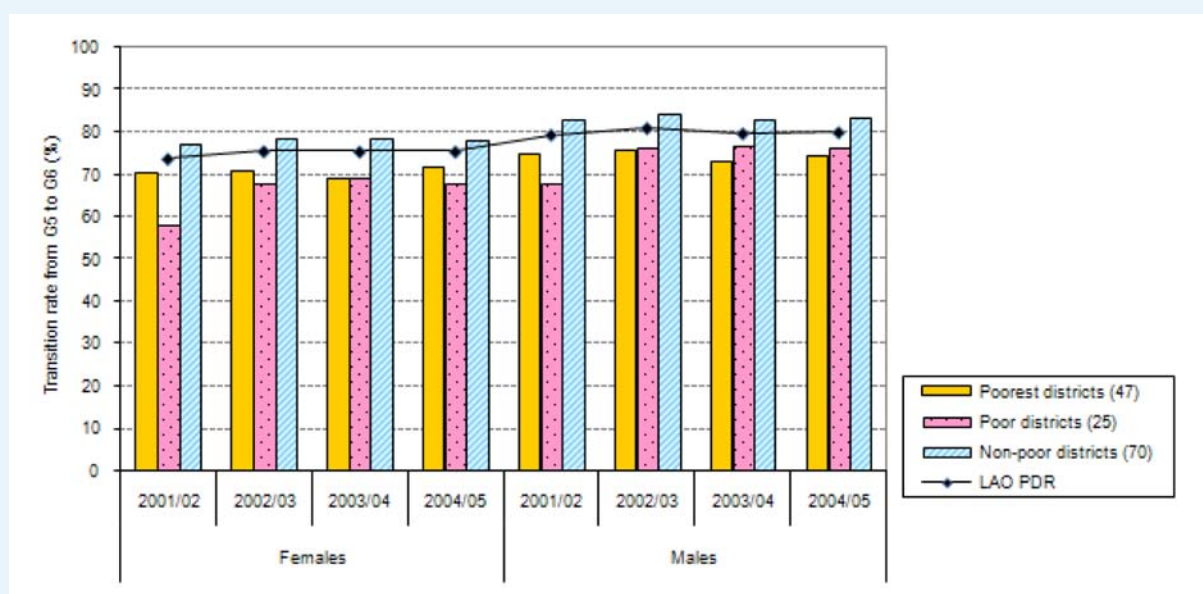
	2006
Pre-primary	1,087
Primary	8,654
Secondary	980
Vocational & Technical	51
Teacher Training	14
Tertiary	3
Total	10,787

Source: MOE. 2006a.

3.2 Admission Requirements

The transition system in Lao PDR is based on the results of a school-leaving examination. Admission in Grade 6 (the first year of lower secondary education) is open to all students having passed the Primary Education Achievement Examination held at the end of Grade 5. Similarly, admission in Grade 9 (the first year of upper secondary education) is open to all students having passed the Lower Secondary Achievement Examination, held at the end of Grade 8. However, the administration body for the examination varies between the two levels. While DEBs are responsible for the administration of the examination in primary schools and admission to lower secondary schools, PESs take responsibility for examination in lower secondary schools and admission to upper secondary schools.

Figure 10. Transition Rate from Primary to Lower Secondary Education by Poverty Level³, 2001/02-2004/05



Source: UNESCO. 2005.

3.3 Student Assessment and Promotion

Annual Promotion

In both lower and upper secondary education, each school conducts monthly and semester tests to assess students' learning. Annual promotion is decided mainly based on the accumulated test results from monthly and semester tests. Therefore, in principle, each school is held responsible for the assessment of its students.

Table 14. Percent of Repeaters by Grade and Sex, 2005

	Lower Secondary			Upper Secondary		
	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
Both sexes	2.99%	2.10%	4.97%	2.35%	1.32%	1.71%
male	4.12%	2.97%	6.14%	3.24%	1.72%	2.16%
female	1.52%	1.00%	3.38%	1.11%	0.75%	1.04%

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics. 2008a.

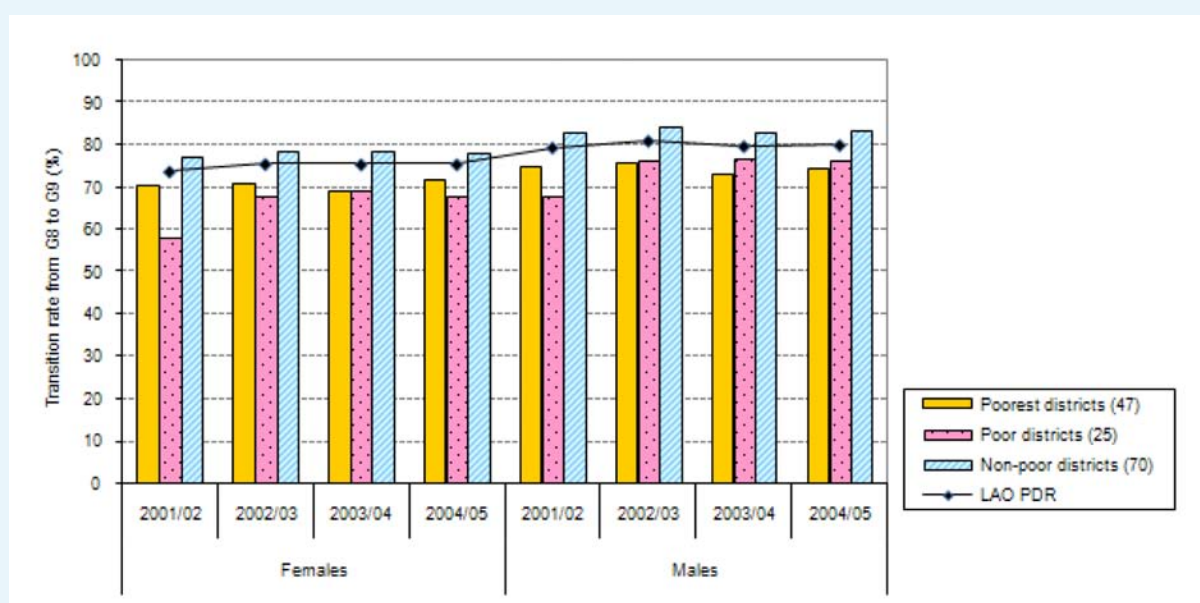
3 The National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy (NGPES) (Lao PDR. 2003) divided the 142 districts of Laos into 70 non-poor, 25 poor and 47 poorest districts, using a range of income, physical infrastructural and educational characteristics.

Graduation

Students' graduation from lower and upper secondary schools is decided based on the results of the Lower Secondary Achievement Examination and Upper Secondary Achievement Examination administered at the end of Grade 8 (the final grade of lower secondary education) and Grade 11 (the final grade of upper secondary education), respectively. The results of this examination are used both as a school-leaving assessment and as an entry requirement to the next level of education (i.e. upper secondary education or higher education). According to the General Schooling Regulation issued by Department of General Education (DGE) of MOE, a student should not be absent from school for more than 30 days during the final year in order to be qualified to take the examination.

While the achievement examination for the lower secondary education is conducted at the provincial level by each PES, that for upper secondary education is administered and assessed at the national level by MOE.

Figure 11. Transition Rate from Lower to Upper Secondary Education by Poverty Level, 2001/02-2004/05



Source: UNESCO. 2005.

3.4 Tuition

Although lower and upper secondary education is offered legally free of charge, schools are entitled to raise registration fees of generally in excess of Kip 10,000-50,000 per student per year (equivalent of USD 1-5) for lower secondary education and Kip 10,000-100,000 per student per year (equivalent of USD 1-10) for upper secondary education, as well as fees for specific purposes for both levels. Money from registration fees is used for school operation and maintenance, including small repairs and subsidies for teachers in some cases, since recurrent budget from MOE does not include any provision for school operation and management.

There are some schemes in place to provide special assistance to ethnic groups in disadvantaged areas. The Government provides boarding schools at a cost of USD 9 per month per student, and local governments also provide such assistance. Also, schools normally do not require registration fees for more than three children per family.

3.5 Curriculum

The Research Institute for the Educational Science (RIES), which is under MOE authority, is in charge of curriculum development and research. The RIES encourages provincial and district level participation in the textbook development process, as well.

At the secondary level, all public and private schools must comply with the national curriculum, which took effect in 1975 and was revised in 1994. Government policy allows up to 20 percent of the curriculum to be localized in order to reflect conditions at each school. MOE works with development partners to promote the development of local curriculum at the school level (for example, in the area of life skills learning).

The curriculum content in secondary education reflects the ideas described in the Education Law, which states “education is the innovative process of learning and teaching in natural and social sciences for the development of human resources in all areas, to be just, knowledgeable, capable, good health, artistic, have vocational skills, love the nation and the peoples’ democracy regime to supply the needs of the social- economic structure in each era” (the Education Law, Article 2).

With the view to extending lower secondary education from a three- to four-year cycle, the current curriculum has been undergoing a reform and revision process since 2007. (Please see 7. Recent Reforms for the context of the Basic Education Sector Development Programme (BESDP), of which the curriculum reform constitutes one of the major components.)

Table 15. Statutory School-opening and Teaching Weeks per Year, Teaching Hours per Week

	School opening weeks per year	Teaching weeks per year	Teaching hours per week
Lower secondary	33 weeks	33 weeks	27-32 hours
Upper secondary	33 weeks	33 weeks	32-33 hours

Note: School opening weeks per year were calculated by P. Inthasone based on the academic year (September 1 to June 30).

Source: NRIES. 1994.

A more comprehensive and detailed description of the curriculum is available from “[World Data on Education](#)” database by IBE.

4 Private Education

The Decree on Compulsory Primary Education in Lao PDR (Prime Minister Office, 1996) states that the education service can be provided by either public or private institutions, provided that the teaching/learning content complies with the national curriculum designed by the MOE, as well as the minimum standards stated in the Regulations of the General Education System, issued by the DGE. Private institutions are fully independent in terms of finance, but they must be registered under the Department of Private Education.

Although the Government encourages the private provision of education at all levels, the number of private institutions and enrolments are still very limited (1.94 percent at the lower secondary level and 0.99 percent at the upper secondary level in 2005). While several incentive schemes have been introduced by the Education Law in order to promote and support the private educational institutions, such as loans and tax exemption (Article 4, paragraph 3), private schools do not currently receive any government subsidies.

Table 16. Percent of Enrolment in Private Institutions, 2000 and 2005

	2000			2005		
	All	General	TVE	All	General	TVE
Secondary education	0.87%	0.88%	-	1.57%	1.60%	-
Lower secondary	1.25%	1.25%	-	1.94%	2.19%	-
Upper secondary	-	-	-	0.99%	1.02%	-

Note: The percentages were calculated by UNESCO Bangkok on the basis of UIS Statistics.

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics. 2008a.

5 Secondary Level Technical and Vocational Education

Technical and vocational education is seen as one of the key components for developing human resource capacity and, thereby, the socio-economic development of the country.

The Action Plan for the Development of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (MOE, 2006b) sets the national target at an annual intake of 8,000 students in TVE programmes, as well as establishing at least one public TVE institution/centre in each province by 2020. The target includes not only institutions under the authority of MOE but also those of other line ministries. The latter target has been already met as of November 2007, including not only institutions under the authority of MOE but also those under other ministries. The Government also strives to establish better coordination between TVE-related policies, the broad context of national socio-economic development and the needs of the labour market. In order to meet this goal, the Government organizes meetings with all line ministries to discuss relevant topics such as meeting manpower needs and establishing additional TVE institutions.

Table 17. Percent of Enrolment in TVE Programmes, 2000-2005

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Secondary education	1.3%	1.4%	1.4%	1.4%	1.4%	1.4%
Lower secondary	-	-	-	-	-	-
Upper secondary	4.3%	4.6%	4.2%	4.0%	3.8%	3.6%

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics. 2008a.

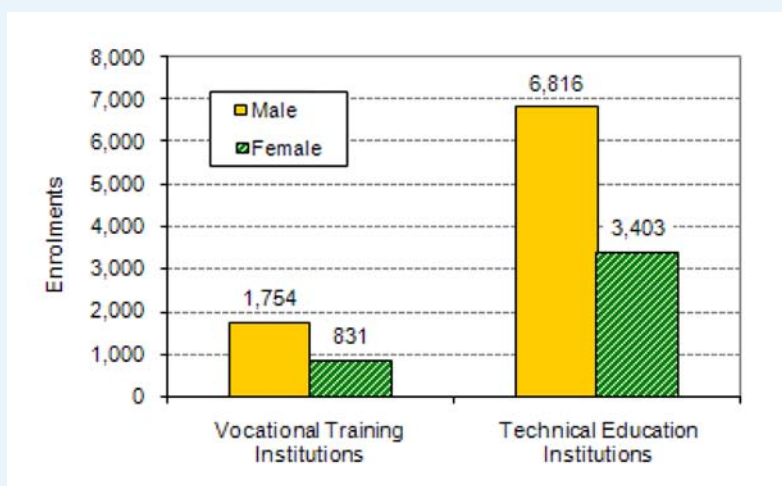
Types and Levels of TVE

There are two types of secondary level TVE institutions in Lao PDR: vocational training institutions and technical education institutions. Vocational training institutions are administered by several governmental bodies, including the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Transportation, and Ministry of Culture and Health. There are 12 vocational training institutions in the whole country, which offer either 3-year programmes for lower secondary school graduates or 4-year programmes for primary school graduates. The latter applies only to institutions under the Ministry of Information and Culture.

The other type of TVE, technical education institutions, provides three- or four-year programmes at the upper secondary level for lower secondary school graduates. There are currently 17 technical education institutions in the country.

Under the Education sector's on-going reform (National Education System Reform Strategy 2006-2015), students will be able to shift their specialization from TVE to general education and vice versa. (See *7 Recent Reforms* to learn more about the NESRS.)

Figure 12. Enrolment by Types of TVE Institutions and Sex, 2005/06



Source: ESITC, 2006.

6 Teachers in GSE

Table 18. Number of Teachers and Key Indicators, 2005

	Number of teachers	Percent of female teachers	Percent of trained teachers	Teacher-pupil ratio
Secondary education	15,618	42.14%	92.49%**	24.78
Lower secondary	10,551	41.17%**	91.04%**	23.04**
Upper secondary	5,067	44.06%**	89.81%**	28.26**

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics. 2008a.

6.1 Teacher Management

For public institutions, PESs are responsible for recruitment of teachers based on the Department of Administration and Civil Servants quota. Applications for quotas can be submitted by each school through DEB, PES and MOE for lower secondary school teachers and through PES and MOE for upper secondary school teachers. In terms of teacher deployment, the Ministry grants final approval of assignments based on the teacher applications or on recommendation by the evaluation committee through DEB, PES, and DOP. Both in- and pre-service teacher training is under the control of the Department of Teacher Education (DTE), MOE. DTE is also responsible for overseeing activities that are conducted by teacher training institutions.

6.2 Qualifications and Pre-service Training

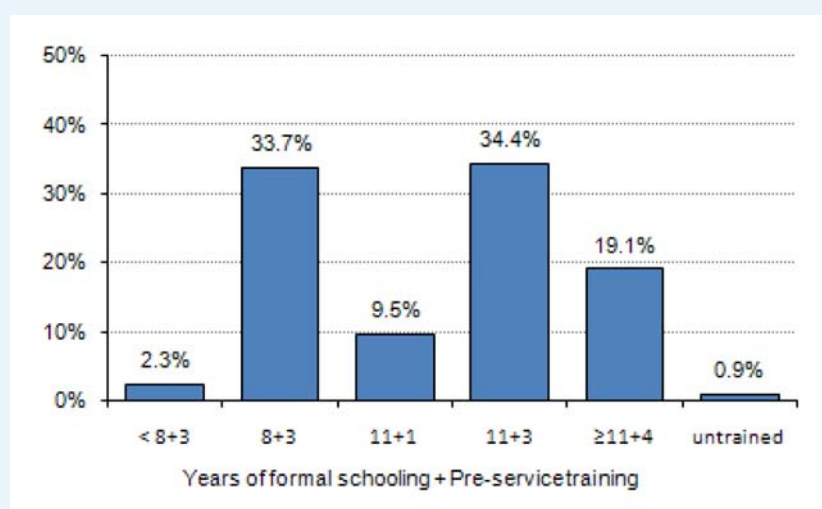
Lower and upper secondary teachers are required to obtain 11 years of formal schooling, followed by 3-year pre-service teacher training for lower secondary teachers and 4- or 5-year training for upper secondary teachers. The 3-year programmes are currently offered in five Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) for the following seven courses: Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, English, French, Lao Language, Mathematics, and Sciences, whereas 4-/5-year training programmes are provided by the Faculty of Education, National University of Laos. As part of pre-service teacher training, students are required to complete a 3-month practical training.

There are also a specialized teacher training college and other schools in the capital city for specific types of teacher training (i.e. monk Colleges, physical education teacher training school).

6.3 In-service Training

There are in-service teacher upgrading centres in every province. However, training is currently institutionalized only for primary school teachers. Trainings for secondary school teachers are organized on an ad-hoc basis in the context of donor projects. Once trainings for secondary teachers are mainstreamed, TTCs and Teacher Training Schools (TTSs) will be facilitating courses for both primary and lower secondary teachers in cooperation with teacher upgrading centres. It is expected that about 3,000 secondary teachers will be trained over the next three years (as of September 2007).

Figure 13. Distribution of Secondary Teachers by Qualifications, 2005/06



Source: MOE.

7 Recent Reforms

National Education System Reform Strategy (NESRS) 2006-2015

In line with the target set by the EFA NPA 2003-2015 to extend the duration of lower secondary education by one year, the NESRS further focuses on improving education access and quality, especially at the lower secondary level (including curriculum revision and development).

Under the framework of NESRS, the Basic Education Sector Development Programme (BESDP) 2007-2011, funded by ADB, sets more specific targets to: (1) expand opportunities to attend lower secondary schools, especially in poorer and under-served rural villages, (2) improve quality and standards in schools by extending lower secondary education from three to four grades, (3) revise and integrate the basic education curriculum and develop new learning/teaching materials, and (4) improve the effectiveness and relevance of education management at the local level.

(Decree 84/PM on the Adoption and Implementation of National Education System Reform Strategy 2006-2015 and Decree 85/PM on the Establishment and Tasks of the National Education Reform Commission Chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister)

Secondary Curriculum Reform from Grade 6 to Grade 12 (2007-present)

In line with the NESRS, a curriculum reform committee was established in 2007. The committee is currently drafting the objectives and reform content, and sub-committees organized by each subject matter are developing specific objectives and curriculum content based on the committee's tactics. This reform started with Grade 6 in 2007, and will continue in a grade-by-grade manner.

(Decree of the Education Minister on the Appointment of the Committee for Secondary Curriculum Reform. Number 391/MOE.RISE/07)

Establishment of Teacher Education Evaluation Division in the Department of Teacher Training, 2006

A draft 5-year plan was developed to make a fully functional database and reporting system for TTCs/TTSs and DTE. The Data-base Reporting System (DRS) will assemble qualitative and quantitative data to support the evaluation system of both teacher education and teacher performance, including the projection of teacher demand and supply. And also, Quality Assurance (QA) for teachers and Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) are now in the process of development.

(Decree of the Education Minister on Organization and Duties of the DTT. Number 1097/MOE.DTT/06.)

Teacher Education Strategy 2006-2015 and Action Plan 2006-2010 (TESAP)

The overall objective of this reform is to improve the management of the teacher education system. It addresses teacher supply and adequate deployment at all educational levels to meet the demand of growth. The plan has been designed in accordance with the NSEDP 2006-2010 and the EFA NPA 2003-2015. The TESAP outlines directions for teacher development, and particularly emphasizes staff needs for adequate conditions and facilities to perform their teaching tasks and responsibilities. The TESAP aims to ensure that teachers receive continuous and systematic upgrading related to their teaching subjects in order for them to become highly skilled teachers. The TESAP also intends to raise the teaching profession's status by improving the quality of training and by providing appropriate policies for extrinsic and intrinsic rewards.

(Lao PDR Prime Minister's Decree on Approval of the TESAP. Number 174/PM, dated 3 August 2006)

8 Involvement of Development Agencies

Below is the list of major projects relevant to secondary education (either on-going or recently completed) that receive support from external development agencies (as of September 2007):

Project Title	Agency (type of assistance)	Level of Education	Implementation Period	Links
Second Education Quality Improvement Project	ADB/Sida (TA/Loans)	US, PE+LS	2001-2008	Project website
Science and Mathematics Teacher Training	JICA (TA)	PE+LS	2004-2008	...
Basic Education Sector Development Program	ADB (TA/Grant/Loans)	LS	2006-2010	Project website
SWAP approach in Education Development	ADB (TA)	All levels in General Education	2007-2008	Project website

TA = Technical Assistance; PE = Primary education; LS = Lower secondary; US = Upper secondary

Implementation period: from the year of project approval to the [estimated] project completion year

The projects and information listed here are taken from agency websites.

9 Relevant Documents and Additional Resources

Listed below are documents and websites that provide country-specific information on education or the secondary education sub-sector.

Publications

Benveniste, L., Marshall, J. & Santibanez, L. 2007. *Teaching in Lao PDR*. ([Publication website](#))

Documents

People's Democratic Republic of Lao:

The Education For All National Plan of Action 2003-2015 ([PDF](#); 1.3Mb)
The Education Law
The Educational Strategic Planning by 2010 and 2020
The Five Year Education Development Plan 2006-2010
The Lao PDR Constitution
The Sixth Five-Year National Socio-economic Development Plan 2006-2010

World Bank:

King, E. & Walle, D. 2005. *Schooling and Poverty in Lao PDR*. (Report No. 39318-LA) ([Publication website](#))
World Bank. 2007. *Lao PDR Public Expenditure Review: Integrated Fiduciary Assessment*.
(Report No. 39791-LA) ([Publication website](#))

Websites

Asian Development Bank: <http://www.adb.org> (English)
[Key Indicators](#)

International Bureau of Education: <http://www.ibe.unesco.org> (English)
[World Data on Education](#) (Country pages in French)

UNESCO Institute for Statistics: <http://www.uis.unesco.org> (English)
[Education Database](#)
[Literacy Database](#)
[Country/Regional Profiles](#)

World Bank: <http://www.worldbank.org/> (English)
[Country website](#) (English)
[Data and Statistics](#)

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- Research Institute for the Educational Science (RIES). 1994. *Secondary Education Curriculum*.

Annex

Background Statistics: Development Indicators

Geography

1	Area	230,800 sq km ² (land)
		6,000 sq km ² (water)

Source: Central Intelligence Agency. 2008.

Demography

2	Total population, 2005	5.7 million
3	Population growth rate, 2000-2005	1.62%
4	Life expectancy at birth, 2000-2005	61.9 years (total)
		60.7 years (male)
		63.1 years (female)
5	Total fertility rate, 2000-2005	3.59

Source: UNPD. 2007.

Social and Economic Indicators

6	Population below the national poverty line, 1990-2004	38.6%
7	Population below the absolute poverty line, 1990-2005	27.0%
8	GDP, 2005	USD 2.9 billion
		USD 12.1 billion (PPP)
9	GDP per capita, 2005	USD 485
		USD 2,039 (PPP)
10	GDP per capita annual growth rate, 1990-2005	3.8%
11	Human Development Index, 2005	0.601

Source: UNDP. 2007.

Education Indicators

12	Adult literacy rate (ages 15 and above), 2001 ⁽¹⁾	68.7%*
13	Youth literacy rate (ages 15-24), 2001 ⁽²⁾	78.5%*
14	School life expectancy, 2005 ⁽¹⁾	9.2 years (total)**
		10.0 years (male)**
		8.3 years (female)**
15	EFA Development Index, 2005 ⁽³⁾	0.750

Source: ⁽¹⁾UNESCO Institute for Statistics. 2008a. ⁽²⁾UNESCO Institute for Statistics. 2008b. ⁽³⁾UNESCO. 2006.

Country profiles are updated on a regular basis. Visit the [Secondary Education Regional Information Base](http://www.unescobkk.org/education/epr/sepra/infobase) website to access the latest version or to check the status of updates. Other country profiles are also available from the website (<http://www.unescobkk.org/education/epr/sepra/infobase>).



• Education Policy and Reform (EPR)
• UNESCO Bangkok
• 920 Sukhumvit Road, Prakanong
• Bangkok 10110
• Thailand
•
• Tel: (66-2) 391 0577
• Email: epr@unescobkk.org
• <http://www.unescobkk.org>