



Lao People's Democratic Republic

STATEMENT BY

Ambassador Anouparb Vongnorkeo, Permanent Representative of the Lao PDR
at the Fifty-Eighth Session of the Commission on Population and
Development

Agenda item 3:

- (a) Actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development at the global, regional and national levels;**
- (b) Ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages.**

New York, 7-11 April 2025

(Please check against delivery)

Madam Chair,

The Lao PDR remains firmly committed to implementing the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD PoA). Recognizing the key role of population dynamics in sustainable development, the Lao Government has systematically integrated population considerations into national and sectoral strategies, policies, and development planning at all levels. This effort is carried out in close collaboration with development partners, civil society organizations, and the private sector.

Since 1976, UNFPA has been a trusted partner contributing to maternal health, gender equality, and data-driven policymaking in the Lao PDR. Together, we have reduced maternal mortality, addressed unmet family planning needs, expanded youth-friendly health services, and strengthened data systems for evidence-based decisions. By 2030, the Lao PDR has set a clear course to fully realize the goals of the ICPD PoA. At the heart of this commitment are the three transformative results: zero preventable maternal mortality, zero unmet need for family planning, and zero gender-based violence, harmful practices, and child marriage, each a pillar of a just and equitable society. Beyond these strategic goals, the government is taking bold steps to harness the demographic dividend and realize the full potential of its young people. With a strong focus on empowering youth, advancing gender equality, and ensuring no one is left behind, this vision is more than a policy agenda. It is a promise of a future where every individual, regardless of background or circumstance, has the opportunity to succeed. By investing in young people today, the Lao PDR is shaping a legacy of progress, inclusion, and human dignity, a model for sustainable development in the country, region, and beyond.

Madam Chair,

At the first National Conference on Population and Development in October 2023, we set forth 14 bold recommendations, commitments that are now taking shape in reality. These commitments were reaffirmed on regional and global stages, including the 7th Asian and Pacific Population Conference in November 2023 and the 57th Session of the Commission on Population and Development last year. Key initiatives include integrating sexual and reproductive health into the upcoming 10th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2026–2030), launching Family Planning 2030 commitments to ensure universal access to reproductive health care, the Population Policy Coordination Committee (PPCC) is in the process of being established as a key strategic body with the task to overseeing the implementation of the National Population and Development Policy, strengthening midwifery services through a new strategy for 2026–2030, and preparing for our first fully digital Population and Housing Census in 2025.

With the support and strong engagement of national and international partners, we have turned words into action. We have intensified our efforts to reduce maternal mortality, strengthen midwifery services, ensure access to rights-based family planning, address gender-based violence and harmful practices, and empower our youth to realize the demographic dividend. We have not merely walked the talk; we have created new pathways of progress as follows:

- The ongoing preparation of the 10th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSED 2026–2030) prioritizes and integrates investments in sexual and reproductive health, the advancement of youth and women’s rights, and the strengthening of national administrative data governance systems in alignment with Lao PDR’s ICPD commitments.
- The Lao Government has officially launched its Family Planning 2030 (FP2030) commitments, a key global partnership dedicated to ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health care. This initiative aims to empower individuals and communities, laying the groundwork for a brighter, more sustainable future for all.
- The Population Policy Coordination Committee is in the process of being established as a key strategic body. Tasked with overseeing the implementation of the National Population and Development Policy for 2019–2030, the Coordination Committee will play a key role in advancing the SDGs and monitoring progress toward the ICPD PoA.
- Finalizing the National Midwifery Strategy and Action Plan for 2026-2030 for national and community-level health systems and the well-being of the population, with a particular focus on the most vulnerable women.
- The Lao PDR’s Demographic Dividend Roadmap 2030, developed recently, is poised for its official launch at the 2nd National Conference on Population and Development this June. This evidence-based, multi-sectoral roadmap is designed to harness the country’s demographic dividend through investing in education, youth empowerment, and employment, aligning with the National Population and Development Policy and marking a transformative step toward national progress.
- The government preparations for the 5th Population and Housing Census are well underway. This first-ever fully digital census will provide comprehensive, up-to-date data on the population, enabling the government to shape evidence-informed national plans, policies, and strategies.
- A Comprehensive Sexuality Education roadmap has been developed, expanding across primary and secondary education nationwide. Efforts are ongoing to extend these programs into vocational training and higher education sectors.
- Adolescents and youth-friendly services are being scaled up to ensure that no young person is left behind in the pursuit of their health and education.

The Government has supported 33 youth delegates in prioritizing sexual and reproductive health in the ASEAN Youth Statement and demonstrated the linkages between gender-based violence and the care economy at the 3rd ASEAN Women Leaders' Summit, hosted by Lao PDR.

- Emergency preparedness has been notably strengthened through capacity-building support to core personnel in 17 provinces, equipping them with the tools to implement the Minimum Initial Service Package for Sexual and Reproductive Health in crises. This proactive approach ensures that sexual and reproductive health services remain prioritized and accessible during emergencies.

Building on the progress vis-a-vis the national commitments at last year's 57th session of the Commission on Population and Development, the Government of Lao PDR has identified key priorities that it remains steadfast in pursuing and implementing in the year ahead:

- Developing a new Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child, and Adolescent Health Strategy for 2026–2030 in collaboration with key development partners. Grounded in last year's evaluation findings, this strategy will prioritize people-centered, integrated healthcare services at all levels.
- Formulating a new Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Strategy for 2026–2030 to enhance data accuracy, streamline registration processes, and ensure universal access to legal identity documentation.
- Advancing women's empowerment, gender equality, and protection by formulating a new National Action Plan for 2026–2030 to effectively address violence against women and children while strengthening legal and social safeguards.
- Conducting a second national survey on violence against women to generate comprehensive data on the prevalence of gender-based violence. These insights will guide strategic planning, policy formulation, and evidence-based interventions to safeguard and empower women and girls.
- Strengthening partnerships and collective action to combat harmful practices such as child marriage and early pregnancy while ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights under the FP2030 commitments.
- Leveraging Lao PDR's role within ASEAN to uphold the ICPD PoA as a priority in regional development. This includes scaling up cooperation, promoting knowledge exchange, and reinforcing South-South and Triangular Cooperation, including among Mekong countries.

Madam Chair,

The Lao PDR reaffirms its commitment to implementing the ICPD PoA and the SDGs. In this regard, enhanced collaboration with development partners remains vital to realizing these ambitions. We extend our sincere gratitude to UNFPA and all partners for their unwavering support in promoting sexual and reproductive health rights and addressing gender-based violence.

Together, we are shaping a future where every individual can live with dignity, opportunity, and hope.

Thank you.