

LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CEDAW CONVENTION

LIST OF KEY ISSUES TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE CEDAW COMMITTEE

CEDAW PRESESSION NOVEMBER 2008 (44TH CEDAW SESSION)

Prepared by the Gender and Development Group (GDG)

1. ARTICLE 4:

ACCELERATION OF EQUALITY BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN

1. GDG would like to access Information about temporary special measures adopted to accelerate de facto equality between men and women, especially in the field of education;
2. GDG would like to access Information about special measures aimed to protect maternity. Single pregnant women and single mothers are often

discriminated against. For example, they may be ostracized and forced to drop out school and universities.

2. ARTICLE 5:

GENDER AND STEREOTYPE

1. GDG is concerned about the persistence of gender stereotypes in Lao PDR, especially in rural areas of the country.

3. ARTICLE 6:

SUPPRESSION OF TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN AND EXPLOTATION OF PROSTITUTION OF WOMEN

1. GDG is concerned about the increasing number of cases of trafficking in women and exploitation of prostitution of women. Some development projects occurring in Lao PDR, for example roads construction, may increase the demand of sexual workers and so the exploitation of them;
2. GDG believes it is important that the 2005 Lao Penal Law punishes trafficking as well as that in 2005 Lao PDR signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Thailand to Combat Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. GDG would like to access information about the protection of women victims of trafficking and enforced prostitution

4. ARTICLE:

10 EDUCATION

1. GDG finds that many women from rural areas face important problems to access to education. For example, due to long distances young girls have

to walk to access schools from remote areas parents often do not send them to school because they are afraid it can be dangerous;

2. GDG finds that especially in rural areas and in ethnic communities girls face many obstacles to education as women are expected to stay at home and take care of family members and household rather than get a formal job;
3. GDG would like to access to updated information on literacy and education for women (from 2005 to 2008)

5. ARTICLE 11: EMPLOYMENT

1. Although women have de jure equality to men, GDG finds that women face discrimination to access certain types of job, especially in the private sector;
2. GDG believes women migrant workers need special protection, especially because they may face form of violence against women and are unable to seek justice

6. ARTICLE 14: WOMEN IN RURAL AREAS

1. GDG finds there is not enough participation of women in decision making for issues such as land reforms, relocation of rural villages and access to water;
2. GDG believes that women from rural areas, especially from ethnic groups may face new problems, included an increasing of cases of violence against women due to some development projects. For example, dams constructions that cause relocation issues.

7. ARTICLE 16:

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY RELATIONS

1. Although there is de jure equality between men and women, GDG finds that in the practice women are discriminated against in the marriage and family relations. For example, despite polygamy is formally prohibited there are in Lao PDR many cases of “mia noi” (minor wife);
2. GDG is concerned about the issue of domestic violence, included marital rape, and believe that cases of domestic violence go mostly unreported due to social stigma;
3. GDG would like to access information on prosecution in genderbased crimes and ways to seek redress for genderbased crimes