



Lao People's Democratic Republic
Peace Independence Democracy Unity Prosperity

Prime Minister's Office

No. 509/PM

Vientiane Capital, 07 December 2010

Decree

on

the endorsement and promulgation

of

the National Policy on Inclusive Education

- Pursuant to the Law on the Government of Lao PDR No. 02/NA, dated 06 May 2003;
- Pursuant to the Law on Education No. 04/NA, dated 03 July 2007;
- Pursuant to the resolution of the Government's ordinary monthly meeting on 26 August 2010; and
- Pursuant to the proposal of the Minister of Education No. 1170/MOE.IEC.10, dated 29 November 2010.

The Prime Minister decrees that:

Article 1: The National Policy on Inclusive Education is hereby endorsed and promulgated.

Article 2: Ministry of Education will take the leading role in collaboration with relevant ministries, local administration authorities and related organizations to disseminate and implement this National Policy on Inclusive Education and consider it the centerpiece of education development.

Article 3: Other ministries, ministry-equivalent agencies, provinces, capital and relevant sectors will acknowledge, collaborate and implement this Decree successfully.

Article 4: This Decree shall enter into force on the date it is signed.

Prime Minister of Lao PDR

(Signed and sealed)

Bouasone BOUPHAVANH



Lao People's Democratic Republic
Peace Independence Democracy Unity Prosperity

NATIONAL POLICY
ON
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Ministry of Education

November 2010

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Lao People's Democratic Republic



Peace Independence Democracy Unity Prosperity

Ministry of Education

No. 1170 /MOE

Vientiane Capital, 29 NOV 2010

NATIONAL POLICY ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

I. Introduction

The Party and the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) have formulated various policy directives, strategic plans and legislative acts to ensure the realization of the full range of basic rights of Lao citizens of all ethnic groups in order to promote national development and strengthen national unity. The goal is to see the country graduate from Least Developed Country (LDC) status by the year 2020 by focusing on socio-economic development and environmental sustainability, political stability, the continuing development of culture and society, the preservation of the country's cultural diversity, and the well-being of all people.

Realizing education a basic right and fundamental to achieving other basic rights of its citizens, the Government of the Lao PDR considers education a priority both for socio-economic development and for the development of the nation's human resources. Better educated citizens, it is believed, will be equipped with appropriate moral values, knowledge and skills; will be able to contribute to the protection and development of the nation; and will be adaptable to the needs of both national economic and social development and regional and international integration. In light of the Millennium Development Goals and the goals for

developed the National Education For All Plan of Action (2003-2015) and implemented various education projects to expand access for disadvantaged people such as girls, children with disabilities, and children from ethnic groups through the Inclusive Education Project, the Basic Education for Girls Project (BEGP), boarding schools for ethnic students, the School Feeding Project, Schools of Quality, the Basic Education Development Project and the Education Quality Improvement Project which integrated gender equality and ethnic diversity concepts into the revised primary-secondary education curriculum teachers' guides and textbooks.

Despite favorable achievements in implementing the aforementioned programmes and projects, a number of constraints and challenges remain to be addressed. Many potential learners – girls, women, members of ethnic groups, people living in rural and remote areas, people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups – remain outside the education system. The disparity between males and females, among ethnic groups, and between the non-poor and poor districts and across levels of education remains high.

Moreover, most of these projects are implemented in isolation, internal and external coordination remains poor, there is no common understanding of inclusive education, and there is a lack of a clear definition of the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in removing barriers to schooling and to learning. Therefore, efforts are often duplicated, and the use of scarce resources is ineffective and inefficient. Ownership at local level, especially at the community level, is still low, resulting in a lack of sustainability.

The challenges mentioned above arise from various factors, such as the lack of necessary scattered and remote settlements, difficult road access, the low level of understanding of the importance of education, family poverty and the beliefs and traditions of some ethnic groups which hinder the education of girls and people with disabilities in particular. The education system does not provide enough accessible and attractive schooling; the quality of education provided is often poor and does not fully meet the different needs of a very diverse population of learners; lack of necessary resources; teachers lack experience and poorly motivated.

Thus, in order to ensure that all Laotians have access to education of good quality, to achieve the goals of Education for All, the National Education System Reform Strategy and the Education Sector Development Framework, to promote further social and economic development, and to ensure national unity, it is essential to have a National Policy on Inclusive Education to drive and further strengthen the implementation of existing Party and Government policy guidelines on Education for All in a coherent way.

II. Objectives and Goal

1. Objectives

- To ensure the right to equitable access to quality education for all people in the society, to reduce and eventually eliminate the disparities in access to and completion of education, especially among the educationally disadvantaged groups such as girls, women, ethnic groups, people with disabilities and people with socio-economic vulnerabilities.
- To address barriers to and within education by considering the characteristics and diverse needs of all learners.
- To improve the quality and relevance of the education system at all levels, to create enabling environments that facilitate effective learning for all, and to promote the involvement of learners, families, schools, communities, and society as a whole in education.

2. Goal

All Lao people, regardless of their ethnicity, race, language, religion, sex, age, ability, or socio-economic status, should receive universal quality education, equally and appropriate to individual capacities in accordance with the five education aspects; have the knowledge, capacity, and necessary skills to support themselves and their families; and be able to participate effectively in all areas of national life such as political, economic, and socio-cultural development; environmental protection; national security and defense; and effective international cooperation.

III. Content of the National Policy on Inclusive Education

1. Continue to create friendly social environments at all levels of the system through advocating for social awareness and non-discrimination, and development of quality standards for inclusive education, especially in regard to values, traditions and attitudes towards women, ethnic groups, people with disabilities and others disadvantaged groups.

2. Implement a policy abolishing registration and tuition fees in public primary and lower secondary schools.
3. Create an enabling environment to ensure all children have access to primary education and strive to reduce repetition and drop-out rates by expanding creche, preschools and preprimary classes attached to primary schools linked to the development of school readiness standards; upgrading incomplete primary schools in remote locations by instituting a systematic programmes of multi-grade teaching and mobile teachers; providing extra support to teachers of grades 1-3 to ensure student mastery of literacy and numeracy; and adapting school calendars and schedules to suit local conditions.
4. Continue to reform curricula and provide learning and teaching materials supportive of inclusive education at all levels of the system and suitable to the special needs of all learners, particularly girls, women, ethnic children, learners with disabilities, those living in remote areas, and people of especially vulnerable populations; especially important is to improve the teacher training curriculum -- both pre-service and in-service -- to raise awareness, promote values and attitudes, and teaching skills supportive of inclusive education.
5. Ensure that schools and boarding facilities of all levels of education, i.e. from preschool to higher education, are healthy, safe, and protective places for girls, women, ethnic children, learners with disabilities, those living in remote areas, and people of especially vulnerable populations - in terms of both adequate infrastructure and an environment based on high moral standards, and promote the physical and mental health and nutrition of their teachers and learners, through the provision of school meal programmes, nutritional supplements, and other health services.
6. Guarantee appropriate facilities and services to people with disabilities by providing them assistive devices where needed and specialist technical assistance leading to their inclusion in regular schools. Special schools should be maintained only for students with complex disabilities.
7. Promote the recruitment and deployment of teachers in ways supportive of inclusive education by ensuring that more women, members of ethnic groups, and people with disabilities are recruited as civil servants and teachers. Train, upgrade and provide necessary technical assistance to teacher educators, education administrators, pedagogy advisors, teachers and staff at all levels in implementing inclusive education. Strengthen data collection and analysis mechanism to better understand factors inhibiting inclusion and use the data to improve planning, monitoring and evaluation of inclusive education.

8. Promote the participation and involvement of other local stakeholders, e.g. Education Development Committees, social and business organizations of both public and private sectors in implementing the National Policy on Inclusive Education.
9. Gradually increase the budget for and investment in the education sector, inclusive education in particular, and mobilize needed funds from communities, international organizations, the private sector, and foundations as well as from other domestic and international sources.

IV. Implementation

1. The Ministry of Education to take the leading role in collaboration with relevant sectors to disseminate this National Policy on Inclusive Education nationwide and develop a strategy and plan of action to realize the policy.
2. Different ministries, ministry-equivalent agencies, local administrations, education development committees at various levels and relevant sectors to cooperate and collaborate effectively to implement this National Policy on Inclusive Education.

Minister of Education



W. Phankham

Dr. Phankham VIPHAVANH