

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Noi 2030

"...half of our population are young people and half of these young people are girls. They are our current and future labour force. To enable the country to fully realize the demographic dividend, we must ensure that young people in particular adolescent girls, who are often lagging behind, are at the heart of our countries development agenda."

H.E. Dr. Khamlien Pholsena, Vice Minister of Ministry of Planning and Investment
11 October 2016, International Day of the Girl Child

International Day of the Girl Child

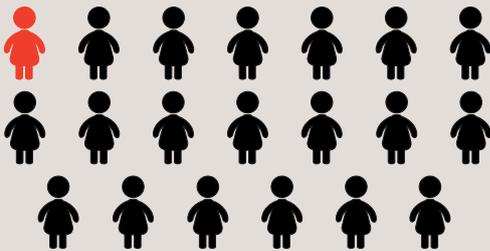
In 2011, the United Nations General Assembly adopted 11 October as the International Day of the Girl Child. It emphasizes the urgency to recognize girls' rights around the world. Each year, a different topic is highlighted to mark the special attention girls require. This year's theme is *The Power of the Adolescent Girl: Vision for 2030*. This theme manifests the acknowledgment by the international community that investment in adolescent girls yields multiple social and economic returns. Investing in the health and wellbeing of adolescent girls, including their sexual and reproductive health, is the best action the global community can undertake to achieve

the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Therefore, adolescent girls' progress plays a pivotal role in the achievement of all SDGs.

Current Situation in Lao PDR

Lao PDR has the highest proportion of early marriage and the highest adolescent birth rate in the region. This indicates that adolescent girls are not yet receiving the necessary attention and investment to develop their full potential. Lao PDR now stands at the crossroads to take critical decisions with regard to their young population, particularly adolescent girls, to determine how the country will shape up towards 2030.

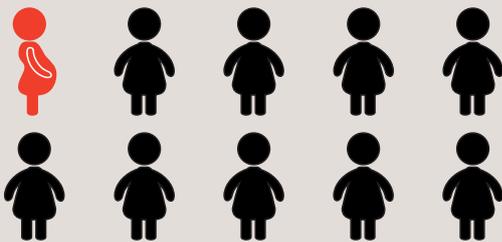
More than **1 in 20** adolescent girls have never attended school



More than **1 in 5** adolescent girls have dropped out of school



More than **1 in 10** girls aged 15-19 have begun childbearing



Nearly **1 in 5** girls aged 15-19 are married



But *who* exactly is Noi?

Noi represents all 700,230 adolescent girls in Lao PDR aged 10 to 19. Like all of us, Noi dreams to get quality education, easy access to reproductive health services, a job, and to take part in decision-making processes. Noi is created

to serve as an entry point for dialogue, and to create awareness about adolescent issues, especially early marriage and early pregnancy. In fact, Noi is meant to bring attention to the unfinished MDG agenda for adolescent girls.

Noi's first anniversary

Last year, Noi was introduced to Lao PDR on the International Day of the Girl Child 2016. The Noi idea was born after the adoption of the SDGs by the international community. She was a 10-year old girl when created last year. The International Day of the Girl Child thus symbolizes her anniversary. This year marks her 11th birthday. Every year, the progress related to adolescent

programming and partnership building is showcased.

Noi's first year has already been successful. More and more agencies in Lao PDR are aware of the importance of investing in adolescent girls and of the necessity to develop a multi-sectoral approach to bring adolescent to the forefront of the development agenda.



Why should we invest in Noi?

Investing in Noi helps families breaking the cycle of poverty. When Noi completes her education she will have children at a later age. Through education, she will be more aware about providing her children nutritious food. Noi will also know that it is better to “space” her pregnancies and she will know how to prevent sexually transmitted infections. In short, educated mothers have healthier children who will pass on their knowledge to future generations, which in turn will have a long term trickle-down effect. When educated, Noi is more likely to find a productive job, contributing to her family, the community and society as a whole.

With the concept of Noi, UNFPA wants to highlight that adolescence is a crucial period in a girl's life. It prepares her transition into adulthood and must equip her with the necessary life-skills to lead a healthy, responsible and fulfilling life. If Noi benefits from such opportunities, it is a key to Laos' social and economic development, also an imperative for the achievement of the 8th NSEDP objectives as well as the government's target to LDC graduation by 2020.

Noi 2030 Framework

In Lao PDR, many organisations worked to ensure the protection of the health and rights of adolescent girls. Now it's the time to jointly move forward by adopting a holistic approach to adolescent girls programming, a so-called Noi 2030 Framework. The Noi 2030 Framework can act as a baseline to monitor and visualize the

specific progress of adolescent girls within the SDGs, to ensure that this time they are not left behind.

The Noi 2030 framework allows different agencies, units and organizations to identify relevant programming for Noi within the SDG agenda. This can facilitate the identification of existing programs, the development of new programs and of collaborative efforts that directly or indirectly target Noi. Importantly, it allows partners to work together in a coherent manner and visualizes their contribution towards both the National and Global Development Goals. Each year, on the International Day of the Girl Child, we can take stock of the progress and see whether we are on track to achieve the SDGs for Noi.

Noi, the achievement of the SDGs and the importance of partnerships

The Noi 2030 Framework calls for partnerships of all sectors to invest in adolescent girls. Partnerships are essential to achieving sustainable development and ultimately the 2030 Agenda. The collective success is directly dependent on how we jointly answer to the adolescent girls' question. In line with the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, a set of targets will be chosen for Lao PDR in order to measure socio-economic progress made by adolescent girls. Ideally the progress made will be reflected in a chapter or an annex of the first Voluntary SDG report that Lao PDR will present next year.



Actions required

The Noi 2030 project is created to take action, now. In line with this year's 11 October theme, Noi 2030 calls for increased preventive and protective investment in the adolescent girl of today so that by 2030 young women achieve full gender parity, contributing to the development of their nation. In this manner Lao PDR will reap the benefits of a demographic dividend boosting sustainable economic growth.

- ▶ Each partner to participate in the co-creation of Noi as a strong advocacy modality owned by all partners to highlight the importance of programmes focusing on adolescent girls and disaggregated data collection;
- ▶ Continuous joint multi-sectoral advocacy efforts of partners utilizing Noi as tool to increase the knowledge of key stakeholders on the importance of adolescent girls and how individual agencies can bring Noi into their existing work aligned with the SDG agenda;
- ▶ To build further partnerships around Noi within the framework of the SDGs, particularly SDG17 on partnership;
- ▶ Within the pre-consultation for the Round Table, generate more attention for Noi, the adolescent girl in the different pillars of the NSEDP and in the different sector working groups;
- ▶ Generate increased investment for adolescent programming.



It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that adolescent girls grow up safe, secure and healthy and it is our role to work together to ensure that not one single adolescent girl is left behind, nowhere.