

NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION EQUITY POLICY

Lao PDR



Policy Frameworks

Does equity with regard to supporting students from low-income or marginalized populations to enter or succeed in higher education feature in any government produced policy documents? If so, which government policy document(s) are these and can you provide website link(s) to them?

For the Higher Education Sector, the 8th Five-year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2016-2020)

For Vision 2030, the Strategy Education and Sports Sector Development Plan (2016-2020)

<http://www.moes.edu.la>

What policies and actions are described in these government policy documents in terms of supporting students from low-income or marginalized populations to enter or succeed in higher education?

The government, with reference to lifelong learning policy, support all Laos citizens in gaining access to higher education based on an individual's competencies and condition through the provision of scholarships to outstanding students, the poor, females, ethnic minorities and the disadvantaged. The government encourages and facilitates individuals, companies or organisation, both local and international, to participate in the development of higher education

Is there a standalone policy document dedicated to equity promotion in higher education? If so, which document(s) is/are these? Can you provide a link(s)?

The Higher Education Law, and Decree on Higher Education.

Which equity target groups are identified in the policy documents? (Please choose as many groups as apply in your own country)

- Low-income or lower socio-economic background students
- Gender groups
- People from rural backgrounds
- Students with disability

Does the country have concrete targets for the participation of specific equity groups in higher education?

- -200,000 students to study at higher education institutes both public and private (of which the five universities under the Ministry of Education and Sports are expected to have 45,000 students) by 2020-2021.
- The proportion of females studying at higher education institutes reaches 45% of total students in higher education institutes
- Review and implement policies on expansion of higher education access for excellent students, those who are disadvantaged, particularly girls, ethnic and the poor by
- Providing scholarships, and create a study loans system.

Which agency has responsibility for policies related to equity in student participation/success in higher education?

The Ministry of Education and Sports, in particular is investing in building infrastructure at four universities that are under the Ministry of Education and Sports including policies for the public and private sectors, which conduct teaching-learning together to develop higher education in both quantity and quality.

Which stakeholder groups are consulted during the equity policy formulation? (Please choose all the stakeholders that are invited to the consultation process in your own country)

- Higher Education Institutions' Associations
- Student Organisations/Association

Achieving Policy Targets

Are there any non-monetary instruments such as outreach work between schools and universities, reforms to university admission etc. used to promote access/success for students from specific equity groups in higher education? If so, can you describe what they are?

We have the Higher Education Law, and Decree on Higher Education to support students access to higher level. Universities take action on outreach work between provincial education authorities, communities and parents to disseminate higher education policy.

Are there any financial instruments such as bursaries, scholarships and loans used to promote access/success for students from specific equity groups in higher education? If so, can you describe what they are?

- Department of Higher Education to support equitable access to higher education. and have
- Policies on expansion of higher education access for excellent students, those who are disadvantaged, particularly girls, ethnic and the poor by providing scholarships, and create a study loans system.
- Support females from ethnic group, disadvantaged and the poor students to studying at higher education institutes reaches 45% of total students in higher education institutes.

Who is responsible for monitoring the impact of measures used to promote access/success for students from specific equity groups in higher education?

The Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education and Sports.

What instruments, methods and data are in place to carry out the monitoring and evaluation?

- Teaching and Learning
- Reports
- research and monitoring

What kind of autonomy do higher education institutions enjoy in reaching the policy targets set by government?

Some, but not all, universities are given autonomy from the Government to achieve policy targets.

How do you see the role of inter-governmental/international organisations in supporting higher education equity policies? In which areas would be their contribution the most valuable? (1= most valuable contribution 4=least valuable contribution)

1. Policy setting
2. Financial assistance (grants, loan financing, scholarships)
3. Technical assistance and capacity building
3. Facilitating peer learning, exchange of experience among countries

COVID-19 and Equitable Access and Success in Higher Education

How, if at all, has Covid-19 affected the existence and implementation of policies designed to encourage greater access and success on higher education of those from low-income/marginalized groups?

No information was available on this area.

Sources

This country brief was prepared as part of the [“ASEM National Equity Policies in Higher Education”](#) report, a collaboration between the [Asia-Europe Foundation \(ASEF\)](#) and the [National Education Opportunities Network \(NEON\)](#). The report was launched at the [8th ASEF Regional Conference on Higher Education \(ARC8\)](#) on *“Inclusive and Diverse Higher Education in Asia and Europe”* on 10 September 2021.

All information in this country brief was provided by the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education and Sports of Lao PDR, as of 26 October 2020.