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Four members of the 48-member LPRP Central Committee are women, 2 of whom are also members of the 7-member standing committee in the National Assembly. However, there are no women in the Politburo or the Council of Ministers. Despite all of these, women remain underrepresented in government and politics.

The Constitution provides for equal rights for women, and the Lao Women's Union operates nationally to promote the position of women in society. Discrimination against women is not generalized; however, varying degrees of traditional culturally based discrimination persist, with greater discrimination practiced by some hill tribes. Many women occupy responsible positions in the civil service and private business, and in urban areas their incomes are often higher than those of men. The Family Code prohibits legal discrimination in marriage and inheritance.

Lao women were allowed to vote and stand for election in 1958.

In the period from 1997 through 2000, the Government increased support for the position of women in society in development programs, some of which are designed to increase the participation of women in the political system. In the 1997 elections, women increased their representation in the National Assembly from 9 percent to 21 percent, as 20 of the 27 female candidates won seats bringing the number of women-parliamentarians at 21. Another major breakthrough is one of the vice-presidents of the National Assembly is a woman, H.E. Onechanh Thammavong.

There are reports that domestic violence against women occurs, although it is not widespread. Sexual harassment and rape reportedly are rare. In cases of rape that are tried in court, defendants generally are convicted.

Trafficking in women is a problem. 🚫