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Partnering for Social Justice – Towards Realising the Universal Right to Social Security and Decent Work for all

On 23 November 2022, by Khamphy KHAMMAVONG, Program Manager, Oxfam in Laos

Email: Khamphy.khammvong@oxfam.org



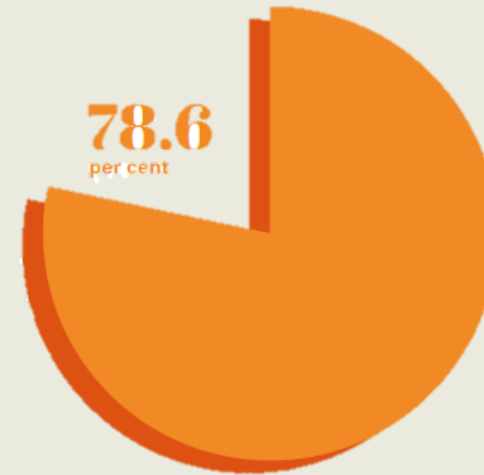
Facts and figures in ASeam

244 million
people

are in **informal
employment**



This represents as much as
78.6% of the region's
workforce aged 15 and older



Informal Economy workers in Laos

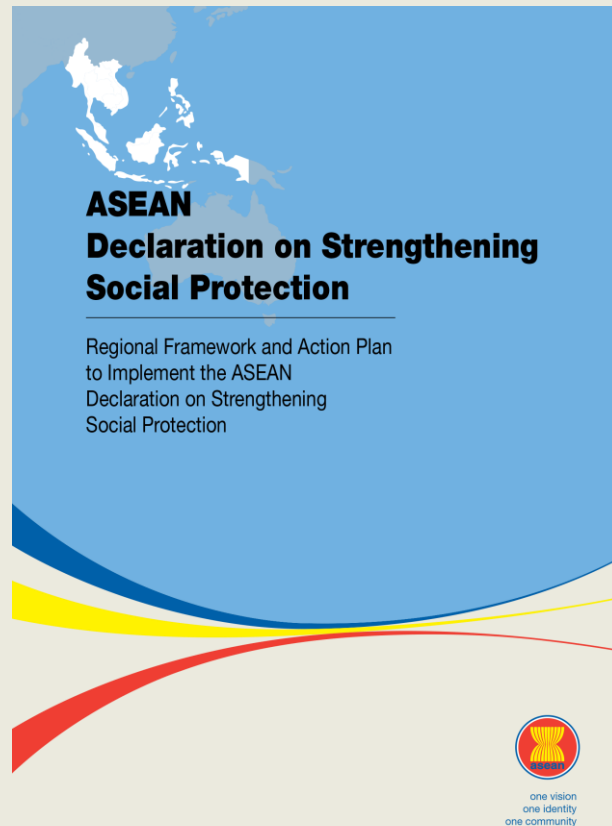
- ❑ More than **80%** of the total labor workforce in Lao is employed in the informal economy sector
- ❑ Women are disproportionally represented in the informal sector
- ❑ Most of workers **are excluded from social protection**, are **not protected against labor rights violations**, are at high risk of **work-related hazards**, OSH, and lack decent work
- ❑ **Agri-food sector** is the larger informal employment sector (e.g. rice, coffee, tea, cassava, banana plantation, vegetable, etc.)

INFORMAL ECONOMY WORKERS CAN INCLUDE

- SMALL SCALE FARMERS
- OWN ACCOUNT WORKERS
- STREET VENDORS
- HOME-BASED WORKERS
- DOMESTIC WORKERS
- SEASONAL WORKERS
- SERVICES WORKERS
- ETC.

Oxfam's experience

Working toward ASEAN's Declarations



2016 VIENTIANE DECLARATION ON TRANSITION FROM INFORMAL EMPLOYMENT TO FORMAL EMPLOYMENT TOWARDS DECENT WORK PROMOTION IN ASEAN

Adopted in Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic on 6 September 2016

WE, the Heads of State/Government of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (hereinafter referred to as "ASEAN"), namely Brunei Darussalam, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam on the occasion of the 28th and 29th Summits in Vientiane, Lao PDR;

REAFFIRMING our continued commitment to build an ASEAN Community comprising three pillars, namely the ASEAN Political and Security Community, the ASEAN Economic Community, and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community;

With the EU and DGD Funded program, We are working across the countries and regions

01

Lao PDR

LFTU, MOLSW/NSSO,
CSOs, ILO

02

Cambodia

Unions, CSOs,

03

Indonesia AROSP

03

Vietnam

VCCL, Farmer Union,
CSO,

05

Philippines

PAN-AP

Malesia
IWRAW



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Working toward National Social Protection Strategy

“Goal 2: The social security system is further developed and strengthened.

(...)

Objective 2.1: All the workers and self-employed workers in the formal sector are covered by social security.

(...)



Challenge of informal economy workers in accessing social protection and decent work



Legal barriers



Weak enforcement



Lack of
policy integration



Admin barriers

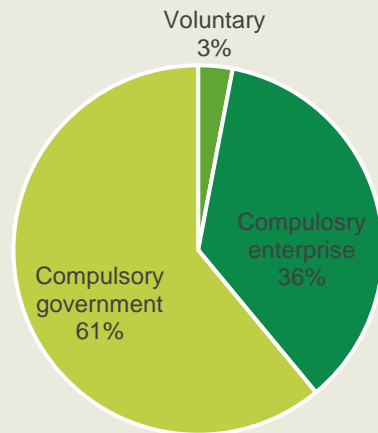


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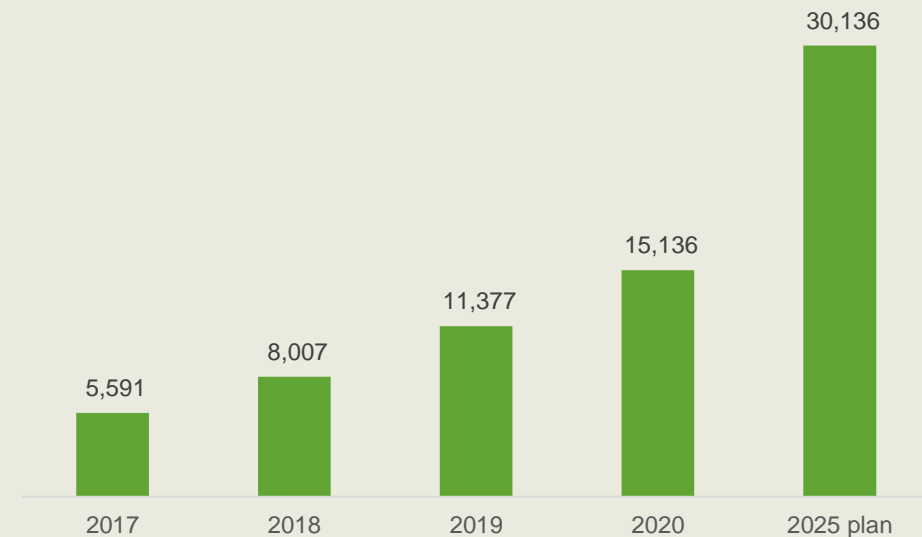
A joint research _2020 by Oxfam

of people with access to LSSO

7a. Total members of LSSO in 2018
(Total: 300,409 person)



7b. Number of VSS members in Laos



Number of LSSF members in 2018 and VSS members in 2017-2020 and plan for 2025

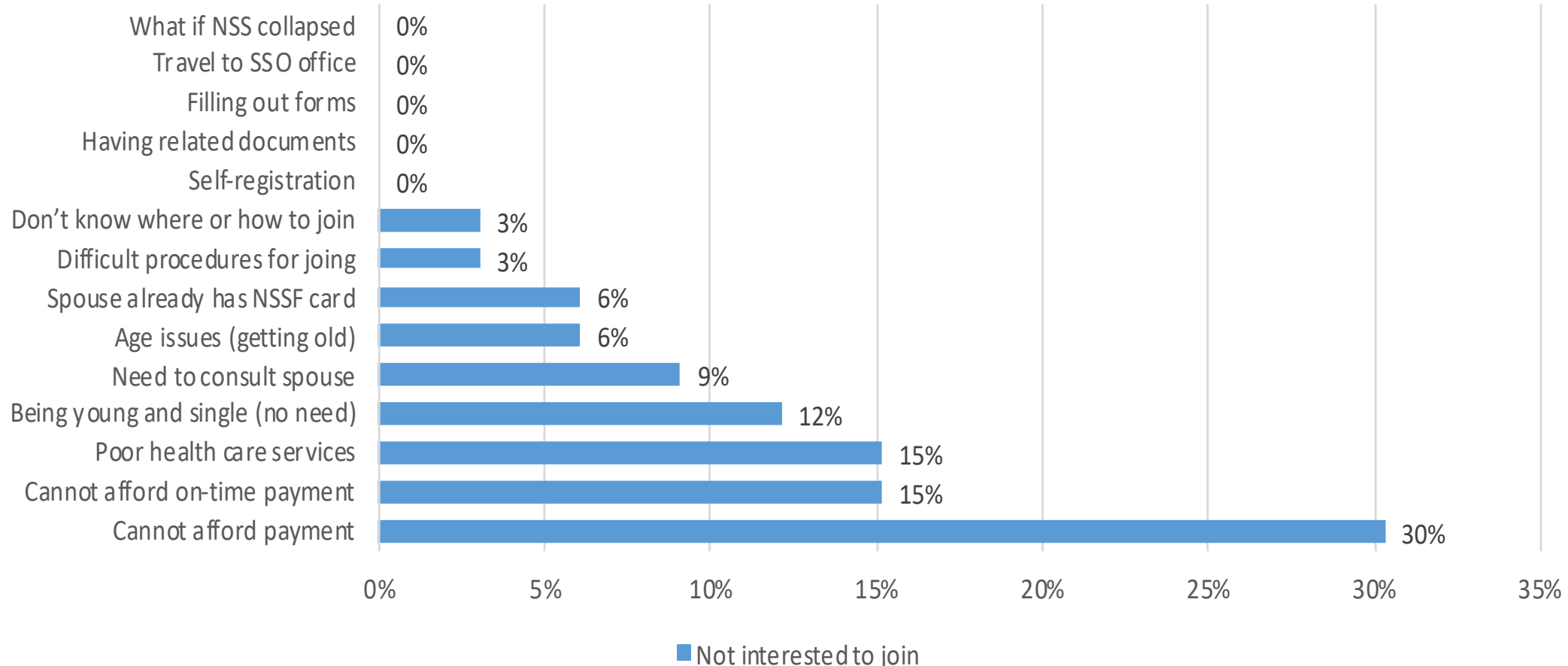
Source: 2017 data is the SO 2.2 baseline taken from NSPS's monitoring table, 2018 data is from the Annual Report of LSSO, 2019 data is from LJI's study (LJI, July 2019), 2020 data obtained from [LSSO's press on annual meeting](#) (calculated as 2019 figure plus new members of 3,759), and target for 2025 obtained from 6th draft of the 9th NSEDP



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A joint research between Oxfam, and partners (LFTU, NSSO, and CSOs)_2020

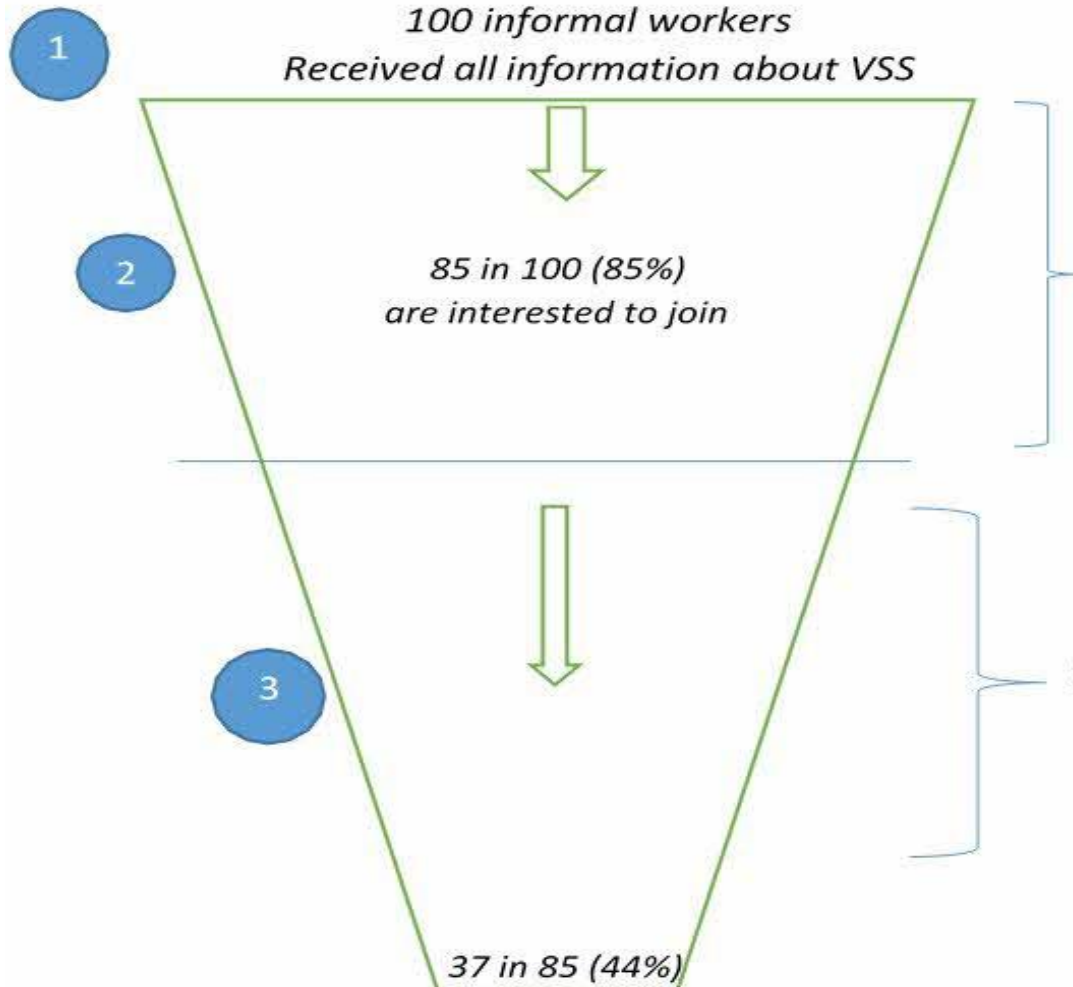
Reasons for not being interested to join LSSO



Source: Survey on Informal Worker's Access to LSSF, November to December 2020.

A joint research between Oxfam, and partners (LFTU, NSSO, and CSOs)_2020

Figure 3: Summary of findings on informal workers' interests in joining VSS scheme



Reasons for not being interested (source: survey)

1. May not afford paying full amount (5 in 15)
2. May not afford paying on-time (2 in 15)
3. Poor health care services (2 in 15)
4. Still young and healthy (2 in 15)
5. Need to consult spouse (1 in 15)

Characteristics significantly linked with a lower/negative likelihood of being interested (Source: regression in Table 14)

1. Age. The youngest and the oldest age groups (likelihood increases until age 40-42, then decreases again).
2. Income frequency. The low income workers who earn seasonal income.
3. Living in provincial capital.

Concerns (Source: survey)

1. Late payment for not more than 3 consecutive months (15 in 48)
2. Self-registration (12 in 48)
3. Related documents e.g. ID card and family book (6 in 48)
4. Filling form (5 in 48)
5. Travel to SSO office (3 in 48)

Barriers to extending social protection



Affordability



Governance



Incentives
& trust



Information



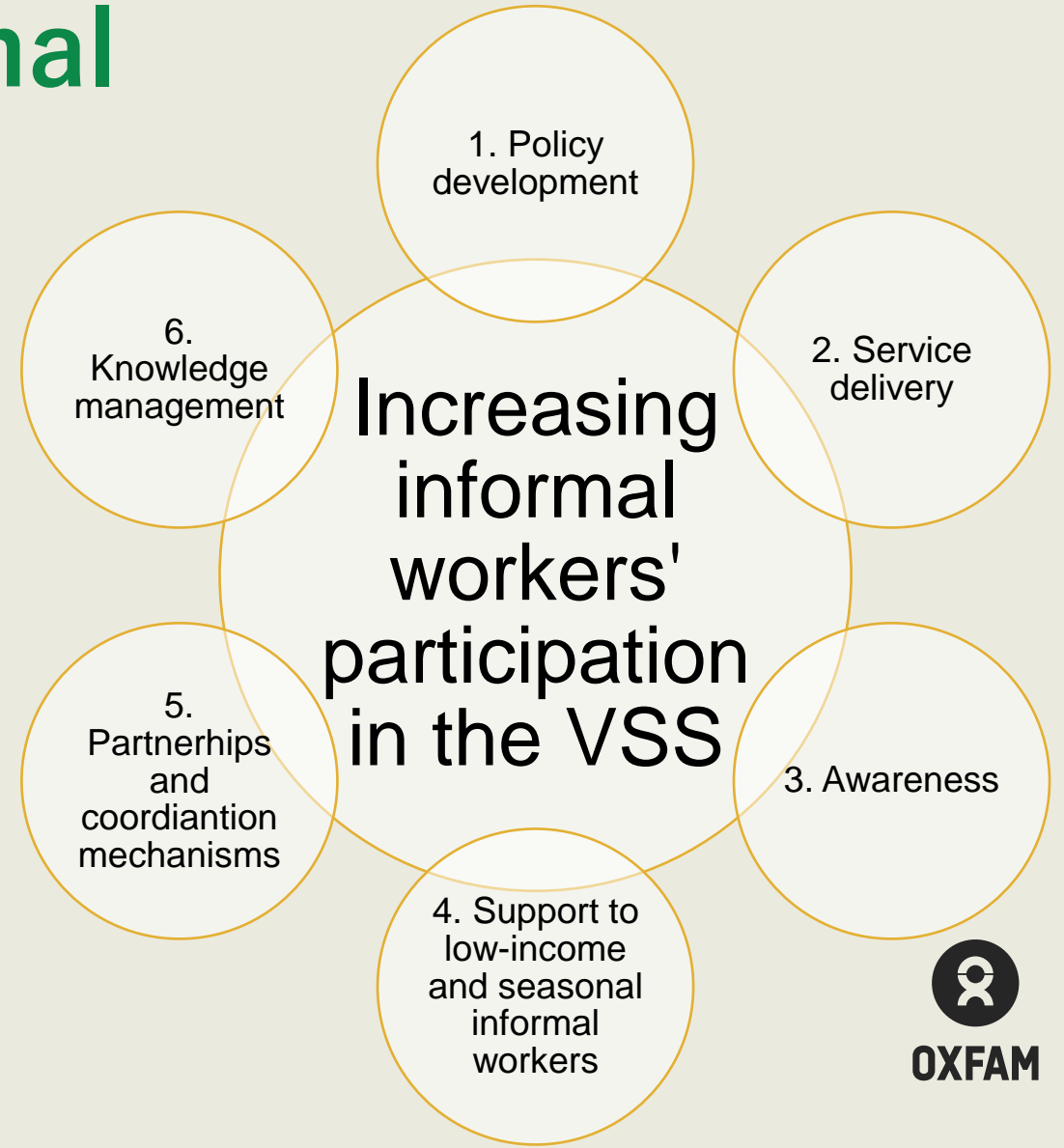
Organization
& representation



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Considerations for Expanding Social security to informal economy workers

Social security for all, increase the coverage of informal workers in the agri-food sector, domestic, and community care workers.



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Considerations for Expanding Social protection and labour rights to informal economic workers and for all

- **Acknowledge the rights of informal workers**, specifically women, to social protection
- **Implement non-contributory**, social welfare, and social pensions to reach universal coverage
- **Ensure gender lens is mainstreamed in the policy design**, to ensure social protection address the needs of men and women and how the schemes affect gender relations

(cont)

- **Design progressive taxation policies** for social protection programs for the poor and vulnerable and close the care deficit gap.
- **Addressing unpaid care and domestic work.** Government, businesses, and development actors must invest in care-supporting services and infrastructures, such as childcare, child grants, health care, education, public transport, electricity, and clean water for the poorest households.
- **Taking into account the impact of COVID,** ensure long-term sustainable gender transformative social protection policies that can enhance the resilience of vulnerable communities and individuals, especially poor women and girls.

A short video on the challenges of informal worker access to LSSO in Laos



[VDO_IWAA:](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/IWAA.la/videos/404808524607857>



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**THANK YOU FOR
HELPING US TO
ACCESS TO LSSO**

