

# DATABASE ANALYSIS OF WOMEN IN PROSTITUTION (WIP) IN VIENTIANE CAPITAL (2005-2006)

WIP in Vientiane Capital represent by far the vast majority of the investigation’s sample (312/384, that is 81.25%) surveyed by the outreach social department of AFESIP in Vientiane in so far that the capital constitutes one of the most important hot spots of prostitution in the Lao PDR. As a matter of fact, it is important to draw a specific profile of these women and have a better understanding of their socio-economic background. This study aims at answering the following questions which are crucial to define an adequate strategy of preventing STD/HIV as well as the potential threat of trafficking in women and girls: Who are these women? Where do they come from? Why are they involved in prostitution? Have they been forced or trafficked? Are they aware of STD/HIV risks they take? What are their perspectives for the future?

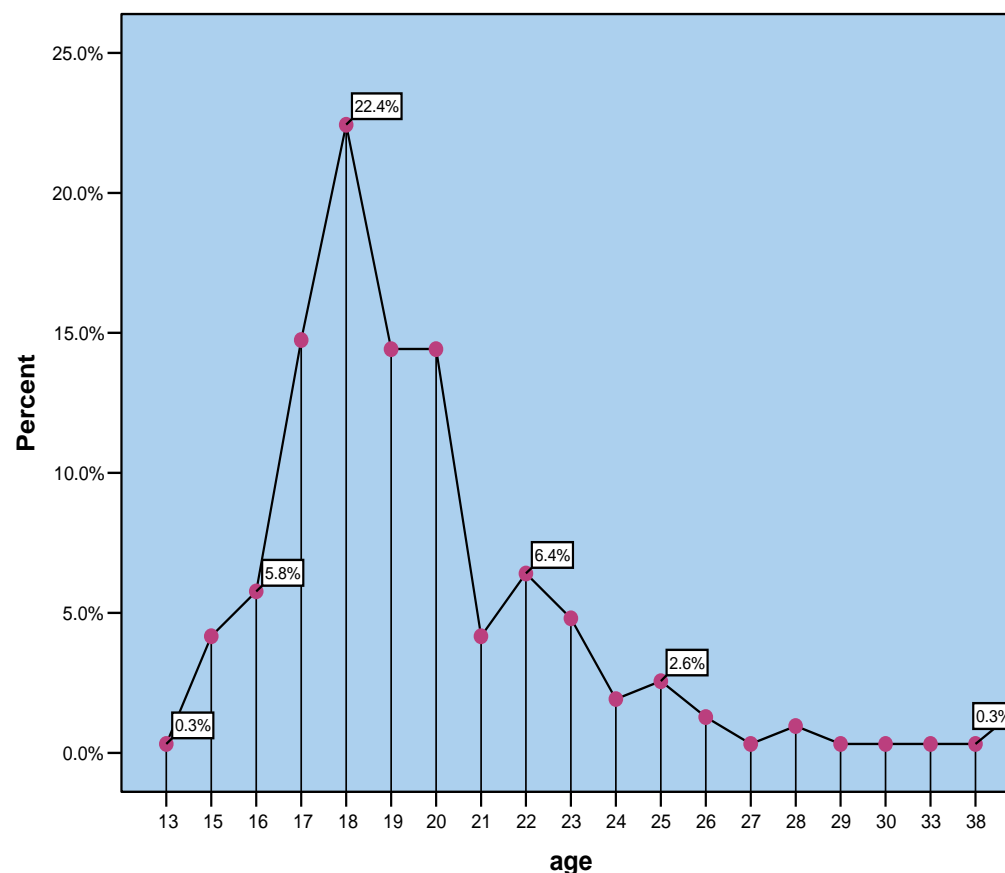
## AGE

The **age average** of the **312 WIP** in Vientiane Capital is **19.36**. The youngest is **13** and the eldest is **38**. Young girls aged less than 16 constitute a minority within the WIP (4.5%). However, **minor girls** – aged under 18 – almost represent **half of the sample (47.4%)**. 18-year-old girls are the most represented group that is more than one fifth of the sample (22.4%). Since 25 years old, the number of WIP decreases because youth is a strongly desired criterion by Asian customers. But the “age” variable has to be considered cautiously given the fact that, on one hand, girls aged less than 18 and especially less than 16 are not allowed to enter beer shop or night clubs, and on the other hand, the eldest women would be likely to lie about their age as well to attract more customers.

### Frequency table by age

AGE	Frequency	Percent
<16	14	4.5
16-18	134	42.9
>18	164	52.6
Total	312	100.0

Graph by Age



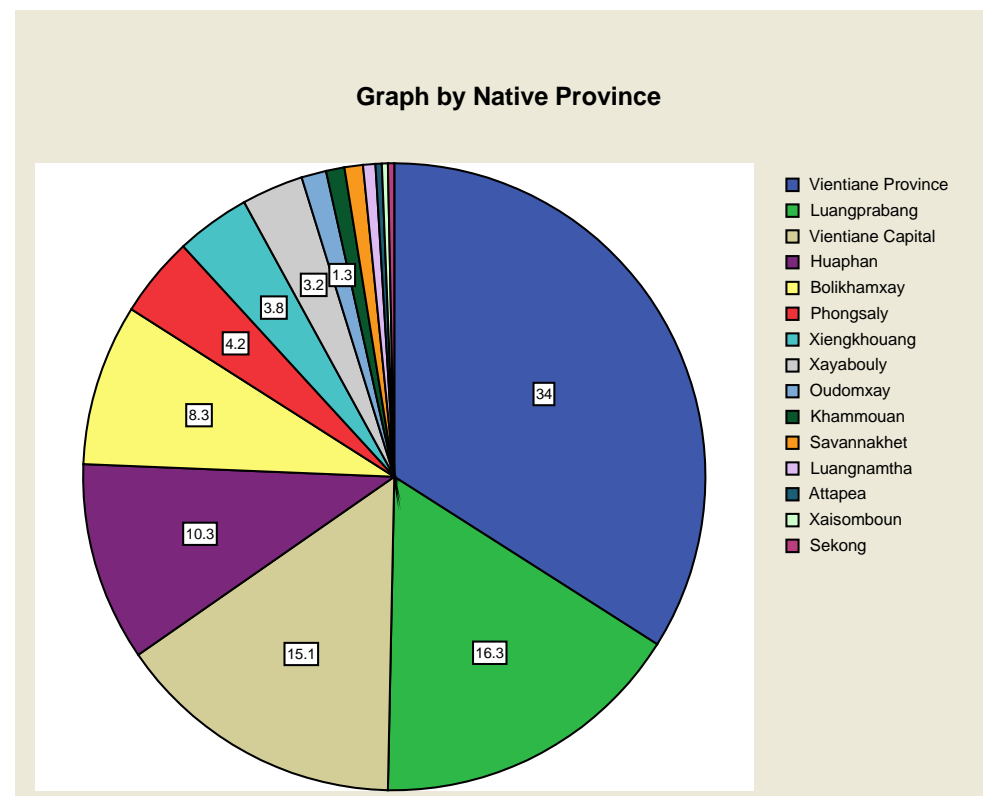
# DATABASE ANALYSIS OF WOMEN IN PROSTITUTION (WIP) IN VIENTIANE CAPITAL (2005-2006)

## GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN

One third of the WIP in Vientiane Capital come from Vientiane Province (34%). The group of women coming from the capital itself is at the third rank (15.1%), after those who are native of Luang Prabang (16.3%). However, if we gather the native provinces by region, we can observe that almost half of the women come from the Centre of the Lao PDR (including 8.3% from Bolikhamxay; 3.2% from Xayabouly; 0.3% from Xaysomboun) and more than one third are native of Northern Provinces, mainly from Luang Prabang, but also Huaphan (10.3%), Phongsaly (4.2%), Xiengkhouang (3.8%), Oudomxay (1.3%), and Luangnamtha (0.6%). Very few women come from the Southern Provinces (2.6%).

### Frequency table by Region

REGION	Frequency	Percent
North	114	36.5
Vientiane Capital	47	15.1
Centre	143	45.8
South	8	2.6
Total	312	100.0



## DATABASE ANALYSIS OF WOMEN IN PROSTITUTION (WIP) IN VIENTIANE CAPITAL (2005-2006)

### Age bracket \* Regional origin Crosstabulation

Age bracket		Region				Total
		North	Vientiane Capital	Centre	South	
<16	Count	3	1	10	0	14
	% within Age bracket	21.4%	7.1%	71.4%	.0%	100.0%
16-18	Count	57	10	65	2	134
	% within Age bracket	42.5%	7.5%	48.5%	1.5%	100.0%
>18	Count	54	36	68	6	164
	% within Age bracket	32.9%	22.0%	41.5%	3.7%	100.0%
Total	Count	114	47	143	8	312
	% within Age bracket	36.5%	15.1%	45.8%	2.6%	100.0%

The youngest girls (aged less than 18) mainly come from the Centre and the Northern Provinces. **The majority of the girls aged less than 16 come from Vientiane Province** (10 out of 14), 3 out of 14 from Xiengkhouang and Huaphan and only one comes from Vientiane Capital. Between 16 and 18 years old, almost half of the girls (48.5%) come from the Centre and 42.5% from the North. Very few girls come from Vientiane Capital (7.5%) but their number increases when they get more than 18 years old (22%). We find only 2 girls aged less than 18 native of Southern Provinces but a threefold increase among WIP aged more than 18.

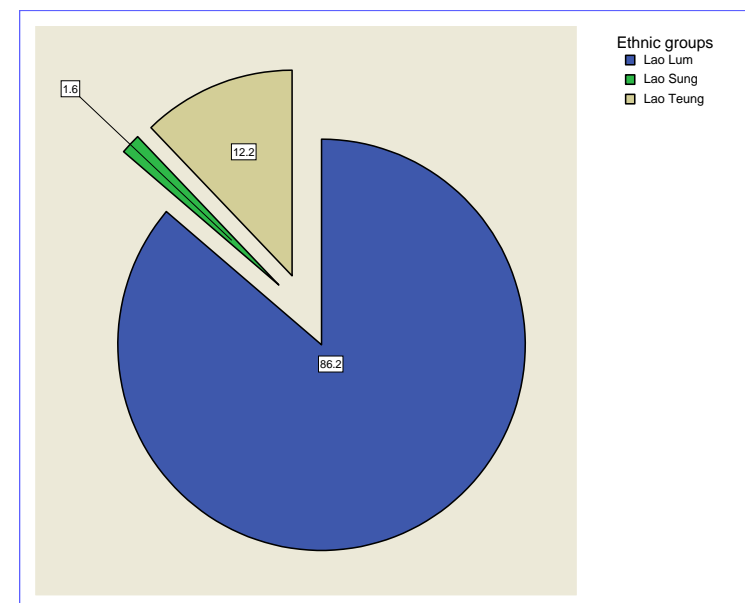
### ETHNIC ORIGIN

The **great majority** of the WIP in Vientiane belong to the **Lao Lum** ethnic group (**86.2%**). The second group represented in a smaller proportion (12.2%) is the Lao Teung. There are very few WIP belonging to the Lao Sung group (1.6%).

It is important to note that regarding the ethnic repartition in Lao PDR, Lao Lum women are over-represented since the Lao Lum group constitutes 60% of the total population and the other 40% gather different ethnic minorities (Lao Sung and Lao Teung). If we cross the ethnic origin with the geographical origin, the results confirm firstly that Lao Lum women mainly come from the Centre, Vientiane Capital and the South, but we also find that there are more Lao Lum women (78.1%) than Lao Teung (19.3%) coming from the North, which is mostly inhabited by Lao Teung and Lao Sung. Secondly, we also find Lao Teung women native of Vientiane Province (23.7%) and Vientiane Capital (7.9%). We can hypothesise that this presence results from rural mobility and resettlement programs related to the national policy of eradication slash-and-burn agriculture affecting Highland minorities. In the same way, but in a smaller proportion, we can find 2 women with Lao Sung origin native of Vientiane Province; the three others come from Phongsaly and Luang Prabang.

If we cross the ethnic origin with the age, we find that **2/3 girls aged less than 16 are Lao Lum (64.3%) and one third is Lao Teung (35.7%)**. Above 16 years old, young girls and women are mainly Lao Lum (88.1% for those aged 16 to 18 and 86.6% for WIP who are more than 18). In the next few years, it will be important to observe whether the number of women from ethnic minorities will increase because of internal migration related to the “resettlement policy” carried out by the Lao government.

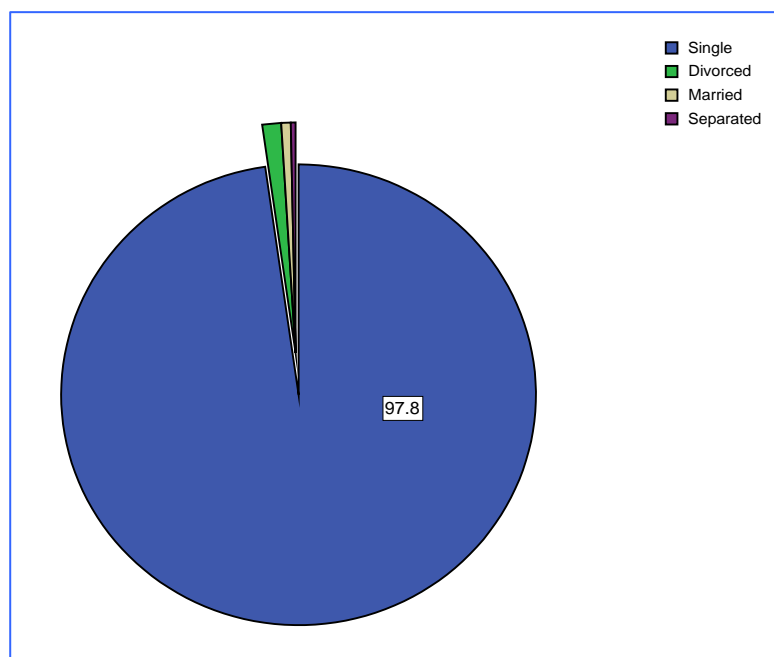
Graph by Ethnic Origin



# DATABASE ANALYSIS OF WOMEN IN PROSTITUTION (WIP) IN VIENTIANE CAPITAL (2005-2006)

## SOCIAL BACKGROUND

### Marital Status

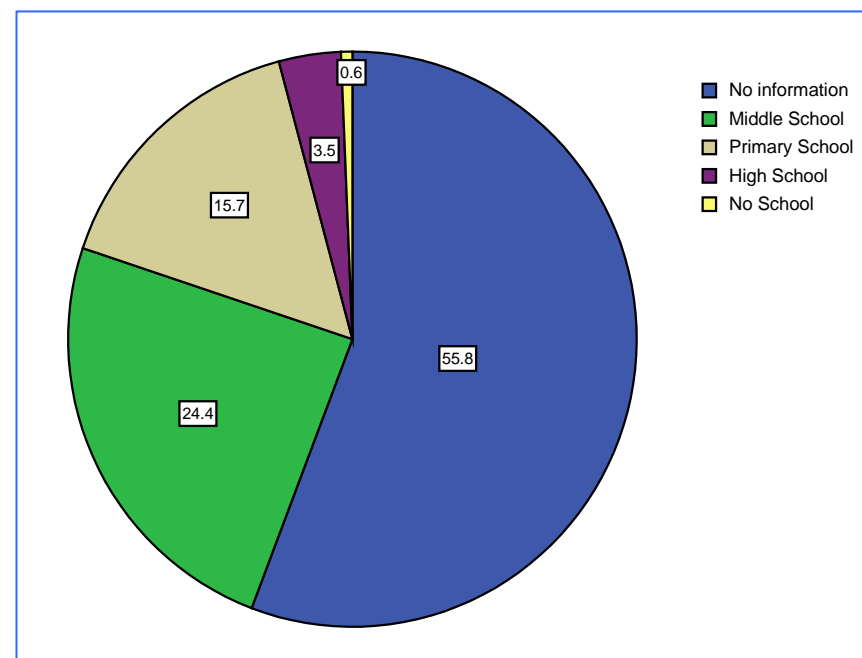


**Almost all the WIP in Vientiane Capital are single (97.4%).** Very few women are married (0.6%), divorced (1.6%) or separated (0.3%)

### Contact with family

**The majority of the WIP keep contact with their family (81.1%).** The more the WIP are old, the more they keep contact. The WIP who keep less contact come from isolated province such as Phongsaly or Oudomxay.

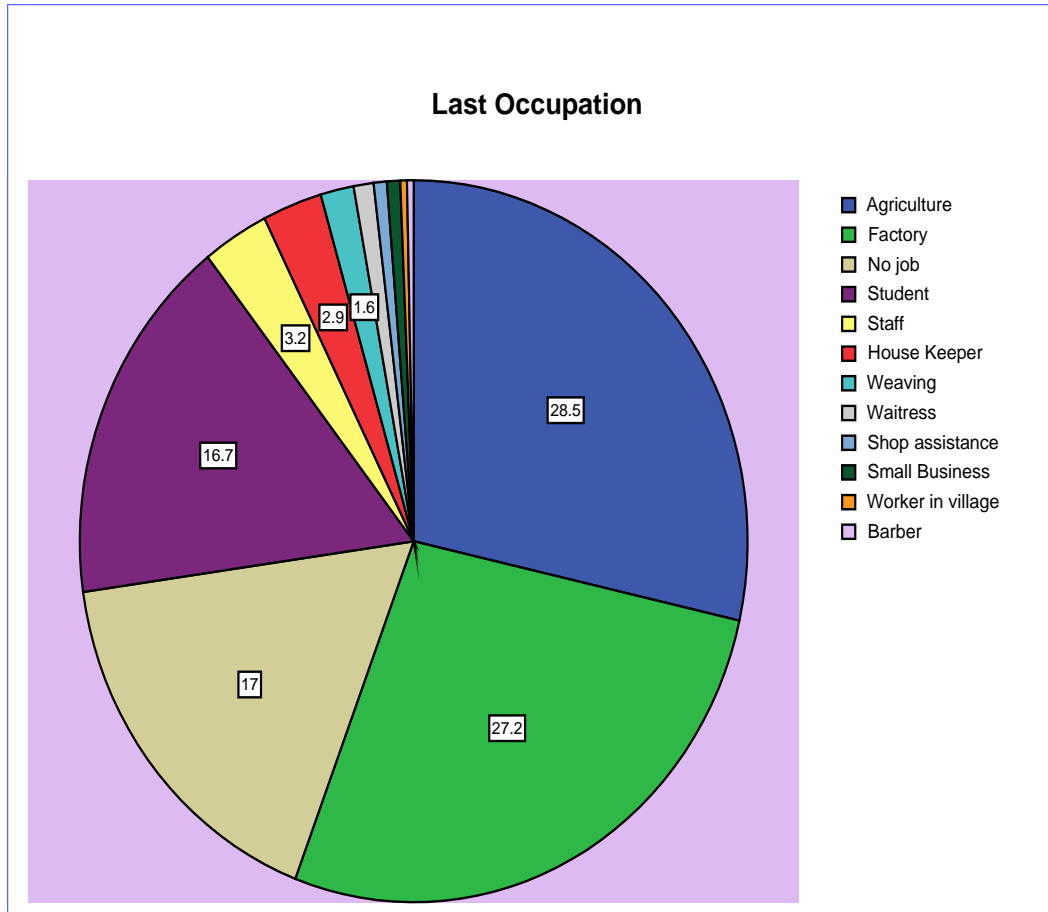
### Education Level



Given the high number of “no answer”, we can’t draw a relevant profile related to the education level, but we can note that a **small number (3.5% of the WIP) went to high school** and at least one fifth went to middle school. However, if we cross Education Level with the Geographical and Ethnic origin, we can see that WIP who went to high school and middle school mainly come from Vientiane Province, Vientiane Capital and Luang Prabang, and they are almost all from Lao Lum origin (only 2 Lao Teung women went to middle school).

# DATABASE ANALYSIS OF WOMEN IN PROSTITUTION (WIP) IN VIENTIANE CAPITAL (2005-2006)

## ECONOMIC BACKGROUND



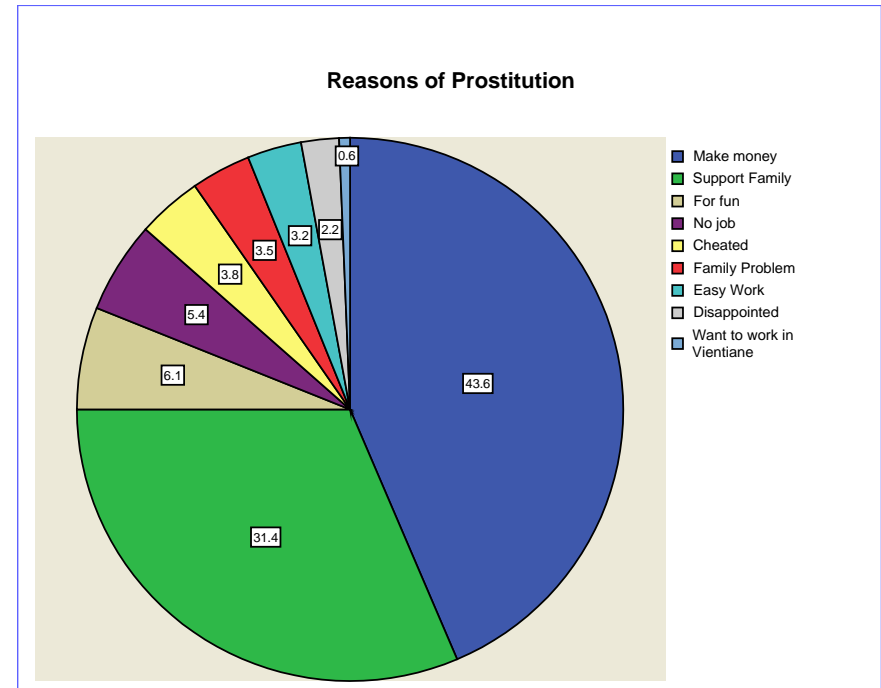
**More than half of the WIP in Vientiane Capital used to work in agriculture (28.5%) or in factory (27.2%).** A large number of women had no job (17%) or were students (16.7%). The others (10%) used to work in service activities such as a barber, waitress, house keeper, shop assistance or as a craftswomen (weaving). Only two women run a small business. If we cross the last occupation with the geographical origin, we find that one third of the women who used to work in agriculture come from Vientiane Province (36%), and then from Luang Prabang (15.7%), Bolikhamxay (11.2%), Xiengkhouang (11.2%), and from Vientiane Capital as well (9%). Regarding the last occupation in factory, 30.6% of the WIP come from Vientiane Province, 18.8% from Vientiane Capital, 12.9% from Luang Prabang and 10.6% from Bolikhamxay. Concerning the women who had no job, they mainly come from Vientiane Province (37.7%), Vientiane Capital (17%), Luang Prabang (17%), and Huaphan (13.2%). At last, the women who used to be student before being involved in prostitution come from Vientiane Province (28.8%), Luang Prabang (21.2%), Vientiane Capital (13.5%) and Huaphan (13.5%).

If we cross the last occupation with age, we find that **half of the girls aged less than 16 used to work in agriculture, and then in factory, were student or jobless.** Between 16 and 18, they used to work in the same proportion in agriculture and factory (26-27%), and then were student (22.4%) or jobless (15.7%). Above 18, they also used to work in the same proportion in agriculture and factory, and then were jobless (18.3%) or a student (12.2%).

## DATABASE ANALYSIS OF WOMEN IN PROSTITUTION (WIP) IN VIENTIANE CAPITAL (2005-2006)

Thus, we can draw four types of motivation to be involved in prostitution:

1. **“Economic motivation”** which gathers the **majority of the WIP (80.5%)**: 43.6% want to make money; 31.4% have to support their family, and 5.5% found no job. These women suffer from poverty, living either in countryside where it becomes more and more difficult to earn money from agriculture (43,9%), or working in factory (24,5%) where the wages are not sufficient to send money to their family and the working conditions are hard. If we cross the reasons of prostitution with age, we find that the girls aged less than 16 want at first make money (37%) and then in the same proportion, decided to be involved in prostitution for fun and to support their family (21.4%). Between 16 and 18, almost half of the young women want to make money (48.5%) and one third have to support their family (31.3%). Above 18, they declare the same reasons (respectively 40.2% and 32.4%).



2. **“Motivation related to the pressure of social environment”** which encourages them to be involved in prostitution: 3.8% have problems with their family, which are likely to be linked with personal issue. Those who have problems with their family are mainly jobless, student or used to work in factory. Moreover, 2.2% have been sentimentally disappointed (for example, a girl loses her virginity with her boyfriend who refuses to marry her. She loses at the same time her honor, then it becomes difficult for her to get married and she has trouble with her family). The young women who have been disappointed by a sentimental relationship mostly used to work in factory or in agriculture, study, or had no job.

3. **“Involuntary choice”**: 3.8% were cheated and 2.2% had sought to work in Vientiane Capital, they used to work in agriculture or as a shop assistant. If we cross the reasons of prostitution with the last occupation, we find that the students are more likely to be cheated, and then the girls working in factory and agriculture. Only one case of girl aged less than 16 was reported to be cheated; 7 girls between 16 and 18 have been cheated and 4 women aged above 18.

4. **“Personal choice”**: 6.1% wanted to try prostitution for fun and 3.2% think that it is an easy work. More than half of the women who do this “job” for fun were students and are mostly more than 18; one third used to work in agriculture. The women who think that it is an easy job mostly used to work in factory. So, they think that their working conditions in factory are worst than in prostitution.

It seems that the majority of the women have “voluntary” chosen to “work” in prostitution. But, we can wonder weather it is really a free choice since they don’t have many other choices. In the next investigations, the outreach staff should deepen their survey concerning the way the women have started to be involved in prostitution. Indeed, at that time, it is impossible to evaluate how many WIP have been forced to get involved in prostitution, trafficked and harmed in so far that the outreach staff doesn’t question the WIP about this issue.

# DATABASE ANALYSIS OF WOMEN IN PROSTITUTION (WIP) IN VIENTIANE CAPITAL (2005-2006)

## WORKING CONDITIONS

### Age \* Duration Crosstabulation

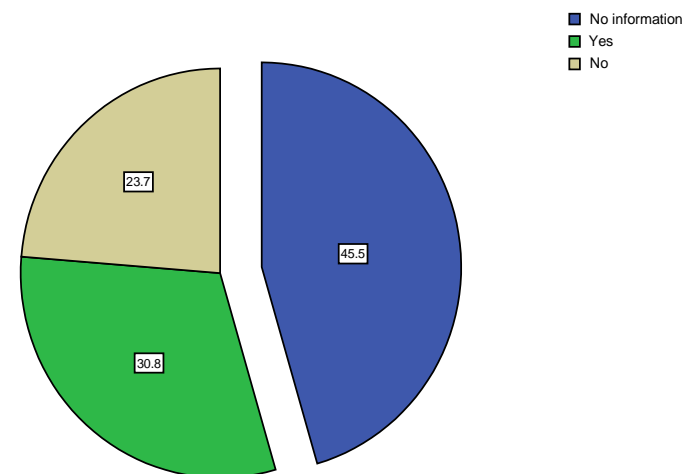
AGE	Less than one week	Less than one month	Less than one year	More than one year	Total
<16	0	6	8	0	14
% duration	0%	12%	3,9%	0%	4,5%
% of Total	0%	1,9%	2,6%	0%	4,5%
16-18	6	21	92	15	134
% duration	60%	42%	44,9%	31,9%	42,9%
% of Total	1,9%	6,7%	29,5%	4,8%	42,9%
>18	4	23	105	32	164
% duration	40%	46%	51,2%	68,1%	52,6%
% of Total	1,3%	7,4%	33,6%	10,3%	52,6%
Total	10	50	205	47	312
% duration	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
% of Total	3,2%	16%	65,7%	15,1%	100%

**2/3 of the WIP have worked less than one year** (an average of 3.4 months). 15.1% have worked more than one year (an average of one year and a half). About one fifth of the WIP have worked less than one month. 2/3 of the WIP who have worked more than one year are aged more than 18. There are almost as many WIP aged less than 18 as WIP aged more than 18 who have worked less than one year. More than half of the youngest girls (aged less than 16) surveyed have worked less than one year. The others have worked less than one month.

The WIP who have worked more than one year mainly come from Vientiane Province (29,8%), Luang Prabang (23.4%) and Vientiane Capital (17%) and used to work before in agriculture (23.4%) or were a student (23,4%), had no job (21,3%) or used to work in factory (12.8%). The majority of them (83%) got involved in prostitution for economic reasons (44.7% to support their family, 31.9 to make money and 6.7% had no job). 8,5% got involved because of the pressure of social environment (family problem); 6.4% for personal motivation (for fun) and only 2.1% because they have been cheated.

### HIV training

Almost half of the WIP didn't give any information about HIV training. **Only 30.8% are informed about HIV. Almost 2/3 of the WIP who didn't receive any HIV training are less than 18 (63.6%).**

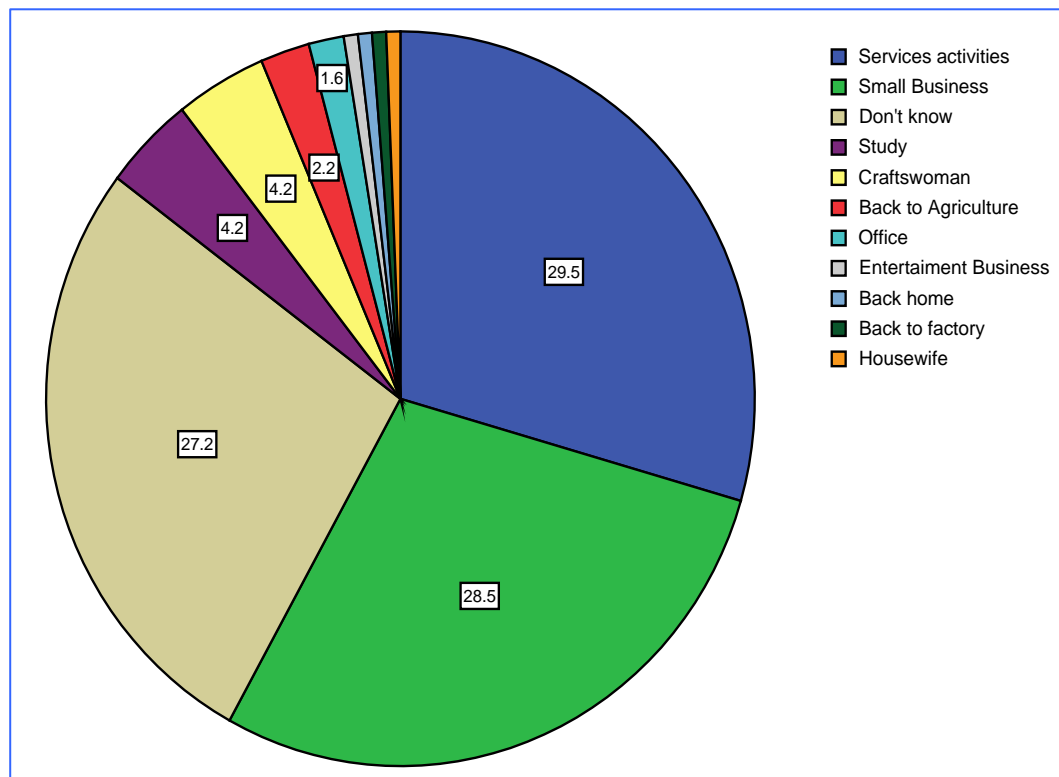


# DATABASE ANALYSIS OF WOMEN IN PROSTITUTION (WIP) IN VIENTIANE CAPITAL (2005-2006)

## FUTURE EXPECTED

### Job expected in the future

29.5% of the WIP expect to work in services activities, such as a hairdresser (17%), or a tailor (9.9%). Almost as many of them (28.5%) expect to save enough money to run their own small business. One fifth (27.2%) don't know what they want to do in the future. A small proportion (4.2%) wants to study again or work as a craftswomen (weaving in general). Very few women want to come back to agriculture (2.2%), or factory (0.6%). Very few women expect to work in office (1.6%) because they don't have a good education. Only 0.6% expect to get married or want to come home. And only 2 WIP (0,6%) expect to run their own entertainment business.



### Job expected \* reasons of prostitution crossing

The WIP who got involved in prostitution to make money expect to work in services activities (37.5%) or run their own small business (30.1%). The WIP who got involved in prostitution to support their family expect to work in services activities (31.6%) or run their own small business (27.6%) too, but one fifth don't know what to do in the future (26.5%). More than half of the WIP who got involved in prostitution because they had no job don't know what to do in the future. 23.5% want to run their own small business. A great number of the WIP who got involved in prostitution for fun don't know what to do in the future (42.1%). One quarter (26.3%) want to run their own business and 15.8% want to work in office (only 5.3% want to work in services activities).

### Job expected \* last occupation crossing

One third of the WIP who used to work in agriculture don't know what to do in the future (37.1%). 29.2% want to run their own business and 24.5% expect to work in service activities. Only 3.4% want to come back to agriculture. One third of the WIP who used to work in factory expect to run their own business (36.5%); 27.1% want to work in service activities; 15.3% don't know what to do and only 2.4% want to come back to factory. More than one third of the WIP who had no job want to work in service activities (39%), one quarter

don't know what to do (26.4%), 22.6% expect to run their own business. One third of the WIP who were student don't know what to do (32.7%); one third want to work in service activities (32.7%); 7.7% expect to work in office, and only one wants to study again. 2 out of 5 WIP who used to work as a craftswoman want to study again and only one wants to come back to handicraft.

## **DATABASE ANALYSIS OF WOMEN IN PROSTITUTION (WIP) IN VIENTIANE CAPITAL (2005-2006)**

### **Job expected \* Age crossing**

**More than half of the WIP who don't know what to do are less than 18 years old.** 2/3 of the WIP who expect to run their own business are more than 18. 2/3 of the WIP (69.2%) who want to study again are aged between 16 and 18. 71.4% of the WIP who want to come back to agriculture are more than 18. 2/3 of the WIP who want to work as a craftswoman are more than 18. There is as many girls aged less than 18 (48.9%) as women aged more than 18 (51.1%) who want to work in service activities.

### **Job expected \* Geographical origin crossing**

**The women who don't know what to do in the future mainly come from the Centre (45.9%) and the Northern Provinces (44.7%).** More than half of the WIP who want to come back to agriculture come from the Vientiane Province (57.1%) and 28.6% from the North (Phongsaly and Luang Prabang). Half of the WIP who expect to run their own business come from the Centre and 28.1% from the North. Half of the WP who want to work in service activities come from the Centre (47.8%), 30.4% from the North. More than half of the WIP who want to work as a craftswoman come from the North (53.8%) and 30.8% from the Centre. The WIP who want to come home or get married come from the North. Almost half of the WIP who want to study again come from Vientiane Province (46.2%) and from Huaphan (38.5%)

## **CONCLUSION**

The target of AFESIP is the minor girls coming from Vientiane Province and the North of Lao PDR, who are less educated, more likely to be cheated or influenced and not informed about STD/HIV risks. The outreach staff will have to deepen the investigation to determine:

- the different types of prostitution in order to build a specific intervention for each type of prostitution
- how the WIP started to get involved in prostitution in order to prevent human trafficking and prostitution