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**Fertility Decline and Transnational Mothering in a Rural Village of Laos***Futoshi NISHIMOTO (Japan)*

Evidence from rural populations suggests that fertility was brought under control due to demands for labor migration to urban centers and the contraceptive use which facilitates working away from home. The objective of this study is to assess the fertility change in the last fifty years in a paddy farming village of Laos and the effects of recent fertility decline on local social landscape. Retrospective questionnaires on birth outcomes, age at delivery, contraceptive use and migration experience were collected from 265 women including the deceased. All were born in the village or neighboring area between 1880 and 1996 and delivered of 1,007 children. Many women aged 40 or younger have experience of temporary labor migration and started using contraceptives right after the first child delivery. Total marital fertility rate (TMFR) increased from 4.6 to 6.4 between 1960s and 1970s. During the latter decade the villagers faced economic hardship due to the political regime shift. The next two decades of 1980s and 1990s find TMFR still high at 5.4 and 5.5. However TMFR sharply dropped to 2.2 in the 2000s. Age at the first delivery remained almost the same around the age of twenty throughout the five decades while birth interval lengths were deliberately extended in the last decade. Return home for delivery has become common practice for young mothers who head again for Bangkok soon after delivery leaving a child at grandmother's care. Mothering in rural Laos today cannot work without remittance from mothers working abroad.