



WFP Lao PDR Country Brief

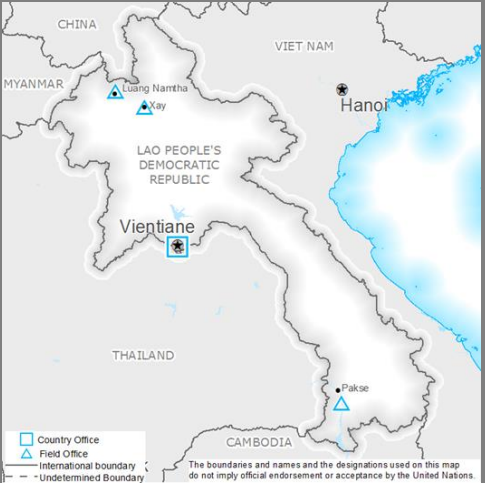
June 2018

Operational Context

Lao PDR is a least developed country, ranking 138 out of 188 countries in the 2016 Human Development Index. It has one of the lowest population densities in Asia. 28 percent of the population lives below the national poverty line (USD 1.25/day), with a gross national income per capita of USD 1,740 (World Bank 2015). The country is ranked 64 out of 144 in the Global Gender Gap Index 2017.

While Lao PDR has managed to reduce the proportion of hungry poor to 23 percent, the 2015 Global Hunger Index still rates hunger levels as “serious”. Malnutrition remains a major challenge with stunting affecting one out of three children in Laos (LSIS II, 2017).

Climate change is a key challenge facing rural livelihoods, and the country is the world’s 73rd most vulnerable to climate change due to its low adaptability and its dependence on climate-sensitive natural resources. Changing climate patterns, combined with poor access to both markets and diverse livelihoods, further worsen the situation in remote upland areas, where 25 percent of households are food insecure.



Population: **6.5 million**

2016 Human Development Index: 138 out of 188

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: 35.6% of children between 6-59 months

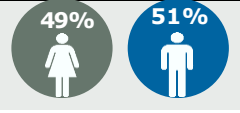
In Numbers

1,344 metric tons of food distributed in the first quarter of 2018.

21 percent of children under five are underweight, 33 percent stunted, and 9 percent affected by wasting (2017).

US\$ 0.9 million six-month (July – December 2018) net funding requirement

670,328 people assisted in June 2018



Operational Updates

- As part of school meals handover efforts, a provincial school meals handover workshop was held on 14-15 June in Oudomxay province, chaired by Dr. Khamphay Sisavanh, Vice Minister of Education and Sports, in charge of the supervision of the School Meals Programme. The meeting was co-chaired together with WFP and Mr. Ovath Chanthavong, Oudomxay Permanent Party Committee, President of Provincial Lao Front, to disseminate information related to the WFP-Ministry of Education and Sports school meals handover plan and discuss workplan and ministerial decrees related to the handover with provincial and district representatives. Nearly 90 participants attended from Ministry of Education and Sports at the central level as well as from provincial and districts from the nine targeted districts, selected as part of the first phase of the handover in June 2019.
- From 04-14 June, a research team facilitated by WFP visited Lao PDR to conduct a case-study as part of a regional project aimed at strengthening the capacity of ASEAN Member States to design and implement risk-informed and shock-responsive social protection systems to enhance resilience. The joint UN research exercise is implemented by WFP, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), International Labour Organization (ILO), and the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR). The regional study will rely on a desk-review and interviews with key informants to develop a relevant framework for the ASEAN member states.
- On behalf of the government, WFP has been storing and delivering APTERR tier 3 rice donated by ASEAN. This effort was in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, and it was distributed in two southern provinces in early June.

Main Photo Credit: WFP/Bart Verweij
Caption: Mothers lining to receive Nutributter from WFP for their children in southern Lao PDR.

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WFP Country Strategy		
Total CSP Requirement (in USD)	Confirmed Contributions (in USD)	July - December 2018 Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
Lao PDR Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)		
85 m	32.7 m	0.9 m
Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food		
Strategic Outcome 1: Schoolchildren in remote rural areas have sustainable access to food by 2021 <i>Focus area: Root causes</i>		
48.4 m	19.1 m	0.1 m
Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition		
Strategic Outcome 2: Stunting levels among children under 2 in provinces with high levels of malnutrition meet national levels by 2025 <i>Focus area: Root causes</i>		
23.5 m	6.3 m	0.8 m
Strategic Result 4: Food systems are sustainable		
Strategic Outcome 3: Vulnerable households in climate-sensitive districts are more resilient to seasonal and long-term shocks and stresses <i>Focus area: Resilience</i>		
8.4 m	1.2 m	0.3 m
Strategic Result 5: Developing countries have strengthened capacities to implement the SDGs		
Strategic Outcome 4: National and local governance institutions are strengthened to improve service delivery, especially in hard-to-reach areas, by 2025. <i>Focus area: Root causes</i>		
4.7 m	1.8 m	0.2 m

Figures provisional

Monitoring

- WFP monitored 51 prevention of stunting project sites. In addition, WFP trained Lao Front for National Development (LFND) at 7 provinces. Training included LFND province and district officers. LFND will function as WFP's third-party monitors and support mobilization at community level.
- Since January 2018, WFP has deployed senior community mobilisers to strengthen community engagement and local ownership in the school meals programme. The implementation of the packages of assistance has intensified in the 500 communities where school meals will be handed over in 2019. WFP community mobilizers are engaging with the communities on 13 different areas from rehabilitation of kitchens to water connectivity, hygiene, maintenance of vegetable gardens, and so on. As a result, during March to May 2018, the frequency of cooking and community contributions of fresh food have increased as communities understand the importance of the programme for their children, and how they can be more engaged.
- During June, WFP distributed the remaining food closing balances at schools to families of students as take-home rations for support during the lean season.
- The distributions of supplementary nutritious food for children below 23 months continued in villages. The shift of distribution points from district centres to villages has increased the coverage and the outreach of the programme.

Partnerships

- WFP received a letter of interest from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) outlining interest to jointly develop a funding proposal for the Green Climate Fund.
- In June, WFP signed a visibility agreement with the Lao Airlines to raise awareness about food security and nutrition in Lao PDR. This visibility campaign will be undertaken through publications in the in-flight magazines, raising awareness to Lao Airlines staff, conducting joint advocacy at major events, and supporting humanitarian goods delivery by Lao Airlines in the event of natural disasters.

Challenges

Dispatches of food for the second half of the year have begun. Locations where nutrition activities are implemented have been prioritized along with the districts which face access difficulty during the rainy season.

Donors

USA, Australia, Japan, Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme (GAFSP), Government of Lao PDR, Private Donors

GENDER MARKER 2A 

WFP Lao PDR's Activities

SO 1	1) Provide policy support, technical assistance and transfer of capacities
	2) Accelerate the implementation of the Government's plan of action of the school meals programme
	3) Support a national process for community and Government hand-over of the schools
SO 2	4) Provide technical assistance for evidence-based policy dialogue
	5) Stimulate access to local specialized nutritious food for children aged 6 to 23 months
	6) Develop a social behaviour change communication and establish farmer nutrition schools
SO 3	7) Build community resilience through the creation of productive assets and sustainable livelihood opportunities
SO 4	8) Invest in national capacity for food and nutrition security governance
	9) Enable communities to lead and own their food and nutrition security solutions
	10) Enhance government capacity at all levels to prepare for and efficiently respond to natural disasters