



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

WFP Lao PDR Country Brief March 2019



Operational Context

Lao PDR is a least developed country, ranking 139 out of 189 countries in the 2017 Human Development Index. It has one of the lowest population densities in Asia. 23 percent of the population lives below the national poverty line (USD 1.25/day), with a gross national income per capita of USD 2,270 (World Bank 2017). 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".

Climate change is a key challenge facing rural livelihoods, and the country is 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.

WFP has been present in Lao PDR since 1975.



Population: **6.5 million**

Human Development Index: **139 out of 189**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

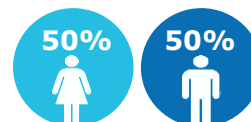
Chronic malnutrition: **35.6% of children between 6-59**

In Numbers

568 mt of food distributed

USD 25,084 in cash distributed

200,717 people assisted



Operational Updates

- WFP has completed all cash distributions to 6,388 flood-affected households in Khammouane Province with funding from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). 131 villages in three districts were targeted, where 33,000 people received assistance. In total, LAK 10,443,040,000 (approx. USD 1.2 million) was distributed during the 6-month period of the flood response.
- France confirmed a contribution of EUR 350,000 (approx. USD 395,000) for continued nutrition support to flood-stricken communities in Attapeu and Khammouane Provinces.
- With support from WFP, the Ministry of Education and Sports issued a decree on school gardens, stipulating that all schools will from now on have to ensure they have a vegetable garden attached to their premises.

WFP is preparing to hand over the entire school feeding implementation (a total of 1,450 schools and 140,000 children across seven provinces) to communities and the Government by 2021. The first batch of 515 schools in the Northern Provinces will be handed over this year. Capacity strengthening of communities and authorities is ongoing in order for them to drive and implement local sustainable solutions following the handover.

- A regional evidence mission identified gaps and needs in collecting and analysing data to report on programmes and using evidence to design successful initiatives. Within the framework of the mission, a field trip to Xieng Khouang Province looked at methodologies to improve the Agriculture for Nutrition programme by using integrated social and behaviour change communication.

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Further information: www.wfp.org/countries/lao-peoples-democratic-republic

Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

| Total Requirement (in USD) | Allocated Contributions (in USD) | Apr – Sept Net Funding Requirements (in USD) |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| 78.7 m | 42.5 m | 0.21 |

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Schoolchildren in remote rural areas have sustainable access to food by 2021.

Focus area: Root causes

Activities:

- Provide policy support, technical assistance and transfer of capacities
- Accelerate the implementation of the Government's plan of action of the school meals programme
- Support a national process for community and Government hand-over of the schools.

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.

Focus area: Root causes

Activities:

- Provide technical assistance for evidence-based policy dialogue
- Stimulate access to local specialized nutritious food for children aged 6 to 23 months
- Develop a social behaviour change communication and establish farmer nutrition schools.

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.

Focus area: Resilience

Activities:

- Build community resilience through the creation of productive assets and sustainable livelihood opportunities.

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.

Focus area: Root causes

Activities:

- Invest in national capacity for food and nutrition security governance
- Enable communities to lead and own their food and nutrition security solutions
- Enhance government capacity at all levels to prepare for and efficiently respond to natural disasters.

Mr. Sonexay Keomanyvong teaches at Pangdeua School of Beng District in the Northern Province of Oudomxay. The students of Sonexay's school enjoy daily school meals, supported by WFP.

The leadership of Pangdeua is deeply committed to the school feeding programme, and there is strong ownership and participation from the community.

In June 2019, the school feeding programme for 515 schools will be handed over to the Government of Lao PDR, with Pangdeua school amongst them. One of WFP's activities in preparing the schools for this handover is the installation of water supply.

"It used to be so difficult to cook for our students. Villagers had to bring water from home to school for cooking. Now, we have water available in the school which makes our lives so much easier. Soon, we will start planting our school garden", Sonexay says with a smile.



Donors

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