

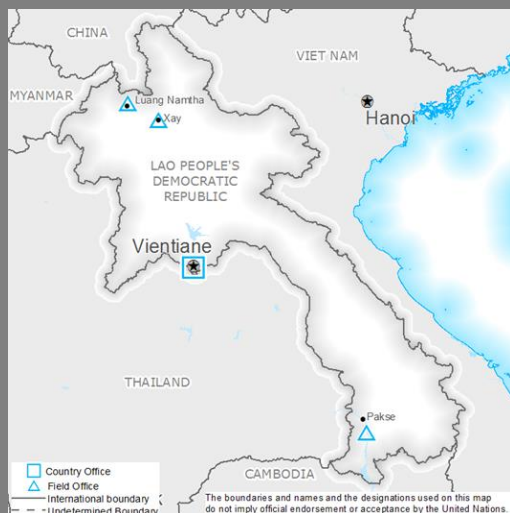


## Operational Context

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**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

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

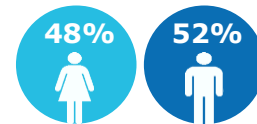
Chronic malnutrition: **35.6% of children between 6-59 months**

## In Numbers

530 mt of food assistance distributed

US\$ 1.12 million six-month (Jul-Dec 2019) net funding requirements

160,147 people assisted



## Programmatic and Operational Updates

- WFP distributed 116.7 mt of rice and 8.4 mt of canned fish to 5,395 flood-affected beneficiaries in Sanamxai District, Attapeu Province.
- WFP conducted an initial meeting with district officials and village representatives regarding the establishment of 40 community rice banks which will benefit 22,000 beneficiaries in 40 target villages in the districts of Kaleum and Sanamxai in Southern Laos.
- In partnership with the National Mutual Federation of Luxembourg, WFP has continued distributing cash to beneficiaries for establishing community assets in vulnerable communities. As of June 2019, the partnership has distributed a total of US\$ 46,291 to 8,972 beneficiaries in 32 villages for the establishment of 37 community assets.
- Agriculture For Nutrition organised a consultation meeting on land-use planning with stakeholders in Oudomxay and Xiengkhuang to discuss various approaches and implementation modalities. Under Strategic Outcome 4 of its Country Strategic Plan, WFP is supporting and enabling communities to lead their own food security and nutrition solutions. Land-use planning is one of the areas where WFP is providing support, with the objective to improve access to productive land and management of natural resources in a sustainable way.
- To mark the Japanese Government's contribution to WFP of 339 mt canned fish and 205 mt of rice, the Japanese Ambassador to the Lao PDR attended a ceremony at the WFP warehouse in Vientiane. This in-kind contribution is part of Japan's pledge of US\$ 3.2 million towards WFP's school meals and resilience building programmes, which help communities withstand disasters caused by climate change.
- A baseline survey was conducted in 13 Villages in Sanamxay District, Attapeu Province and 6 Villages in Nhommalath District, Khammouan Province from 10-14 June 2019, to understand the nutrition status of the population within the targeted villages. The study also seeks to expose the gaps in Villagers' knowledge or beneficial attitudes and practices regarding feeding and hygiene of infants and young children.

## Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Jul – Dec Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
78.72 m	49.23 m	1.12 m

## 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.

- A nutrition campaign was also conducted from 10-14 June 2019 in Sanamxay District, Attapeu Province to understand knowledge, attitudes and practices among adolescent girls, pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers.
- On 20 June, the National Nutrition Center and Ministry of Health held a preparatory meeting of the Taskforce on Food Fortification. The meeting was attended by relevant ministries and the private sector, with the objective of getting ready for the 3-4 July meeting for developing Technical Aspects of Standard Setting for Food Fortification in Laos.

## Story from the field



35-year-old Saothong Khammany is a farmer from Namheang Village, Nalae District, Luang Namtha Province. Her family was once one of the poorest in the village. Since she joined the Local and Regional Procurement (LRP) project in 2017, her life and that of her family has improved. She is now a well-trained farmer and actively produces vegetable for the village.

Speaking to WFP, she said *"I used to burn the forest to plant rice, hunt the wildlife for food and find Non-timber forest products (NTFPs) to sell and earn some money, but often it was not enough. Now, since I joined the LRP project, my life has changed. I've learned how to do farming and set up my own vegetable garden. My family is happier than ever before, we have more time to make a living. We don't have to burn the forest to cultivate or hunt for food anymore."*

The LRP project contributed to this small success. It helps to improve the lives of more than 1,500 people in this area by providing seeds, tools and capacity building to groups of farmers. These farmers then earn an average of US\$ 2,500-3,000 per year from vegetable gardens. Finally, forests have been slowly restored as the farmers no longer use shifting cultivation methods that have damaged them in the past.

## Donors

USA, Australia, Japan, France, Russia, Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme, UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), Government of Lao PDR, Private Donors