



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

# WFP Lao PDR Country Brief August 2019

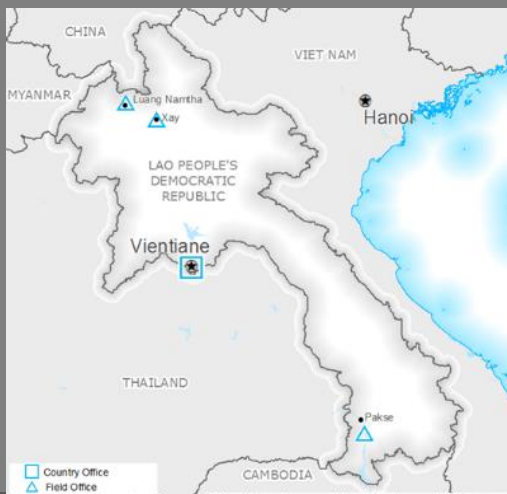


## Operational Context

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 months

## In Numbers

US\$ 1.58 million six-month (Sept 2019 – Feb 2020) net funding requirements

137.088 mt of food assistance distributed

24,484 people assisted



## Operational Updates

- Flood update: During 29 August – 2 September 2019, heavy rainfall from Tropical Storm PODUL and Tropical Depression KAJIKI resulted in widespread flooding being reported in six provinces in southern Lao PDR (Khammouane, Attapeu, Saravan, Sekong, Savannakhet and Champasack Provinces). As of 9 September 2019, an estimated 397,000 people have been affected with 88,000 people displaced and 14 people have died. WFP is providing logistics support for the distribution of 400 mt of rice from the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR) to the affected area. As of 10 September 2019, no official request for assistance from the Government has been received by the UN Country Team, however, WFP is closely monitoring the situation and is ready to respond.
- WFP conducted an emergency food security assessment aimed to provide an overview of the humanitarian situation and risks to food security in northern provinces that have been affected by drought, rodent plagues and flash flooding during the past months. Findings are due to be released mid-September.
- WFP and the Lao Red Cross distributed 116.65 mt of rice and 8.43 mt of canned fish to the 5,395 people in Sanamxay district of the Southern Attapeu province who were hit by the floods of 2018.
- To ensure food security during the lean season, community rice banks have been established in two districts (Kaleum in Sekong Province and Sanamxay in Attapeu Province) of Southern Laos. 28 rice storage facilities have been built out of the planned 40. Food distribution is scheduled for the beginning of September, or as soon as the villages are accessible by road.
- WFP and the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare co-chaired a Logistics Cluster Preparedness workshop in Vientiane. The workshop agreed upon focus areas for a desktop simulation to further evaluate priority tools, infrastructure and trainings needed to address gaps in emergency logistics.

**Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)**

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Sept 2019 – Feb 2020 Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
78.72 m	49.21 m	1.58 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.

**Operational Updates (continued)**

- WFP held a Training of Trainers for the assembly of Mobile Storage Units (MSU) in Vientiane. 24 people participated from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Lao Military, Lao Red Cross and WFP. WFP also provided two MSUs in support of the government's prepositioning strategy for rapid temporary relief item storage or shelter following disasters. Further trainings will be organised in the provinces.
- To improve communities' resilience and raise their awareness of positive nutrition practices, WFP trained 50 people from 10 villages in Luang Namtha Province to process food and animal feed and use bio-fertilizers.
- WFP held an Agriculture for Nutrition Training of Trainers to build facilitation skills among district government technical officers. The aim is that all 12 district trainer teams will transfer their skills to facilitators in the villages targeted in 2019 and 2020, in support of activities in the Farmer Nutrition Schools programme.

**Story from the field**



During the Emergency Rapid Assessment in Oudomxay Province, we talked to Lar, aged 50, who is one of the poorest in her ethnic Khmu community of Kangkok Village in Xay District. Lar has seven children who she is raising alone. Her rice field is on a mountain slope and is her only source of income. In 2017, severe drought meant the family had no rice to eat or sell in 2018. This year, rats ate all her rice stocks. The family is often hungry and relies on tubers that they scavenge in the forest. Last year, Lar borrowed money to buy rice, but this year no one in the village had any to spare and she can't reach the district capital in the rainy season on the dirt roads.

**Donors**

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