



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

# WFP Lao PDR Country Brief September 2019



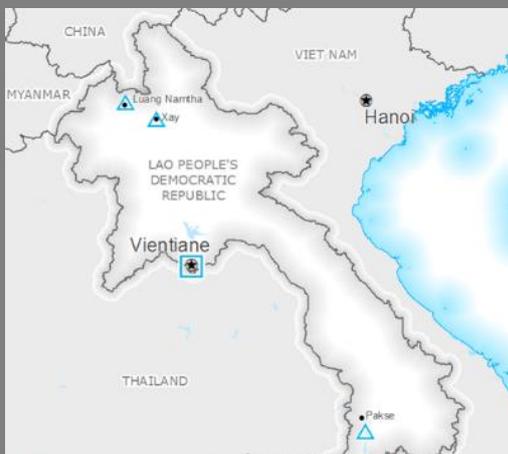
## Operational Context

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 2017 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: 33.0% of  
children between 6-59 months

## In Numbers

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

493.693 mt of food assistance distributed

120,690 people assisted



## Operational Updates

- WFP provided support to the Government to conduct an impact assessment after the recent floods in six central and southern provinces of Laos. The final report is expected to be submitted in mid-October and is set to inform the further recovery actions.
- The Government plans to conduct an after-action review of the logistics and coordination of the recent flood response. The floods at the end of August affected an estimated 397,000 people, with 88,000 persons displaced and 14 losing their lives. The review, which WFP has offered to support, is tentatively scheduled to take place in late October in Champassak Province.
- WFP organised a farmer nutrition training for 24 village facilitators and nine district officers in Ngommalath District, Khammouane Province as part of the nutrition support project for flood-affected populations. The training consists of nutrition information and dietary diversity, topics that the participants will convey to their communities in further sessions.
- As a part of the handover of the school feeding programme to the Government, WFP has completed orientation and planning workshops in all seven WFP-assisted provinces. The Ministry of Education and Sports has allocated a state budget to support the programme in 515 schools which have already been handed over in July 2019 (this is in nine districts across three provinces which have now been handed over).
- WFP is working with the Southern Laos Food and Nutrition Security and Market Linkages Programme' to rehabilitate access roads in seven villages across three districts of Xekong and Saravane Provinces. This IFAD-funded programme will benefit 641 households and 3,599 people (of which 1,710 are women). Community members working on the rehabilitation will receive a total of USD 34,000 as conditional payments for their labour.
- WFP organised a training in Oudomxay on the installation of mobile storage units (temporary warehouses with the capacity to store and sort food supplies and relief items). Two more trainings will be held in Khammouane and Champassak Province in October.

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.

Monitoring

- A delegation from the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) visited Houn and Beng Districts of Oudomxay Province to monitor the WFP-supported school feeding programme. The mission also visited four villages in Nalae District of Luangnamtha Province, where agricultural production, weaving activities and livelihood development of women and farmer groups are supported by WFP's Local and Regional Procurement Programme, also funded by USDA.

Story from the field



Xongkot is almost two years old, and his mother is nothing but smiles. "The most important thing in my life is that my son is healthy," the 23-year-old Kham says.

She tells us how lucky she feels that her village had a health volunteer trained by WFP. This health volunteer taught her about eating right during her pregnancy, about the importance of breastfeeding in the first six months and about supplementing her son's diet after with healthy vegetables and proteins.

"We have traditional food taboos in our village, limiting pregnant women's diets," she says. But thanks to WFP, she tells us that she was able to learn about healthy foods, "I can see that Xongkot is so much stronger, healthier and happier."

Donors

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