



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

# WFP Lao PDR Country Brief December 2019

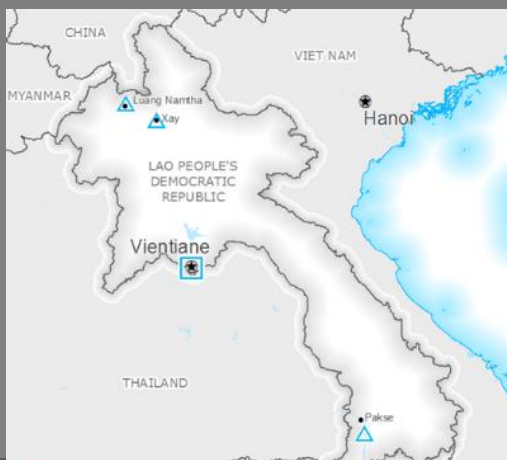


## Operational Context

Lao PDR is a least developed country, ranking 140 out of 189 countries in the 2018 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 [inconsistent]**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

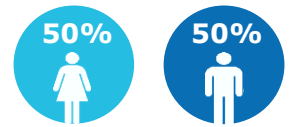
Chronic malnutrition: **33% of children between 6-59**

## In Numbers

**US\$ 2.3 million** six-month (Jan – June 2020) net funding requirements

**249.434 mt** of food distributed

**107,158 people** assisted



## Operational Updates

- WFP held a validation workshop for the external evaluation of the USDA-funded local and regional procurement programme. In addition to the workshop in Vientiane, the evaluation team and WFP met with 33 farmers and 15 local government authorities in the target district Nalae in Luangnamtha Province. The evaluation found the programme to be generally effective and provided recommendations for similar future initiatives.
- In support of the handover of the school feeding programme by 2021, WFP supplied computers, printers and projectors to relevant departments of the Ministry of Education and Sports in Luangprabang, Sekong, Saravane and Attapeu provinces. This hardware will help implementation of the programme in 21 WFP-supported districts.
- Since 2018, WFP has built 190 fish ponds as livelihoods and food support for the school feeding programme. An aquaculture expert assessed 12 of these ponds in Oudomxay, Luangnamtha and Phongsaly provinces in order to improve the intervention across these and other provinces.
- Together with the National Nutrition Center, WFP organised a training for the staff of two factories on basic nutrition. This activity was led by the SUN Business Network, in order to promote improved nutrition and health at the workplace. In 2020, another seven factories will be targeted.
- The National Nutrition Forum convened over 300 participants from different sectors. At this forum, WFP provided technical support for meeting preparations and showcased SUN Business Network members and their products as unique solutions to improve nutrition nationally.
- WFP has started phasing out the distribution of Specialized Nutritious Food. The last stock was dispatched to Sekong Province during December. WFP will continue to support nutrition at the community level through promoting local nutritious food and nutrition education activities for behaviour change.

## Operational Updates (continued)

- WFP completed the food-assistance for assets partnership with Food and Nutrition Security and Market Linkages (an IFAD-funded programme in the south of Laos). Through this partnership, WFP created 41 assets in 37 communities. WFP also contributed USD 81,383 as cash-based transfers for 2,000 households (12,800 beneficiaries).
- WFP received confirmation of a US\$ 73,000 contribution from the Government of the Russian Federation. The contribution will be used for capacity strengthening and skills trainings related to asset creation. These funds complement an existing US\$ 1 million from Russia to support resilience building through food assistance for assets.

## Story from the field



Villagers from Kangnoon village are proud to build their own road. Photo: © WFP/ Vilakhone Sipaseuth

Since 2002, WFP has been implementing the food-assistance for assets activity in Lao PDR. Villagers receive cash or food in exchange for their labor, constructing access roads and water supply systems, typically, for the benefit of the entire community.

In Kangnoon village, Salavan Province, the community is building an access road to the village. Linlan Xapasert, a villager, says: “Earlier, life was hard. There was no road here, no connection to the village. We villagers are glad to contribute to the construction of the road, which makes our life so much easier. Now we can easily reach the health center when we are sick, for example.”

WFP’s Programme Policy Officer Sorraphong Pasomsouk says: “Our goal is community involvement and ownership. When we roll out these activities, we want the community to benefit. We believe that if the community understands and is willing to take charge, then that reflects sustainability in the long term.”

## Donors

USA, Australia, Japan, France, Russia, Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme, Government of Lao PDR, Private Donors

### Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Jan– June 2020 Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
78.7 m	51.5 m	2.3 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.