



World Food Programme



# Rapid Assessment of Food Security and Agriculture in Lao PDR

SAVING  
LIVES  
CHANGING  
LIVES



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## ບົດສະຫລຸບຫຍໍ້

ເຖິງແມ່ນວ່າມາຮອດປະຈຸບັນ, ສປປ ລາວ ໄດ້ມີການຢັ້ງຢືນພົບຜູ້ຕິດເຊື້ອພະຍາດອັກເສບປອດຈາກເຊື້ອຈຸລະໂລກສາຍພັນໃໝ່ (ໂຄວິດ-19) ພຽງແຕ່ 19 ກໍລະນີ, ແຕ່ວ່າກໍຄືເຊັ່ນດຽວກັນກັບປະເທດອື່ນໆທົ່ວໂລກ - ສປປ ລາວ - ກໍແມ່ນໄດ້ຮັບຜົນກະທົບທາງ ເສດຖະກິດ ແລະ ສັງຄົມເປັນອັນດັບຮອງ, ເນື່ອງຈາກການຈັດຕັ້ງປະຕິບັດມາດຕະການເພື່ອສະກັດກັ້ນການແຜ່ລະບາດຂອງໂຄວິດ-19. ການສໍາຫລວດຄັ້ງນີ້ແມ່ນເພື່ອສຶກສາເຖິງຜົນກະທົບຂອງວິກິດການຕໍ່ກັບການຄ້າປະກັນດ້ານສະບຽງອາຫານ ແລະ ການກະສິກໍາ ເພື່ອກໍານົດບັນຫາທີ່ເປັນຂອດອຸປະສັກຕົ້ນຕໍ ແລະ ຈໍານວນປະຊາກອນທີ່ຖືກຜົນກະທົບຢູ່ແຂວງຕ່າງໆໃນຂອບເທດທົ່ວປະເທດ, ພ້ອມທັງເພື່ອເປັນທິດທາງສໍາລັບບາງການຕອບໂຕ້ ແລະ ຮັບມືທີ່ຈໍາເປັນ.

ການສໍາຫລວດໃນຄັ້ງນີ້ແມ່ນໄດ້ຈັດຕັ້ງປະຕິບັດໂດຍຮູບແບບການໂທຜ່ານໂທລະສັບເພື່ອເກັບຂໍ້ມູນ ເລີ່ມຕັ້ງແຕ່ວັນທີ່ 21-30 ເມສາ 2020, ຫຼັງຈາກວັນພັກບຸນກຸດສິງການ (ບຸນປີໃໝ່ລາວ) ແຕ່ວັນທີ່ 13-16 ເມສາ 2020. ໃນລະຫວ່າງນີ້ໄດ້ມີການປະຕິບັດມາດຕະການຄວບຄຸມ ແລະ ການປິດຕົວເມືອງ (ລວມທັງມາດຕະການຫ້າມການເດີນທາງເຂົ້າ-ອອກນອກປະເທດ ແລະ ລະຫວ່າງແຂວງຕໍ່ແຂວງ ພ້ອມທັງໄດ້ມີການປິດການໃຫ້ບໍລິການຂອງທຸລະກິດຫຼາຍປະເພດ) ຢ່າງເຂັ້ມງວດ ເລີ່ມຈາກວັນທີ່ 30 ມີນາ 2020 ຈົນຮອດ ວັນທີ່ 3 ພຶດສະພາ 2020. ໃນຊ່ວງຂອງການສໍາຫລວດ, ຜົນກະທົບຈາກການປະຕິບັດມາດຕະການດັ່ງກ່າວກໍໄດ້ຖືກນໍາມາພິຈາລະນາເຂົ້າໃນການເກັບຂໍ້ມູນຄັ້ງນີ້.

ການສໍາຫລວດຄັ້ງນີ້ ໄດ້ດໍາເນີນການສໍາພາດ 1,007 ຄົນໃນ 17 ແຂວງ ແລະ ນະຄອນຫລວງວຽງຈັນ. ໃນຂະນະທີ່ມີຂໍ້ຈໍາກັດໃນຫຼາຍດ້ານໃນການເຮັດການສໍາຫລວດຄັ້ງນີ້ ໃນນັ້ນລວມເຖິງຈໍານວນຕົວຢ່າງຂອງການເກັບຂໍ້ມູນຍັງມີຂະໜາດນ້ອຍໃນບາງແຂວງ, ກໍລະນີສຶກສາໃນຄັ້ງນີ້ແມ່ນອີງໃສ່ ຄວາມຮັບຮູ້ຂອງຄົນໃນທ້ອງຖິ່ນທີ່ມີຄວາມເຂົ້າໃຈຕໍ່ກັບສະພາບການດັ່ງກ່າວ.

ບາງຈຸດທີ່ສໍາຄັນຈາກການເກັບຂໍ້ມູນຕາມຂະແໜງການມີດັ່ງນີ້:

- **ດ້ານກະສິກໍາ:** ໂດຍສະເລ່ຍບໍ່ພົບການລາຍງານກ່ຽວກັບການຫຼຸດລົງໃນກິດຈະກໍາດ້ານກະສິກໍາ ຫລືການເຂົ້າເຖິງປັດໄຈເພື່ອການຜະລິດກະສິກໍາ, ຕາມການສັງເກດໂດຍລວມທົ່ວແຂວງ, ສັງເກດເຫັນວ່າແຂວງຫຼວງນໍ້າທາທຽບກັບແຕ່ລະແຂວງ ຂ້ອນຂ້າງໃຫ້ທັດສະນະທີ່ມີຜົນດ້ານລົບຕໍ່ກັບທຸກບັນຫາທີ່ກ່ຽວຂ້ອງກັບການກະສິກໍາ ເປັນຕົ້ນແມ່ນການຜະລິດກະສິກໍາ, ການປູກພືດເສດຖະກິດ (ເຊັ່ນ: ໝາກແໜ່ງ, ສວນຢາງ, ຊາ, ກາເຟ ແລະ ອື່ນໆ) ແມ່ນໄດ້ຮັບຜົນກະທົບຫຼາຍທີ່ສຸດຈາກວິກິດການຄັ້ງນີ້, ຮອງລົງມາກໍແມ່ນການປູກພືດສວນ.
  - **ບັນດາແຂວງທີ່ໄດ້ຮັບຜົນກະທົບຫຼາຍທີ່ສຸດມີດັ່ງນີ້:** ແຂວງອັດຕະປື, ບໍ່ແກ້ວ, ບໍລິຄໍາໄຊ, ຫຼວງນໍ້າທາ, ສະຫວັນນະເຂດ ແລະ ໄຊສົມບູນ.
- **ດ້ານການຕະຫລາດ:** ການຈໍາກັດການເຄື່ອນຍ້າຍຂອງພໍ່ຄ້າ, ພໍ່ຄ້າຄົນກາງ ແລະ ຊາວກະສິກອນ ມີຜົນກະທົບຢ່າງເຫັນໄດ້ຢ່າງຈະແຈ້ງຕໍ່ການຂາຍຜົນຜະລິດ (ພືດເສດຖະກິດ ແລະ ພືດສວນ) ແລະ ຍັງມີຜົນກະທົບຕໍ່ລາຄາສິນຄ້າ ແລະ ອາຫານທີ່ມີຢູ່ບາງປະເພດໃນບາງແຂວງ ລວມທັງແຂວງຫຼວງນໍ້າທາ ແລະ ບໍ່ແກ້ວ.
  - **ບັນດາແຂວງທີ່ໄດ້ຮັບຜົນກະທົບຫຼາຍທີ່ສຸດມີດັ່ງນີ້:** ແຂວງບໍ່ແກ້ວ ແລະ ຫຼວງນໍ້າທາ.
    - **ການດໍາລົງຊີວິດ:** ການວ່າງງານໄດ້ມີການເພີ່ມຂຶ້ນໃນທຸກພາກຂອງປະເທດ. ຜູ້ອອກແຮງງານລາຍວັນ ແມ່ນໄດ້ຮັບຜົນກະທົບຫລາຍທີ່ສຸດ, ລາຍໄດ້ໂດຍລວມຂອງຄົວເຮືອນຂອງຊາວກະສິກອນກໍໄດ້ມີການຫຼຸດລົງ ເນື່ອງຈາກປະລິມານການຂາຍທີ່ຫຼຸດລົງ ແລະ ລາຄາທີ່ຕໍ່າລົງ. ການສົ່ງເງິນໃຫ້ຄອບຄົວກໍຫຼຸດລົງ ແລະ ສິ່ງຜົນກະທົບຕໍ່ຫຼາຍຄົວເຮືອນ.
  - **ບັນດາແຂວງທີ່ໄດ້ຮັບຜົນກະທົບຫຼາຍທີ່ສຸດມີດັ່ງນີ້:** ອັດຕະປື, ບໍ່ແກ້ວ, ຫຼວງນໍ້າທາ, ສະຫວັນນະເຂດ ແລະ ນະຄອນຫຼວງວຽງຈັນ.
- **ການເຂົ້າເຖິງອາຫານຂອງຄົວເຮືອນ:** ຂໍ້ຈໍາກັດຫຼັກຂອງການເຂົ້າເຖິງແຫຼ່ງອາຫານແມ່ນດ້ານການເງິນ, ຜູ້ທີ່ໄດ້ຮັບຜົນກະທົບສ່ວນຫຼາຍແມ່ນຄົວເຮືອນທີ່ທຸກຍາກ ແລະ ຜູ້ອອກແຮງງານທີ່ໄດ້ຮັບຄ່າຈ້າງເປັນລາຍວັນ.
  - **ບັນດາແຂວງທີ່ໄດ້ຮັບຜົນກະທົບຫຼາຍທີ່ສຸດມີດັ່ງນີ້:** ແຂວງຫຼວງນໍ້າທາ ແລະ ສະຫວັນນະເຂດ

- **ດ້ານສຸຂະພາບແລະໂພຊະນາການ:** ຂໍ້ສັງເກດໃນການໄດ້ຮັບຜົນກະທົບຕໍ່ດ້ານຕ່າງກ່າວຍັງມີລັກສະນະຈໍາກັດ. ຂໍ້ສັງເກດຕ່າງກ່າວອາດຈະສະແດງໃຫ້ເຫັນໄດ້ຊັດເຈນຂຶ້ນໃນຊ່ວງໄລຍະກາງ. ຄົວເຮືອນໃນເຂດຊົນນະບົດແມ່ນຍັງອາໄສການຜະລິດກະສິກໍາ ແລະ ແຫຼ່ງອາຫານຈາກທໍາທະຊາດເຊັ່ນ: ປາ, ພືດສະໝຸນໄພ, ໝາກໄມ້ ແລະ ແມງໄມ້ທີ່ກິນໄດ້. ນອກຈາກນີ້ເກືອບໜຶ່ງສ່ວນສາມ (1/3) ຂອງຜູ້ໃຫ້ສໍາພາດໄດ້ໃຫ້ຂໍ້ສັງເກດວ່າ ມີການປ່ຽນແປງໄປໃນທາງລົບຂອງຄຸນຄ່າທາງໂພຊະນາການຂອງອາຫານທີ່ໄດ້ກິນໃນແຕ່ລະມື້.
  - **ແຂວງທີ່ໄດ້ຮັບຜົນກະທົບຫຼາຍທີ່ສຸດໄດ້ແກ່:** ແຂວງບໍ່ແກ້ວ ແລະ ຫຼວງນໍ້າທາ.

ດັ່ງທີ່ເຫັນຢູ່ຂ້າງເທິງ, ໂດຍອີງຕາມຄວາມຮັບຮູ້ຂອງຜູ້ໃຫ້ສໍາພາດ, ແຂວງຫຼວງນໍ້າທາໄດ້ຮັບຜົນກະທົບເປັນພິເສດ. ກ່ຽວກັບດ້ານກະສິກໍາ, ຜູ້ໃຫ້ສໍາພາດ ໄດ້ໃຫ້ຂໍ້ສັງເກດວ່າມັນຍາກຫຼາຍທີ່ຈະເຂົ້າເຖິງປັດໄຈຕ່າງໆສໍາລັບການກະສິກໍາ ໃນນັ້ນລວມມີ: ປຸຍ, ອາຫານສັດ, ເຄື່ອງມື ແລະ ອຸປະກອນການກະເສດ. ມີບາງສິນຄ້າກໍ ຂາດແຄນໃນທ້ອງຕະຫຼາດ ແລະ ບາງຄົນກໍພົບກັບບັນຫາລາຄາສິນຄ້າເພີ່ມຂຶ້ນສູງ. ການເກັບກ່ຽວອ້ອຍອາດຈະໄດ້ຮັບຜົນກະທົບເປັນພິເສດຍ້ອນວ່າບໍ່ມີການເຄື່ອນຍ້າຍ ແລະ ການຂາດແຮງງານເພື່ອຊ່ວຍການເກັບກູ້ ໃນຊ່ວງນີ້.

ດ້ານການຕະຫຼາດໄດ້ຮັບຜົນກະທົບຢ່າງເຫັນໄດ້ຢ່າງຊັດເຈນ, ສ່ວນໜຶ່ງອາດຈະເປັນຍ້ອນ ບໍ່ມີພໍ່ຄ້າຊາວຫວຽດນາມຜູ້ທີ່ມີການຄ້າຂາຍໄປມາເປັນສ່ວນໃຫຍ່ໃນພື້ນທີ່. ນອກຈາກນີ້ແຂວງຫຼວງນໍ້າທາ ອາດຈະໄດ້ຮັບຜົນກະທົບຈາກຫລາຍດ້ານຍ້ອນວ່າເປັນຊາຍແດນລະຫວ່າງປະເທດລາວກັບມຽນມາ, ຈີນແລະ ໄທ ຜ່ານແຂວງບໍ່ແກ້ວ - ເຊິ່ງມີຄວາມສໍາຄັນທາງດ້ານການຄ້າ.

ອີງຕາມເນື້ອໃນ ແລະ ປະເດັນທີ່ສໍາຄັນຂອງບົດສໍາຫລວດນີ້, ພວກເຮົາມີບາງຂໍ້ສະເໜີແນະເຊິ່ງເນື້ອໃນລະອຽດຈະໄດ້ຜັນຂະຫຍາຍໃນພາກຂອງ “ບົດສະຫຼຸບ” ດັ່ງນີ້:

- **ອະນຸຍາດໃຫ້ພໍ່ຄ້າແລະພໍ່ຄ້າຄົນກາງໄດ້ມີການເຄື່ອນໄຫວຫຼາຍຂຶ້ນ** ໃນລະດັບທີ່ເໝາະສົມເພື່ອຫຼຸດຜ່ອນຜົນກະທົບຕໍ່ກັບ ການເຂົ້າເຖິງອາຫານ, ແລະ ລາຄາອາຫານ ແລະ ສິນຄ້າດ້ານການກະສິກໍາ, ເພື່ອຫຼຸດຜ່ອນພາລະດ້ານການເງິນຂອງຄົວເຮືອນ ແລະ ເພີ່ມການເຂົ້າເຖິງອາຫານໃນຄົວເຮືອນ.
- **ໃຫ້ການສະໜັບສະໜູນບັນດາຄອບຄົວທີ່ບໍ່ມີອາຫານພຽງພໍ** ໂດຍການແຈກຢາຍເປັນວັດຖຸ ຫຼື ເປັນເງິນສົດ ເພື່ອຫຼຸດຜ່ອນຄວາມບໍ່ໝັ້ນຄົງດ້ານສະບຽງອາຫານກະທັນຫັນ, ພ້ອມທັງພິຈາລະນາການຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອດ້ານອາຫານເພື່ອຊັບສິນ ຫຼື ອາຫານເພື່ອງານ (FFA) ເພື່ອສ້າງຄວາມເຂັ້ມແຂງໃຫ້ຊຸມຊົນໃນການຮັບມືກັບການຄ້າປະກັນສະບຽງອາຫານໃນໄລຍະຍາວ.
- **ໃຫ້ການສະໜັບສະໜູນຊຸມຊົນໃນການວາງແຜນລະດູການຜະລິດ**, ໂດຍສະເພາະໃນລະດັບຄົວເຮືອນໃນການເຮັດສວນຄົວ, ການລ້ຽງສັດນ້ອຍ ແລະ ການລ້ຽງປາ. ການສະໜັບສະໜູນ ບັນດາກິດຈະກຳ ອາດຈະມີຄວາມສໍາຄັນໃນການ ຊ່ວຍຫຼຸດຜ່ອນຜົນກະທົບອື່ນໆ ຂອງ ພະຍາດໂຄວິດ-19 ໂດຍສະເພາະ ກ່ຽວກັບຕ່ອງໂສ້ມູນຄ່າດ້ານກະສິກໍາລວມທັງການສະໜັບສະໜູນພາກສ່ວນເອກະຊົນເພື່ອສ້າງຕັ້ງກຸ່ມສະໜອງປັດໄຈສໍາລັບເຮັດການກະເສດໃນລະດັບກຸ່ມບ້ານ. ມີການກຳນົດແລະຊ່ວຍໃຫ້ຊາວກະສິກອນມີການຕິດຕໍ່ພົວພັນ ກັບຕະຫຼາດເພື່ອໃຫ້ມີທາງເລືອກສໍາຮອງສໍາລັບຜົນຜະລິດຕະຜົນທີ່ເກັບກ່ຽວໃໝ່ (ເຊິ່ງເຄີຍໄດ້ຮັບຜົນກະທົບຈາກສະພາບການຕ່າງກ່າວມາກ່ອນ ແລະ ໃຫ້ການສະໜັບສະໜູນກິດຈະກຳການຖະໜອມອາຫານ ແລະ ແປຮູບອາຫານ. ມາດຕະການໄລຍະສັ້ນ ສາມາດກວມເຖິງການສະໜອງແນວພັນປູກ, ອຸປະກອນເຮັດສວນຄົວເຮືອນ, ອຸປະກອນຮັກສາສຸຂະພາບສັດ ແລະ ການສະໜັບສະໜູນດ້ານເຕັກນິກຈາກພະນັກງານກະສິກໍາເມືອງ ແລະ ບັນດາຜູ້ໃຫ້ບໍລິການໃນຂັ້ນທ້ອງຖິ່ນ.
- **ໃຫ້ຄວາມຮູ້ດ້ານໂພຊະນາການ ແລະ ມີການສະໜັບສະໜູນ / ສົ່ງເສີມອາຫານທີ່ມີໂພຊະນາການທີ່ມີໃນທ້ອງຖິ່ນ** (ເຊັ່ນ: ຊີ້ນ, ໄຂ່) ເຊິ່ງວຽກງານຕ່າງກ່າວອາດເປັນຂອບເຂດທີ່ສໍາຄັນທີ່ຮຽກຮ້ອງໃຫ້ມີການສະໜັບສະໜູນເພີ່ມເຕີມ.

## Executive summary

While there have been just 19 confirmed cases of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) to date in Lao PDR, the country – as with other countries around the world – has been affected by secondary social and economic impacts as a result of measures instituted to stop the spread of the virus. This survey seeks to measure the impact of the crisis on food security and agriculture in order to identify bottlenecks and affected populations/provinces, and ultimately guide any required response.

The survey was conducted by phone from 21 – 30 April 2020. This period followed the Pi Mai (Lao New Year) holidays from 13 – 16 April 2020. Full “lockdown” measures (including restrictions on international and inter-provincial travel, as well as the closing of many businesses) were in place from 30 March 2020 until 3 May 2020. As such, we can expect that the full impact of these measures was being felt during the survey period.

A total of 1,007 completed interviews were conducted, covering all 17 provinces and Vientiane Capital. While there are limitations to this study including small sample sizes in some provinces, the study sought to capture the perceptions of local “experts” with an informed understanding of the situation.

Some key findings by sector include the following:

- **Agriculture:** While on average, significant reductions in agricultural activity or access to inputs were not reported, significant disparities were observed across provinces, with those in Luangnamtha perceiving significant negative impacts across issues. In terms of agricultural sub-sectors, cash crops (e.g. cardamom, rubber, tea, coffee, etc.) were by far the most impacted, followed by horticulture.
  - **Provinces perceived to be most impacted:** Attapeu, Bokeo, Bolikhamxai, Luangnamtha, Savannakhet and Xaixomboun
- **Markets:** The restrictions in movement by traders, middlemen and farmers had a visible impact on the sales of farmer produce (cash crops and horticulture) and on the availability and prices of some food products in some provinces, including Luangnamtha and Bokeo.
  - **Provinces perceived to be most impacted:** Bokeo and Luangnamtha
    - **Livelihoods:** Unemployment spiked in many parts of the country, with daily labourers most impacted. Overall income for farmer households also declined as a result of both reduced volume of sales and lower prices. A decline in remittances also affected a subset of households.
  - **Provinces perceived to be most impacted:** Attapeu, Bokeo, Luangnamtha, Savannakhet and Vientiane Capital

- **Household Access to Food:** The main constraint in access to food was financial, with poorer households and those with daily labour as the main source of income having the most acute access issues.
  - **Provinces perceived to be most impacted:** Luangnamtha and Savannakhet
- **Health and Nutrition:** The perceived immediate impact on health and nutrition was limited. This would also be a trend only visible in the medium-term. Rural households rely on food from their own agricultural production but also collect food from nature, such as fish, herbs, fruits and edible insects. There were also perceived negative changes in the nutritious value of what was consumed for almost one-third of respondents.
  - **Provinces perceived to be most impacted:** Bokeo and Luangnamtha

As seen above, Luangnamtha seems to have been particularly affected based on the respondents' perceptions. With regards to agriculture, respondents noted that it was very difficult to obtain agricultural inputs, including fertilizers, animal feed, tools and agricultural equipment, with some items in short supply and others experiencing significant price increases. Sugarcane harvest may have been particularly impacted as there was no movement and thus no access to external labour during this time.

Markets were also significantly impacted, possibly in part due to the absence of Vietnamese traders, who constitute the majority of mobile traders. In addition, Luangnamtha may have been disproportionately affected as its international borders – with Myanmar, China as well as Thailand through Bokeo – are significant in terms of trade.

Based on the findings from this survey, we recommend the following, which are further elaborated in the “Conclusions” section:

- **Allow traders and middlemen greater movement to the extent possible** to alleviate the impact on the availability and prices of agricultural and food items, ease the financial burden on households and to increase household access to food.
- **Support households with insufficient access to food** through in-kind or cash distributions to alleviate immediate food insecurity, while considering Cash or Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) to build longer-term resilience to food insecurity.
- **Support to agricultural season**, particularly at the household level through home gardens, small livestock raising and fish culture. It may also be important to support activities that mitigate other impacts of COVID-19 on the overall agricultural value chain, including the establishment of private input suppliers at the village cluster level, identifying and connecting farmers with alternative markets for fresh produce (which has been disproportionately affected) and supporting food preservation and processing activities. Short-term measures may also include the provision of seed-kits, home gardening equipment, animal healthcare material and technical support through DAFO and local service providers.
- **Nutrition** awareness raising and promoting/supporting the availability of nutritious food (e.g. meats, eggs) may be important areas requiring further support.

## Background / introduction

COVID-19 is an infectious disease discovered in Wuhan, China in December 2019. On 30 January 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). In Lao PDR, the first case of COVID-19 was confirmed on 23 March 2020, and as of the writing of this report (mid-May 2020), there have been 19 confirmed cases in Vientiane Capital (14), Luangprabang (3) and Xaisomboun (2), with the last case identified on 13 April. No deaths or severe cases have been reported to date.

In addition to the health consequences of the virus, the measures put in place to stem the spread of transmission – such as the closure of international borders, restrictions on in-country travel and the closing of businesses – have secondary social and economic impacts, including on food security and agriculture. While COVID-19 has had a direct or indirect impact on the entire nation (primarily through these secondary effects), certain districts and provinces, as well as certain population groups, may face disproportionate challenges. Vulnerable population groups may include – but are not limited to – those engaged in daily labour, workers in the informal economy, migrant workers, the elderly, those with pre-existing conditions and the poor.

A brief overview of events – particularly related to Government orders restricting travel or instituting a stay-at-home order – is important to provide a context within which this survey took place, and to inform the interpretation of this survey and subsequent surveys, which may be conducted under different environments. This is in fact one of the key objectives of this periodic survey, i.e. to analyse the impact on various facets of food security and agriculture as the situation of both the virus as well as restrictions evolves over time.

The survey period – 21 to 30 April 2020 – took place shortly after the Pi Mai (Lao New Year) holidays from 13 – 16 April 2020. In advance of Pi Mai, on 29 March 2020, Prime Minister's Order Number 6 was released, prohibiting the population from leaving their homes except to purchase essential goods, to visit hospitals and other limited tasks authorized by the Government. Travel – both international as well as inter-provincial – was also curtailed for most purposes, although commercial transport was exempted. Other restrictions were put in place, including limiting gatherings of more than 10 people and the closing of businesses including entertainment venues and night markets. This initial order was effective from 30 March until 19 April.<sup>1</sup>

Subsequently, on 15 April 2020, the Prime Minister announced that the “lockdown” would be extended by a further 14 days, through 3 May 2020, with regulations in place in line

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<sup>1</sup> <https://laotiantimes.com/2020/03/29/laos-to-enter-full-lockdown-starting-march-30/>



with Order No. 06/PMO above. As such, the restrictive measures outlined above were in full force during the survey period. Note that some of these measures were later eased from 4 May 2020, following Prime Minister's Order No. 524/PMO notice on 1 May 2020.<sup>2</sup>

Note that on 20 April 2020, FAO and WFP sent a letter to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) seeking permission to conduct this survey. An informal approval was granted immediately, followed by an official response on 24 April 2020. The official response is attached as Annex A. A notification from MAF to the Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Offices (PAFOs) regarding the survey was also sent on 28 April 2020. The document is attached as Annex B.

## **Lao context relevant to food security and nutrition**

Lao PDR has made significant strides in development over the last decade, particularly towards graduation from least developed country status by 2024 and ranks 139 of 189 countries in the Human Development Index.<sup>3</sup> Despite the overall progress, Lao PDR still experiences serious hunger levels according to the 2019 Global Hunger Index.<sup>4</sup> About 23 percent of the population lives below the national poverty line, and the gross national income per capita stands at USD 2,270.<sup>5</sup> Stunting affects 33 percent of children aged 6 - 59 months; in eight provinces, prevalence is higher than 40 percent. Wasting has increased from 6 to 9 percent between 2012 - 2018, indicating a significant gap in family nutrition.<sup>6</sup> Rice and subsistence farming account for 72 percent of total cultivated land in Lao PDR, and subsistence farming is still the way of life for 80 percent of the rural population, supplemented with livestock rearing and collection of non-timber forest products and fish from local water supplies.<sup>7</sup>

The LECS-6 survey found that 6.2% of households in Laos have a "poor" or "borderline" Food Consumption Score, which would correspond to approximately 430,000 people. The same survey reported that using the "Food Insecurity Experience Scale, 31.8 % of households experienced mild, moderate or severe food insecurity" (translating to 2.2 million people).

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<sup>2</sup> The Government of Lao PDR announced that government offices and certain businesses will be allowed to re-open with preventative measures in place. Inter-provincial travel and large social gatherings continued to be prohibited.

[https://www.covid19.gov.la/index.php?r=site%2Fdetail&id=547&fbclid=IwAR051jQgfcs\\_TNngw6Kkjl4T8j0z4zcOyOnFnh8S2OMYfQVV-T1mBvDzYeM](https://www.covid19.gov.la/index.php?r=site%2Fdetail&id=547&fbclid=IwAR051jQgfcs_TNngw6Kkjl4T8j0z4zcOyOnFnh8S2OMYfQVV-T1mBvDzYeM)

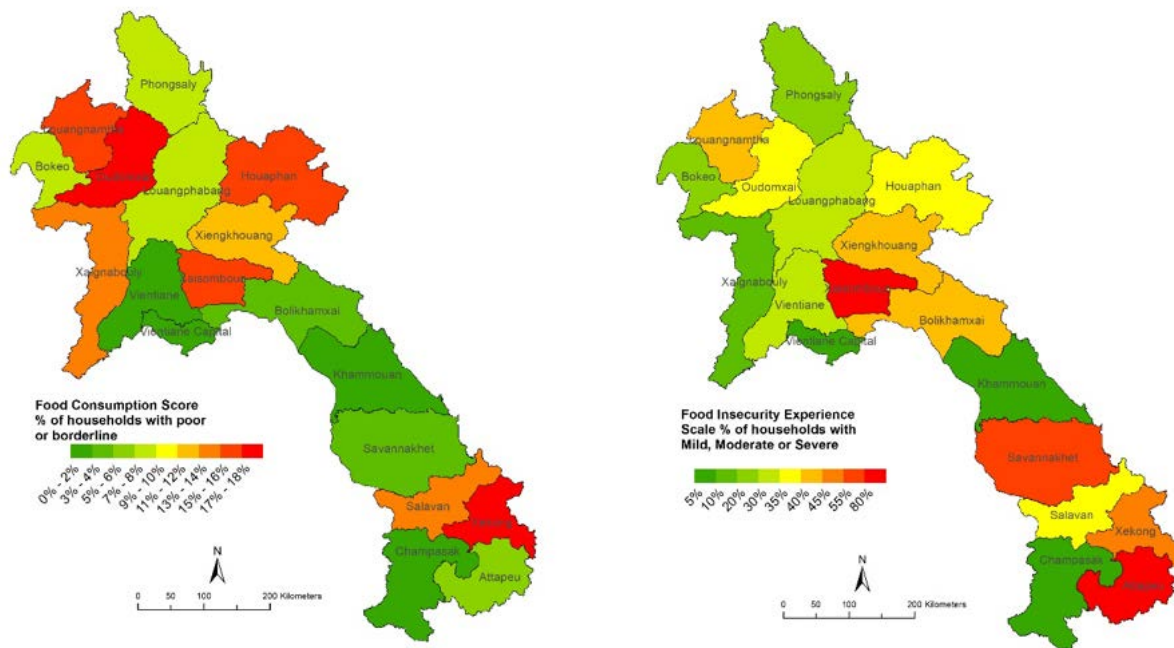
<sup>3</sup> Human Development Index, 2018, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/LAO>

<sup>4</sup> Global Hunger Index, 2019, <https://www.globalhungerindex.org/laos.html>

<sup>5</sup> Asian Development Bank Development Indicators, 2018, <https://www.adb.org/publications/basic-statistics-2018>

<sup>6</sup> Lao Social Indicator Survey II, 2017

<sup>7</sup> FAO, 2019, <http://www.fao.org/laos/fao-in-laos/laos-at-a-glance/en/>



Agricultural livelihoods in Lao PDR have been impacted by compounding shocks over the past 2 years, including flash floods, animal diseases, droughts and rodent/pest outbreaks that have negatively impacted livelihoods and food security, especially of vulnerable households. Rapid food security assessments undertaken by WFP during August-September 2019 in northern Laos found borderline food consumption in 15% of villages assessed, where populations were in need of food assistance. The assessment found the most affected households located in Khua, Mai and Samphanh Districts in Phongsaly Province and Namor, Xay, Beng and La Districts in Oudomxay Province. A key recommendation from the rapid food security assessment was to undertake a joint FAO/WFP Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission (CFSAM) to gain an accurate picture of the extent and severity of crisis-induced food insecurity across the country.<sup>8</sup>

The CFSAM was undertaken during November – December 2019 at the request of MAF. The mission found that prolonged drought conditions from May to December 2019 in northern Lao PDR and severe floods in August and September 2019 in the southern and central parts of the country severely affected the 2019 main (wet) season paddy crop, the country’s primary staple food. The impacts of drought and flooding in 2019, combined with the already low baseline levels of household resilience among vulnerable communities, indicated that an estimated 67,800 people would be food insecure from the beginning of March 2020.

In addition to food insecurity and general vulnerability in parts of the country, a number of other factors specific to the Lao context are relevant in understanding the possible pathways in which COVID-19 may impact food security.

<sup>8</sup> WFP, 2019, Rapid Food Security Assessment – Oudomxay and Phongsaly Province

First, the population of Lao PDR is mostly **rural**, with 67.1% of the population living in the countryside. Agriculture is the main livelihood in rural settings, with an estimated 72% of the labour force engaged in agriculture – primarily subsistence agriculture.<sup>9</sup> The population density is also very low, with 31 persons per square kilometre, with the density outside of urban centres even less. The majority of its 7 million inhabitants reside in 8,500 villages, which often have a population of between 600-800 people.

Second, **marketing/trading and supply networks** are small and underdeveloped and therefore play less of a role in food security as one may expect. Many households subsist on what they grow themselves or collect from nature, and purchases from village shops are often limited to condiments and other items such as instant noodles, processed snacks and mobile phone credit. In addition, the low purchasing power of many households limits the marketing/trading systems from playing a larger role in accessing diversified food.

Third, Lao PDR also has a very high percentage (82.7%)<sup>10</sup> of the workforce in the **informal sector**. This suggests that the loss of livelihoods may be a relatively important factor, especially in districts or provinces with particularly high shares of the workforce that may have been impacted.

Fourth, **exports** account for about one-third of the GDP – highest in the region. As such – and as the analysis in this report shows – another significant risk factor is the impact of those reliant on the export sector. According to the Department of Import and Export (DIMEX) within the Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MoIC), total imports in March 2020 stood at US\$ 461 million and total exports were US\$ 343 million, of which US\$ 109 million was attributed to cash crops including bananas, cassava and fruits. In April 2020, trade reduced significantly, with US\$ 320 million of imports and US\$ 208 million of exports. Total exports of cash crop dropped to US\$ 42 million in April.

Fifth, **tourism** made up 13.7% of Laos' total GDP in 2018.<sup>11</sup> With the closure of borders and limitations on travel – both internationally and domestically – communities relying on income from tourism may also be disproportionately impacted.

Sixth, Laos – like some of its neighbours – is dependent on **remittances** from migrant workers working in other countries in the region, mostly in Thailand. Remittances from these migrants amounted to US\$ 118 million in 2018, accounting for 1.3% of GDP that year. Remittances are significant particularly in the southern part of the country, where in 2014, 20% of adults received remittances, compared to just 2.7% in the north. With lockdowns in neighbouring countries and with many of these migrants returning to Laos in March and April (before the Lao New Year in mid-April), significant decreases in income are expected in communities and families relying on remittances.

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<sup>9</sup> Lao PDR Population and Housing Census, 2015

<sup>10</sup> Labour Force Survey, 2017

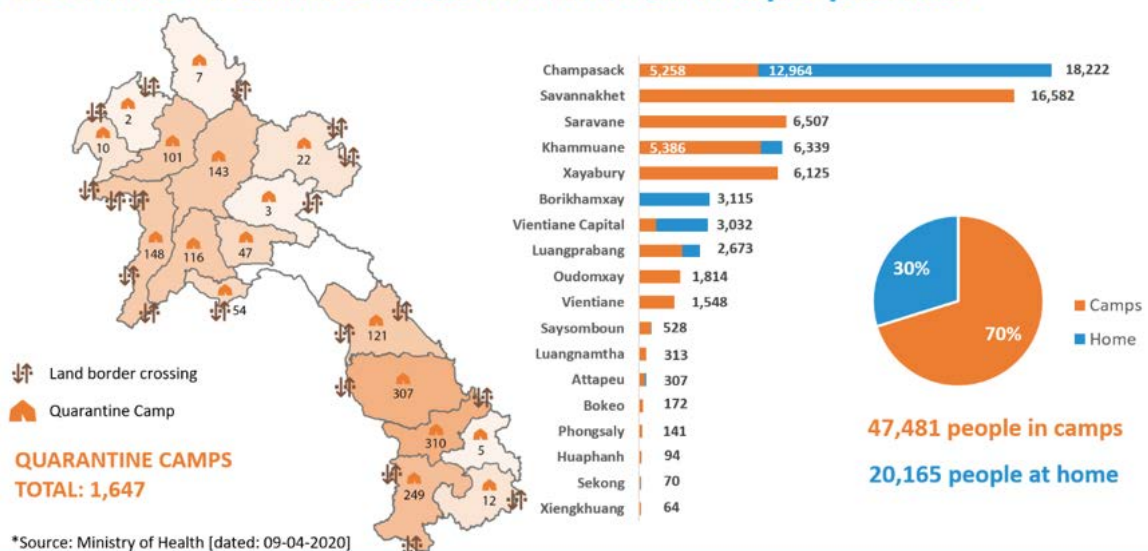
<sup>11</sup> United Nations' World Travel and Tourism Council, 2018

Seventh, there has been a lot of **agricultural concessions / plantations** (e.g. banana, tea, coffee, rubber) opened in the past 10 years in northern Laos, which rely largely on Lao labour. Most of these plantations are run by Chinese and many of the owners have left their fields (with many stuck in China since Chinese New Year's). This has resulted in a sharp decrease in labour opportunities. Lao news sources also reported that 300 trucks with agricultural produce were stuck on the Chinese border at Boten without being able to cross over to China. The closing of international borders (especially China and Vietnam) may have had a strong impact on wage availability and therefore increased the vulnerability of rural communities.

Lastly, Lao PDR is experiencing high numbers of **returning migrants** from Thailand. Decrees from the Royal Government of Thailand that closed border crossings have accelerated the rate of nationals returning home before the closures. From 11 March to 15 April 2020, approximately 78,322 migrants (23,405 female) returned and more are expected to return once the borders official re-open.

As of early April, there were 1,647 quarantine / non-health isolation facilities active in the country (Ministry of Health, 9 April 2020). The district-level quarantine centres were not centrally managed and did not fall organizationally under any specific ministry. Therefore, the management of such centres was based on the level of interest and capacity of the local authorities. More recently, as those staying in the quarantine facilities have gone home, there has been a trend to consolidate the facilities at the provincial level.

### RETURNED MIGRANTS & QUARANTINE CAMPS per province\*



This survey seeks to examine some of the vulnerabilities outlined above and identify their impact on the food security of communities.

## Objectives and methods

As part of the partnership with FAO on a rapid food security and agriculture assessment, WFP initiated a field-based questionnaire to collect information from district-level government officials, traders, as well as various people in villages across the country to gain a broad perspective on the state of food security in the COVID environment. The survey focused on questions on the impact of COVID-19 on agriculture, markets, livelihoods, access to food, and basic health/nutrition (the questionnaire can be found in Annex C).

The results of this survey – and subsequent rounds of the survey – will help inform the government and development partners in understanding the impact of the crisis on agriculture and food security, on recommended measures, which populations and areas are most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and to guide any required response. The survey also seeks to analyse the bottlenecks and pathways in which food security may have been impacted in certain provinces and districts.

### Methods:

Given the nationwide lockdown with severe movement restrictions, it was impossible for WFP field staff to travel to villages to collect data. It was hence impractical to draw a nationwide representative random sample. Instead, WFP's field staff were requested to contact key informants in the districts by phone, initially in those areas where WFP had operations. In order to obtain information from all provinces, development partners were contacted to reach out to additional key informants and villages in other provinces and districts. The telephonic survey took place between 21-30 April and was coordinated by WFP field offices and field-based staff. Respondents were from varying backgrounds:

- At the district level, information was gathered from staff at the District Agriculture and Forestry Offices (DAFOs), District Education and Sports Bureaus (DESBs), District Health Offices (DHOs), District Labour and Social Welfare (DLSW), District Industry and Commerce, as well as the Lao Women's Union and Lao Front for National Development. These respondents provided information for their districts as a whole.
- At the village level information was sought from individual farmers, *naibans* (village chiefs), schoolteachers, village facilitators and village health volunteers. These respondents provided information relating specifically to their village.

Overall, 72% of the respondents were from the village level and 27% were from the district level.

A total of 1,007 completed forms were received, covering 77 districts in all 17 provinces and Vientiane Capital. Note that there were fewer than 20 surveys conducted in

Xaisomboun (9), Vientiane Capital (10), Bolikhamxai (12) and Xaignabouly (13). The number of respondents per province and district can be found in Annex D. When respondents did not have knowledge of what was asked, they could reply “don’t know”, and such answers were not included in the analysis. Despite small numbers of actual responses for certain geographic areas, we may still find value of the “expert opinion” from the few respondents who indicated they understood the situation.

The analysis was carried out by province, by sex and by type of respondent, as well as based on the agriculture and food security status. Detailed explanations on how the “agriculture and food security status” were derived are outlined in subsequent sections. Note that there were no discernible differences in responses between genders.

#### **Below are several limitations to this study:**

- The sample is not representative for the population of Laos as a whole but consists of key informants that data collectors happened to know or were accessible by the data collectors.
- The questions probe into the perceptions and opinions of the respondents rather than collecting more objective indicators from those potentially impacted by the crisis. The bias of the respondents may skew the findings.
- The number of respondents in a few provinces and many districts is very low and the conclusions made for such provinces depend on the opinions and perceptions of only a small number of individuals.
- For some questions such as those on health and malnutrition, while we understand that accurate data would require more in-depth questions, the survey sought to identify possible indications of issues in certain provinces or districts, which could then be followed up in greater detail and with greater methodological rigor.

## **Agriculture**

Overall, respondents did not report significant reductions in the level of agricultural activity and access to agricultural inputs. However, there were significant disparities across provinces, with respondents in Luangnamtha perceiving significant negative impacts to all related questions. Other provinces that were also more negatively affected include Attapeu, Bokeo, Bolikhamxai, Savannakhet and Xaixomboun

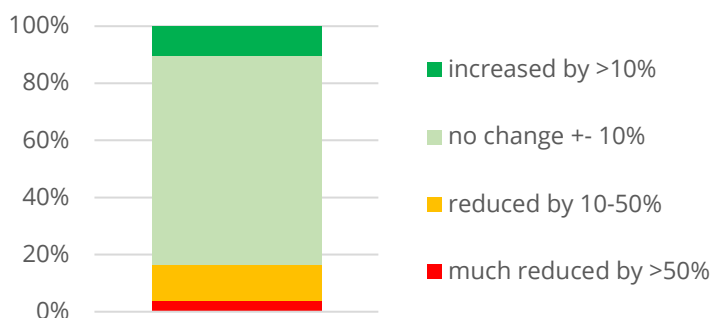
In terms of the outlook for the upcoming main agricultural season, roughly 40% of respondents saw an average harvest, while 27% predicted poor or very poor harvests and 20% predicted good or excellent harvests.

## Activity level

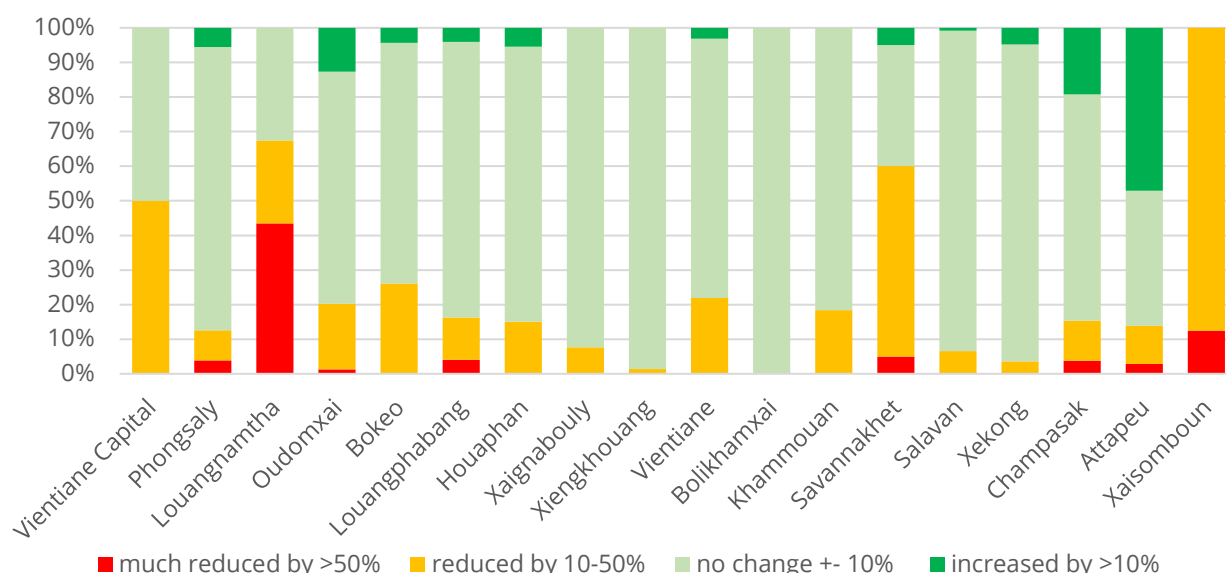
Overall, most respondents (83%) did not perceive any major change in terms of agricultural activities.

However, there were significant differences between provinces, with a much higher percentage of respondents from Luangnamtha, Savannakhet and Xaisomboun reporting reduced or much reduced agriculture activities.

Are agriculture activities going on as normal?



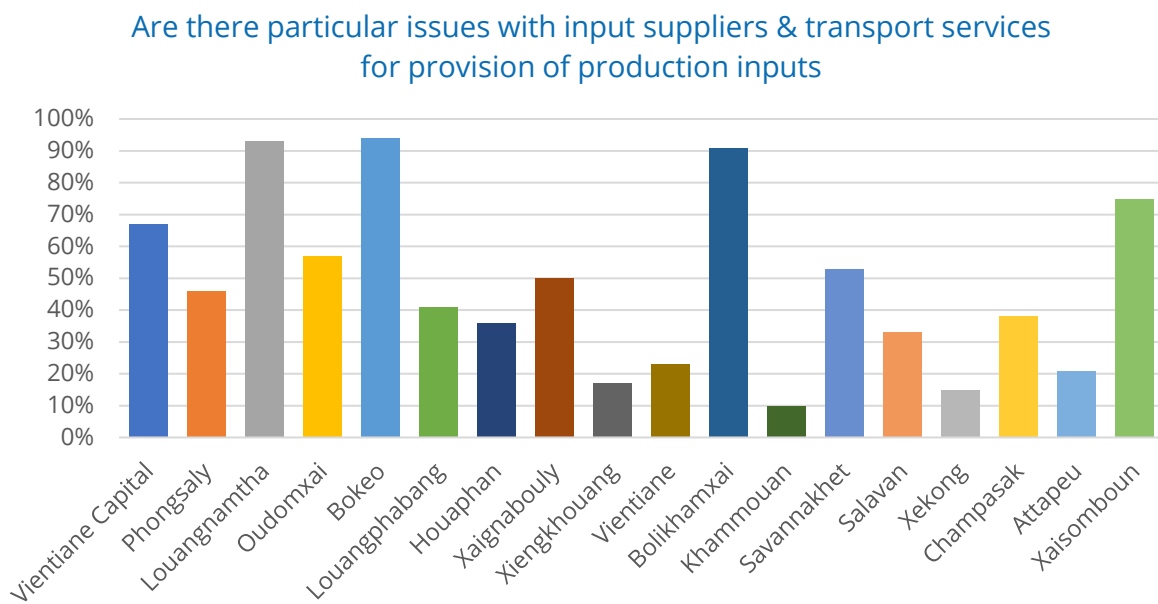
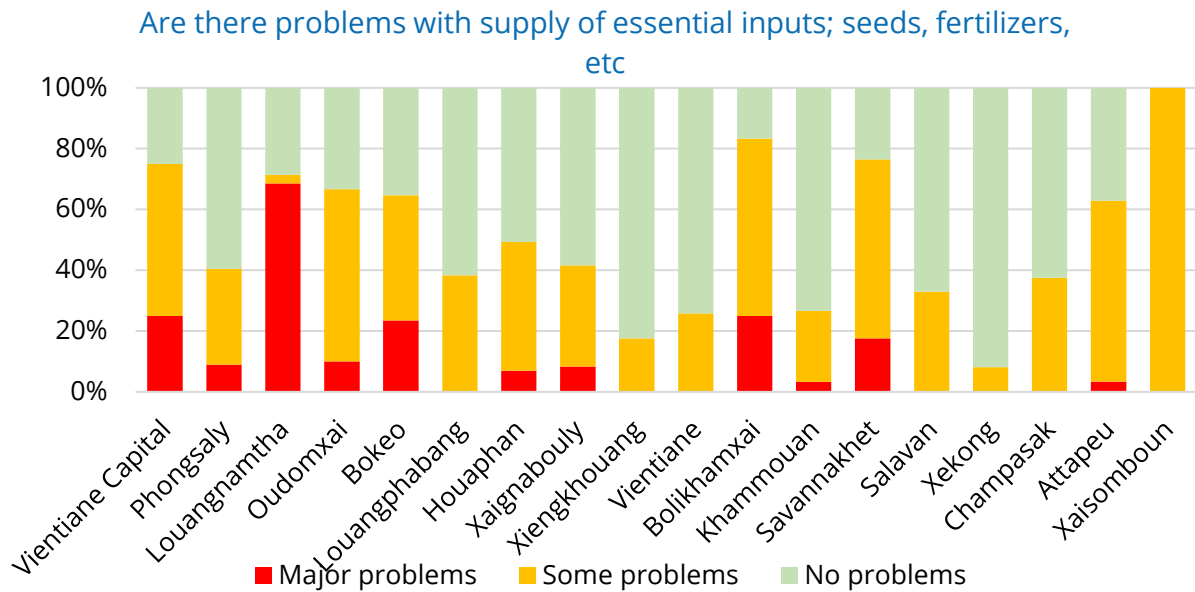
Are agriculture activities going on as normal?



## Access to inputs, labour and equipment

While the level of agricultural activities remained relatively stable (at least on average), almost half of respondents reported some (36%) or major (7%) problems in accessing essential inputs, such as seeds and fertilizers. In line with these findings, 37% of respondents noted that there were issues with input suppliers and transport services for the provision of production inputs.

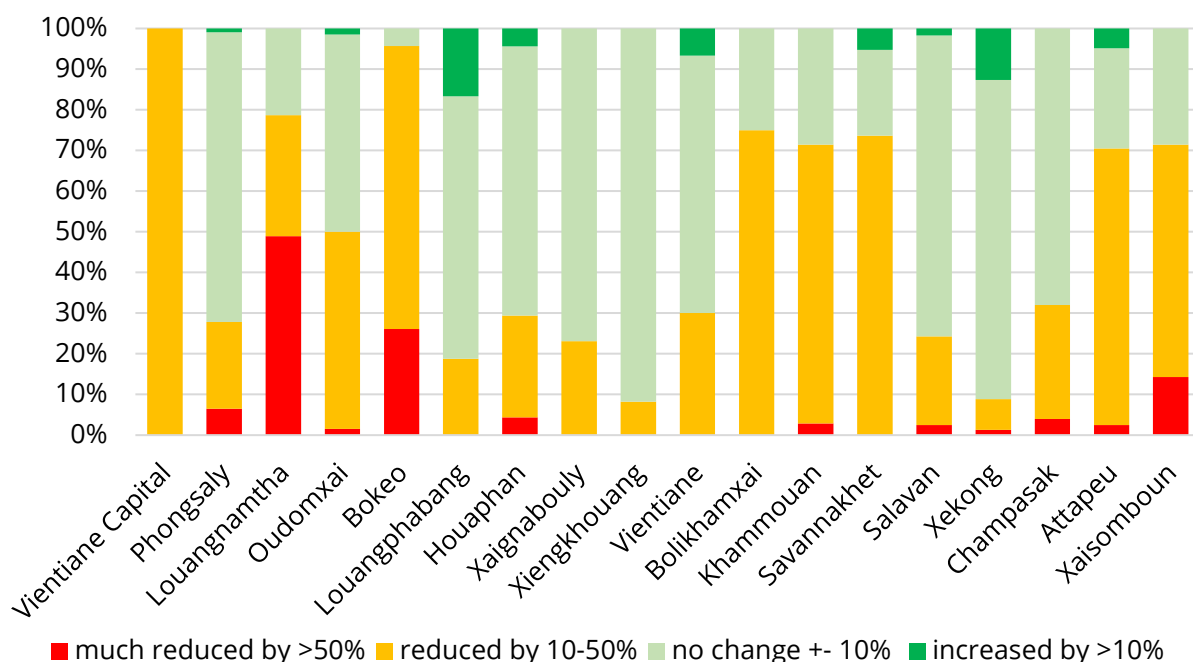
Again, there was some disparity between provinces, with, for example, 69% of respondents in Luangnamtha reporting “major problems” with the supply of agricultural inputs. In Luangnamtha, 93% of respondents replied that there were issues with input suppliers and transport services, with high rates also seen in Bokeo (94%) and Bolikhamxai (91%). These results could be linked with the importance of border trade in these provinces.



In addition to inputs, 35% of respondents reported reduced (30%) or much reduced (5%) access to external labour. Again, Luangnamtha and Bokeo were among the provinces where this was perceived to be a more significant issue.

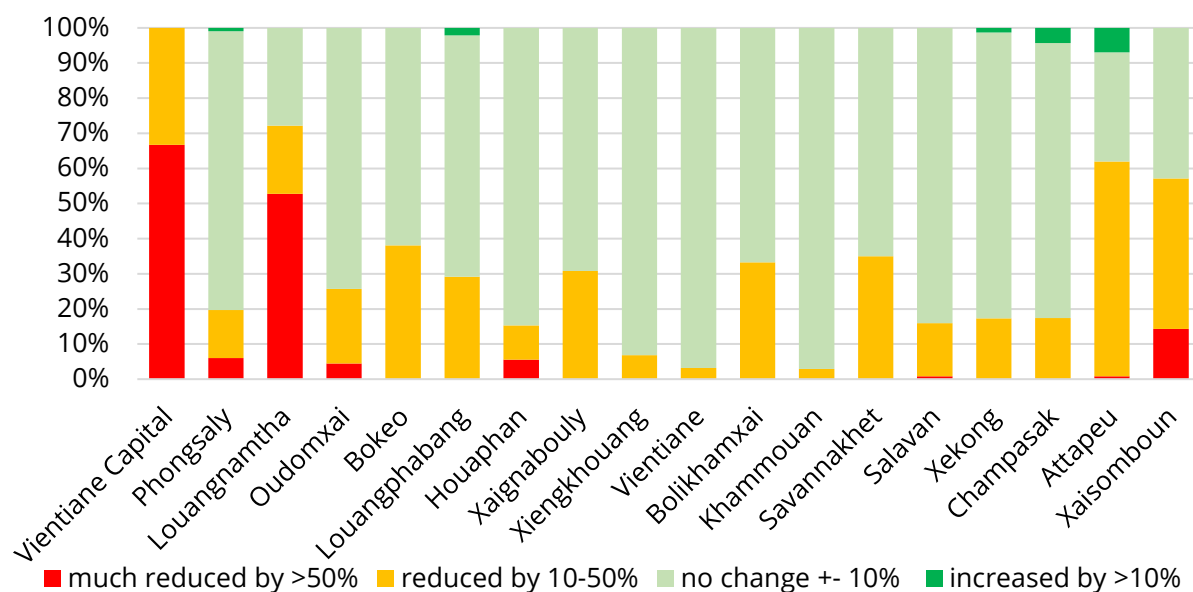


### Can external agricultural labour be accessed in the same way as before?



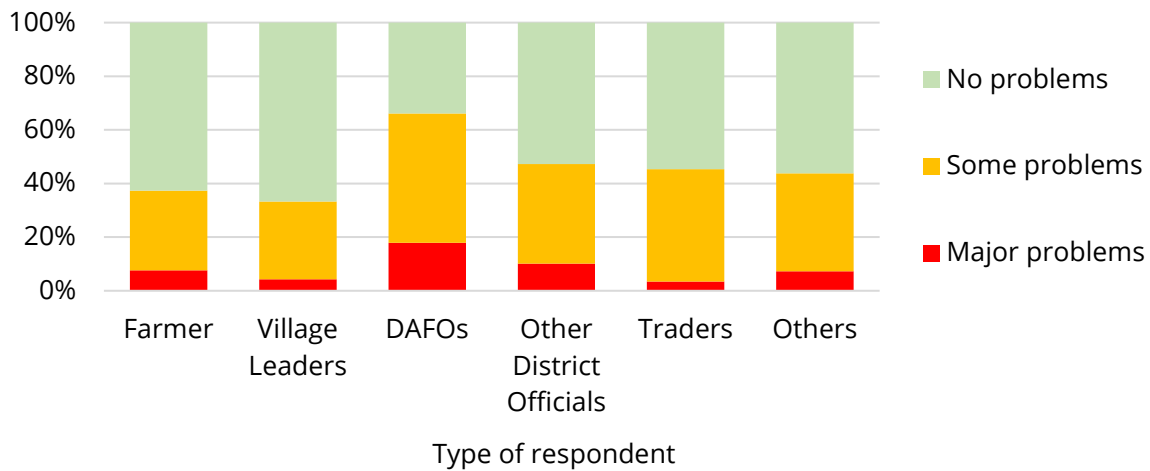
Similarly, while just 27% of respondents overall reported reduced or much reduced access to external agricultural equipment or working animals, the issue was more pronounced in Luangnamtha and - to a lesser degree - in Attapeu and Xaisomboun.

### Can external agricultural equipment or working animals be accessed in the same way as before?

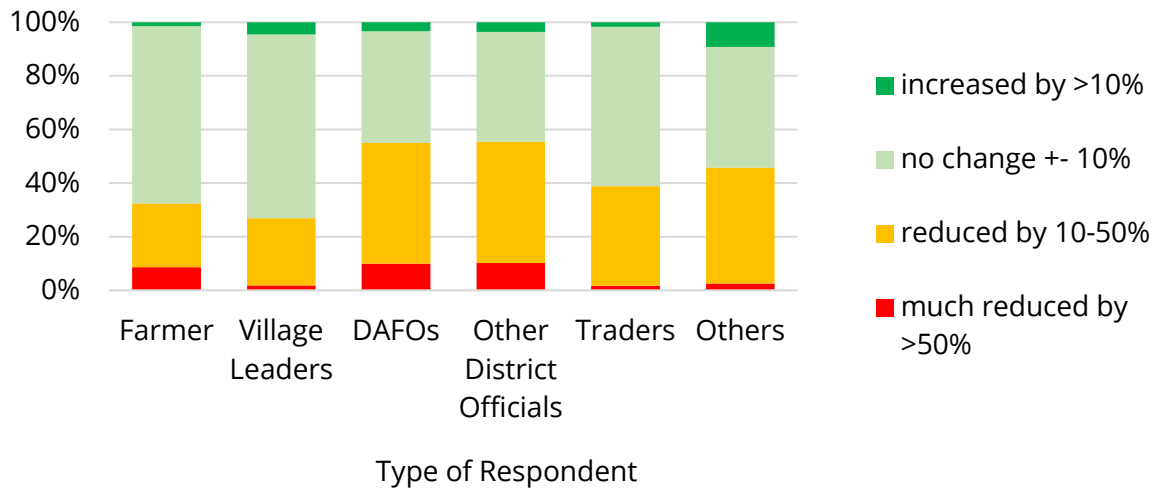


Significant differences were also observed between responses from district level versus villages. Overall, respondents from districts perceived more issues in terms of essential inputs and agricultural labour, as shown below. This could be because district government officials had greater knowledge of the overall district-wide issues including supply systems compared to those at the village level.

Are there problems with supply of essential inputs; seeds, fertilizers, etc



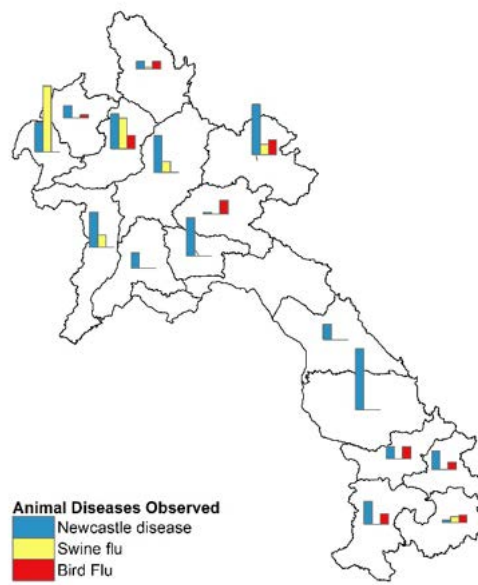
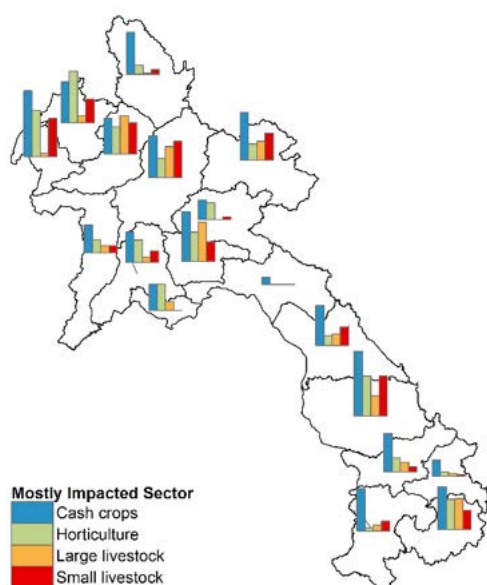
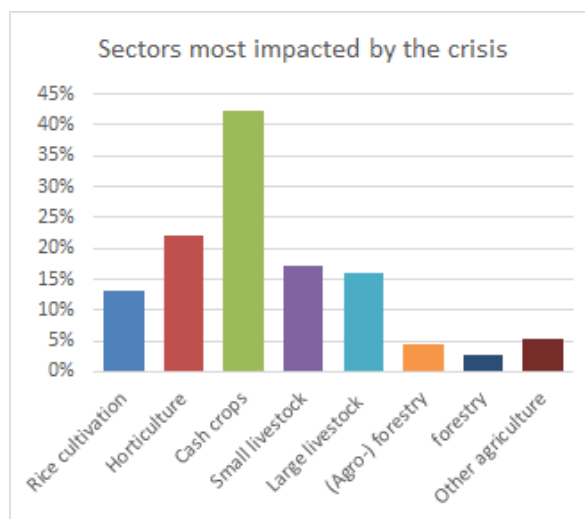
Can external agricultural labour be accessed in the same way as before?



## Affected sub-sectors

As expected, cash crops were by far the most impacted sub-sector, with 42% of respondents highlighting a negative impact in this sub-sector. This is of course linked to responses in the following section on the visible negative impact on exports.

More district respondents (54%) than villagers (37%) thought cash crops were most impacted, perhaps simply because district officials were more knowledgeable of trading and marketing issues in their districts. Cash crops were followed by horticulture, small livestock raising and large livestock raising.



70% of respondents in Bokeo and Savannakhet mentioned cash crops as being impacted; Vientiane, Bolikhamxai and Xiengkhouang reported less. This may be due to local circumstances and different local priorities.

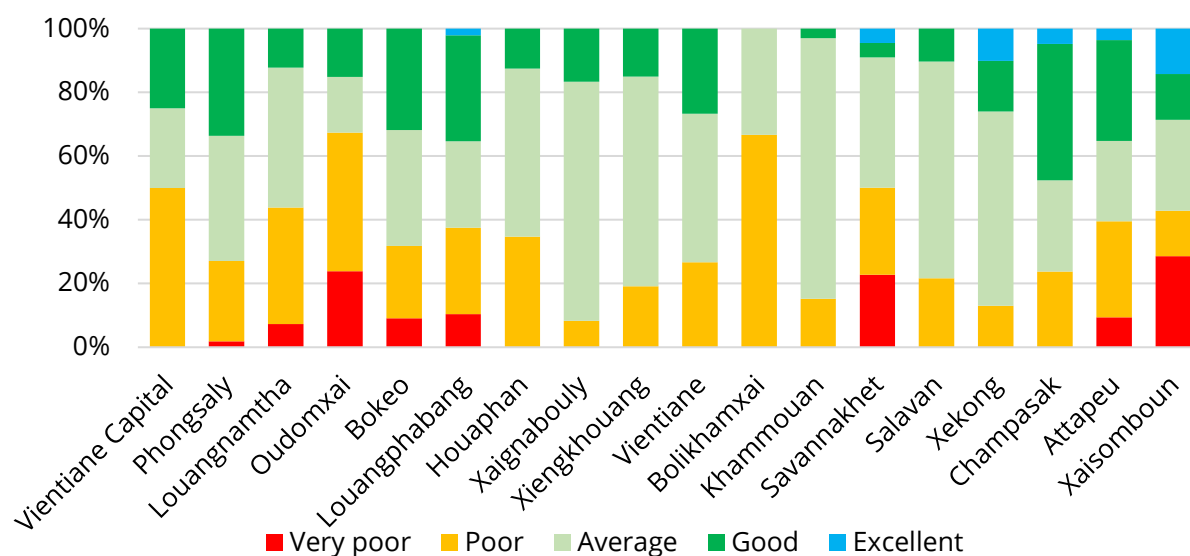
The survey also asked about the occurrence of livestock diseases in the country. It is doubtful how reliable the diagnosis of the various diseases by the population is, but answers may provide an indication of problems. However, not surprisingly, the current COVID-19 outbreak and the associated measures were not perceived to have had much to do with the outbreak of animal disease.

## Prospected harvest

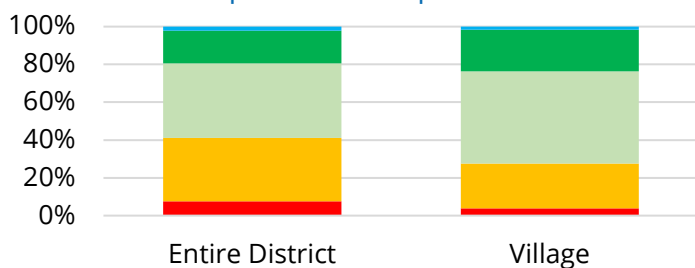
According to the CFSAM (2020), production prospects for the secondary season irrigated paddy crop for harvest in April-May, are generally unfavourable, reflecting a decline in both the area harvested as well as yields as less irrigation water is available following damages to the irrigation infrastructure caused by floods in previous years. Additionally, the 2019 aggregate paddy output was forecast at 3.4 million tonnes, about 10 percent below the five-year average and slightly above reduced levels in 2018.

In terms of the outlook for the upcoming rainy season and main harvest, 40% of respondents see an average prospect, while more respondents saw poor or very poor harvests (31%) compared to good or excellent (23%). Poor harvests were foreseen most in Oudomxay (68%) and Bolikhamxai (67%).

What's the prospect for the next agricultural season



Perspective of Respondent



Prospects for the next harvest for district respondents were seen as more pessimistic (42% perceived as 'very poor' and 'poor') compared with villagers (28%).

## Further analysis of the status of agriculture

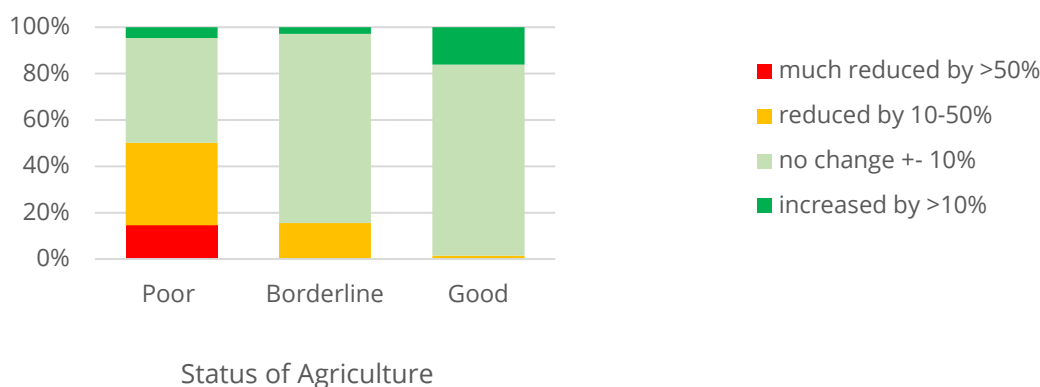
The survey gathered information from the various respondents assessing the ongoing agricultural season, the agricultural production factors and expectations for the upcoming season. Six variables were grouped into three dimensions.

- Current status
  1. Are agriculture activities going on as normal?
- Production factors:
  2. Are there problems with supply of essential inputs; seeds, fertilizers, etc.?
  3. Are there particular issues with input suppliers & transport services for provision of production inputs?
  4. Can external agricultural labour be accessed in the same way as before?
  5. Can external agricultural equipment or working animals be accessed in the same way as before?
- Seasonal outlook
  6. What's the prospect for the next agricultural season?

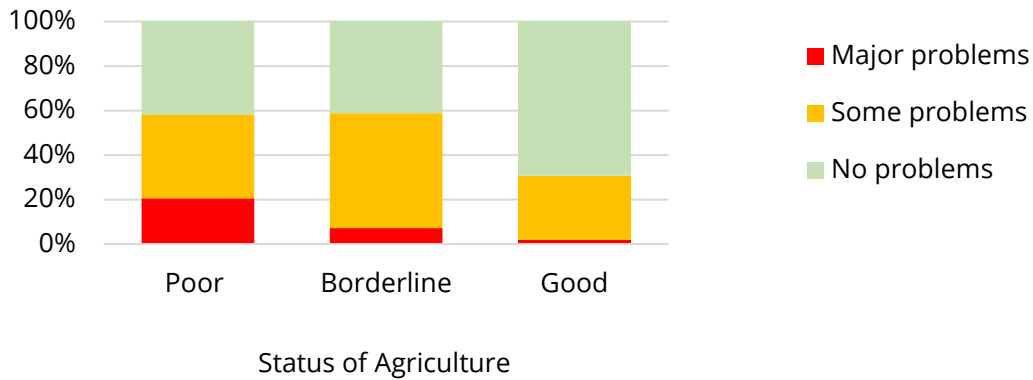
All the variables under these dimensions were normalized. The production factor dimension was calculated as the average of  $(0.5 \cdot \text{Var}2 + 0.5 \cdot \text{var}3 + \text{var}4 + \text{var}5)$  using the normalized variables. The variables of the two other dimensions (current activity level and seasonal outlook) were also normalized and the average of these three resulted in a score describing the change in agricultural status, with a lower score indicating a relatively worse agricultural situation compared to the higher scores. Values below one standard deviation from the mean are categorized as "poor", while other values below the mean are categorized as "borderline." The values above the mean are categorized as "good."

It was found that all three dimensions are positively correlated with each other with correlations between +0.2 and +0.3. The graphs below show how each individual component contributes to the index.

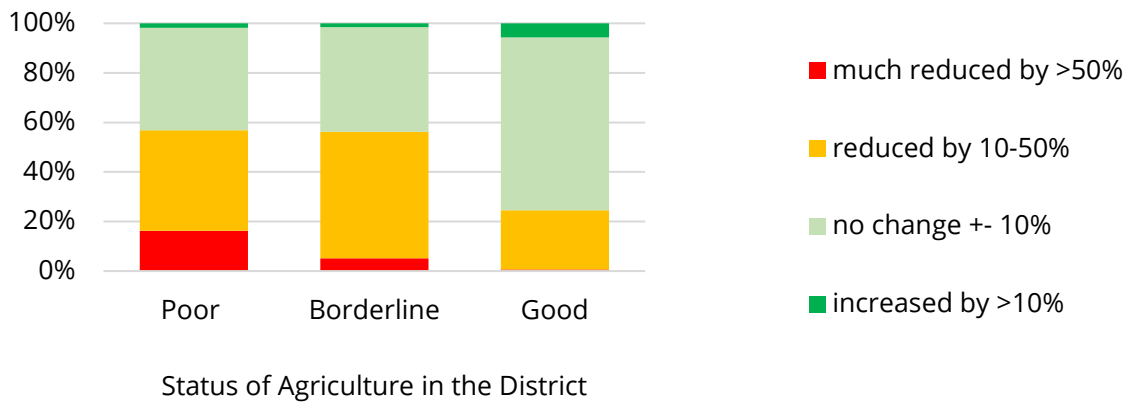
### Are agriculture activities going on as normal?



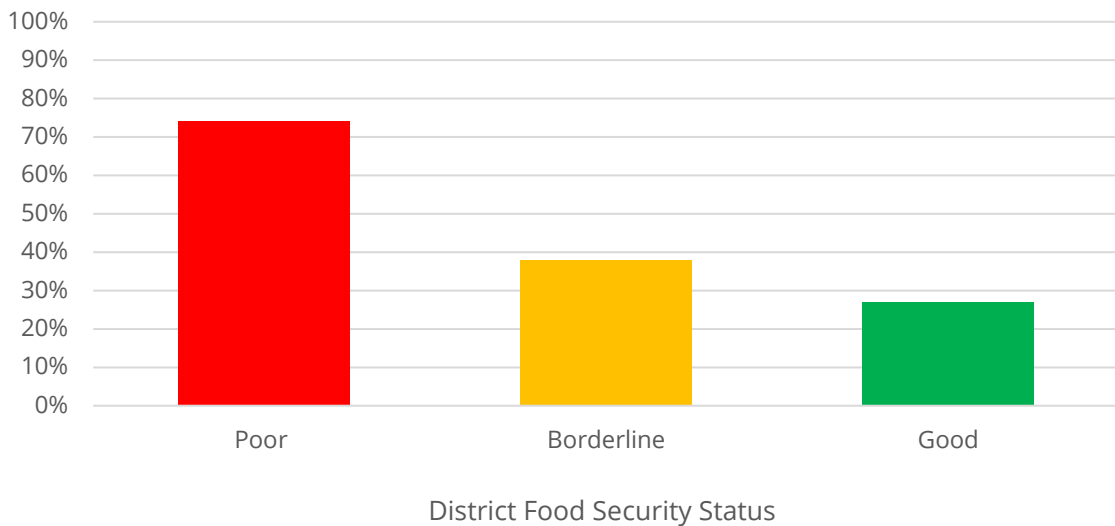
Are there problems with supply of essential inputs; seeds, fertilizers, etc



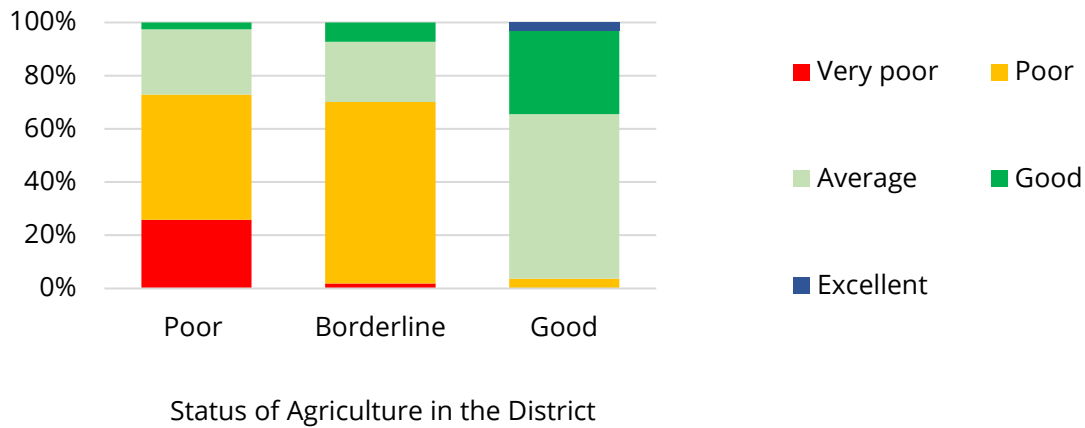
Can external agricultural labour be accessed in the same way as before?



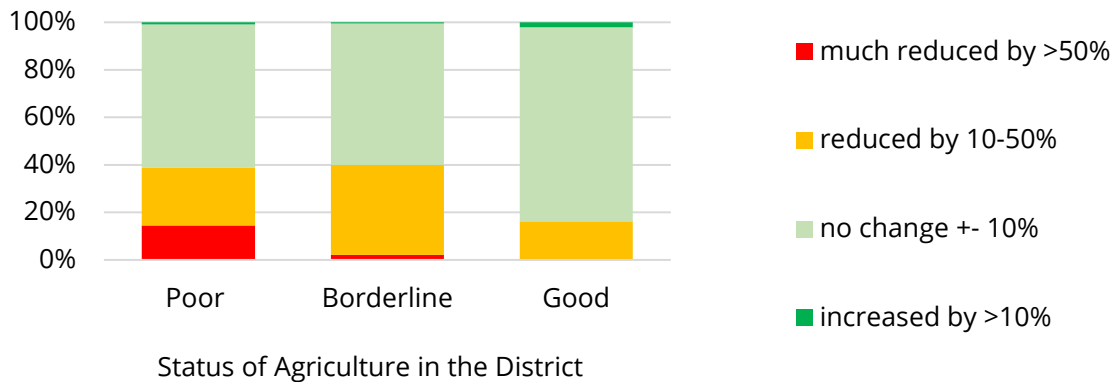
Are there particular issues with input suppliers & transport services for provision of production inputs



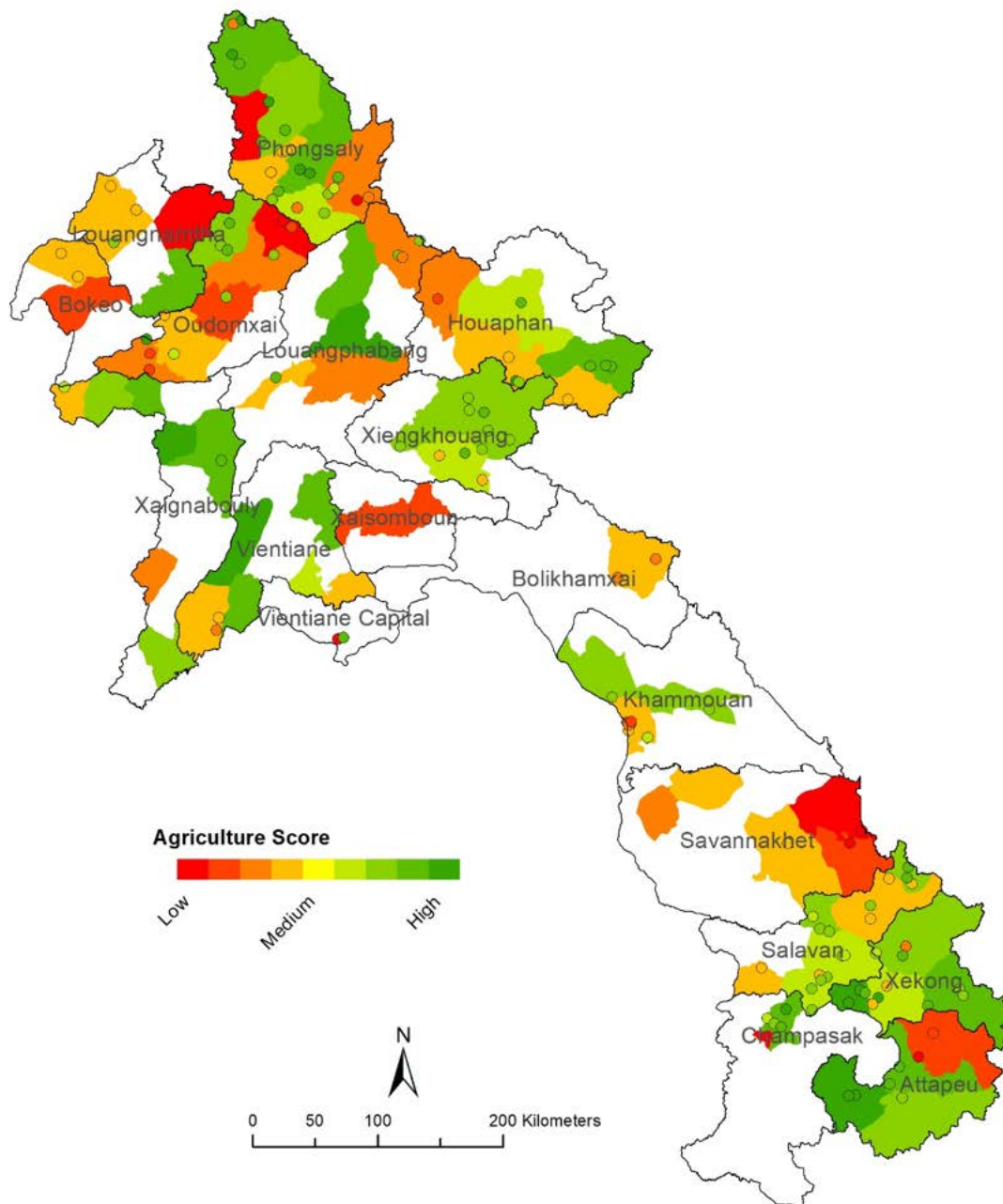
### What's the prospect for the next agricultural season



### Can external agricultural equipment or working animals be accessed in the same way as before?



The six previous graphs indicate the meaning of “poor status of agriculture” as defined by the indicator. In many villages with existing poor agriculture conditions, activities have been seriously reduced. These villages experienced problems (sometimes major problems) with inputs, in particular because suppliers and transport services could not operate like normal. Access to external labour was also a problem as well as access to agricultural equipment and draft animals. It follows from this that for three-quarters of the poor areas, the agricultural outlook was “poor” or “very poor”, compared to a much better outlook in those areas with “good” agricultural status.



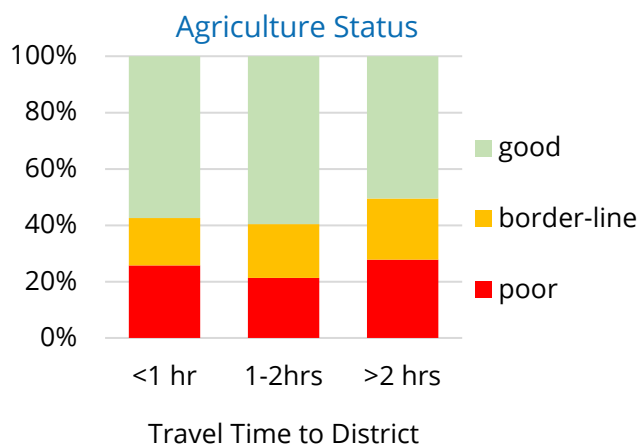
## Agricultural status across the country

The status of agriculture differs across the country, with most areas doing reasonably well. In the south, in the districts in Savannakhet that were surveyed, the status seems rather poor. In the north-west, respondents from Luang Namtha and Oudomxai have reported difficulties with agriculture, and centrally in the country it is Xaisomboun that is perceived as problematic. The map disaggregates at district level to show variation at sub-

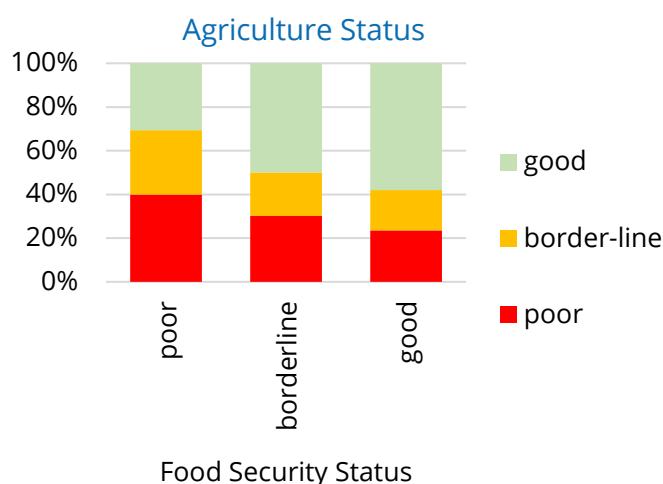


provincial level (subsequent maps are presented at the provincial level). Special efforts to ensure that the upcoming agriculture season could be rescued are needed.

Linking up the villages from which information was gathered with the 2015 national census data and WFP's internal datasets, an analysis was conducted to establish determinants of poor agricultural conditions. Remoteness of the village was the only statistically significant predictor. It is in the more remote villages where issues with the agricultural season occur and this should be considered when providing support.



In areas with poor food security it is also more likely to find a more problematic agricultural situation. This does not bode well for the future of the food insecure villages, since they depend on agriculture and future harvests to improve their conditions. Food security interventions should not interfere with the current agricultural activities but as much as possible support them. They can also be associated with more longer-term interventions (like productive asset creation) to support agriculture in the same areas. Severe droughts are forecast in all of Laos from May to July 2020, thereby putting additional pressure on these food insecure areas.



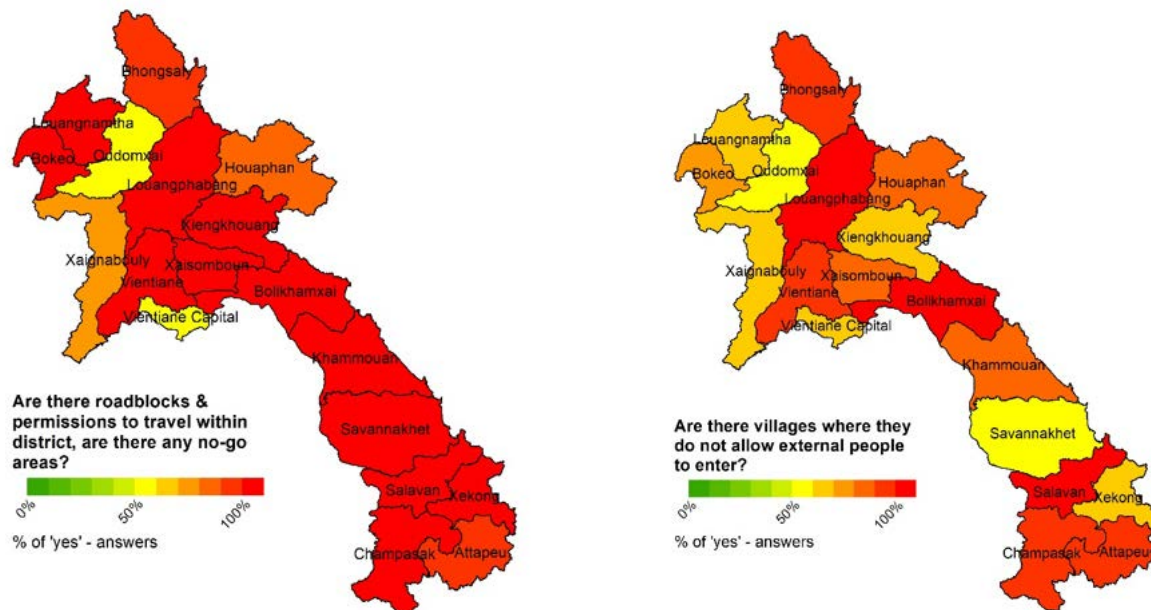
## Markets

The survey questions on markets collected information on the functioning and size of markets, changes in mobile traders and trade/exports, the availability and prices of food, and major constraints such as travel restrictions and roadblocks between provinces, districts and villages.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> This rapid approach looks at the major part of the Market Functionality Index of WFP, covering the full range of market dimensions.

Clearly, the movement of traders/middlemen and overall trade and labour flows were restricted following the lockdown instituted by the Government on 29 March 2020.<sup>13</sup> This has had visible impacts on the availability and prices of food in some provinces, including Luangnamtha and Bokeo.

## Physical access to markets and market activity



Following the lockdown measures instituted by the Government of Lao PDR at the end of March, there were significant restrictions in travel not only between provinces but also between districts and villages. 84% of respondents perceived restrictions in movement within their own district and 66% reported that there were villages that did not allow external people to enter, further impacting trade and labour flows.

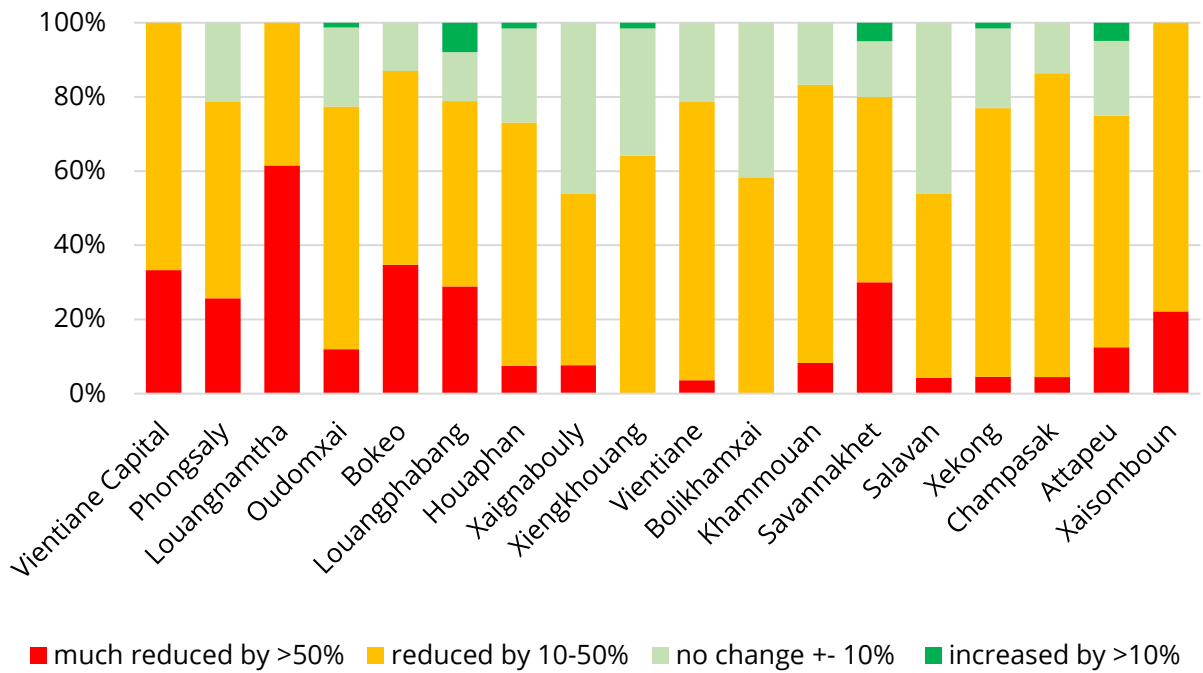
While most markets remained open, almost two-thirds of respondents noted that the size/volume of markets had reduced (60%) or much reduced (14%), with noticeable provincial differences as seen below.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Prime Minister's Office, Order from the Prime Minister on COVID-19 counter-measures, 29 March 2020

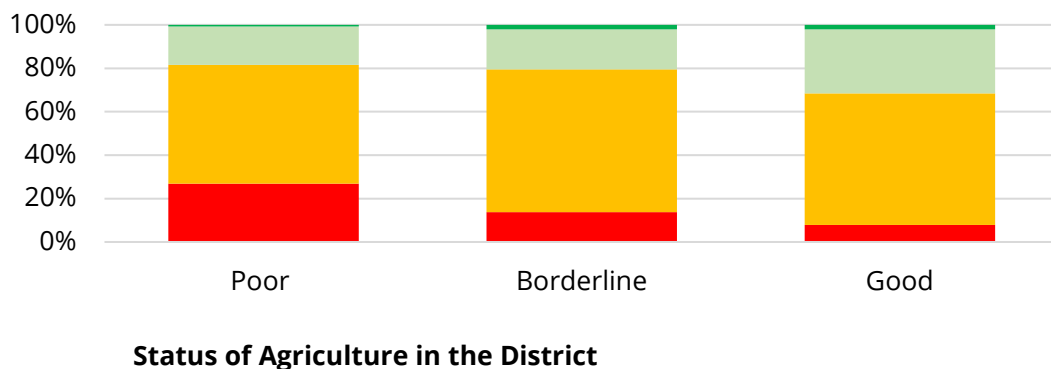
<sup>14</sup> Further investigation may be warranted to see why only 22% of respondents in Bokeo responded that markets were open.

There was also a considerable difference in responses between those districts and villages categorized as having poor agricultural status versus those areas where agriculture was thriving better. This means that where agriculture has been affected, the markets were also not functioning well.

Has the size and volume of the markets changed?



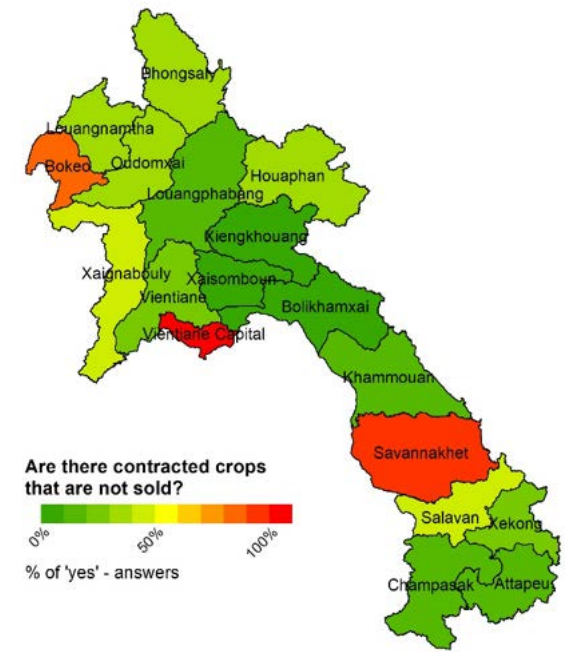
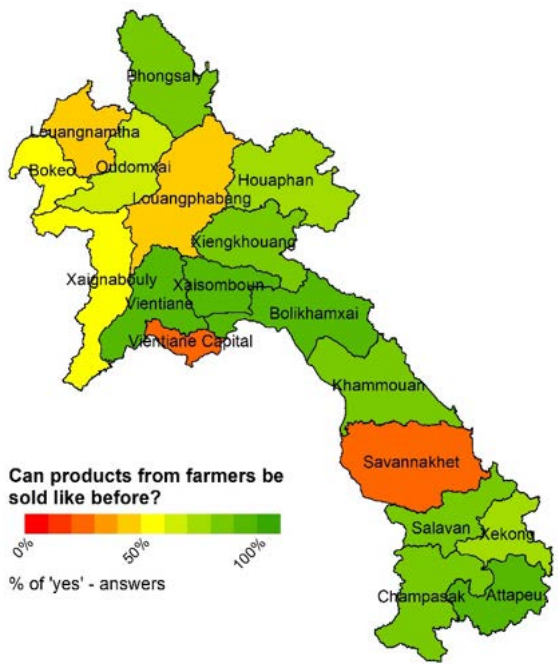
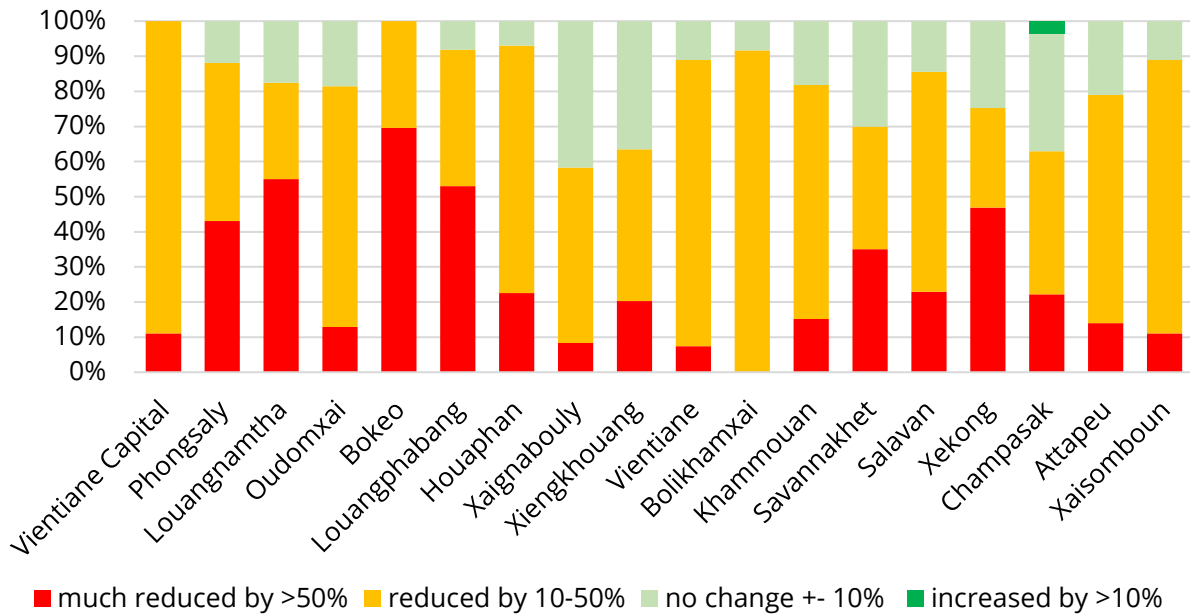
Has the size and volume of the markets changed?

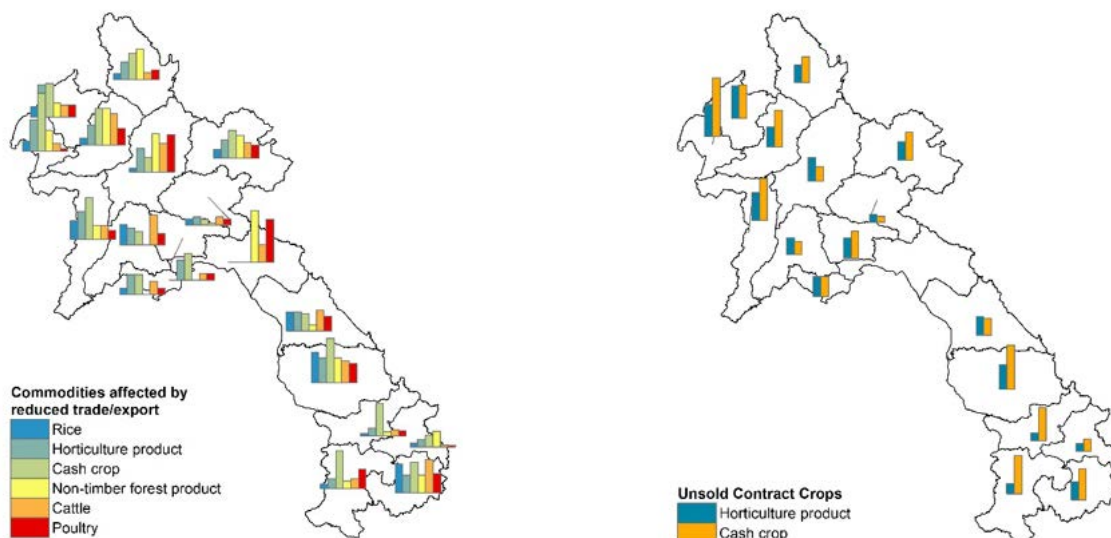


## Mobile traders and trade/exports

A significant impact seen across provinces is the decreased activity of mobile traders and middlemen. Roughly three-quarters of respondents noted reduced (54%) or much reduced (28%) levels of trader activity. Some provinces showed particularly severe impacts including Bokeo, Luangprabang and Luangnamtha, where over 50% of respondents reported much reduced levels of trader and middlemen activity.

Are mobile traders and middlemen still collecting



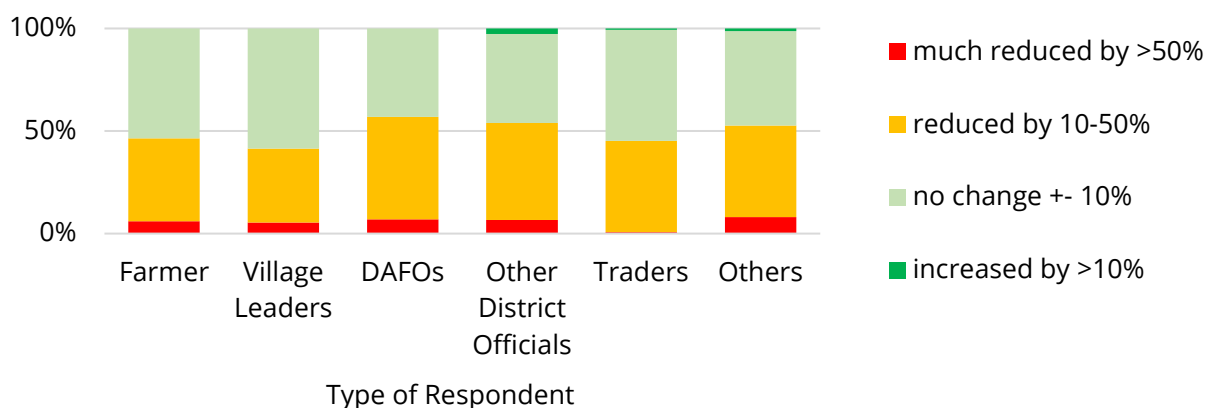


In terms of exports, almost two-thirds of respondents perceived a reduced (55%) or much reduced (21%) level of outgoing international trade, with the remaining respondents seeing little change. Consistent with responses in the previous section on the most impacted agricultural sub-sector, cash crops were by far most affected by reduced local trade and exports. This was followed by non-timber forest products (28.3%), horticultural products (e.g. beans, pumpkins, cucumbers, kale, cabbage, etc. at 26%) and cattle (25.4%).

## Availability and price of food

Findings from the CFSAM (2020) indicate that 2019 food prices for rice reached record highs in October 2019 as a result of impacts on crop yields but stabilized in November/December 2019 as newly harvested crops from the 2019 main season boosted availability in most markets.

### Is there a change of food availability in the villages?

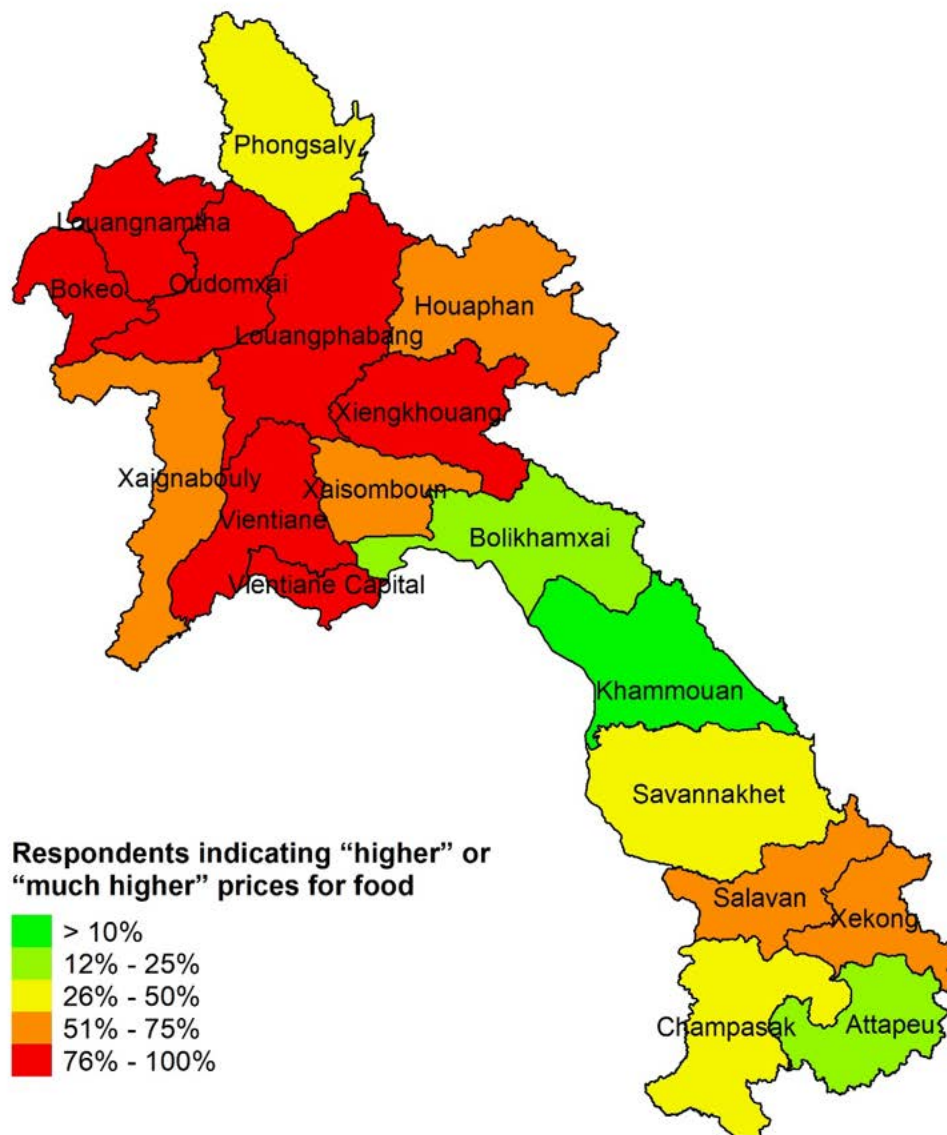


When asked about the change in food availability in the villages, half (51%) of respondents noted there was little change, while 43% reported reduced availability and 6% much reduced availability of food.

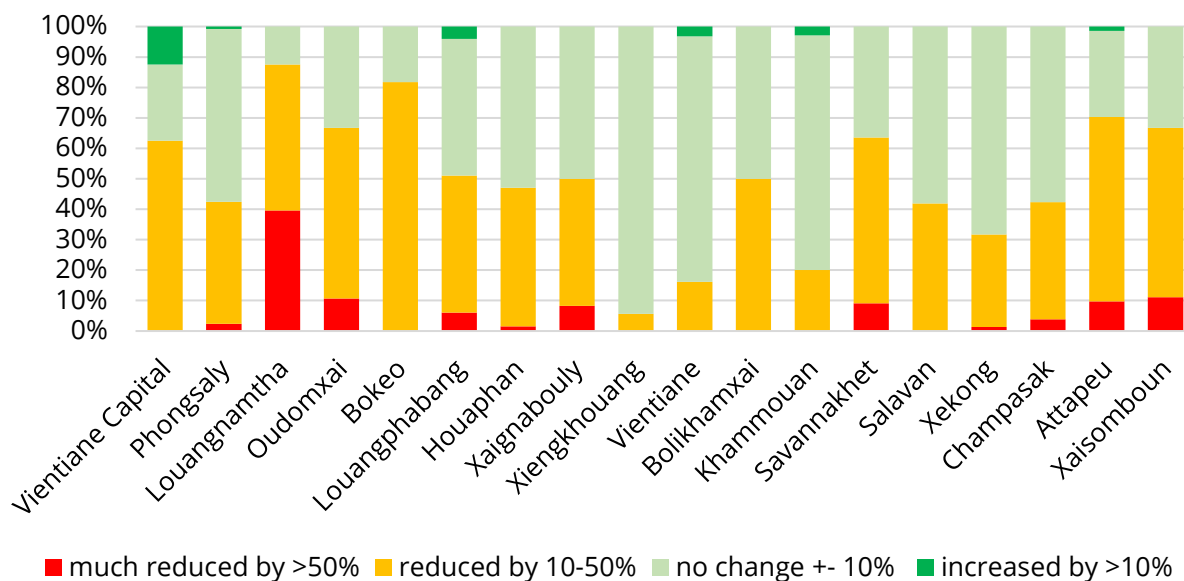
Half of respondents indicated that there was less food available in the villages. However, this opinion was more prevalent among district officials than among villagers themselves.

41% of farmers believed food availability was 10-50% less and 6% believed that it was reduced by even more than 50%.

The provinces where most respondents indicated reduction in available food in the village are Louangnamtha, Bokeo, Attapeu, Xaisomboun, Savannakhet and Oudomxai.

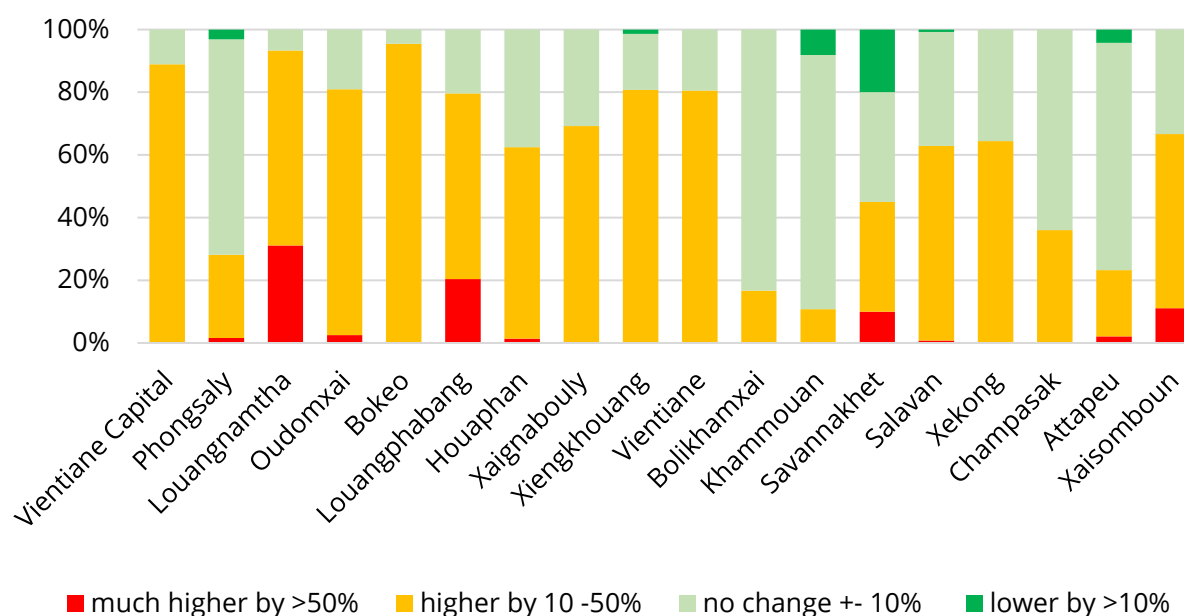


### Is there a change of food availability in the villages?

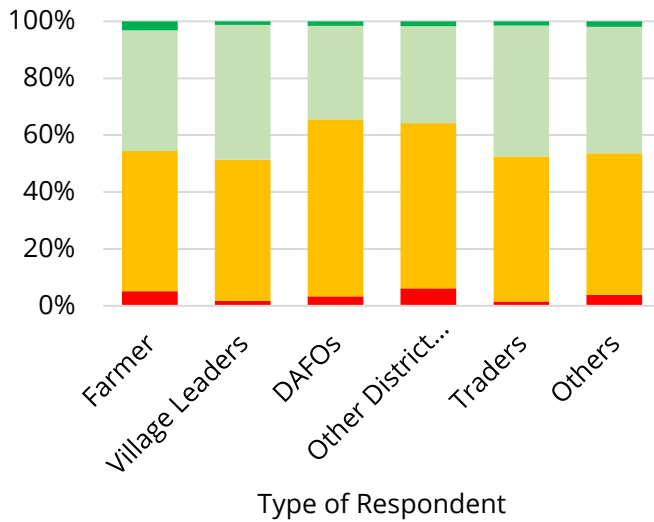


Similarly, 42% of respondents perceived little change in food prices, while about half (52%) reported witnessing higher prices, 4% reporting price increases by more than 50%. Respondents from Luangnamtha reported the most significant negative impacts, with almost 40% of respondents reporting much reduced food availability and 31% reporting much higher food prices.

### Is there a change in food prices overall?



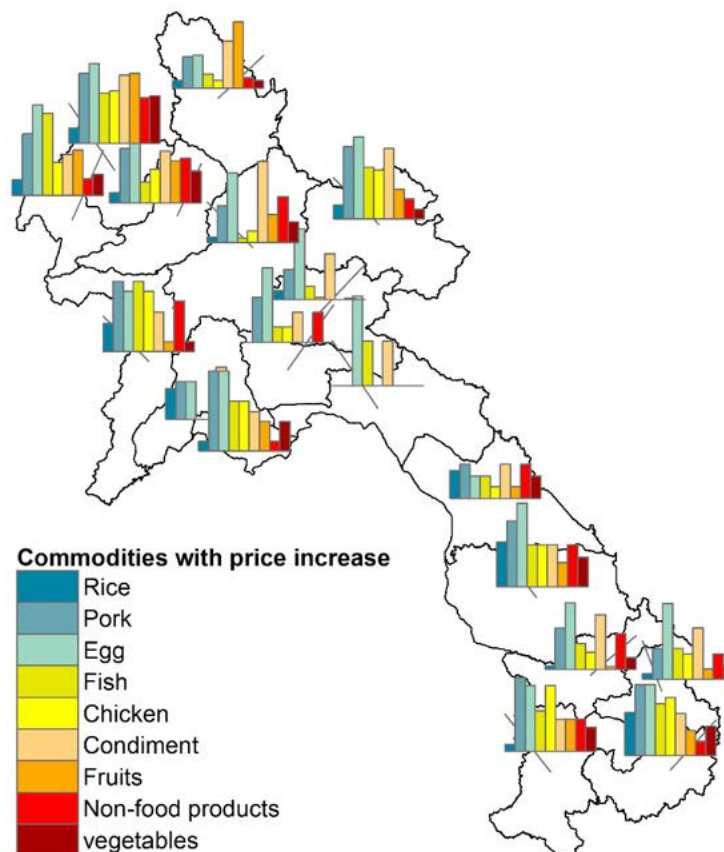
### Is there a change in food prices overall?



Perhaps not surprisingly, the proportion of those that thought food prices had increased was higher among the respondents with a district perspective compared with villager responses as seen above.

The commodities seeing the largest price increases were eggs (45%), condiments (34.7%), pork (31.9%) and rice (23.2%). The increase in prices of eggs may be linked to a false rumour that spread around January/February that eating eggs may protect against COVID-19. In addition, Thailand banned the exports of eggs, which may

have contributed to higher prices. The increase in prices of condiments may be linked to the poorly reduced activity of middlemen and inter-province trade. The price increases for pork may be the result of lasting impacts of the African Swine Fever, which hit Laos hard in 2019. The CFSAM (2020) reported that although widespread outbreaks of African Swine Fever (ASF) were reported during the second half of 2019, no new cases have been reported since November 2019 and local authorities declared that the disease had been contained.





## Livelihoods

The survey also examined perceptions related to employment, sales and income from farming, as well as remittances.

Unsurprisingly, unemployment increased significantly in many parts of the country as a result of the lockdown measures instituted in response to COVID-19 in Lao PDR – and in the case of migrant workers abroad, in other countries. The impact was perceived most prominently in Attapeu, Bokeo, Luangnamtha, Savannakhet and Vientiane Capital. As expected, daily labourers were most significantly impacted.

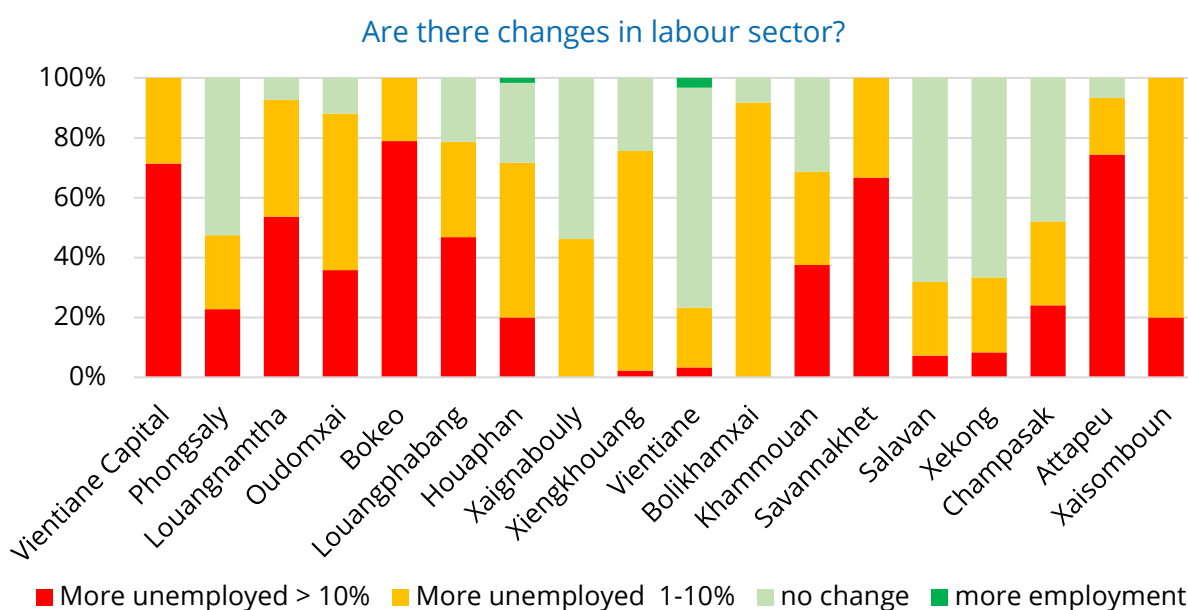
Farmer households continued to sell their produce, but overall incomes for these households decreased as a result of reduced volume of sales and lower prices. The impact seemed particularly severe in Luangnamtha, Luangprabang and Savannakhet.

Respondents also perceived a reduction in remittances, except in Vientiane. As expected, most of the southern provinces showed significant reductions.

## Employment

As discussed in the introduction, a large percentage of the workforce in Laos is employed in the informal sector, and many of them work as day labourers. Unsurprisingly, the lockdown instituted in response to COVID-19 has led to increased unemployment. Almost half (48%) of respondents reported that unemployment had increased, while only a quarter (24.9%) of respondents reported that there was no change (the remaining 27% of respondents reported that they “didn’t know”).

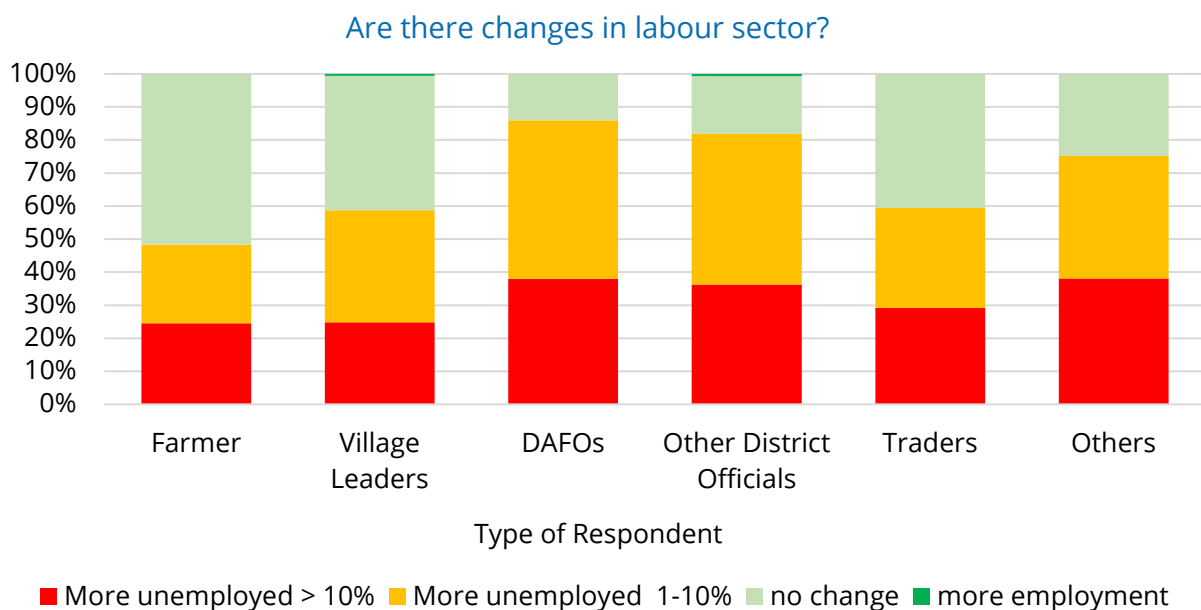
Provinces that seem particularly affected include Bokeo, where 79% of respondents reported a greater than 10% increase in unemployment. Bokeo was followed by Attapeu (74%), Vientiane Capital (71%), Savannakhet (67%) and Luangnamtha (54%).



When asked to describe the people most affected by the recent unemployment, daily labourers were unsurprisingly the most common response (25.4%), followed by returning migrant workers (11.7%), workers at private companies (10.9%) and employees at guesthouses or restaurants (10.2%). These responses are consistent with sectors that have been disproportionately affected as a result of the lockdown.

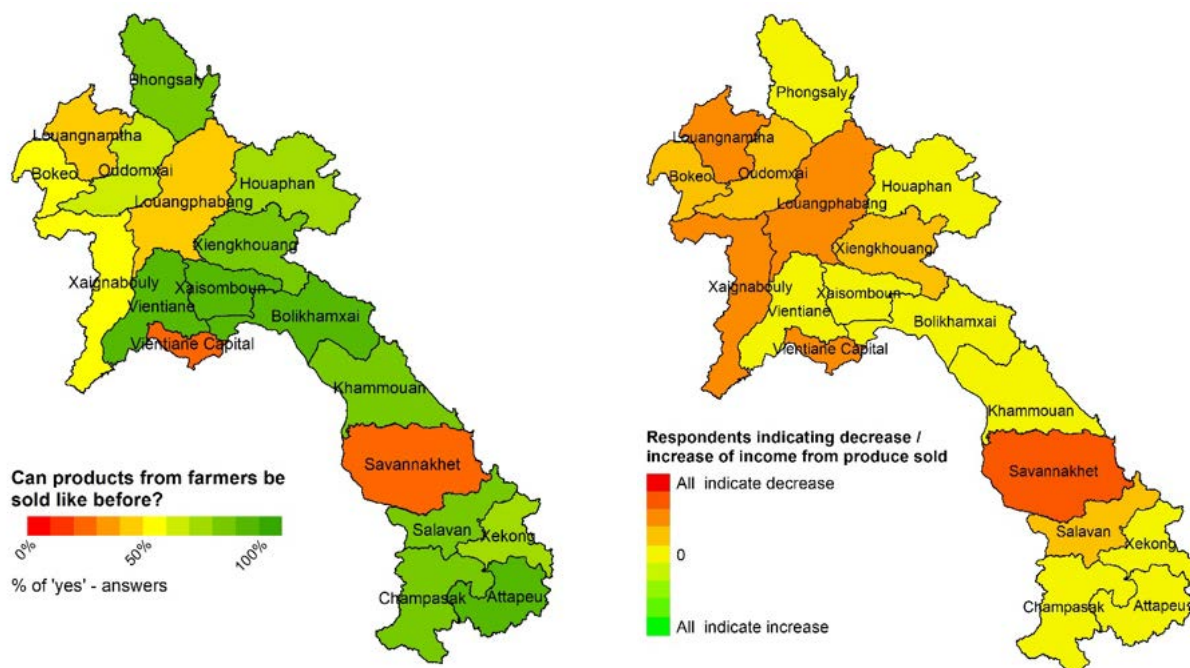
Some respondents mentioned problems with handicrafts, particularly weaving. Raw materials (silk) often from Vietnam were no longer available and traders were not buying the products anymore.

Perspectives were also different between district-level officials and villagers, with district officials perceiving greater increases in unemployment.



## Sales and income from farming

The survey also examined farmer households more closely, as they make up a significant portion of the rural economy. While only 32% of respondents noted that produce from farmers cannot be sold like before the COVID crisis, 22% noted that quantities being sold went down and 15% indicated prices decreasing, with 11% indicating price increases. As a result of reduced volumes being sold at lower prices, 28% of respondents noted that incomes had also decreased, while only 1% indicated increased incomes for farmers. Again, cash crops were most significantly affected, followed by vegetables and gourds.



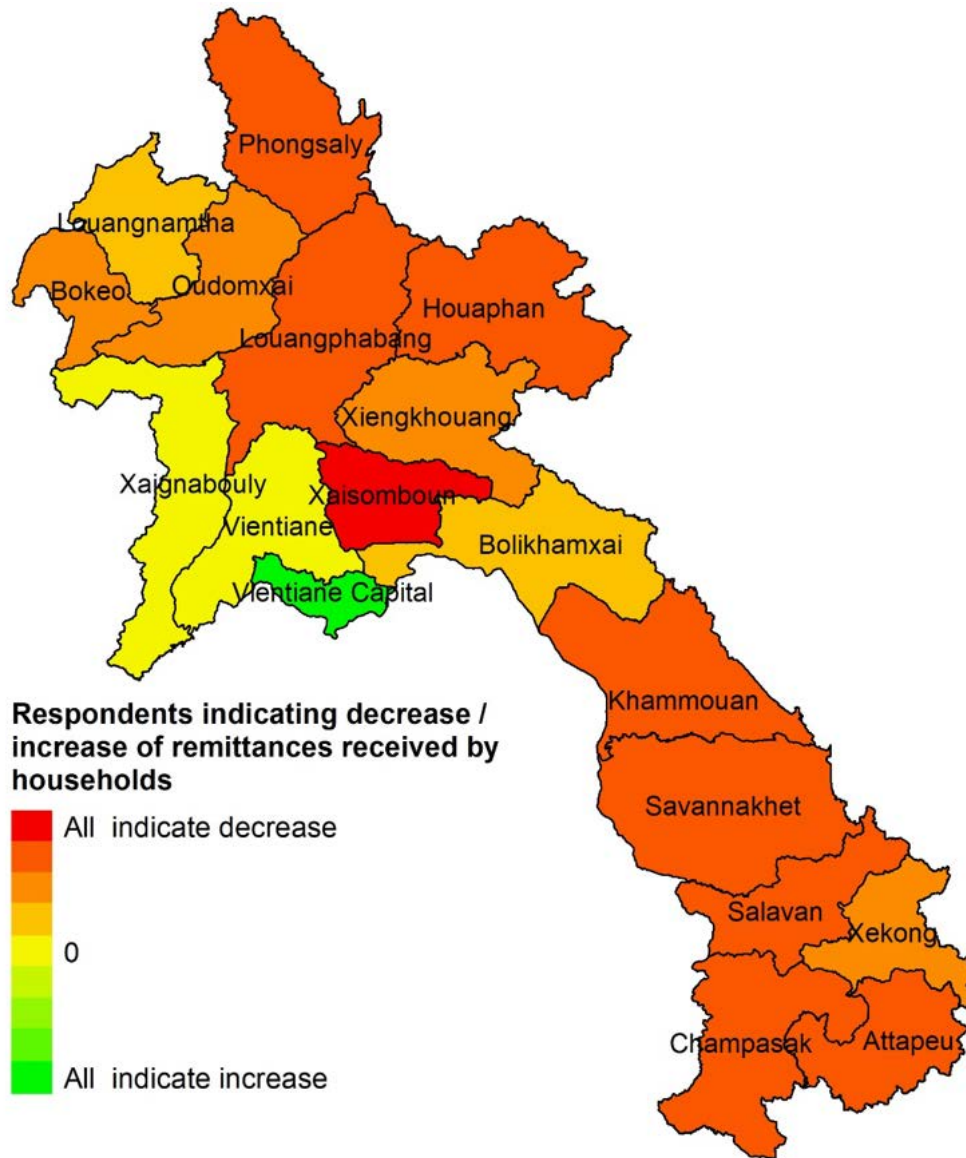
At the sub-national level, only 14% of respondents in Savannakhet reported that produce from farmers could be sold like before the COVID pandemic. Vientiane Capital (20%), Luangnamtha (32%) and Luangphabang (39%) also reported concerning statistics. Income reduced in the districts surveyed in Savannakhet (86% of respondents) Luang Namtha (66%) and Luang Prabang (61%), which is a major issue for these households.

## Remittances

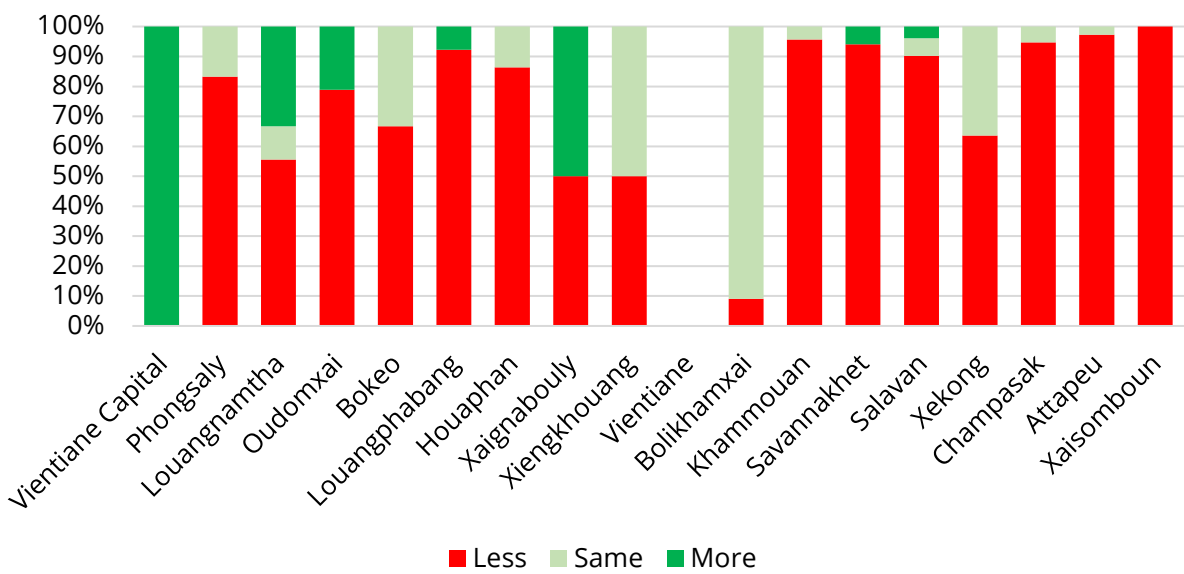
As noted above, remittances constitute a significant portion of some communities' incomes, particularly in the southern part of the country. While most respondents (74%) reported that they did not know about changes to remittances, among those that were able to provide an answer, the vast majority (83%) reported reduced remittances, with just 6.5% of respondents reporting an increase. The large percentage of respondents (74%) not knowing is not inconsistent with the fact that overall, 9% of households receive remittances from abroad, and remittances constitute 60% of their household income.<sup>15</sup>

A provincial breakdown of responses shows that indeed, most of the southern provinces reported reduced amounts of remittances, including in Attapeu (97%), Champasack (95%) and Salavan (90%). However, some northern provinces such as Luangprabang also reported very high reductions (92%). All three valid responses on remittances in Vientiane capital indicated an increase.

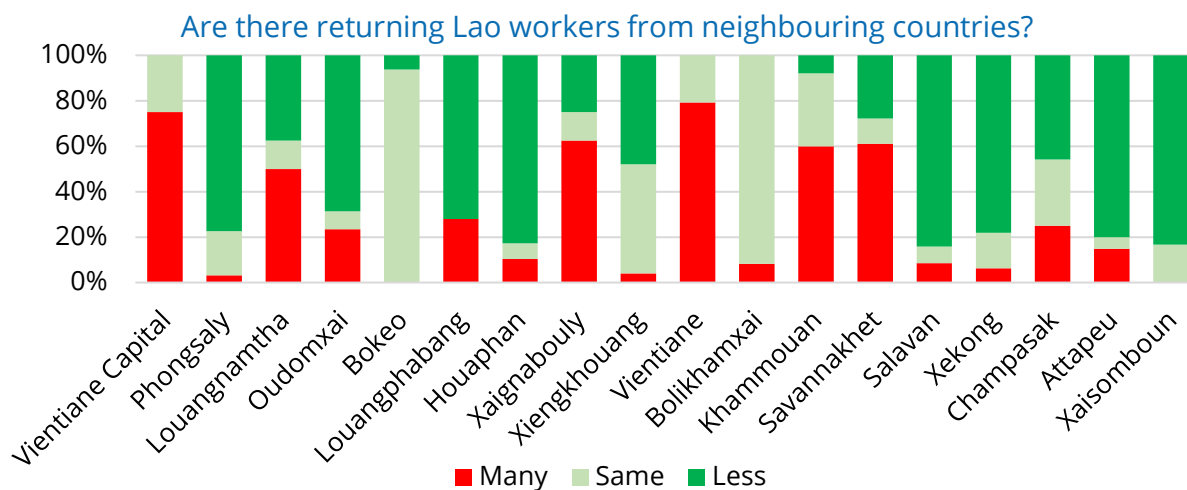
<sup>15</sup> World Bank Economic Monitor, May 2020, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/lao/publication/covid-19-to-impact-lao-pdr-growth-debt-in-2020-new-world-bank-report>



Is there a change in remittances received by households?



Despite the economic crisis in Thailand causing layoffs of migrant workers, as the survey was conducted after the Pi Mai (Lao New Year) holidays and after the international borders were closed, more respondents (32.4%) noted a decrease in the return of Lao workers from abroad than an increase (11.9%).



## Household Access to Food

Questions in this section centred around who had access to food and the primary reasons for those without access, food items consumed as coping mechanisms, and food aid that had been provided to date.

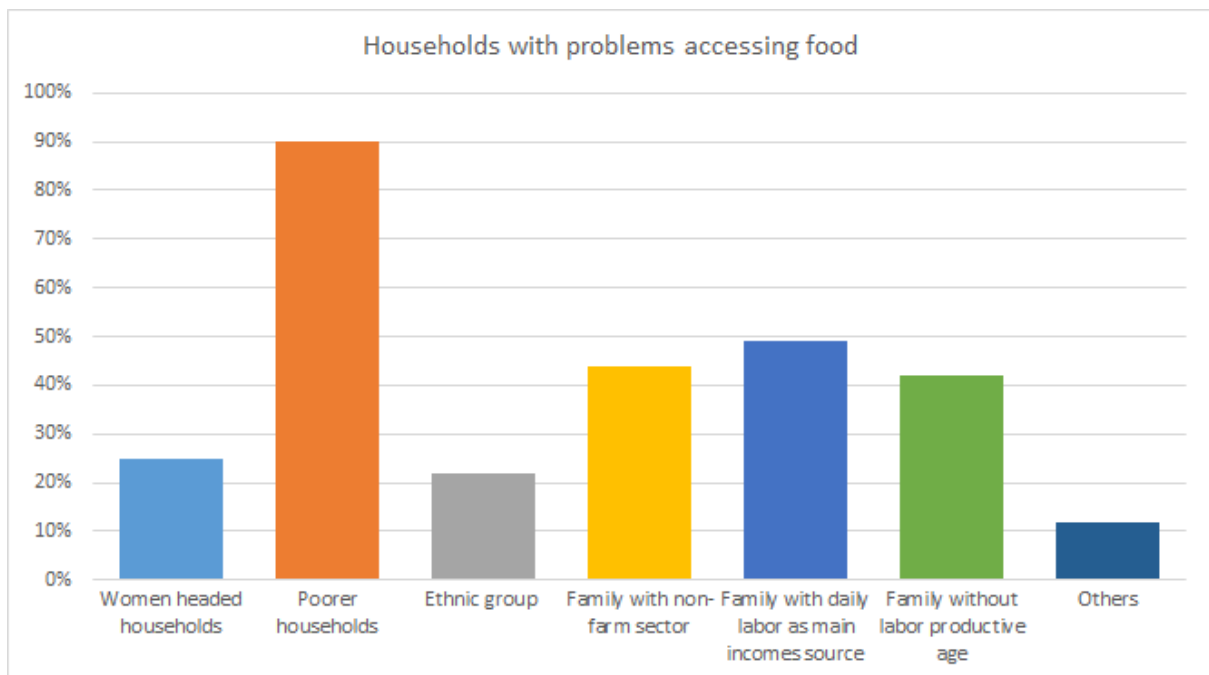
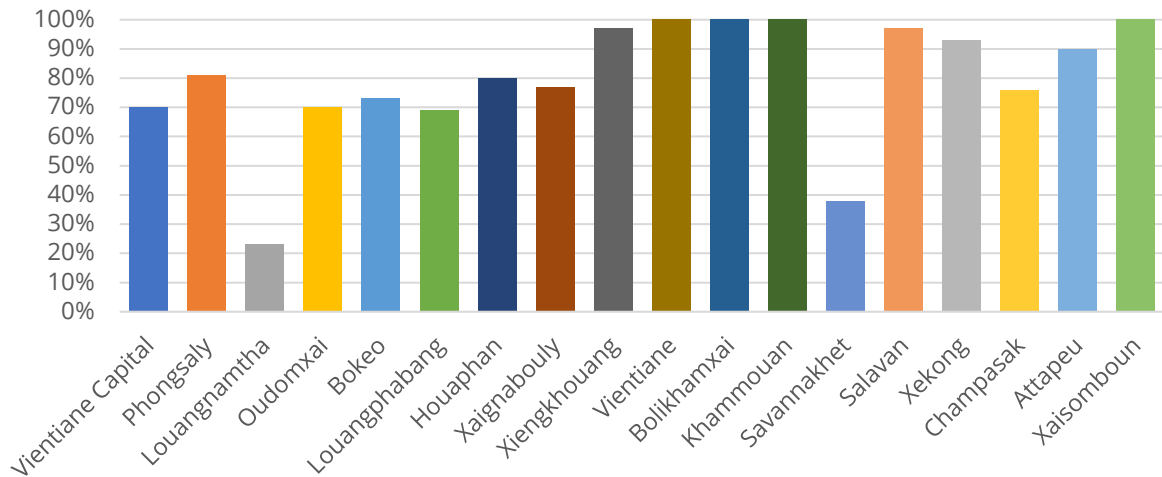
The primary constraint in access to food was perceived as financial – either because households did not have enough income or money to purchase food, or – relatedly – due to higher food prices and unemployment. As a result, households with less income and households with daily labour as the main sources of income suffered the most.

### Who has access to food and reasons for lack of access

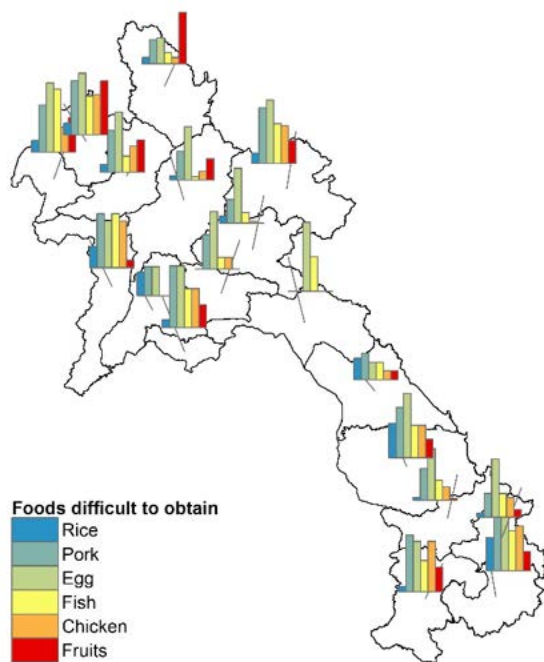
Most of the respondents (82%) reported that all households could access the same foods as before, although this may not be in the same quantities, especially as many respondents indicated that different foods are consumed to cope with the situation. Examining provincial-level data, Luangnamtha (23%) and Savannakhet (20%) stand out as having a very low percentage of respondents citing that all households have access to the same foods as before the crisis. Responses from all other provinces were at 69% or higher.

Among the 18% who responded that this was no longer possible, the vast majority cited financial reasons: lack of income, not having enough money and price increases; they often responded that the unavailability of employment during this crisis was the key reason for the lack of access to some foods.

### Can all household access the same foods as before?



It is generally perceived that poor households have the most problems in accessing food. Households without anybody of working age and households depending on daily labour also faced issues, as well as households in the non-farm sector (e.g. weaving).



In terms of which foods were most difficult to obtain, pork (67%) came in first, followed by fish (44%), fruit (43%) and eggs (40%).

Consistent with the above findings, poorer households had the most acute problems in access to food, as well as households with daily labour as the main source of income.

## Different foods for coping and food aid

Presumably as a result of reduced incomes and higher prices for some food items, 80% of respondents noted that there were different foods accessed to cope with the situation. These included the collection of wild vegetables and bamboo, as well as the collection of animals and insects from rice fields as coping strategies.

## Health and nutrition

Nutrition questions focused on whether there were any noticeable differences in consumption of nutritious food, specifically focusing on pregnant and lactating women with children under two years of age. A little less than one-third of respondents – both overall and among pregnant and lactating women – reported a negative change, with most of these respondents noting they were now unable to consume 5 food groups. There may also be issues around the lack of awareness around nutrition at the community level.

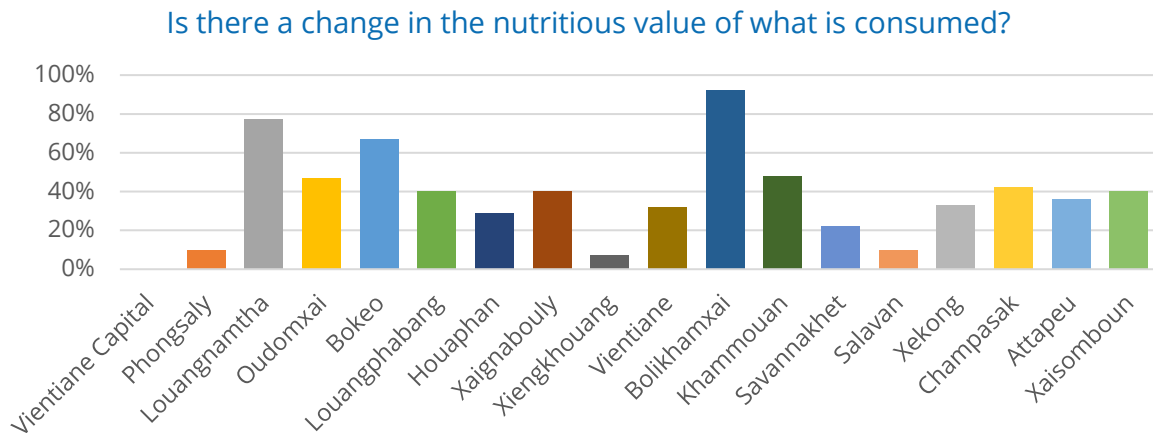
Overall, perceptions around changes in the health and malnutrition status of communities was not significant. However, in Bokeo and Luangnamtha, respondents reported a relatively high change in conditions, warranting further investigation.

## Changes in nutritious value of food consumed, including by PLW and children

Overall, 30% of respondents noted that there was a change in the nutritious value of what was consumed. Most of these respondents noted that prices had increased, and that

people were unable to consume 5 food groups. Half of respondents mentioned that there was less meat available in the markets.

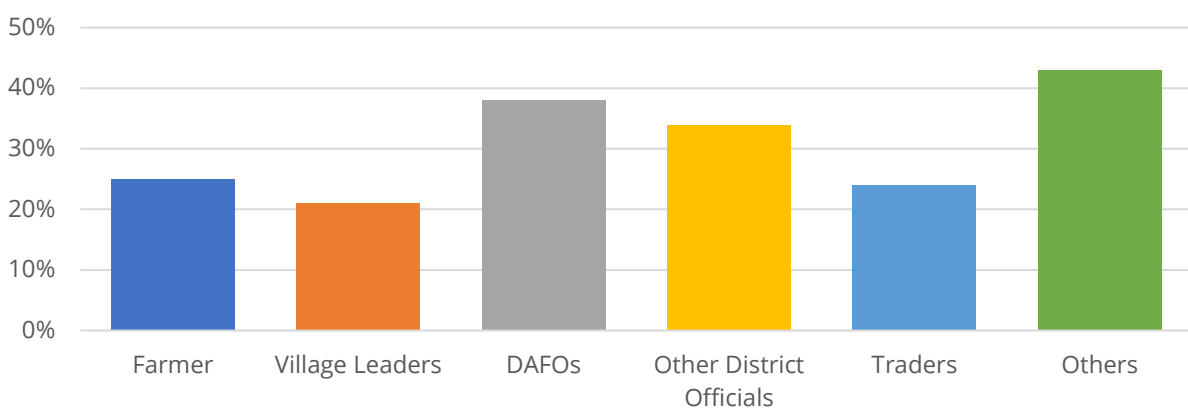
At the sub-national level, in four provinces (Bolihamxay, Khammouan, Luangnamtha and Bokeo) more than half of the respondents indicate a change in nutritious value of what was being consumed.



Similar findings were observed when respondents were asked about consumption for pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers and small children, with 29% noting a change, most of them reporting people were unable to consume 5 food groups due to price increases and that there was less meat in the markets. Some respondents mentioned that some mothers discontinued breast feeding out of fear of transmission of COVID-19.

Note that nearly 40% of the district respondents thought there were changes in food consumption of pregnant and breastfeeding mothers with small children, while farmers and village leaders did not perceive as large a change, suggesting a difference in perception and awareness. In view of the high chronic malnutrition rates in some provinces (~50% Phongsaly and Sekong) lack of awareness around nutrition at the community level may be a factor.

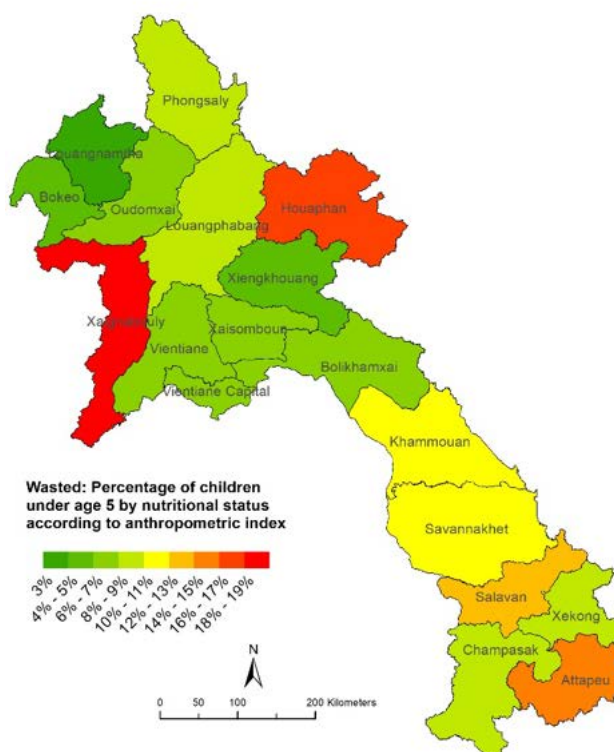
**Is there a change in the food consumed by pregnant women, breast feeding mothers and small children?**



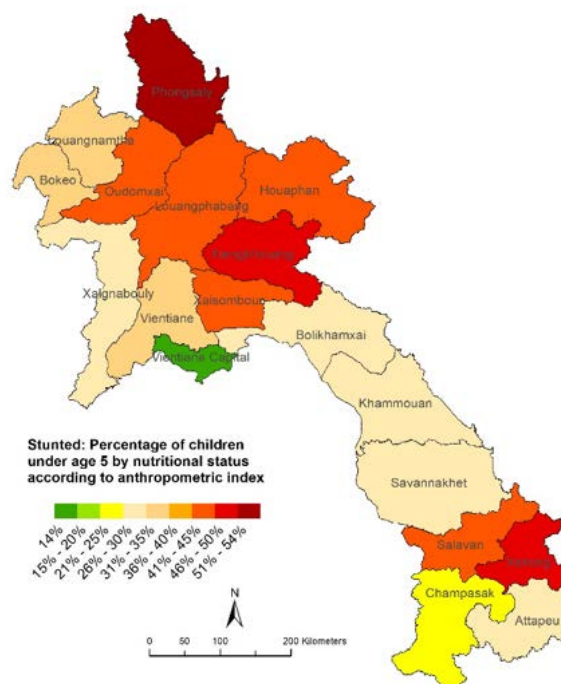


## Signs of health and malnutrition issues

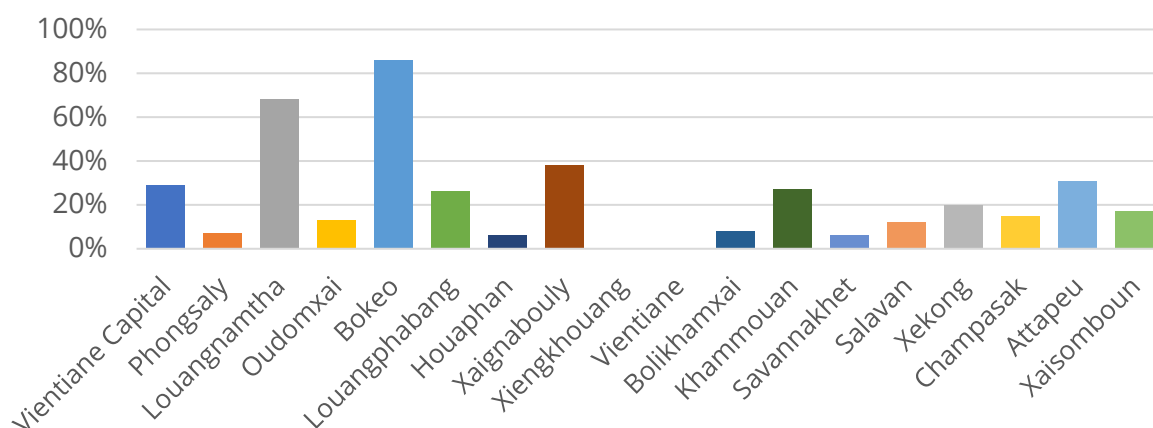
Based on LSIS-II, 33% of children under age 5 were stunted which is considered a “high severity” prevalence of chronic malnutrition. Acute malnutrition can be considered as “medium severity” with 9% of children under age 5 wasted at the time of the survey in 2017. There are however important disparities in the country . Only 21% of children in urban areas are stunted, 36% of children in rural areas with road and 43% of children in areas without road, which is considered “very high severity” based on the WHO classification. Wasting fo children in rural areas without road (11.5%) “highly severe” is also higher than in other areas (urban has 7% wasting). The regional disparities are striking,as can be seen from the maps.



Overall, only 14% of respondents noticed a visible change in the overall health conditions in the district, with most of these respondents citing cases of fever, flu and coughs. However, a high percentage of respondents in Bokeo (86%) and Luangnamtha (68%) reported changes in health conditions, which may warrant further investigation. Note, however, that responses in Luangnamtha may have been affected by the very dry, dusty and smoky environment during the survey period.



### Is there a change visible in overall health conditions in the district?



The survey also asked respondents whether they had noticed any signs of malnutrition. We note that this is a difficult question to ask someone without a background in nutrition or health, but the question was posed to get possible indications of issues - in particular provinces or districts - which could then be followed up with more in-depth questions by experts. 22% of DAFOs confirmed signs of malnutrition against less than 10 % of farmers and village leaders. These signs of malnutrition were mostly reported in Bokeo and Luangnamtha.

## Food Security Analysis

### Methodology

Since there is no available information from the survey of individual households' access and consumption of food, which is typically the basis for WFP's food security methodology, a more general food security indicator had to be created. Based on the answers from respondents, a food security indicator was constructed by using 14 variables related to the four dimensions of food security:

- Income / Livelihoods
  - Is there a change in remittances received by households?
  - Can produce from farmers be sold like before?
  - Are mobile traders and middlemen still collecting?
  - Are there contracted crops that are not sold?
  - Is there a change in export visible?
- Markets (availability of food)
  - Is there a change of food availability in the villages?
  - Are markets still open?
  - Has the size and volume of these markets changed?
- Households' Access to food:
  - Is there a change in food prices overall?

- Can all household access the same foods as before?
- Are there different foods that are now accessed to cope with the situation?
- Food Consumption and Nutrition
  - Is there a change in the food consumed by pregnant women, breast feeding mothers and small children?
  - Is there a change in the nutritious value of what is consumed?
  - Are there any signs or evidence of malnutrition?

Each variable was normalized, and, after replacing missing values by “0” the mean of all variables in one dimension became the score for that dimension. The mean of the averages for the four dimensions then became the food security score, and this score was generated from each response. These scores were then aggregated to produce, for example, district food security scores or village food security scores. This score is a “relative score” which allows one to distinguish areas with worse conditions from areas with relatively better conditions.

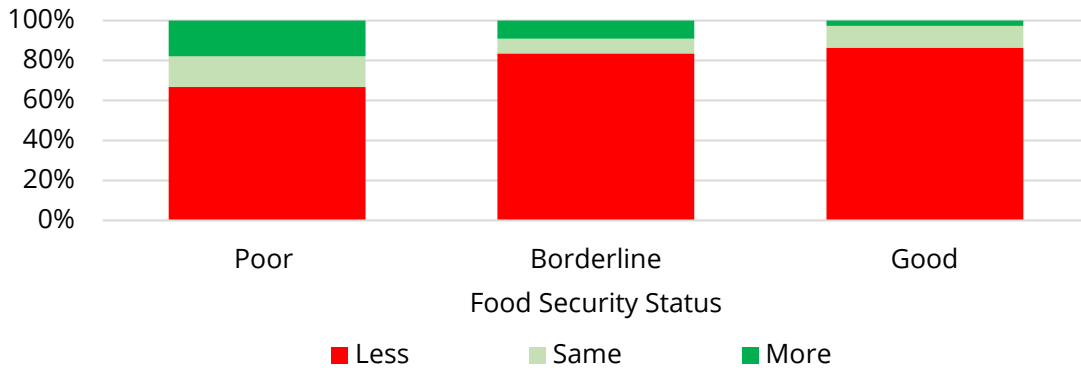
If the score is less than one standard deviation below the mean, food security is categorized as “poor”; if it is less than the mean (and higher than “poor”), the situation is categorized as “borderline”. If the score is higher than the mean, the food security situation is considered “good”.

The indicators used to construct the food security indicator should (by design) be strongly correlated with the food security score. The first three dimensions (Income / Livelihoods; Markets (availability of food); and Households’ Access to food) are positively correlated with each other ( $r$  between 0.3 to 0.4, all statistically significant with  $p < 0.001$ ) whereas the fourth dimension (Food Consumption and Nutrition) is negatively correlated (around -0.3 with each of the 3 other dimensions,  $p < 0.001$ ) This negative direction is rather unexpected and may be due to the lack of awareness of food insecure people that their nutrition status is poor.. As a result (see graphs below) most indicators correlate well with food security, except for the nutrition related indicators.

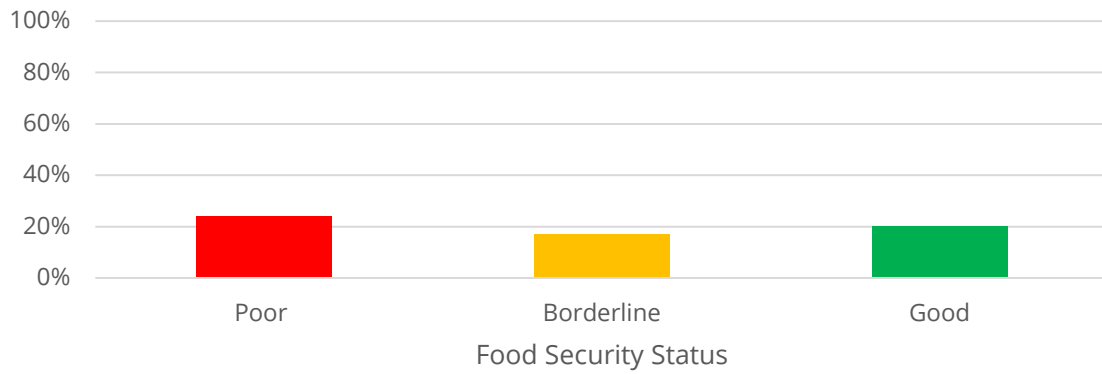
Can produce from farmers be sold like before?



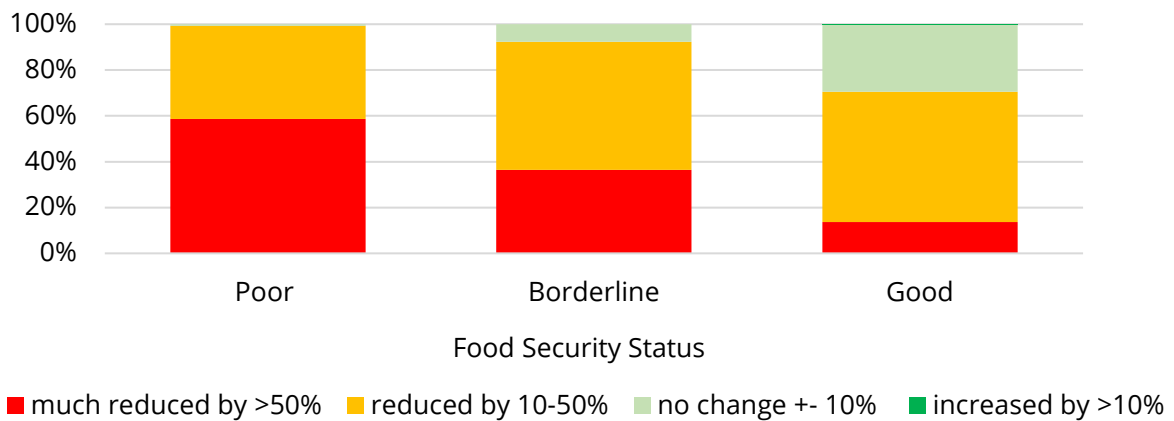
### Is there a change in remittances received by households?



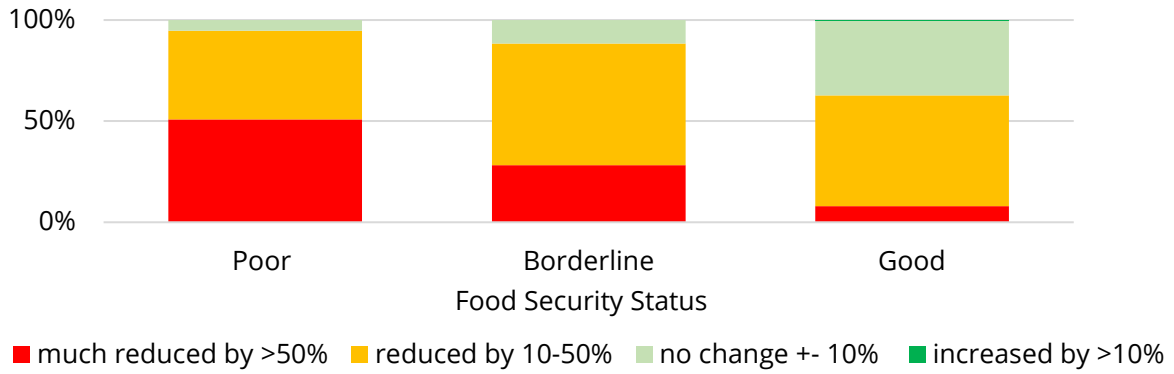
### Are there contracted crops that are not sold?



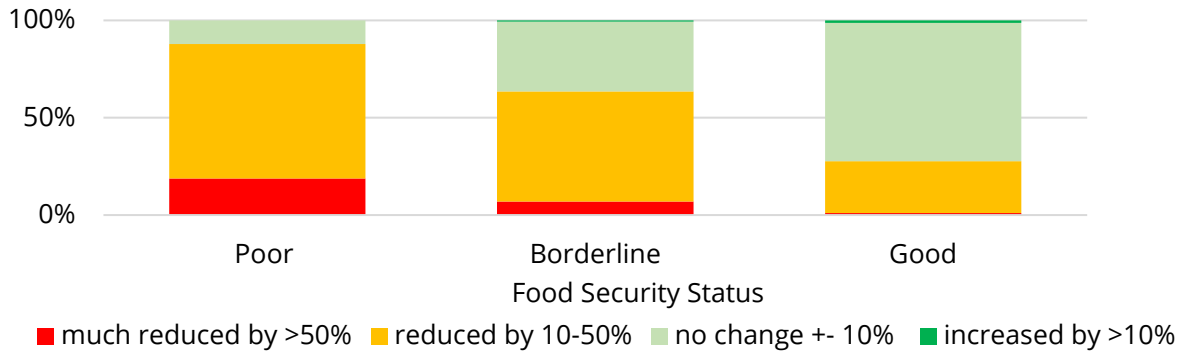
### Are mobile traders and middlemen still collecting



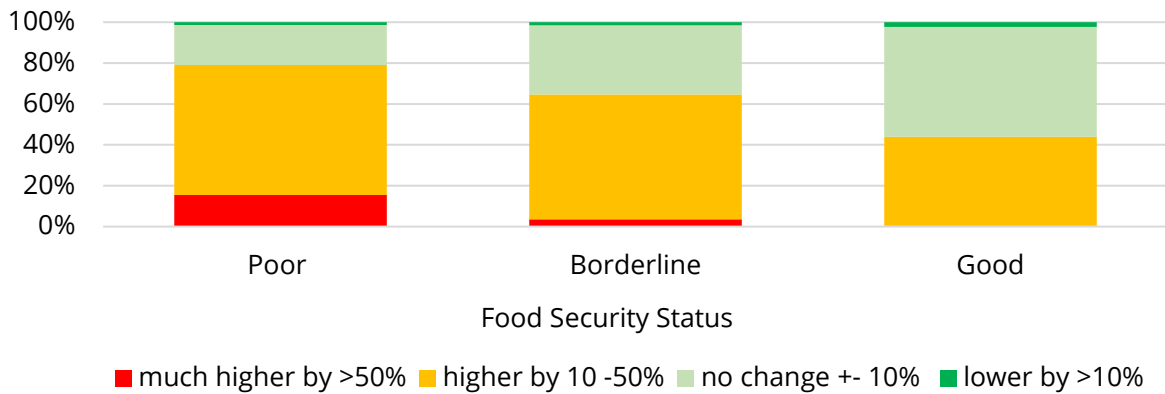
Is there a change in export visible?



Is there a change of food availability in the villages?



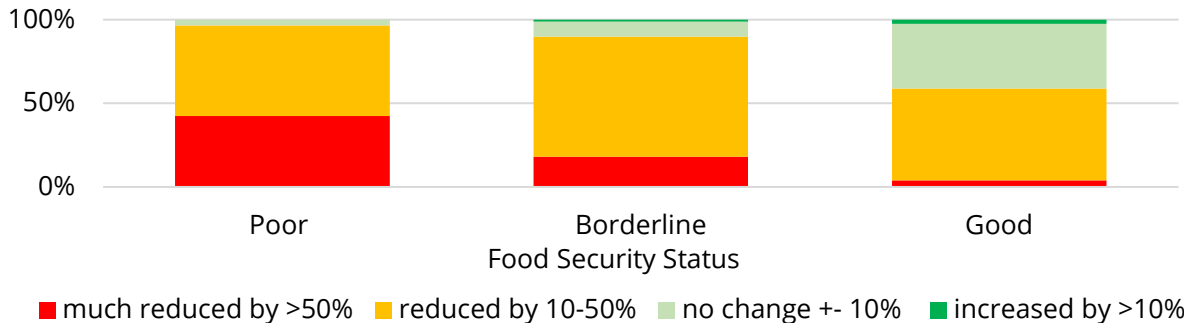
Is there a change in food prices overall?



### Can all household access the same foods as before?



### Has the size and volume of the markets changed?



### Are markets still open?

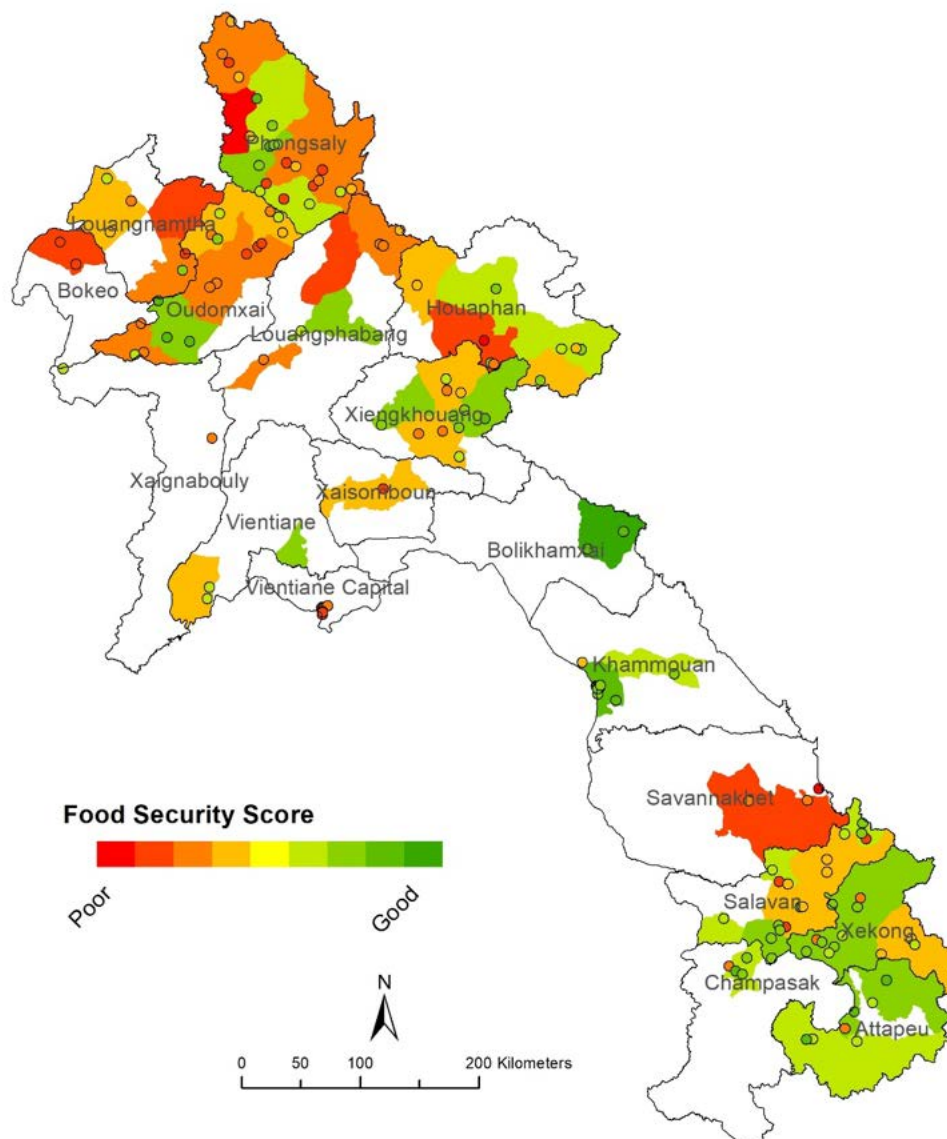


The graphs above provide a good impression of the meaning of “poor food insecurity” as defined by the indicator we constructed. Food insecurity is found in villages where farmers now have problems to sell their produce, where traders and middlemen all but stopped operating, and even contract crops are left unsold and export of produce was reduced. These are also the villages where less food was available and often markets were not open anymore or were reduced in size and volume. Food prices in the food insecure areas have increased and not many households could access food in the same way as before and there were also less possibilities for alternative foods to cope with the

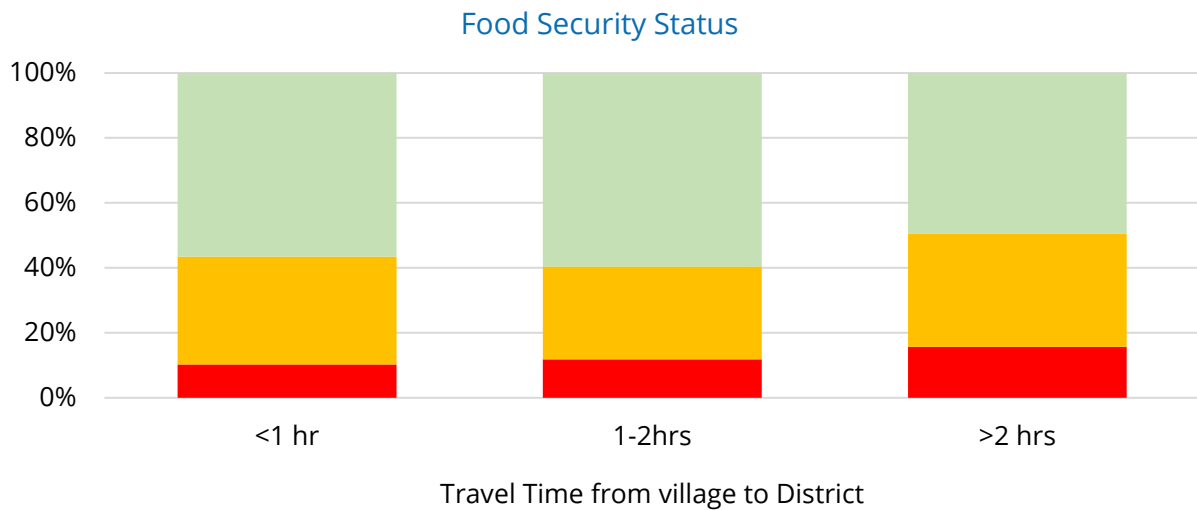
access problems. Changes in remittances were seen equally for the food insecure and food secure, and the hints of poor nutrition as reported by the respondents cut across all food security categories.

## Food Security across the country

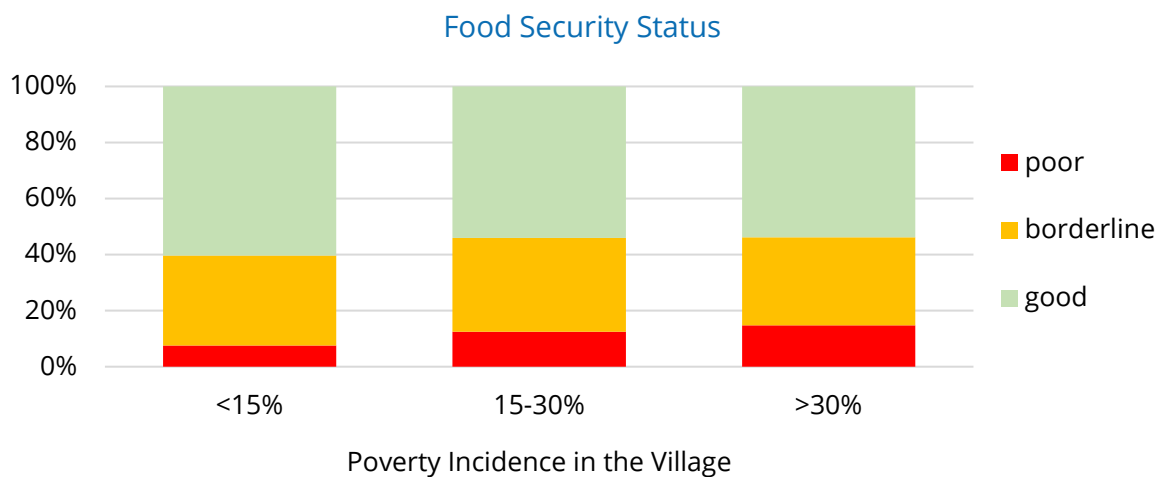
The information received on the various villages and districts indicates that the food security situation is uneven across the country. Food insecurity seems to be most prevalent in the north (Bokeo, Louangnamtha, Phongsaly, Oudomxay, Luangphabang, Houaphan and Xaisomboun). The map is disaggregated at district level to show the substantial variation at sub-provincial level. The south-eastern districts in Savannakhet are also having worse food security conditions. The northern provinces of Bokeo, Oudomxay and Luangphabang as well as Savannakhet in the south, were already identified by the CFSAM in December 2019 as having problematic food security conditions.



The villages from which data have been collected have been linked through GIS with existing information from the national survey (2015 census), and we analysed if some of these pre-existing circumstances could help explain the differences in food security.



Using a General Linear Model (GLM) we found that poverty in the village, remoteness and occurrence of larger households in the villages were predictors of food insecurity.



Interventions should target the provinces / districts with most food insecurity and the should focus on more remote and poor villages.



## Conclusions

COVID-19 and the measures put in place to stem the transmission (e.g. restrictions on travel and the closing of businesses) have had secondary social and economic impacts in Lao PDR, including on food security and agriculture. Below are some findings from the survey, including the possible bottlenecks and pathways in which food security may have been impacted, followed by recommendations.

### Impact on Markets, on Livelihoods and Availability of Food in Villages

- The restrictions on the movement of traders and middlemen across the country as a result of the lockdown had visible impacts on the size of markets and the availability and resulting increased prices of food in some provinces, most notably in Luangnamtha and Bokeo.
- Because of the same restrictions, products of farmers were left unsold, especially in Savannakhet and the north-west of the country (Luangnamtha and Luangphabang).

### Household Access to Food

- The primary constraint in access to food was perceived to be financial – as a result of the inter-related factors of a lack of income, higher food prices and unemployment.
- Those impacted most include low income households, those engaged in daily labour / farm labour and workers in the informal economy. Respondents from Luangnamtha and Savannakhet stood out as perceiving the large negative impacts in food access.
- While farmers continued to sell their produce, the volume of sales decreased and sales prices were also often lower, leading to decreased incomes for farmer households.
- As expected, unemployment increased significantly in parts of the country following the lockdown measures instituted in response to COVID-19. The most significant impacts were reported in Bokeo, Attapeu, Vientiane Capital, Savannakhet and Luangnamtha.
- Reduced remittances further affected a subset of households, primarily in the south but in other provinces as well.

### Agricultural Sector

- Overall, respondents did not report significant reductions in the level of agricultural activity and access to agricultural inputs. However, there were significant disparities across provinces, with respondents in Luangnamtha and Xaisomboun perceiving significant negative impacts to all related questions. Other

provinces that were also more negatively affected include Attapeu, Bokeo, Bolikhamxai and Savannakhet.

- The agricultural sub-sector most impacted was cash crops, at least in part due to the closing of international borders. This was followed by horticulture.
- There remain many uncertainties over the coming months, both in terms of the status of COVID-19 in Laos and resultant measures, as well as normal fluctuations in rainfall and weather patterns. The majority (60%) of respondents also predicted either an average harvest (40%) or good/excellent harvest (20%).
- Looking ahead at this year's main harvest in October/November, perceived prospects were worst in Oudomxai (68%), Bolikhamxai (67%), Savannakhet (50%) and Luangnamtha (44%).

## Food security and nutrition

- Even before COVID-19 was a factor, the impacts of drought and flooding in 2019, combined with the already low baseline levels of household resilience among vulnerable communities, indicated that an estimated 67,800 people were food insecure before the crisis (CFSAM, 2020). Adding on impact of COVID-19 on the dimensions of food security, these identified households considered as having low levels of resilience and dependent on upland rice cultivation and those that did not have access to dry season planting in early 2020 are likely to require food assistance to bridge the food gap until the next main season harvest in 2020, starting October 2020. The CFSAM 2020 identified the provinces of Bokeo, Luang Prabang, Oudomxai, Attapeu, Savannakhet and Sekong as having the highest numbers of households in need of food assistance.
- The status of agriculture in the food insecure village is more often poor, hence coordinated food security and agricultural support is required.
- Almost one-third of respondents noted changes in the nutritious value of what was consumed. Most of these respondents cited price increases and limited quantities of animal protein as the primary reasons for not being able to consume 5 food groups. Similar findings were observed when asking about consumption for pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers and small children.
- It is probably too soon to see any evidence of increased malnutrition in the villages. Although villagers noted a decrease in the availability and accessibility of food, on the whole they could cope with the situation by accessing food from the wild, including fish, forest products and edible insects. If the current situation of restricted travel and increased food prices are prolonged or worsens, an increase in malnutrition may be observed, most likely first in the villages which are already more food insecure.

## Provinces Most Impacted

- Respondents from **Luangnamtha** perceived significant negative impacts on almost every measure.

- In agriculture, respondents in Luangnamtha perceived negative impacts on current activity levels, as well as access to inputs, labour and equipment. Roughly 44% of respondents from Luangnamtha foresaw a poor or very poor harvest. Respondents noted that it was very difficult to obtain agricultural inputs, including fertilizers, animal feed, tools and agricultural equipment, with some items in short supply and others experiencing significant price increases. Sugarcane harvest may have been particularly impacted as there was no movement and thus no access to external labour during this time.
- Luangnamtha also witnessed the most negative impacts on the availability and prices of food.
- Markets were impacted, possibly in part due to the absence of Vietnamese traders, who constitute the majority of mobile traders. In addition, Luangnamtha may have been disproportionately affected as its international borders – with Myanmar, China as well as Thailand through Bokeo – are significant in terms of trade.
- Unemployment increased significantly, and for farmers, many could not sell produce at the same levels as before the crisis.
- Luangnamtha showed the largest impact in terms of change in food access compared to pre-crisis levels.
- Other provinces that were relatively more affected include Bokeo and Savannakhet. Note that Bokeo (with Attapeu) was identified as being at risk of food insecurity in the CFSAM. Parts of Phongsaly and Luangphabang are also affected.

## Recommendations

- **Allow traders and middlemen greater movement to the extent possible within the measures to fight the spread of COVID-19:** The movement restrictions for traders and middlemen have had visible negative impacts on rural incomes, on the availability and prices of agricultural and food items and on agricultural inputs. In order to alleviate some of these impacts, greater movement for these individuals is advised while requiring strict adherence to COVID-19 prevention measures. In addition to increasing the availability of diverse foods in vulnerable communities, this will increase the income of those engaged in the agriculture sector, including farmers, suppliers of inputs in addition to the traders themselves and allow for better future harvest. This will in turn increase household access to food, as the main constraint at present is financial.
- **Support households with insufficient access to food:** Food assistance in the form of in-kind food or cash to vulnerable households will alleviate immediate food insecurity. Support in the form of Cash or Food Assistance for Assets (CFA / FFA) will also build resilience for the longer term. Targeting at the provincial level may be based on food insecure areas identified in the Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission (CFSAM, April 2020) pre-COVID (e.g. Bokeo and Attapeu), as well as provinces and districts identified as most affected from this survey and subsequent surveys (e.g. Luangnamtha). Further targeting at sub-district level will also be required by focusing on the more remote and poor villages. Finally, given that the vast majority of the population lives in rural areas and many of them are engaged in subsistence agriculture, assistance may consider greater self-sufficiency (e.g. home gardens and small livestock raising) rather than a reliance on income from exports.
- **Support to agricultural season/next season:** Agriculture will remain the backbone of the economic activities in most of the rural areas and villages in Laos. There has been a gradual shift to market-oriented agricultural production, and this segment has been mostly affected by the present crisis through the disruption of transport as well as the closure of borders and export markets. This has especially affected agricultural products such as fresh vegetables and fruits, rather than dried products such as coffee, tea or cardamom.

It is evident that local food production becomes more important during a crisis like COVID-19 with major disruptions in markets, transport and accessibility to inputs. Communities that rely heavily on the sale of fresh products and the buying of food will be more impacted by closed markets than communities that are more self-sufficient in their food. It will therefore be important to continue the support in agricultural production at the household level such as home gardens, small livestock raising and fish culture. It will also be more important to support activities

that mitigate some of the other impacts of COVID-19 on the overall agriculture value chain such as the below:

- Support the establishment of private input suppliers at village cluster level
  - Identify and connect farmers/ producers with alternative markets for fresh products
  - Support food preservation and processing activities
  - Short-term measures also include the provision of seed-kits, home gardening equipment, animal healthcare material and technical support through DAFO and local service providers.
- **Nutrition:** In view of the pre-existing high malnutrition rates, nutrition is a concern and nutrition sensitive and specific interventions may be required. Again, a more rigorous analysis on health and nutrition would require a more in-depth questionnaire on this topic. Certainly, nutritional awareness and the availability of nutritious food (e.g. meats, eggs) are important areas requiring further support.

# Annex

## Annex A: Letter from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry to FAO Approving the Survey



Lao People Democratic Republic  
Peace Independence Democracy Unity Prosperity

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry  
P.O. Box 811,  
Vientiane, Lao PDR

Ref.no.: 0286/MAF

Vientiane, date: 24 APR 2020

To: Mr Nasar Hayat,  
FAO Representative  
Vientiane, Lao PDR

Subject: Rapid assessment on the impact of COVID-19 on food security and livelihood in the  
Lao PDR

Dear Mr Nasar Hayat,

Referring to your letter dated 20 April 2020, regarding the above-mentioned subject, on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF), I would like to express an appreciation for FAO and WFP leadership on behalf of the UN Crisis Management Sub-group on Food Security and Livelihood to support MAF on this important assessment of the impact on food security and agriculture in Lao PDR.

Having gone to the framework of this assessment, I would like to recommend to roll out this assessment as soon as possible according to the timeframe that you suggested. I assign Department of Planning and Finance to continue to liaison in collaboration with various government counterparts at national and provincial levels to work with your team. Please note that the Government of Lao PDR is working with stakeholders involved, under extremely difficult and challenging circumstances, to come up with a comprehensive plan and will notify your office on regular basis when things evolve. Moreover, together with the result from this assessment, it is highly recommended a clear programme for further resources mobilizations, mainly for immediate response, recovery and preparedness, can be developed.

Although this pandemic has been making a great impact on our activities, I believe that together we could make all arrangements work for supporting the development of Lao PDR despite the most difficult circumstances we are currently facing. We will keep each other updated as much as we can in the coming days/weeks as the situation evolves. *BS*

Yours sincerely,



Phouang Parisak PRAVONGVIENGKHAM, PhD  
Deputy Minister  
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

Cc: - Mr. Somxay SISANONH, DG of Planning and Finance Department, MAF  
- Mr. Jan DELBAERE, Country Director, WFP

**Annex B: Notification from MAF to PAFOs Regarding the Survey**



**ສາທາລະນະລັດ ປະຊາທິປະໄຕ ປະຊາຊົນລາວ**  
**ສັນຕິພາບ ເອກະລາດ ປະຊາທິປະໄຕ ເອກະນາຍ ວັດທະນະຖາວອນ**

ກະຊວງກະສິກໍາ ແລະ ປ່າໄມ້  
 ຕໍ່ໜັງສືສະເໜີ

ເລກທີ: **0588** / ກກກ  
 ເອກສອນສູງວຽງຈັນ, ວັນທີ: **28 APR 2020**

**ໜັງສືສະເໜີ**

ຮຽນ: ທ່ານ ຫົວໜ້າພະແນກກະສິກໍາ ແລະ ປ່າໄມ້ ແຂວງ ທົ່ວປະເທດພາຍໃນສູງວຽງຈັນ.....  
 ເລື່ອງ: ຂໍຂໍ້ມູນຜົນກະທົບຈາກ ການລະບາດຂອງພະຍາດ COVID 19 ຕໍ່ການຄ້າປະກັນສະບຽງອາຫານ ແລະ ຊີວິດການເປັນຊີ ຂອງ ປະຊາຊົນໃນ ສປປ ລາວ

- ສິ່ງກາມ ສຳຄັນ ດາວໂລກ ການຄ້າ ແລະ ການສົ່ງເສີມ ຂອງ ຕົວຢ່າງກະຊວງ, ສະບັບເລກທີ 288/ກກ, ວຽງຈັນ ວັນທີ 29/06/2017.
- ສິ່ງກາມ ສຳຄັນ ຈາກ ສິ່ງກາມອາຫານ ແລະ ການສະໜອງ (FAO), ສະບັບເລກທີ 006/2020, ວຽງຈັນ ວັນທີ 20/04/2020.
- ສິ່ງກາມ ການສົ່ງເສີມ ແລະ ປ່າໄມ້ ຈາກ ກົມສະໜອງ ແລະ ການຄ້າ, ສະບັບເລກທີ 1679/ກກ, ວຽງຈັນ ວັນທີ 27/04/2020

ຕໍ່ໜັງສືສະເໜີ ກະຊວງກະສິກໍາ ແລະ ປ່າໄມ້ ຂໍໃຫ້ເປັນກຽດຮຽນລາຍງານມາທົ່ວທ່ານຊາບວ່າ: ສິ່ງກາມສະມາບການລະບາດຂອງ ພະຍາດ COVID-19 ຢູ່ ສປປ ລາວ ໃນປະຈຸບັນ, ເຖິງແມ່ນວ່າ ລັດຖະບານແມ່ນສາມາດຄວບຄຸມໄດ້ ແລະ ຈໍາເປນສູ້ຕົວເພື່ອແມ່ນບໍ່ມີການເພີ່ມຂຶ້ນໃນອາທິດສົ່ງຜ່ານມາ, ເຖິງຢ່າງໃດກໍຕາມ ສປປ ລາວ ອາດຈະປະເຊີນກັບຄວາມສ່ຽງທາງດ້ານການຄ້າປະກັນສະບຽງອາຫານ ແລະ ຊີວິດການເປັນຊີຂອງ ປະຊາຊົນ ພາຍໃນປະເທດ, ເນື່ອງຈາກ ຫຼາຍປະເທດ ໃນສະໂຫດອາຊີ ໄດ້ມີການຫຼຸດຜ່ອນການສົ່ງອອກ. ຄໍາສະເໜີດັ່ງກ່າວ, ມີນາຄຸຊ່ວມພິດທະພາ (ສິ່ງກາມຈັດຕັ້ງສາກົນ ເປັນຕົ້ນແມ່ນສິ່ງກາມ FAO ແລະ ສະຖາບັນການເງິນສາກົນຕ່າງໆ ແມ່ນໄດ້ມີຈາກຈໍານົງທີ່ຈະຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອ ສປປ ລາວ ຕໍ່ກັບຜົນກະທົບຈາກການລະບາດຂອງພະຍາດດັ່ງກ່າວ ໂດຍສະເພາະ ຂະແໜງການກະສິກໍາ ທີ່ອາດຈະໄດ້ຜົນກະທົບໃນໄລຍະຍາວ. ຊຶ່ງໃນການຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອດັ່ງກ່າວແມ່ນຕ້ອງໄດ້ມີການສຶກສາ ກ່ຽວກັບ ຜົນກະທົບ ແລະ ຄວາມຕ້ອງການໃນການເປັນຊີ ສະມາບການຜະລິດໃນຂະແໜງກະສິກໍາ ຊຶ່ງມາດາຍລະອຽດດັ່ງນີ້:

1. ລະບົບຕ້ອງໄດ້ການສະໜອງສະບຽງອາຫານ
2. ການປຸງແຕ່ງແລະ ຄວາມປອດໄພດ້ານອາຫານ
3. ການຄອບສະໜອງຄວາມຕ້ອງການດ້ານອາຫານ
4. ມາດຕະການສ້າງດ້ານການຄ້າ
5. ການສະໜັບສະໜູນຊາວກະສິກອນສະໜາດນ້ອຍ
6. ມາດຕະການຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອສິ່ງຄົມ (ການມີກາບຄອງສິ່ງຄົມ, ການໂອນເງິນຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອ ແລະ ຕື່ນໆ)

ເພື່ອເປັນການຄອບສະໜອງຂໍ້ມູນຜົນກະທົບຈາກພະຍາດ COVID19 ຕໍ່ຂະແໜງການກະສິກໍາ ແລະ ປ່າໄມ້ ໃຫ້ແກ່ສິ່ງກາມ FAO ແລະ ມີນາຄຸຊ່ວມພິດທະພາຕື່ນໆ ເພື່ອເປັນປ່ອນສິ່ງໃນການວາງແຜນເພື່ອສະໜອງກັບຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອໃຫ້ແກ່ ສປປ ລາວ ໃນການເປັນຊີຜົນກະທົບດັ່ງກ່າວ ຕາມລາຍລະອຽດທີ່ກຳນົດມາທ້າຍທ້າຍ, ຕໍ່ໜັງສືສະເໜີ ກະຊວງກະສິກໍາ ແລະ ປ່າໄມ້ ຈຶ່ງສະເໜີສິ່ງກໍາເນີນສະໜອງຂໍ້ມູນໃສ່ແບບຟອມສອບຖາມທີ່ໄດ້ອີກຕົວມາດ້ອມນີ້.

**ພາບແທດ:** ຊຶ່ງຈາກສໍາລັດການວິໄນຂໍ້ມູນໃສ່ໃນແບບຟອມແລ້ວ ກະລຸນາສົ່ງມາທົ່ວທ່ານຊາບ ແລະ ການເງິນ ບໍ່ໃຫ້ຄາຍວັນທີ 01/05/2020, (ໂທ: 021415358, ແມັກ: 021412343)

ດັ່ງນັ້ນ, ຈຶ່ງສະເໜີມາທົ່ວທ່ານເພື່ອສົ່ງເສີມວິນການຕາມເວລາທີ່ກຳນົດດ້ວຍ. ☺

ຫົວໜ້າຕໍ່ໜັງສືສະເໜີ ກະຊວງກະສິກໍາ ແລະ ປ່າໄມ້  
  
**ຄິແກ້ວ ສິ່ງມາວິງ**

ສັນຕິ:  
 - ມີນາຄຸຊ່ວມພິດທະພາ ຕໍ່ໜັງສື 1 ສະບັບ  
 - ພະແນກກະສິກໍາ ແລະ ປ່າໄມ້ ແຂວງ 1 ສະບັບ

## Annex C: Questionnaire

Joint Assessment on COVID-19 Impact on Agriculture and Food Security: Village and District Levels

### General information

Province Name: \_\_\_\_\_ |\_\_|\_\_| *CODE*

District Name: \_\_\_\_\_ |\_\_|\_\_|

Is your answer for entire district for from village where you live?:

\_\_\_\_\_

Village Name: \_\_\_\_\_ |\_\_|\_\_||\_\_||\_\_|\_\_||\_\_|

Select Location (optional)

Interviewer name : \_\_\_\_\_

Respondent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Respondent Title : \_\_\_\_\_

Please specify : \_\_\_\_\_

Respondent sex: |\_\_|\_\_|

Respondent age: |\_\_|\_\_|

Respondent ethnic: |\_\_|\_\_|

If other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of interview: |\_\_|\_\_| / |\_\_|\_\_| / 2020  
*Day Month*



<b>I. Agriculture activities</b>		
1.a	<b>a. Are agriculture activities going on as normal (land clearing, burning, ploughing, cultivation, harvesting etc.)?</b>	1 much reduced (by >50%) 2 reduced (by 10-50%) 3 no change ( $\pm 10\%$ ) 4 increased (by >10%) 99 Don't know
	<b>If much reduced or reduced, what is the main reason?</b>	
1.b	<b>b. Which agriculture sector is mostly impacted by COVID19?</b>	1 Rice cultivation 2 Horticulture 3 Cash crops 4 Small livestock 5 Large livestock 6 (Agro-) forestry 7 forestry 8 Other agriculture 99 Don't know
	<b>If other, please specify</b>	
1.c	<b>c. Is there an increase in animal diseases visible?</b>	1 Yes 0 No 99 Don't know
	<b>If yes, what is the name of disease</b>	1 Newcastle disease 2 Swine flu 3 Other 99 Don't know
	<b>If other, please specify</b>	
1.d	<b>d. Are there problems with supply of essential inputs; seeds, fertilizers, etc</b>	1 Major problems 2 Some problems 3 No problems 99 Don't know
1.e	<b>e. Are there particular issues with input suppliers &amp; transport services for provision of production inputs</b>	1 Yes 0 No 99 Don't know
	<b>describe short up to 2 main issues if there are any issues (one sentence per issue)</b>	

1.f	<b>f. Can external agricultural labour be accessed in the same way as before?</b>	1 much reduced (by >50%) 2 reduced (by 10-50%) 3 no change ( $\pm 10\%$ ) 4 increased (by >10%) 99 Don't know
1.g	<b>g. Can external agricultural equipment or working animals be accessed in the same way as before?</b>	1 much reduced (by >50%) 2 reduced (by 10-50%) 3 no change ( $\pm 10\%$ ) 4 increased (by >10%) Don't know
1.h	<b>h. What's the prospect for the next agricultural season (perception)?</b>	1 Very poor 2 Poor 3 Average 4 Good 5 Excellent 99 Don't know

II. Markets		
2.a	<b>a. Are markets still open?</b>	1 Yes 0 No 99 Don't know
2.b	<b>b. Has the size and volume of these markets changed?</b>	1 much reduced (by >50%) 2 reduced (by 10-50%) 3 no change ( $\pm 10\%$ ) 4 increased (by >10%) 99 Don't know
2.c	<b>c. Are mobile traders and middlemen still working/collecting/moving around ?</b>	1 much reduced (by >50%) 2 reduced (by 10-50%) 3 no change ( $\pm 10\%$ ) 4 increased (by >10%) 99 Don't know
2.d	<b>d. Is there a change in export visible?</b>	1 much reduced (by >50%) 2 reduced (by 10-50%) 3 no change ( $\pm 10\%$ ) 4 increased (by >10%) 99 Don't know

2.e	<b>e. Which commodities? Name up to 3 different commodities that are mainly affected by reduced local trade or export (banana, cardamom, beans, rubber, sugar cane, tea, coffee, cassava, cattle, pigs....)</b>	1 Rice 2 Horticulture product (bean, pumpkin, cucumber, kale, cabbage, etc.) 3 Cash crop 4 Non-timber forest product 5 Cattle 6 Poultry 7 Fish and aquatic animal 8 Others 99 Don't know
	<b>If other, please specify</b>	

III. Food availability		
3.a	<b>a. Is there a change of food availability in the villages? (requires calling a couple of villages)</b>	1 much reduced (by >50%) 2 reduced (by 10-50%) 3 no change ( $\pm 10\%$ ) 4 increased (by >10%) 99 Don't know
3.b	<b>b. Is there a change in food prices overall? (this also includes such items as oil, salt, sugar, fish sauce, MSG, etc.)</b>	1 much reduced (by >50%) 2 reduced (by 10-50%) 3 no change ( $\pm 10\%$ ) 4 increased (by >10%) 99 Don't know
3.c	<b>c. Which foods have seen price changes? Name up to 5 products which have increased most:.....</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Rice <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Pork <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Egg <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Fish <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Chicken <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Condiment <input type="checkbox"/> 7 Fruits <input type="checkbox"/> 8 Non-food products <input type="checkbox"/> 9 vegetables <input type="checkbox"/> 10 Others <input type="checkbox"/> 99 Don't know	
	<b>If other, please specify</b>	
3.d	<b>c. Which foods have seen price changes? Name up to 5 products which have decreased most:.....</b>	

	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Rice <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Pork <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Egg <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Fish <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Chicken <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Condiment <input type="checkbox"/> 7 Fruits <input type="checkbox"/> 8 Non-food products <input type="checkbox"/> 9 vegetables <input type="checkbox"/> 10 Others <input type="checkbox"/> 99 Don't know	
	<b>If other, please specify</b>	

IV. Physical access		
4.a	<b>a. Are there roadblocks &amp; permissions to travel within district, are there any 'no-go' areas?</b>	1 Yes 0 No 99 Don't know
	<b>If yes: Give a short answer and example:</b>	1 Connection between province to province 2 Connection between district to district 3 Connection between village to village 4 To and from province 5 To and from district 6 To and from village 7 To and from farm 8 Others 99 Don't know
	<b>If other, please specify</b>	
4.b	<b>b. Are there villages where they do not allow external people to enter?</b>	1 Yes 0 No 99 Don't know
	<b>If yes: Give a short answer and example:</b>	1 Most villages 2 Some villages 3 Villages along the main road 4 Villages near by intersection 5 Villages along internation border 6 Villages where vVietnamese traders used to come 7 Others 99 Don't know

	<b>If other, please specify</b>	
4.c	<b>c. Are there contracted crops that are not sold?</b>	1 Yes 0 No 99 Don't know
	<b>If yes: Give a short answer and example:</b>	1 Rice 2 Horticulture product (bean, pumpkin, cucumber, kale, cabbage, etc.) 3 Cash crop 4 Others 99 Don't know
	<b>If other, please specify</b>	

<b>V. Employment / income</b>		
5.a	<b>a. Are there changes in labour / employment sector?</b>	1 More unemployed (> 10%) 2 More unemployed ( 1-10%) 3 no change 4 more employment 99 Don't know
5.b	<b>b. If less work, does this affect more men or women?</b>	1 Men 2 Same 3 Women 99 Don't know
5.c	<b>c. Please describe the people affected by recent unemployment (type of skills, ethnic groups, returning migrant workers, ....):</b>	
5.d	<b>d. Can produce from farmers be sold like before?</b>	1 Yes 0 No 99 Don't know
	<b>If No: Any change in quantities:</b>	1 more 2 less 99 Don't know
	<b>Any change in price:</b>	1 more 2 less 99 Don't know
	<b>Any change in income:</b>	1 more 2 less 99 Don't know
	<b>Give a short answer and examples of products:</b>	

5.e	<b>e. Are there returning Lao workers from neighboring countries?</b>	1 Many 2 Same 3 Less 4 don't have migrant worker 99 Don't know
5.f	<b>f. Is there a change in remittances received by households?</b>	1 Many 2 Same 3 Less 4 don't have migrant worker 99 Don't know

<b>VI. Access and consumption of food</b>		
6.a	<b>a. Can all household access the same foods as before?</b>	1 Yes 0 No 99 Don't know
	<b>If no, what are the reasons?</b>	1 Not enough money 2 Unavailability of employment during COVID-19 pandemic 3 No incomes 4 Price increase 5 Others 99 Don't know
	<b>If other, please specify</b>	
6.b	<b>b. If not, which foods are more difficult to obtain?</b>	1 Rice 2 Pork 3 Egg 4 Fish 5 Other aquatic animals 6 Chicken 7 Wild animals 8 Fruits 9 Horticulture product (bean, pumpkin, cucumber, kale, cabbage, etc.) 10 Wild vegetable 11 Others 99 Don't know
	<b>If other, please specify</b>	

6.c	<b>c. Which types of households have more problems?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Women headed households</li> <li>2 Poorer households</li> <li>3 Ethnic group</li> <li>4 Family with non-farm sector</li> <li>5 Family with daily labor as main incomes source</li> <li>6 Family without labor productive age</li> <li>7 Others</li> <li>99 Don't know</li> </ul>
	<b>Any other description of those who have more problems accessing food?</b>	
6.d	<b>d. Are there different foods that are now accessed to cope with the situation?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Yes</li> <li>0 No</li> <li>99 Don't know</li> </ul>
	<b>If yes: Give a short answer and example of foods:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Animal raising in the HH</li> <li>2 Horticulture product (bean, pumpkin, cucumber, kale, cabbage, etc.)</li> <li>3 Hunting</li> <li>4 Collect animals and insects from rice field</li> <li>5 Wild vegetables and bamboo</li> <li>6 Available dried food</li> <li>7 Others</li> <li>99 Don't know</li> </ul>
	<b>If other, please specify</b>	
6.d	<b>e. Has there been any food- aid provided?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Yes</li> <li>0 No</li> <li>99 Don't know</li> </ul>
	<b>If other, please specify</b>	
6.f	<b>f. Is there a change in the nutritious value of what is consumed?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Yes</li> <li>0 No</li> <li>99 Don't know</li> </ul>
	<b>If yes: Give a short explanation:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Unable to consume 5 food groups</li> <li>2 Less available meats in the market</li> <li>3 Price increase</li> <li>4 Others</li> <li>99 Don't know</li> </ul>
	<b>If other, please specify</b>	

6.g	<b>g. Is there a change in the food consumed by pregnant women, breast feeding mothers and small children?</b>	1 Yes 0 No 99 Don't know
	<b>If yes: Give a short explanation:</b>	1 Unable to consume 5 food groups 2 Less available meats in the market 3 Price increase 4 Others 99 Don't know
	<b>If other, please specify</b>	

<b>VII. Health / nutrition</b>		
7.a	<b>a Is there a change visible in overall health conditions in the district?</b>	1 Yes 0 No 99 Don't know
	<b>If yes: Give a short answer and examples:</b>	1 Having fever 2 Having flu 3 Having cough 4 Others 99 Don't know
	<b>If other, please specify</b>	
7.b	<b>b Are there any signs or evidence of malnutrition?</b>	1 Yes 0 No 99 Don't know
	<b>If other, please specify</b>	

<b>VIII. Any other striking observations?</b>		
8.a	<b>a. Other relevant information for agriculture and food security? Give a short answer and examples</b>	



## Annex D: Number of Respondents Per Province and District

No	Province	District	At district level	At village level	Respondent by district	Respondent by province
1	Vientiane Capital	Chanthabuly		3	3	10
2		Sisattanak		4	4	
3		Xaysetha		1	1	
4		Xaythany		2	2	
5	Phongsaly	Boon neua	5		5	131
6		Boontay	5	21	26	
7		Khua	5	21	26	
8		May	5	16	21	
9		Nhot ou	1	9	10	
10		Phongsaly	9	10	19	
11		Samphanh	4	20	24	
12	Louangnamtha	Long	7	9	16	48
13		Nalae	4	3	7	
14		Namtha	1	24	25	
15	Oudomxai	Beng	5	2	7	80
16		Hoon	4	10	14	
17		La	3	13	16	
18		Namor	5	9	14	
19		Parkbeng	6	9	15	
20		Xay	7	7	14	
21	Bokeo	Huoixai	1		1	23
22		Meung	5	17	22	
23	Louangphabang	Luangprabang	5	2	7	51
24		Ngoi	5	11	16	
25		Park xeng	4	1	5	
26		Phonthong	7	15	22	
27		Phonxay	1		1	
28	Houaphan	Huameuang	4	20	24	73
29		Kuan	3	7	10	
30		Xamneua	7	7	14	
31		Xamtay	4	10	14	
32		Xon	4	7	11	
33	Xaignabouly	Botene	1		1	13
34		Kenethao	1		1	
35		Khop	1	2	3	
36		Ngeun	1		1	
37		Thongmyxay	1		1	
38		Xayabury	1	3	4	
39		Xaysathan	1		1	
40		Xienghone	1		1	

No	Province	District	At district level	At village level	Respondent by district	Respondent by province
41	Xiengkhouang	Kham	5	21	26	74
42		Khoune	3	10	13	
43		Nonghed	5	20	25	
44		Pek	3	7	10	
45	Vientiane	Mad	1		1	32
46		Meun		1	1	
47		Phonhong	4	17	21	
48		Thoulakhom		2	2	
49		Vangvieng	1		1	
50		Xanakharm	3	3	6	
51	Bolikhamxai	Xaychamphone	5	7	12	12
52	Khammouan	Hinboon		1	1	38
53		Nhommalath	3	11	14	
54		Thakhek	8	15	23	
55	Savannakhet	Atsaphone	1		1	22
56		Nong	5	3	8	
57		Outhoomphone	1		1	
58		Phine	2	6	8	
59		Sepone	2	2	4	
60	Salavan	Khongxedone	1	7	8	125
61		Lao ngarm	5	15	20	
62		Samuoi	5	21	26	
63		Saravane	5	18	23	
64		Ta oi	5	21	26	
65		Toomlarn	4	18	22	
66	Champasack	Bachiangchaleunsook	5	20	25	27
67		Pakse	2		2	
68	Sekong	Dakcheung	5	18	23	92
69		Kaleum	6	15	21	
70		Lamarm	4	17	21	
71		Thateng	5	22	27	
72	Attapeu	Phouvong	8	42	50	147
73		Samakkhixay	10	32	42	
74		Sanamxay	7	20	27	
75		Sanxay	6	21	27	
76		Xaysetha	1		1	
77	Xaisomboon	Anouvong	7	2	9	9
	<b>Total</b>		<b>277</b>	<b>730</b>	<b>1007</b>	<b>1,007</b>

**World Food Programme Lao PDR**

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[www.wfp.org/countries/laos](http://www.wfp.org/countries/laos)