



WFP Lao PDR Country Brief

October 2020

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES



Operational Context

Lao PDR is a least developed country, ranking 140 out of 189 countries in the 2018 Human Development Index. It has one of the lowest population densities in Asia. 23 percent of the population lives below the national poverty line (USD 1.25/day), with a GDP per capita of USD 2,542 (World Bank 2018). The country is ranked 110 out of 162 countries in the Gender Inequality Index 2018. While Lao PDR has managed to reduce the proportion of hungry poor to 23 percent, the 2019 Global Hunger Index still rates hunger levels as “serious”.

Climate change is a key challenge facing rural livelihoods, and the country is vulnerable to climate change due to its low adaptability and its dependence on climate-sensitive natural resources. Changing climate patterns, combined with poor access to both markets and diverse livelihoods, further worsen the situation in remote upland areas, where 25 percent of households are food insecure.

WFP has been present in Lao PDR since 1975.



Population: **6.5 million**

Human Development Index: **140 out of 189**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

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

In Numbers

US\$ 3.3 million six-month (Nov 2020 – April 2021) net funding requirements

222.7 mt of food distributed

109,375 people assisted

49%



51%



Operational Updates

- As part of the COVID-19 response, WFP is providing food assistance to returning migrant labourers in six COVID-19 quarantine centres in Lao PDR through partnerships with World Vision International and the Swiss Red Cross. During October, WFP provided over 56,877 nutritious meals to a total of 3,380 beneficiaries (1,652 women) at a total cost of USD 108,148.
- During October, WFP delivered trainings to 35 community rice bank management committees in Sanamxai and Kaleum districts of southern Laos on reducing post-harvest losses through the use of hermetic rice storage bags. The airtight storage bags protect grains and seeds after harvest against insect attacks for up to 24 months.
- In partnership with Aquatic Development Co. Ltd. (ADC), WFP provided fish farming training to 18 representatives from Provincial Education and Sports Services, as well as District Agricultural and Forest Services from Phongsaly, Luangnamtha, Oudomxay and Luangprabang. These are locations in which WFP is supporting selected schools to establish fish ponds to diversify school meals and generate income. The training taught the participants basic fish farming knowledge and introduced them to the fish farming life cycle, spanning from breeding to harvesting. The participants also visited model fish farms supported by ADC in these areas and practiced hands-on activities such as fish egg collection, feed calculation, fingerlings estimation, fish breeding and nursery. This training will improve the know-how of the local government officials to provide technical and supervisory support to the schools with fish ponds.
- WFP completed the procurement of tablet computers installed with monitoring software for the school meals programme digital monitoring initiatives launched in September. In October, WFP conducted refresher workshops on digital monitoring with these tablets for assigned officials from the Ministry of Education and Sports to prepare for their training of trainer missions to provincial and district education services. The local education officials will then be tasked with training the school directors and teachers to use these tablets to monitor their school meals programmes.

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Further information: www.wfp.org/countries/lao-peoples-democratic-republic

Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Nov 2020 – Apr 2021 Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
88.5 m	80 m	3.3 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Schoolchildren in remote rural areas have sustainable access to food by 2021.

Focus area: Root causes

Activities:

- Provide policy support, technical assistance and transfer of capacities
- Accelerate the implementation of the Government's plan of action of the school meals programme
- Support a national process for community and Government hand-over of the schools.

Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

Strategic Outcome 2: Stunting levels among children under 2 in provinces with high levels of malnutrition meet national levels by 2025.

Focus area: Root causes

Activities:

- Provide technical assistance for evidence-based policy dialogue
- Stimulate access to local specialized nutritious food for children aged 6 to 23 months
- Develop a social behaviour change communication and establish farmer nutrition schools.

Strategic Result 4: Food systems are sustainable

Strategic Outcome 3: Vulnerable households in climate-sensitive districts are more resilient to seasonal and long-term shocks and stresses.

Focus area: Resilience

Activities:

- Build community resilience through the creation of productive assets and sustainable livelihood opportunities.

Strategic Result 5: Developing countries have strengthened capacities to implement the SDGs

Strategic Outcome 4: National and local governance institutions are strengthened to improve service delivery, especially in hard-to-reach areas, by 2025.

Focus area: Root causes

Activities:

- Invest in national capacity for food and nutrition security governance
- Enable communities to lead and own their food and nutrition security solutions
- Enhance government capacity at all levels to prepare for and efficiently respond to natural disasters.

- WFP supported the organization of a workshop to review the Green Box materials and the related teacher's manual. The Green Box is an educational toolkit for sharing nutrition, climate change and WASH knowledge to primary school students. This workshop allowed teacher representatives to give feedback on these pedagogical materials for which WFP led the designs on.
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture has awarded a USD 25 million McGovern-Dole grant to WFP to implement a school feeding program which will help strengthen the capacities of the host government and communities for a smooth, coordinated transition of all WFP-supported schools into the national school meals programme by 2025, in line with government plans. The proposed programme will expand school feeding to new schools to enable the Government to reach the last 18 priority districts identified by the Government as not having school feeding programs, while creating structures and systems within the Government and communities to ensure sustainability after the project ends.

Story from the field



Mr. Khao receiving cash assistance. Photo: © WFP/Sorraphong Pasomsouk

WFP, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, funded by the Government of France, is implementing a cash assistance project for resilient recovery of 35 flood-affected communities in southern Laos. The project has started cash distributions to villagers in partnership with the Lao Development Bank. Mr. Khao from Ling village says: "I'm very happy. This money comes at the right time, this LAK 300,000 (approx. USD 32) will be enough to buy three dozen books and two pairs of shoes for my children to go to school." Khao has seven children, with four of them in primary school age.

Donors

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