



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES



WFP Lao PDR Country Brief November 2020

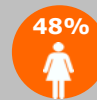
In Numbers

WFP
SAYS
NO to
GENDER
BASED
VIOLENCE

US\$ 1.11 million six-month (Dec 2020 – May 2021) net funding requirements

451.9 mt of food assistance distributed

140,081 people assisted



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**

Operational Updates

- WFP received US\$ 2.3 million additional funding from the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 in 120 new villages in the 12 districts where WFP implements its agriculture for nutrition project. WFP will strengthen local food production through scaling up pro-poor nutrition-sensitive agriculture support systems.
- In partnership with Big Brother Mouse, Plan International and Room to Read, WFP completed the distribution of 145,418 books to schoolchildren in 456 schools in November. The provision of books is part of WFP’s literacy promotion activities integrated into the school feeding package, which aim to fill the literacy gap in areas with weaker education and to help children from ethnic minorities to better learn the Lao language.
- WFP and the SUN Business Network supported the National Nutrition Center in opening a contest for the food fortification logo, to engage the public and create awareness on the concept of food fortification.
- WFP continued to distribute food to returning migrant labourers in seven quarantine centres in Lao PDR through partnerships with World Vision International and the Swiss Red Cross. During November, WFP provided over 32,089 nutritious meals to a total of 2,674 beneficiaries (1,310 women) at a total commodity voucher cost of US\$ 57,631.
- WFP supported a training of trainers in the two northern provinces of Oudomxay and Phongsaly, in villages where 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.

Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Dec 2020 – May 2021 Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
88.53 m	85.76 m	1.11 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.

Donors

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

- WFP provided financial and human resources to support the Government in conducting a flood impact assessment in Savannakhet, Saravane and Sekong Provinces. The assessment used KoBo Toolbox as a tool to collect data. WFP provided 15 smartphones for data collection and conducted a training on how to use the system for all government staff before the field work.
- WFP completed data collection in 30 communities across Oudomxay, Saravan, Sekong and Attapeu Provinces to generate evidence on food assistance-for-asset activities in Lao PDR. The data will ensure that the design of WFP's future interventions are impactful, sustainable, cost-effective and maximize benefits to beneficiaries.
- In partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, WFP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) held an inception meeting for a French-funded project on cash assistance and resilient recovery of flood affected communities in Southern Lao PDR. The objectives of the meeting were to discuss the coordination mechanism for the project and jointly tackle priority topics including community asset identification and unexploded ordnance risks.

In November, the Association of Lao Garment Industry became the SUN Business Network's strategic partner. This partnership is essential for the promotion of workforce nutrition, in order to reach women at reproductive age, a group essential for enhancing the country's nutrition markers. WFP and the SUN Business Network continue to cooperate in producing nutrition training material.



COVID-19 and 16 Days awareness material displayed outside the WFP Country Office in Vientiane. Photo: © WFP/ Ildiko Hamos