



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

WFP Lao PDR Country Brief October 2021

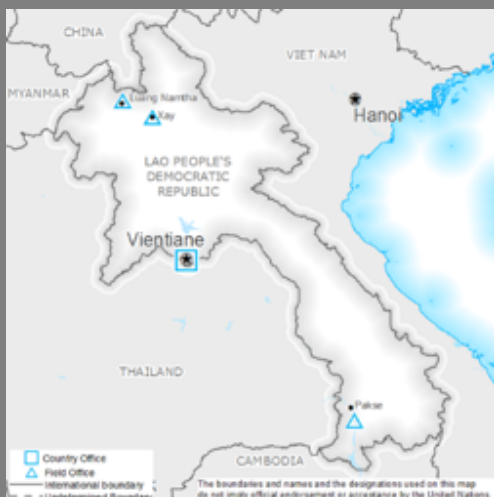


Photo: World Vision International Laos

Operational Context

Lao PDR is a least developed country, ranking 137 out of 189 countries in the 2020 Human Development Index. It has one of the lowest population densities in Asia. 23 percent of the population lives below the national poverty line (US\$ 1.25/day), with a GDP per capita of USD 2,534.9 (World Bank 2019). The country is ranked 137 out of 162 countries in the Gender Inequality Index 2020. While the poverty rate in Lao PDR more than halved in the past two decades, the 2020 Global Hunger Index still rates hunger levels as “serious”.

Climate change is a key challenge facing rural population, and the country is vulnerable to climate change due to its low adaptability and high 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: **137 out of 189**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

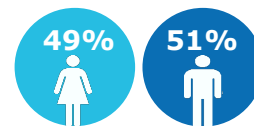
Chronic malnutrition: **33% of children between 6-59 months**

In Numbers

23.6 mt of food assistance distributed

US\$ 270,000 six months (Nov 2021 - April 2022) net funding requirements

26,394 people assisted
in October 2021



Operational Updates

- WFP continued providing unconditional food assistance to returning migrant labourers in quarantine centres across six provinces in Lao PDR. Through partnerships with World Vision International and the Swiss Red Cross, the food assistance has reached 1,976 people (980 women), worth a total value of USD 126,733 for October. In November, WFP will expand the assistance to cover two more provinces, Khammouan and Luangprabang.
- WFP has reached a partnership agreement with World Vision International to implement the “Enhancement of Food Supply and the Rehabilitation of Agricultural Infrastructure in Floods Affected Areas” project in Savannakhet Province. The project will target 27,700 people in 46 vulnerable communities, and aims to provide livelihood recovery and build long term resilience by creating or rehabilitating community infrastructure damaged by natural disasters in 2020.
- As part of the “Improved food and nutrition security in Northern Lao PDR” project, supported by the French Government, WFP, together with the Government of Lao PDR, organised a three-day training of trainers (ToT) session on the delivery of Farmer Nutrition School modules. The 23 participant trainers followed on to train the nominated 173 village facilitators (129 females), from 55 out of 64 target villages to carry out the farmer nutrition schools in their respective villages. Farmer nutrition schools will support the promotion of positive nutrition behaviours and enhance dietary diversity of vulnerable groups including pregnant and lactating women, caregivers with children under 5 years of age and adolescent girls. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the training for the remaining villages has been postponed.
- As part of the Agriculture for Nutrition programme, WFP provided training to 36 individuals (14 female, 11 from different government offices), who form part of nutrition committees in two districts in Xiengkhouang Province. The training focused on their roles and responsibilities to support nutrition interventions, in line with the National Nutrition Action Plan. WFP also disbursed 1,229 garden and livestock grants to households who completed the Farmer Nutrition Schools across the four target provinces. The grants aim to improve household food production, enhance household nutritious food availability and diversity.

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Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
92.83 m	95.17 m	0.27 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: School children 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.

- Following the master training of trainers that took place in September, the master trainers went on to roll out the training on the cash-based transfer guidelines of the National School Meal Programme to the secondary trainers. The secondary trainers are provincial and district education officials from the seven provinces, where schools are transitioning to the National School Meal Programme. WFP also supported an extra workshop as a refresher for officials from Luangnamtha Province, where schools were handed over in 2019.
- In areas where lockdown or travel restrictions were not applied and schools remained open, WFP continued to work with partners to assist literacy promotion activities in October. In Salavan Province, Plan International completed visits to 56 schools and in Phongsaly Province, Big Brother Mouse visited 230 schools to help improve literacy activities and collect data on the implementation of these activities.

Story from the field



Keo and Koudsaphone with a school friend. Photo: © WFP Laos/Peo Panyanouvong

Koudsaphone and Keo are best friends, sitting in the same school bench in Chalarmkao Village Primary School, in Lao PDR's southern province of Sekong.

Koudsaphone was born with disabilities and did not start school with boys his age. When his parents heard about school lunches being served at the local school, they enrolled Koudsaphone so he could socialize, learn and enjoy a daily nutritious meal. Since they were working in the fields all day, bringing their son to school was a problem – until Keo offered a solution. Every day, he carries his best friend to school and back home again, on his back.

"Keo and I really like school," Koudsaphone says. "We love reading, and our favourite part of the day is when we have math lesson, and of course also the food we get for lunch."

Donors

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