

Evaluation of BASELINE STUDY FOR USDA McGOVERN-DOLE GRANT FOR WFP SCHOOL FEEDING in Laos from 2020 to 2025



Decentralized Evaluation Terms of Reference

WFP Laos Country Office

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1. Background

1. These terms of reference (ToR) were prepared by the WFP CO Laos based upon an initial document review and consultation with stakeholders and following a standard template. The purpose of these terms of reference is to provide key information to stakeholders about the evaluation, to guide the evaluation team and to specify expectations during the various phases of the evaluation.

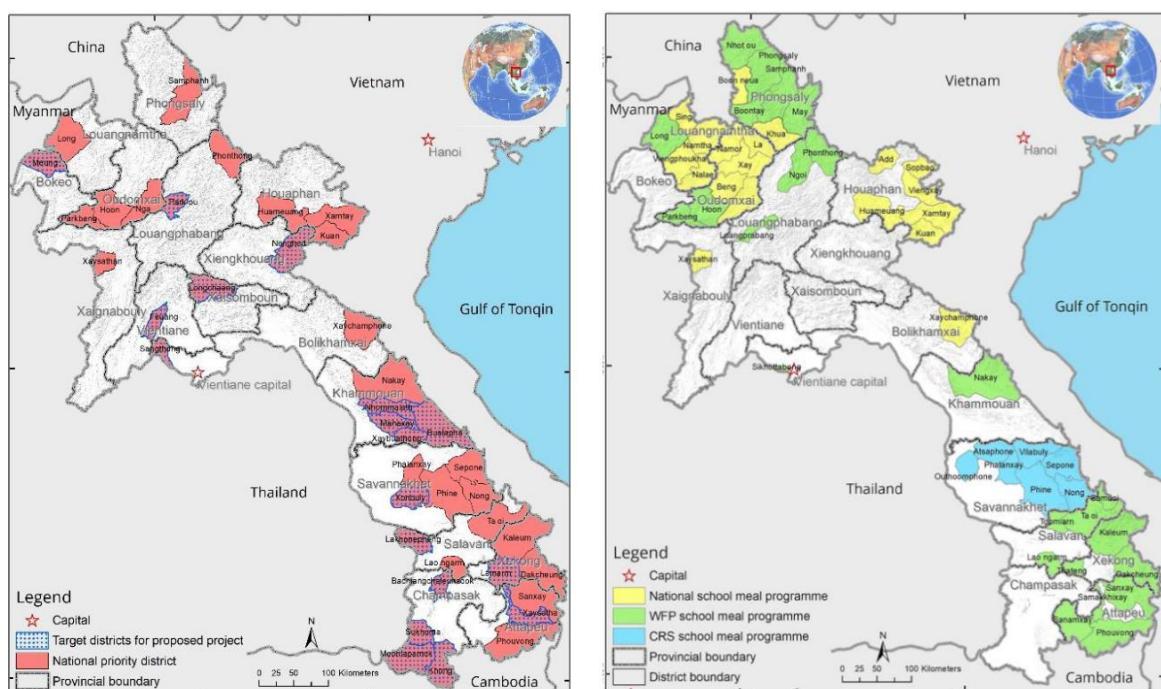
1.1. INTRODUCTION

2. These terms of reference are for a baseline study of the FY 2020-USDA McGovern-Dole project in support of WFP's School Feeding Program (SFP) activities in Lao PDR, to be evaluated from the period of June to November 2021 (inception phase to submission of the final report), in order to be able to critically and objectively assess performance of the project for the purposes of learning and accountability. This evaluation is commissioned by WFP Laos CO and will cover the period from June 2021 to November 2021. The TOR aims to 1) provide key learning themes, project scope, and other key information to guide the evaluation team on conducting the evaluation; and 2) to involve stakeholders early on, keeping them informed of progress, and providing opportunities for inputs to secure their support and commitment.
3. The purpose of the baseline study will serve several critical purposes: (1) confirm indicator selection and targets and establish baseline values for all performance indicators included in the USDA McGovern-Dole FY2020 School Feeding Program, (2) be used for ongoing project monitoring activities to regularly measure activity outputs and performance indicators for lower-level results (i.e. output level), (3) measure performance indicators for McGovern-Dole's two strategic objectives as well as the highest-level results (outcomes) that feed into the strategic objectives as part of the mid-term and final evaluations, (4) provide a situational analysis before the project begins which will inform project implementation and will provide important context necessary for the mid-term and final evaluation to assess the project's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact.
4. The evaluation process within WFP will be managed by an evaluation manager appointed by WFP Lao PDR's Country Director. This evaluation manager will be the main focal point for day-to-day contact during the evaluation period. An external independent firm (evaluation team) will be contracted to carry out the actual evaluation and will appoint their own evaluation team leader and managers.
5. This evaluation will provide an evidence-based, independent assessment of the results of the project to enable WFP CO, government, and Cooperating Partners (CPs) to demonstrate results and learning to feed into future school feeding initiatives, in particular the government-led and managed National School Meals Program (NSMP), while also making it possible to quantify the impacts of the project.
6. WFP Lao PDR has been awarded \$25.0 million to implement a McGovern-Dole-funded school feeding program in Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR). The five-year project closely aligns with the priorities of the Government of Lao PDR and the US Government on school feeding, nutrition and education, and will help to strengthen the capacities of the host government and communities in school feeding to enable a smooth, coordinated transition of all WFP-supported schools into the National School Meals Program (NSMP) in 2025, in line with government plans. The program, building on the successes and lessons learned in the previous McGovern-Dole-funded programs in Lao PDR, will expand school feeding to new schools to enable the Government of Lao PDR to reach the last of its priority districts for education while creating the structures and systems within the Government and communities to ensure sustainability after the program ends. The Government's vision of expanding school feeding to the remaining priority districts and integrating them into the NSMP are clearly articulated in national development plans and strategies. This project, implemented in partnership with Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), will provide a package of school health and nutrition activities, including school meals, water access, hygiene promotion, literacy, community mobilization, school feeding-related infrastructure investments, agricultural support, policy support, and health and nutrition awareness activities, to reach approximately 65,550 pre-primary and primary school-aged children in 18 districts in Laos.

1.2. CONTEXT

7. Lao PDR has progressed steadily across multiple economic, health and nutrition, education, and poverty indicators over the past three decades, and the country aims to graduate from its status as one of 47 Least Developed Countries (LDCs) by 2024. Between 2004–2006 and 2016–2018, undernourishment in Laos declined from 27 percent to 16.5 percent. Under-five mortality also halved between 1995 and 2015. More children are attending school, with the proportion of children over age 6 who have never attended school falling from 38 percent in 1995 to 13 percent in 2015. They are also attending school earlier, with national enrolment rates of 3–4 year-olds increasing from 37 percent in the 2015/16 school year to 50 percent in 2019/20. As of the 2019/20 school year, 82 percent of all 5-year-olds attended school nationally, with equal numbers of boys and girls.
8. Yet despite the considerable progress, there is still far to go to tackle poverty and malnutrition, and improve education, water access and hygiene and sanitation. Nearly 19 percent of the population live on under \$1.90 a day. Overall, 33 percent of children under age 5 are stunted, 21.1 percent are underweight, and 44.1 percent suffer from anaemia. For school-aged children (ages 5–19), 9 percent are thin or severely thin – on par with Indonesia and the Philippines (10 percent). Over four out of five households had source water contaminated with *E. coli*.
9. The country has experienced unequal growth, with large disparities between the more remote, upland provinces and lowland provinces, and between ethnicities. There are 49 officially recognized ethnicities, classified into four ethno-linguistic families: Lao-Tai, Hmong-Mien, Sino-Tibetan, and Mon-Khmer. The majority Lao-Tai population has a 75.7 percent literacy rate, while literacy among the other ethno-linguistic groups is below 40 percent. Only 19.3 percent of Mon-Khmer children attend upper secondary school or higher.
10. To address these disparities, the Government of Lao PDR (GoL) has approved a package of complementary national strategies and plans, which aim to ensure that economic growth is accompanied by improvements in health and nutrition, education, and human capital. Key strategies include the 8th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2016–2020), the draft 9th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2021–2025), the Education and Sports Sector Development Plan (2016–2020 and 2021–2025), National Nutrition Strategy to 2025 and Plan of Action (2016–2020) and National Social Protection Strategy 2030.
11. School feeding is seen as a key component of these strategies and a platform for addressing hunger and nutrition awareness as well as increasing attendance and learning outcomes. The Nutrition Strategy/Plan of Action and Social Protection Strategy specifically highlight the National School Meals Program as a core instrument to improve diets and nutrient intake.
1. School feeding context
12. With nearly 90 percent of children of primary school age attending primary schools, the Government of Lao PDR clearly sees schools as a key platform through which to deliver an essential integrated package of health and nutrition services to children.
13. School feeding has gained importance among government priorities for its role in increasing attendance, educational outcomes and improving the nutritional status of school-aged children. The 8th National Socio-Economic Development Plan attributes increased attendance and lower drop-out rates to school lunch and food supplements, among other initiatives (p.32–33), and highlights the importance of promoting a diverse diet and eating behavior among children through school feeding, as well as micronutrient supplementation and deworming (p.34). The 2014 Policy on Promoting School Lunch states as one of its objectives, “instil good values and principles of proper nutrition and good health practices with children acting as agents of change at home and in the communities” (p.4–5).
14. The first school feeding program (SFP) in the country began in 2002, when WFP began distributing a mid-morning snack of corn-soya blend (CSB) to students in the three northern provinces of Phongsaly, Luangnamtha and Oudomxai. In 2012, WFP carried out a “Home Grown School Feeding” cash-based pilot project in Oudxomai and Phongsaly provinces. The Government took over the pilot schools and used the pilot to design their own model, which became the cash-based NSMP. With funding from the World Bank, the NSMP gradually expanded to cover over 24,600 students in 306 schools across 10 districts by the end of 2018.

15. Since 2014, WFP has moved away from simply providing school meals towards capacity strengthening of schools, communities and the Government, with the aim for an eventual handover of the school feeding program to the GoL, in line with WFP's global School Feeding Strategy 2020–2030, which envisions a shift from direct implementation to supporting the transition and scale up of national programs.
16. In May 2018, WFP and the MoES signed a School Feeding Handover Plan, which outlined a phased approach to the handover of SFPs. WFP-supported programs in the first 515 schools in nine districts were handed over under the plan in July 2019, and WFP will hand over programs in the remaining 925 schools as scheduled in mid-2021. Catholic Relief Services (CRS), which began implementing the Learning and Engaging All in Primary School (LEAPS) program in 2012 and provides school feeding in 349 schools, is currently in discussions with MoES for the handover of these schools and successful transition into the NSMP.
17. The successful first phase of the handover in mid-2019 was made possible through close engagement with the Government and communities, and was the culmination of support to institutional frameworks, legislation, school meals management and school infrastructure. Following the agreement in 2018, a School Meals Handover Committee within MoES – as well as committees at the provincial and district levels - were established. WFP also supported the development of several decrees and legislation, including a Prime Minister's Decree to integrate school feeding into the national budget (currently in process) and guidelines on school meals implementation at the national, provincial, district and community levels. For the previous school year (2019-2020), the Government re-allocated funds to provide cash to the 821 schools that were part of the NSMP, representing the first ever domestic budget allocation to school feeding.



Figures 1 & 2. MoES 40 priority education districts (left) and current coverage of school feeding programs (right).

18. Today in Lao PDR, nearly 25 percent of all primary and pre-primary school children (approximately 205,000 children in 2,100 schools) receive school lunch through SFPs implemented by the GoL (through the NSMP), WFP and CRS. WFP, the largest provider of school meals in Laos, supports 88,700 pre-primary and primary school students in 925 schools across 23 districts in 8 provinces. MoES supports 76,300 students in 821 schools in 10 districts through the NSMP. CRS supports 40,000 children in 349 schools across seven districts in Savannakhet Province. The local non-profit association Education for Development Foundation (EDF) provides meals to 15 schools in Khammouane Province under the WFP program. In addition, the Humana People to People organization supports two schools in Borikhamxay Province.

19. The current SFPs offer a mix of in-kind food commodities, paired with awareness raising and community activities, as well as cash disbursements. The Government's NSMP provides a cash budget of \$0.09 child/day (LAK 800), used by schools for the local procurement of food items. Students in schools supported by WFP receive a daily lunch consisting of rice, lentils, canned fish, and fortified vegetable oil through USDA and other donor funds. CRS provides a similar food basket. The in-kind food provided is supplemented by fresh produce (meat, fish, eggs and green leafy vegetables or root vegetables) donated by parents and the community to provide more nutritious and diversified lunches for the children. WFP also provides take-home rations of rice for cooks and storekeepers, once per semester, as an incentive.
20. As the Government highlights in its National Social Protection Strategy 2030, the NSMP, along with cash transfers to the most vulnerable, is central to developing the first level of a national social protection system, e.g., the social protection "floor".
21. Current annual resources for School Feeding Programs (NSMP and McGovern-Dole) amount to approximately \$12 million. This includes approximately \$830,000 from the Government for the NSMP in Budget 2020, a negotiated increase from \$550,000 allocated for the 2019-2020 school year. This also includes multi-year funding from McGovern-Dole for WFP and CRS school feeding programs, totalling approximately \$27 million for each organization over a 4-5-year period.

Health and nutrition

22. Despite progress in recent years, Lao PDR still has some of the poorest health and nutrition indicators in South-East Asia. The country has the highest under-5 child mortality rate in the region, and at 16.5 percent, the prevalence of undernourishment in the population in Lao PDR is higher than any other South-East Asian country with the exception of Timor-Leste. Stunting among children under 5 is prevalent among all income levels, from 48 percent for the poorest quintile ("very high" according to World Health Organization (WHO) classification) to 13.9 percent for the richest (medium, WHO classification). Over 30 percent of children under 5 from the poorest quintile and 25 percent from the second-poorest quintile were underweight
23. It is clear that there is a need for further education and awareness raising about nutrition and the need for diverse, healthy diets – not only in the first 1,000 days but throughout childhood and adolescence to ensure that children grow up to realize their potential.

Agriculture and smallholder farmers

24. Agriculture and rural livelihoods provide income to more than two-thirds of the population in Lao PDR, although only 4 percent of the total area in Laos is arable – the smallest amount of any country in Southeast Asia – due to its mountainous terrain. Most of this land is devoted to paddy production, with glutinous (sticky) rice making up almost 80 percent of rice production.
25. Changing climate patterns combined with poor access to both markets and diverse livelihoods worsen the situation in remote upland areas, where 25 percent of households are food insecure. In addition, Lao PDR faces limited technical knowledge and know-how in climate-smart agriculture, particularly in climate information management and analysis, technical approaches to agricultural extension with a focus on climate hazards, and community-based approaches for agricultural and rural development

Education and literacy

26. There are 8,854 primary schools (public and private) and 3,432 pre-primary schools in Lao PDR. Compulsory education lasts nine years in the country, from Grade 1 (G1) through G9. When accessible, children typically attend pre-primary school from ages 3-5, enter primary school at age 6 and attend Grades 1-5 until age 10. There are four grades in lower secondary school (G6-G9), and three grades in upper secondary school (G10-G12). The school year generally runs for 175 days from September to June. Enrolment reached 770,659 students in public and private primary schools in the 2018/19 school year, and 66 percent of new entrants in G1 had pre-school experience. On average, there are fewer than 100 students per primary school in Lao PDR, which adds to the challenge and expense to reach each school in the country.

27. While significant progress has been made across all levels of the Lao education structure in previous decades, literacy remains a significant challenge with many students lacking the basic literacy skills necessary to engage in classroom learning. One assessment showed that over 30 percent of 2nd graders could not read a single word, and among those who could read, 57 percent did not understand what they had just read. This issue is most pronounced in early grades where students first begin to fall behind in Lao language and readings skills, particularly for non-Lao speaking students. Inadequate learning at the primary level has flow-on effects to higher levels of education. Nationally, 83 percent of students who enrol in G1 complete G5, 51 percent complete lower secondary school, and 33 percent complete upper secondary school.
28. Forty priority districts were identified by MoES as underperforming, based on education indicators such as net enrolment rate lower than 60 percent, primary education repetition rate higher than 7 percent, and primary education dropout rate higher than 6 percent, and are typically characterized by sizeable non-Lao speaking populations. The GoL does not endorse mother-tongue instruction and many teachers are recruited from Lao-speaking areas and do not speak local languages. If teachers do speak the local language, MoES policies are unclear on how teachers can use local languages in the classroom and teachers are not adequately trained to teach second language learners. Because language and literacy developments are inextricably linked, provinces with a high percentage of ethnic minority students tend to score lowest on reading skills assessments.

COVID-19

29. Since early April 2021 till now, the sudden increasing of the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the closure of schools since then. This significant disruption to the school calendar reduced the number of classroom contact hours that students are receiving and may lead to lower adherence to the curriculum by teachers who are forced to "catch up" with reduced time. The already apparent need for materials that allow students to have extra reading practice has been further highlighted by the pandemic.

Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

30. Accessing clean water and sanitation facilities remains a critical need in schools in Laos and is a priority of the MoES. According to MoES data from 2017, only 66 percent of primary schools in Laos had both access to water and sanitation facilities. This lack of access can have detrimental effects on attendance, enrolment, and learning outcomes, and rural and marginalized communities are most affected. Diarrheal disease and parasitic infections – both sanitation-related – are leading causes of mortality and malnutrition in those under five years of age and missed school days and disability among children of all ages.

Overview of proposed response

31. Of MoES' 40 priority districts, 22 received school feeding through WFP, CRS or the GoL prior to this FY 2020 project. McGovern-Dole funding will be used to support the GoL's priorities in reaching the remaining 18 priority districts that do not receive school feeding and to leverage past experience on capacity strengthening and handover to ensure that by the end of this 5-year project, SFPs at all schools will be integrated into the NSMP. As outlined in the GoL's Policy on Promoting School Lunch, school feeding requires not only the provision of safe and nutritious school meals to enhance learning and improve resistance to infections, but also the promotion of local ownership and capacity, and provision of safe access to water. The project will be a collaboration between WFP, leading the school feeding activities in nine districts, CRS – leading the literacy and WASH activities along with the community mobilization components in five districts – and MoES facilitating the provision of school feeding in the four northern districts.
32. Evaluations of previous McGovern-Dole/WFP projects have found that they have contributed to building the capacity of the Government and communities to manage SFPs. The end-line evaluation for the 2014–2016 grant found that the number of children completing primary school rose from 60 percent at the start of the project to 80 percent by the end. In addition, teacher attendance increased, from 84 percent at the start of the project to 94 percent. The evaluation also showed an increase in the average Dietary Diversity Score (DDS) score from 5 at the start of the project to 7.6 by the end and that the establishment of school gardens

contributed towards diversifying the food basket and generating awareness among children on agri-nutrition systems.

Nutrition implementation strategy

33. In 2015, the GoL approved its National Nutrition Strategy to 2025 and Plan of Action 2016–2020. The Government laid out the key drivers of malnutrition in Laos and outlined a strategic framework for the next 10 years that aimed to reduce maternal and child malnutrition rates while improving the nutritional status and food security of the country's multi-ethnic population.
34. The school feeding program can directly and indirectly address some of the interconnected factors leading to malnutrition. School lunch will improve nutrient intake and dietary diversity while also alleviating the economic burden for vulnerable families by reducing household spending on food. These savings can then be allocated towards other costs, such as access to health care, soap and detergent, and other items that can contribute to a more sanitary environment. WASH activities will address the poor environmental hygiene that lead to food, water, and vector-borne diseases.
35. WFP's experience implementing nutrition awareness campaigns showed that villagers were engaged when learning in their own language. By leveraging the lessons learned from its previous nutrition interventions as part of broader nutrition awareness raising, this project has an opportunity to have an impact on maternal and child health and nutrition (MCHN).
36. The proposed school feeding activities will provide a daily hot lunch including 100g of fortified white rice procured through USDA in Years 2-4. In Years 3 – 4, a small percentage of the fortified rice will be procured locally. In Year 5, communities will be expected to contribute rice or another staple, as outlined in the NSMP guidance, to gradually transition to the national program. The project will also procure lentils from USDA, provided 3 days a week. Daily provision of fortified vegetable oil (10g/day, fortified with Vitamins A and D) and 30g/day of canned fish, provided two days a week, will be purchased through regional procurement. The ration was selected based on local acceptability, nutritional content and diversity (including two different protein sources), providing about 630 kilocalories – approximately 48 percent of the recommended daily intake for pre-primary schoolchildren and between 33 – 42 percent of daily energy (kcal) requirements for primary school-aged children. The variance within the primary cohort is wide, as the needs of 6-7-year olds (1,501 kcal/day) differs significantly from the needs of 9-10-year olds (1,916 kcal/day). The energy intake is sufficient based on WFP recommendations for school feeding, providing over 30 percent of daily requirements, even for the oldest age group. In addition, the introduction of fortified rice will help improve the micronutrient status of school children by providing vitamins and minerals.
37. This basic food basket will be complemented by contributions of fresh produce from the local communities to facilitate the eventual handover, as well as to fill gaps in required micronutrients (refer to the "Commodity Management" section). This contribution, while voluntary, is part of the Government's strategy as outlined in the School Lunch Program Strategy No. 903/MoES (July 2019), which promotes communities to be the owners of the SFPs. The MoES guidance includes the provision of rice from home, a government cash subsidy of \$0.09 per child per day, and the promotion of community and school agriculture. Mobilization efforts will also facilitate community contributions (in part through increased understanding of the value of education) and agriculture support to the model schools will set specific conditions on contributions. To ensure sustainability of these complementary inputs by local communities, WFP will explore opportunities to define the minimum nutritional value, frequency of contributions and means to encourage these inputs to ensure enhancement of the school menu in the long run. Community engagement and contributions will be an integral component of WFP's regular monitoring efforts.

Literacy activities

38. The project will provide a package of literacy activities for high-need schools that are responsive to the needs of students and teachers in Laos, built on in-country and global experience. The project will focus on 90 schools in Khammouane Province. Schools will be selected using the following criteria: low education indicators, no additional literacy support programming, and high percentage of ethnic minority students who do not speak Lao as their mother tongue. The package of activities will focus on emergent literacy skills covering the first

two years of primary school – with an emphasis on non-Lao-speaking children – using materials designed and developed specifically for the Lao context and language. Approaches are designed to support teachers in the classroom and be complementary to the national curriculum, rather than a burdensome add-on to already-busy teachers. Through the literacy activities – designed in alignment with the USAID Reading MATTERS framework – the project will train administrators to become more effective mentors to teachers, train teachers to regularly and effectively assess students' reading and provide adaptive remedial instruction, provide high-quality materials to create extra practice opportunities for students during and outside of school, and familiarize pre-primary children with the classroom environment and Lao language to prevent dropout and grade repetition when entering school. The activities are designed to strengthen the rollout of the national curriculum and complement other existing literacy investments in Laos, such as USAID's Learn to Read

Policy Support/Government Capacity Strengthening

39. High level policy support and capacity strengthening form the backbone of the transition to the NSMP under full government ownership in 2025. Through support to national legislation and guidelines, the strengthening of technical capacity, and the facilitation of knowledge sharing, WFP aims to build on work completed under the previous McGovern-Dole award to equip the Government with the means to take over the target schools by the end of the project period. The end of the project period aligns with the end of the 9th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDP, 2021-2025). The GoL will aim to take over management of school feeding in these 18 districts in the 10th NSEDP (2026-2030). In the context of this proposal, "high level" refers to relevant government officials from national, provincial and district levels.

COVID

40. The COVID-19 pandemic will likely roll back the gains made in health, education, and poverty reduction and exacerbate the disparities across provinces. According to the World Bank, approximately 9 percent of households in Laos – predominantly in the south – receive remittances from abroad, which constitute 60 percent of their household income. Already, more than 100,000 migrant workers have returned from abroad, resulting in an estimated reduction of up to 0.7 percent of GDP from remittances in 2020. The widespread school closures due to the pandemic have also affected the most vulnerable and marginalized in Laos. In response to the school closures, WFP and partners have provided take-home rations under the current project, as well as home-learning kits for home-based learning. The distributions themselves adopted safety measures including physical distancing to prevent any risk of disease transmission. WASH interventions – including additional hygiene messaging and the provision of hygiene kits – are also scheduled to be rolled out for further prevention and mitigation measures.
41. The COVID-19 crisis will further aggravate the long-standing structural vulnerabilities of Lao PDR, particularly the absence of adequate fiscal and monetary buffers, with economic growth expected at a record low 1 percent of GDP in 2020. Preliminarily, the Ministry of Finance and the World Bank anticipate that in 2020 domestic revenue will shrink by 3 to 4 percent of GDP (to 10 percent of GDP in 2020), the fiscal deficit will reach between 7.5 and 8.8 percent of GDP, public debt will soar to between 65 and 68 percent of GDP, while foreign currency reserves will be crunching to an extremely low level of 0.8 month of import.
42. Whereas economic growth is expected to resume in 2021 and 2022, it will be very slow and is unlikely to surpass 4.5 percent of GDP on average. In this context, 2019 levels will not be recovered until before 2023. Domestic revenue is expected to grow slowly to 11.6 percent of GDP by 2022. Public spending will shrink to 18.8 percent of GDP on average in the period 2020–2022, from 20.2 percent in 2019. Any fiscal space available will be captured by debt service, which is expected to reach an average of 55 percent of domestic revenue in the medium term.
43. These developments will have a considerable impact on fiscal space during implementation of the country's 9th NSEDP (2021–2025). On the expenditure side, priority will be given to protect the wage budget and capital investments in major economic infrastructure projects. Operational expenditures of line ministries will be severely restrained. In the short to medium term, because of COVID-19, the health sector will likely be given priority among the social sectors. In the education sector, the GoL would be expected to protect teacher salaries, but operational and investment budgets, which were already at a rather low level before the crisis, will likely be cut further. In the education sector, the GoL would be expected to protect teacher salaries, but operational and investment budgets, which were already at a rather low level before the crisis, will likely be cut further. The project will work with the GoL to continue advocacy to sustain NSMP as a priority.

44. On the institutional front, a School Meals Unit has been set up at the national level with 7 permanent staff. However, at the provincial and district levels, members of sub-national committees are currently assigned school feeding duties. To ensure sufficient human resources after the handover, WFP will continue advocating for the appointment of dedicated staff for school feeding at the sub-national level.

2. Reasons for the evaluation

2.1. RATIONALE

45. The WFP CO is commissioning this activity evaluation as a baseline study for the FY 2020-USDA McGovern-Dole project in support of WFP's School Feeding Program (SFP) activities in Lao PDR, to be evaluated from the period of June to November 2021 (inception phase to submission of the final report), in order to be able to critically and objectively assess performance of the project for the purposes of learning and accountability.
46. The baseline study is being commissioned as the first stage in the evaluation cycle to fulfil USDA McGovern-Dole project requirement to provide information about the pre-project situation, establish a baseline value and review targets, to validate project design assumptions, and to provide project implementation recommendations for the 2020-2025 programme. As such, the methodology and indicators selected for the baseline will be carried forward and used to assess the results of the project in the endline evaluation.

2.2. OBJECTIVES

47. Evaluations serve the dual and mutually reinforcing objectives of accountability and learning for WFP and partners, including government and other stakeholders, to feed into future project design. Evaluation findings will also be used by the key government counterpart for this project, the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES)..
- **Accountability** – The evaluation processes will assess and report on the performance and results of the USDA McGovern-Dole project during the funding period. For accountability, the evaluations assess whether targeted beneficiaries have received services as expected, and if the project is on track to meeting their stated goals and objectives aligned with the results frameworks and assumptions.
 - **Learning** – The evaluation processes will determine the reasons why certain results occurred or not to draw lessons, derive good practices and pointers for learning. They will provide evidence-based findings to inform operational and strategic decision-making. Findings will be actively disseminated, and lessons will be incorporated into relevant lesson sharing systems. For learning, the evaluation components will aim at critically and objectively review and take stock of participants' implementation experience and the implementation environment.

2.3. STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

48. The evaluation will seek the views of, and be useful to, a broad range of WFP internal and external stakeholders. A number of stakeholders will be asked to play a role in the evaluation process in light of their expected interest in the results of the baseline study and relative power to influence the results of the programme being evaluated. Table 1 provides a preliminary stakeholder analysis, which should be deepened by the evaluation team as part of the inception phase.
49. Accountability to affected populations, is tied to WFP commitments to include beneficiaries as key stakeholders in WFP work. WFP is committed to ensuring gender equality, equity and inclusion in the evaluation process, with participation and consultation in the evaluation of women, men, boys and girls from different groups (including persons with disabilities, the elderly and persons with other diversities such as ethnic and linguistic).
50. The primary users of this evaluation will be:

- a. The WFP Lao PDR and its partners in decision-making, notably related to programme implementation and design and partnerships
- b. USDA as funder for the project and the evaluation
- c. WFP's Regional Bureau Bangkok (RBB) is expected to use the evaluation findings to provide strategic guidance, programme support, and oversight
- d. WFP HQ may use evaluations for wider organizational learning and accountability as well as program support on school feeding.
- e. WFP's Office of Evaluation (OEV) may use the evaluation findings, as appropriate, to feed into evaluation syntheses as well as for annual reporting to the Executive Board.
- f. The government is expected to take over the management and monitoring of the school feeding program over time, therefore, information on whether the programme is yielding the desired results is of primary importance. The Ministry of Education and Sports will use evaluation findings as input for its take-over strategy.
- g. Other partners such as World Bank and UN agencies such as UNICEF involved in the education sector may also be interested in the results of the evaluation.

The evaluation will be shared and disseminated to the primary users primarily through email. An internal and external communication plan will be prepared. The communication plan will identify the means and channels for sharing and disseminating the evaluation to the primary users in each respective phases.

Table 1: Preliminary stakeholder analysis

Stakeholders	Interest and involvement in the evaluation
Internal (WFP) stakeholders	
WFP country office (CO) in Lao PDR	Key informant and primary stakeholder - Responsible for the planning and implementation of WFP interventions at country level. The country office has an interest in learning from experience to inform decision-making. It is also called upon to account internally as well as to its beneficiaries and partners for performance and results of its programmes. The country office will be involved in using evaluation findings from this baseline study for programme implementation and/or in deciding on the next programme and partnerships.
WFP field offices in Pakse	Key informant and primary stakeholder - Responsible for day-to-day programme implementation. The field offices liaise with stakeholders at decentralized levels and has direct beneficiary contact. It will be affected by the outcome of the evaluation.
Regional bureau (RB) for Asia and the Pacific based in Bangkok	Key informant and primary stakeholder - Responsible for both oversight of country offices and technical guidance and support, the regional bureau management has an interest in an independent/impartial account of operational performance as well as in learning from the evaluation findings to apply this learning to other country offices. The regional bureau will be involved in the planning of the next programme, thus it is expected to use the evaluation findings to provide strategic guidance, programme support, and oversight. The regional evaluation officers support country office/regional bureau management to ensure quality, credible and useful decentralized evaluations.
WFP HQ divisions	Key informant and primary stakeholder - WFP headquarters divisions are responsible for issuing and overseeing the rollout of normative guidance on corporate programme themes, activities and modalities, as well as of overarching corporate policies and strategies. They also have an interest in the lessons that emerge from evaluations, as many may have relevance beyond the geographical area of focus. Relevant headquarters units should be consulted from the planning phase to ensure that key policy, strategic and programmatic

	considerations are understood from the onset of the evaluation. They may use the evaluation for wider organizational learning and accountability.
WFP Office of Evaluation (OEV)	Primary stakeholder – The Office of Evaluation has a stake in ensuring that decentralized evaluations deliver quality, credible and useful evaluations respecting provisions for impartiality as well as roles and accountabilities of various decentralized evaluation stakeholders as identified in the evaluation policy. It may use the evaluation findings, as appropriate, to feed into centralized evaluations, evaluation syntheses or other learning products.
WFP Executive Board (EB)	Primary stakeholder – the Executive Board provides final oversight of WFP programmes and guidance to programmes. The WFP governing body has an interest in being informed about the effectiveness of WFP programmes. This evaluation will not be presented to the Executive Board, but its findings may feed into thematic and/or regional syntheses and corporate learning processes.
External stakeholders	
Beneficiaries	Key informants and primary/secondary stakeholders - As the ultimate recipients of food assistance, beneficiaries have a stake in WFP determining whether its assistance is appropriate and effective. Among the beneficiaries receiving capacity strengthening are schoolteachers, women and men small-holder farmers and women and men members of Village Education Development Committee. The level of participation in the evaluation of women, men, boys and girls from different groups will be determined and their respective perspectives will be sought.
Government of Lao PDR	Key informants and primary stakeholder - The Government has a direct interest in knowing whether WFP activities in the country are aligned with its priorities, harmonized with the action of other partners and meet the expected results. Issues related to capacity development, handover and sustainability will be of particular interest. Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES) and Ministry of Health (MoH) are partners in the design and implementation of WFP Local Regional Procurement and School Meals activities. At sub-national level, Provincial Education and Sports Services (PESS), District Education and Sport Bureau (DESB), Provincial Health Office (PHO), and District Health Office (DHO), all of these sub-national government institutions play key roles at implementation level.
United Nations country team (UNCT)	Secondary stakeholder - The harmonized action of the UNCT should contribute to the realization of the government developmental objectives. It has therefore an interest in ensuring that WFP programmes are effective in contributing to the United Nations concerted efforts. Various agencies are also direct partners of WFP at policy and activity level.
Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) Catholic Relief Services	Key informants and primary stakeholder - NGOs are WFP partners for the implementation of some activities while at the same time having their own interventions. The results of the evaluation might affect future implementation modalities, strategic orientations and partnerships. They will be involved in using evaluation findings from this baseline study for programme implementation.
Donors USDA, France Embassy, DFAT, JICA	Primary/secondary stakeholders - WFP interventions are voluntarily funded by a number of donors. They have an interest in knowing whether their funds have been spent efficiently and if WFP work has been effective and contributed to their own strategies and programmes. USDA has specific interest in ensuring that operational performance reflects USDA standards and accountability requirements, as well as an interest in learning to inform changes in project strategy, results framework, and critical assumptions. That is the main reason for including USDA in the Evaluation Reference Group.

Others	A wide range of actors, such as local suppliers, school administrators and local communities, are involved in the provision of school meals and are expected to benefit from some of the capacity development activities. WFP-Lao PDR also has established partnerships with the World Bank, Australian DFAT, UNFPA, UNICEF, FAO, and Lao Women Union to achieve project objectives. Their respective perspectives will be sought during the evaluation as the engagement of these actors influences the effectiveness of the programme as well as its sustainability.
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3. Subject of the evaluation

3.1. SUBJECT OF THE EVALUATION

51. The UN World Food Programme (WFP) will implement a \$25.0 million McGovern-Dole-funded school feeding project in Lao PDR. The proposed five-year project closely aligns with the priorities of the Government of Lao PDR and the US Government on school feeding, nutrition and education, and will help to strengthen the capacities of the host government and communities in school feeding to enable a smooth, coordinated transition of all WFP-supported schools into the NSMP in 2025, in line with government plans. The proposed project, building on the successes and lessons learned in the previous McGovern-Dole-funded projects in Lao PDR, will expand school feeding to new schools to enable the Government of Lao PDR to reach the last of its priority districts for education while creating the structures and systems within the Government and communities to ensure sustainability after the project ends. The Government's vision of expanding school feeding to the remaining priority districts and integrating them into the NSMP are clearly articulated in national development plans and strategies. This project, implemented in partnership with CRS and the MoES, will provide a package of school health, education, and nutrition activities, including school meals, water access, hygiene promotion, literacy, community mobilization, school feeding-related infrastructure investments, agricultural support, policy support, and health and nutrition awareness activities, to reach approximately 63,000 pre-primary and primary school-aged children in 18 districts in Laos.
52. The project will provide mid-day school meals consisting of fortified rice, canned fish, lentils, and fortified cooking oil across the 18 targeted districts in Lao PDR: Meung District in Bokeo Province, Park ou District in Luangprabang Province, Nonghed District in Xiengkhouang Province, Longcheng District in Xaisomboun Province, Feuang District in Vientiane Province, Sangthong District in Vientiane Capital, Bualapha, Mahaxay, Nhommalath and Xaybuathong Districts in Khammouane Province, Xonbulu District in Savannakhet Province, Lakhonepheng District in Salavan Province, Bachiangchaleunsook, Khong, Moonlapamok and Sukhuma Districts in Champasack Province, Lamarm District in Xekong Province, and Xaysetha District in Attapeu Province.
53. This will be complemented by a comprehensive package including interventions in the areas of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), community development and infrastructure investment, literacy, agriculture support, policy support/government capacity strengthening, and health and nutrition. Through a set of defined outputs, these activities will equip the GoL, schools, parents and communities with the resources, knowledge and practical application experience needed to achieve the key objectives of improving the literacy of school-aged children and increasing the use of health, nutrition and dietary practices.
54. The proposed project will use McGovern-Dole commodities and cash funding to contribute directly towards the McGovern-Dole project's highest-level Strategic Objectives, SO1: Improved Literacy of School-Aged Children; SO2: Increased Use of Health and Dietary Practices; and LRP SO1: Improved Effectiveness of Food Assistance through Local and Regional Procurement.
55. The following activities will contribute toward the achievement of SO1: literacy, school meals, agriculture support, and community mobilization and infrastructure investments. The following activities will contribute toward the achievement of SO2: WASH, health and nutrition, and community mobilization and infrastructure investments. WFP has also incorporated a strong focus on capacity strengthening to ensure sustainability by targeting the following McGovern-Dole Foundational Results: increased capacity of government institutions (McGovern-Dole 1.4.1/2.7.1), improved policy and regulatory framework (McGovern-Dole 1.4.2/2.7.2), increased government support (McGovern-Dole 1.4.3/2.7.3) and increased engagement of local organizations and community groups (McGovern-Dole 4.4/2.7.4). Activities that will contribute to these foundational results include policy support & government capacity strengthening, health and nutrition, community mobilization and infrastructure investments, and agriculture support.

3.2. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

56. The baseline is part of an evaluation plan that includes three key products: a baseline study, a mid-term evaluation, and a final evaluation. The evaluations will be carried out in a representative sample of the intervention areas in all target districts, including areas with WASH and literacy activities, and all type of beneficiaries. As needed, WFP will update the evaluation plan throughout the life of the agreement. The evaluation will be managed by WFP Laos Country Office with the support from the Regional Evaluation Officer, and the School-Based Programs Evaluation Officer and Office of Evaluation at WFP's Headquarters. The baseline will be contracted separately, but with strong built in anticipation of mid-term and end-line requirements.
57. The baseline study will serve several critical purposes: (1) confirm indicator selection and targets, and establish baseline values for all performance indicators included in the proposal, with new indicators for nutrition-related social and behaviour change communication outputs and outcomes in line with the WFP School Feeding Strategy 2020-2030, (2) be used for ongoing project monitoring activities to regularly measure activity outputs and performance indicators for lower-level results (i.e. output level), (3) measure performance indicators for McGovern-Dole's two strategic objectives as well as the highest-level results (outcomes) that feed into the strategic objectives as part of the mid-term and final evaluations, (4) provide a situational analysis before the project begins and confirm the full evaluation design as prepared during the inception period. This analysis will inform project implementation and will provide important context necessary for the mid-term and final evaluation to assess the project's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact.

The baseline study will therefore be designed to include data collection for indicators that are suitable for both monitoring and evaluation. The baseline study will also include draft evaluation questions, so that the indicators and data collection will support the future evaluations, as well as the specific USDA Learning Agenda research questions.

4. Evaluation approach, methodology and ethical considerations

4.1. EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND CRITERIA

58. The evaluation will address the following key questions, which will be further developed and tailored by the evaluation team in a detailed evaluation matrix during the inception phase. Collectively, the questions aim at highlighting the key lessons and performance of the baseline study of the USDA McGovern-Dole FY20 School Feeding Programme, with a view to informing future strategic and operational decisions.
59. The evaluation should analyse how gender, equity and wider inclusion objectives and GEWE mainstreaming principles were included in the intervention design, and whether the evaluation subject has been guided by WFP and system-wide objectives on GEWE. The gender, equity and wider inclusion dimensions should be integrated into all evaluation criteria as appropriate.

Table 2: Evaluation questions and criteria

Evaluation questions - Baseline		Criteria
EQ1 -		Coherence
1.1.	How well is the project aligned to national policy, national need, WFP policy and guidance and with donor and partner strategies.	
1.2		

EQ2 -		Relevance
2.1	To what extent does the design of the School Feeding Programme contribute to realizing the Government of Laos policies and strategies related to school feeding and WFP's Country Strategic Plan (2017–2021 and 2022–2026)?	
2.2	To what extent is the design appropriate/responsive to the context and aligned to needs of women, men, girls and boys and relevant local, meso and national stakeholders? (design including intended targeting, modalities, relevance to identified need based on analysis (e.g. gender, capacity.)	
2.3	To what extent does the design of the School Feeding Programme facilitate the handover of the SFP to GoL and integration into the National School Meals Programme at the end of the program timeframe?	
EQ3 -		Effectiveness and Efficiency
3.1	The extent to which intended results, indicators, and monitoring systems are feasible and able to inform results-based management	
3.2	To what extent does the project design (including partnerships with CRS and MoES) ensure efficiency in service delivery and handover?	
3.3	What are current knowledge, attitudes and practices around healthy diets?	
3.4	Are health-related illnesses a significant issue in causing students to be absent at targeted schools?	
3.5	The extent to which intended results, indicators and monitoring systems are able to inform GEWE analysis	
3.6	What is the impact of COVID on women and girls in the programme areas? (Both Health and Socio-Economic Impacts and what modification are needed to the programme to compensate for this?)	
3.7	Should there be any changes to the allocations and structure of the programme budget considering the pandemic?	
EQ4 -		Impact
4.1	How can different groups benefit from the intervention outcomes and how can GEWE outcomes vary by stakeholder group?	
4.2	What is the status of attendance, drop-out rates, retention rates like in the 12 provinces?	
4.3	To what extent has COVID affected or is expected to affect policy level contributions?	
EQ5 -		Sustainability
5.1	What is the status of VEDC and community members' capacity and school infrastructure?	

5.2	Is there sufficient production of diverse and nutritious crops in the communities, and are fresh produce will be contributed for the SFP?	
5.3	Which components of the SFP will be the most sustainable in terms of operational efficiency and why?	
5.4	Are there any foreseeable influences of COVID-19 on the sustainability of the programme?	
5.5	To what extent will the government still prioritise institutional setup necessary for the programme after the COVID-19 aftermath?	
5.6	What additional advocacy might be required by WFP?	
EQ6-		General
6.1	What interventions will be the most effective at securing community, local or national government investment into the SFP? What will be the barriers and challenges in securing investment?	
6.2	How have the intended immediate beneficiaries, i.e. schools, teachers, students, and the community been impacted by COVID? (Both Health and Socio-Economic impacts)	

60. The evaluation will apply the international evaluation criteria of Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, Sustainability, Appropriateness. Gender equality and empowerment of women should be mainstreamed throughout. The table below outlines those focus areas, along with preliminary key evaluation questions and the relevant data sources.
61. **Evaluation Questions** Allied to the evaluation criteria, the evaluation will address the key questions outlined in the table below, which will be further developed by the evaluation team during the inception phase. The evaluation team will develop an appropriate evaluation and analytical approach for the evaluation. This should be documented systematically in the Evaluation Matrix. This evaluation matrix is one of the outputs in the Inception Phase. Collectively, the questions aim at highlighting the key lessons and performance of the USDA McGovern-Dole FY2020 which could use as the baseline and inform future strategic and operational decisions of USDA McGovern-Dole FY2020.
62. **The evaluation** should analyse how GEWE objectives and GEWE mainstreaming principles were included in the intervention design, and whether the object has been guided by WFP and system-wide objectives on GEWE. The GEWE dimensions should be integrated into all evaluation criteria as appropriate.
63. **The baseline conclusion** should draw together what the answers to these questions mean for implementation and monitoring: what needs to be modified or strengthened to maximise results?
64. **Baseline recommendations** should outline any missing concrete steps to enabling an operational implementation of the USDA McGovern-Dole FY2020 Program, i.e. school meals, water access, hygiene promotion, literacy, community mobilization, agricultural support, policy support, and health and nutrition awareness activities and strengthen the capacities of the host government and communities in school feeding to enable a smooth, coordinated transition of all WFP-supported schools into the National School Meals Program (NSMP) in 2025. The recommendations should take into consideration the geographic, political, economic, and enabling environment. Additionally, the lessons learned, challenges and recommendations related to GEWE must also be included and presented in the findings of this baseline study.

4.2. Evaluation Approach and Methodology

65. The methodology will be designed by the evaluation team during the inception phase in accordance with the WFP Decentralized Evaluation Quality Assurance System (DEQAS) as well as USDA's Monitoring and Evaluation

Policy. Based on the requirements described in the TORs, further analysis done at inception phase and consultations with key stakeholders, the baseline team will formulate an appropriate evaluation design, sampling strategy, and methodological approach for each stage of evaluation process. The detailed methodology defined in the Inception Report should be guided by the following principles:

- Employ the relevant evaluation criteria above
 - Apply an evaluation matrix geared towards addressing the key evaluation questions taking into account the data availability challenges, the budget and timing constraints
 - Use mixed methods (quantitative and qualitative) to ensure information from difference methods and sources is triangulated to enhance the validity, reliability and credibility of the findings. Qualitative methods such as focus group discussions and key informant interviews, will be used where relevant to highlight lessons learned and case studies representative of the interventions.
 - Partnership with local research firms is encouraged. This includes the use of local enumerators for any survey work, ensuring that cultural and political sensitivities are addressed and that the enumeration teams have the local language expertise to elicit the needed information from beneficiaries and others; and
 - To the extent possible, the evaluation will be conducted by a gender-balanced, geographically and culturally diverse team with appropriate skills to assess gender dimensions of the subject as specified in the scope, approach and methodology sections of the ToR.
66. The methodology chosen should demonstrate attention to impartiality and reduction of bias by relying on mixed methods (quantitative, qualitative, participatory etc.) and different primary and secondary data sources that are systematically triangulated (documents from different sources; a range of stakeholder groups, including pre-primary (5 years) and primary school students (6-11 years), teachers, parents, cooks, storekeepers, members of the Village Education Development Committees and village leaders); direct observation in different locations; across evaluators; across methods etc.). It will take into account any challenges to data availability, validity or reliability, as well as any budget and timing constraints. The evaluation questions, lines of inquiry, indicators, data sources and data collection methods will be brought together in an evaluation matrix, which will form the basis of the sampling approach and data collection and analysis instruments (desk review, interview and observation guides, survey questionnaires etc.).
67. The methodology should be sensitive in terms of GEWE, equity and inclusion, indicating how the perspectives and voices of diverse groups (men and women, boys, girls, the elderly, people living with disabilities and other marginalized groups) will be sought and taken into account. The methodology should ensure that primary data collected is disaggregated by sex and age; an explanation should be provided if this is not possible.
68. Looking for explicit consideration of gender and equity/inclusion in the data after fieldwork is too late; the evaluation team must have a clear and detailed plan for collecting data from women and men in gender and equity-sensitive ways before fieldwork begins.
69. The evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations must reflect gender and equity analysis. The findings should include a discussion on intended and unintended effects of the intervention on gender equality and equity dimensions. The report should provide lessons/ challenges/recommendations for conducting gender and equity-responsive evaluations in the future.
70. A purposive comparison design will be employed for the baseline study of the McGovern-Dole project, as WFP's main partner, the Ministry of Education was unwilling to organize a random allocation of control schools. The sampling strategy will be guided by the options presented in Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, Fourth Edition, 2015, Module 30, Purposeful Sampling and Case Selection: Overview of Strategies and Options. A typical sample size in purposive sampling with 95% confidence interval, is approximately 30 persons per characteristic included in the study. The purpose is to gain and exhaustive understanding of the profiles of the children/HH that exhibit each identified characteristic.
71. There is already useful data from the FY 2017 McGovern-Dole project by using a quasi-experimental approach to analyze the overall impact of school feeding versus no school feeding. However, the current approach tends to treat the project group as homogeneous. With the FY 20 McGovern-Dole award, WFP will look into

the performance of different types schools within the project along various characteristics (some are listed below, but the final variables will be determined during the inception phase). We will thus still apply quasi-experimental techniques by breaking the schools according to categories and then randomly selecting within these (i.e. stratified random sampling).

72. Purposive sampling will be based on known divergences in characteristics to facilitate comparative change from baseline to midline and endline. For the survey-based portion of the baseline, it is proposed to select target schools and respondents. Examples of divergences include the following:

- Comparison of different ethnic groups,
- Comparison of WASH and non-WASH-supported schools.
- Comparison between agro-ecological zones and geographies,
- Comparison based upon remoteness from urban centres.
- Comparison based on local food security/poverty indicators.

73. The aim of monitoring and evaluation is to understand the extent to which project strategies can compensate for specific vulnerabilities and deprivations. The sample size for the baseline will be determined based on the degree of change that is expected amongst the performance indicators (enrolment, literacy after five years of school, attendance, drop-out and retention rates, nutrition awareness, etc.), levels of statistical significance desired and acceptable levels of statistical error. Gender will also be considered and is an important variable for WFP's gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) agenda. The sampling frame, methodology, and sample size calculations will be the responsibility of the Evaluation Team in consultation with the WFP CO.

74. Specific data collection methods are expected to include: a desk review, quantitative survey, semi-structured interviews and focus groups (to ensure that a cross-section of stakeholders is able to participate so that a diversity of views is gathered) and observation during field visits. Participants for focus group discussions will include school principals/teachers, parent-student associations, village education development committee members and community members/small-holder farmers. Participants for (semi-)structured interviews will include district and provincial education officials, relevant local and international NGOs and UN agencies, and central government officials. The survey modules utilized will include household and child questionnaires, suppliers and smallholder farmers as well as school questionnaire (with teachers and school directors). In a sample of schools targeted for literacy activities, the baseline will include a full literacy assessment. The key respondents have been identified as critical for the primary data collection as outlined in Table 3 with the list and survey modules to be reviewed and further detailed based on methodology proposed by the Evaluation Team and agreed by WFP CO.

Table 3. Key respondents for primary data collection by program

Type	Respondents for Baseline,
Baseline 2020-2025	Schools (school directors and staff responsible for provision of school feeding; school children), Parents, Teachers, Communities, Government (MoES, MAF, MoH), Cooperating Partner NGOs, WFP Officials at Country Office and Regional Bureau

75. The following mechanisms for independence and impartiality will be employed

Independence: The Evaluation Manager ensures that the independent evaluators selected have not had prior involvement with the subject to be evaluated and have no vested interest.

Impartiality: The Evaluation Manager prepares the TOR following this Process Guide to ensure the absence of bias in terms of scope and design. A reference group, which includes key stakeholders, is formed to help steer the evaluation and reduce the risk of bias. The Evaluation Manager has demonstrated his/her ability to maintain impartiality towards the evaluated subject, i.e. should not be biased with respect to what is being evaluated.

76. The following potential risks to the methodology have been identified

The COVID-19 pandemic may pose challenges, particularly related to international travel into Lao PDR. Mitigation measures include adopting a hybrid approach to data collection, with a subset of the evaluation team present in-country, while other members may operate remotely. Key government and cooperating partner NGOs and WFP officials who are key informants will be interviewed by the in-country evaluation team (face-to-face) and remotely-called-in from the outside-country evaluation team. Data collection at the sub-national levels (provincial, district and school) will be done by the in-country evaluation team by either face-to-face or remotely-called-in in case of lockdown or domestic travel restriction. The approach will need to be adapted to the evolving situation and the internal evaluation committee, the external reference group (including USDA) will be updated of the changes. The evaluation team should clearly identify the data collection approaches in the inception report.

Potential COVID related limitations. Depending on the prevailing circumstances at the time of the evaluation the evaluation team may be requested to mitigate the following potential limitations if adopting remote data collection:

- The lack of visual cues (that ease communication), loss of non-verbal visual data and the inability of the evaluator to use body language for probing were limitations
 - Poor mobile connectivity also leading to dropping of some sample points and re-sampling new respondents.
 - Limited time and complexity of questions: While the tools used during a baseline face-to-face study can be more detailed, phone surveys are unavoidably constrained by time and hence, require shorter and concise tools.
 - Selection bias of respondents: using remote data collection mechanisms can limit the reach to the vulnerable population of the study regions.
 - Also, the protracted timelines and delay caused in conducting a study owing to the pandemic can add to the challenge of finding relevant and up to date data.
 - Lack of observation data: Key outcome indicators (skills of teachers, administrators, cooks; personal hygiene; sanitation behavior by students) could not be reported due to lack of observation data.
77. The methodology will be GEEW-responsive, indicating what data collection methods are employed to seek information on GEEW issues and to ensure gender equality is considered when designing and performing data collection.
78. For this baseline study, the evaluation team will need to expand on the methodology presented in the ToR, and develop a detailed evaluation matrix in the inception report.

4.3. EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENT

Main sources of information available to the evaluation team are the following

- 1) USDA McGovern-Dole FY2020 – Project Proposal
- 2) USDA McGovern-Dole FY17 Baseline report
- 3) Semi-annual report – USDA McGovern-Dole FY17 2019 and 2020
- 4) WFP Annual Country Report 2020
- 5) WFP CO Laos – CSP 2017-2021 Evaluation Report - draft
- 6) Endline Evaluation on USDA LRP
- 7) LSIS 2017 (Lao Social Indicator Survey 2017)
- 8) EMIS 2020-2021
- 9) 8th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2016–2020)
- 10) The draft 9th National Socio-Economic Development Plan
- 11) The Education and Sports Sector Development Plan (2016–2020)
- 12) National Nutrition Strategy to 2025 and Plan of Action (2016–2020)
- 13) National Social Protection Strategy 2030.

Concerning the quality of data and information, the evaluation team should:

- a. assess data availability and reliability as part of the inception phase expanding on the information provided in this Annex 6. This assessment will inform the data collection
 - b. systematically check accuracy, consistency and validity of collected data and information and acknowledge any limitations/caveats in drawing conclusions using the data.
 - c. Assess the data and information in the USDA McGovern-Dole FY2020 School Feeding Program project documents as key data source for designing of this baseline study
79. During the inception phase, the evaluation team will be expected to perform an in-depth evaluability assessment and critically assess data availability, quality and gaps expanding on the information provided in Section 4.3. This assessment will inform the data collection and the choice of evaluation methods. The evaluation team will need to systematically check accuracy, consistency and validity of collected data and information and acknowledge any limitations/caveats in drawing conclusions using the data during the reporting phase.

4.4. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 80. The evaluation must conform to [UNEG ethical guidelines for evaluation](#). Accordingly, the selected evaluation firm is responsible for safeguarding and ensuring ethics at all stages of the evaluation process. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring informed consent, protecting privacy, confidentiality and anonymity of respondents, ensuring cultural sensitivity, respecting the autonomy of respondents, ensuring fair recruitment of participants (including women and socially excluded groups) and ensuring that the evaluation results do no harm to respondents or their communities.
- 81. The evaluation firm will be responsible for managing any potential ethical risks and issues and must put in place, in consultation with the evaluation manager, processes and systems to identify, report and resolve any ethical issues that might arise during the implementation of the evaluation. Ethical approvals and reviews by relevant national and institutional review boards must be sought where required.
- 82. The team and evaluation manager will not have been involved in the design, implementation or monitoring of this USDA McGovern-Dole FY17 School Feeding programme implemented by WFP Laos CO nor have any other potential or perceived conflicts of interest. All members of the evaluation team will abide by the [2020 UNEG Ethical Guidelines](#), including the Pledge of Ethical Conduct as well as the WFP technical note on gender. The evaluation team and individuals who participate directly in the evaluation at the time of issuance of the purchase order are expected to sign a confidentiality agreement and a commitment to ethical conduct. These templates will be provided by the country office when signing the contract.

4.5. QUALITY ASSURANCE

- 83. The WFP evaluation quality assurance system sets out processes with steps for quality assurance and templates for evaluation products based on a set of [Quality Assurance Checklists](#). The quality assurance will be systematically applied during this evaluation and relevant documents will be provided to the evaluation team. This includes checklists for feedback on quality for each of the evaluation products. The relevant checklist will be applied at each stage, to ensure the quality of the evaluation process and outputs.
- 84. The WFP Decentralized Evaluation Quality Assurance System (DEQAS) is based on the UNEG norms and standards and good practice of the international evaluation community and aims to ensure that the evaluation process and products conform to best practice. This quality assurance process does not interfere with the views or independence of the evaluation team but ensures that the report provides credible evidence and analysis in a clear and convincing way and draws its conclusions on that basis.
- 85. The WFP evaluation manager will be responsible for ensuring that the evaluation progresses as per the [DEQAS Process Guide](#) and for conducting a rigorous quality control of the evaluation products ahead of their finalization.
- 86. To enhance the quality and credibility of decentralized evaluations, an outsourced quality support (QS) service directly managed by the WFP Office of Evaluation reviews the draft ToR, the draft inception and the

evaluation reports, and provides a systematic assessment of their quality from an evaluation perspective, along with recommendations.

87. The evaluation manager will share the assessment and recommendations from the quality support service with the team leader, who will address the recommendations when finalizing the inception and evaluation reports. To ensure transparency and credibility of the process in line with the [UNEG norms and standards](#),^[1] a rationale should be provided for comments that the team does not take into account when finalizing the report.
88. The evaluation team will be required to ensure the quality of data (reliability, consistency and accuracy) throughout the data collection, synthesis, analysis and reporting phases.
89. The evaluation team should be assured of the accessibility of all relevant documentation within the provisions of the directive on disclosure of information. This is available in the [WFP Directive CP2010/001](#) on information disclosure.
90. All final evaluation reports will be subject to a post hoc quality assessment (PHQA) by an independent entity through a process that is managed by the Office of Evaluation. The overall PHQA results will be published on the WFP website alongside the evaluation report.

^[1] [UNEG](#) Norm #7 states “that transparency is an essential element that establishes trust and builds confidence, enhances stakeholder ownership and increases public accountability”

5. Organization of the evaluation

5.1. PHASES AND DELIVERABLES

The evaluation will proceed through the following phases. The deliverables and deadlines for each phase are as follows (refer to Annex 2 for further details):

Figure 1: Summary Process Map



Please refer to an evaluation schedule in Annex 2

1) Inception phase, timeline is from 21 June to 25 August 2021. The evaluation team is required to share the Inception Report for the baseline study of USDA McGovern-Dole FY2020 School Feeding. The Inception report of the baseline study of USDA McGovern-Dole FY2020 School Feeding will include the methodology of the baseline study, sample size and locations of villages/schools to be visited during field data collection or remote data collection (in case of travel restriction or lockdown due to COVID-19), review and analysis of secondary data, tentative key informants for focus group discussion, and interviews.

Deliverables: Workplan, Quality Assurance Plan, and Inception Report.

2) Data collection phase, timeline is from 27 August to 20 September 2021. The evaluation team is required to collect sufficient and reliable data to enable evaluation questions to be answered, by conducting field visits or remote calls (in case of travel restriction or lockdown due to COVID-19) to collect primary data, key informant information, etc. In addition, the ET is required to prepare a plan B option for primary data collection in case of travel restrictions or lock-downs in which data collection may only be possible remotely for all sampled communities/schools. The evaluation team is also expected to conduct an end-of-fieldwork debriefing session complemented by a written document or Power Point presentation.

Deliverables: Data Collection Tools, Clean Datasets, and debriefing powerpoint presentation.

3) Analyse data and report phase, timeline is from 20 September to 30 November 2021. The evaluation team is required to finalize the analysis of data gathered, produce a draft evaluation report which presents the key findings, conclusions and recommendations in an accessible manner with a 2-3 page stand-alone brief describing the evaluation design, key findings and other relevant considerations. It will serve to inform any interested stakeholders of the midterm evaluation, and should be written in language easy to understand by non-evaluators and with appropriate graphics and tables. The evaluation team is expected to produce a final report by 12 December 2021. All final versions of international food assistance evaluation reports will be made publicly available. Evaluators shall provide a copy of the evaluation reports that is free of personally identifiable information (PII) and proprietary information. Final versions of evaluation reports ready for publication should be accessible to persons with disabilities. For guidance on creating documents accessible to persons with disabilities, please see the following resources: <https://www.section508.gov/create/documents> <https://www.section508.gov/create/pdfs>

Deliverables: Draft Evaluation Report (with performance indicators annex), Final Evaluation Report, Presentation of Evaluation.

91. Table 4 presents the structure of the main phases of the evaluation, along with the deliverables and deadlines for each phase. Annex 2 presents a more detailed timeline.

Table 4: Summary timeline – key evaluation milestones

Main phases	Indicative timeline	Tasks and deliverables	Responsible
1. Preparation	11 January to 20 June 2021	Preparation of ToR Selection of the evaluation team & contracting Document review	Evaluation manager
2. Inception	21 June to 26 August 2021	Inception mission Inception report	Evaluation Team
3. Data collection	27 August to 20 September 2021	Fieldwork Exit debriefing	Evaluation Team
4. Reporting	20 September to 30 November 2021	Data analysis and report drafting Comments process Evaluation report	Evaluation Team Evaluation Manager
5. Dissemination and follow-up	1-30 December 2021	Management response Dissemination of the evaluation report	Evaluation Manager WFP Laos CO Programme and Management Team

5.2. EVALUATION TEAM COMPOSITION

92. The evaluation team is expected to include at least two members, including the team leader and a mix of national and international evaluator(s) will be required. To the extent possible, the evaluation will be conducted by a gender-balanced and geographically and culturally diverse team with appropriate skills to assess gender dimensions of the subject as specified in the scope, approach and methodology sections of the ToR. At least one team member should have WFP experience.
93. The team will be multi-disciplinary and include members who, together, include an appropriate balance of technical expertise and practical knowledge in the following areas:
- The evaluation team will need to ensure a complementary mix of expertise in the technical areas covered by the evaluations for both national and international evaluators (excluding field enumerators). To the extent possible, the evaluation will be conducted by a gender-balanced, geographically and culturally diverse team with appropriate skills to assess gender dimensions of the subject as specified in the scope, approach and methodology sections of the TOR. At least two team members should have experience in conducting evaluation exercises for WFP-implemented programs funded by McGovern-Dole.
 - 3-4 members including McGovern-Dole Team Manager, with appropriate balance of expertise and practical knowledge in the following areas:
 - Institutional capacity development (with a focus on establishing national systems, cost-efficiency analysis, supply chain management)
 - School feeding, education, nutrition, food security, systems strengthening.
 - All team members should have strong analytical and communication skills, evaluation experience with a track record of written work on similar assignments, and familiarity with Asia and Pacific regions.

Other areas of expertise may include:

- Gender expertise / good knowledge of gender analysis, and gender responsive evaluation
 - Evaluation designs and methods (both qualitative and quantitative)
 - Knowledge management
 - All team members should have strong analytical and communication skills, evaluation experience and familiarity with Lao PDR and/or the region.
 - All team members should have strong skills in oral and written English. For the national team members should have strong skills in oral and written Lao, and able to communicate in ethnic minority dialects will be preferable.
94. The team leader will have expertise in one of the key competencies listed above as well as demonstrated experience in leading similar evaluations, including designing methodology and data collection tools. She/he will also have leadership, analytical and communication skills, including a track record of excellent English writing, synthesis and presentation skills. Her/his primary responsibilities will be: i) defining the evaluation approach and methodology; ii) guiding and managing the team; iii) leading the evaluation mission and representing the evaluation team; and iv) drafting and revising, as required, the inception report, the end of field work (i.e. exit) debriefing presentation and evaluation report in line with DEQAS.
95. Team members will: i) contribute to the methodology in their area of expertise based on a document review; ii) conduct field work; iii) participate in team meetings and meetings with stakeholders; and iv) contribute to the drafting and revision of the evaluation products in their technical area(s).
96. The evaluation team will conduct the evaluation under the direction of its team leader and in close communication with Sengarun BUDCHARERN - the WFP Laos CO evaluation manager. The team will be hired following agreement with WFP on its composition.

5.3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

97. The WFP Laos Country Office management (Director or Deputy Director) will take responsibility to:
- Assign an evaluation manager for the evaluation [Sengarun BUDCHARERN, M&E Officer]
 - Compose the internal evaluation committee and the evaluation reference group (see below)
 - Approve the final ToR, inception and evaluation reports
 - Approve the evaluation team selection
 - Ensure the independence and impartiality of the evaluation at all stages, including establishment of an evaluation committee and a reference group
 - Participate in discussions with the evaluation team on the evaluation design and the evaluation subject, its performance and results with the evaluation manager and the evaluation team
 - Organize and participate in two separate debriefings, one internal and one with external stakeholders
 - Oversee dissemination and follow-up processes, including the preparation of a management response to the evaluation recommendations.
98. The **evaluation manager** manages the evaluation process through all phases including: drafting this ToR; identifying the evaluation team; preparing and managing the budget; setting up the evaluation committee and evaluation reference group; ensuring quality assurance mechanisms are operational and effectively used; consolidating and sharing comments on draft inception and evaluation reports with the evaluation team; ensuring that the team has access to all documentation and information necessary to the evaluation; facilitating the team's contacts with local stakeholders; supporting the preparation of the field mission by setting up meetings and field visits, providing logistic support during the fieldwork and arranging for interpretation, if required; organizing security briefings for the evaluation team and providing any materials as required; and conducting the first level quality assurance of the evaluation products. The evaluation manager will be the main interlocutor between the team, represented by the team leader, the firm's focal point, and WFP counterparts to ensure a smooth implementation process.
99. An internal **evaluation committee** is formed to help ensure the independence and impartiality of the evaluation. The specified membership and key roles and responsibilities, including overseeing the evaluation process, making key decisions and reviewing evaluation products. Annex 3 provides further information on the composition of the evaluation committee.
100. An **evaluation reference group (ERG)** is formed as an advisory body with representation from. Please find details of list of the membership of the ERG representing the key internal and external stakeholders for the evaluation in Annex 3. The evaluation reference group members will review and comment on the draft

evaluation products and act as key informants in order to contribute to the relevance, impartiality and credibility of the evaluation by offering a range of viewpoints and ensuring a transparent process.

101. **The regional bureau:** RBB, the regional bureau will take responsibility to:

- Advise the evaluation manager and provide support to the evaluation process where appropriate
- Participate in discussions with the evaluation team on the evaluation design and on the evaluation subject as required
- Provide comments on the draft ToR, inception and evaluation reports
- Support the preparation of a management response to the evaluation and track the implementation of the recommendations.

102. While the regional evaluation officer, Yumiko KANEMITSU, will perform most of the above responsibilities, other RBB-relevant technical staff may participate in the evaluation reference group and/or comment on evaluation products as appropriate.

2. Other Stakeholders: **USDA**

- Provide inputs and comment on ToRs.
- Participate in an introduction teleconference with the selected independent evaluator prior to evaluate field work for the evaluations.
- Provide comment on the inception report as required.
- Participate in discussions of findings and recommendations that suggest changes in the project strategy, results frameworks and critical assumptions.
- Provide comment on the report

103. **Relevant WFP Headquarters divisions** will take responsibility to:

- Discuss WFP strategies, policies or systems in their area of responsibility and subject of evaluation.
- Comment on the evaluation TOR, inception and evaluation reports, as required.

104. **The Office of Evaluation (OEV).** OEV is responsible for overseeing WFP decentralized evaluation function, defining evaluation norms and standards, managing the outsourced quality support service, publishing as well submitting the final evaluation report to the PHQA. OEV also ensures a help desk function and advises the Regional Evaluation Officer, the Evaluation Manager and Evaluation teams when required. Internal and external stakeholders and/or the evaluators are encouraged to reach out to the regional evaluation officer and the Office of Evaluation helpdesk (wfp.decentralizedevaluation@wfp.org) in case of potential impartiality breaches or non-adherence to UNEG ethical guidelines.

5.4. SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS

105. **Security clearance** where required is to be obtained from the Laos CO, through UNDSS.

- Consultants hired by WFP are covered by the United Nations Department of Safety & Security (UNDSS) system for United Nations personnel, which covers WFP staff and consultants contracted directly by WFP. Independent consultants must obtain UNDSS security clearance for travelling from the designated duty station and complete the United Nations basic and advance security trainings (BSAFE & SSAFE) in advance, print out their certificates and take them with them.
- As an “independent supplier” of evaluation services to WFP, the contracted firm will be responsible for ensuring the security of the evaluation team, and adequate arrangements for evacuation for medical or situational reasons. However, to avoid any security incidents, the evaluation manager will ensure that the WFP country office registers the team members with the security officer on arrival in country and arranges a security briefing for them to gain an understanding of the security situation on the ground. The evaluation team must observe applicable United Nations Department of Safety and Security rules and regulations including taking security training (BSAFE & SSAFE), curfews (when applicable) and attending in-country briefings.

106. However, to avoid any security incidents, the Evaluation Manager is requested to ensure:

- The WFP CO registers the team members with the Security Officer on arrival in country and arranges a security briefing for them to gain an understanding of the security situation on the ground.
- The team members observe applicable UN security rules and regulations –e.g. curfews etc

107.Potential COVID related limitations. Depending on the prevailing circumstances at the time of the evaluation the evaluation team may be requested to mitigate the following potential limitations if adopting remote data collection:

- The lack of visual cues (that ease communication), loss of non-verbal visual data and the inability of the evaluator to use body language for probing were limitations
- Poor mobile connectivity also leading to dropping of some sample points and re-sampling new respondents.
- Limited time and complexity of questions: While the tools used during a baseline face-to-face study can be more detailed, phone surveys are unavoidably constrained by time and hence, require shorter and concise tools.
- Selection bias of respondents: using remote data collection mechanisms can limit the reach to the vulnerable population of the study regions.
- Also, the protracted timelines and delay caused in conducting a study owing to the pandemic can add to the challenge of finding relevant and up to date data.
- Lack of observation data: Key outcome indicators (skills of teachers, administrators, cooks; personal hygiene; sanitation behavior by students) could not be reported due to lack of observation data.

5.5. COMMUNICATION

108.To ensure a smooth and efficient process and enhance the learning from this evaluation, the evaluation team should place emphasis on transparent and open communication with key stakeholders. These will be achieved by ensuring a clear agreement on channels and frequency of communication with and between key stakeholders specified in the communication and knowledge management plan in Annex 5.

109.Should translators be required for fieldwork, the evaluation firm will make arrangements and include the cost in the budget proposal.

110.Based on the stakeholder analysis, the communication and knowledge management plan (in Annex 5) identifies the users of the evaluation to involve in the process and to whom the report should be disseminated. The communication and knowledge management plan indicates how findings including gender, equity and wider inclusion issues will be disseminated and how stakeholders interested in, or affected by, gender, equity and wider inclusion issues will be engaged.

111.As part of the international standards for evaluation, WFP requires that all evaluations are made publicly available. It is important that evaluation reports are accessible to a wide audience, thereby contributing to the credibility of WFP – through transparent reporting – and the use of evaluation. Following the approval of the final evaluation report, as having described the communication and knowledge management plan.

5.6. BUDGET

112.This baseline study will be financed from the WFP Laos Country Office using the M&E budget allocation in the McGovern-Dole grant funds.

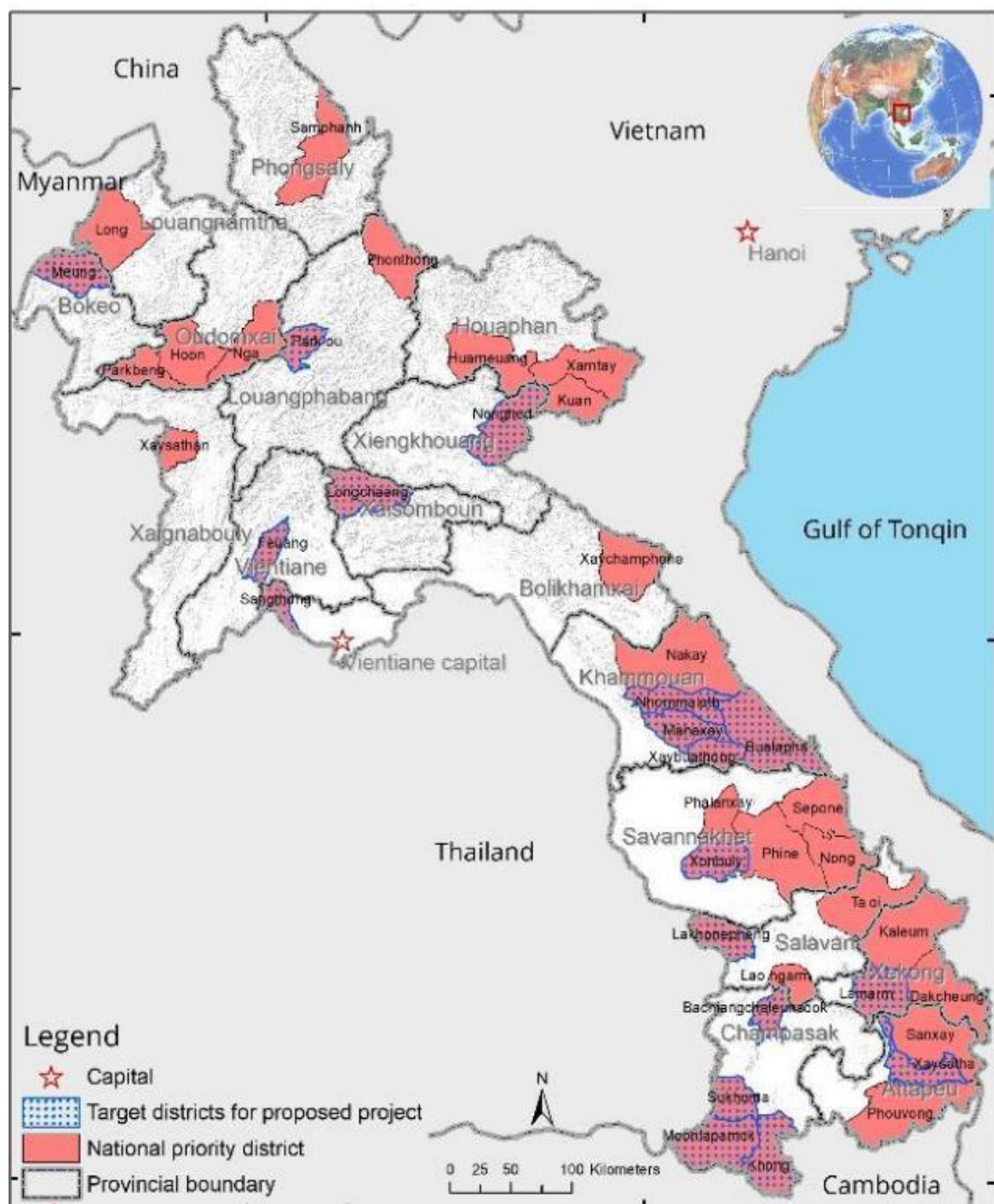
113.The offer will include a detailed budget for the evaluation, including consultant fees, travel costs and other costs (interpreters, etc.). For the purpose of this evaluation, the service provider will:

- Include budget for travel for all relevant in-country data collection (both qualitative and quantitative)
- Hire and supervise any and all technical and administrative assistance required (including in-country).
- The final budget and handling will be determined by the option of contracting that will be used and the rates that will apply at the time of contracting.
- Follow the agreed rates for decentralized evaluations as provided for in the Long-Term Agreement (LTA) with WFP

114. Please send any queries to George GEGELIA, Sr. Procurement Officer, Regional Bureau Bangkok (RBB) at email: george.gegelia@wfp.org.

Annexes

Annex 1: Map



Annex 2: Timeline

	Phases, deliverables and timeline	Key dates
	Phase 1 - Preparation	Up to 9 weeks
EM	Desk review, draft ToR and quality assurance (QA) by EM and REO using ToR QC	11-31 Jan 2021
EM	Share draft ToR with quality support service (DEQS) and organize follow-up call with DEQS	1-3 Feb 2021 (3 days)
EM	Review draft ToR based on DEQS and REO feedback and share with ERG	4-5 Feb 2021 (3 days)
EM	Start identification of evaluation team	April 2021
ERG	Review and comment on draft ToR	March - April 2021
EM	Review draft ToR based on comments received and submit final ToR to EC Chair	28 April – 14 May 2021
EC Chair	Approve the final ToR and share with ERG and key stakeholders	17-20 May 2021
EM	Assess evaluation proposals and recommends team selection	20 May – 20 June 2021
EM	Evaluation team recruitment/contracting	20 May – 20 June 2021
EC Chair	Approve evaluation team selection and recruitment of evaluation team	20 May – 20 June 2021
	Phase 2 - Inception	Up to 7 weeks
EM/TL	Brief core team	21 June 2021 (1 day)
ET	Desk review of key documents	22-24 June 2021 3 days
	Inception mission in the country (if applicable)	NA
ET	Draft inception report	25 June – 5 July 2021
EM	Quality assurance of draft IR by EM and REO using QC, share draft IR with quality support service (DEQS) and organize follow-up call with DEQS	6 – 13 July 2021 (1 week)
ET	Review draft IR based on feedback received by DEQS, EM and REO	15-22 July 2021 (1 week)
EM	Share revised IR with ERG	26 July - 6 August 2021

ERG	Review and comment on draft IR	26 July - 6 August 2021
EM	Consolidate comments	7-10 August 2021
ET	Review draft IR based on feedback received and submit final revised IR	11-18 August 2021
EM	Review final IR and submit to the evaluation committee for approval	20 August 2021
EC Chair	Approve final IR and share with ERG for information	21-25 August 2021
Phase 3 – Data collection		Up to 3 weeks
EC Chair/ EM	Brief the evaluation team at CO	27 August 2021 (1 day)
ET	Data collection	30 August – 17 September 2021 (3 weeks)
ET	In-country debriefing (s)	20 Sept 2021 (1 day)
Phase 4 - Reporting		Up to 11 weeks
ET	Draft evaluation report	20 Sept - 8 October 2021 (3 weeks)
EM	Quality assurance of draft ER by EM and REO using the QC, share draft ER with quality support service (DEQS) and organize follow-up call with DEQS	9-16 October 2021 (1 week)
ET	Review and submit draft ER based on feedback received by DEQS, EM and REO	17-23 October 2021
EM	Circulate draft ER for review and comments to ERG, RB and other stakeholders	25 October – 5 November 2021
ERG	Review and comment on draft ER	24 October 2021
EM	Consolidate comments received	6-10 November 2021
ET	Review draft ER based on feedback received and submit final revised ER	26-29 November 2021
EM	Review final revised ER and submit to the evaluation committee	30 November 2021

EC Chair	Approve final evaluation report and share with key stakeholders for information	30 November 2021
Phase 5 - Dissemination and follow-up		Up to 4 weeks
EC Chair	Prepare management response	1-30 December 2021
EM	Share final evaluation report and management response with the REO and OEV for publication and participate in end-of-evaluation lessons learned call	

Annex 3: Role and Composition of the Evaluation Committee

Purpose and role: The purpose of the evaluation committee (EC) is to ensure a credible, transparent, impartial and quality evaluation in accordance with WFP evaluation policy. It will achieve this by supporting the evaluation manager in making decisions, reviewing draft deliverables (ToR, inception report and evaluation report) and submitting them for approval by the Country Director/Deputy Country Director (CD/DCD) who will be the chair of the committee.

Composition: The evaluation committee will be composed of the following staff:

- The Deputy Country Director (Chair of the Evaluation Committee)
- Evaluation manager (Evaluation Committee Secretariat)
- Head of Programme or programme officer(s) directly in charge of the subject(s) of evaluation
- Regional evaluation officer (REO)
- Country office monitoring and evaluation (M&E) Assistant
- Country office school feeding programme team.
- **Internal Evaluation Committee** for USDA McGovern-Dole FY2020 – Baseline Study

No.	Core member	Alternate
1	Jacqueline de Groot (Deputy Country Director)	
2	Fumitsugu Tusu (Head of Programme)	Outhai Sihalath
3	Yangxia Lee	Air Sensomphone
4	Phouthisinh Khamvongsa	Sengphet Laopaoher
5	Joelle Dahm	
6	Sengarun Budcharern (Evaluation Manager)	Khammon Phommakeo

Annex 4: Role and Composition of the Evaluation Reference Group

Purpose and role: The evaluation reference group (ERG) is an advisory group providing advice and feedback to the evaluation manager and the evaluation team at key moments during the evaluation process. It is established during the preparatory stage of the evaluation and is mandatory for all decentralized evaluations.

The overall purpose of the evaluation reference group is to contribute to the credibility, utility and impartiality of the evaluation. For this purpose, its composition and role are guided by the following principles:

- **Transparency:** Keeping relevant stakeholders engaged and informed during key steps ensures transparency throughout the evaluation process
- **Ownership and Use:** Stakeholders' participation enhances ownership of the evaluation process and products, which in turn may impact on its use
- **Accuracy:** Feedback from stakeholders at key steps of the preparatory, data collection and reporting phases contributes to accuracy of the facts and figures reported in the evaluation and of its analysis.

Members are expected to review and comment on draft evaluation deliverables and share relevant insights at key consultation points of the evaluation process.

The main roles of the evaluation reference group are as follows:

- Review and comment on the draft ToR
- Suggest key references and data sources in their area of expertise
- Participate in face-to-face or virtual briefings to the evaluation team during the inception phase and/or evaluation phase
- Review and comment on the draft inception report
- Participate in field debriefings (optional)
- Review and comment on the draft evaluation report and related annexes, with a particular focus on: a) factual errors and/or omissions that could invalidate the findings or change the conclusions; b) issues of political sensitivity that need to be refined in the way they are addressed or in the language used; c) recommendations
- Participate in learning workshops to validate findings and discuss recommendations
- Provide guidance on suggested communications products to disseminate learning from the evaluation.
- External Reference Group for USDA McGovern-Dole FY2020 – Baseline Study

Core members	
Yumiko Kanemitsu (Regional Evaluation Advisor)	Anna Inzeo (Partnership Officer WFP Washington)
Niamh O'Grady (HQ Evaluation Officer, School Based Programmes)	Luna Kim (Regional Monitoring Advisor)
Nadya Frank (RBB School Feeding)	Mr. Maaly Vourabouth, Deputy Director of Planning Department, and Director General of EMIS, Ministry of Education and Sports
Mrs. Dala Khiemthammakhoun,	Mr. Houmphanh Keo Ounkham

Acting Director Inclusive Education Center, Ministry of Education and Sports	Deputy Director of Inclusive Education Center – Ministry of Education and Sports
Mamie Clarke, USDA Analyst	Katherine McBride, TFAA-FAS, Washington, DC
Sengarun Budcharern (Evaluation Manager, M&E Officer)	Khammon Phommakeo (M&E Assistant)

Annex 5: Communication and Knowledge Management Plan

Decentralized evaluation for evidence-based decision making

WFP Office of Evaluation

Communication and Knowledge Management Plan

Part 1: The Internal (WFP) Communications Plan

When Evaluation phase	What- Communication product/ information	To whom-Target group or individuals / position (e.g. country office staff, technical staff etc)	What level Organizational level of communication (e.g. strategic, operational, field etc.)	From whom Lead commissioning office staff with name/position (e.g. Country Office Director, evaluation manager etc)	How (in what way) Communication means (e.g. meeting, interaction, written report, email etc.)	Why-Purpose of communication (e.g. solicit comments, seek approval, share findings for organizational learning)
Planning	Tentative time and scope of evaluation	WFP CO Laos – Programme Team – SO1 Programme Manager and Team Head of Programme	Programme staff	Evaluation Manager and Head of Programme	Meeting and emails	To ensure evaluation is reflected in work plans for the office as well as PACE for involved staff including the evaluation manager
Preparation/TOR	Draft TOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key stakeholders Through the Internal Evaluation Committee, RBB Evaluation Team, and DEQS.• Head of Programme, programme staff, and Evaluation Manager	Management and technical level (Head of Programme and SO1 School Feeding Programme Staff)	Sengarun Budcharern – WFP CO M&E Officer as Evaluation manager on behalf of the evaluation committee	Both face-to-face and MS Teams Meetings and Emails	To get comments/inputs on the draft ToR

When Evaluation phase	What- Communication product/ information	To whom-Target group or individuals / position (e.g. country office staff, technical staff etc)	What level <i>Organizational level of communication (e.g. strategic, operational, field etc.)</i>	From whom <i>Lead commissioning office staff with name/position (e.g. Country Office Director, evaluation manager etc)</i>	How (in what way) <i>Communication means (e.g. meeting, interaction, written report, email etc.)</i>	Why-Purpose of communication (e.g. solicit comments, seek approval, share findings for organizational learning)
	Final TOR	Key stakeholders through the Internal Evaluation Committee and the External Evaluation Reference Group, WFP CO Laos management, Head of Programme and programme staff – SO1 School Feeding team and the relevant support staff	Both management and technical level; Chair of Evaluation – DCD and the Internal Evaluation Committee, RBB Evaluation Team and WFP CO SO1 School Feeding programme team	WFP CO M&E Officer - Evaluation manager	Emails	To inform the relevant staff of the overall plan for the evaluation, including critical dates and milestones. To informs the support staff on the selected option for contracting team
Inception	Draft Inception report	Key stakeholders through the Internal Evaluation Committee and the External Evaluation Reference Group, DEQS, WFP CO Laos management, Head of Programme and programme staff	Management and technical level	Evaluation manager on behalf of the evaluation committee	MS Teams Meetings and Emails	To get comments/inputs on the draft Inception Report
	Final Inception Report	Key stakeholders through the Evaluation reference Group WFP CO Laos management and programme staff -relevant support staff -Field level staff (sub-offices, field offices, area offices)	management and technical level at both CO and FO levels. -HoFOs and FO operations staff	Evaluation manager, on behalf of the evaluation committee	Emails	To inform the relevant staff of the detailed plan for the evaluation, including critical dates and milestones; sites to be visited; stakeholders to be engaged etc. To informs the field office support staff (especially administration) of required logistical supports

When Evaluation phase	What- Communication product/ information	To whom-Target group or individuals / position (e.g. country office staff, technical staff etc)	What level <i>Organizational level of communication (e.g. strategic, operational, field etc.)</i>	From whom <i>Lead commissioning office staff with name/position (e.g. Country Office Director, evaluation manager etc)</i>	How (in what way) <i>Communication means (e.g. meeting, interaction, written report, email etc.)</i>	Why-Purpose of communication (e.g. solicit comments, seek approval, share findings for organizational learning)
Data collection	Debriefing powerpoint	WFP CO Laos management, RBB Evaluation Team, CO and FO programme staff	Strategic and operation/technical levels	Team leader (may be sent to EM who then forwards to the relevant staff)	MS Teams Meeting and Emails	Allow reflection on the preliminary findings before the scheduled debriefing.
Data Analysis and Reporting	Draft Evaluation report	Key stakeholders through the Internal Evaluation Committee and the External Evaluation Reference Group, RBB Evaluation Team, WFP CO Laos management and programme staff	Management and technical levels	Evaluation manager, on behalf of the evaluation committee	MS Teams Meetings and Emails	Request for comments on the draft report
	Final evaluation Report	Key stakeholders through the Evaluation reference Group WFP CO Laos management and programme, and other staff - RBB Evaluation Advisor and Team - WFP HQ - OEV - Global WFP	All levels -Users of WFPgo	Evaluation manager shares the final report through RBB Evaluation Advisor.	Email	Informing internal stakeholders of the final main product from the evaluation -Making the report available publicly
Dissemination & Follow-up	Draft Management Response to the evaluation recommendations	- CO Programme and M&E staff -Senior Regional Programme Adviser level (RBB School Feeding Programme Team) - RBB Evaluation Advisor and team.	Management and technical	Evaluation manager	Email, -and/or an organized face-to-face session	-communicate the suggested actions on recommendations and elicit comments -discuss the commissioning office's action to address the evaluation recommendations

When Evaluation phase	What- Communication product/ information	To whom -Target group or individuals / position (e.g. country office staff, technical staff etc)	What level Organizational level of communication (e.g. strategic, operational, field etc.)	From whom Lead commissioning office staff with name/position (e.g. Country Office Director, evaluation manager etc)	How (in what way) Communication means (e.g. meeting, interaction, written report, email etc.)	Why-Purpose of communication (e.g. solicit comments, seek approval, share findings for organizational learning)
	Final management Response	-Staff in the commissioning office -Global WFP	- All levels -Users of WFPgo	Evaluation manager	Email, plus shared folders Posting report and MR on WFPgo	-Ensure that all relevant staff are informed on the commitments made on taking actions -Make MR accessible across WFP
<i>Others</i>						

Part 2: The External Communications Plan

When <i>Evaluation phase plus month/year</i>	What <i>Communication product (e.g. TOR, inception report, Final Report etc)</i>	To whom -Target organization or individuals/position (e.g. NGO partner, head of government ministry, donor representative)	What level <i>Organizational level of communication (e.g. strategic, operational, field etc.)</i>	From whom <i>Lead commissioning office staff with name/position (e.g. Country Office Director, evaluation manager)</i>	How <i>Communication means (e.g. meeting, interaction, etc.)</i>	Why <i>Purpose of communication (e.g. solicit comments, share findings for accountability)</i>
Planning	Tentative time and scope of evaluation	Government counterparts, NGO partners (CRS), UN agency partners, donors	Strategic + Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fumitsugu Tusu, WFP CO Head of Programme. • Yangxia Lee, WFP CO SO1 School Feeding Manager. • Sengarun B. M&E Officer – Evaluation Manager 	Meeting and Emails	To confirm the intention to learn/ account for results for the baseline study of USDA McGovern-Dole FY20 School Feeding Programme
Preparation	Draft TOR	Key stakeholders Through the Evaluation reference Group; and directly to stakeholders not represented in the ERG	Operational/ Technical	Sengarun B. Evaluation manager	Email; plus a meeting of the ERG if required	To seek for review and comments on TOR
	Final TOR	Key stakeholders Through the Evaluation reference Group; and/or directly	Strategic + Operational/ Technical	Sengarun B. Evaluation manager	Email; plus discussions during scheduled coordination meetings as appropriate	Informing stakeholders of the overall plan, purpose, scope and timing of the evaluation; and their role
Inception	Draft Inception report	Key stakeholders through the Evaluation reference Group; and/or directly	Operational/ technical	Sengarun B. Evaluation manager	Email	To seek for review and comments on draft Inception report

When	What	To whom -Target organization or individuals/position (e.g. NGO partner, head of government ministry, donor representative)	What level	From whom	How	Why
Evaluation phase plus month/year	Communication product (e.g. TOR, inception report, Final Report etc)		Organizational level of communication (e.g. strategic, operational, field etc.)	Lead commissioning office staff with name/position (e.g. Country Office Director, evaluation manager)	Communication means (e.g. meeting, interaction, etc.)	Purpose of communication (e.g. solicit comments, share findings for accountability)
	Final Inception Report	Key stakeholders through the Evaluation reference Group; and/or directly	Strategic + Operational/ Technical	WFP CO Laos DCD as Chair of Evaluation with supports from Head of Program and Evaluation Manager	Email; plus discussions during scheduled coordination meetings as appropriate	Informing stakeholders of the detailed plan of the evaluation; and their role including when they will be engaged
Data collection and analysis debrief	Debriefing power-point	Key stakeholders through the Evaluation reference Group; and/or directly	Technical/ operational	Evaluation manager And/or the head of programme, and SO1 School Feeding programme manager	Email	Invite the stakeholders to the external debriefing meeting, to discuss the preliminary findings
Reporting	Draft Evaluation report	Key stakeholders through the Evaluation reference Group; and/or directly	Management and technical levels	Evaluation manager, on behalf of the evaluation committee	Email	Request for comments on the draft report
	Final evaluation Report	-Key stakeholders through the Evaluation reference Group; and/or directly -General public	All levels -Users of WFP.org -Users of partners websites	-Evaluation manager; RBB Evaluation Advisor plus the head of programme - Focal point at the partner organizations	Email -Posting report on WFP.org -Posting on partners websites	Informing all key stakeholders of the final main product from the evaluation -Making the report available publicly
	Draft Management	-Key stakeholders through the Evaluation	Management and technical level,	Evaluation manager, on behalf of the evaluation	-Email,	-communicate the suggested actions on

When	What	To whom -Target organization or individuals/position (e.g. NGO partner, head of government ministry, donor representative)	What level	From whom	How	Why
<i>Evaluation phase plus month/year</i>	<i>Communication product (e.g. TOR, inception report, Final Report etc)</i>		<i>Organizational level of communication (e.g. strategic, operational, field etc.)</i>	<i>Lead commissioning office staff with name/position (e.g. Country Office Director, evaluation manager)</i>	<i>Communication means (e.g. meeting, interaction, etc.)</i>	<i>Purpose of communication (e.g. solicit comments, share findings for accountability)</i>
Dissemination & Follow-up	Response to the evaluation recommendations	reference Group; and/or directly	depending on subject of evaluation and their responsibility in taking the action	committee and RBB Evaluation Advisor	-and/or an organized face-to-face session	recommendations and elicit comments, especially on actions required by external stakeholders
	Final Management response	-General public	-Users of WFP.org -Users of partners websites	Evaluation manager -Focal point at the partner organizations	-Posting report on WFP.org -Posting on partners websites	-Making the MR available publicly
Others						

For more information on Decentralized Evaluations visit our webpage

<http://newgo.wfp.org/how-do-i/do-an-evaluation>

Or contact the DE team at: wfp.decentralizedevaluation@wfp.org

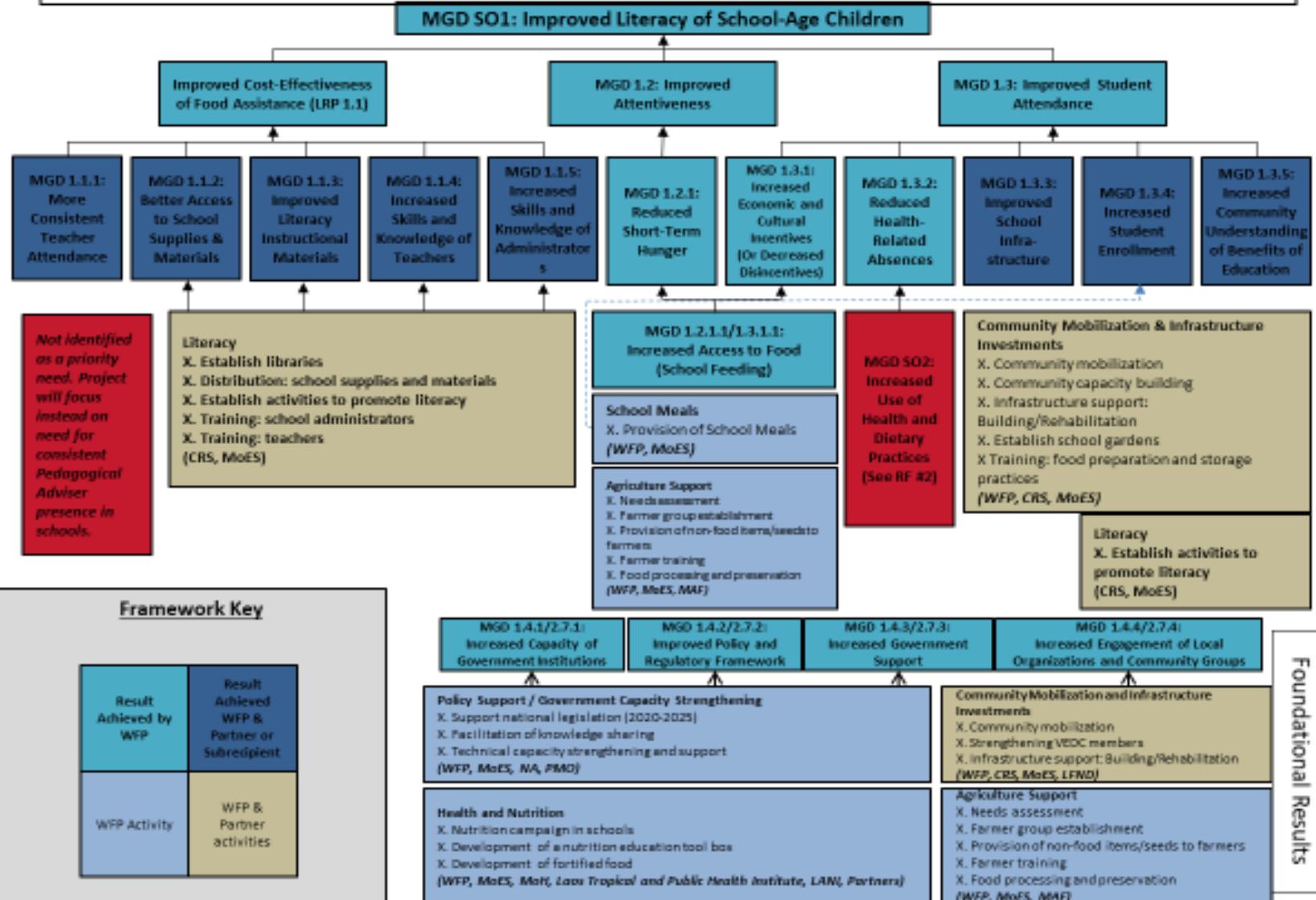
Annex 6: Acronyms

ASEAN	Associate of Southeast Asian Nations
CD	Country Director
CO	Country Office
DEQAS	Decentralized Evaluation Quality Assurance System
DESB	District Education and Sports Bureau
EDF	Education for Development Foundation
EM	Evaluation Manager
EMIS	Education Management and Information System
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
FAD	Food Assistance Division
FFE	Food for Education
GGI	Gender Gap Index
HQ	Headquarters
IEC	Internal Evaluation Committee
LDC	Least Developed Country
LMIC	Lower Middle Income Country
LRP	Local and Regional Procurement
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MoH	Ministry of Health
NSMP	National School Meal Program

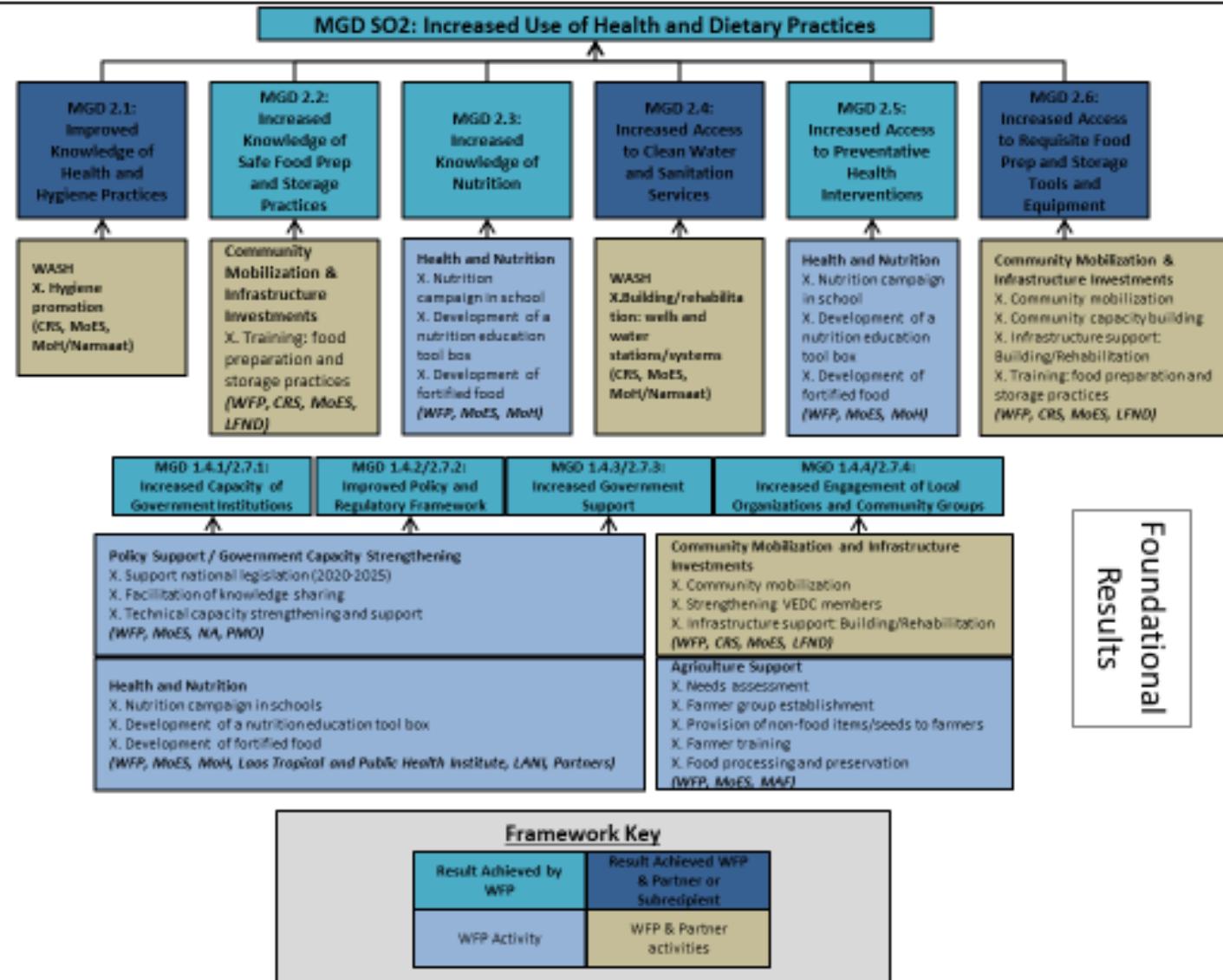
OEV	Office of Evaluation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDSS	United Nations Department of Safety and Security
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
VEDC	Village Education Development Committee
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

Annex 7: USDA McGD FY20 School Feeding Programme - Logical Framework

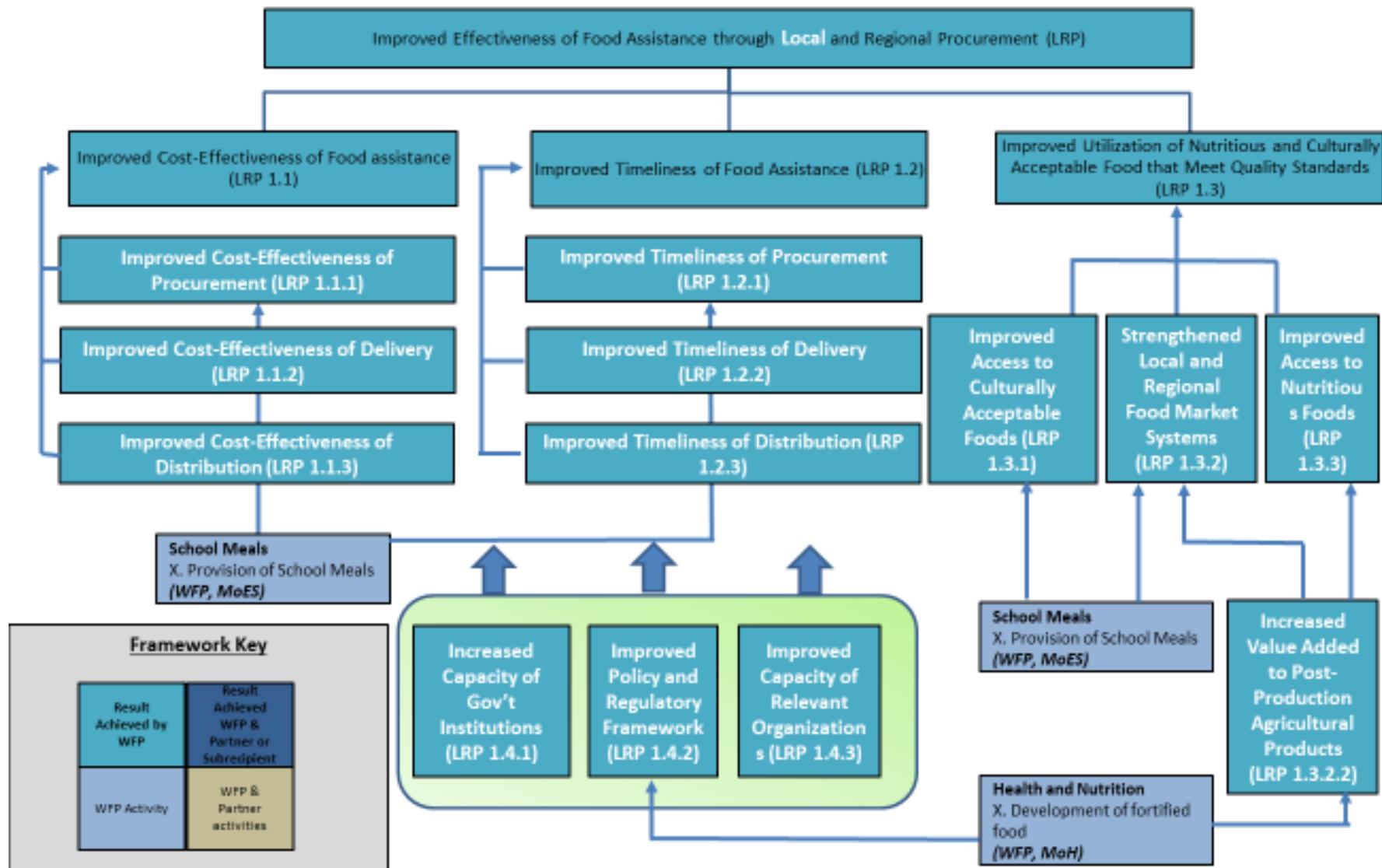
WFP-Lao PDR FY2020 McGovern-Dole Proposal: Results Framework #1



WFP-Lao PDR FY2020 McGovern-Dole Proposal: Results Framework #2



WFP-Lao PDR FY2020 McGovern-Dole Proposal: Results Framework #3 (LRP)



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