



WFP Lao PDR Country Brief November 2021

World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

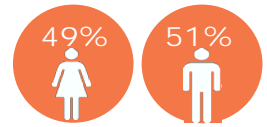


In Numbers

108.1 mt of food distributed

US\$ 504,000 six-month (Dec 2021 - May 2022)
net funding requirements

51,124 people assisted
In November 2021



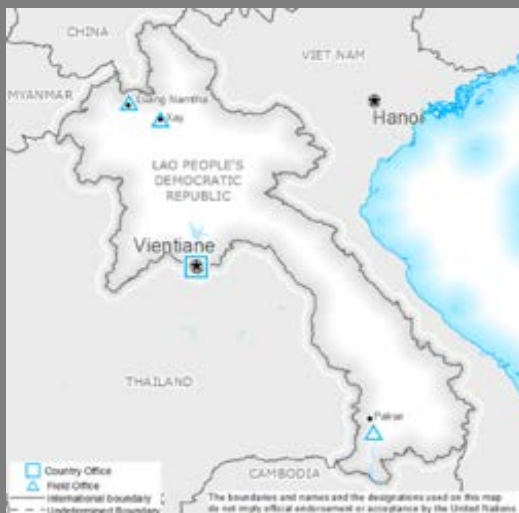
Operational Updates

- Ending almost two decades of support, WFP handed over school feeding programmes at 915 schools across eight provinces of Lao PDR to the Government. These schools will now be incorporated into the National School Meals Programme, WFP will continue to provide technical support. At the same time, WFP is starting up school feeding activities in 718 schools in 18 priority districts on Government request, supported by the U.S. Government's McGovern-Dole Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program.
- In partnership with cooperating partners, Big Brother Mouse and Room-to-Read, WFP continued to complete its literacy promotion activities for the schools that were handed over to the Government. Additionally, WFP supported data collection activities utilising mobile devices to collect data on literacy.
- WFP completed distribution of the Green Box initiative to 515 target schools that WFP had handed over to the Government in 2019. The boxes contain teaching tools and guidance for teachers on nutrition, environment, school agriculture and WASH. The materials were developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Sports. WFP completed ToTs for 14 master trainers from the Ministry. The master trainers will cascade the training to district education officials from nine target districts in December, who in turn will roll out this training to schools.
- In November, WFP continued providing unconditional food assistance to returning migrant labourers in quarantine centres across nine provinces in Lao PDR. Through partnerships with World Vision International and the Swiss Red Cross, the assistance has reached 4,210 people (2,176 women) with a total value of US\$ 190,941.
- In partnership with the Lao Red Cross, WFP supported food assistance activities to flood affected communities in Xayaboury Province. WFP distributed 82 mt of rice and 6 mt of fortified cooking oil in November to 3,094 beneficiaries (1,514 women) to meet a portion of their food needs for a period of two months.

Operational Context

Lao PDR is a least developed country, ranking 137 out of 189 countries in the 2020 Human Development Index. It has one of the lowest population densities in Asia. 23 percent of the population lives below the national poverty line (US\$ 1.25/day), with a GDP per capita of USD 2,630.2 (World Bank 2020). The country is ranked 137 out of 162 countries in the Gender Inequality Index 2020. The poverty rate in Lao PDR more than halved in the past two decades and the 2021 Global Hunger Index rates hunger levels as “moderate”.

Climate change is a key challenge facing rural population, and the country is vulnerable to climate change due to its low adaptability and high dependence on climate-sensitive natural resources. Changing climate patterns, combined with poor access to both markets and diverse livelihoods, further worsen the situation in remote upland areas, where 25 percent of households are food insecure. WFP has been present in Lao PDR since 1975.



Population: **6.5 million**

Human Development Index: **137 out of 189**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

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

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Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
92.83 m	95.95 m	0.50 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

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

Focus area: *Root causes*

Activities:

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

Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

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

Focus area: *Root causes*

Activities:

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

Strategic Result 4: Food systems are sustainable

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

Focus area: *Resilience*

Activities:

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

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

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

Focus area: *Root causes*

Activities:

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

- Together with the National Nutrition Centre, WFP facilitated a two-day ToT session on the workforce nutrition programme, which was developed as part of WFP's convening role of the SUN Business Network. The programme is tailored to businesses that are interested in promoting nutrition in the workplace. Participants were trained on how to use the package of 30 tools. As a next step, the trainees will train district health staff in Vientiane capital and support the implementation of workforce nutrition training in garment factories.
- In partnership with Helen Keller International, WFP kicked off a study that will generate understanding and evidence on the drivers of food choice among primary school-aged children. To introduce the study to stakeholders and gather input, WFP and Helen Keller hosted an inception meeting, bringing together 50 participants from national and provincial government and development.

Story from our programmes



Examining fortified rice at WFP's warehouse in Vientiane. Photo: © WFP Laos/Phiengphaneth Chanthalangsy.

- For the first time, WFP is using fortified rice for its school meals programme in Laos. 1,300 mt of fortified rice has arrived from the United States, which will be used to prepare healthy school lunches for 63,000 school children. In Lao PDR, micronutrient deficiencies are present and contribute to anaemia. forty percent of women of reproductive age and 44 percent of children under 5 suffer from anaemia, with long-lasting and devastating consequences.
- The Government of Lao PDR has identified rice and oil as foods for fortification, with potential to fight malnutrition on scale, because of their widespread consumption. Micronutrients such as vitamins and minerals are added to the rice, which have no effect on taste, but have a significant impact on helping to eradicate malnutrition. Together with the Ministry of Health, WFP is currently working on local production of fortified rice in Laos, with the aim of providing such rice to school children in the coming years.

Donors

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