



World Food Programme

SAVING  
LIVES  
CHANGING  
LIVES

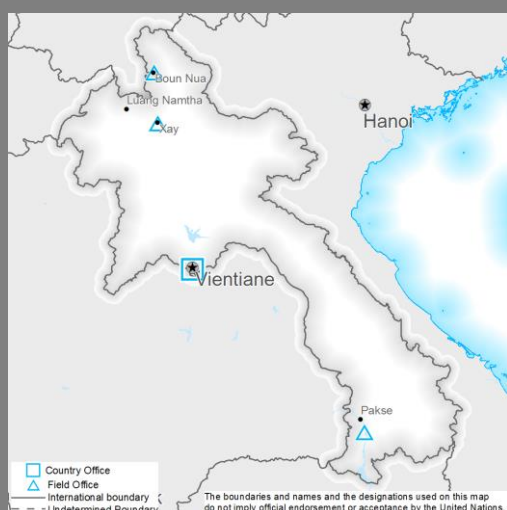
# WFP Lao PDR Country Brief June 2023



## Operational Context

Lao PDR is a least developed country, ranked 140<sup>th</sup> out of 191 countries in the 2021/2022 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 US\$2,551.30 (World Bank 2021). The country is ranked 137<sup>th</sup> out of 162 countries in the Gender Inequality Index 2020. While the poverty rate in Lao PDR more than halved in the past two decades, the 2022 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: **7.37 million**

2021/2022 Human Development Index:  
**140 out of 191 countries**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

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

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## In Numbers

**243.797 mt** of food distributed

**US\$1.5 million** six-month (July-December 2023)  
net funding requirements

**22,000** people assisted  
In June 2023



## Operational Updates

- WFP launched the Global 4Fs (food, fuel, fertilizers and feed) Crisis Lean Season Response in partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Lao Red Cross and Swiss Red Cross. Aligned with WFP's Lao Country Strategic Plan (2022-2026) Strategic Outcome 4 – crisis response, the project aims to provide improved food access to vulnerable households during the rainy season (July-September). Approximately 100,000 people across 16 districts in Luang Namtha, Oudomxay, Salavanh, and Sekong provinces will receive food assistance.
- WFP launched the Cash Assistance and Resilient Livelihoods for Improved Food Security and Nutrition project, supported by France Aide Alimentaire Programmée. The project, under WFP's CSP Strategic Outcome 2 – nutrition, aims to provide cash grants to approximately 10,600 people in 20 villages in Thateng District, Xekong Province, covering immediate food needs, supporting home gardens and livestock, and providing training in nutrition and resilience to climate-related events and shocks.
- WFP concluded the Enhancement of Food Supply and the Rehabilitation of Agricultural Infrastructure in Flood-Affected Areas Project supported by the Government of Japan in Savannakhet Province after nearly two years of implementation. In partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and World Vision International, the project distributed over 1,000 tons of food assistance, creating more than 128 community assets for flood recovery and resilience building which enhances the capacities of communities in community-based disaster risk management and benefitted over 33,000 people through the project.
- A semi-annual progress review meeting on the implementation for the McGovern-Dole project funded by the United States Department of Agriculture took place in Sangthong District, Vientiane Province. WFP, along with provincial and district education authorities, discussed the challenges faced during the last six months of project implementation and agreed on the way forward.

## Country Strategic Plan (2022-2026)

Total Requirement (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$)
85.93 m	43.89 m	1.3 m

### Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

**Strategic Outcome 1:** Schoolchildren in vulnerable areas have improved food security, nutrition and learning results through a sustainable national school meals programme by 2026

**Focus area:** Root causes

#### Activities:

- Provide direct support and technical assistance to the Government to strengthen and complement the national school meals programme and to facilitate a sustainable handover of the programme to the Government

### Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

**Strategic Outcome 2:** Vulnerable people at risk of any form of malnutrition, in particular women and girls of reproductive age, children under 5 and school-age children, have improved nutrition outcomes in line with national targets by 2026

**Focus area:** Root causes

#### Activities:

- Provide universally accessible nutrition support services for targeted populations and nutrition-related technical assistance, advocacy and evidence-based advice to the Government and other stakeholders, including in the private sector

### Strategic Result 4: Food systems are sustainable

**Strategic Outcome 3:** Vulnerable people in disaster-affected or at-risk areas have enhanced food and nutrition security all year round and increased capacity to mitigate and manage risks associated with climate and other shocks by 2026

**Focus area:** Resilience building

#### Activities:

- Provide assistance and technical support to targeted communities and government entities to build communities' resilience to climate and other shocks through strengthened capacity in disaster and climate risk management and social protection

### Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

**Strategic Outcome 4:** Crisis-affected populations in the Lao People's Democratic Republic are able to meet their food, nutrition and other essential needs during and after disasters

**Focus area:** Crisis response

#### Activities:

- Provide nutrition-sensitive cash-based transfers or food assistance to help meet the essential needs of crisis-affected people

- WFP engaged with the Ministry of Education and Sports to support the dissemination of the Prime Minister's Decree for School Lunch Promotion (SLP) at the national and provincial levels. Additional legislation related to SLP will also be published simultaneously with the Prime Minister's decree dissemination.
- WFP participated in the Annual Monsoon Season Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) meeting, as the co-chair of the Food Security, Logistics and Information Communication Technology Clusters in Lao PDR. The meeting focused on preparedness measures for the upcoming monsoon season, the potential impacts of the El Niño–Southern Oscillation in 2023 and introducing the final draft of the IASC Contingency Plan for a level 3 flooding event, which adopts a scenario-based planning approach.

## Story from the field



In the remote and mountainous villages of northern Laos, the communities rely heavily on subsistence farming, cultivating rice, and tending to tea plantations. Unfortunately, their harvests are frequently disrupted by seasonal floods and droughts, putting communities at risk of food insecurity.

WFP, in partnership with USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance, provides valuable training on disaster preparedness and ensures access to sufficient food throughout the year. The villagers work together to safeguard their village and implement community projects that enhance food security such as establishing a rice bank to ensure sufficient rice supply during lean seasons. WFP provides the necessary equipment and technical support to help the villagers construct and manage the rice bank. Furthermore, the project addresses the issue of water shortage by assisting the villagers in building a reliable water source and supply system.

The ultimate aspiration of the community is to have enough food throughout the year while also being prepared for potential disasters. With the ongoing support of this project, the villagers are hopeful for a better future, both in terms of food availability and resilience in the face of emergencies.

## Donors

Asian Development Bank (ADB), China, European Union, France, Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme, Ireland, Japan, Luxembourg, Republic of Korea, Russia, United States and private donors