



World Food Programme

SAVING  
LIVES  
CHANGING  
LIVES

# WFP Lao PDR Country Brief July 2023



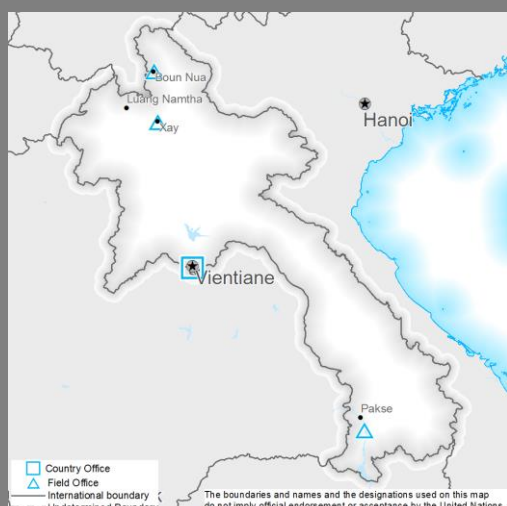
An Agriculture for Nutrition participant rolling out village nutrition session. ©WFP/Vilakhone Sipaseuth

## 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 the 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**

## In Numbers

**US\$ 1.3 million** six-month (August-December 2023) net funding requirements

## Operational Updates

- The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Lao PDR and WFP signed a Memorandum of Agreement for the second phase of the Agriculture for Nutrition (AFN) project. Over the next seven years, the project, aligned with WFP's Strategic Outcome 2 on nutrition, will focus on nutrition, gender transformation, and resilience. This initiative will benefit 28,000 vulnerable households residing across 500 villages in six provinces: Attapeu, Phongsaly, Oudomxay, Salavan, Sekong and Xiengkhaoung.
- The Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare (MLSW), together with WFP, organized the Bi-Annual Meeting for 2023 to review the overall achievement of the collaboration and partnership. The meeting enabled WFP and the Ministry to identify gaps, challenges, lessons learned and areas for improvement as well as to further enhance the partnership and improve coordination for strategic collaboration and programme implementation.
- MLSW, along with WFP, Lao Red Cross and Swiss Red Cross, successfully completed community consultation and registration for 17,451 families as part of the Global 4Fs (food, fuel, fertilizers, and feed) Crisis Lean Season Response. Under WFP's Strategic Outcome 4 on crisis response, this effort improves access to food during the rainy season (July-September) for vulnerable families, reducing the impact of high food and fuel prices across the country. Rice distribution to families residing in 220 villages across 16 districts in Luang Namtha, Oudomxay, Salavan and Sekong provinces will commence in August.
- WFP completed the delivery of rice, cooking oil and lentils to 705 schools, where WFP directly implements school meal programmes. The schools will start distributing the food in the new school term starting September.
- The Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), with the technical and financial support from WFP, organized workshops to disseminate the Prime Minister's Decree on School Lunch Promotion. The decree will establish a policy framework to enhance the school meal programmes, while increasing the national budget for school lunches by 20 percent. WFP provides the Government with technical assistance to strengthen the expanding national school meals programme.

**Contact info:** Ildiko Hamos ([Ildiko.hamos@wfp.org](mailto:Ildiko.hamos@wfp.org))  
**Country Director:** Jan Delbaere  
Further information: [www.wfp.org/countries/Lao](http://www.wfp.org/countries/Lao)

## Country Strategic Plan (2022-2026)

Total Requirement (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$)
85.93 m	55.88 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

## Donors

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

- WFP organized Training of Trainers (TOT) sessions for community mobilization to district-level education officials in six provinces: Attapeu, Champasak, Luang Prabang, Salavan, Sekong and Vientiane. Through the sessions, the government officials were equipped with the necessary skills to lead community mobilization training for the Village Education and Development Committees. The initiative aimed to enable communities to effectively implement and sustain school meal programmes.
- MoES, together with WFP, organized a workshop to assess the utilization of digital monitoring systems for the school meal programmes, involving authorities from the provincial, national, district, and school levels. The workshop aimed to enhance the system's functionality and address any practical challenges encountered in its implementation.

## Story from the field



Bounthip, a 29-year-old mother, faced a concerning situation with her 1-year-old son, who was diagnosed with moderate acute malnutrition. Collaborating with the Health Centre's staff and dedicated village volunteers, she embarked on a journey to nurse her son back to health. This involved not only feeding him more nutritious and diverse foods but also placing a strong emphasis on hygiene in cooking facilities and food preparation.

With the combined efforts from the community supported by WFP, in partnership with UNICEF, and funded by the Government of France, Bounthip's son graduated from malnutrition, attaining a healthier state.