



WFP Lao PDR Country Brief

October 2023

World Food
Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

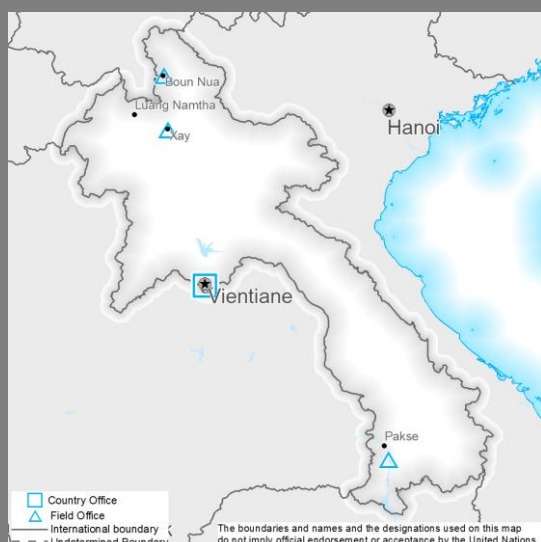


Operational Context

Lao PDR is a least developed country, with one of the lowest population densities in Asia. Eighteen percent of the population lives below the national poverty line (US\$1.25/day), with a GDP per capita of US\$ 2,088.40 (World Bank 2022). The country is ranked 120 out of 177 countries in the Gender Inequality Index 2021. 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 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 over 20 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**

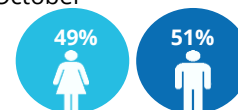
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In Numbers

160 mt of food distributed

US\$0.23 million six-month (November 2023-
April 2024) net funding requirements

43,405 people assisted in October



Operational Updates

- The Government of Germany committed to support school meals in Lao PDR over 5 years with a contribution of USD 10 million, in schools where the programme is managed by the government. The project includes a strong gender component and will strengthen local production of food in support of school meals. WFP continues to add value with technical assistance for the government-run school meal programmes.
- WFP organized orientation meetings in Oudomxay and Phongsaly provinces to brief government authorities on climate-smart and nutrition-sensitive agricultural support to farmers to improve availability of food for school meal programmes. The project, funded by the Republic of Korea, also includes a strong supervision and support component to schools from education authorities.
- WFP and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) jointly organized a technical workshop to review the monitoring system of the school meal programme with government authorities. Bottlenecks in reporting using digital monitoring systems and possible solutions to enhance the efficiency of monitoring systems were discussed during the workshop.
- The Cocreation of Food Security for Farmers with Economic Empowerment with JAPAN (COFFEE-JAPAN)-project, funded by the Government of Japan with kicked off with village orientations in Luang Prabang province. The goal of this project is to ensure food security through increased income for smallholder coffee farmers and improved nutrition for target communities. This project collaborates with a Japanese private company, Saka no Tochu, that will provide training on producing and processing quality coffee, while WFP is leading nutrition activities. In October, basic nutrition education was delivered to the villagers together with the Provincial and District Agriculture and Forestry Offices.
- Training of trainer sessions were held on the use of the Green Box, a supplementary teaching and learning toolkit for primary schools on nutrition education. The Green Box was developed in 2020 by the Ministry of Education and Sports with support of WFP. In total, 89 education officers from eight provinces were trained, who in turn will train around 3,500 teachers on the use of the toolkit in 702 target schools in 11 provinces. 1,220 boxes will be distributed to the schools later this year.

Country Strategic Plan (2022-2026)

Total Requirement (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$)
85.93 m	66.15 m	0.23 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, Lao PDR, Luxembourg, Republic of Korea, Russia, United States of America, and private donors

- WFP held a press engagement event for Lao national media staff, sharing key messages on current status and trends in food security. This is another step in the close collaboration between WFP and national media with the objective of advocacy and capacity building, utilizing the important role of journalism.
- WFP in partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare distributed 222 mt of rice to 12,561 beneficiaries (6,412 women) across 38 communities across two districts in Phongsaly Province. Participating households received 130 mt in food assistance as conditional payments for participating in food assistance for assets activities with the aim of meeting immediate food needs while building long term resilience. Supporting the establishment of community safety nets, WFP delivered 91 mt of rice to 23 of these target communities to establish community rice banks to help ensure availability of rice during lean season periods.

Story from the field



Kongkien, aged 15, is a student of the Luang Prabang Special Education School in northern Laos. Kongkien and his fellow school mates have a hearing disability. Their school is home to about 80 children from northern Laos who are unable to attend regular schools, due to their hearing impairment.

The school has been part of the government's school meal programme since 2012, supported by WFP. The children receive daily warm and nutritious meals which helps their learning and physical development. In recent years, the government has requested WFP to support with additional rice, to counterbalance the current economic hardship, high food prices and living costs. Kongkien's passion is cooking. "I feel so good when I am allowed to help in the school kitchen," he says. "I help with cutting vegetables, making soups and preparing stir-fried dishes. I get good feedback from my friends, who like the food I help prepare. I am thankful we have food at our school – this is not the case in the school back home in my village, so I feel lucky."