



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

# WFP Lao PDR Country Brief

November 2024



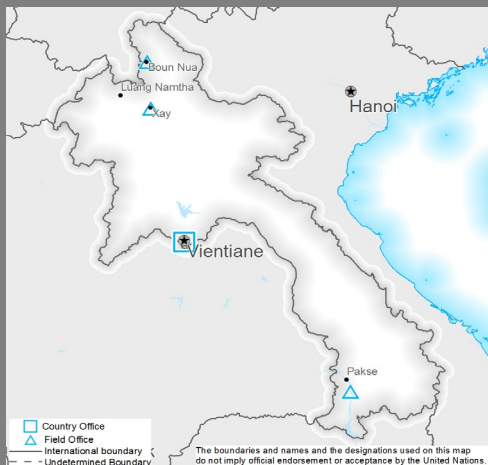
Villagers participate in Gender Action Learning System in Attapeu province ©WFP/Vilakhone Sipaseuth

## 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 (World Bank 2022). The country is ranked 116 out of 166 countries in the Gender Inequality Index 2022. 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: **7.5 million**

2022 Human Development Index: **139 out of 193 countries**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

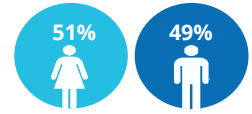
Chronic malnutrition: **33% of children between 6-59 months**

## In Numbers

**158 mt** of food dispatched

**US\$455,000** cash distributed

**67,605 people** assisted in November



## Operational Updates

- The first-ever Southeast Asian Summit of the School Meals Coalition took place in November in Siem Reap, Cambodia, bringing together delegations from ASEAN member-states engaged in school meals programmes. WFP Lao PDR's Representative and Country Director and the Vice Minister of Education and Sports (MoES) led a team of government to engage and accelerate collaboration and commitment to enhancing school meals. Lao PDR joined the Coalition last September.
- WFP provided training and agricultural inputs to improve farmers' agricultural production and supply locally grown food to schools under the home-grown school feeding initiative. With a generous contribution of US\$1.1 million from the Swiss Development Cooperation, WFP will scale up the initiative.
- WFP participated in the Pre-Intersession Policy Dialogue to the 8<sup>th</sup> ordinary National Assembly session, to brief parliamentarians about the National School Lunch Programme, and advocate for additional funding for the programme.
- WFP conducted a second round of Emo-Demos, a participatory nutrition behaviour change programme, in 16 villages of Oudomxay province. The sessions focused on iron-rich foods and feeding timelines for children aged 6 to 23 months. These activities aim to enhance the community's knowledge and practices related to nutrition.
- The second phase of the Agriculture for Nutrition project piloted the [Gender Action Learning System](#) (GALS) in four villages of Attapeu province. GALS is a participatory methodology developed by the International Fund for Agriculture Development with the aim of sharing farming and household tasks more equally and making joint decisions on nutrition-related investments.
- WFP and district officers conducted trainings on linking agriculture, nutrition and natural resources in two districts of Xieng Khouang province, supporting communities to adopt nutritious dietary practices by utilizing locally available resources.
- As part of the Sustainable Rural Infrastructure and Watershed Management Sector Project, WFP, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, distributed US\$455,000 to 3,113 smallholder

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## Country Strategic Plan (2022-2026)

Total Requirement (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$)
<b>100.72 m</b>	<b>108.89 m</b>	<b>0 m</b>

### 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

farmers in 75 villages in Houaphanh, Xieng Khouang, Xayabouly and Luang Prabang provinces. Based on their investment plan, each provinces. Each farmer received US\$146 as the first part of a US\$300 grant to buy seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and rent machinery to increase the production of high-value dry season crops.

- WFP, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, trained 32 government officials from Bokeo, Luang Namtha, Phongsaly and Oudomxay provinces on humanitarian logistics and supply chain management. The training focused on roles of humanitarian actors, the disaster management cycle, procurement and transportation during disasters, relief item management, emergency coordination, and the legal framework, to strengthen government crisis response capabilities.
- WFP, Tetra Tech (a consulting firm providing international development services) and the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare organized a workshop to review findings from a study on integrating climate risk data into social registries. Participants refined strategies to improve social protection systems, enhance data sharing and system interoperability, advance targeting mechanisms for vulnerable populations and foster inter-ministerial collaboration.

## Story from the field



Xaysamone inspects his layer hens. ©WFP/Vilakhone Sipaseuth

Four households in Numheang Neua village of Oudomxay province have just received a special delivery: 200 layer hens and 60 packs of chicken feed.

Layer hens are bred specifically for a reliable source of eggs and raising them requires extra care: calcium-enriched feed for strong eggshells, regular cycle monitoring, clean nesting boxes and optimal lighting. It is a big commitment, which is why many farmers hesitate to take on the risk.

But Xaysamone Lasachan, a young farmer, embraced the challenge. "I have experience raising free-range chickens. Now that I have completed the training on raising this new species, I believe that with the right care, these hens will produce plenty of eggs. I will give one third of the eggs to schools to cook lunches with them and sell the rest. If this first batch succeeds, I plan to expand my poultry business and share the knowledge with other farmers," he says confidently.

This home-grown school meals initiative is supported by the Republic of Korea. It empowers farmers like Xaysamone, who are eager to learn and uplift their communities, to turn their dreams into reality.

## Donors

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