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# **Mid-Term Evaluation of WFP School-Feeding Program for USDA McGovern-Dole Grant [FY 2020-25]**

Decentralized McGovern-Dole Mid-Term Evaluation Report



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## Disclaimer

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# Executive Summary

- 1. Overview.** This is a midterm evaluation of the World Food Programme (WFP) United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) McGovern-Dole Grant for School Feeding in Lao PDR (2020-2025) (“McGovern-Dole project”). It examines project performance since baseline and identifies lessons to inform operational and strategic decision-making. The evaluation has dual objectives of accountability and learning, particularly to inform future school feeding initiatives and support timely and informed decision-making regarding programming and resource allocation for National School Lunch Program (SLP).
- 2.** This decentralized evaluation, which covers all project activities during the period of September 2021 to March 2024, was commissioned by WFP Lao PDR and conducted by TANGO International in partnership with local research partner Lao Social Research (LSR).
- 3. Evaluation purpose and objectives.** The main purposes of the midterm evaluation are:
  - Review the project’s coherence, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability
  - Collect performance indicator data for strategic objectives and higher-level results
  - Assess whether the project is on track to meet the results and targets
  - Assess how well gender, equity and wider inclusion issues were mainstreamed and integrated into the project
  - Identify any necessary mid-course corrections and operational lessons
- 4. Context.** The United Nations Human Development Index (HDI) ranks Lao PDR 139th of 193 countries. The country faces challenges in both education outcomes and in food security and nutritional needs of children. Under the 9th Lao National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSED 2021-2025), the Government of Lao PDR has undertaken various school-related policies and strategies to address food insecurity and nutrition, and the National Nutrition Strategy and Action Plan (NNSAP) (2015) has identified school meals as one of its 22 priorities. In 2012, WFP piloted a cash-based “Home Grown School Feeding” project; this project was handed over to the Government and informed the Government’s own school feeding model, which became the cash-based National School Meals Policy, which is officially known as SLP. Since then, WFP Lao PDR has implemented three McGovern-Dole awards: 2014-2016 (FY14), 2017-2022 (FY17), and the ongoing 2020-2025 (FY20).
- 5. Subject of the evaluation.** The McGovern-Dole project has a budget of USD 26 million, and directly implements school feeding, literacy, WASH, community development and infrastructure investment, agriculture support, country capacity strengthening (CCS) and health and nutrition activities. The project covers 17 districts in Lao PDR, reaching approximately 63,000 pre-primary and primary school-aged children.
- 6.** The project aligns with the McGovern-Dole strategic objectives to improve literacy in school-age children (SO1), increase the use of health, nutrition, and dietary practices (SO2) in targeted areas and improve the effectiveness of food assistance through local and regional procurement (LRP SO1). A key project goal is to support and strengthen national and sub-national government capacity to manage the SLP. The project is implemented in partnership with Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES). Further project partners include Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao Women’s Union, Research Institute for Educational Sciences (RIES), and the National Center for Environmental Health and Water Supply (Nam Saat).
- 7. Evaluation users.** The primary users of the evaluation are WFP Lao PDR country office, the project’s implementing partners CRS and MoES, WFP Regional Bureau Bangkok (RBB) and Headquarters (HQ), and key national Government stakeholders involved in school feeding, education and nutrition. External stakeholders include schools and communities involved in the project, sub-national Government offices, United States Department of Agriculture and the United Nations Country Team.
- 8. Methodology.** The midterm evaluation questions correspond to relevance and coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability criteria. The evaluation approach combines a desk review, student and parent/caregiver survey, school observation survey, literacy assessment and key informant interviews and focus group discussions. The midterm includes reporting on required McGovern-Dole performance



indicators. Primary data collection activities were conducted using a representative sample of 68 schools across all 17 districts of the project. Within this sample frame, deep dives were conducted in 14 schools to provide greater insight into the project's implementation and outcomes. In-country data collection took place between 18 March – 05 April 2024.

9. **Limitations:** The primary limitations to the evaluation centered around the availability of secondary information (mainly documentation of project approaches and implementation strategies) and the quality of the data produced by the baseline evaluation, namely around the computation of performance indicators. For the purposes of the midterm, it was jointly agreed by the Lao PDR country office and the evaluation team to accept baseline values for indicators presented in the baseline report and reserve a recalculation of the baseline dataset at endline (i.e. recalculating how the baseline measured each performance indicator in the quantitative data). to test the statistical significance of the difference from baseline to midterm to endline. This will enable a more accurate representation of project performance between baseline and endline.
10. **Findings and Conclusions: Relevance and coherence.** The McGovern-Dole project is relevant to the education, literacy, nutrition, and health needs of its target beneficiaries. Similarly, the priorities of the project and those of the Government are in alignment. The project fulfills WFP Country Strategic Objectives of enhancing food security, nutrition, and learning results for vulnerable groups (in particular women and girls, children under 5 and school-age children). The prioritization of national capacity strengthening (initiatives has contributed to important shifts in national policy around school feeding and a firm commitment from the Government to continue the SLP. The project is actively implementing recommendations from the Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER-SF) assessment conducted in 2023 by WFP and partners.
11. The evaluation found that food items provided for school meals were sufficiently nutritious and in-line with acceptable global standards in food assistance. The project is working with schools and communities to increase the local palatability of particular food items (lentils), which are not normally consumed in Lao PDR.
12. **Findings and Conclusions: Effectiveness.** At midterm, activities are generally on track toward expected results. The project has achieved 50 percent or higher life of project targets for 17 out of 23 standard output indicators. WFP and partners have reached over 60 percent of the life-of-project (LOP) targets for individuals reached.
13. The overall good quality of activities is recognized by community members and key stakeholders and validated by the evaluation team. Training delivered to schoolteachers, administrators, cooks, and storekeepers has been effective and appropriate. Positive outcomes have been observed in student attendance and dropout rates. The evaluation team has confidence that schools can continue providing school meals post-handover if they are properly resourced.
14. Literacy activities have effectively strengthened the capacity of key district-level educational staff that provide pedagogical support to teachers in schools. The material support provided to teachers are relevant and useful to teachers and see active use in the classroom. While overall literacy outcomes remain low at the midterm, students are showing steady improvement since the baseline study in 2022.
15. The project is making progress on establishing a kitchen, storeroom, and water source (or handwashing station) in schools. The construction of complex water systems in some schools is underway and progress at midterm is according to expected timelines. There are concerns around the extent that these infrastructure investments can be sustained after WFP's exit, given that the target communities are among the most vulnerable and in-need in Lao PDR. Hygiene and health promotion activities are ongoing, but the midterm shows positive results among target groups. At the midterm, the support to smallholder farmers is currently nascent and planned for the second half of the project.
16. There are challenges with community contribution to school feeding, which is underpinned by a lack of project monitoring and reporting in this area. The project M&E system does not have a structured approach to project reflection and learning. However, the improvements to monthly monitoring conducted in schools is a positive step towards capturing greater programmatic insight and progress.
17. Project activities consider gender equality and women empowerment in implementation but there is limited reflection or planning on how this can be improved. The project does not capture disability-disaggregated information.

18. **Findings and Conclusions: Efficiency.** Activities are being implemented in a timely manner. COVID-19 outbreaks at the start of the project and the ongoing inflation in the global market are the main factors impacting implementation and efficiency. The project has appropriately recovered the delays caused by the pandemic and is on-track to complete all activities within the project timeframe.
19. WFP recognizes the importance of strengthening Government partnerships towards greater efficiency and effectiveness in implementing school meals. As WFP is already a member of key established school feeding working groups within the Government, it is well positioned to continue strategic engagement and technical support to Government ministries.
20. **Findings and Conclusions: Impact and sustainability.** The project is positively contributing to impact on targeted beneficiaries in the domains of literacy, hygiene and health, and has made good contributions towards overall objectives for school feeding in Lao PDR. WFP's contribution to the development of the Minister Decree for School Lunch Promotion (2023) is a key example of national-level strategic engagement and policy support that increases government capacity and provision of nutritious school meals in Lao PDR. At the community level, the suite of activities to increase educational, health and hygiene outcomes is showing positive impacts on the knowledge, attitude and behaviors of students, caregivers/parents and teachers. There is an appropriate and sufficient focus on building the capacity of village education development committees (VEDC), which is important because of their pivotal role in supporting school feeding.
21. Inflation and the increasing costs of food and fuel will have a large impact on sustaining project results, particularly around community contributions to school meals.
22. WFP has demonstrated a willingness to support project schools beyond the completion of the McGovern-Dole project. The evaluation agrees with internal and external stakeholders that the Government is currently not ready to integrate the McGovern-Dole project schools into the SLP. WFP is currently working closely with the MoES to develop a joint Action Plan that includes a detailed transition strategy for after 2025, with associated readiness milestones.
23. **Lessons Learned.** WFP engagement with the Government on school feeding and the results of country capacity strengthening has outlined a need to invest in inter-ministerial coordination. The momentum generated from recent Government commitments to school feeding should be capitalized in the remaining half of the project; this prompts a need to adopt a structured and strategic approach to supporting Government capacity in providing school meals. This involves identifying and strengthening strategic and operational partnerships with MoES and its stakeholders. The project has drawn key operational lessons primarily from community mobilizations and community engagement activities. This includes ensuring that capacity building activities are timed well with associated inputs, and the importance of supporting VEDCs, as they play a strong contributing factor to successful school feeding implementation. Finally, the project has observed the importance of monitoring and tracking all components of school meals, specifically the quantity, quality, frequency and source of community contributions to schools.
24. **Recommendations.** Recommendations are based conclusions and associated findings, and are informed by the broader lessons identified by the evaluation. Seven operational and two strategic recommendations are proposed.
  - **Recommendation 1 (strategic):** Based on the need to strengthen partnerships with key Government agencies involved in school meals planning and coordination, continue to strengthen the Technical Working Group for School Meals, to foster inter-ministerial collaboration.
  - **Recommendation 2 (operational):** Given its nascency in this project and strong potential for results, strengthen the agricultural component and market linkage of the project by learning from similar initiatives within the WFP Lao PDR portfolio. Set the foundations for strong agriculture-focused work in future initiatives.
  - **Recommendation 3 (operational):** To promote harmonization of approaches and results across the project, update Standard Operating Procedures for each activity component, based on experience and reflections from implementation.
  - **Recommendation 4 (strategic):** Strengthen district-level capacity for monitoring and community engagement.

- **Recommendation 5 (operational):** To understand community contribution and school-level needs more comprehensively, strengthen the monitoring system of the project, and ensure information is shared with the national School Lunch Program.
- **Recommendation 6 (operational):** Ensure key lessons and good practices on project processes and results are efficiently and effectively documented to shape future initiatives in school feeding and catalyze innovation in the national School Lunch Program
- **Recommendation 7 (operational):** Document all modalities of capacity strengthening provided to Village Education Development Committees, given they play an instrumental role in ensuring the success of school meals implementation in Lao PDR.
- **Recommendation 8 (operational):** As transition planning is currently underway, work with project schools to develop a continuation plan for school meals under the national program.
- **Recommendation 9 (operational):** Expand the scope of work for the endline evaluation to include methodological considerations proposed at midterm: (i) recalculate baseline values, (ii) mirror midterm sampling approach, (iii) include a cost-analysis of the project.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. EVALUATION FEATURES

1. This is the decentralized midterm evaluation report for the FY20 US Department of Agriculture (USDA) McGovern-Dole Grant for the World Food Programme (WFP) School Feeding Program (SFP) in Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) (hereafter, "McGovern-Dole project" or "the project") implemented from 2020 to 2025. The evaluation is part of a five-year evaluation series that comprises a baseline study and midterm and endline evaluations. These three exercises are commissioned by the WFP Lao PDR Country Office (CO) as decentralized evaluations (DEs). The baseline study was completed in February 2022.<sup>1</sup>
2. The USD 26 million McGovern-Dole grant in Lao PDR supports direct implementation of school feeding, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), community mobilization, school-feeding-related infrastructure investment, literacy, agriculture support, policy support and government capacity strengthening, and health and nutrition activities in 17 districts, reaching approximately 63,000 pre-primary and primary school-aged children.
3. The evaluation is timed approximately at project midpoint to validate project design assumptions and allow for mid-course corrections and operational lessons to be applied during the project's remaining lifespan. The evaluation assesses performance against project objectives and associated activities under i) McGovern-Dole SO1 (improved literacy of school-age children) and SO2 (increased use of health and dietary practices), as detailed in the McGovern-Dole Results Framework; ii) Local and Regional Procurement; and iii) Foundational Results, which focus on strengthening government capacity for school feeding.<sup>2</sup> The evaluation scope includes all project activities and covers all 17 project districts. The evaluation period covers the start of the project in September 2021 to March 2024, the start of data collection.
4. The main expected users of the evaluation are WFP stakeholders at national, regional, and corporate level; USDA; the project's main government partner – the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES); its non-governmental implementing partner Catholic Relief Services (CRS); and the communities and beneficiaries the project is intended to serve. Additional interested parties include the World Bank and United Nations agencies involved in the education sector.
5. The midterm evaluation serves dual objectives of accountability and learning. There is particular emphasis on learning to inform future school feeding initiatives and allow the Government to make timely and informed decisions regarding programming and resource allocation for the National School Meals Programme. Issues relating to gender equality and women's empowerment and human rights—particularly children's rights and the rights to education, health, and nutrition—are mainstreamed across the two evaluation objectives and considered in accordance with the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP).
6. TANGO International and its research partner in Lao PDR, Lao Social Research (LSR), conducted the midterm evaluation. The evaluation team comprised three international evaluators from TANGO (one female, two males) and one Laotian senior evaluator from LSR (female), supported by TANGO research analysts and a quality control team.

## 1.2. CONTEXT

7. Lao PDR is a nation in Southeast Asia that borders Myanmar, Cambodia, China, Thailand, and Vietnam. Due to its vast forests and mountainous terrain, the transport of resources into and within the country is often delayed. Lao PDR, with 50 different ethnic groups and 160 ethnic subgroups recognized by the Lao

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<sup>1</sup> The baseline evaluation was scheduled to be conducted between September and December 2021, but was extended through February 2022 due to restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

<sup>2</sup> The results framework for the project is included in [Annex 5](#)

Government,<sup>3</sup> is the most ethnically diverse country in Southeast Asia.<sup>4</sup> Half of the population is ethnic Lao.<sup>5</sup> A majority of the 7 million people (49.6 percent female; 50.4 percent male) living in Lao PDR belong to four ethnolinguistic families: Lao-Tai (62.4 percent), Mon-Khmer (23.7 percent), Hmong-Lu Mien (9.7 percent), and Chine-Tibetan (2.9 percent).

8. The United Nations Human Development Index (HDI) ranks Lao PDR 139th of 191 countries. Lao PDR is a lower- middle-income country. Most of the population reside in rural areas. The agricultural industry accounts for 62 percent of the workforce and 16 percent of the GDP.<sup>6</sup> Since 2012 Lao PDR has experienced economic decline, which became more pronounced following the COVID-19 pandemic. The employment rate in Lao PDR rose in mid-2022 (from 69.4 percent in 2021 to 88.2 percent in 2022) after pandemic restrictions eased.<sup>7</sup> However, inflation boomed from 6.2 percent in January 2022 to 40 percent in February 2023, driving an increase in food and fuel prices that reached 6 percent and 40 percent, respectively, in December 2022. High nationwide inflation rates have been driven by concerns about the government's ability to satisfy its debt repayment obligations, low foreign exchange reserves, and cascading negative impacts produced by COVID-19.<sup>8</sup> As of January 2024, inflation has declined to 24 percent.<sup>9</sup>
9. The 9th Lao National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSED) for the year 2021, which is in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), serves as the governing framework for sectoral policies and strategies. Under the NSED, the Government has undertaken initiatives to address food insecurity and nutrition, particularly through various school-related policies and strategies, including the Policy on Promoting School Lunch (2014) and the School Meals Action Plan (2015).<sup>10</sup> Additionally, the National Nutrition Strategy and Action Plan (2015) has identified school meals as one of its 22 priorities. The plan outlines a strategic framework for the next decade aimed at reducing maternal and child malnutrition rates while enhancing the nutritional status and food security of the country's diverse population, aligning with SDGs 2, 4, and 17.
10. Lao PDR's currency, the Laotian Kip, lost more than half of its value against the US dollar from July 2021 to July 2023.<sup>11</sup> The decreased value of the Laotian Kip has catalyzed domestic inflation, led to a temporary shortage of fuel, and limited access to foreign markets and other currencies. The increase in global commodity prices has transferred to the cost of raw materials and domestically produced goods.<sup>12</sup>

### ***Food security, nutrition and health***

11. Lao PDR has some of the poorest national health and nutrition indicators in the Southeast Asia region.<sup>13</sup> The mortality rate of children under 5 years old was 42.5 deaths per one thousand live births in 2021, the highest in the region.<sup>14</sup> Data from September 2023 show that nearly one in seven households in Lao PDR, equivalent to 14 percent, are food insecure.<sup>15</sup> WFP's Mobile Vulnerability Assessment & Mapping data from September

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<sup>3</sup> Open Development. 2023. [Sharing information about Lao PDR.](#)

<sup>4</sup> IWGIA. 2022. [The Indigenous World 2022: Laos.](#)

<sup>5</sup> IWGIA. 2022. [The Indigenous World 2022: Laos.](#)

<sup>6</sup> UNDP. 2022. [Youth as Drivers for Sustainable Development.](#)

<sup>7</sup> World Vision. 2023. [The Impact of the Economic Crisis on Food Security of Rural Households in Lao PDR.](#) Accessed on 14 February 2024.

<sup>8</sup> FAO. 2023. [Lao People's Democratic Republic Country Brief.](#)

<sup>9</sup> Bank of the Lao PDR. 2024. [Inflation Rate.](#)

<sup>10</sup> United Cities and Local Governments. 2021. [Country-by-country analysis of SDG localization: Lao People's Democratic Republic.](#) Accessed on 13 February 2024.

<sup>11</sup> World Bank. 2023. [The World Bank in Lao PDR Context Overview.](#)

<sup>12</sup> World Bank. 2023. [Lao PDR Economic Monitor: Addressing economic uncertainty.](#)

<sup>13</sup> UNICEF. 2024. [Lao People's Democratic Republic.](#)

<sup>14</sup> UNICEF. 2021. [Country Profiles: Lao People's Democratic Republic.](#)

<sup>15</sup> WFP. 2023. [Enhancing Food Security and Nutrition and Managing Risks and Shocks in Asia and the Pacific Through Support to Social Protection Systems.](#)

2023 indicates that 21 percent of families struggle with insufficient food consumption and 16 percent of rural households and 9 percent of urban households are food insecure.<sup>16</sup>

12. Lao PDR has high malnutrition rates, with 24.3 percent of children under 5 classified as underweight, 33 percent affected by stunting, and 10.7 percent showing signs of wasting.<sup>17 18</sup> Deficiencies in iron, vitamin A, zinc and other micronutrients disproportionately affect women, adolescents, and children.<sup>19</sup>
13. Factors contributing to food insecurity in Lao PDR include inflation and lack of access to affordable food. The conflict in Ukraine has resulted in a global food crisis, which increased local prices to record-high levels.<sup>20</sup> Male-headed households and households with no education are more likely to experience food insecurity: 14 percent of male-headed households in Lao PDR were food insecure in September 2023, compared to 9 percent of female-headed households. Households headed by someone without formal education (23 percent) are more vulnerable to food insecurity than households headed by someone with secondary or higher education (6 percent).<sup>21</sup>
14. Roughly 13.9 percent of the population live with moderate acute food insecurity and 0.9 percent suffer from severely acute food insecurity.<sup>22</sup> There is limited food diversity in Lao PDR due to poor farming practices, limited market access to varied food items, a lack of health and education services and awareness campaigns, and poverty.<sup>23 24</sup> A quarter (25 percent) of rural households consume a less varied diet, compared to 12 percent of urban households.<sup>25</sup> Frequently, the diet of adolescent girls, especially during pregnancy, infants and children under 3 years of age does not meet their nutritional needs.<sup>26</sup> Adolescent girls and young children often do not consume enough protein, fresh fruits, or vegetables. Health consequences associated with food and nutrition insecurity include anemia, stunting, wasting, and issues relating to motor and cognitive development, eyesight, immunity, and mental ability.<sup>27 28</sup>
15. Overweight and obesity, also indicators of malnutrition, are both increasing; 16 percent of children and adolescents between the ages of 5 and 19 are classified as overweight.<sup>29</sup> Between 2000 and 2016, the proportion of obese boys increased from 1 percent to 6 percent and obese girls increased from 0.5 percent to 3 percent, respectively.<sup>30</sup> Among adolescents, 14 percent of boys and 11 percent of girls were overweight or obese in 2019.<sup>31</sup> A key contributor to adolescent and child obesity is the overconsumption of sugary foods imported into the country.<sup>32</sup> Many supermarkets and local shops are now selling only preserved, pre-packaged food and drinks with a high preservative content, often specially marketed to school children.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, 98 percent of commercially produced complementary foods in Lao PDR are labelled either only in

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<sup>16</sup> WFP. 2024. [WFP Lao PDR Country Brief \(January 2024\)](#).

<sup>17</sup> Lao Statistics Bureau. 2024. [Lao Social Indicator Survey 2023 – Key Indicators Report](#).

<sup>18</sup> UNICEF. n/d. [Lao People's Democratic Republic: Nutrition](#).

<sup>19</sup> WFP. 2023. [Understanding the Rice Value Chain in Lao PDR](#).

<sup>20</sup> East Asia Forum. 2023. [Laos must address rising inflation in 2023](#).

<sup>21</sup> WFP. 2023. [Lao PDR Food Security Monitoring \(March/April 2023\)](#).

<sup>22</sup> ERCC. 2023. [ECHO Daily Flash \(10 March 2023\)](#).

<sup>23</sup> FAO. 2022. [Food Systems Profile – Lao PDR](#).

<sup>24</sup> WFP. 2023. LAO PDR Food Security Monitoring.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Asian Development Bank. 2020. [Eating in Developing Asia: Trends, Consequences and Policies](#).

<sup>27</sup> WFP. 2016. [Strategic Review of Food and Nutrition Security in Lao People's Democratic Republic](#).

<sup>28</sup> Sonia Y. Hess et al. 2023. [Risk factors for anaemia among women and their young children hospitalised with suspected thiamine deficiency in northern Lao PDR](#).

<sup>29</sup> WFP. 2021. [Executive Board Second Regular Session: Lao PDR Country Strategic Plan \(2022-2026\)](#).

<sup>30</sup> Global Nutrition Report. [Country Nutrition Profiles: Lao PDR](#).

<sup>31</sup> WFP. 2016. [Strategic Review of Food and Nutrition Security in Lao People's Democratic Republic](#).

<sup>32</sup> FAO. 2022. [Food Systems Profile – Lao PDR](#).

<sup>33</sup> WFP. 2016. [Strategic Review of Food and Nutrition Security in Lao People's Democratic Republic](#)

English or in English and a non-national language (due to being primarily imported into the country), which limits the ability of parents, guardians, and other consumers to make nutritionally informed decisions.<sup>34</sup>

16. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted domestic food and nutrition security and exacerbated socioeconomic and macroeconomic instability. In early 2022, cases of COVID-19 increased and lasted until the second quarter of 2022.<sup>35</sup> The predominantly young population and high vaccination rates helped reduce serious illness and hospitalization, and cases started to stabilise after June 2022. Still, in March 2023 two-thirds of households reported spending less on health and education in the previous year, indicating that inflation and the pandemic's economic impacts continued to affect households.<sup>36</sup>

## Education

17. In Lao PDR, most primary schools are small with fewer than 100 students. The school year typically runs for 175 days from September to June. Primary education, which has been free since 2000 with the passing of the Laotian Education Law, includes five years of education from ages six to ten.<sup>37</sup> Compulsory education in Lao PDR begins at age 6 and includes primary (Grades 1-5) and lower secondary (Grades 6-9) education. Upper secondary education is not compulsory and includes Grade 10 to 12.
18. According to the Lao Education and Sport Management Information System, the gross enrolment rate in 2022-2023 for primary school was 97.7 percent, yet only 67 percent of primary students transition to lower secondary.<sup>38</sup> Even fewer (36 percent) transition from lower to upper secondary. Nearly three quarters (73 percent) of children of school-entry age enrolled in Grade 1 of primary school and 61 percent of children entering Grade 1 had attended an early childhood education project the previous school year.<sup>39</sup>
19. The net attendance ratio between girls and boys in Lao PDR is generally consistent across all levels of education (see Table 1).<sup>40</sup> The net attendance ratio between boys and girls in both primary and lower secondary school is 1.03,<sup>41</sup> whereas the net attendance ratio in pre-primary and upper secondary school is 1.04.<sup>42</sup> The net attendance ratio for children in rural areas and urban areas is 0.71 for pre-primary, 0.94 for primary school, 0.68 for lower secondary school, and 0.45 for upper secondary school, indicating that children living in urban areas have a higher school attendance rate across all education levels compared to rural counterparts.<sup>43 44</sup>

**Table 1. Lao Social Indicator Survey III key indicators on attendance rates of girls and boys (2023)**

Indicator <sup>1</sup>	Pre-Primary <sup>2</sup>	Primary Education	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary
Net attendance rate for girls divided by net attendance rate for boys	1.04	1.03	1.03	1.04

<sup>34</sup> UNICEF. 2023. [COMMIT to better first foods for young children: A call to strengthen national regulations on commercially produced complementary foods in Southeast Asia.](#)

<sup>35</sup> WFP. 2023. LAO PDR Food Security Monitoring.

<sup>36</sup> World Vision. 2023. [The Impact of the Economic Crisis on Food Security of Rural Households in Lao PDR.](#) Accessed on 14 February 2024.

<sup>37</sup> ETH Zurich. 2022. [Factbook Education System: Laos.](#)

<sup>38</sup> UNICEF. 2023. [Country Office Annual Report 2023: Lao People's Democratic Republic.](#)

<sup>39</sup> Lao Statistics Bureau. 2024. [Lao Social Indicator Survey 2023 – Key Indicators Report.](#)

<sup>40</sup> The Lao Social Indicator Survey III Key Indicators Report (2023) presents only calculated ratios for the attendance rates of boys and girls. It does not present sex-disaggregated values used for calculating these ratios.

<sup>41</sup> Net attendance rate (adjusted) for girls divided by net attendance rate (adjusted) for boys.

<sup>42</sup> Lao Statistics Bureau. 2024. Lao Indicator Survey III-2023 Key Indicators Report.

<sup>43</sup> Net attendance rate (adjusted) for children in rural areas divided by net attendance rate (adjusted) for children in urban areas.

<sup>44</sup> Lao Statistics Bureau. 2024. Lao Indicator Survey III-2023 Key Indicators Report.



Net attendance rate for children in rural areas divided by net attendance rate for children in urban areas	0.71	0.94	0.68	0.45
<p><sup>1</sup> The 2023 Lao Social Indicator Survey III presents only calculated ratios for the attendance rates of boys and girls. It does not present sex-disaggregated values used for calculating these ratios.</p> <p><sup>2</sup> One year younger than the official primary school entry age.</p> <p>Source: Lao Statistics Bureau. 2024. <a href="#">Lao Social Indicator Survey 2023 – Key Indicators Report</a>.</p>				

20. There is limited statistical information available on enrolment or education rates for children with disabilities in Lao PDR. The most recent information from 2017 indicates that 2 percent of Lao children ages 2 to 4 years old experience at least one disability (i.e., related to seeing, hearing, walking, fine motor skills, communicating, learning or behavior).<sup>45</sup> Socioeconomic factors, gender, ethnicity, distance to school and poverty all influence whether children with disabilities can attend and stay in school. In many communities across the country, children with severe disabilities are often kept at home or hidden due to societal stigma. Additionally, children with disabilities are at higher risk of neglect, abuse and exploitation compared to their non-disabled peers. Combined with the inaccessibility of many schools, children with disabilities are often deprived of education.<sup>46</sup>
21. Literacy is a significant challenge for many students, who lack the basic literacy skills needed to fully engage in classroom learning; over half (57 percent) of primary students struggle with reading comprehension.<sup>47</sup> Students in early grades, especially non-Lao speaking students, tend to have more difficulty with language and reading skills. The Government of Lao PDR does not support native language instruction, and many teachers are from Lao-speaking areas. In 2023, the literacy rate among women ages 15-24 years was 82 percent and 86 percent among men.<sup>48</sup> Presented in the table below, the girl-to-boy reading ratio is 1.09 and the numeracy ratio is 1.03.<sup>49</sup> <sup>50</sup> Regarding students of age for grades 2 and 3, the girl-to-boy reading (1.25) and numeracy (1.16) ratios are more disproportionate.<sup>51</sup> <sup>52</sup>

**Table 2. Lao Social Indicator Survey III key indicators on foundational learning skills of girls and boys (2023)**

Indicator <sup>1</sup>	Reading Skills	Numeracy Skills
Percentage of girls with foundational learning skills divided by percentage of boys with foundational learning skills (age for grades 2/3)	1.25	1.16
Percentage of girls with foundational learning skills divided by percentage of boys with foundational learning skills (attending grades 2/3)	1.11	1.01
<p><sup>1</sup> The Lao Social Indicator Survey III only calculated ratios for the reading and numeracy skills of boys and girls. It does not present sex-disaggregated values used for calculating these ratios.</p>		

<sup>45</sup> UNICEF. [Children with disabilities](#).

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> USDA. 2022. [LAO PDR McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Project: Baseline Evaluation](#). Accessed on 21 February 2024.

<sup>48</sup> Lao Statistics Bureau. 2024. [Lao Social Indicator Survey 2023 – Key Indicators Report](#). Accessed on 21 February 2024.

<sup>49</sup> Percentage of girls with foundational learning skills divided by percentage of boys with foundational learning skills

<sup>50</sup> The Lao Social Indicator Survey III Key Indicators Report (2023) presents only calculated ratios for the reading and numeracy skills of boys and girls. It does not present sex-disaggregated values used for calculating these ratios.

<sup>51</sup> Percentage of children with foundational learning skills in the poorest wealth quintile divided by percentage of children with foundational learning skills in the richest wealth quintile.

<sup>52</sup> Lao Statistics Bureau. 2024. Lao Social Indicator Survey III-2023.



Source: Lao Statistics Bureau. 2024. [Lao Social Indicator Survey 2023 – Key Indicators Report](#).

22. COVID-19 mitigation measures negatively impacted schools during the pandemic. Schools in Lao PDR were closed for more than two months, reducing the number of classroom hours that students received.<sup>53</sup> Access to education was particularly limited in remote areas due to limited infrastructure, limited internet access, and understaffed schools.

### **Water, sanitation and hygiene**

23. The high prevalence of contaminated water, inadequate sanitation, and inadequate hygiene practices, coupled with challenges in accessing public health services contribute significantly to health issues such as malnutrition in numerous communities in Lao PDR.<sup>54</sup> The majority (87 percent) of Lao household members use improved drinking water sources,<sup>55</sup> with about 78 percent of people in rural areas and 97 percent in urban settings drinking from improved water sources.<sup>56</sup> About a quarter of the population practices open defecation, and only 28 percent ensure safe disposal of children's feces. In 2023, the percentage of children under age 5 with diarrhea in the last two weeks for whom advice or treatment was sought stood at 58 percent.<sup>57</sup> In comparison with northwest and southern provinces of Lao PDR, the northeastern region has less access to and availability of basic water services. The absence of adequate water and hygiene facilities leads to frequent diarrheal diseases, which contributes to malnutrition.<sup>58</sup> As of 2017, only 66 percent of primary schools had both a water supply and latrine facilities, and 11 percent lacked any kind of WASH facility despite improvements in infrastructure.
24. The COVID-19 pandemic accentuated the inadequacies of WASH facilities, particularly in schools.<sup>59</sup> Consequently, adherence to good standard hygiene practices continues to lag.

### **Gender and social inclusion**

25. Lao PDR ranked 53rd out of 153 countries in the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Index 2020, which measures gender equality in health, education, economy, and politics.<sup>60</sup> Progress has been made in promoting women to senior roles in both public and private sectors, with 30-40 percent of new entrepreneurial opportunities led by women. However, unpaid care work, mostly done by women, remains a main source of employment for women due to limited educational and work opportunities. In 2017, 61 percent of women in the labor force were unpaid family workers, compared to 26 percent of men.<sup>61</sup> On average, a Laotian woman's working day is two hours longer than a man's.<sup>62</sup>
26. In response to critical country needs, Lao PDR has made progress on two notable SDGs: End Hunger (SDG 2) and Quality Education (SDG 4).<sup>63</sup> The prevalence of undernourishment in Lao PDR has declined from 25.9 percent in 2006 to 16.5 percent in 2018 and stunting in children under 5 years has decreased from 44.4 percent in 2013 to 33.0 percent in 2018. Children in rural areas, and poorer households are more likely to be stunted.<sup>64</sup>
27. Despite progress made towards SDG 4 through ensuring universal access for primary education and achieving a 98 percent gross enrolment ratio and 100 percent completion rate in primary education, learning

<sup>53</sup> USAID. 2021. [Final Report USAID/LAO PDR COVID-19 Assessment](#).

<sup>54</sup> Cooperative Committee for Laos (CCL). 2024. [Water, sanitation, and hygiene \(WASH\)](#).

<sup>55</sup> Statistics Bureau. 2024. [Lao Social Indicator Survey 2023 – Key Indicators Report](#).

<sup>56</sup> UNICEF. 2018. [Water, Sanitation & Hygiene Thematic Report](#).

<sup>57</sup> Lao Statistics Bureau. 2024. [Lao Social Indicator Survey 2023 – Key Indicators Report](#).

<sup>58</sup> WHO. 2021. [Country Case Study: Lao National WASH Survey 2021](#).

<sup>59</sup> UNICEF For Every Child. 2024. [Water, Sanitation & Hygiene and Climate Change Resilience](#).

<sup>60</sup> The World Bank. 2013. [Country Gender Assessment for Lao PDR: Key Findings](#).

<sup>61</sup> Asian Development Bank. 2020. [Exploring the Gender Dimensions of Unpaid Care Work in Lao PDR](#).

<sup>62</sup> UNICEF. 2020. [The Situation of Children and Women: Lao PDR](#).

<sup>63</sup> United Nations. 2021. Lao People's Democratic Republic: Voluntary National Review on the 2023 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

outcomes and other contributing factors require greater attention in Lao PDR.<sup>65</sup> In 2019, 2.5 percent of children achieved at least a minimum proficiency level in reading, 49.6 percent were unable to perform basic reading, and 51.9 percent had limited ability to articulate ideas in writing. Between 2013 and 2018, general government expenditure on education decreased from 4 percent of GDP to 2.9 percent of GDP, respectively.

28. There is a lack of data on people with disabilities in the Lao PDR education system.<sup>66</sup> However, it is well acknowledged that factors including ethnicity, gender, poverty, distance, and physical barriers can exacerbate challenges for children with disabilities in accessing education.<sup>67</sup> The Lao PDR constitution codified in 1991 and amended in 2003 establishes that all citizens are equal before the law and have the same rights as other citizens. <sup>68</sup> In 1995, the Compulsory Education Act was passed, requiring all children to complete primary school education and schools to accept children with disabilities.
29. **National Plans to promote Gender Equality.** Under the Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH) Phase 3 (2021-2025) policy and strategy, Lao PDR renewed commitments to reduce maternal mortality, improve maternal and newborn health, and increase modern contraceptive prevalence.<sup>69</sup> In 2021, the government launched the Fourth National Plan of Action on Gender Equality (2021-2025), the Second National Plan of Action on Violence against Women and Violence against Children (2021-2025), the 3rd National Plan of Action on Mother and Children (2021-2025), and National Women Development Plan (2021-2025) to scale up gender-based violence protection, response, and multisectoral coordination through the provision of shelter, psychosocial support, medical and legal assistance, and other services.<sup>70</sup> The Government also aims to integrate comprehensive sex education through the "Noi 2030 framework" to empower adolescent girls and raise community awareness.
30. The Lao-Tai ethnic group sees better welfare outcomes compared to other ethnic groups in the country. <sup>71</sup> The welfare gap between ethnic other ethnic groups and the Lao-Tai ethnic majority is attributable to differences in education levels, amount of land owned, income sources, access to electricity, and other economic opportunities. Mon-Khmer and Hmong-Mien ethnic groups generally have larger household sizes made up of more dependents than workers. The larger number of dependents in turn causes school dropouts due to financial constraints and early marriages and teenage pregnancies which drive up fertility rates. Among non-Lao Tai ethnic groups, a smaller number of household members have at least a secondary education; fewer economic opportunities translate to a lower likelihood of owning a business and access to markets and electricity.<sup>72</sup>

### ***History of school feeding in Lao PDR***

31. WFP and the Government of Lao PDR have collaborated on school feeding activities since 2002, with the launch of the first SFP.<sup>73</sup> Initially, WFP distributed a corn-soya blend as a mid-morning snack in three northern provinces. In 2012, WFP piloted a cash-based "Home Grown School Feeding" project; this project was handed over to the Government in 2014 and informed the Government's own school feeding model, which became the cash-based National School Meals Policy, which is officially called the SLP.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> United Nations. 2021. Lao People's Democratic Republic: Voluntary National Review on the 2023 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

<sup>66</sup> United Nations. 2021. Lao People's Democratic Republic: Voluntary National Review on the 2023 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

<sup>67</sup> UNICEF. 2020. [Children with disabilities](#).

<sup>68</sup> ASEAN Disability Forum. [ASEAN Disability: Lao PDR](#).

<sup>69</sup> UNDP. 2023. [Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn and Adolescent Health in Lao PDR Phase 3](#). Accessed on 21 February 2024.

<sup>70</sup> UNFPA. 2021. [The Official Launch of the National Action Plans to Promote Gender Equality and Combat Violence Against Women and Children](#).

<sup>71</sup> IFAD. 2022. [Country Technical Note on Indigenous Peoples' Issues: Lao PDR](#).

<sup>72</sup> World Bank. 2017. [Lao Poverty Policy Brief: Why Are Ethnic Minorities Poor?](#)

<sup>73</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. [End-Line Evaluation of USDA McGovern-Dole Grant for WFP School Feeding in Laos from 2017 to 2022](#).

<sup>74</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2020. FY 2020 USDA McGovern-Dole Proposal.

32. The SLP directly and indirectly addresses interconnected factors contributing to malnutrition and food insecurity.<sup>75</sup> The provision of school lunches aims to positively impact health outcomes by enhancing nutrient intake and dietary diversity while at the same time alleviating the economic burden of vulnerable families by reducing household food expenditures. This in-turn enables the reallocation of funds toward other essential needs such as health care and hygiene products. WASH activities are integral to addressing environmental hygiene issues associated with food-, water-, and vector-borne diseases, thereby conferring dignity to students. Additionally, gender-responsive nutrition campaigns hold the potential to reduce the unpaid care burden on women and girls.
33. To support the SLP, CRS and USDA, in partnership with MOES, signed an agreement in September 2012 for the McGovern Food for Education award, Learning and Engaging All in Primary School (LEAPS) in the Province of Savannaketh, providing school lunch meals to 308 schools (made with rice, oil, lentils, and green split peas) and supplementing with wash in school, literacy and inclusive education interventions.
34. Building on its success, the LEAPS program continued to support the same province and additional schools in its second phase (LEAPS II: 2016-2021) and third phase (LEAPS III: 2021-2025). In alignment with joint efforts by WFP, CRS and MOES, the LEAPS III is designed with the aim to gradually transition schools to the SLP through a handover process that strengthens local capacities, particularly within communities. Additionally, LEAPS III incorporates local and regional procurement of commodities such as soymilk, chicken eggs, and powdered sacha inchi, a protein-rich edible seed grown in Lao PDR. This approach supports local farmers and enhances the nutritional quality of school meals.
35. To support the SLP and in alignment with WFP's global school feeding priorities, WFP implemented the first McGovern-Dole award in 2014-2016 (known as McGovern-Dole FY14 project). This grant gradually shifted from providing a mid-morning snack to providing school lunches consisting of USDA sourced rice and lentils and adopted a greater focus on capacity strengthening for the Government, communities and schools to ensure project sustainability.<sup>76</sup>
36. WFP was awarded a second round of the McGovern-Dole project for 2017-2022 (FY17), which focused on transitioning WFP-supported schools to the SLP,<sup>77</sup> and in May 2018 WFP and the MoES signed a School Feeding Handover Plan.<sup>78</sup> In July 2019, the Government assumed management of 515 WFP-supported schools; an additional 915 schools transitioned in September 2021.<sup>79</sup> Following the successful first phase of the handover, and in preparation for the 2019-2020 school year, the Government allocated domestic funds to school feeding for the first time. During implementation of the FY17 McGovern-Dole project, WFP also received complimentary funding from USDA to support the Local and Regional Procurement (LRP) in one district in Luangnamtha Province. This allowed WFP to provide over 1,100 smallholder farmers with training, tools, and seeds to supply fresh produce for the SFP. Due to implementation interruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, USDA approved a no-cost extension until September 30, 2023.<sup>80</sup>

### 1.3. SUBJECT OF THE EVALUATION

37. **Overview.** The subject of this midterm evaluation is the FY20 USDA McGovern-Dole School Feeding Project (2020-2025) and represents the third cycle of the McGovern-Dole award in Lao PDR. The five-year, USD 26 million project builds on successes and lessons learned from WFP's previous school feeding projects to expand school feeding to the Government's remaining priority districts: Bachiangchaleunsook, Bualapha, Feuang, Khong, Lakhonepheng, Lamarm, Mahaxay, Meung, Moonlapamok, Nhommalath, Nonghed, Park Ou,

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<sup>75</sup> The World Bank.2013. Laos: A Feeding Program is Bringing More Children to School.

<sup>76</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2018. [USDA McGovern-Dole FY14 End-line Evaluation in Lao PDR \[FY14-16\]. October.](#)

<sup>77</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. [End-Line Evaluation of USDA McGovern-Dole Grant for WFP School Feeding in Laos from 2017 to 2022.](#)

<sup>78</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2020. FY 2020 USDA McGovern-Dole Proposal.

<sup>79</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023.

<sup>80</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. [End-Line Decentralized Evaluation of USDA McGovern-Dole Grant for WFP School Feeding in Laos from 2017 to 2022.](#) Accessed on 12 March 2024.

Sangthong, Sukhuma, Xaybuathong, Xaysetha, and Xonbuly districts.<sup>81</sup> These 17 districts<sup>82</sup> span 11 provinces in northern, central and southern Lao PDR and received school feeding support for the first time through the 2020-2025 project.<sup>83</sup>

38. Over the life of the award, the project will deliver over 43 million meals to improve the health, literacy and dietary practices of 31,111 pre-primary and primary school-age girls and 33,045 boys across 705 schools.<sup>84</sup> As of the 2019-2020 school year, Lao PDR had a total of 8,518 primary schools, indicating that the McGovern-Dole project covers approximately 8 percent of all primary schools in the country.<sup>85</sup>
39. The design of the McGovern-Dole project draws from the previous CO experience in directly implementing school feeding initiatives, previous evaluations of McGovern-Dole projects in Lao PDR (i.e. FY14 and FY17), needs assessments for activity domains (such as for WASH and agriculture activities), Government policies (such as the National Nutrition Strategy to 2025 and Plan of Action 2016–2020), WFP country strategy plan (CSP) and the WFP corporate strategic plan.
40. **Baseline assessment.** The baseline was conducted in September 2021, prior to the launch of the McGovern-Dole project.<sup>86</sup> The study found that the project design aligned well with the Education Sector and Sports Development Plan and National School Meals Program, with a vision to improve the educational and nutritional target of the country and meet SDG targets. Project villages showed varying levels of vulnerability; malnutrition and poor education outcomes were more present in rural villages, and poverty was a critical determinant of absenteeism in schools. The baseline study also found that it was important to focus on supporting farmers through increasing production capacity in addition to income. Regarding gender equality and women’s empowerment considerations, the number of women in leadership roles was limited at the village level. Strategic and financial decision-making at the village level was primarily reserved for men, which limited full engagement of women in these roles.
41. Since the launch of the project, WFP has completed several additional studies to inform project implementation. In 2022, following recommendations made at baseline, WFP conducted an acceptability study when introducing school feeding in communities that do not normally consume lentils or fortified rice with daily meals.<sup>87</sup> In addition, WFP tailored cooks’ training to promote these unfamiliar, nutritious foods to project communities, provided recipes and introduced different cooking methods so households were comfortable preparing lentils. Also in 2022, WFP and Helen Keller International completed a study on snack food consumption and the drivers of school-age children’s food choices.<sup>88</sup> Findings from the study were used to inform the McGovern-Dole project’s nutrition campaigns.

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<sup>81</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. [Mid-Term Evaluation of USDA McGovern-Dole Grant for WFP School Feeding in Laos from 2020 to 2025: Decentralized Evaluation Terms of Reference.](#)

<sup>82</sup> Though the original Lao PDR FY 2020 USDA McGovern-Dole Proposal listed 18 target districts, Longcheng District in Xaisomboun Province was dropped because the Government had not granted approval by the end of 2021.

WFP Lao PDR. 2022. FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period 1 October 2021 – 31 March 2022.

<sup>83</sup> Salavan, Savannakhet, and Attapeu provinces are among the most food insecure provinces in the country.

<sup>84</sup> As of September 2023, one school has closed, and the total number of project schools is 704.

WFP Lao PDR. 2023. FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023.

<sup>85</sup> World Bank. 2020. [Project Information Document: Lao PDR Global Partnership for Education III: Learning and Equity Acceleration Project.](#)

<sup>86</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2022. [Baseline Evaluation of WFP School-Feeding Program for USDA McGovern-Dole Grant \[FY 2020-25\].](#)

<sup>87</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2022. [Lao People’s Democratic Republic Annual Country Report 2022.](#)

<sup>88</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2022. FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period 1 October 2021 – 31 March 2022.

## Partners and project focus

42. The project is implemented by WFP in partnership with CRS and the MoES.<sup>89</sup> The MoES is WFP's principal government counterpart and coordinates the management of the National School Meals Program through the Inclusive Education Promotion Center (IEPC). Under the project, the MoES implements school feeding in three northern provinces; CRS implements school feeding, literacy and WASH activities in two southern provinces.
43. In addition to the MoES and CRS, WFP collaborates with the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao Women's Union, Research Institute for Educational Sciences (RIES) and the National Center for Environmental Health and Water Supply (Nam Saat) to implement WASH, health and nutrition, literacy, and community mobilization activities.

## Results framework and monitoring system

44. **Results framework.** The McGovern-Dole strategic objectives are improved literacy of school-age children (MGD SO1), increased use of health and dietary practices (MGD SO2) and improved effectiveness of food assistance through local and regional procurement (LRP SO1) in the targeted areas.<sup>90</sup> The full results frameworks for each strategic objective are presented in [Annex 5](#). Activities contributing to MGD SO1 include literacy activities, school meals, and agriculture support activities. To achieve MGD SO2, WFP and partners are implementing WASH and health and nutrition activities. Community mobilization and infrastructure investment activities contribute to both MGD SO1 and MGD SO2. WFP has incorporated capacity strengthening to ensure the sustainability of project outcomes by targeting four McGovern-Dole foundational results: increased capacity of government institutions, improved policy and regulatory framework, increased government support, and increased engagement of local organizations and community groups. The underpinning project logic is that these activities will equip the Lao Government, schools, parents and communities with the resources, knowledge, and experience needed to achieve MGD SO1 and SO2.
45. **Monitoring system.** WFP developed the project monitoring system to align with its corporate commitment to results-based management and to ease the mainstreaming of the system into the government architecture after the SFP handover.<sup>91 92</sup> The monitoring system is primarily digital and comprises a monitoring application linked with the Education Management Information System database to enable routine data collection on critical indicators. The project's Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) comprises McGovern-Dole standard and customized indicators that outline the source data and methodology to measure each indicator. Output indicators are reported monthly and outcome indicators are reported through bi-annual and annual reports.<sup>93</sup> Monitoring data are gender disaggregated across most indicators, as shown in [Annex 6](#). The school meals application tracks total food items distributed to every school on a quarterly basis and links with total food items utilized in school meals on a daily basis.<sup>94</sup> The WFP M&E team is responsible for planning and managing on-going monitoring. District community facilitators (DCF) collect project data at the school level and report directly to the WFP M&E team.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023.

<sup>90</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. [Mid-Term Evaluation of USDA McGovern-Dole Grant for WFP School Feeding in Laos from 2020 to 2025: Decentralized Evaluation Terms of Reference](#).

<sup>91</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2020. FY 2020 USDA McGovern-Dole Proposal.

<sup>92</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2022. [Baseline Evaluation of WFP School-Feeding Program for USDA McGovern-Dole Grant \[FY 2020-25\]](#).

<sup>93</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2020. FY 2020 USDA McGovern-Dole Proposal.

<sup>94</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2022. [Baseline Evaluation of WFP School-Feeding Program for USDA McGovern-Dole Grant \[FY 2020-25\]](#).

<sup>95</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2020. FY 2020 USDA McGovern-Dole Proposal.

## Project activities

46. The McGovern-Dole project in Lao PDR implements school feeding, WASH, community development and infrastructure investment, literacy, agriculture support, government capacity strengthening and health and nutrition activities. This section describes each activity.
47. **School Meals.** These activities are central to the McGovern-Dole project and is a key activity under SO1 of the CSP. All schools in the project participate in school feeding, which consists of one lunch meal per day consisting of: fortified rice, lentils three times a week, canned fish twice a week, and fortified cooking oil.<sup>96</sup> The following section discusses how these in-kind inputs are procured and distributed.
48. According to the most recent Nutrition Value (NutVal) calculations,<sup>97</sup> the nutritional composition of ration content, along with percentage of daily requirements for relevant school-aged children, is presented Table 3. In summary, the rations provide 633.2 kilocalories of energy (39 percent of daily intake for primary aged students), 23.2 grams of fat (57 percent of daily intake for primary aged students) and 14.1 grams of fat (46 percent of daily intake for primary aged students).

**Table 3. Micro and macronutrient composition of the food basket, based on NutVal 41.**

RATION CONTENTS (daily ration)	Daily Ration	Energy	Protein	Fat	Calcium	Iron	Zinc	Vit. A	Folate Vitamin B9
	g/person/day	kcal	g	g	mg	mg	mg	µg RAE	µg DFE
Rice, fortified (USAID)	100.0	360.0	6.6	0.6	9	5.6	4.7	111	264
Oil, vegetable (USAID)	10.0	88.4	0.0	10.0	0	0.0	0.0	203	0
Sardines, canned in tomato sauce, drained	30.0	58.0	6.3	3.1	72	0.7	0.4	10	7
Lentils	40.0	126.8	10.3	0.4	22	3.0	1.9	1	192
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>633.2</b>	<b>23.2</b>	<b>14.1</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>9.3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>463</b>
<b>% of daily requirements for 05 – 10 years</b>	-	39%	57%	46%	16%	58%	67%	68%	178%

Source: [Nutritional Value Tool \(NutVal\) 4.1](#); WFP Lao PDR. 2020. FY 2020 USDA McGovern-Dole Proposal.

49. School gardens, smallholder farmers' groups and parent or community donations supplement school lunches with meat, fish, eggs, and green leafy or root vegetables. Selection criteria for schools was primarily vulnerability-based, considering the needs prioritized by the project. Additionally, schools were also selected partly based on their interest and readiness to sustain school feeding in the long-term, both of which are critical for a successful transition to the national program.
50. **Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH).** WASH activities are implemented in 130 schools across Khammouane, Savannakhet and Champasak Province.<sup>98</sup> Activities include construction of water systems, establishment of Water User Committees, and activities to encourage hygiene practices among students such as handwashing, tooth brushing and toilet use. Schools were selected based on a single criterion: whether they had an available water source. Project WASH activities aim to increase the use of healthy practices by providing increased access to clean water and improved knowledge of hygiene practices.<sup>99</sup>
51. **Community mobilization and infrastructure investments.** This is an integrated activity package that intends to increase community awareness of the school feeding initiative, engage communities in the

<sup>96</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2020. FY 2020 USDA McGovern-Dole Proposal.

<sup>97</sup> [Nutritional Value Tool \(NutVal\) 4.1](#).

<sup>98</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2024. FY 2020 USDA McGovern-Dole Project sample.

<sup>99</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2020. FY 2020 USDA McGovern-Dole Proposal.



implementation and improvement of the project and requisite infrastructure, and build ownership of the project to ensure continuation of the project after it is nationalized. WFP and CRS employ district community facilitators (DCFs) to work directly with local MoES and all school staff to oversee the set-up and functionality of school feeding activities, provide capacity building for local Village Education Development Committees (VEDCs) on school feeding implementation, food preparation and storage, and conduct training for cooks, storekeepers, and school meals support staff (teachers, principals, VEDCs) on safe food preparation and storage practices in collaboration with school administrators, district education staff and the Lao Women's Union.<sup>100</sup> DCFs conduct these duties in all schools under the project.

52. In close coordination with VEDCs, DCFs, and District Education and Sports Bureau staff, the project builds and rehabilitates school warehouses and storerooms, school kitchens, dining areas, handwashing stations and water supply systems. MoES Directive 944/MoES of 2019 mandates that all school lunch projects have a garden, to encourage school nutrition. The project complements this through the distribution of school garden manuals, trainings on school gardening (e.g. master training, training of trainers and rollout at school level), school lessons that incorporate gardening, nutrition and health, and garden starter kits with seed packets and equipment.<sup>101</sup>
53. **Literacy activities.** The project provides literacy activities to 90 high-need schools in Khammouane Province. WFP and partners selected schools with low education indicators, no additional literacy support programming, and a high percentage of ethnic minority students whose mother tongue is a language other than Lao.<sup>102</sup> Literacy activities align with the USAID Reading MATTERS framework and include training for administrators to become more effective mentors to teachers, training for teachers to promote timely and effective assessment of students' literacy skills and adaptive remedial instruction, high-quality learning materials for students' use in school and at home, and activities to familiarize pre-primary children with the Lao language and classroom environment to reduce dropout and grade repetition in primary school.
54. Central to these activities is the updating and distribution of the Lao Language Formative Assessment toolkit. The formative assessment aims to assess literacy and bolster students' skills in 4 main areas: oral vocabulary knowledge, phonological awareness, decoding and reading comprehension. This assessment was adapted from previous CRS education projects in Lao PDR and was updated under the McGovern Dole project by CRS and Research Institute for Educational Sciences. Documents show that the toolkit – which is aimed primarily at teachers – consisted of quick guide, a guidebook, and a handbook for master trainers from the offices of the Provincial the Education and Sports Services and the District Education and Sports Bureau.<sup>103 104</sup> To support the rollout of the FA toolkit, CRS provided trainings to district-based Pedagogical Advisors, who are charged with providing technical support to teachers on instruction. The topics of these trainings included: how to implement formative assessments, teaching techniques for the first two years of primary, education rubrics and providing clarity on the PA role overall within the Lao education system.<sup>105</sup> The key intention behind these trainings is for PAs to cascade the use of formative assessments and good literacy practices to teachers in school.
55. Under the literacy package, CRS has been working closely with MoES, Provincial Education and Sports Services and community-level VEDCs to organize School Readiness Camp: workshops to familiarize pre-Grade 1 students with positive school environments and support students with Lao language competency before they begin school.

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<sup>100</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2020. FY 2020 USDA McGovern-Dole Proposal.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. [Mid-Term Evaluation of USDA McGovern-Dole Grant for WFP School Feeding in Laos from 2020 to 2025: Decentralized Evaluation Terms of Reference.](#)

<sup>103</sup> CRS. 2022. Quarterly Report for April –June 2022 for McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program 2020-2025

<sup>104</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. WFP Lao PDR FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period: 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023

<sup>105</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2022. USDA McGovern-Dole Semi-Annual Report (FY20 Award) 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022.

56. Literacy activities also work with literacy promotion within communities, such as hosting open days at school and large community events such as the Home Learning Day. The latter initiative saw CRS collaborate closely with Provincial Education and Sports Services and District Education and Sports Bureau across 4 districts in early 2024, drawing a total of 1,851 community members in attendance (1,153 females) and participation of 7,534 students (3,773 female).<sup>106</sup> Messaging in this community event centered around promoting literacy and health and hygiene, highlighting a holistic approach by CRS in achieving outcomes across both critical project domains.
57. All activities are designed to complement the national curriculum and other literacy investment in Lao PDR (e.g., USAID's Learn to Read and BEQUAL)<sup>107 108</sup> and use materials developed specifically for the Lao context and language.
58. **Agriculture activities.** Villages requiring agriculture support were identified through needs assessments in approximately 90 villages (5 villages per district) and required two days to complete. The assessments focused on agriculture and livelihood mapping, farmers groups, and gap analysis, and helped identify three main potential support areas: 1) production of nutritious food for school meals program; 2) market linkages; and 3) climate change adaptability.<sup>109</sup>
59. Agriculture activities characterized by targeted support to five smallholder farmers in each of the 85 villages of the project. The support involves providing either agriculture support (a package consisting of seeds and fruit saplings, along with associated equipment to support crop production) or livestock support (fish, frogs, or poultry, with associated feed and fencing equipment). Interviews show that the current implementation plan involves: (i) providing technical training to these smallholder farmers around productivity, farm management, and farmer-to-farmer collaboration; (ii) provision of support packages detailed above; and (iii) providing on-going technical support through to project close. Interviews highlight the component objective of catalyzing the exchange of ideas, knowledge, and good agricultural practices. The project plans to provide supplementary support including capacity strengthening to participating farmers and villagers on agricultural technical methods and establish food preparation and storage management regulations within farmers groups.<sup>110</sup>
60. **Government capacity strengthening.** Capacity strengthening is integrated under all strategic outcomes of the CSP 2022-2026, and WFP continues to build government capacity to integrate USDA-supported schools and maintain school feeding activities to the SLP.<sup>111</sup> WFP supported the Government to develop the Minister Decree for School Lunch Promotion to integrate school feeding into the national budget for the 2023-2024 school year and devise guidelines on school meals implementation at the national, provincial, district and community levels.<sup>112</sup>
61. From April to August 2023, WFP conducted a System Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) exercise to assess current national capacity for the school feeding transition strategy across five domains: policy and regulatory framework, financial sustainability, institutional capacity and coordination, project design and implementation, and community participation. WFP continues to advocate for Lao PDR to join the global School Meals Coalition.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> CRS. 2024. Quarterly Report #12 for McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program 2020-2025.

<sup>107</sup> USAID. 2022. [USAID Learn to Read Laos](#).

<sup>108</sup> Government of Lao PDR & Government of Australia. N.D. [Basic Education Quality and Access in Lao PDR \(BEQUAL\)](#).

<sup>109</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2020. FY 2020 USDA McGovern-Dole Proposal.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> WFP. 2021. [Lao People's Democratic Republic country strategic plan \(2022-2026\)](#). 21 October. WFP/EB.2/2021/7-A/2/Rev.1

<sup>112</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2022. FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period April – September 2022.

<sup>113</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. FY20 McGovern-Dole Semi-Annual Report: Indicator Spreadsheet. Reporting Period 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023.



62. **Health and nutrition.** Social behavior change communication (SBCC) activities were used to promote healthy dietary and hygiene practices. School nutrition campaigns, held at least twice a year, aim to raise awareness among parents, teachers, children, local farmers and cooks on healthy eating habits and foster demand for locally produced nutrient-dense foods. WFP reinforces nutrition awareness and food security messaging in the classroom curriculum through the Green Box – a green container that features supplementary teaching and learning tools in the forms of posters, flash cards, and educational comic books.<sup>114</sup> All project schools receive the Green Box package.
63. Refer to [Annex 7](#) for a synthesis of the activity objectives, main implementer(s), locations and partners.

### **Procurement and distribution**

64. School feeding started in Year 2 of the project and will continue through Year 5. Rice distributions (USDA procured) will continue into the first semester of Year 5, after which households will be responsible for providing rice for their children to bring to school.<sup>115</sup> To supplement the USDA commodities, the project uses local/regional procurement (LRP) for the following commodities: fortified palm olein oil from Indonesia and Malaysia; canned fish from Thailand; and fortified rice sourced locally from Lao PDR.<sup>116</sup>
65. Each year the project monitors the annual distributions of rice, lentils, canned fish, and vegetable oil procured by USDA and the LRP mechanism. WFP is responsible for tracking incoming food and school distributions. Table 4 below presents combined totals of USDA and LRP procured commodities that have been distributed between start of school feeding activities and the midterm. Differences between actual and expected distribution is primarily attributed to school closures resulting in no meals being served (due to COVID-19 or lack of teachers).<sup>117</sup>

**Table 4. Commodity distribution at midterm**

Commodity	Expected Distribution (MT)	Actual Distribution (MT)
<b>Year 2 - FY22</b>		
<b>01 Oct 2021 - 31 Mar 2022</b>		
Rice	277.2	61.733
Lentils	55.44	12.618
Vegetable Oil	27.72	5.033
Canned Fish	35.64	12.183
<b>01 Apr 2022 - 30 Sept 2022</b>		
Rice	575.270	579.542
Lentils	103.950	42.463
Vegetable Oil	50.160	16.716
Canned Fish	61.380	31.539
<b>Year 3 - FY23</b>		
<b>01 Oct 2022 - 31 Mar 2023</b>		
Rice	984.43	984.43
Lentils	135.849	135.849
Vegetable Oil	86.414	86.391
Canned Fish	81.157	81.136

<sup>114</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2020. FY 2020 USDA McGovern-Dole Proposal.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. FY20 McGovern-Dole Semi-Annual Report: Indicator Spreadsheet. Reporting Period 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023.

Commodity	Expected Distribution (MT)	Actual Distribution (MT)
<b>01 Apr 2023 - 30 Sept 2023</b>		
Rice	352.539	324.763
Lentils	71.436	88.826
Vegetable Oil	35.254	22.09
Canned Fish	40.82	27.197
Source: Figures provided through email correspondence between the ET and the CO.		

66. WFP is responsible for quality assurance mechanisms of in-kind commodity transport and storage; the project utilizes three warehouses to store food on receipt from USDA. Interviews and documents confirm that all three warehouses adhere to WFP's global warehousing standards and stock rotation principles. As per these principles, WFP interviews confirm that: food commodities operate on a first-in-first-out basis; expiry dates and spoilage are closely monitored by staff; warehouses are under 24-hour surveillance; and routine inspections are carried out once a month.<sup>118</sup> WFP's corporate supply chain management systems are used to track all points of journey for food commodities, from suppliers to school deliveries. Two incidents of infestation have been reported: first in January/February 2022 involving 529MT of rice containing dead insects, upon arrival to provincial warehouses; and second in 2023, where 16.65MT of rice was received moldy and with worms.<sup>119,120</sup> Records show that WFP was able to supplement the lost stock with existing surplus from warehouses. Transportation from warehouses to schools is all outsourced to local freight companies.
67. After schools receive food, WFP and CRS field monitoring teams ensure schools cook for the maximum number of days as planned. In the last reporting period (April – September 2023), schools cooked 15 days per month, 75 percent of total school days.

### **Amendments to initial project design**

68. The COVID-19 pandemic and resulting government mitigation measures delayed project implementation. The distribution of school meals between late February and March 2022 was contingent on if schools had the necessary infrastructure and resources in place (e.g., a storeroom and kitchen).<sup>121</sup> Additionally, WFP-supported schools will not transition to the national School Lunch Program in 2025, as was originally planned.<sup>122</sup> WFP is prepared to support school feeding implementation in project schools past the initial transition date, and is actively working to build pipeline to continue support beyond 2025; at the time of the midterm, WFP has submitted its application for a fourth cycle of the McGovern-Dole award, which continues support to the same 705 schools as the current project.

### **Project resources**

69. The original budget for the McGovern Dole project was USD \$25 million over five years. This was broken down into: commodity costs (USD \$2.3M), freight (USD \$1.0M), and administrative costs (USD \$21.8M). The original total operating budget (grand total costs) for the project was USD \$27.0M; this included USD \$2.0M in cost share.<sup>123</sup>

<sup>118</sup> WFP Lao PDR. Annual Work Plan October 2022-September 2023.

<sup>119</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2022. USDA McGovern-Dole Semi-Annual Report (FY20 Award) 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022

<sup>120</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. WFP Lao PDR FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period: 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023.)

<sup>121</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2022. FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period 1 October 2021 – 31 March 2022.

<sup>122</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. [Mid-Term Evaluation of USDA McGovern-Dole Grant for WFP School Feeding in Laos from 2020 to 2025: Decentralized Evaluation Terms of Reference.](#)

<sup>123</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2020. FY 2020 USDA McGovern-Dole Proposal.

70. As of the midterm, the total awarded amount to WFP under the McGovern-Dole project is USD \$26,019,265.22. Updated financial data – including current expenditure and burn rate – was not available for the evaluation team to review. As a result, efficiency analyses (i.e. cost-effectiveness and cost-efficiency) was not conducted. Therefore, it is recommended this analysis is specifically included in the terms of reference for the endline evaluation.

#### 71. **Social inclusion**

72. WFP Lao PDR scored a gender and age marker (GAM) score of 4 (out of 4) for school feeding, indicating that gender and age considerations are well integrated into the design and implementation of the WFP SFP.<sup>124</sup><sup>125</sup> The baseline report highlights that incorporation of gender components into the current school feeding project draws from experience and lessons drawn since the FY14 award, including: the promotion of sharing of tasks in school gardens between boys and girls without defining tasks by gender, strengthening of nutrition education; and mainstreaming of gender into field-level activities by using new literacy materials to revisit, unpack and improve perceptions of gender roles. Additionally, the project collects data and reports results on primary school-age children by gender and ethnicity.<sup>126</sup>

73. To promote inclusive education, CRS trains and supports VEDCs to organize community awareness events; advocates for inclusive policies and plans; strengthens the capacity of communities and the Government to raise awareness and promote inclusive education; and trains teachers, school administrators and parents in inclusive education strategies and tools.<sup>127</sup> WFP and CRS are both members of the Disability Inclusive Development Working Group, and WFP is a member of the Education Sector Work Group, which promotes coordination among in-country stakeholders on inclusive education.<sup>128</sup>

#### **Other Country Office programs that support school feeding**

74. While the McGovern-Dole project represents a key school feeding initiative for the CO, there are ongoing initiatives aimed at supporting transitioned schools (i.e. schools supported under previous iterations of the McGovern-Dole project and now managed under the SLP). At the time of the midterm, feedback from WFP staff show three wider school-feeding activities are being implemented, with a combined total of USD \$13.2M:

75. Through funding from the German Government's Federal Ministry for Economic Development and Cooperation (BMZ) (including ISC), this program aims to strengthen the SLP's sustainability and enhances local agricultural production by promoting nutrition-sensitive, gender-responsive, and climate-smart agricultural practices among smallholder-farmers. Additionally, the program provides additional cash (3,000 kips student/day) to top up the government's 1,000 kip student/day for the procurement and preparation of nutritious school meals. This program provides agriculture inputs, trainings, and establish farm-school-market linkages to ensure a stable supply of local and nutritious food for the SLP. The program also supports schools with energy-efficient cooking stoves and support for the SLP monitoring system.

76. The Republic of Korea's Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs (MAFRA) has provided funding to support smallholder farmers through materials for climate-smart and nutrition-sensitive agricultural production as well as fish and poultry farming. WFP collaborates with local government agencies to promote community contributions, strengthen school capacity, and ensure efficient monitoring and problem-solving within the SLP framework.

77. A third project within the CO's school feeding portfolio focuses on utilizing the home-grown school feeding model. Elected schools have received greenhouses for agriculture production to be used in school lunches.

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<sup>124</sup> WFP GaM is a corporate tool that codes – on a scale from 0 to 4 – the extent to which gender and age are integrated into the design and implementation of a WFP CSP. It is based on a self-reported assessment by the CO.

<sup>125</sup> WFP. 2022. [Lao People's Democratic Republic Annual Country Report 2022](#).

<sup>126</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2022. [Baseline Evaluation of WFP School-Feeding Program for USDA McGovern-Dole Grant \[FY 2020-25\]](#).

<sup>127</sup> Catholic Relief Services. 2024. [CRS in Laos](#). Accessed 10 February 2024.

<sup>128</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. [Mid-Term Evaluation of USDA McGovern-Dole Grant for WFP School Feeding in Laos from 2020 to 2025: Decentralized Evaluation Terms of Reference](#).

Additionally, this project promotes healthy cooking practices, dietary diversity, food safety, menu planning, and government capacity strengthening within the SLP structure. Lastly, through this project the revised Green Boxes were distributed to handed-over schools.

78. These projects all fall under 2022-2026 CSP Strategic Outcome 1 (SO1)<sup>129</sup>, with a focus on supporting the productivity of smallholder farmers through nutrition-sensitive approaches, and work towards stronger community contributions to school meals in SLP schools. Feedback from WFP shows that across all these initiatives – like the McGovern Dole project – there is an explicit focus on strengthening and supplementing the SLP and the strengthening capacity of Government at national and sub-national levels.

### Protection and accountability

79. Feedback from WFP staff shows the primary community feedback mechanism of the project is implemented through DCFs, who regularly conduct school visits and discuss implementation with community members. Project documentation does not indicate a formal strategy is in place for approaching community feedback and complaints, however there is a hotline number provided for complaints.

### Outcomes

80. Table 5 and Table 6 present life of project (LOP) targets for standard as well as custom output and outcome indicators for the project, along with corresponding baseline values and yearly progress (where measured). For a full detailing on progress against McGovern-Dole and custom indicators, refer to [Annex 8](#). Refer to findings under [Evaluation Question 4](#) for more discussion on these outcomes at the midterm.

**Table 5 Standard McGovern-Dole outcome indicators**

Outcome Indicator	Baseline	FY22	FY23	LOP target
<b>MGD SO1: Improved literacy of school-aged children</b>				
Percent of students who, by the end of two grades of primary schooling, demonstrate that they can read and understand the meaning of grade-level text	3%	-	-	11%
Average student attendance rate in USDA- supported classrooms/schools <sup>1</sup>	95.09%	No data	No data	99%
Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants who demonstrate the use of new and quality teaching techniques or tools as the result of USDA assistance <sup>2</sup>	0	0	0	132
Number of school administrators and officials in target schools who demonstrate use of new techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance <sup>2</sup>	0	0	0	10
Number of students enrolled in school receiving USDA assistance	64,156	66,998	61,772	102,650
Number of policies, regulations, or administrative procedures in each stage of development as a result of USDA assistance <sup>3</sup>	0	1	4	9
<b>MGD SO2: Increased use of health and dietary practices</b>				
Number of individuals who demonstrate use of new child health and nutrition practices as a result of USDA assistance	0	0	605	1,485
Number of individuals who demonstrate use of new safe food preparation and storage practices as a result of USDA assistance	0	0	605	1,639
<b>LRP SO1: Improved effectiveness of food assistance through local and regional procurement</b>				
Number of individuals in the agriculture system who have applied improved management practices and technologies with USDA assistance	0	0	0	840

<sup>129</sup> WFP Lao PDR Strategic Outcome 1: Schoolchildren in vulnerable areas have improved food security, nutrition and learning results through a sustainable national school meals programme by 2026.

Outcome Indicator	Baseline	FY22	FY23	LOP target
Colour code key:	Data collected at baseline, midterm and endline only			
<p><sup>1</sup> WFP completed digital monitoring training in five districts during the Oct 21 – Mar 22 reporting period due to COVID-19 restrictions; only the overall attendance data were available from schools in these districts in Mar 2022. In the Apr – Sep 22 reporting period, WFP completed rolling out the digital monitoring that aims to collect data on this indicator in all project schools in May 22. The system gradually started to function in schools in Sept 22. In the Oct 22 – Sep 23 reporting period, WFP was actively updating the School Meals app; the completed app is expected to be rolled in the next reporting period.</p> <p><sup>2</sup> This indicator was collected starting Oct 2023 using the new monitoring school class observations tool created throughout this reporting period. Data will be included in the next reporting period.</p> <p><sup>3</sup> This indicator is considered an output indicator for stages 1-2 and an outcome indicator for stages 3-5.</p> <p>Source: WFP Lao PDR. 2023. FY20 McGovern-Dole Semi-Annual Report: Indicator Spreadsheet. Reporting Period 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023.</p>				

**Table 6. Custom outcome indicators.**

Outcome Indicator		Baseline	LOP target
<b>MGD SO1: Improved Literacy of School-aged Children</b>			
Average number of words spoken by Grade 1 and Grade 2 students as measured by the CRS semantic fluency test	Grade 1	8	G1: 11
	Grade 2	16.5	G2: 18
Percent of students at the end of two grades of primary schools that show proficiency reading familiar words		21%	27%
Percent of schools where teachers report higher concentration/attention by children during the day		0	70%
Drop-out rate		6%	4%
<b>MGD SO2: Increased Use of Health and Dietary Practices</b>			
Number of schools where principals report improved WASH practices as a result of USDA		0	104
Proportion of children who have knowledge (K), believe in (A -attitudes) and practice (B-behaviors) the consumption of a diverse and healthy diet, including fruit and vegetable consumption and avoiding unhealthy food and beverages	Knowledge	77.8%	85%
	Attitudes	16.4%	23%
	Behaviors	27.5%	33%
Proportion of children who have knowledge, believe in and practice washing hands before and after meals and washing hands before and after going to the toilet	Knowledge	81.1%	85%
	Attitudes	85%	85%
	Behaviors	82.9%	85%
Proportion of teachers who have knowledge, believe in and practice the importance of a diverse and healthy diet, and avoiding unhealthy foods and beverages, for child growth and development and the impact on child well-being <sup>1</sup>	Knowledge	88.2%	96%
	Attitudes	25.3%	35.4%
	Behaviors	78.8%	80%
Proportion of caregivers who have knowledge, believe in and practice the provision of a diverse and healthy diet, and avoiding unhealthy foods and beverages, for the growth and development of their children	Knowledge	88.2%	94%
	Attitudes	25.3%	35.4%
	Behaviors	78.8%	80%
<p><sup>1</sup> It is not currently known how the baseline calculated these values; the baseline report indicates this was drawn from qualitative questions in-depth interviews with teachers. For the midterm, the values for these indicators are drawn from the quantitative School Survey. While the values for this indicator are not comparable to baseline, it is recommended the endline measurement is compared to midterm.</p> <p>Source: WFP Lao PDR. 2023. FY20 McGovern-Dole Semi-Annual Report: Indicator Spreadsheet. Reporting Period 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023.</p>			

## 1.4. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY, LIMITATIONS AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

### Scope of the evaluation

81. The midterm evaluation scope includes all aspects of the project including school meals, WASH, literacy activities, community mobilization and capacity, and capacity strengthening results. It covers all activities of McGovern Dole project in all 17 districts from the start of the project in September 2021 to March 2024, the start of data collection.
82. The evaluation assesses performance against project objectives and associated activities under the McGovern-Dole results framework SO1 (improved literacy of school-age children) and SO2 (increased use of health and dietary practices), LRP; and Foundational Results (which focus on strengthening government capacity for school feeding).<sup>130</sup> While an assessment on government capacity was beyond the scope of this evaluation, there is a focus on the design and effectiveness of WFP's work to strengthen government capacity – namely in school feeding – by analyzing evaluation data against recently completed Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER-SF) in 2023.<sup>131</sup>
83. The purposes of the midterm evaluation are presented in Table 7 below, along with where in the report they are specifically addressed. Cumulatively, these purposes reflect the dual and equal objectives of accountability and learning.

**Table 7. Purposes of the evaluation**

Evaluation key purpose	Corresponding section where it is addressed
i. Review the project's coherence, relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, impact, and sustainability	Triangulated qualitative and quantitative evidence is presented as findings under <a href="#">Section 2: Evaluation findings</a> .
ii. Collect performance indicator data for strategic objectives and higher-level results	Progress against targets for output, outcome and custom indicators is presented in <a href="#">Annex 8</a> Analysis on progress is presented as findings primarily under <a href="#">Section 2.3: Evaluation Question 3</a> .
iii. Assess whether the project is on track to meet the results and targets	The extent to which project and activities are on track is presented through findings under <a href="#">Section 2.3: Evaluation Question 3</a> and <a href="#">Section 2.4: Evaluation Question 4</a> .
iv. Assess how well gender, equity and wider inclusion issues were mainstreamed and integrated into the project	Specific findings on gender and inclusion of the project discussed under <a href="#">Finding 14</a> To enable greater insight into differences between boys and girls and men and women, disaggregated data are presented where available, particularly under EQs discussing effectiveness, impact and sustainability.
v. Identify any necessary mid-course corrections and operational lessons	Operational and strategic recommendations are presented in <a href="#">Section 3: Conclusions and recommendations</a> . The mapping of recommendations to corresponding findings and conclusions is presented in <a href="#">Annex 12</a> .

84. The midterm evaluation is guided by five evaluation questions, which follow the OECD-DAC criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness and efficiency, impact and sustainability.<sup>132</sup> The EQs adhere to the Terms of Reference (ToR) and were vetted by the Evaluation Reference Group in the Inception Phase. The table below presents the overarching EQs.

<sup>130</sup> The McGovern-Dole, LRP and Foundational Results frameworks are included in [Annex 3](#).

<sup>131</sup> WFP. 2023. Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER): Lao PDR.

<sup>132</sup> Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee.

**Table 8. Evaluation Questions.**

Criteria	Evaluation Question
Coherence	<b>EQ1</b> – What is the current level of alignment of the intervention with other relevant initiatives?
Relevance	<b>EQ2</b> –To what extent do the McGovern-Dole objectives and design respond to the needs of stakeholders and institutions?
Effectiveness & Efficiency	<b>EQ3</b> – To what extent are McGovern-Dole activities being delivered in an efficient and timely manner and likely to achieve objectives and results, including possible differences across groups or institutions?
Impact	<b>EQ4</b> – Are there any emerging impacts of the intervention at the mid-term stage?
Sustainability	<b>EQ5</b> – To what extent are McGovern-Dole project results, benefits, and outcomes likely to continue after the project concludes?
Lessons and Recommendations <sup>1</sup>	Are there any recommendations for mid-course corrections to improve the project’s relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and/or sustainability; and What are the lessons learned from the project so far?
<sup>1</sup> Lessons and recommendations are drawn from evaluation findings and presented as a <a href="#">separate section</a> .	

85. Each EQ has corresponding sub-EQs that guide further and specific lines of inquiry; these are detailed in full within the evaluation matrix presented in [Annex 3](#) . The evaluation matrix further presents indicators/specific areas of inquiry, data sources, data collection methods, and data analysis and triangulation methods.
86. In addition to the EQs listed above, the midterm explores select thematic areas prioritized by senior CO staff during the inception phase. These lines of inquiry – discussed in associated [Evaluation findings](#) – are:
  - Current policy and institutional capacity for school feeding in Lao PDR.
  - Balance of roles and responsibilities between key stakeholders as they pertain to school feeding.
  - Potential effects of the macro-economic situation and the effectiveness and sustainability of the project.
  - Implementation progress and the quality of activity implementation/ results delivery. This includes a specific focus on the internal and external factors that affect the results.
87. These thematic areas draw from a willingness of the CO to understand how best to directly and indirectly school feeding initiatives in Lao PDR. As such, this evaluation has a focus on examining operational effectiveness and efficiency, and to provide insight into what can be done for the remainder of the project to address country needs and Government priorities, and to meet WFP strategic goals.
88. **Approach to the evaluation.** The evaluation utilized a mixed-methods approach that considered primary and secondary data to triangulate information from different methods and sources to enhance the validity and reliability of findings. The evaluation team systematically reviewed all known sources pertinent to each EQ and presents a robust evidence base for each finding and conclusion. The approach combines a desk review; student and caregiver survey; school survey with an observation component, a literacy assessment (Early Grade Reading Assessment) , remote and in-person qualitative fieldwork (key informant interviews and focus group discussions), including deep dives in select schools, and the examination of quantitative data from WFP and partner monitoring reports and databases. The midterm also includes reporting on required McGovern-Dole performance indicators deriving a large portion of the quantitative data from existing WFP and partner reports.
89. The qualitative and quantitative analysis of primary data draws from a representative sample of 68 schools in all 17 project districts. An overview of these approaches and the sampling strategy is presented in this section, with more information and justification provided in [Annex 4](#).
90. The student survey engaged students between Grades 1-5 and the literacy assessment engaged students in Grade 2 during the 2023-2024 school year; this matches the cohort selected for the baseline evaluation to ensure comparability of results. Students were randomly selected within a school. The caregivers/parent



survey was conducted with parents and/or caregivers of students attending the sampled schools, giving preference to: (i) parents/caregivers of students engaged in the student survey, then (ii) parents/caregivers of any student attending the sampled schools. The school survey was complimented by field observations, where evaluation field staff toured the school, alongside school heads, to visually inspect key school infrastructure – namely classrooms, water sources and handwashing stations, toilets and latrines, school kitchens and storerooms, and school gardens. Field staff took photographs for analysis, and ensured principles of consent and anonymity were upheld.

91. In addition to the student and literacy assessments, the midterm evaluation includes a qualitative deep dive in 14 purposively selected schools. Deep dives consisted of senior researchers conducting 3-5 interviews and focus group discussions in schools, with school heads, teachers, VEDCs, school committees and other school staff. Deep dives explored key aspects, insights and results of the project in schools, as identified by WFP and its partners. Deep dive activities ran in parallel to the school-level survey. A key purpose of the deep dives was to gather key operational lessons from implementing the project so far and to provide more granular insight into school-level needs.
92. Key informant interviews with senior stakeholders in Vientiane Capital – including WFP and CRS staff and Government counterparts – were conducted in-person by senior members of the evaluation team. Focus group discussions were held with sub-national government staff at the district and provincial level. To support triangulation of evidence and validation of emerging lines of inquiry, a second round of remote interviews was conducted with key WFP staff toward the end of the analysis period. The table below summarize the interviews and FGDs conducted.

**Table 9. Overview of stakeholders interviewed**

Stakeholder	Activity	Number of activities conducted
WFP CO staff	KII	12 (5F, 7M)
RBB / HQ	KII	4 (3F, 1M)
Implementing partners	KII	1 (M)
National Government	KII	4 (3M, 1F)
Provincial and district Government	FGD	28 (17 district level, 11 provincial level)
Deep Dives	KIIs	29 (11 F, 18M)
Deep Dives	FGD	14 (18 F, 49 M)

93. The evaluation team considered UN-SWAP criteria to guide the methodology and the evaluation approach.<sup>133</sup> Per Criterion 1,<sup>134</sup> primary data are disaggregated in this report by gender and/or other characteristics as specified in the performance indicator table ([Annex 8](#)). The qualitative discussions incorporated questions on gender equality and access for disabled students. Gender equality and human rights aspects of the project were specifically addressed in quantitative and qualitative interviews and mainstreamed across the evaluation topics. For Criterion 2,<sup>135</sup> a mixed-methods approach was used to collect data from a diverse range of stakeholders in the project (Government, WFP, students, schools, caregivers/parents). This included students, teachers, and parents from the most vulnerable and food-insecure districts in Lao PDR. Per Criterion 3,<sup>136</sup> gender issues were further explored in-depth with key informants. The analysis reports on progress in gender equality and human rights issues such as equal access to education and food security, noting gaps in the project design relating to gender and where additional work is needed. Human rights considerations were addressed in relation to access to education by gender, parents’ attitudes toward girls’ education, access for disabled students, and food security (i.e., school meals). The evaluation methodology

<sup>133</sup> UN Women. 2023. [UN-SWAP 2.0 Framework and Technical Guidance](#).

<sup>134</sup> UN-SWAP Criteria 1: GEEW is integrated in the evaluation scope of analysis and evaluation criteria and questions are designed in a way that ensures GEEW related data will be collected.

<sup>135</sup> UN-SWAP Criteria 2: A gender-responsive methodology, methods and tools, and data analysis techniques are selected.

<sup>136</sup> UN-SWAP Criteria 3: The evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendation reflect a gender analysis.



aimed for equal representation of women and men, girls and boys, as far as possible, and probed gender differences and the reasons for it in the qualitative interviews.

94. Ethical standards were adhered to throughout the evaluation and participants were informed prior to interviews that all participation was voluntary, and their information was confidential.<sup>137</sup>
95. **Sampling for quantitative activities.** The sampling and sampling strategy was developed in close coordination with WFP during the inception phase. WFP first provided a full list of all schools in the project (n=705), by district and province, along with an indication if there were targeted WASH and literacy activities implemented; while all project schools received school meals, 89 schools from the school sample frame had targeted WASH activities and 90 schools from the sample frame received literacy activities.
96. Based on this, the midterm followed a stratified sample for quantitative activities, which is recommended for endline surveys, with four strata based on the following intervention categories:
  - (i) School meals only; (stratum: 570 schools, final sample: 17 schools)
  - (ii) School meals and WASH; (stratum: 47 schools, final sample: 17 schools)
  - (iii) School meals, WASH and literacy; (stratum: 42 schools, final sample: 17 schools)
  - (iv) School meals and literacy; (stratum: 48 schools, final sample: 17 schools).
97. For a detailed discussion on the sampling approach, see [Sampling strategy \(Annex 4\)](#)
98. **Sampling for qualitative “deep dive” activities.** It was agreed in the inception phase that schools for deep dives should be purposively selected from the quantitative sampling frame of 68 schools, for efficiency purposes. The deep-dive selection involved WFP first providing a “long list” of 20 schools based on where good practice was demonstrated, where WFP and partners overcame key challenges or learned lessons, and/or where project outcomes were particularly notable, as identified by WFP and partners. To appropriately capture a breadth of insight across implementation partners, the selection also considered the lead implementing partner in the schools – WFP, CRS or Government. After a series of consultations, WFP and CRS each submitted five schools where they were leading implementation, and WFP suggesting four schools where the Government ran the activities. A final list of 14 schools for deep dives was finalized after the submission of the Inception Report – see [Annex 10](#).
99. For interviews with senior stakeholders, WFP provided the evaluation with a list of key informants from WFP CO, WFP field offices, WFP RBB and HQ, CRS, and government partners involved in school feeding. As indicated in the previous section, some key informants were interviewed multiple times across the evaluation to ensure evidence and findings were triangulated and validated. The full list of people interviewed is presented in [Annex 11](#).

### **Data collection**

100. In-country data collection took place between 18 March – 05 April 2024. This involved field visits to all 68 schools, their communities and the corresponding district/provincial government offices. Quantitative data were collected on Android tablets using Open Data Kit (ODK) and Tangerine (RTI) data collection software. Paper versions of the tools exist both in Lao and English, to facilitate quality control in the data review. See [Annex 4](#) for more information.
101. Despite best efforts, WFP was not able to secure timely Government approvals for fieldwork within agreed evaluation timelines. This delayed data collection by two weeks, which caused a budget overrun and time delay. The time delay was absorbed by TANGO during the reporting and analysis phase. This did not impact the quality of data collected.

### **Data analysis**

102. The evaluation team sought to validate and triangulate findings by drawing on a range of primary quantitative data, primary qualitative data, and secondary data of both types, examining the issues through different lenses and perspectives. Primary quantitative data from the school-level surveys were analyzed to provide point estimates of student literacy and WASH indicators. Indicators were statistically analyzed for comparison

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<sup>137</sup> Refer to [Ethical considerations, risks and safeguards](#).

with baseline survey findings, where possible. The analyses were descriptive with statistical significance tests for the difference between baseline to midterm. These findings were triangulated with project monitoring data and qualitative results. Refer to [Annex 4](#) for more information on the approach to analysis.<sup>138</sup>

### **Limitations**

103. **Availability of project documents.** While country and annual reports are detailed and of good quality, some project approaches and implementation strategies are not yet fully documented. The evaluation team found that knowledge of these approaches and processes lay with project and implementing staff. While this documentation process is ongoing at midterm, the evaluation relied heavily on qualitative evidence triangulated across discussions to comment on some project approaches and systems.
104. **Quality of the baseline analysis.** There are concerns with the quality of data produced by the baseline evaluation, including concerns about the sampling approach, the selection of data collection methods and the calculations to determine indicator values. The baseline sample selection process was multi-stage sampling (selection of schools [2 schools per district], stratification at the grades, stratification for boys and girls within the grades, etc.). The baseline indicator values were estimated without applying the sample weight required to obtain an unbiased estimate due to applying the multi-stage stratification. Therefore, the indicator values reported in the baseline were statistically inconsistent.
105. For the purposes of the midterm, it was agreed between the CO and the evaluation team to accept the baseline values. The analysis presented below highlights when this limitation should be considered when understanding indicator progress and impact. To address certain evaluation questions (i.e. on effectiveness, impact and sustainability), the midterm has a particular focus on assessing and triangulating the quality of activities as key measure of project performance. It is recommended that baseline values be recalculated at endline to ensure accurate measurement of indicator progress and outcomes of the project.

### **Ethical considerations**

106. The midterm evaluation conforms to WFP ethical standards and norms and the [2020 United Nations Evaluation Group \(UNEG\) Ethical Guidelines](#). TANGO International, Inc. takes responsibility for safeguarding and ensuring ethics at all stages of the evaluation cycle. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring informed consent, protecting the privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity of participants, ensuring cultural sensitivity, respecting the autonomy of participants, ensuring fair recruitment of participants (including women and socially excluded groups) and ensuring that the evaluation results in no harm to participants or their communities. Refer to [Ethical considerations, risks and safeguards](#) for more information.

## **2. Evaluation findings**

107. The findings are organized by Evaluation Question (EQ). The specific sub-EQs to which each finding applies are footnoted in the blue boxes, and the evaluation matrix maps where each EQ and sub-EQ is addressed.<sup>139</sup> To promote readability of the findings, EQ1 and EQ2 are presented together.
108. Select quantitative data from the midterm surveys are integrated into the narrative as tables and triangulated with qualitative evidence. Full quantitative results for each survey are provided in [Annex 9](#) and progress on indicator performance is presented in [Annex 8](#).

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<sup>138</sup> An assessment of the project Theory of Change and its underlying assumptions was not conducted in this evaluation. The ET recommends this analysis is reserved for the endline evaluation.

<sup>139</sup> [Annex 3: Evaluation Matrix](#)

## 2.1. EVALUATION QUESTION 1: WHAT IS THE CURRENT LEVEL OF ALIGNMENT OF THE INTERVENTION WITH OTHER RELEVANT INITIATIVES? (COHERENCE)

## 2.2. EVALUATION QUESTION 2: TO WHAT EXTENT DO THE MCGOVERN-DOLE OBJECTIVES AND DESIGN RESPOND TO THE NEEDS OF STAKEHOLDERS AND INSTITUTIONS? (RELEVANCE)

### Finding 1

The project aligns with WFP priorities and strategic objectives related to school feeding.

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109. The McGovern-Dole project in Lao PDR aligns closely with the WFP's Lao PDR Country Strategic Plan (CSP) (2022-2026) in that its objectives —improving literacy, health, and dietary practices among school-age children—directly contribute to the CSP's strategic outcomes related to improving food security, nutrition, and learning results for vulnerable groups. By providing nutritious meals to schoolchildren, the project addresses key priorities identified in the CSP such as enhancing food and nutrition security for disaster-affected populations and promoting sustainable interventions to mitigate risks associated with climate shocks.
110. Overall, the project fits appropriately with the WFP Corporate Strategic Plan (2022-2025), which is guided primarily by SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).<sup>141</sup> Toward SDG 2, it contributes to targets for increasing access to food, ending malnutrition, supporting agricultural productivity of small-scale farmers and sustainable food systems. Toward SDG 17, the project contributes to targets for mobilizing resources (supporting government funding for school meals), capacity building (of the national school feeding system), enhancing policy coherence (collaborating with Government on food security, education and health activities), and global partnerships (continued advocacy for Lao PDR to join the Global School Meals Coalition).<sup>142 143 144</sup>
111. The McGovern-Dole project is directly aligned with the WFP School Feeding Strategy (2020-2030), particularly by delivering an integrated school feeding package to vulnerable children across the country.<sup>145</sup> This package involves outcomes for improving the health and nutrition status of school-aged children, increasing school attendance, and building the capacity of local communities to continue sustainable school feeding implementation. The partnership with CRS and MoES to deliver the project indicates a commitment to a collaborative approach, in agreement with the WFP School Feeding Strategy's emphasis on multi-stakeholder engagement and coordination, to ensure project effectiveness and sustainability.
112. The ways the McGovern-Dole project broadly aligns with both the CSP (2022-2026) and WFP's School Feeding Strategy (2020-2030) are presented below. Interviews show that activities were chosen to reflect these WFP strategic priorities, indicating that the alignment in project design was deliberate.
- The project includes mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating its impact on school attendance, academic performance, and nutritional status of children, ensuring some alignment with WFP's focus on outcome measurement and effectiveness.<sup>146</sup> However, there is room for improvement; refer to [Finding 18](#) for more discussion around the project monitoring mechanism.
  - Community involvement is a key aspect of the project, with initiatives aimed at promoting sustainability and local ownership (working closely with VEDCs to support activity implementation)

<sup>140</sup> [Finding 1](#) addresses sub-EQ 1.2 How well integrated is the project in practice with other projects, activities and outcomes in the WFP CSP?

<sup>141</sup> WFP. 2021. WFP strategic plan (2022-2025).

<sup>142</sup> UN General Assembly. 2015. Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

<sup>143</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2020. FY 2020 USDA McGovern-Dole Proposal.

<sup>144</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. FY20 McGovern-Dole Semi-Annual Report: Indicator Spreadsheet. Reporting Period 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023

<sup>145</sup> WFP. 2020. [A Chance for every Schoolchild - WFP School Feeding Strategy 2020 – 2030](#).

<sup>146</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2024. Lao PDR Expression of Interest

and mobilize and engender community participation and beneficiary-level feedback). This aligns with WFP's emphasis on community engagement and capacity building for long-term impact.<sup>147</sup> Refer to [Finding 19](#) for reflections on the community engagement strategy.

- Efforts towards sustainability beyond the project duration are evident, with strategies in development to transition activities to local authorities or community structures. This focus on sustainability aligns with WFP's goal of ensuring lasting impact and continuity of benefits.<sup>148</sup> See [Evaluation Question 5](#) for more information.

## Finding 2

The project responds to and supports government priorities and strategies related to school feeding.

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113. The McGovern-Dole project is closely aligned with government priorities related to school lunches, nutrition and education, specifically in the Minister Decree for School Lunch Promotion (2022), the 9th National Socio-Economic Plan (NSED) (2021-2025) and the National Nutrition Strategy (2015). Interviews highlighted that the latter two government strategies informed the selection of project activities. Interviews with WFP staff indicated that aligning the project directly with Government priorities has supported institutional buy-in and support, extending to MoES' involvement in the project as a direct implementing partner. The alignment of the project and its activities with these key government strategies is discussed below.

114. **Minister Decree for School Lunch Promotion.** In August 2022, the Prime Minister issued a decree promoting school lunches.<sup>150</sup> The decree outlines the terms of meals provision, addresses public and private schools, provides general criteria for school selection and broadly addresses funding.<sup>151</sup> Internal and external stakeholders agreed that this was a significant boost to the core implementing modality of the McGovern-Dole project (and the national SLP). In the Lao PDR context, Prime Minister decrees are uncommon and are only reserved to indicate a serious, long-term commitment from Government. Interviews highlighted that WFP's advocacy efforts with the Government played a major role behind articles and provisions of the decree, notably through facilitating inter-ministerial policy meetings and providing technical guidance on school meals implementation and nutrition.<sup>152</sup> For example, during the October 2022 – March 2023 reporting period, WFP organized over 15 consultative meetings with MoES to finalize policy documentation around the Prime Minister's Decree. Interviews show these meetings were instrumental in advocating for expanding the national budget allocation for school meals, which was ultimately successful; the Decree increased the allocation for food purchases for school meals from 800 to 1000 LAK per child per day. However, feedback from WFP highlights that while this is an encouraging start, 1000 LAK (approximately USD \$0.05) is still well below the required amount per child to sustain a school meals initiative on the same level as the McGovern-Dole project: cash-based analysis conducted in Lao PDR in 2018 shows the cost of a daily food basket for one

<sup>147</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2022. [Baseline Evaluation of WFP School-Feeding Program for USDA McGovern-Dole Grant \[FY 2020-25\]](#).

<sup>148</sup> WFP. 2024. WFP-led CRS FFE Progress Report Jan-Mar 2024.

<sup>149</sup> [Finding 2](#) addresses sub-EQs: 2.1 To what extent is the School Feeding Program contributing to realizing the Government of Laos policies and strategies related to school feeding; 1.1 Are there any changes to the alignment with school feeding national policy, national need, WFP school feeding policy and guidance and with donor and partner school feeding strategies since the baseline; and 5.5 To what extent has the package of capacity strengthening activities within WFP-supported program been institutionalized into the Government's policies, strategies, systems, and implementation arrangements?

<sup>150</sup> Government of Lao PDR. 2022. [Prime Minister's Decree on Promoting School Lunches](#).

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. WFP Lao PDR FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period October 2022 – March 2023

child is USD \$37.74 under a food-based programme (like the McGovern-Dole project) and higher under a cash-based initiative (using local procurement) at USD \$53.00.<sup>153154</sup>

115. **Alignment with the national development plan.** The McGovern-Dole project is aligned with the Government's 9<sup>th</sup> Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2021-2025), with direct contributions to Plan Outcomes 1 and 5. School feeding, literacy and WASH activities of the McGovern-Dole project contribute to NSEDP Outcome 1,<sup>155</sup> namely through Output 1: More inclusive and better-quality healthcare services and nutrition, and Output 2: Improved quality of all levels of education. Under Output 1, the NSEDP specifically outlines the need for continued implementation of school meals programming that includes building awareness and behaviors of improved nutritional diets and hygiene for children.<sup>156</sup> The literacy activities of the McGovern-Dole project, such as the literacy skills teacher trainings provided in schools, are aligned with the NSEDP's call to improve the quality of teaching and learning in primary schools, with a focus on improving child literacy in Lao PDR.
116. Within NSEDP Outcome 3,<sup>157</sup> the project contributes to Output 1: Poverty alleviated in rural and remote areas in people's livelihoods, cultural values and media work improved and Output 5: Expand access to more efficient social protection services for the people, including workers and self-employed individuals. This is reflected in the provision of agricultural inputs (e.g. tanks, nets, seedlings),<sup>158</sup> training, and incentives delivered to smallholder farmers in select project sites. Contributions to Outputs 1 and 5 are also considered through the overall school selection criteria: the project strategically targets high-need schools in 18 priority districts identified by the MoES, most of which are in rural or remote locations. By providing school lunches, the project reduces the economic burden on families and indirectly frees up funding for other essential expenses.<sup>159</sup> This was confirmed by field-level interviews with school heads and VEDCs across districts, who expressed that households in their communities perceived this benefit as a crucial and well-regarded impact of the project.
117. **Alignment with the National Nutrition Strategy.** There is clear and close alignment with the National Nutrition Strategy to 2025 and Plan of Action 2016-2025 (NNS), which embed mutual strategic goals of reducing national malnutrition rates and increasing knowledge of nutrition, health and hygiene practices.<sup>160</sup> The strategy explicitly mentions 'the provision of food in schools' as a priority intervention to address food insecurity and improve the nutrient intake of school children. The strategy also includes coverage targets for school children to be reached by school meals. The nutrition strategy also focuses on expanding the agricultural production of a diverse range of nutritious and safe foods for school meals through necessary agricultural infrastructure support and extension services to facilitate food production funded by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.<sup>161</sup> As an update to his strategy, the Nutrition Plan of Action on Nutrition (NPAN) 2021-2025 clarifies on the mission to create an enabling environment to reduce all forms of malnutrition, to focus action on nutrition priorities, and promote effective multisectoral coordination. This update specifically outlines MoES as the key stakeholder responsible for improving child and adolescent knowledge and behavior about nutritious diets.
118. A review of project documents and interviews show no changes in the level of positive alignment among government strategies, WFP strategies, and the McGovern-Dole project since baseline.

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<sup>153</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2018. [Cost benefit analysis of the school meals programme – Lao PDR.](#)

<sup>154</sup> Note this analysis was conducted in 2018 and that current food prices are reported to be substantially more expensive; see [Finding 17.](#)

<sup>155</sup> NSEDP Outcome 2: Improved Quality of Human Resources to meet development, research capacity, science and technology needs, and create value-added production and services

<sup>156</sup> Government of Laos. 2021. 9<sup>th</sup> Five-Year National Socio-economic development plan (2021-2025).

<sup>157</sup> NSEDP Outcome 3: Enhanced Well-being of the People

<sup>158</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023.

<sup>159</sup> WFP Lao. 2023. End-Line Evaluation of USDA McGovern-Dole Grant for WFP School Feeding in Laos from 2017 To 2022 September 30, 2023 Decentralized Draft Evaluation Report

<sup>160</sup> Government of Laos. 2015. National Nutrition Strategy to 2025 and Plan of Action 2016-2020.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

**Finding 3**

The McGovern-Dole project address critical community needs, specifically in education and WASH.

119. McGovern-Dole project activities are highly relevant to the needs of target beneficiaries and their communities. This is, to a large extent, a function of the high level of local needs across the project implementation domains. As noted above in [Education](#), reading comprehension and wider literacy remain a challenge for students; assessments on learning outcomes for primary-aged children show very low levels of proficiency in reading, writing and numeracy skills across Lao PDR.<sup>162 163</sup> This is shown in both baseline and the midterm tests for Lao language oral reading fluency and reading comprehension; 13.6 percent of students at baseline and 2.1 percent of students at midterm achieved grade-level standards. In response, the project implements a suite of appropriate activities that address factors contributing to student literacy, including providing a nutritious school meal, teacher capacity strengthening and learning materials, and increasing water access in schools.<sup>164</sup>
120. The project appropriately targets schools identified as high priority by the Government. Interviews highlighted that these schools were classified as high priority because they (i) exist outside the SLP, (ii) are in poorer communities, (iii) are in remote and hard-to-reach locations, and/or (iv) have lower rates of educational attainment and attendance. These factors suggested a clear need for the provision of daily and nutritious school meals. However, interviews acknowledge that the project has an expectation for the communities to contribute food and resources into its activities, which can burden poor and food in-secure communities. There is consensus in all interviews that the current food basket is appropriate within the options available through McGovern Dole in-kind menu items and local procurement options. The issue of lentil palatability is well known to the project partners and stakeholders and is discussed specifically under [Finding 7](#). Stakeholders agree that lentils are the currently most appropriate protein option on the USDA menu.
121. The support to teacher capacity strengthening is highly relevant for literacy schools, which were identified because of low education indicators and high percentages of ethnic minority students who were not native Lao speakers and had no ongoing literacy support programming.<sup>165</sup> The baseline report and qualitative feedback received at midterm indicated that teachers are overburdened and require assistance to boost their teaching effectiveness and keep pace with changes in the national curriculum. The teacher trainings delivered by the project are an important component of literacy support, and interviews showed that trainings emphasized ways to effectively assess student reading and comprehension ability and how to provide remedial instruction when needed. Evidence highlights that teacher capacity strengthening activities draw from leading practice in literacy development (i.e., the USAID Reading MATTERS framework)<sup>166</sup> and from the strong experience of CRS – the project literacy lead – in similar programming, globally and in Lao PDR.<sup>167</sup>
122. Support to WASH infrastructure has been highly relevant to targeted schools' needs. As indicated in [Section 1.3](#), direct WASH interventions were implemented in schools that did not have a functional water source. In addition, all project schools received inputs to link a village water source to school gardens. Feedback from field interviews indicates this was highly relevant as water access was consistently cited as a primary need for schools across the sample. Interviews from the field show the work around supporting water access is very well regarded and teachers report increased and consistent handwashing from students.
123. Project adaptations (implemented on an ad-hoc basis) to respond to external shocks have been appropriate to the changing context and relevant to beneficiary needs. This was demonstrated by the project's response

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<sup>162</sup> UNICEF & SEAMEO. 2020. SEA-PLM 2019 Main Regional Report: Children's learning in 6 Southeast Asian countries.

<sup>163</sup> UNICEF & MoES. 2015. Student Learning Outcomes in Primary Education in Lao PDR.

<sup>164</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. WFP Lao PDR FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period October 2022 – March 2023

<sup>165</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2020. FY 2020 USDA McGovern-Dole Proposal.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> For example, the ongoing Learning and Engaging all in Primary Schools (LEAPS) III Project.



to interrupted school days during the 2021-2022 academic year, due to COVID-19 and tropical storms. Due to school closures, food that would have otherwise been utilized for in-school meals remained in stock. To avoid food damage, the project distributed take-home rations to families, where possible, during these months.<sup>168</sup> Additional related adaptations included shifting capacity-strengthening training activities from face-to-face to virtual modalities; reports from 2021 show that all five training activities planned for the year was able to resume virtually.<sup>169</sup>

**Finding 4** WFP is showing progress on key recommendations captured in the SABER-SF assessment. 170

124. In addition to progress made on the Government’s commitment to school meals, the McGovern-Dole project continues to provide institutional support to key government ministries to address capacity gaps both at national and sub-national levels. In order to understand where to focus national capacity-strengthening activities most effectively and efficiently, WFP conducted a Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER-SF) assessment in May-June 2022 that involved a robust analysis of current government capacity along five standardized policy goals, conducted by WFP country and regional staff and representatives from MoES (Inclusive Education Promotion Center, DEQA, DoF) and MoF.<sup>171</sup> Assessment results are shown in Table 10.<sup>172</sup>

**Table 10. Summary of SABER-SF 2023 assessment results**

SABER-SF Policy Goals	Level (2023) <sup>173</sup>
Policy frameworks	Established ●●●○
Financial capacity	Emerging ●●○○
Institutional capacity and coordination	Emerging ●●○○
Design and implementation	Emerging ●●○○
Role of community and private sector	Emerging ●●○○

125. Interviews and project documents indicated that since the SABER-SF assessment, progress has been made primarily under the ‘Policy frameworks’ pathway. While policy frameworks were concluded as ‘established’ – largely due to the commitment to school lunches by the national Government, detailed above – the frameworks lack concrete guidance on school lunch composition (i.e. menus) and implementation.<sup>174</sup> Although interviews found that this is still the case at the time of the mid-term evaluation, WFP and its partners have developed operational guidelines for both McGovern-Dole and SLP initiatives (i.e., operational

<sup>168</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2022. Annual Country Report

<sup>169</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2021. [Lao People’s Democratic Republic Annual Country Report 2021](#)

<sup>170</sup> [Finding 4](#) addresses sub-EQs: 2.4 To what extent are WFP’s capacity strengthening activities designed based on needs assessments/ analyses of national capacity in all five SABER-SF policy goals; 3.1 How effective is the capacity strengthening work at building national capacity in school feeding; 3.6 Has WFP been able to timely mobilize the required skills, personnel, and technical support to be able to provide the right support to national actors; 3.6 How effective is the capacity strengthening work at building national capacity in school feeding; and 5.5 To what extent has the package of capacity strengthening activities within WFP-supported program been institutionalized into the Government’s policies, strategies, systems, and implementation arrangements?

<sup>171</sup> WFP. 2023. Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER): Lao PDR.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

<sup>173</sup> The state of national capacities was assessed within four levels: (1) Latent; (2) Emerging; (3) Established;; (4) Advanced.

<sup>174</sup> WFP. 2023. Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER): Lao PDR.

guidelines for storage management, cooking and basic nutrition).<sup>175</sup> <sup>176</sup> A review of these guidelines found that they are of good quality: they are written in Lao, provide clear instructions with visual aids/pictures, and are contextually and culturally appropriate for Lao schools. The midterm survey confirms that these guidelines are in use: over 95 percent of school administrators report possession of school nutrition and safety guidelines, and over 91 percent of school cooks and storekeepers confirm that schools actively utilize the guidelines.<sup>177</sup>

126. WFP also provided similar technical support to enhancing the wider national food security and nutrition system of the country, demonstrating progress towards the 'Institutional capacity' policy goal. Documents show that WFP continues to develop knowledge products under the McGovern-Dole project and through initiatives under the Strategic Objective 1 of CSP.<sup>178</sup> Key examples include technical guidance on rice fortification, community mobilization and food processing initiatives driven by VEDCs and the development of village nutrition plans.<sup>179</sup> Interviews with WFP staff highlighted that these knowledge products have been positively received by stakeholders and that WFP is in the process of identifying further topics, namely around supporting nutrition and hygiene outcomes, for which to develop technical guidance.
127. Interviews show that capacity-building activities with District Education and Sports Bureau and Provincial Education and Sports Services have been beneficial, particularly in spreading awareness of school meals, the importance of community contributions and promoting good nutritional and hygiene practices. Interviews with District Education and Sports Bureau and Provincial Education and Sports Services show an appreciation for providing school meals in communities outside the SLP and acknowledge WFP's national-level policy advocacy.
128. As a response to the SABER-SF assessment, WFP and partners have worked closely with key ministries to create the Lao PDR School Lunch Programme Joint Action Plan 2024-2028, as a roadmap for the capacity strengthening of the Government. At the time of this midterm evaluation, interviewees conveyed that this plan was still under development and not available for review. The evaluation team acknowledges that the MTE has taken place shortly after completion of the SABER-SF exercise, and therefore potential progress towards other policy pathways has not yet been realized fully and is best reserved for a full examination at endline.

### **2.3. EVALUATION QUESTION 3: TO WHAT EXTENT ARE MCGOVERN-DOLE ACTIVITIES BEING DELIVERED IN AN EFFICIENT AND TIMELY MANNER AND LIKELY TO ACHIEVE OBJECTIVES AND RESULTS, INCLUDING POSSIBLE DIFFERENCES ACROSS GROUPS OR INSTITUTIONS? (EFFECTIVENESS & EFFICIENCY)**

#### **Finding 5**

Mid-term targets have largely been achieved.

180

129. WFP and partners planned to reach 102,650 students by the end of the FY20 McGovern-Dole grant and have achieved over 60 percent of the life-of-project (LOP) target by the most recent reporting period at midterm (64,000 children as of September 2023).<sup>181</sup> The project has delivered 12,253,243 daily meals to school-age

<sup>175</sup> WFP, Government of Laos, CRS. 2022. School Lunch Guidelines on Storage and Food management.

<sup>176</sup> WFP, Government of Laos, CRS. 2022. School Lunch Guidelines on Cooking and Basic Nutrition.

<sup>177</sup> Table 75 in [School Observations](#)

<sup>178</sup> Strategic outcome 1: Schoolchildren in vulnerable areas have improved food security, nutrition and learning results through a sustainable national school meals programme by 2026. WFP will deliver an integrated package of support for schoolchildren in priority, disadvantaged districts, while providing technical assistance to strengthen the expanding national school meals programme.

<sup>179</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2022. Annual Country Report.

<sup>180</sup> [Finding 5](#) addresses sub-EQs 3.1 What is the output and the progress of program implementation – is the program on track to complete all activities as planned; and 4.2 What changes in attendance, drop-out and retention rates have been observed as a result of the project?

<sup>181</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. FY20 McGovern-Dole Semi-Annual Report: Indicator Spreadsheet. Reporting Period 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023.



children (27.3 percent of the LOP target). As of September 2023, 170,700 individuals yearly indirectly benefited from McGovern-Dole interventions, with the LOP target for this indicator being 272,021.<sup>182</sup> For a complete list of performance indicators, refer to [Annex 8](#).

130. All but one custom indicator had achieved at least 50 percent of its LOP target by September 2023. The distribution and integration of Green Boxes into the school curriculum was scheduled for late 2023 into early 2024.<sup>183</sup> As the boxes had not yet launched prior to the most recent semi-annual report, no progress was reported on the corresponding custom indicator. However, interviews highlight that since September 2023, Green Boxes have been rolled out to schools and will be reported against under the next reporting period.

**Table 11. Indicators on project progress towards beneficiary targets.**

Performance Indicator		Baseline (2020)	FY22 target	FY22 actual	FY23 target	FY23 actual	LOP target
# of students enrolled in school receiving USDA support	Sex: Male, Female	64,156	64,156	66,998	64,156	61,772	102,650
	Pre-primary Female	2,099	2,099	5,143	2,099	5,362	3,358
	Pre-Primary Male	2,120	2,120	5,092	2,120	5,483	3,392
	Primary Female	29,012	29,012	28,126	29,012	24,824	46,419
	Primary Male	30,925	30,925	28,637	30,925	26,104	49,480
# of daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) provided to school-age children		0	11,227,300	3,914,023	11,227,300	8,339,220	44,909,200
# of individuals benefiting indirectly from USDA-funded interventions		0	170,013	170,700	170,013	170,700	272,021
<p>FY = annual period covering 01 October – 30 September.            Source: WFP Lao PDR. 2023. FY20 McGovern-Dole Semi-Annual Report: Indicator Spreadsheet. Reporting Period 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023.            Figures presented for FY22 and FY23 in the indicator data are for progress measured for that year only, rather than a sum of values across the years, as indicated in the USDA Food Assistance Indicators and Definitions Handbook (2019).</p>							

131. Implementing partners are making good progress toward or have already achieved LOP targets for 17 of the 23 standard output indicators at midterm.<sup>184</sup> Moreover, progress has far exceeded LOP targets of indicators in Table 12.

**Table 12: Standard output indicators that have achieved LOP targets at midterm.**

Indicators	FY22	FY23	LOP target	% of LOP target achieved
Number of teaching and learning materials provided	11,787	28,901	19,647	207.1%
Number of teachers, educators, and/or teaching assistants trained or certified	195	470	176	377.8%

<sup>182</sup> The reporting data defines indirect beneficiaries as: 100 people per village plus 100,000 people nationwide as a result of the policy support. This definition was developed by the CO for this project.

<sup>183</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023.

<sup>184</sup> "Good progress" is considered to be at least 50 percent of the LOP target at midterm.

Number of school administrators and officials trained or certified	12	25	12	308.3%
Number of Parent-Teacher Associations or similar school governance structures supported	707	705	705*	100%
Number of individuals trained in safe food preparation and storage	2,342	605	2,342	125.8%
Source: WFP Lao PDR. 2023. FY20 McGovern-Dole Semi-Annual Report: Indicator Spreadsheet. Reporting Period 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023. FY – annual period covering 01 October – 30 September. *Target updated in 2023 reporting data; 705 schools supported by project.				

132. Of the 23 standard output indicators, only 7 had not achieved 50 percent or higher of the LOP target by project midterm, as shown in Table 13.<sup>185</sup> Interviews show that missing results for output indicators are due to activity implementation having just started or being scheduled for the next reporting period, which accounts for perceived delays in progress. For example, the training of trainers for the new Green Box tools was scheduled for late 2023, so was not included in the progress reported for “Number of individuals trained in child health and nutrition.”<sup>186</sup> However, interviews show that Green Box training of trainers have been delivered, in conjunction with MoES, and a second round is scheduled after the student examination period in June/August 2024.
133. While no progress was reported for the indicator “Number of individuals who have received short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security training,” partners were finalizing the training package during the April – September 2023 reporting period; training was set to start at the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year.<sup>187</sup> Water system construction did not start until FY23, and WFP is still in the process of locally procuring rice.
134. The number of daily school meals provided to school-age children at project midpoint was 26.5 percent of the LOP target; project reports highlight that schools cooked 15 days per month on average, which is around 75 percent of total school days. Interviews from project staff and beneficiaries highlight the absence of cooks (due to turnover within the VEDCs), lack of teachers forcing school closures and water accessibility are three major factors that contribute to this.<sup>188</sup>

**Table 13. Standard output indicators that have not achieved ≥ 50 percent of LOP targets at midterm.**

Indicators	FY22	FY23	LOP target	% of LOP target achieved
Number of individuals trained in child health and nutrition	0	705	2,121	33.2%
Number of individuals who have received short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security training	0	0	1,200	0%
Value of USG commitments and new public and private sector investments leveraged by USDA to support food security and nutrition	10,800	10,800	55,000	19.6%
Number of schools using improved water source	0	30	461	6.5%
Quantity of commodity procured (MT) – Fortified rice (regionally procured)	0	0	608	0%

<sup>185</sup> Quantity of commodity procured (MT) is one indicator but disaggregated by commodity.

<sup>186</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023.

<sup>187</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. FY20 McGovern-Dole Semi-Annual Report: Indicator Spreadsheet. Reporting Period 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023.

<sup>188</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. WFP Lao PDR FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period October 2022 – March 2023

Quantity of commodity procured (MT) – Oil (regionally procured)	157.10	0	440	35.7%
Number of daily school meals provided to school-age children	3,914,023	8,339,220	44,909,200	27.3%
Source: WFP Lao PDR. 2023. FY20 McGovern-Dole Semi-Annual Report: Indicator Spreadsheet. Reporting Period 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023.				
Figures presented for FY22 and FY23 in the indicator data are for progress measured for that year only, rather than a sum of values across the years.				

135. While there are internal and external factors that affect results (see [Evaluation Question 4](#)), interviews and indicate that the project is projected to complete all activities as planned; at midterm, no extension to the McGovern-Dole project is required to meet targets.

**Finding 6** The good quality of school feeding activities has contributed to positive results in students.

136. **Overall quality of school feeding activities.** There is high regard in communities for the provision of school meals under the project. At midterm, nutritious school meals are being served in all project target schools (n=707), who receive a lunch meal every school day. Interviews with beneficiaries and stakeholders, including school heads and teachers, caregivers, VEDCs and government officials, strongly valued the school meal, and associated it with increased educational performance of students: improved attendance, reduced absenteeism in the afternoon,<sup>189</sup> and increased attentiveness in classrooms. Interviews show that school meals were seen as nutritious because they were hot meals featuring a combination of food groups and a protein source (i.e. rice with fish or lentils). This relevance to community needs reinforces [Finding 3](#).

137. The midterm shows students are reporting a significant increase in meals eaten at school, from 26.5 percent at baseline to 86.8 percent, and more specifically, a significant increase in the percentage of students eating lunch at school from 15.3 percent at baseline to 79.3 percent at midterm.<sup>190</sup> Additionally schools report that 95 percent of all students receive a meal provided by the school.<sup>191</sup><sup>192</sup> No significant differences are observed between boys and girls in these results, indicating that school meals are being consumed equally by both boys and girls.

138. **Enrolment.** Total enrolment in McGovern-Dole-supported schools in the sample is 6,465 at midterm. Enrolment at schools remained consistent in all grades from the previous year, with no statistically significant changes observed. The average number of students per school fell slightly from 98.5 students to 95.1 students in 2024.<sup>193</sup> Outside the midterm sample, there was a significant drop in total enrolment (5,226 fewer students) across all project schools between FY22 (66,998 students) and FY23 (61,772 students); no reasons were provided in school-level interviews for these observations.

139. **Dropout rates.** Dropout rates remain almost zero at midterm, with only 17 students out of 6,456 reported as dropping out,<sup>194</sup> with a slightly smaller percent of girls dropping out than boys.<sup>195</sup> Enrolment also remains consistent across grade levels, with minimal drop-off from first grade to fifth grade. Additionally, all grade levels have high graduation levels, with only pre-primary below 90 percent. Girls show a consistently better graduation rate than male students.<sup>196</sup> When discussing potential reasons for dropout, interviews with caregivers and teachers confirm that obligations to earn income for the household continue to be a big factor

<sup>189</sup> Table 26 in [Absenteeism](#).

<sup>190</sup> Table 27 in [Student Diet](#).

<sup>191</sup> No information was indicated during data collection on the remaining 5%.

<sup>192</sup> Table 65 In [School Meals Served](#).

<sup>193</sup> Table 59 in [School Records](#).

<sup>194</sup> Table 62 in [Drop Rates](#)

<sup>195</sup> Table 63 in [Drop Rates](#)

<sup>196</sup> Table 61 in [Enrolment](#)

for boys. For girls, interviews show responsibilities to household duties continue to play a role, with added expectations and responsibilities as the child grows older.

140. **Repetition.** Regarding repetition of grades, 16.4 percent of students self-reported repeating at least one grade, with a slightly higher percentage for boys (18.2 percent) than girls (14.9 percent). Among repeat learners, the grade most commonly repeated was first grade at 43.2 percent, followed by second grade at 24.3 percent.<sup>197 198</sup>
141. **Attendance.** The attendance rate has generally increased for all grade levels from baseline, with a significant increase among boys. First and second grade students report the highest attendance, at about 80 percent, with pre-primary the lowest at only 35 percent.<sup>199</sup> Teachers reported in interviews an observable increase in attendance among both boys and girls and attribute it to the provision of nutritional school meals; along with improving educational outcomes, teachers consistently cited a key purpose and result of the McGovern-Dole interventions was to increase consistent attendance of students. Interviews further outlined instances of students encouraging other students to attend school because of the provision of a particular meal.
142. **Positive impacts of providing school meals.** Teachers and parents in “deep dive” schools reported that children appeared healthier and had healthier behaviors since the provision of school meals; children were described as having more energy during class time and teachers reported higher levels of attentiveness.<sup>200</sup> The midterm survey shows over 92 percent of students were deemed to be attentive by at least one teacher, with female students outperforming male students by almost 15 percentage points.<sup>201</sup> Interestingly, teachers across three deep dive schools specifically highlighted positive health observations on girls and attributed this to the regular consumption of meals in schools; this included more attentiveness in class, increased engagement in social activities and positive increases in girls’ bodyweight. These positive health observations on students may in-part be attributed to the increase in the positive perception of school meals among parents, from 71.1 percent at baseline to 99.9 percent at midterm.<sup>202</sup> The gathering of students to eat lunch together was also seen as an opportunity for increased engagement between teachers and students; school heads in deep dive schools highlight that some teachers read to students during lunch time, which promoted positive out-of-classroom interactions between students and teachers. According to interviewed parents, the availability of nutritious meals at school also acts as an indirect income transfer for poorer households, alleviating some financial burdens, particularly in view of rising food costs. At midterm 77.4 percent of parents viewed school meals projects as helping to reduce household food costs, however this was significantly lower than baseline at 84.1 percent.<sup>203</sup> Additionally, nearly all parents (98.3 percent) viewed school lunch provisions as increasing the willingness, interest and attentiveness of the student.<sup>204</sup>
143. **Community contribution.** Feedback on community contribution to schools was mixed. Discussions with VEDCs show that the most common community contributions were locally grown vegetables, eggs, chicken and cash transfers. Interviews show there is considerable variation in the amount of cash communities provided; one VEDC reported their community collectively contributed as high as 2.2 million Lao Kip (USD 100) a year to their school, where as another VEDC discussion indicated collective community contributions were under 900,000 Lao Kip (USD 40). Similarly, some VEDCs were highly satisfied with the level of community contribution to schools, whereas others felt it was severely underserved. Field-level interviews show no observable or stated difference in community contributions to sampled schools where school feeding

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<sup>197</sup> Table 22 in [Repeat Learners](#)

<sup>198</sup> Repeat learner data were collected at midterm via self-reported student surveys; these data were not collected at baseline. It is recommended that the endline survey also collect data on repetition rates to allow greater insight, including against national trends.

<sup>199</sup> Table 66 in [Attendance and attentiveness rates](#)

<sup>200</sup> Deep dive schools were selected on WFP/partners in suggestion for particularly high performing schools. These deep dive observations, then, demonstrate a ‘good case’ of outcomes as a result of project activities.

<sup>201</sup> Table 66 in [Attendance and attentiveness rates](#)

<sup>202</sup> Table 44 in [Parents/Caregivers Survey](#)

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid.

activities are primarily implemented by WFP, CRS (as a sub-recipient/partner) and the Government. Parent contributions have increased significantly at midterm, with 98.1 percent of parents willing to contribute in some fashion, up from 83.5 percent at baseline. At midterm parents still prefer to provide in-kind assistance or labor; 30.1 percent of parents report being able to contribute cash, with an average amount of 43,927 Lao Kip (approximately USD 2.05) per semester.<sup>205</sup>

144. As of midterm, there is no mechanism to track the amount of community contributions per school; project staff indicated that integrating this information into existing monitoring systems should be a priority, particularly to understand project impact and identify struggling communities. While there was consensus in VEDC interviews of the importance and necessity of the community contribution to sustaining school meals activities, there was a strong sentiment that it was the Government's responsibility to provide school meals – both under SLP and WFP programming – and that the McGovern-Dole project served as a stopgap for this national need.

#### Finding 7

The McGovern-Dole project is working through community engagement to improve the nutritional value and local palatability of the food basket.

206

145. The nutritional composition of the food basket provided by the project adheres to both USAID and WFP's nutritional standards for school feeding.<sup>207,208</sup> Interviews with WFP staff show that the rations were selected based on their overall nutritional value and what is generally acceptable for the Lao context, i.e. what can reasonably be consumed by students in schools. Though lentils are not typically consumed in Lao PDR, project staff indicated in interviews that it was selected because it presented the most cost-efficient source of protein available from the USDA commodity list.<sup>209 210</sup>
146. To address the issue of general unfamiliarity of lentils in the Lao diet, the project conducts community-based activities aimed primarily at schools and cooks. Interviews with teachers, cooks and VEDCs consistently reported students showed greater preference for other proteins in school meal, such as canned fish.<sup>211</sup> To encourage the cooking and consumption of lentils, DCFs conducted trainings and demonstrations with cooks and VEDCs at the district and community level to highlight different ways to cook and prepare lentils for school meals, such as de-husking methods, encouraging rice-based recipes, and creating lentil milk. There is feedback from school-level interviews that these trainings were useful and relevant to cooks as many were unfamiliar with lentil preparation, and engendered discussions around adapting local recipes. However, cooks stated in interviews that more trainings on building lentil familiarity should continue across the span of the project to reach new cooks assigned by the VEDCs. Feedback from WFP highlighted that, in addition to lentil palatability, creative recipe trainings will be useful in the longer term (i.e. how to create/adapt school meals to locally available commodities/ingredients) when schools transition to community contribution and locally procured models.
147. At the midterm, there is no cookbook developed under the McGovern-Dole project nor are there set menus at the regional or national levels; deep dive activities showed that school cooks develop their own menus per the food available at the school, which are mainly comprised of combinations of stir-fried vegetables, canned fish and/or lentils. These menus did not indicate use of community contributions; however, cooks did report

<sup>205</sup> Table 50 in [Parents attitude to students' education](#)

<sup>206</sup> [Finding 7](#) addresses the SubEQ 3.6 Has WFP been able to timely mobilize the required skills, personnel, and technical support to be able to provide the right support to national actors?

<sup>207</sup> WFP. No date. [The WFP food basket](#).

<sup>208</sup> USAID. 2011. [Improving the Nutritional Quality of U.S. Food Aid: Recommendations for Changes to Products and Programs](#).

<sup>209</sup> World Food Programme Laos. 2021. [Evaluation of Baseline Study for USDA McGovern-Dole Grant for WFP School Feeding in Laos from 2020 to 2024 Decentralized Evaluation Terms of Reference](#).

<sup>210</sup> A lentil extrusion pilot was conducted during the McGovern-Dole project, funded by USDA. The ET recommends examining at the endline evaluation how the CO implemented key lessons learned from this pilot into the project.

<sup>211</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. WFP Lao PDR FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period October 2022 – March 2023

in interviews that they receive good quality produce from local farmers for meals, albeit on an ad hoc basis. Additionally, there are also no national nutrition standards to guide implementation of school meal activities—both for the SLP and the McGovern-Dole project. Interviews with WFP staff show there are opportunities to include the outcome of menu planning activities developed under a separate ongoing WFP school feeding initiatives to harmonize outcomes and efforts across the CO portfolio.<sup>212</sup>

**Finding 8** Literacy outcomes are mixed, however the quality of literacy activities is high.

213

148. Literacy activities were concentrated in Khammouane Province, which has some of Lao PDR's lowest education outcomes, and the implementation was led by CRS. Overall at midterm, education outcomes remain a challenge for project schools; only 2.1 percent (4 students out of 192) were able to demonstrate reading and comprehension skills at a second-grade level.
149. **Overall results on reading and comprehension.** Although the midterm literacy assessment showed that a small number of students were considered readers (n=4), these students performed well in comprehension tests and were all female.<sup>214</sup> Overall, students also showed a slight drop in understanding syllables from baseline; notably male students saw a significant decrease in average of correct answers (1.3), while females maintained a score of 1.7 correct syllables. Additionally 15.2 percent (19.8 percent from female students) were able to give correct answers more than 4 syllable questions.<sup>215 216</sup> Students' performance in identifying correct letters remained overall consistent with baseline, with a slight improvement highest category of 28-33 correct letters, especially by female students with over 40 percent reaching this mark.<sup>217</sup> Students show a significant improvement in matching phrase to the correct descriptive picture with a significant improvement in the number of students that could identify 5 or more phrases correctly, with male students showing significant improvement from baseline. Students similarly improvement in commonly used words, with significant increases with the number of students that answered 10 or more words correctly, as well as the average amount of correct words (9.0).<sup>218</sup> These are early signs of overall improvement in literacy, which may be attributed to the increased presence of literacy-focused materials in classrooms, discussed below.
150. **School libraries.** The establishment of school libraries has seen very good progress, with only one school remaining without a library as of the Jan – Mar 24 reporting report.<sup>219</sup> Deep dive teacher interviews show that reading and learning materials provided by CRS have been well received by students and seen continued use throughout the school year. Teachers qualitatively attribute more classroom engagement and attentiveness in part to these reading materials; one teacher cited that Grade 1 students are showing more interest in reading, as there are more picture books that are suitable for their age. At midterm, over a fourth of students had utilized reading corners and book bank, an increase since baseline.<sup>220</sup>
151. **Lao Language Formative Assessment toolkit.** Key to the literacy activities in the McGovern Dole project is the revision and distribution of the formative assessment toolkit. Interviews and documents show that CRS has addressed critical deficits in the capacity of district-level government staff through the targeted training

<sup>212</sup> See [1.3. Subject of the Evaluation](#).

<sup>213</sup> [Finding 8](#) addresses EQ 2.2 How well do teacher and administrator trainings and other literacy interventions organized by the project support teachers to address the issues they face in their schools and communities?; EQ 3.3 Is there evidence that the training of teachers led to improved teaching practices?; 4.2 What changes in attendance, drop-out and retention rates have been observed as a result of the project?

<sup>214</sup> Table 57 in [Literacy Assessment](#)

<sup>215</sup> Table 54 in [Literacy Assessment](#)

<sup>216</sup> Only at midterm were students asked five syllable questions.

<sup>217</sup> Table 53 in [Literacy Assessment](#)

<sup>218</sup> Table 56 in [Literacy Assessment](#)

<sup>219</sup> CRS. 2024. Quarterly Report #12 for McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program 2020-2025.

<sup>220</sup> Table 35 in [School Environment and Resources](#)



provided to Pedagogical Advisors.<sup>221</sup> Internal pre- and post-testing of teachers and principals before and after receiving this training from Pedagogical Advisors shows the training was effective in enhancing the knowledge and capacity of participants. This indicates that working with Pedagogical Advisors is ultimately proving successful, which was confirmed qualitatively in interviews.<sup>222</sup> Project documents further highlight an ongoing commitment to work with Pedagogical Advisors and provide ongoing literacy support to schools for the remainder of the project.

152. **School Readiness Camps.** Interviews highlight that School Readiness Camps are a low-investment, high return activity to achieve literacy outcomes. At midterm 10.5 percent of learners, with over 11.5 percent female learners reported going to school readiness camp<sup>223</sup>. Qualitative data indicates that 12 weeks is sufficient engagement to support literacy outcomes in learners; project documents and interviews highlight camps have a very positive reception by attending participants, parents, schools and the wider community.<sup>224</sup> Qualitative evidence further show school readiness camps show particularly good outcomes for non-native Lao speakers, highlighting that exposure to Lao language in an educational setting has resulted in more speaking and comprehension confidence in students going into Grade 1. There is a commitment from CRS to strengthen this activity across the McGovern Dole project duration; documents show that CRS works closely with Research Institute for Educational Sciences, Inclusive Education Promotion Center and Provincial Education and Sports Services of Khammouane each year to plan for review and update camp instruction and materials.

#### Finding 9

Nutrition knowledge and attitudes have improved throughout the project implementation.

153. The project at midterm is demonstrating good results in nutrition promotion. The student survey shows significant improvement in both students' attitudes and knowledge about healthy food; students report significantly enjoying fruits and vegetables at midterm (98.9 percent) and 49.1 percent of students considered junk food as a healthy snack/meal, down significantly from 63.6 percent at baseline.<sup>225</sup>
154. Similar positive trends in attitudes around nutrition can be observed for parents and caregivers; almost all parents encouraged their children to eat fruits (90.1 percent) and vegetables (89.4 percent). Additionally, a high percentage of parents and caregivers report the ability to provide healthy and diverse meals (81.3 percent), vegetables and fruits (87.9 percent) and tasty meals for their child (78 percent). However, while parents and caregivers are showing very encouraging nutrition practices, they also report feeling that it is difficult to consistently provide lunch every day for their families (59.6 percent). Additionally, many parents and caregivers reported they have lost influence over the long-term health of their children (50.0 percent), which links to the increased presence and accessibility of junk food in Lao PDR (as discussed in [Food security, nutrition and health](#)). Overall, a midterm over 87.2 percent of parents and caregivers felt that school meals projects help them utilize better healthy food practices at home.
155. Qualitative evidence from deep dives confirms these survey trends; discussion with school heads and VEDCs highlight schools are placing more emphasis on creating cultures of healthy practice within schools, as a result of the promotional materials provided by the project. Additionally, interviews indicated that DCFs – upon doing monthly school visits – would often discuss the importance of nutrition; this might in-part explain the increased awareness of healthy practices. Interviews with school heads speculated that the provision of nutritious meals in schools (i.e. meals with multiple food groups) may be incentivizing parents to continue/capitalize on this practice (within their means) at home. Interviews with Government and in deep dives show that the project is working to combat the consumption of widely available junk food sourced from China.

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<sup>221</sup> See [Project activities](#) for more information.

<sup>222</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. WFP Lao PDR FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period: 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023

<sup>223</sup> Table 23 in [Repeat Learners](#)

<sup>224</sup> CRS. 2023. Quarterly Report #10 for McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program 2020-2025

<sup>225</sup> Table 29 in [Food Attitudes – Student Reported](#)



156. The Green Box component of the project has been rolled out to all schools at the time of midterm. Interviews and documents show WFP and partners have since conducted assessments to understand the impact of the Green Box as a promotional campaign.<sup>226 227</sup> Interviews and documents show that key areas for improving the rolled out Green Boxes were to size up the photo messages, utilize fabric for poster material, increase the user friendliness for teachers and lower the overall size and bulk of the box.<sup>228</sup> As of last reporting period (ending September 2023), interviews and documents confirm WFP has implemented these changes and 736 new Green Boxes have been printed. Observations from deep dives show that Green Boxes were present in schools but there was mixed feedback on how often they were used. Numerous teachers expressed that further training was required on how to use the educational materials effectively in the classroom and that Green Boxes are being underutilized as a result. Documents show that there are plans to continue supporting target schools with Green Box-related training once the roll out of the revised version is complete.<sup>229</sup>
157. The training of cooks and storekeepers, in addition to the guidance activities provided by the project, has promoted better food safety in schools; the use of nutrition and food safety guides is reported by over 90 percent of schools, with over 23 percent of cooks and storekeepers able to name 3 or more safety guidelines.<sup>230</sup> Interviews with cooks and storekeepers discussed the importance of a clean kitchen and the preparation of nutritious and balanced meals as a result of training activities. This is reflected in the observations from deep dive field visits, where clean kitchens were generally observed, which is elaborated under [Finding 11](#).

#### Finding 10

While implementation of agriculture support activities have only recently been initiated, there is potential for good results in the latter half of the project.

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158. The agriculture support activities are nascent at the midterm; results on these activities have yet to be reported on in the monitoring data, however interviews confirm that trainings are underway and agriculture/livestock packages in procurement stages.<sup>232</sup> As a result, it is difficult to evaluate the extent to which there is sufficient production of diverse and nutritious crops in communities; the ET recommends this line of inquiry is specifically included at the endline.
159. However, WFP staff indicate that wider funding sources from other donors are being drawn upon to support farmers in communities under the SLP.<sup>233</sup> Interviews show these initiatives provide much more comprehensive support packages to farmers, which include guidance on specific and climate-smart agricultural practices and enhance existing farm-school-market linkages. The presence of these initiatives demonstrates a willingness and capacity within WFP to support this kind of livelihood programming, particularly in the context of supporting school meals. Interviews acknowledge the high degree of complementarity between these initiatives and the agriculture component of the McGovern-Dole project, and interviews indicate there are plans from WFP to optimize these agriculture components based on emerging implementation lessons, particularly on farm-school-market linkages.
160. At midterm, all schools feature a school garden which was either constructed or rehabilitated through support from the McGovern-Dole project. Interviews confirm this primarily included the provision of fencing and gardening tools, in addition to setting up water access from the local water source. Qualitative deep dive

<sup>226</sup> For example, conducting a validation study in 2022/2023 to assess (i) user friendliness and (ii) the appropriateness of the technical content.

<sup>227</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. WFP Lao PDR FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period October 2022 – March 2023

<sup>228</sup> Ibid.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> Table 75 in [School Observations – School Feeding](#)

<sup>231</sup> [Finding 10](#) partially addresses Sub-EQ 5.2 Is there sufficient production of diverse and nutritious crops in the communities, what are the barriers being faced if any, what is the extent of fresh produce being contributed for the SFP and what is the extent to which consistent incomes for farmers and market linkages have been addressed since baseline?

<sup>232</sup> Trainings have been completed in Sangthong and Feuang districts, as of the midterm.

<sup>233</sup> See [1.3. Subject of the Evaluation](#)

evidence highlighted that school gardens, where successful, provide teachers with a good opportunity for nutrition-focused lessons and discussions on topics such as diet diversity and the importance of fruits and vegetables. Among schools visited at midterm, the primary responsibility for school garden maintenance varied between cooks and storekeepers, community members assigned by the VEDCs, and teachers. No school visited at midterm relied substantially on gardens to contribute to school meals (only 7.4 percent of school report using school gardens<sup>234</sup>), however productive gardens were maximized where they did exist. Interviews at the school-level highlighted – in accordance with the evidence above – that the primary benefit of school gardens within schools is for educational purposes, rather than as a source for food.

161. Field level observations show that there was a correlation between availability of water, the size of the plot and the success of the garden; Larger plots with consistent water access fared much better than those without. Interviews at the school level indicate the primary challenge to maintaining school gardens – outside of water access – was fencing, particularly to protect from wild animals. Planting and harvesting generally occurs in January while the summer months see a decline in use. Documents show that CRS and WFP are in the process of discussing how to maximize use during summer months to promote year-round garden use.<sup>235</sup>

**Finding 11** Investments in school infrastructure are generally of good quality.

162. There is good progress across targets related to supporting school infrastructure at the midterm,<sup>236</sup> and the project reported that most schools had basic infrastructure (kitchens, storerooms, school gardens and water connections) established on campus by the 2022 reporting period.<sup>237</sup> For WFP-supported schools and Government-led schools, all infrastructure activities have successfully completed.<sup>238</sup> For CRS-supported schools, infrastructure activities are ongoing at midterm. Data shows significant improvement in these areas, with 98.5 percent of schools reporting a kitchen, 82.4 percent a dining room, and 69.1 percent a storage facility.<sup>239</sup>

163. Interviews show that infrastructure activities were implemented in close coordination with District Education and Sports Bureaus and VEDCs, who provided technical support and helped coordinate implementation. Staff further indicated successful and timely implementation of these activities was in-part due to the strong community-level relationships that both WFP and CRS staff have within their target communities. Interviews and documents show that WFP led the provision of materials and utilized community contributions for local materials when available. Specifically, WFP provided materials such as zinc sheets, nails, hinges, iron nets and locks, while the communities provided wood and labor to build the infrastructure.<sup>240</sup> Interviews show that community members across districts were very positive about this process and VEDCs indicated they had little trouble mobilizing the community to provide their support. Project documents further highlight instances where project activities catalyzed construction of additional school buildings by community members.<sup>241</sup>

164. Field-level observations at midterm broadly assessed the quality of infrastructure supported by the project across three categories: (i) below typical for local context; (ii) typical/average for the local context; (iii) above typical for the local context (i.e. demonstrating good practice). Field visits show that the quality of project supported school infrastructure generally match standards typical for the local context. Many storerooms

<sup>234</sup> Table 80 in [School Observations – School Meals Funding](#)

<sup>235</sup> CRS. 2024. Quarterly Report #12 for McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program 2020-2025.

<sup>236</sup> See [Annex 8: Indicator Progress Against Targets](#)

<sup>237</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2022. WFP Lao PDR FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period: April – September 2022

<sup>238</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. WFP Lao PDR FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period: 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023

<sup>239</sup> Table 67 in [School Information](#)

<sup>240</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2022. WFP Lao PDR FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period: April – September 2022

<sup>241</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2022. USDA McGovern-Dole Semi-Annual Report (FY20 Award) 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022

were appropriately elevated and secure, and most handwashing stations were functional, with enumerators observing student use across the day. Most kitchens visited were clean and equipped with utilities for cooking. However, there was mixed results for school gardens; while some school gardens were active and well maintained ([Finding 10](#)) enumerators noted that many gardens lacked fencing and sufficient access to water. In schools where below typical infrastructure was observed, interviews cited that ongoing maintenance costs is the primary challenge; three separate school heads indicated in interviews that piping for handwashing stations were prone to leaks and required fixing often. While outside the scope of project activities, latrines were consistently found to be of poor quality, many were not secured, did not have pouring facilities or were entirely non-functional. Interviews in deep dives highlighted that supporting with toilets and latrines are a critical area for investment in future activities.

## Finding 12

WASH activities have contributed to improved health and hygiene knowledge for students. 242

165. The midterm results show that students are demonstrating improved health and hygiene practices and knowledge in WASH schools. There is a significant increase in the number of teachers providing instruction around health (65.5 percent), as well as a significant increase in students reporting they wash their hands when no one is looking (93.5 percent at midterm), including over 98 percent of female students highly significant from baseline<sup>243</sup>. Students principally report needing to wash their hands before meals (90.6 percent) and after meals (48.1 percent).<sup>244</sup> Less than fifty percent of students report using soap, over 93 percent of those students cited a lack of soap at school<sup>245</sup>; school observations only saw 20 percent of schools having soap in school facilities.<sup>246</sup>
166. The WASH module of the midterm survey (namely observing the presence of water sources and access) was conducted in all schools in the sample, to provide insight into critical WASH needs regardless of whether targeted activities were conducted.<sup>247</sup> Overall, the midterm found that access to drinking water in schools remains to be a challenge. Only 36.8 percent of schools in the total sample were observed to have access to a drinking water source, with only 11.8 percent of those schools with an improved water source.<sup>248</sup> Evaluation enumerators did not observe tap water (piped) connections in schools (0 percent) but did record 24 percent of schools using boreholes, and over 50 percent of schools providing bottled water. Only 16 percent of school report having drinking water available throughout the day. For schools without a water sources, almost 90 percent of schools report that students bring drinking water from home.<sup>249</sup> For handwashing stations, of the schools with a water source over 60 percent of schools reported a hand washing facility in school, with 73.3 percent of schools observed to have access to water for handwashing.
167. Project documents highlight that CRS effectively adopts a localised and consultive approach to WASH infrastructure support, which centers working with local authority Nam Saat in targeting water-scare schools and ensuring no duplication of efforts. To ensure interventions are recorded and legitimized within the Government system and to promote local ownership, documents show that all water systems receive official Nam Saat certification before it is handed over to schools for use.<sup>250</sup>

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<sup>242</sup> [Finding 12](#) addresses EQ 3.4: Is there evidence that WASH interventions contributed to changes in the use of health and hygiene practice?; 5.3 What, or who, incentivizes VEDCs and water user committees (WUCs) to sustain/maintain water points and handwashing facilities and what are the internal (project related) and external (enabling environment) barriers for this?

<sup>243</sup> Table 37 in [Student Health and Hygiene](#)

<sup>244</sup> Table 38 in [Student Health and Hygiene](#)

<sup>245</sup> Table 41 in [Student Health and Hygiene](#)

<sup>246</sup> Table 74 in [School Observations – Handwashing](#)

<sup>247</sup> Refer to [Annex 7: Methodology](#) for more information on the sampling and stratum selection.

<sup>248</sup> Table 70 in [School Observations – Water](#)

<sup>249</sup> Table 71 in [School Observations](#)

<sup>250</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. WFP Lao PDR FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period October 2022 – March 2023

168. To support the investments to WASH infrastructure, the CRS has worked closely with schools to form Water User Committees. Project documents and interviews highlight these committees are fostering local ownership of WASH infrastructure and promote hygiene practices within schools and communities.<sup>251,252</sup> The project has also been deliberate in capacitating these committees on the management and maintenance of WASH infrastructure before handover. Project documents indicate that the first cohort received handover of 18 water systems in August and September 2023, with the second cohort still ongoing.<sup>253</sup> It is too early at midterm to assess the effectiveness of Water User Committees in operating and maintaining handover water systems; a fuller examination is recommended for endline.

**Finding 13**

The project partially addressed key observations put forward at baseline.

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169. The baseline report identifies several key observations for implementation, which also builds from reflections from previous iterations of the McGovern-Dole project.<sup>255</sup> Qualitative evidence from the school level, in addition to self-reporting by WFP in documents, show most progress has been made under observations regarding the community mobilization activities and providing specific capacity building activities (i.e. training). There is consensus in discussions with project staff that recommendations and observations from previous studies (baseline, MGD17 evaluation series) remain relevant for the existing McGovern-Dole project.

170. The baseline suggests that the project should undertake specific community mobilization activities to ensure sustainable uptake of new food. This refers to inclusion of lentils as a source of protein in the food basket, which is not a traditionally consumed food in Lao communities. As noted in [Finding 7](#), the trainings were conducted with cooks and VEDCs to explore different recipes and preparation methods, though turnover in cooks was a problem in schools, particularly during harvest season.

171. This feedback directly links to the second and wider baseline observation to regularly conduct such training to mitigate effects of turnover. The McGovern-Dole project places a deliberate focus on the training-of-trainers (ToT) model, which addresses in part the losses in capacity and knowledge when staff/community members leave. The ToT model aims to train stakeholders and implementors at key levels, who can then continue dissemination of project approaches and trainings in-turn. WFP reports highlight that ToTs have been used effectively across project components: in addition to the above example, ToTs were held to train District Education and Sports Bureau staff on WASH materials produced by the project,<sup>256</sup> to pedagogical staff in Provincial Education and Sports Services offices on teaching literacy skills,<sup>257</sup> and to DCFs and province/district staff on how to utilize Green Box materials.<sup>258</sup>

172. The baseline also observes the project needed to customize and adapt approaches to reflect the needs of each specific target school/community. Recognition of this observation is reflected through the overall targeting strategy for key infrastructure investments, which is primarily needs based. For instance, if a school did not have an adequate drinking water source, the project collaborated with local actors (Nam Saat) to

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<sup>251</sup> CRS. 2024. Quarterly Report #12 for McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program 2020-2025

<sup>252</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. WFP Lao PDR FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period October 2022 – March 2023

<sup>253</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. WFP Lao PDR FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period October 2022 – March 2023.

<sup>254</sup> [Finding 13](#) partially addresses Sub EQs: 1.1 Are there any changes to the alignment with school feeding national policy, national need, WFP school feeding policy and guidance and with donor and partner school feeding strategies since the baseline; 5.2 Is there sufficient production of diverse and nutritious crops in the communities, what are the barriers being faced if any, what is the extent of fresh produce being contributed for the SFP and what is the extent to which consistent incomes for farmers and market linkages have been addressed since baseline?

<sup>255</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2022. [Baseline Evaluation of WFP School-Feeding Program for USDA McGovern-Dole Grant \[FY 2020-25\]](#).

<sup>256</sup> [Finding 12](#)

<sup>257</sup> [Finding 8](#)

<sup>258</sup> [Finding 10](#)

rehabilitate or reconstruct the water supply system.<sup>259</sup> Interviews show that more investment needs to go into assessing and understanding village-level needs around malnutrition and educational learning outcomes, as Government data on these needs at the district and community levels remains incomplete.

173. At the midterm, the two key baseline observations where progress is limited is around increasing farmer incomes and supporting farmer-to-market linkages, given that the agriculture component is in its nascency.<sup>260,261</sup> A full examination on progress against these key observations are suggested at endline.

**Finding 14** The project's focus on gender and inclusion is limited.

262

174. The activities under the McGovern-Dole project are not directly gender-focused and the midterm found evidence awareness among partners on the need to strengthen considerations of gender equality and women's empowerment into a broader range of project activities. The project monitors outcomes for boys and girls on key education, health and hygiene. Additionally, the project does specifically target female volunteer cooks from the Lao Women's Union (LWU) with technical trainings on how to preparation of nutritious and diverse meals for schools.<sup>263</sup> Interviews highlighted this was done because school cooks in the project are overwhelming female. There is a commitment from WFP staff that targeted support to women will continue under the national project, following handover.<sup>264</sup> These examples indicate that the project is demonstrating a level of gender-sensitivity to its design and implementation, but interviews agree there is room for improvement; interview specifically highlighted there needs to be investments within the project towards sensitizing all stakeholders to issues pertaining to gender equality and women's empowerment

175. While there is no explicit intention for the project to be gender-transformative, there was consensus in WFP interviews that the project should focus more on strengthening women's involvement in VEDCs. It was acknowledged by project staff that there are underlying power imbalances between men and women within Lao communities, leading to an underrepresentation of women in leadership roles at the village level. Interviews at the field-level confirm that men outnumbered women in VEDCs and those who held power within these committees – the school heads and community leaders – were largely men; interviews show, as a result, that for women who do participate in VEDCs, their decision-making power is generally lower than men. Research and WFP staff agree that cultural and social barriers, limited access to education and economic constraints (i.e. responsibilities in the household) are key factors that affect women's involvement and leadership potential in VEDCs.<sup>265</sup> This is highlighted in the baseline evaluation, which observes that voices of vulnerable groups may not be readily heard given the imbalance of power across groups.<sup>266</sup> Project staff demonstrated knowledge of this concern and indicated to the evaluation team that more gender-focused activity planning is being considered for the remainder of the project, though details were not provided.

**Finding 15** Implementation of project activities are generally efficient in terms of timeliness.

267

<sup>259</sup> Activity 2.1: Building/rehabilitation: Wells and water stations/systems

<sup>260</sup> [Finding 10](#)

<sup>261</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. WFP Lao PDR FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period: 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023

<sup>262</sup> [Finding 14](#) addresses EQ 2.3 To what extent is the design and implementation of the School Feeding program gender-sensitive?; 3.2 Has sufficient attention been given to gender, disability and equal rights issues in the implementation of the project and has this produced any results?

<sup>263</sup> LWU is a women's organization that is part of the Government system and exists at village, district, provincial, and central levels

<sup>264</sup> WFP Lao PDR McGovern-Dole FY20 Semi-Annual Report (Oct 21 – Mar 22)

<sup>265</sup> UNICEF Lao PDR. 2018. [Village Education Development Committees in Lao PDR: Structure and Membership](#).

<sup>266</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2022. Baseline Evaluation of WFP School-Feeding Programme for USDA McGovern-Dole Grant FY 2020-2024

<sup>267</sup> [Finding 15](#) addresses 3.5 Are all areas of service delivery in the project as efficient as they can be or are there some areas where there is room for improvement?; 5.4 Which components of the SFP are proving to be most sustainable in terms of operational efficiency and why?

176. Overall, the activities were implemented in a timely manner and are generally in line with project plans. The school feeding teams of WFP and CRS are well staffed and the project monitoring system allows for adaptive management. WFP is working to strengthen Government partnerships that will allow for increased efficiency in programming and smoother transition process, when the project is handed over.
177. A robust cost-efficiency analysis for school feeding initiatives at endline is recommended by key informants to understand which activity components are the most operationally efficient. Based on qualitative analysis across activity components, school feeding activities hold potential of the most return on investment based on inputs; the analysis above indicates positive and widespread outcomes across schools, showing direct return on (i) nutritious but cost-efficient food items;<sup>268</sup> (ii) infrastructure to support school feeding (kitchens, storerooms); and (iii) capacitating cooks and storekeepers to cook and store food across the year. Local stakeholders perceived that this is the area where WFP has the most experience in – demonstrated in-part through the multiple iterations of the McGovern Dole project – which has resulted in experienced staff and a CO which is overall technically proficient in school meals (i.e. having full-time nutritionists and project managers and MEAL specialists on roster). Interviews highlight that other activity components, such as country capacity strengthening and WASH activities, have impacts felt more in the long-term, particularly after project transition, and therefore difficult to measure the efficiency of inputs at midterm.
178. While a full cost analysis was not conducted at midterm, the evaluation identifies the following key ways the project efficiency has been considered and incorporated.
179. **Monitoring systems to support efficiency.** The M&E system provides monthly data on activity progress. For WFP schools, data collection from school visits are reported directly to the field offices, with five schools in Vientiane Capital reporting directly to the CO. Interviews with WFP show that reports reaching WFP CO is at times delayed, highlighting room for improvement in the reporting process. CRS and Government-led schools directly provide quarterly reports to WFP CO; a review of these narrative reports show they are clear, informative and provide sufficient detail on activity progress. Interviews show no concerns regarding the quality and depth of the reporting provided to donors. Additionally, reporting quality and contents overall resonate with the on-the-ground reality observed during the field tour. Interviews show that there were structured meetings every two weeks between partners however they have ceased since 2023; interviews confirm there are efforts to reinstate these meetings, which will strengthen efficiency in coordination and reporting of the project.
180. **Role of Government in efficiency.** Interviews underscore a positive and ongoing dialogue with key Government ministries – such as the Inclusive Education Promotion Center and MoES – and the openness of Government as key factors to the successful operation of the McGovern Dole project and the SLP. The PM's Decree, outlined in [Finding 2](#) shows that the Government is engaged in school feeding at the highest level, which is an important factor supporting efficiency in implementation.
181. Interviews acknowledged the complexity of the Government structure when it comes to school feeding, highlighting the need for active forums between key ministries. Documents show that out of the four national-level school feeding forums that exist, two are functional: the School Meals Technical Working Group (SM-TWG) and the National Nutrition Committee (NNC).<sup>269</sup> Documents and interviews show that the SM-TWG (of which WFP is a co-chair)<sup>270</sup> is a strong forum for WFP and partners' to provide technical and strategic support to key ministry agencies and to share outcomes of its own school-feeding initiatives. Interviews highlight that increasing the SM-TWG meetings from twice a year to every quarter may catalyze inter-ministerial support and strategic positioning of school feeding at national levels. Interviews speculated that increased inter-ministerial collaboration in this way will create freer flowing channels of resources within the Government and enable more structured and formal lines of communication, enabling greater transparency.
182. **Adaptive management.** The project does adapt to optimize efficiency in the face of disruptions and challenges. A key example found at midterm was the management of excess USDA commodities during the 2022 school year. In this year, COVID-19 outbreaks resulted in school closures that stopped the distribution

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<sup>268</sup> Food items were chosen in-part due their cost-to-nutrition contribution to the food basket, see Finding 7 for more discussion.

<sup>269</sup> WFP. 2023. Internal note on mapping SLP related forums.

<sup>270</sup> WFP. N.D. Terms of Reference for the School Meals Technical Working Group (SM-TWG).



of school meals. This resulted in excess commodities in warehouses. Interviews show that this will be used to cover rice distribution through to the first semester of Year 5 (2025). Interviews with WFP show a willingness to continue adjusting project plans as necessary to respond to changing conditions. There is feedback from senior WFP staff around the opportunities to develop plan/or operational guidance on what to do and adapt in the crisis/emergency situation, towards more shock responsive school feeding initiatives

183. **Delays in implementation timeline.** Interviews and documents show that the majority of activities kicked off in 2022, and good progress has been observed since.<sup>271</sup> Documents show that WFP is responsive to implementation delays across partners. An example is the activity delays under Government-led schools due to lengthy government processes of fund disbursement from MoES to the Provincial Education and Sports Services offices.<sup>272</sup> WFP appropriately responded to this delay by creating annual workplans in conjunction with the government and organized workshops to identify and work through bottlenecks.<sup>273</sup>

## 2.4. EVALUATION QUESTION 4: ARE THERE ANY EMERGING IMPACTS OF THE INTERVENTION AT THE MID-TERM STAGE, AND WHAT ARE THE FACTORS AFFECTING RESULTS? (IMPACT)

**Finding 16** The project is showing positive results for nutrition and education outcomes.

274

184. The contribution to impact of the project in schools at midterm has been positive across both project domains of literacy and hygiene/health. This finding presents outcome-level results, against the McGovern-Dole framework, followed by specific outcomes from the quantitative data. Overall, the level of progress on outcome results are appropriate and expected, given this is midway through the project.
185. **MGD SO1 Outcomes (literacy).** While overall literacy outcomes remain low at the midterm compared to life of project targets, children show steady improvement (Table 14). Students improved in identifying phrases (5.9 to 7.1), and significant improvement in students who can identify more than 5 phrase, especially for male students who were significantly up from baseline.<sup>275</sup> Students averaged significantly more correct words per minute, as well as students reading above 9 correct words per minute. Female students significantly improved in both, with an average of 3.1 correct words per minute and 3.8 percent reading above 9 correct words per minute at midterm.<sup>276</sup> Additionally, the percentage of students proficient in reading familiar words by the end of two grades of primary school increased from 21 percent at baseline to 56.8 percent at midterm. The average number of correct words for both female and male grade 2 students spoke based on the CRS semantic fluency test significantly increased from 4.9 to 9.0.<sup>277</sup>

**Table 14. Midterm progress on MGD SO1 outcome indicators**

Outcome Indicator	As of Midterm	LOP target
<b>MGD SO1: Improved literacy of school-aged children</b>		
Percent of students who, by the end of two grades of primary schooling, demonstrate that they can read and understand the meaning of grade-level text	2.1%	11%
Average student attendance rate in USDA- supported classrooms/schools <sup>1</sup>	73.5% <sup>2</sup>	99%

<sup>271</sup> [Finding 5](#)

<sup>272</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. WFP Lao PDR FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period: 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023

<sup>273</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. WFP Lao PDR FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period: 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023

<sup>274</sup> [Finding 16](#) address EQ 3.3 Is there evidence that the training of teachers led to improved teaching practices?

<sup>275</sup> Table 55 in [Literacy Assessment](#)

<sup>276</sup> Table 58 in [Literacy Assessment](#)

<sup>277</sup> Table 56 in [Literacy Assessment](#)



Outcome Indicator	As of Midterm	LOP target
Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants who demonstrate the use of new and quality teaching techniques or tools as the result of USDA assistance <sup>2</sup>	0	132
Number of school administrators and officials in target schools who demonstrate use of new techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance <sup>2</sup>	Not available at midterm	10
Number of students enrolled in school receiving USDA assistance	61,772	102,650
Number of policies, regulations, or administrative procedures in each stage of development as a result of USDA assistance <sup>3</sup>	5	9
<p><sup>1</sup> WFP completed digital monitoring training in five districts during the Oct 21 – Mar 22 reporting period due to COVID-19 restrictions; only the overall attendance data were available from schools in these districts in Mar 2022. In the Apr – Sep 22 reporting period, WFP completed rolling out the digital monitoring that aims to collect data on this indicator in all project schools in May 22. The system gradually started to function in schools in Sept 22. In the Oct 22 – Sep 23 reporting period, WFP was actively updating the School Meals app; the completed app is expected to be rolled in the next reporting period.</p> <p><sup>2</sup> This indicator was collected starting Oct 2023 using the new monitoring school class observations tool created throughout this reporting period. Data will be included in the next reporting period.</p> <p><sup>3</sup> This indicator is considered an output indicator for stages 1-2 and an outcome indicator for stages 3-5.</p> <p>Source: WFP Lao PDR. 2023. FY20 McGovern-Dole Semi-Annual Report: Indicator Spreadsheet. Reporting Period 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023.</p>		

186. **MGD SO2 Outcomes (health and dietary practices).** As of midterm, 605 individuals have demonstrated the use of new child health and nutrition practices (40.74 percent of life of project targets). Through USDA assistance, 605 people have also shown they use new safe food preparation and storage practices (Table 15). At midterm, students demonstrate improved health and hygiene practices and knowledge: there is a significant increase in the number of teachers teaching about health and nutrition (to 65.5 percent), as well as a significant increase in students reporting washing hands when no one is looking (to 93.5 percent) at midterm, especially for female student who significantly improved (to 98.4 percent) from baseline and are reporting almost 10 percent higher than male students.<sup>278</sup> Students, without being prompted, principally report needing to wash hands before meals (90.6 percent) and after meals (48.1 percent), with female students slightly outperform male students in both categories.<sup>279</sup> More than fifty percent of students report using soap, however of those students over 95.4 percent report a lack of soap at school for the reason.<sup>280</sup>
187. Midterm data show improved signs of healthier dietary practices, as parents report significant improvement in encouraging their children to eat fruits (90.1 percent) and vegetables (89.4 percent). Additionally, parents report a significant increase in the ability to provide healthy and diverse meals (81.3 percent), vegetables and fruits (87.9 percent) and tasty meals for their child (78.0 percent).
188. Parent knowledge and attitudes about sugary food has declined since midterm with a significant number of parents agreeing that health food is not tasty (59.3 percent), the acceptability of buying sugary foods when children are young (57.7 percent). A significant number of fewer parents agree that consuming sugary foods leads to tooth decay (32.8 percent). At midterm, over 40 percent of parents still feel healthy food is not enjoyable for children. However, parents' attitudes to fruits and vegetables have significantly improve (89.5 percent) since baseline.<sup>281</sup>

**Table 15. Midterm progress on MGD SO2 outcome indicators**

Outcome Indicator	As of Midterm	LOP target
<b>MGD SO2: Increased use of health and dietary practices</b>		
Number of individuals who demonstrate use of new child health and nutrition practices as a result of USDA assistance	605	1,485

<sup>278</sup> Table 37 in [Student Health and Hygiene](#)

<sup>279</sup> Table 38 in [Student Health and Hygiene](#)

<sup>280</sup> Table 41 in [Student Health and Hygiene](#)

<sup>281</sup> Table 43 in [Parents attitudes to food](#)

Outcome Indicator	As of Midterm	LOP target
Number of individuals who demonstrate use of new safe food preparation and storage practices as a result of USDA assistance	605	1,639
Source: WFP Lao PDR. 2023. FY20 McGovern-Dole Semi-Annual Report: Indicator Spreadsheet. Reporting Period 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023.		

189. **LRP SO1 Outcomes (local procurement).** Farmer training began during the 2023-2024 school year, so no individuals within the agriculture system have yet applied improved management practices and technologies with USDA assistance (Table 16). At midterm, 19.1 percent of schools have a partnership with a farmers group during the school year. Additionally, midterm surveys indicate that funding for school meals and food mainly comes from parents (82.4 percent). Schools also report WFP and NGO's as the principal suppliers of food to schools, with only 16.2 percent coming from local markets. There is agreement in interviews around the need to continue investment into bolstering community capacity in providing contributions to the school and lowering the reliance on external support in this regard.

**Table 16. Midterm progress on MGD LRP SO1 outcome indicators**

Outcome Indicator	As of Midterm	LOP target
<b>LRP SO1: Improved effectiveness of food assistance through local and regional procurement</b>		
Number of individuals in the agriculture system who have applied improved management practices and technologies with USDA assistance	0	840
Source: WFP Lao PDR. 2023. FY20 McGovern-Dole Semi-Annual Report: Indicator Spreadsheet. Reporting Period 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023.		

190. **Custom Indicators Outcomes.** Since baseline, most indicators under this outcome have achieved their LOP target (Table 17). The proportion of children who consume a diverse and healthy diet increased from 27.5 percent at baseline to 47.4 percent at midterm. Additionally, the proportion of caregivers who provide a healthy and diverse diet to support their children's growth and development increased from 78.8 percent to 81.3 percent. Attitudes and behaviors related to washing hands before and after meals and using the toilet both increased from baseline, with attitudes increasing from 85 percent to 95.7 percent and behavior increasing from 82.9 percent to 86.5 percent.

**Table 17. Midterm progress on custom outcome indicators**

Outcome Indicator		At midterm	LOP target
<b>MGD SO1: Improved Literacy of School-aged Children</b>			
Average number of words spoken by Grade 1 and Grade 2 students as measured by the CRS semantic fluency test	Grade 1	N/A	G1: 11
	Grade 2	9.0	G2: 18
Percent of students at the end of two grades of primary schools that show proficiency reading familiar words		G2: 55.2%	27%
Percent of schools where teachers report higher concentration/attention by children during the day		92.1%	70%
Drop-out rate		0.3%	4%
<b>MGD SO2: Increased Use of Health and Dietary Practices</b>			
Number of schools where principals report improved WASH practices as a result of USDA		0	104
Proportion of children who have knowledge (K), believe in (A -attitudes) and practice (B-behaviors) the consumption of a diverse and healthy diet, including fruit and vegetable consumption and avoiding unhealthy food and beverages	Knowledge	54.5%	85%
	Attitudes	23.8%	23%
	Behaviors	47.4%	33%
Proportion of children who have knowledge, believe in and practice washing hands before and after meals and washing hands before and after going to the toilet	Knowledge	2.0%	85%
	Attitudes	93.5%	85%
	Behaviors	90.3%	85%
	Knowledge	45.5%	96%

Outcome Indicator		At midterm	LOP target
Proportion of teachers who have knowledge, believe in and practice the importance of a diverse and healthy diet, and avoiding unhealthy foods and beverages, for child growth and development and the impact on child well-being <sup>1</sup>	Attitudes	65%	35.4%
	Behaviors	65.5%	80%
Proportion of caregivers who have knowledge, believe in and practice the provision of a diverse and healthy diet, and avoiding unhealthy foods and beverages, for the growth and development of their children	Knowledge	78.0%	94%
	Attitudes	42.3%	35.4%
	Behaviors	81.3%	80%
Colour code key:	At least 50% of end target achieved by midterm	Less than 50% of end target achieved by midterm	
<p><sup>1</sup> It is not currently known how the baseline calculated these values; the baseline report indicates this was drawn from qualitative questions in-depth interviews with teachers. For the midterm, the values for these indicators are drawn from the quantitative School Survey. While the values for this indicator are not comparable to baseline, it is recommended the endline measurement is compared to midterm.</p> <p>Source: WFP Lao PDR. 2023. FY20 McGovern-Dole Semi-Annual Report: Indicator Spreadsheet. Reporting Period 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023.</p>			

191. Across the evidence-base, there have been no unintended or unanticipated effects – positive or negative – reported at the midterm. Interviews with WFP staff show a commitment in documenting examples of these consequences/effects in future project documentation for the basis of project learning and adaptive management; in view of this, the ET recommends a detailed analysis of all unanticipated consequences of the project at endline.

**Finding 17** Macroeconomic conditions, Government partnerships and resourcing are key factors <sup>282</sup> that affect current and projected results of the project.

192. Key factors that affect results include: fluctuating markets and inflation, Government partnerships and the resourcing opportunities following the close of the project.

193. **Fluctuating markets.** Interviews and documents show inflation has significantly worsened food and fuel prices and have resulted in acute shortages in major Lao cities.<sup>283 284</sup> Interviews in deep dives repeatedly cited the increased cost of food for households and parents/caregivers expressed concern on their ability to afford contributions to school meals currently and moving forward. Similarly, documents and interviews highlight inflation has affected project operation, such as increases in transport costs related to providing commodities to schools and for inputs under other activities (i.e. WASH). In response, the project has demonstrated good adaptive management strategies to mitigate impacts to cost and timeline – this is evidenced by CRS’ adjustment to WASH-related work, such as adjusting/delaying procurement processes to factor in inflation-driven surges.

194. **Strength of Government partnerships.** Given the priority of handover, WFP staff agree that maintaining strong relationships with Government partners should remain a priority. Interviews across internal and external stakeholders indicate that that WFP and the Inclusive Education Promotion Center (and by extension MoES) have a long-standing relationship that spans multiple school-feeding initiatives. WFP staff highlight that this relationship historically allowed WFP to effectively provide direct and in-direct monitoring support (i.e. building capacity of district offices to monitor school meals activities) and provide targeted policy support to national ministries (i.e. providing critical inputs in developing national nutrition and school meal mandates). Interviews indicated this strong working relationship allowed for quick and efficient communication between WFP and key ministries. However, interviews with WFP and Government

<sup>282</sup> [Finding 17](#) addresses Sub-EQ 4.1 What internal and external factors are affecting the project’s achievement of intended results in the evaluation priority areas?

<sup>283</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2022. WFP Lao PDR FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period: April – September 2022

<sup>284</sup> World Bank. 2024. Household Welfare Monitoring in the Lao PDR.

stakeholders show that turnover in key senior positions within the Government has resulted in fewer regular engagements with government ministries, particularly to the extent it was previously. Interviews highlight, then, a need re-establish previous levels of collaboration between WFP and Inclusive Education Promotion Center/MoES, particularly so WFP can be aware of Government needs and provide operational support proactively (i.e. providing monitoring support at the district/school level), in addition to ensuring that handed-over schools do not create further burden on the existing national system.<sup>285</sup>

195. **Resourcing to support project schools after 2025.** While the initial plan for transitioning the McGovern-Dole project saw complete handover at project close, there is a willingness within WFP to continue supporting project schools after the McGovern-Dole grant is completed. According to WFP interviews, there are opportunities to support these project schools through wider funding sources procured by the CO, particularly with agriculture/livelihood initiatives or with a cash-based top-up.<sup>286</sup> Interviews show this willingness to continue supporting project schools (and in-turn strengthening the SLP) draws from a shared perspective across WFP that the SLP serves as important and needed social protection mechanism for the country.

At the time of the midterm, WFP staff indicated that the formal transition strategy is currently under development, following the SABER-SF assessment. Feedback from WFP underscored the importance of building awareness (within WFP and with the Government) on learning/experience conducting handovers in previous McGovern-Dole projects. WFP staff indicated that key considerations for this formal strategy include: (i) planning should prepare schools to continue school feeding activities independently of support; (ii) schools and communities should be properly informed in advance of project completion/handover; (iii) necessary capacities at the community level is strengthened through readiness activities.

**Finding 18**

The current monitoring system does not track all aspects of project activities and there is limited knowledge management practice.

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196. For the majority of the first half of implementation, the primary reporting mechanism conducted at the school level was the Monthly Distribution Report. This report broadly covered key project components such as number of students receiving lunch, number of cooking days, number of cooks and storekeepers, and average attendance in the school.<sup>288</sup> In addition, the opening stock, food loss, actual food balance and food distributed across the 6 USDA commodities provided is tracked. The evaluation team found this covers the minimum standard for project reporting, contributing to the overall quality of narrative and donor reports discussed in [Finding 15](#). However, interviews show that a revised monitoring report has recently been implemented, titled the Activity Implementation Monitoring. This improved report provides more space for DCFs to examine and report on more qualitative insight, such as identifying key project strengths and underlying issues. A review of this new report shows important questions are now being asked to schools around teacher needs and students' perception school meals;<sup>289</sup> this will enable greater learning and adaptive management for the remainder of the project.
197. Other monitoring activities include field visits, surveys and spot checks at schools. A key gap in the monitoring mechanism is lack of insight into community contributions – both by farmers and by households. Interviews highlight this is a major gap in the reporting function, as project staff currently rely on qualitative evidence largely collected by DCFs to understand this component.
198. Monitoring data is disaggregated by gender for relevant output and outcome indicators. Currently, disability-disaggregated monitoring data is not collected or required under the project. Interviews acknowledge that having disability targets would be a direct way to support more work around inclusion, however noted that

<sup>285</sup> WFP. 2023. Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER): Lao PDR

<sup>286</sup> For example, wider country office initiatives detailed in [1.3. Subject of the Evaluation](#)

<sup>287</sup> [Finding 18](#) addresses Sub-EQ 4.1 What internal and external factors are affecting the project's achievement of intended results in the evaluation priority areas?

<sup>288</sup> WFP. 2024. MDR Tracking Template MGD20.

<sup>289</sup> WFP. 2023. School Feeding Activity Implementation monitoring.

disability monitoring can be resource intensive, as it may involve more household level visits to track beneficiaries.

199. WFP staff acknowledge that the current monitoring and evidence generation system has a generally weak knowledge management capacity beyond examining food movement and measuring progress against targets; while assessments and reflections occur across activity components, this is done more on an ad-hoc basis or part activity implementation (i.e. needs assessments), rather than a structured and iterative approach to project learning. WFP staff further highlighted that developing a knowledge management plan would be beneficial in documenting project learning related to school feeding, develop a learning agenda for further studies and to support transition and scale-up of activities.
200. WFP has supported the government capacity in project monitoring – particularly for after handover and under the SLP via the School Meals App. This was designed to support District Education and Sports Bureau staff monitor project results in a user-friendly manner and allowing schools to self-report on key results. Interviews and documents show this includes the number of students eating school lunch, types of food served, management of the cash transfer from the Government, school attendance, hygiene practices, and contributions from the communities to school meals.<sup>290</sup> Schools under Government implementation within the McGovern-Dole project were provided tablets with app reloaded. However, there was feedback around the application not being user-friendly and lacking offline functionality. These issues were addressed collectively by WFP, Inclusive Education Promotion Center and the Government’s Education Management Information System and provided additional functionality. Documents highlight that the revised version of this app is now connected to the Government-run Lao Education and Sport Management Information System, enhancing the national database and providing project data, outcomes and learning to a wider range of users and stakeholders.<sup>291</sup> Interviews indicate that the app is currently being tested and with a release schedule of 2024.

**Finding 19**

There is no community engagement strategy, but this is partially mitigated through project staff actively integrating principles of accountability.

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201. The project – and the WFP CO at large – does not have Lao specific community mobilization strategy for the Lao PDR context. However, it is clear that project staff across all implementing partners demonstrate a high awareness of accountability principles aligned with the WFP Global Community Engagement Strategy for Accountability to Affected Populations.<sup>293</sup> Staff are implicitly adhering to these principles; field-level interviews repeatedly highlighted the high levels of trust between project staff and community members, particularly with DCFs. The regular four to six week visits to schools, that involve DCFs engaging closely with school heads and VEDCs to understand progress, demonstrate an ongoing commitment and downward accountability to project schools.
202. Project documents highlight the project is responsive to community feedback mechanisms and adjustments to project activities are made; a key example being adjusting the School Meals App based on feedback, and the ongoing lentil sensitization activities.<sup>294</sup> Interviews with WFP agree that a community engagement strategy would be useful for the CO to formalize these implicitly demonstrated principles and catalyse further strategic approaches within the project. Additionally, interviews further speculated that developing a community engagement strategy that considers the unique way communities Lao PDR operate would be a strong resource for wider CSO and UN actors in the country.

<sup>290</sup> WFP Lao PDR. n.d. Concept Note: Digital Monitoring System Improvement Lao School Meal App in WFP Supporting and handed-over schools

<sup>291</sup> WFP Lao PDR. n.d. Concept Note: Digital Monitoring System Improvement Lao School Meal App in WFP Supporting and handed-over schools.)

<sup>292</sup> [Finding 19](#) addresses Sub-EQ 4.1 What internal and external factors are affecting the project’s achievement of intended results in the evaluation priority areas?

<sup>293</sup> WFP. 2021. [WFP Community Engagement Strategy for Accountability to Affected Populations \(AAP\)](#)

<sup>294</sup> [Finding 7](#)

**Finding 20**

Strategic and operational collaboration between implementing partners has improved across the project. <sup>295</sup>

203. The project leverages the comparative strengths of both WFP and CRS as implementing partners. WFP coordinates the procurement and distribution of school feeding commodities, allows for project coverage in critical in-need communities and provides community mobilization capacity, while CRS provides expertise on literacy and WASH objectives, which include infrastructure construction and capacity strengthening activities. Interviews show that there was room for greater engagement between project partners at inception, particularly around conducting the baseline, to which implementing partners were not involved in. However, qualitative evidence demonstrates an increased spirit of closer collaboration since project inception – demonstrated in particular through this midterm, where both WFP and CRS provided technical input into developing qualitative and quantitative data collection tools towards, better assessing project impact and performance.
204. However, interviews agree there is room for improvement to better share project learning and lessons. While interviews highlight that staff from WFP and CRS meet monthly to discuss activity updates, the outcomes of these meetings are not well documented or disseminated to engender project learning. All partners produce quarterly reports on activity progress; however, interviews show that more effort can be placed in understanding the complementarities between implementation and key lessons emerging from the project. Interviews indicate that reflection on comparative partner strengths occurs primarily during the donor reporting process rather than ongoing and systematically across the project.
205. There is feedback in interviews that the roles of key project staff within WFP can benefit from clarification, i.e. who is responsible for what activity components, and how activity components (and corresponding teams) work together. Interviews show that staff both internal and external WFP stakeholders are not fully aware of where each project component sits.

## 2.5. EVALUATION QUESTION 5: TO WHAT EXTENT ARE MCGOVERN-DOLE PROJECT RESULTS, BENEFITS, AND OUTCOMES LIKELY TO CONTINUE AFTER THE PROJECT CONCLUDES? (SUSTAINABILITY)

**Finding 21**

The project is proactively mobilizing resources for continuation of project results and maximizing project contribution to national school feeding. <sup>296</sup>

206. WFP has taken steps to ensure the project activities can continue through the transition of project supported schools into the SLP. Key project areas where sustained results can be expected are presented below.
207. **School feeding activities.** Interviews highlight that building the capacity of cooks and storekeepers at the school level will play a strong role in sustaining school feeding in schools. Interviews at the field-level showed appreciation for the trainings focused on food preparation and storage, and there was feedback that these should be done more frequently to equip new cooks and storekeepers with the same knowledge. Deep dive and midterm survey data show that schools rely highly on the USDA commodities to create school meals; schools reported that 89.7 percent of food for school meals came from WFP, which provides primarily USDA commodities.<sup>297</sup> Deep dive interviews indicated generally that external support (either in-kind or cash) was the only way school feeding activities could continue. When discussing the capacity of schools to continue school feeding activities under a cash-based transfer program (such as the SLP), deep dive interviews

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<sup>295</sup> [Finding 20](#) addresses Sub-EQ 4.1 What internal and external factors are affecting the project's achievement of intended results in the evaluation priority areas?

<sup>296</sup> [Finding 21](#) addresses Sub-EQ 3.8 To what extent has the implementation of the School Feeding Program to date facilitated the readiness of all stakeholders for the handover of the SFP?; 5.1 Is the program on track for handover and sustainability in the following areas?; EQ 5.7 The program is proactively mobilizing resources for continuation of program results and maximizing program contribution to national school feeding.

<sup>297</sup> Table 80 in [School observations – Funding \(Midterm only\)](#)



generally indicated they are currently capacitated to do so, contingent on proper and sufficient resourcing (i.e. provision of enough cash to buy food items for meals).

208. The main challenge, as reported by schools, was accessing fresh and diverse produce in the off-season when markets become scarce – this feedback came specifically from interviews conducted in the northern provinces. There are also growing concerns among external and internal stakeholders around the rising cost of food in Lao PDR. According to project staff, the budget allocated for school meals under the SLP (1000 LAK / USD \$0.05 per child/day) is significantly lower than the in-kind the support currently provided by the McGovern Dole project, not including all the additional support/investments outside of direct school feeding.<sup>298</sup>
209. Moreover, schools have expressed the importance of receiving the full expected parent contributions.<sup>299</sup> Parent contributions are still below what is needed to fully fund school feeding and will be even more important once schools transition to the SLP. In response to schools' concerns, the project continues to conduct parent mobilization campaigns at school via VDECs and district level via DCFs to increase parent contributions. However, there are concerns from some internal WFP stakeholders around the burden derived from the expectation of community/parent contribution to sustain the activities, given the project involves the vulnerable communities ([Finding 3](#)) by design, who may not have capacity to meet their own/household needs.
210. **Infrastructure in schools.** The project has worked closely with schools and community-level committees to build local ownership of infrastructure investments. Documents show that forming Water User Committees and capacitating them with trainings and guidance materials on maintenance and operation will engender local ownership, particularly on complex water systems. There are concerns with resourcing in schools however; interviews indicated schools often lack the financial resources to repair infrastructure, even when they understand the importance of WASH facilities and have the technical capacity to do so. Handwashing stations in particular were reported to need repairing most often, given its higher rate of use across the day. Despite these concerns however, handwashing stations are still in operation and use.<sup>300</sup>
211. **Training of trainers.** The ToT approach utilized by the project will have a positive impact on sustainability of activities. ToTs have been deployed across several activities were designed for participants – chiefly VEDCs and District Education and Sports Bureau staff – to cascade knowledge and practices to schools and the wider community-level.<sup>301</sup> Feedback on ToTs across the project has been positive, indicating that the training contents have relevant and delivered well by project staff. Feedback from WFP staff indicate there are plans to develop trainings to further capacitated schools on using cash to support school feeding.
212. **Institutional and policy support.** The ongoing technical and policy-level support WFP has provided to Government ministries has demonstrated strong results, such as the PM Decree on School Meals.<sup>302</sup> Further results can be seen through the ongoing development of the Lao PDR School Lunch Programme Joint Action Plan 2024-2028, where WFP is providing technical support in transition planning. WFP and Government staff indicated in interviews that Government ministries view WFP as the primary support actor for school meals and look favorably at the technical and advocacy support to have provided across the iterations of the McGovern Dole project. WFP is then well positioned within the Government to continue these policy-level support.
213. **Government and community readiness.** Specific readiness activities (i.e. community-based interventions aimed specifically at capacitating schools and districts for handover) under the project have not been carried out, as interviews confirmed that the transition strategy currently under revision following the SABER-SF assessment.<sup>303</sup> Interviews underscored the importance of difference in distribution modalities between SLP and the Mc-Govern Dole project (i.e. in-kind vs cash-based mode). Internal and external stakeholders acknowledged that the current allocation per student under the SLP is a relatively small amount. Qualitative

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<sup>298</sup> USD \$37.74 per child daily for a food-based program in 2018, see [Finding 2](#).

<sup>299</sup> [Finding 6](#)

<sup>300</sup> [Finding 12](#)

<sup>301</sup> See [Finding 6](#) and [Finding 8](#) for examples.

<sup>302</sup> [Finding 2](#)

<sup>303</sup> WFP. 2023. Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER): Lao PDR.



interviews indicated that the purchasing power of this current cash allocation, factoring in what food is available for schools to buy consistency (i.e. proximity to stable markets), is lower than the quantity of directly provided by USDA under the McGovern-Dole project.

214. Schools visited for the evaluation did not have any interaction with WFP regarding readiness aspects. This is possibly due to the project being at the mid-point of its implementation cycle. However, discussions with key informants indicate that the most appropriate approach would involve a slow roll out of activities, i.e. to ease off in-kind support slowly, while increasing cash support. Interviews underscored the importance of starting at the start of the school year and maintaining the phaseout of activities throughout the year, to allow iterative assessment of all stakeholders regarding where there are challenges and cracks in the process. WFP staff have indicated a willingness to continue support to McGovern Dole project schools, after the project closes, highlighting the opportunity to implement such a transition strategy post-2025.

**Finding 22**

The role of VEDCs in supporting community-level outcomes is critical.

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215. The project features a strong focus on supporting community-level groups to achieve outcomes. This is best demonstrated by the role of the VEDCs in all project activities: VEDCs assign cooks and storekeepers, organize community contributions to schools (food and non-food items) and support with project monitoring through collaboration with DCFs.<sup>305 306</sup> WFP and Government counterparts agree that VEDCs should continue to play these community mobilizing roles in subsequent school feeding programs in the same way. This is because they are comprised of key decision-makers in communities (school heads, senior teachers, community leaders) who have considerable influence in local resource mobilization and wider community members. This means VEDCs can and do play a crucial role in operationalizing the community contribution component of school meal activities. Interviews show that the way VEDCs does this is by leveraging the social contract model that exists within communities in Lao;<sup>307</sup> this is best demonstrated by the voluntary, but expected, contribution of produce, cash and/or non-food items to schools from households and farmers, once they have fed themselves.<sup>308</sup> Interviews with WFP staff and VEDCs show this has so far been a successful approach to establishing connections between the community (i.e. farmers) and schools. School-level key informants indicate that VEDCs are overall performing these project-related duties well; all school-level interviews expressed a general satisfaction with their respective VEDCs. There was an acknowledgement in these interviews that VEDCs are challenged with mobilizing community contributions to school, given the rising food costs across the country.<sup>309</sup>
216. Interviews with WFP staff highlight that VEDCs serve as an accountability mechanism for the project, by ensuring contributions happen (in a timely manner and of acceptable quality), providing management of the in-kind commodities and their safe storage and the selection of cooks. Feedback from some Government staff identified that the utilization of VEDC in this way is a good way to build local ownership of school feeding and some interviews indicated that should the budget for SLP be expanded, continuing to support VEDCs directly should be a priority. However, there are concerns among VEDCs about the high level of expectations placed on them to ensure activities (namely school feeding) are implemented and, importantly, sustained.
217. DCFs play a crucial frontline for the project and implement much of the project's community engagement activities. DCFs provide trainings across the [project activities](#) and are responsible for all routine school-level monitoring. This responsibility includes visiting each project school at least once per month, however interviews indicate that in practice it is around once per four to six weeks. There is consensus across internal

<sup>304</sup> [Finding 22](#) addresses Sub-EQ 5.1 Is the program on track for handover and sustainability in the following areas?; EQ 5.6. What are the key gaps and priority areas for institutionalization moving forward? What additional advocacy might be required by WFP

<sup>305</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2020. FY 2020 USDA McGovern-Dole Proposal.

<sup>306</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. WFP Lao PDR FY20 McGovern-Dole Project Semi-Annual Report. Reporting Period October 2022 – March 2023

<sup>307</sup> This social contracting model is unique to the Lao context, as a socialist state.

<sup>308</sup> The farmers typically then sell the surplus, following the school contribution.

<sup>309</sup> [Finding 3](#); [Finding 21](#).

and external stakeholders that the DCFs are performing well within the project, demonstrating high levels of trust at the community and appropriately reporting project results.<sup>310</sup>

218. There was mixed feedback on the current workload of existing DCFs and schools under their remit; while there are roughly 15 schools per DCF, some key informants expressed this was too high, as some DCFs spend a disproportionate amount of time travelling between project sites and less time within schools and communities. Additionally, interviews showed feedback turnover in the DCF role has significant impact on the project because much of the community engagement activities leverages the trust these staff have developed across the span of the project. Interviews highlight that reasons for DCF turnover are largely due to finding higher paid positions in other organizations or through internal promotions, with gaps not being filled in a timely way. Interviews speculate this may be in-part due to hiring functions existing at CO-level rather than in the field offices, where staffing gaps in the DCF role is more acutely felt. Some key informants concluded that field offices may be better positioned to manage DCFs in this way, enabling more efficiency of this key function.

## 3. Conclusions, lessons and recommendations

219. The conclusions and recommendations are based on the evaluation team's analysis of the findings presented in this report per the mixed-method approach and validation processes described in [Section 1.4](#), and [Annex 4](#).

220. [Annex 12](#) maps each recommendation to the primary findings and conclusions to which it responds.

### 3.1. CONCLUSIONS

221. **Relevance and coherence.** The McGovern-Dole project is relevant to education, literacy, nutrition and health needs of its target beneficiaries, which include students and communities in critical in-need districts of Lao PDR. The project is responsive to critical country needs around education, health and WASH through targeted activities aimed at improving literacy rates, providing nutritious meals to students in schools identified as a high priority by the government, and enhancing access to clean water infrastructure. There is direct alignment between the priorities of this project and the priorities of the Government. The project represents a strong component of the CO's portfolio and directly fulfils Country Strategic Objectives of enhancing food security, nutrition, and learning results for vulnerable groups (in particular women and girls, children under 5 and school-age).

222. The prioritization of country capacity strengthening initiatives under the project has contributed to important shifts in national policy around school feeding, such as the increase in allocation for each student per meal under the national budget, which was much needed. This is accompanied by the Government's commitment to continue the SLP, which is attributable to WFP and partners' advocacy and technical support under the McGovern-Dole project, as well as the project's firm alignment with national strategies such as NSEDP (2021-2025) and the National Nutrition Strategy. It is clear that WFP and partners' government capacity strengthening initiatives and operational guidance documents have supported both the McGovern-Dole project and the national enabling environment for school feeding.

223. The evaluation found that food items provided for school meals were sufficiently nutritious and in-line with acceptable global standards in food assistance. The project is working to sensitize schools and communities with particular food items (lentils), which are not normally consumed in Lao PDR. Overall, the provision of a daily and nutritious meal in schools has been appreciated across all beneficiaries and stakeholders, with notable positive benefits on girls' health and education.

224. **Effectiveness.** There is good progress toward overall objectives at midterm and the project leverages the respective strengths of implementing partners to achieve positive results across activities. The quality of

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<sup>310</sup> See [Finding 18](#) for more information the reporting mechanism.

activities is recognized by community members and key stakeholders and validated by the evaluation team. Generally, activities are leading to the results expected.

225. There are challenges with community contribution to school feeding, which is underpinned by a lack of project reporting and monitoring in this area. Without insight into the quantity, quality and frequency of household and community contributions, it is difficult to pinpoint where critical investment by WFP is required.
226. Trainings delivered to schoolteachers, administrators, cooks, and storekeepers have been well received by beneficiaries, and positive outcomes has been observed in student attendance and dropout rates. The evaluation team has confidence that schools can continue providing school meals under the SLP if they are properly resourced; cooks, storekeepers and teachers demonstrate good technical ability and commitment to providing nutritious meals.
227. Literacy activities have effectively strengthened the capacity of key district-level educational staff that provide pedagogical support to teachers in schools. The material support provided to teachers are well regarded and see active use in the classroom, which indicate they are of good quality. While overall literacy outcomes remain relatively low at the midterm, students are showing steady improvement since the baseline study.
228. All schools have established a kitchen, storeroom, and water source (or handwashing station) as a result of project interventions. These contributions are generally of good quality and the evaluation team confirms they are mostly utilized throughout the school year. The construction of complex water systems in schools is underway and show good progress at midterm. There are concerns around the extent that these infrastructure investments can be sustained after WFP's exit, given that the target communities are among the most vulnerable and in-need in Lao PDR. There is solid focus on building local ownership of infrastructure by forming/capacitating local committees. Hygiene and health promotion activities are ongoing, but the midterm shows positive results among target groups.
229. The agricultural component of the project is nascent, as WFP has only recently begun procurement processes for smallholder farmer support. There is strong complementarity between this component and wider initiatives currently implemented by the country office, highlighting opportunities for cross-fertilization of lessons and implementation approaches.
230. The updates to Green Box are appropriate and demonstrate that WFP is responding to community feedback. Updates include resizing photo messages, utilizing fabric for poster material, increasing the user friendliness for teachers and lowering the overall size and bulk of the box.
231. The project M&E system can be strengthened, which WFP is already actively responding to. DCFs are integral to project monitoring and function as the main community feedback mechanism. The improvements to monthly monitoring conducted in schools is a positive step towards capturing greater programmatic insight and progress. However, there is not a structured approach to project reflection and learning; key informants highlighted that more space can be made within WFP for project teams to capture and critically reflect on key learnings and the project's direction of travel in relation to the strategic objectives.
232. Project activities consider gender equality and women's empowerment in implementation, and monitoring systems appropriately track disaggregated information, but there is limited reflection or planning on how this can be improved. Additionally, there are opportunities to implement a system to capture disability-disaggregated information.
233. **Efficiency.** Activities are being implemented in a timely manner. COVID-19 outbreaks at the start of the project and the ongoing inflation in the global market are the main factors impacting implementation and efficiency. The project has appropriately recovered the delays caused by the pandemic and is on-track to complete all activities within the project timeframe.
234. WFP recognizes the importance of strengthening Government partnerships towards greater efficiency and effectiveness in implementing school meals. As WFP is already a member of key established school feeding working groups within the Government, it is well positioned to continue strategic engagement and technical support to Government ministries. There is a willingness within WFP to strengthen its relationship with the Government, particularly with the Inclusive Education Promotion Center and MoES, and continue supporting and expanding the SLP.

235. There are methodological considerations emerging from the midterm that can be used to strengthen the design of the endline evaluation, particularly to assess project effectiveness and efficiency. This includes recalculating the baseline values, adopting the sampling approach conducted at midterm and conducting an endline cost-analysis.
236. **Impact and sustainability.** The project is positively contributing to impact on targeted beneficiaries and has made good contributions towards overall objectives for school feeding in Lao PDR. At the national level, WFP's contribution to the Minister Decree for School Lunch Promotion (2023) is a key example of strategic engagement and policy support that increases government capacity and provision of nutritious school meals in Lao PDR. At the community level, the suite of activities to increase educational, health and hygiene outcomes is showing positive impacts on the knowledge, attitude and behaviors of students, caregivers/parents and teachers. There is an appropriate and sufficient focus on building the capacity of VEDCs, which is important because of their pivotal role in supporting school feeding.
237. Inflation and the increasing costs of food and fuel will have a large impact on sustaining project results, particularly around community contributions to school meals. The project is cognizant of these factors and is actively exploring ways to increase the productivity of farmers to support schools. There are opportunities to cross-pollinate lessons and strategies across WFP-implemented school-feeding initiatives to mitigate these external factors.
238. WFP is exploring avenues to continuing support to project schools following the close of the project. The evaluation agrees with internal and external stakeholders that the Government is currently not ready to integrate the McGovern-Dole project schools into the SLP. WFP is currently working closely with the MoES to develop a joint Action Plan that includes a detailed transition strategy after 2025, with associated readiness milestones.

### 3.2. LESSONS

239. This section synthesizes the lessons from the McGovern Dole project, emerging from the evaluation findings and through discussions with internal and external stakeholders. Lessons are formulated to maximize relevance to school meal initiatives, for use by a broader sector audience. In addition, some lessons have immediate relevance for the remainder of the McGovern project and have therefore been developed into concrete recommendations ([see below](#)) for WFP and partners.
240. **Structured approach to CCS.** The SABER-SF is a comprehensive assessment that provides a good frame for developing future country capacity strengthening work, considering the priorities of eventual handover.<sup>311</sup> Developing and implementing activities under each of the SABER-SF pathways offers a structured approach to country capacity strengthening work under the project. In addition, utilizing the country capacity strengthening framework helps to guide coordination and communication with the Government around the key project components.
241. **Continue to emphasize strategic and operational partnerships.** There is need for WFP to continue building and optimizing strategic and operational partnerships with the Inclusive Education Promotion Center and wider departments/units of the MoES, as necessary. It is important that WFP understands and works closely with the Government to document the functions and internal governance of MoES around feeding. This will enable WFP to respond to Government requests for support in a timely manner, and continue to proactively work with Government to develop leading practice in school feeding.
242. **Distribution of inputs and capacity strengthening activities.** The effectiveness of project inputs is greatly strengthened when target beneficiaries are sufficiently capacitated to use and maximize them. Capacity strengthening activities (such as trainings) should be timed to compliment the distribution of inputs. For example, trainings on how to use Green Boxes should be held prior to or directly after school receipt of the input, to ensure quick uptake among teachers and to maximize on the momentum of schools receiving new support items. Delaying such capacity strengthening activities can result in inputs not being used frequently, correctly or neglected entirely. Timely trainings to foster quicker utilization of inputs can also enable more opportunities to optimize inputs for subsequent rollouts

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<sup>311</sup> See: WFP. 2022. [Country Capacity Strengthening Policy](#).

243. **Tracking in-kind and cash support given to schools.** The lack of project knowledge around community contributions to school feeding is recognized as a critical gap in the project. It remains important to gather and track detailed information around this: the quantity, quality, frequency and source of contributions (in-kind, NFIs and cash) provided to school. Understanding a complete picture of community contributions schools will allow insight into the realities of schools implementing school feeding as well as opportunities to provide targeted support to areas/communities that are facing challenges.

244. **Importance of supporting VEDCs in school feeding activities in Lao PDR.** Working with VEDCs is a strong factor contributing to successful school feeding. VEDCs play an important role in communities in Lao, as they are government mandated and are comprised of key local leaders and stakeholders of the community. This helps them mobilize communities to support schools, particularly through organizing and facilitating community contributions for school meals. Findings from the evaluation suggest that strong and active VEDCs improve the quality of school feeding implementation.

### 3.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

245. This section presents recommendations from the evaluation: six operational and three strategic recommendations. As the midterm was conducted past the mid-point of the project, with less than one year of implementation remaining, the recommendations focus on (i) the immediate actions to be taken by WFP with the remaining implementation period to consolidate key elements of the current project, and (ii) applying project lessons and results to lay foundations for continued growth of the SLP.

246. Recommendations are based on the evaluation findings and conclusions, and have been refined through a remote workshop with WFP CO, RBB and CRS during the final revision round.

#	Recommendation	Type	Responsibility	Other contributing entities	Priority	By when
1	<p><b>Continue to strengthen the Technical Working Group for School Meals to foster inter-ministerial collaboration.</b></p> <p>Utilize this existing forum with key school feeding stakeholders to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Share project and operational lessons on school feeding (see Recommendation 6 for more detail)</li> <li>- Provide a technical support function to school meals implementation</li> <li>- Develop a workplan for capacity strengthening activities, drawing priority focus areas listed in the SABER-SF assessment</li> <li>- Focus on developing evidence to inform targeted advocacy that meets stakeholder needs, i.e., school meals, student literacy, nutrition, local procurement options and financing for the national School Lunch Program.</li> </ul> <p>Update the working group governance by raising the scheduled meeting of the working group to once a quarter and expanding participation by inviting broader government stakeholders. An active and more inclusive working group with evidence-based and targeted messaging will strengthen engagement of high-level decision-makers towards scaling up the national School Lunch Program.</p>	Strategic	WFP CO: SO1 Team	IEPC/MoES and WFP/CRS senior leadership (as co-chairs of the Technical Working Group)	High	By end of project (Sep 2025)
2	<p><b>Strengthen the agricultural component and market linkage of the project by learning from similar initiatives within the WFP Lao PDR portfolio. Set the foundations for strong agriculture-focused work in future initiatives.</b></p> <p>There is an opportunity to strengthen the agriculture component, based on the implementation/lessons from wider SO agriculture initiatives that support school feeding. Within the remainder of the project, work with Government to establish an evidence-building plan, including an initial research scope that could explore the following issues:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Defining what a local procurement and cash-based model of school feeding could look like for Lao PDR, including local, regional and national procurement options for a range of food items that also consider seasonality and regional variability.</li> </ol>	Operational	WFP CO: SO1 Team	WFP RBB and HQ to provide guidance/best practices	High	By end of project (Sep 2025)

	<p>2. How best to build on the current function of the Village Education Development Committees as an entry point to strengthen linkages between farmers and schools towards school meals.</p> <p>3. Identification of programming components that overlap between wider agriculture initiatives and the project.</p>					
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Update Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for each activity component based on experience and reflections from implementation.</b></p> <p>Ensure that each activity component has an up-to-date SOPs/implementation plan, which includes to what extent each activity will be continued after the completion of the project. Implementation plans should be coherent with WFP guidance on the sector – i.e. utilize existing WFP strategies and approach guidelines to inform SOPs/implementation plans.</p> <p>Strengthen the coordination and collaboration of implementing partners, particularly on mutually implemented activities. Host consistent and documented meetings with key project staff from all three partners present. Ensure role clarity is established across partners (i.e. who is responsible for what project component and activity).</p>	Operational	WFP CO: SO1 Team and M&E Team	WFP RBB and HQ to provide guidance	High	By end of project (Sep 2025)
<b>4</b>	<p><b>Strengthen district-level capacity for monitoring and community engagement.</b></p> <p>Initiate national and subnational planning processes to strengthen the District Community Facilitator role to provide more intense and tailored support to District Education and Sports Bureau staff, to enable direct exchange of technical capacity with Government counterparts in performing key project functions. Embed these roles and responsibilities into the upcoming transition plan.</p> <p>Work with the Government to explore sustainable options (using Government funding) for technical capacity to be placed in a more permanent basis within the province and district offices (i.e. sub-national Government offices carrying out District Community Facilitator functions directly under the national School Lunch Program).</p>	Strategic	WFP CO: M&E Team and Gender and Inclusion units	DESB / PESS MoES	Medium	By end of the project (Sep 2025)
<b>5</b>	<p><b>Strengthen the monitoring system of the project, and ensure information is shared to the SLP.</b></p> <p>All performance tracking should include specific gender equality and women’s empowerment targets that extend beyond indicators. Where possible and efficient, include person with disability information in the monitoring system, to enable learning for future initiatives. Use the Technical Working Group to regularly share and exchange</p>	Operational	WFP CO: M&E Team	MoES	Medium	By end of the project (Sep 2025)



	<p>data/information to support and inform Government school meals plans and strategies.</p> <p>Develop country capacity strengthening indicators for the project (at national, province and district levels).</p> <p>Develop a systemic approach to track community contribution, including the quality, quantity, source and frequency of all in-kind, cash and non-food items contributions that support schools. Update the monitoring system of the project to track this data and use the information to inform Recommendation 6 .</p>					
6	<p><b>Ensure key lessons and good practices on project processes and results are efficiently and effectively documented to shape future initiatives in school feeding and catalyze innovation in the national School Lunch Program.</b></p> <p>Document good practices in the identified key areas of learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- District-level capacity building across activity components</li> <li>- School, community and district communication and engagement processes on school meals, literacy and WASH issues</li> <li>- The monitoring mechanisms of the project, with emphasis on District Community Facilitator engagement with the community to gather project data</li> </ul> <p>Identify gaps in project and community knowledge and work with Government to prioritize key questions for future research, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What are the primary ways communities and households are contributing to school meals and how effective are Village Education Development Committees in creating/fostering these linkages?</li> <li>- What are the main challenges in attaining educational outcomes (focus on ethno-linguistic minorities)?</li> <li>- Which of the SABER-SF pathways offer the most return in terms of supporting capacity deficits of national School Lunch Program?</li> </ul> <p>What are the lessons and leading practice drawn from previous evaluations of school feeding initiatives?</p>	Operational	WFP CO: SO1 Team and M&E Team	CRS  IEPC	Medium	By end of the project (Sep 2025)

7	<p><b>Document all modalities of capacity strengthening provided to Village Education Development Committees.</b></p> <p>Identify which inputs and activities targeted at Village Education Development Committees that are demonstrating good return and which have the potential for scale- up; prioritize efficiency - activities that have smaller investment and reach more groups.</p> <p>Create a ‘package of interventions’ that involve the most effective/efficient (along with clear indicators for measurement). Use this package as a minimum standard to ensure all Village Education Development Committees support is provided equally across communities, and in all ongoing and future initiatives.</p>	Operational	WFP CO: SO1 Team and M&E Team		High	By end of the project (Sep 2025)
8	<p><b>Work with project schools to develop a continuation plan for school meals under the national program.</b></p> <p>Using District Community Facilitators, create a school plan for each project school on how best to continue meals once the project closes. This planning process should engage widely with all relevant community stakeholders to reflect current and anticipated needs and challenges. Part of this planning should include capacity building activities for schools, Village Education Development Committees and households on how to best use cash for school meals – with consideration to local market access and community contribution models.</p> <p>Utilize the upcoming Lao PDR School Lunch Programme Joint Action Plan 2024-2028 to set targets for schools’ capacity within these plans.</p>	Operational	WFP CO: SO1 team	<p>WFP RBB and HQ, and CRS to provide guidance/best practices on sustaining cash-based school feeding</p> <p>DESB</p>	Medium	By end of the project (Sep 2025)

9	<p><b>Set the scope of work for the endline evaluation to include methodological considerations proposed at midterm: (i) recalculate baseline values, (ii) align sampling approach, (iii) include a cost-analysis of the project.</b></p> <p>During the scoping of the endline evaluation Terms of Reference, include the following methodological and analytical requirements for the design:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Revisit how the baseline indicators were calculated under the project' Results Framework. Recalculate indicator values, aligned with the midterm methodology, to ensure accurate measurement of longitudinal progress.</li> <li>2. Ensure the endline evaluation adopts the same sampling stratification as the midterm (i.e. school meals only; school meals, WASH; school meals, WASH, literacy; school meals, literacy), to understand differences between intervention packages. Explore the utility of a control group for quantitative endline activities.</li> <li>3. Conduct a cost-efficiency analysis for the project.</li> </ol>	Operational	WFP CO			Endline Evaluation
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# Annex 1: Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference aim to inform stakeholders about the evaluation, clarify expectations and requirements and guide the evaluation team in its work during the various phases of the evaluation.

**The Terms of Reference for the midterm, along with the baseline evaluation report, [can be found here](#).**

## Annex 2: Timeline

Steps	By whom	Date (2024) (Lao PDR time)	Description of deliverable
<b>Inception</b>			
Brief core team	EM, ET	22 Jan	<p>The report will follow the DEQAS template for decentralized evaluations:</p> <p>Report body (15,000 words)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduction               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Evaluation features</li> <li>1.2 Context</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Subject of the evaluation               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 Subject evaluated</li> <li>2.2 Scope of the evaluation</li> <li>2.3 Stakeholder analysis</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Evaluation approach, methodology and ethical considerations               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1 Evaluability assessment</li> <li>3.2 Methodological approach</li> <li>3.3 Data collection methods</li> <li>3.4 Data analysis</li> <li>3.5 Ethical considerations</li> <li>3.6 Risks and assumptions</li> <li>3.7 Quality assurance</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Organization of the evaluation               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4.1 Roles and responsibilities</li> <li>4.2 Timeline</li> </ol> </li> <li>5. Support required</li> </ol> <p>Mandatory annexes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summary TOR</li> <li>• Detailed timeline</li> <li>• Methodology guidance</li> <li>• Evaluation matrix</li> <li>• Data collection tools</li> <li>• Evaluation field mission schedule</li> <li>• Reconstructed theory of change (if applicable)</li> <li>• Results framework/line of sight</li> <li>• Detailed stakeholder analysis</li> <li>• Updated internal reference group membership</li> <li>• Communication and knowledge management plan</li> <li>• List of people interviewed</li> <li>• Bibliography</li> <li>• Acronyms</li> </ul>
Desk review of key documents; inception meeting(s) with stakeholders	ET	22 Jan – 23 Feb	
Inception mission	ET, CO	6 – 7 Feb	
<b>TANGO submitted draft inception report</b>	ET	23 Feb	
Quality assurance of draft IR by EM and Regional Evaluation Office (REO)	EM	23 Feb – 1 Mar	
EM shared draft IR with DEQS and organizes follow-up call with DEQS	EM	1 Mar	
Qualitative and quantitative training, including quantitative pilot	ET	29 Feb – 08 Mar	
Revised draft IR based on feedback received by DEQS, EM and REO	ET	11 – 20 Mar	
<b>TANGO submitted revised inception report</b>	ET	20 Mar	
Shared revised inception report with ERG to review	EM	21 Mar	
Review and comment on draft inception report	ERG	20 – 26 Mar	
Consolidation of comments	EM	27 Mar	
Revised draft inception report based on feedback received	ET	28 Mar – 04 Apr	
<b>TANGO submitted final revised inception report</b>	ET	01 Apr	
Review final inception report and submit to the evaluation committee for approval	EM	2 April	
Approved final inception report and shared with ERG for information	EC Chair	2 April	

Data collection			
Brief the evaluation team at CO	EC Chair / EM	10 Mar	
In-country data collection	ET	11 Mar – 04 Apr	Deep-dive schools complemented the field tour schedule.
In-country debriefing (s)	ET	05 April	
Analysis and reporting			
Drafting of the evaluation report	ET	8 Apr – 24 May	<p>The report will follow the DEQAS template for decentralized evaluations:</p> <p>Executive summary (2,500 words)</p> <p>Report body (30,000 words)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduction</li> <li>2. Evaluation features</li> <li>3. Context</li> <li>4. Subject being evaluated</li> <li>5. Evaluation methodology, limitations and ethical consideration</li> <li>6. Evaluation findings</li> <li>7. Lessons</li> <li>8. Conclusions and recommendations</li> </ol> <p>Mandatory annexes: (40,000 words)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summary ToR</li> <li>• Evaluation timeline</li> <li>• Methodology</li> <li>• Evaluation matrix</li> <li>• Data collection tools</li> <li>• Fieldwork agenda</li> <li>• Findings – conclusions - recommendations mapping</li> <li>• List of people interviewed</li> <li>• Bibliography</li> <li>• Acronyms</li> </ul>
<b>TANGO submitted draft evaluation report</b>	ET	28 May	
Quality assurance of draft evaluation report by EM and REO	EM	29 May – 5 Jun	
EM shared draft evaluation report with DEQS and organized follow-up call with DEQS	EM	5 Jun – 18 Jun	
TANGO receives Draft 1 feedback	ET	14 Jun	
Revision of draft evaluation report based on feedback received by DEQS, EM, RBB Monitoring and REO	ET	17 Jun – 20 Jun	
<b>TANGO submitted revised evaluation report (Draft 2)</b>	ET	20 Jun	
<b>Learning workshop</b>	ET / EM	TBD	
Circulated draft evaluation report for review and comments to ERG, RBB and other stakeholders	EM	21 Jun	
Shared comments, including HQ/RBB responses to Draft 2 comments, with ET	EM	29 Jun	
<b>TANGO submits revised evaluation report (Draft 3)</b>	ET	04 Jul	
WFP submits additional feedback from partners to ET	EM	08 Jul	
<b>TANGO submits revised evaluation report (Draft 4)</b>	ET	12 Jul	
<b>Learning workshop</b>	ET/EM	17 Jul	
<b>TANGO submits finalised evaluation report</b>	ET	19 Jul	



Approve final evaluation report and share with key stakeholders for information	EC Chair	TBD	
<b>Review and approve EC-approved final evaluation report</b>	USDA	TBD	
<b>Dissemination and follow up</b>			
Prepare management response	EC Chair	TBD	
<b>Share final evaluation report and management response with the REO and OEV for publication and participate in end-of-evaluation lessons learned call</b>	EM	TBD	
Disseminate and use midterm report results	EM / CO	TBD	
ET = Evaluation Team; EM = Evaluation Manager; EC Chair = Evaluation Committee Chair; CO = country office; <b>bold</b> = deliverable			

## Annex 3: Evaluation Matrix

The TOR lists two general questions in addition to those listed in matrix below: 1) Are there any recommendations for mid-course corrections to improve the project's relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and/or sustainability and 2) What are the lessons learned from the project so far? The findings for these two questions are provided as separate sections in the main body of the report.

As the [Evaluation Findings section](#) is structured by the five Evaluation Questions, the matrix highlights the specific finding(s) where each sub-question is addressed.

Evaluation Criteria and Question					
Sub-questions	Key Indicators	Data collection methods	Sources of data/information	Data analysis methods/ triangulation	Findings where Sub-EQs are specifically addressed
<b>Coherence</b>					
<b>1. What is the current level of alignment of the intervention with other relevant initiatives?</b>					
1.1 Are there any changes to the alignment with school feeding national policy, national need, WFP school feeding policy and guidance and with donor and partner school feeding strategies since the baseline?	The degree to which WFP/partner/donor/ policies and strategies are aligned with national policies on programme themes  The extent to which the above strategies have been updated/revised since baseline	Literature review  KIIs with government, WFP and CRS staff	WFP, government, donor and partner policies on school feeding, nutrition, school health and social nets,  Information and perceptions of government, WFP and CRS staff and partners obtained from KIIs	Analysis of qualitative data against secondary evidence in policies and strategy documentation	<a href="#">Finding 2</a> <a href="#">Finding 13</a>
1.2 How well integrated is the project in practice with other projects, activities and Outcomes in the WFP CSP?	The extent to which the project aligns with priorities and goals presented in the CSP.  The complementarity of project activities to CSP outcomes and wider WFP activities.	Literature review  KIIs government, WFP and CRS staff	Country Strategic Plan  Qualitative data from interviews with WFP, CRS and government staff  WFP project documentation	Analysis of strategic, policy and project documents triangulated with qualitative data from interviews.  Comparative analysis of project documentation	<a href="#">Finding 1</a>
<b>Relevance</b>					
<b>2. To what extent do the McGovern-Dole objectives and design respond to the needs of stakeholders and institutions?</b>					

2.1 To what extent is the School Feeding Program contributing to realizing the Government of Lao PDR policies and strategies related to school feeding?	The level of alignment and complementarity between SFP and national SM policies and programming.	Literature review KIIs with WFP and government	Government policies on school meals, nutrition, school health, gender equity, equal access to education, and information.  Perceptions of government and WFP staff  Programme monitoring documentation	Qualitative analysis and triangulation of project outcomes against national policies and strategies.	<a href="#">Finding 2</a> <a href="#">Finding 13</a>
2.2 How well do teacher and administrator trainings and other literacy interventions organized by the project support teachers to address the issues they face in their schools and communities? Are the topics being offered relevant to their needs?	Number of teacher and administrator trainings, literacy interventions  Perception of relevance and quality of trainings and literacy interventions as reported by teachers, administration, WFP and CRS staff, government officials	Literature review, KIIs with teachers, school administrators, government, WFP and CRS staff	Teachers, school administrators, government, WFP and CRS staff, Government, implementing partners	Qualitative analysis of KII evidence triangulated with community and school needs identified in project documentation.	<a href="#">Finding 8</a>
2.3 To what extent is the design and implementation of the School Feeding program gender-sensitive?	The degree to which WFP commitments and actions consider GEWE in designing and implementing SF and related activities	Literature review KII with WFP and CRS staff, government	WFP and CRS staff, government, implementing partners	Analysis of project documentation, triangulated with qualitative evidence from KIIs	<a href="#">Finding 14</a>
2.4 To what extent are WFP's capacity strengthening activities designed based on needs assessments/ analyses of national capacity in all five SABER-SF policy goals?	The degree to which capacity strengthening activities compliment needs assessment and analyses.  The extent to which the project shows alignment with SABER-SF policy goals	Literature review, KIIs with WFP and CRS staff, government	WFP and CRS staff, government; implementing partners, existing or record of assessments	Comparative analysis of project documentation with policies	<a href="#">Finding 4</a>
<b>Effectiveness and Efficiency</b>					

3. To what extent are McGovern-Dole activities being delivered in an efficient and timely manner and likely to achieve objectives and results, including possible differences across groups or institutions?					
3.1 What is the output and the progress of project implementation – is the project on track to complete all activities as planned? <i>(Effectiveness)</i>	Refer to MGD and custom Indicators detailed in <a href="#">Annex 6: Performance Indicators Overview</a>	Literature review, key informant interviews with teachers, school administration, farmer groups, survey data	M&E data and reports from WFP Lao PDR and implementing partners, key informants from schools, communities, farmer groups, and students' survey data	Quantitative analysis comparing baseline and midterm data, disaggregated by gender; qualitative analysis of KII evidence triangulated with project documentation	<a href="#">Finding 4</a> <a href="#">Finding 5</a>
3.2 Has sufficient attention been given to gender, disability and equal rights issues in the implementation of the project and has this produced any results? <i>(Effectiveness)</i>	The extent of the project's focus on gender, inclusion and equity issues in implementation and any outcomes from this attention	Literature review, key informant interviews with WFP and CRS staff, government	M&E data and reports from WFP Lao PDR and implementing partners, WFP and CRS staff, government, implementing partners	Quantitative analysis comparing baseline and midterm data, disaggregated by gender; qualitative analysis of KII evidence triangulated with monitoring data and reports	<a href="#">Finding 14</a> Gender disaggregated data is presented across <a href="#">Evaluation findings</a>
3.3 Is there evidence that the training of teachers led to improved teaching practices? To what degree are objectives related to improved quality of instruction likely to be achieved by the end of the project? <i>(Effectiveness)</i>	Number of teachers/ educators/ school administrators who demonstrate use of new and quality teaching techniques or tools Assessment of literacy skills	Literature review; key informant interviews with teachers, school administration, parents/community members and farmer groups; survey data	M&E data and reports from WFP Lao PDR and implementing partners, key informants from schools, communities, farmer groups Students' survey data	Quantitative analysis comparing baseline and midterm data; disaggregated by gender; analysis of monitoring and survey data triangulated with KII evidence	<a href="#">Finding 8</a> <a href="#">Finding 16</a>
3.4 Is there evidence that WASH interventions contributed to changes in the use of health and hygiene practice? <i>(Effectiveness)</i>	Number of schools where principals report improved WASH practices Proportion of children who report knowledge, attitude and belief related to washing hands at key times	Literature review; key informant interviews with teachers, school administration, parents/community members, and farmer groups; survey data	M&E data and reports from WFP Lao PDR and implementing partners, key informants from schools, communities, farmer groups	Quantitative analysis comparing baseline and midterm data; disaggregated by gender; analysis of monitoring and survey data triangulated with KII evidence	<a href="#">Finding 12</a> <a href="#">Finding 16</a>
3.5 Are all areas of service delivery in the project as efficient as they can be or are there some areas where there	The level of activity achievement of against plans; the degree to which	Literature review, budget review, key informant interviews with WFP and CRS staff, government	WFP and CRS staff, government, implementing partners, project reports	Analysis of KII evidence triangulated with budget and resourcing information and project reports	<a href="#">Finding 15</a>

is room for improvement? ( <i>Efficiency</i> )	mitigating factors affected project delivery Review of budget data, budget revisions, perception of cost vs available funding				
3.6 Has WFP been able to timely mobilize the required skills, personnel, and technical support to be able to provide the right support to national actors (at technical, project management and advocacy levels)? ( <i>Efficiency</i> )	The level to which WFP was able to identify and respond to national actors' needs, at the technical, project management and advocacy levels	Literature review, key informant interviews with WFP and government staff	WFP staff, government staff, project reports	Analysis of project documentation triangulated with KII evidence	<a href="#">Finding 7</a> <a href="#">Finding 4</a>
3.7 How effective is the capacity strengthening work at building national capacity in school feeding? Does it include work across the five SABER-SF policy goals? What evidence is there of progress? ( <i>Effectiveness</i> )	Number of policies, regulations, or administrative procedures in development supported by WFP; value of new public and private sector investments to support food security and nutrition  The level of alignment with and across the five SABER-SF policy goals	Literature review, key informant interviews with WFP and government staff	M&E data and reports from WFP Lao PDR and implementing partners, key informants from WFP and government staff	Quantitative analysis comparing baseline and midterm data; disaggregated by gender; qualitative analysis of KII evidence triangulated with monitoring data and reports	<a href="#">Finding 4</a>
3.8 To what extent has the implementation of the School Feeding Program to date facilitated the readiness of all stakeholders for the handover of the SFP to Government of Lao PDR and integration into the national School Lunch Program at the end of the project timeframe? ( <i>Effectiveness</i> )	The degree of stakeholders' readiness for the transition of project-supported schools to the Government  The extent of project achievements against plans and milestones for SFP transition	Literature review, (reports, coordination meetings, MOUs, roadmaps, readiness documents), key informant interviews with WFP, CRS and government staff	WFP staff, government staff, implementing partners, community-level readiness and related documents/info	Analysis of project documentation triangulated with KII evidence	<a href="#">Finding 21</a>
<b>Impact</b>					

4. Are there any emerging impacts of the intervention at the mid-term stage (part of USDA approved evaluation framework)?					
4.1 What internal and external factors are affecting the project's achievement of intended results in the evaluation priority areas? For example: How have project achievements been impacted by policy and institutional capacity for school feeding, stakeholders' roles and responsibilities, the macro-economic situation, implementation progress, the quality of implementing partners, and the mechanism and structure of digital monitoring systems? <sup>312</sup>	The extent to which challenges to management, implementation, and overall performance, posed by specific internal and external shocks or other factors, impacted project achievement	Literature review; key informant interviews with WFP, CRS and government staff, project participants (gender-balanced); secondary data review	WFP staff, government staff, implementing partners, project participants (gender-balanced); project reports	Qualitative analysis of KII evidence triangulated with project documentation	<a href="#">Finding 17</a> <a href="#">Finding 18</a>
4.2 What changes in attendance, drop-out and retention rates have been observed as a result of the project? How do these changes compare with the broader trends which are affected by COVID-19 and reduced living standards caused by the macroeconomic situation?	Average student attendance rate; drop-out rates; number of students enrolled in school	Literature review, key informant interviews with teachers, school administration, parents/community members, and government staff, WFP and CRS staff; survey data	M&E data and reports from WFP Lao PDR and implementing partners, key informants from schools, communities, government Students' survey data	Quantitative analysis comparing baseline and midterm data; comparison with national trends (enrolment, attendance and drop-out rates), disaggregated by gender; qualitative analysis of KII evidence triangulated with project M& data and reports and survey results	<a href="#">Finding 5</a> <a href="#">Finding 8</a>
4.3 How are different groups benefiting from the intervention outcomes so far (intended or unintended) and how do GEWE outcomes vary by stakeholder group?	Level of progress against outcome indicators and perceptions on overall wellbeing changes, including on gender and disability access	Literature review; key informant interviews with WFP, CRS and government staff; analysis of sample panel data on targeted and	M&E data and reports from WFP Lao PDR and implementing partners, WFP staff, government, implementing partners,	Quantitative analysis comparing baseline and midterm data, disaggregated by gender; qualitative analysis of KII	<a href="#">Finding 16</a> Differences in groups are highlighted across findings in <a href="#">Evaluation Question 3</a> and <a href="#">Evaluation Question 4</a>

<sup>312</sup> EQ4.1 is adjusted to specifically outline the priority areas that it references from the TOR.

		non-targeted schools; survey data	project participants, Students' survey data	evidence triangulated with project documentation	
<b>Sustainability</b>					
<b>5. To what extent are McGovern-Dole project results, benefits, and outcomes likely to continue after the project concludes?</b>					
5.1 Is the project on track for handover and sustainability in the following areas? Have relevant milestones been reached? Community-local level: Access to school feeding (including physical infrastructure, VEDC capacity, community contributions, access to water and community engagement) Government-national and sub-national levels: Financial resources, workforce and human resources, leadership and governance, accountability and M&E	The extent to which national and subnational institutions fulfil management responsibilities for school feeding programmes The degree to which communities are able to meet contribution requirements and support school feeding Assessment of progress against milestones Number of educational facilities renovated/ constructed; number of schools using an improved water source; number of policies, regulations or administrative procedures in development	Literature review, key informant interviews with WFP, government and CRS staff, teachers school administration and parents/community members	M&E data and reports from WFP Lao PDR and implementing partners, WFP staff, government staff, implementing partners, schools and community members	Analysis of project documentation triangulated with KII evidence	<a href="#">Finding 21</a> <a href="#">Finding 22</a>
5.2 Is there sufficient production of diverse and nutritious crops in the communities, what are the barriers being faced if any, what is the extent of fresh produce being contributed for the SFP and what is the extent to which consistent incomes for farmers and market linkages have been addressed since baseline?	Farmer production/ sales for SFP Percentage of smallholder farmers, including women, supported to produce quality food surplus and contribute to school meals programmes	Literature review, key informant interviews with WFP, government and CRS staff, smallholder farmers	M&E data and reports from WFP Lao PDR and implementing partners, WFP staff, government staff, implementing partners, community members (smallholder farmers)	Quantitative analysis comparing baseline and midterm data; Analysis of KII evidence triangulated with project documentation and monitoring data and reports	<a href="#">Finding 10</a> <a href="#">Finding 13</a>



5.3 What, or who, incentivizes VEDCs and water user committees (WUCs) to sustain/maintain water points and handwashing facilities and what are the internal (project related) and external (enabling environment) barriers for this?	The extent to which challenges affect the sustainability of VEDCs and WUCs to manage, sustain, and maintain water points and handwashing facilities posed by specific internal and external shocks or other factors	Literature review, key informant interviews with WFP, government and CRS staff, VEDC and WUC members	WFP Lao PDR and implementing partner reports; WFP staff, government staff, implementing partners, community members (VEDCs and WUCs)	Analysis of KII evidence triangulated with project documentation	<a href="#">Finding 12</a>
5.4 Which components of the SFP are proving to be most sustainable in terms of operational efficiency and why?	The degree to which McGovern-Dole project elements align with priorities and capacities of national school feeding programme; Extent to which WFP and government institutional strategies, plans, supporting government policies and milestones promote sustainability	Literature review, (reports, coordination meetings, MOUs, etc.) key informant interviews with WFP, government and implementing partner staff	M&E data and reports from WFP Lao PDR and implementing partners, WFP staff, government staff, implementing partners	Qualitative analysis of KII evidence triangulated with project reports and documentation	<a href="#">Finding 15</a>
5.5 To what extent has the package of capacity strengthening activities within WFP-supported project been institutionalized into the Government's policies, strategies, systems, and implementation arrangements so that they are more likely to be sustainable beyond WFP's support (within all five policy goals)? <sup>313</sup>	The extent to which capacity strengthening activities have been institutionalized into government policies, strategies, systems and implementation arrangements	Literature review, key informant interviews with WFP, government and implementing partner staff	M&E data and reports from WFP Lao PDR and implementing partners (specifically, reporting focused on capacity strengthening activities), WFP staff, government staff, implementing partners	Qualitative analysis of KII evidence triangulated with project documentation	<a href="#">Finding 2</a> <a href="#">Finding 4</a>

<sup>313</sup> **Policy Goal 1:** Is the government convinced of the benefits of school feeding? Does the government have sufficient policies and legislation in place to enable them to implement a sustainable government-run school feeding programme (SLP)? What are the key gaps and priority areas to be worked on? **Policy Goal 2:** Does the government commit sufficient financial resources to school feeding? What are the key gaps and priority areas to be worked on? **Policy Goal 3:** Does the government

5.6 What are the key gaps and priority areas for institutionalization moving forward? What additional advocacy might be required by WFP? <sup>314</sup>	Perception of gaps and priority areas for institutionalization, additional advocacy required	Literature review, key informant interviews with WFP, government and implementing partner staff	M&E data and reports from WFP Lao PDR and implementing partners; WFP staff, government staff, implementing partners	Qualitative analysis of KII evidence triangulated with project documentation	<a href="#">Finding 22</a> ; this Sub-EQ is also addressed across lessons and recommendations.
5.7 What outputs are be the most effective at securing community, local or national government investment into the SFP? What are the barriers and challenges in securing investment? <sup>315</sup>	The level of community, local and national government's investment to project outputs Perception of barriers and challenges in securing investment	Literature review, key informant interviews with WFP, government and implementing partner staff, local government, administrators, parents/community members	M&E data and reports from WFP Lao PDR and implementing partners; WFP staff, government staff, implementing partners, school, local government, and community members	Qualitative analysis of KII evidence triangulated with project documentation	<a href="#">Finding 21</a>

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have sufficient governance and coordination structures to implement a national school feeding programme? What are the key gaps and priority areas to be worked on? **Policy Goal 4:** Does the design of the national SLP align with the capacity of the government, and the needs of the children? Is there sufficient monitoring and review of the national SLP? What are the key gaps and priority areas to be worked on? **Policy Goal 5:** Are communities and other non-state actors sufficiently engaged with school feeding? Are they able to provide contribution in time or resources for the school feeding? What are the key gaps and priority areas to be worked on?

<sup>314</sup> While this is EQ number 5.7 of the TOR, it is re-numbered to 5.6 because EQ5.6 is missing in the TOR.

<sup>315</sup> While this is EQ number 5.8 of the TOR, it is re-numbered to 5.7 due to the re-numbering of EQ5.7 to EQ5.6, as explained in the footnote above.

## Annex 4: Methodology

This annex supplements information given in [Section 1.4](#), with more details about the data collection methods and associated tools, sampling, gender considerations, data analysis, ethical considerations, and quality assurance measures employed in the midterm evaluation,

The methodological approach was carefully developed to respond to the EQs and to the required methodological principles listed in the TOR. These principles include: utilizing a mix of methods to ensure and enable triangulation of evidence, partnership with local firms to ensure the evaluation is sensitive to cultural, political and social context and language proficiencies, and prioritizing a gender-balanced, geographically and culturally diverse evaluation team.<sup>316</sup> The selection of qualitative and quantitative methods compliments the baseline evaluation to ensure comparability of results, in addition to establishing the approach for a robust endline approach.

### SUMMARY OF DATA COLLECTION METHODS

A summary of data collection methods is presented below:

Data collection tool/method	Quantity	Type of data to be collected	Description
Student Survey (ODK)	10 students per school, <b>680 total</b>	MGD Indicators Custom Project Indicators	<p>The national team conducted in-person surveys with students in Grade 1-5 in all project schools in the sample. These interviews collected data on the MGD indicators and on selected questions relevant to the evaluation questions.</p> <p>These questions were administered via an ODK survey programmed on Android devices and recorded on those devices.</p> <p>The student survey for the midterm adapts the baseline survey, with the addition of a WASH module and minor modification to response codes. The following themes were explored:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diet in the last 24 hours</li> <li>• Knowledge and attitudes about food</li> <li>• Household environment as it relates to duties, ability to do homework and reading</li> <li>• School environment as it relates to encouraging reading and literacy</li> </ul>
School Survey (ODK)	1 survey per school, <b>68 total</b>	MGD Indicators Custom Project Indicators	<p>The national team conducted school-level surveys consisting of a school tour/observation alongside school heads. Team members observed the presence and quality of school facilities while touring the school with the school head, who was asked to provide further clarifications and insights.</p>

<sup>316</sup> WFP Lao PDR. 2023. Decentralized Evaluation Terms of Reference: Mid-Term Evaluation of USDA McGovern-Dole Grant for WFP School Feeding in Laos from 2020 to 2025.

			<p>These surveys primarily collected data on MGD indicators.</p> <p>School heads were sent a copy of the survey in advance of field visits to pre-populate school recording information, such as attendance rates and enrolment. This saved time during the field visit, which was used to collect further qualitative data from key school staff, such as teachers, cooks, storekeepers, and administration staff.</p> <p>Key themes in the school survey were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School facilities – particularly around key infrastructure for school feeding and water sources</li> <li>• Student attentiveness data – particularly through discussions with school heads/teachers</li> <li>• Current enrolment and student attendance data</li> <li>• School feeding project information</li> </ul>
Parent / Caregiver Survey (ODK)	5 surveys per school, <b>340 total</b>	Custom Project Indicators	<p>The national team members conducted one-on-one surveys with parents/caregivers of students who attended project schools. National team members worked with schools to identify and facilitate parents' involvement in this survey.</p> <p>This survey underwent the most adjustments from the baseline tool, which explored themes outside the scope of the project, such as household income and composition. The primary focus of the parent survey was at the household level rather than on schools and results from project activities. The baseline report provided little analysis on this data. The midterm parent survey was reviewed and streamlined to omit questions outside the scope of the project to explore specific themes related to the project, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child dietary diversity</li> <li>• Parents' knowledge and attitudes towards education, health and hygiene and school lunch</li> </ul>
Literacy Assessment (Tangerine)	10 surveys in 20 schools, <b>200 total</b>  20 schools in Khammouane Province only	MGD indicators	<p>The national team members administered the literacy assessment in-person to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students to ensure comparability with the baseline. The Literacy Assessment was administered in Lao language only as this is the language of instruction.</p> <p>While the structure of the Literacy tool used at baseline was preserved for consistency, the updates made to the literacy assessment ensured students have had no previous exposure to the material, which will be of comparable skill level across the three exercises. The literacy assessment was updated with feedback from CRS, drawn from their existing literacy tools in Lao and on leading practice. These changes were largely minor, to preserve comparability of performance indicators with baseline. The specific components assessed by the literacy assessment are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expressive vocabulary</li> <li>• Phonological awareness</li> <li>• Letter/symbol sounds</li> <li>• Familiar word decoding – most-used words</li> <li>• Matching pictures</li> <li>• Reading comprehension – passage and questions</li> </ul>

<p>Qualitative topical outlines (interview guides) for KIIs and FGDs</p>	<p>22-20 national and sub-national stakeholders</p> <p>14 deep dive in schools, consisting of 3-5 qualitative activities (KIIs, FGDs, school observations) each.</p>	<p><b>All:</b></p> <p>Qualitative data on all evaluation questions and information to validate and help interpret indicator data</p>	<p>Interview guides (topical outlines) were developed specifically for this midterm evaluation. Topical outlines have been designed for the following stakeholder groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School heads and head teachers (interviewer: national team)</li> <li>• Parent-teacher associations (interviewer: national team)</li> <li>• District and provincial government staff (interviewer: national team)</li> <li>• Implementing partners (interviewer: international team)</li> <li>• WFP CO and field staff (interviewer: international team)</li> <li>• International stakeholders [WFP, United Nations agencies, donors] (interviewer: international team)</li> </ul> <p>Information from key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) will be recorded in written notes and analysed using a matrix analysis process. KII notes used for the analysis are difficult to anonymize, so these will not be shared with WFP; only consolidated analysis from KIIs will be presented in the evaluation report.</p>
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## UPDATES TO EVALUATION DESIGN

The original TOR requested a representative quantitative control for the literacy assessment, which was not feasible within the allocated budget. Through discussions during the contracting and inception phase, it was agreed that the midterm instead use a qualitative approach to assess project outcomes and school settings through deep dives: 14 schools were purposively selected for 3-5 additional qualitative activities.

## ADDITIONAL DETAILS ON DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

### *Tool development*

All data collection tools were submitted to WFP, in English, ahead of the Inception Report Draft 1 submission, to facilitate an early review.<sup>317</sup> It was agreed to strive for an ambitious timeline for starting data collection, which needed to complete before Lao New Year on 13 April 2024, with school closures starting as early as 08 April 2024. This informed sequencing the quantitative data collection tool review in parallel to inception report development, rather than reviewing all tools on submission of Draft 1.<sup>318</sup>

**Translation.** The qualitative and quantitative tools were translated from English to Lao following the submission of Draft 1 of the Inception Report. This was conducted by bilingual researchers from LSR, with multiple consultations with WFP and CRS, to ensure the translations were accurate and reflected the correct terminology. Lao versions of the quantitative tools were reviewed closely during enumerator training (and following the pilot) to ensure the questions were framed and worded to yield appropriate responses, while maintaining comparability with baseline results.

**Training.** Training was conducted for all field data collection staff, including enumerators and supervisors, prior to data collection. As agreed during the inception mission with WFP, TANGO senior consultants provided training to LSR senior supervisors on all quantitative and qualitative tools across 3 days in the inception phase. LSR senior evaluators then facilitated a week-long training session to train field enumerators, which included in a pilot. Training took place in Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR, between 29 February – 07 March 2024.

### *Literacy assessment*

Student literacy was assessed using an internally developed and customized literacy assessment tool, which tests reading and comprehension skills. Based on a standardized method for measuring changes in reading outcomes, analysis of the literacy assessment data showed changes over time in literacy indicators. Qualitative data informed relationships between the literacy outcomes and other trends.

The national team administered the literacy assessment in-person to 2nd graders in the sample of project schools. During the inception phase for this midterm, it was discussed to involve the lead implementing partner CRS in the development, reviewing and training of the literacy tool. The evaluation team worked closely with CRS to update, and quality assure the literacy tool based on: (i) the original baseline tool, (ii) leading practice from CRS (iii) existing literacy assessments implemented in Lao by CRS. This quality assurance process followed the following sequence:

1. The evaluation team and key CRS staff met virtually to orient on the evaluation and on existing quantitative tools, namely the baseline literacy assessment. It was discussed that a key lesson learned from the baseline was that CRS needed to be more actively and technically engaged in reviewing data collection tools, since they are the lead implementing partner of the project. As a result, there was a consensus and commitment to engage CRS actively during the tool development and training process for the midterm evaluation, for technical input and overall sign-off before tools are submitted to WFP.<sup>319</sup>

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<sup>317</sup> The evaluation team submitted the quantitative tools for WFP review on 15 February 2023.

<sup>318</sup> This early review of quantitative tools included inputs from key WFP CO staff, the WFP gender and protection focal point, the WFP Research Assessment and Monitoring team (RAM), and the RBB.

<sup>319</sup> This was also discussed with WFP during the inception mission; which WFP was supportive and facilitated an initial meeting between TANGO and CRS on 08 Feb 2024.

2. The evaluation team provided CRS with a draft literacy assessment tool for technical input. CRS conducted a review of all literacy modules and provided suggestions drawn from leading practice and existing literacy tools implemented in Lao by CRS. CRS also reviewed and sense-checked the WASH module, given their familiarity of WASH activities for the programme.
3. CRS provided technical sign-off on the quality, relevance and appropriateness of the literacy assessment and WASH module (included in the School Survey).
4. The evaluation team incorporated all feedback on the literacy assessment and WASH module and finalised the remaining quantitative tools.

### **School survey**

The national team collected statistical secondary data commonly available on-site in school records/ledgers such as gender-disaggregated enrolment and attendance data, teacher-student ratios, number of teachers, number of students, dropout rate, etc. these records questions are part of the school survey, along with questions for school heads. Data was recorded on Android devices loaded with an ODK tool for this purpose. This serves as an additional validation exercise for WFP's own data collection/profiling of a selection of project schools.

The records component of the school survey was sent to school heads ahead of field visits, so the statistical information described above could be prepopulated and collected on arrival. This saved time that was put toward qualitative discussions with school heads, teachers and key staff.

### **Sampling strategy**

The midterm followed a stratified sample for quantitative activities to ensure representative samples from all types of combinations of project intervention, which is recommended for endline surveys, with four strata based on the following intervention categories:

1. School meals only
2. School meals and WASH
3. School meals, WASH, and literacy
4. School meals and Literacy (exclusive for literacy assessment and school survey)

Results were disaggregated according to the finalised criteria; however, no further explicit stratification for the quantitative methods was proposed according to these criteria. Application of these additional levels of stratification would dramatically increase the required sample size and the complexity of the sample design, which would increase data collection costs. Note that the representation of these subcategories was captured in the overall sample even without further stratification, because the data was collected from all 17 project districts.

A cross-sectional design was proposed for the literacy assessment: a random sample of 20 schools were selected from the sampling frame of 90 schools in Khammouane Province, as literacy activities were only implemented in one province. For endline, it is suggested a new random sample of 20 schools should be drawn. A panel design was planned initially using the same random sample of 20 schools that were selected in the baseline. It was learned from the project that some of the schools selected in baseline were excluded later for the literacy intervention. Therefore, a valid panel sample of 20 schools was not possible for the longitudinal analysis from baseline to mid-term and endline. Although, a panel sample could be generated starting from mid-term to endline, but it would be challenging to obtain significant difference from mid-term to endline. The longitudinal analysis provides significant difference when the comparison is between the starting point (before intervention) to endpoint (after intervention), i.e. baseline to endline. Also, a sample of 20 control schools was proposed initially for the mid-term so that the Difference-in-Difference analysis could be done from midterm to endline from panel datasets to be able to detect true effect of the project intervention. However, the proposed sample of 20 control schools were excluded from the study design due to budget constraints. In this situation, the cross-sectional design was the only option that allowed gauging project intervention effects and the extent of changes (pre and post-tests) from baseline to midterm and endline for the project participating schools only.



It is noted that the proposed sample size of 68 schools for the indicator assessment is double what was considered in the baseline (34 schools). The rationale for this approach is that the larger school sample size ensures the inclusion of diversified groups in well-spread geographic areas. The proposed student sample size per school (10<sup>320</sup> students per school) is lower than the baseline sample (16 per school) to maintain an overall sample size (n=680) similar to the baseline sample size (n=544). The overall minimum required student sample size for the midterm was estimated using the following statistical formula and parameters:

$$\text{Required Sample Size} = D \left[ \frac{[(z_{\alpha} + z_{\beta})^2 * [P_1(1 - P_1) + P_2(1 - P_2)]]}{(P_2 - P_1)^2} \right]$$

Where:

D = Design effect for complex sample design = 2.0

Z<sub>α</sub> = Z value associated with desired significance level for confidence (95%, one-tailed)=1.645

Z<sub>β</sub> = Z value associated with desired significance level for power (80%, one-tailed)= 0.840

P<sub>1</sub> = estimated level of an indicator measured as a proportion at the time of the baseline = 50%<sup>321</sup>

P<sub>2</sub> = expected level of the indicator either at midterm (indicator target at the midterm), where (P<sub>2</sub> - P<sub>1</sub>) is the magnitude of change or difference from baseline to midterm that the sample is powered to detect 20% changes (10% points changes)= 60%

NR= non-response rate = 10%

The 17 schools from each stratum were selected separately using the Probability Proportional to the Size (PPS<sup>322</sup>) statistical sampling procedure. In the PPS sampling procedure, the “size” is referred to as the total number of students in a school. The student samples (n=10 students/school) were selected randomly from the list of students in grade 1 to grade 5 from the selected sample schools. The PPS sampling procedure was applied across all 17 project districts, and number of sample schools per district was selected proportional to the number of schools in a district.

A breakdown of the quantitative survey sample is presented below:

Group/Individual	Proposed for Midterm and Endline					Baseline	Remarks
	Project (Strata)						
	School Meals only (N=570)	School Meals and WASH only (N=47)	School Meals, WASH and Literacy (N=42)	School Meals and Literacy (N=48)	Total		
<b>Indicator Assessment</b>							
# of districts					17	17	All project districts
# of schools	17	17	17	17	68	34	All project districts

<sup>320</sup> A smaller number of student samples per school minimizes the level of intra-correlation and captures larger variations to detect the statistical significance of the changes from baseline or mid-term to endline.

<sup>321</sup> P attains maximum sample size when the initial proportion is 50%.

<sup>322</sup> In larger-sized schools (number of students) the chance that any single student will be selected was smaller than the students selected from the smaller-sized schools, but this is offset by the fact that larger-sized schools had a greater chance of being selected in the PPS procedure.

# of students (10/school)	170 <sup>323</sup>	170	170	170	680	544 (16/ school)	All project districts
# of parents (5/school)	85	85	85	85	340	170	All project districts
# of school surveys (1/school)	17	17	17	17	68	34	All project districts
<b>Literacy Assessment</b>							
<b>Cross-sectional school sample</b>					20 (17+3) <sup>324</sup>	20	Out of 90 project-supported schools selected in the baseline from Khammouane Province
# of students (10/school)					200	200	

Using the above sampling strategy, a sample frame of 68 schools was drawn. This was submitted to WFP for review, to ensure that all schools in the sample met the following criteria:

- The school was still open and operating.
- The school was accessible to visit (i.e. reachable via ground or air transportation).
- In the case for literacy assessment sample, the school saw literacy interventions.

WFP accepted the initial sample with no substitutions, confirming the above criteria for all 68 schools. The sites visited is presented in [Annex 10: Sites visited](#).

### **Qualitative Sampling strategy**

The qualitative sample was split into three main groups: (i) national and subnational stakeholders and staff, (ii) deep dives in 14 schools, (iii) sub-national government staff. Key informants were selected primarily based their knowledge of and relevance to the project and the evaluation (particularly regarding the EQs and lines of inquiry). The selection criteria also took into consideration the nature of key informants' involvement on the project (i.e. strategic stakeholders, operational stakeholders, supporting staff) and general availability for evaluation activities.

Select key informants were interviewed multiple times during the data collection and analysis phases, to discuss and validate emerging findings and conclusions. The breakdown per stakeholder groups is as follows:

**National and subnational stakeholders and staff.** A total of 21 key informants were interviewed from the following organizations/units:

- WFP Lao PDR Country Office
- WFP Regional Bureau Bangkok
- WFP Headquarters
- Catholic Relief Services
- National Government of Lao PDR

<sup>323</sup> Stratum sample size  $n_s=170$  is estimated to detect 20% points change with 95% confidence level and 80% statistical power for the indicator values at the stratum level.

<sup>324</sup> 17 schools from "Meals and Literacy" category and 3 randomly selected schools from the 17 sample schools selected for the category "Meals, WASH and Literacy".

**Deep dives.** Each deep dive school saw an additional 3 qualitative activities per school: 2 KIIs with school heads and teachers, and 1 FGD with VEDCs. Across the 14 deep dive schools, a total of 29 KIIs were conducted (11 F and 18 M). Across the 14 FGDs conducted, 67 participants were consulted (18 F, 49 M).

**Provincial Education and Sports Services (PESS) and District Education and Sports Bureau (DESB) FGDs.** The midterm also conducted FGDs with sub-national government offices at the PESS and DESB level. A total of 17 DESB FGDs (21F, 39M) and 11 PESS FGDs (11 F, 13 M) were held. 84 participants were consulted across these FGDs.

## DATA ANALYSIS

**Overview.** TANGO combined several analytical approaches to cover the evaluation design and specified data collection methods, namely semi-structured thematic literature review, qualitative iterative analysis, quantitative analysis (i.e. descriptive with statistical significance tests for the difference between baseline to midterm), and contribution analysis. The analysis was documented in consistent formats to facilitate easy access by all team members, enable systematic and efficient triangulation, and perform weighted analysis across sources. The various analytical approaches were sequenced to align with data collection timelines, with the intent to start analysis as soon as possible after data collection has started. The analysis was layered through real-time and structured coordination of findings and insights across the team. The team adopt a strategy of triangulation by examining the issues through various lenses and different perspectives, including data collected through the document review, baseline/mid-term surveys, KIIs and FGDs. This process of triangulation directly minimises potential measurement bias (such as participant or researcher bias) and ensures findings are valid and the evaluation is reliable. Key informants were re-interviewed across the analysis phase to validate emerging findings and conclusions.

**Quantitative analysis.** Quantitative data (indicator and literacy assessments) was collected on Android tablets using Open Data Kit (ODK) and Tangerine (RTI) data collection software. All questions were administered in Lao language. Paper versions of the tools had English and Lao languages, to facilitate quality control in the data review.

The national team provided all raw quantitative data to TANGO's quantitative team at HQ for analysis. All data was thoroughly reviewed before data analysis. This involved daily data uploads from the field and real-time review and feedback by TANGO quantitative analysts. The ODK data and quantitative tools were managed by TANGO directly. This process follows is in accordance with TANGO's well-established internal procedures and controls for data protection and quality assurance (see section below).

The literacy assessment data was statistically analysed to allow comparison with baseline survey findings. Quantitative literacy data was statistically powered to provide accurate point estimates of student literacy indicators. Primary quantitative data from the literacy assessment and the indicator assessment (namely the School and Student Survey) was be triangulated with project monitoring data and with qualitative results. It is important to note that the midterm tool has adjustments to the tool used at baseline; and while it covers the same domains, the tool was adapted with different pictures, reading passages, and other features.

**Qualitative, mixed-method analysis.** The main primary qualitative data that was used for the analysis are the evaluation team's summary notes from KIIs, FGDs, and small group meetings. These notes were shared regularly among team members for discussion and iterative qualitative analysis. The notes were structured using a review template that aligns with the topical outlines and facilitates the identification of emerging topics and themes. Team members applied a real-time analysis process through daily debriefs among the TANGO team that updates preliminary findings across qualitative sources every time new interview batches are added.

Semi-structured thematic analysis was applied to the literature review, which was be ongoing throughout most of the evaluation timeframe. Documents were reviewed with reference to the evaluation questions, thematic focus areas, and emerging hypotheses.

Contribution analysis was applied to infer the degree to which project actions have contributed to the perceived outcomes. Contribution analysis began once there was sufficient data saturation across the evaluation questions and themes and sufficient critical mass of findings to begin the conclusion-building phase.

**Datasets.** TANGO will submit the primary data and datasets as follows:

**Quantitative data:** Includes literacy assessment and indicator assessment (student, parent, and school surveys). TANGO will prepare and submit raw and clean STATA datasets and associated syntax files. The shared data will be stripped of personally identifiable information (PII) such as location, school/organization/committee name, name, and title/position/role of respondent.

**Qualitative data:** Includes FGD data only; the evaluation team will not provide KII data, to protect the anonymity of key informants. The Evaluation Team will prepare and submit summary notes of FGD, stripped of PII such as location, school/organization/committee name, name and title/position/role of respondent. Recorded audio recordings or transcripts of FGDs or KIIs will be provided to the CO.

## ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS, RISKS AND SAFEGUARDS

The evaluation team ensured the dignity of all evaluation participants by respected by engaging stakeholders in a way that honours their well-being and personal agency while being responsive to their sex, gender, race, language, country of origin, LGBTQ status, age, background, religion, ethnicity and ability, and to cultural, economic and physical environments.<sup>325</sup> The evaluation team ensured equitable participation and treatment of all evaluation participants and their opportunity to voice their perspectives. Where the evaluation involved the participation of members of vulnerable groups, evaluators complied with international and national legal codes governing respecting and protecting the rights of these groups (e.g., guidelines on researching and interviewing children and young people). All team members abided by the WFP Gender Policy 2022 and UNICEF's Procedure on Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation, Data Collection and Analysis 2021.

All interviewees were informed of the purpose and duration of the interview, how they were identified to participate in the interview, and of their rights. This included (but was not limited to): they may choose not to participate, choose not to answer certain questions, or end the interview at any time; and all information provided will be used to assess the project with no direct attribution to the interviewee in the reporting. All data collected was protective of children's rights. The data collection team obtained parental informed consent and students' assent prior to administrating the student survey and literacy assessment. If parents are unavailable, the school head will be asked to give their informed consent in addition to the students' assent. All consent was verbal and documented in the interview software. Informed consent relating to children was compliant with existing national legislation and took into account competencies, cultural norms, agency and autonomy. The data collection team had contingencies to report issues of suspected child abuse to the WFP Hotline immediately and inform the WFP Child Protection team as protocol requires.

Photographs were not taken during the baseline study; however, they were taken during midterm school survey to help visualize the range of project activities and infrastructure. The evaluation team made all reasonable effort to ensure neither children nor adults are captured in photographs.

During the inception phase, the evaluation team confirmed with WFP that no organizational ethical review process is required for this midterm evaluation. All ethical and safeguarding issues described above was be monitored throughout the evaluation process.

The evaluation team does not have any potential or perceived conflict of interest to disclose; all evaluation team have submitted a Conflict-of-Interest declaration to the WFP evaluation manager.

Ethical considerations, risks and safeguards, as identified in the Inception Report		
Ethical issues	Risks	Safeguards / Mitigation
Sample is inclusive and fair in representing all members of participant groups and stakeholders. Safe participation of girls, and of boys	Certain locations are not included	The sample schools were selected randomly.
	Interviews do not reflect views of women, excluded groups, or other stakeholders	Interviewers ensured representation of all beneficiaries; focus groups will be of same sex with same-sex interviewer to the extent possible; a range of stakeholders will be interviewed

<sup>325</sup> UNEG. 2020. [Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation](#).

Ethical considerations, risks and safeguards, as identified in the Inception Report		
Ethical issues	Risks	Safeguards / Mitigation
	Respondent bias	The ET solicited perspectives from a range of stakeholders and take anticipated biases into account during analysis; The methodology relied on a cross-section of information sources (e.g., stakeholder groups, beneficiaries) and used a mixed methods approach to ensure triangulation of information through a variety of means
Participants give voluntary, informed consent before interviews Deriving appropriate and accurate responses from children	Participants do not know purpose of survey or participate unwillingly Responses from children/students are not accurately recorded or represented	Survey purpose, confidentiality and voluntary participation explained prior to beginning interviews. Consent was obtained before conducting any data collection activity. Interviewers of girls and boys were of same sex
Data collection is culturally sensitive and does not harm participants	Inappropriate behavior or intimidation of or toward girls or boys Conduct of interviewers or content of question may be upsetting or offensive to participants	Field data collected by Lao teams who are sensitive to cultural norms Data collection tools have been reviewed carefully for wording that is appropriate for and understandable to target students..
Data storage is secure	Unauthorized parties get access to data	Data are stored on secure TANGO servers and deleted from tablets after uploading to server
Participant confidentiality is maintained	Individuals can be identified	All personally identifying information were be removed from deliverables
-	Limited datasets Availability and quality of gender-disaggregated data, including data related to gender-specific outcomes	ET conducted evaluability assessment to determine the nature and quality of available data. ET was in close and regular communication with WFP CO for document and information requests as needed by the evaluation.
-	Issues related to comparability of datasets from baseline	CO/ET decided to accept baseline values for the purposes of the midterm and reserve a recalculation of baseline values at endline. It is highlighted in-text where ET has concerns with comparing select midterm datapoints with baseline values.
-	Data only available in Lao language	The ET includes senior native Lao speakers, who provided accurate and reliable translation of documents, when required.
-	High government staff turnover – limited institutional memory	The KII list included stakeholders most knowledgeable of the current project. On permission from CO, the ET was able to interview previous key staff/stakeholders, providing valuable institutional insight.
-	Generalizability of findings	Specific limitations of the project are noted in the ER and presentations of findings. It is highlighted in-text the important considerations for interpreting

Ethical considerations, risks and safeguards, as identified in the Inception Report		
Ethical issues	Risks	Safeguards / Mitigation
		findings/analysis/recommendations in the appropriate context. ET conducted regular check-ins to with CO/evaluation manager to ensure the midterm remained in scope.
	Budget and time constraints	The evaluation design was adjusted in the inception phase, in accordance to resources available (i.e. excluding a control group at midterm). The ET worked with the CO to clarify expectations of all parties on the main evaluation questions and the extent to which these can feasibly be investigated given existing data/ information and the time and resources available for collecting and analysing this and new information.

## TANGO QUALITY ASSURANCE MEASURES

TANGO and LSR worked together across the entire span of the evaluation process. TANGO maintained responsibility for the deliverables and all communication with WFP, while LSR provided national field data collection and insight around the Laotian context and school feeding programming in the country. Both TANGO and LSR have notable and extensive experience conducting school-feeding evaluations for WFP.

Quality control begins with an effective and comprehensive orientation and training of all team members. TANGO delivered a Training of Trainers (ToT) for LSR senior researchers and supervisors to review evaluation protocols and procedures and provide in-depth training on topical outlines, attention to gender issues, photo evidence as part of observation, use of structured checklists, and other relevant topics. All TANGO trainings cover required technical, logistical, and leadership aspects. This includes facilitator and enumerator roles and responsibilities, rules, behaviours and ethics, respondent selection, use of field control sheets, and a detailed review of the survey tool including mock interviews/role playing.

During analysis, the evaluation utilised the process triangulation (referenced in [Data analysis](#) in the main body of the report) minimise potential participant and researcher bias, and ensure credibility, reliability and validity of evaluation findings and conclusions.

Quality control also included data storage, backup and server upload procedures on a daily basis. Data was be uploaded to TANGO secure servers every day during data collection (see data protection protocol in the box below). TANGO reviewed the data and provided feedback on data quality and survey progress and highlight specific issues to be discussed with field teams. There were daily check-ins between field data collectors and the TANGO team leader during data collection for timely analysis and troubleshooting. TANGO has found these procedures to be highly effective and result in high-quality data when implemented during previous WFP evaluations.

<b>TANGO International Data Collection Protocol</b>
<b>Mid-Term Evaluation of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) McGovern-Dole Grant for the World Food Programme (WFP) School Feeding Programme in Lao PDR from 2020 to 2025</b>
TANGO maintains daily backup copies of all qualitative and quantitative data in a secure physical location, on site at TANGO headquarters, as well as on secure cloud servers that are only accessible to TANGO data managers. TANGO assignments that employ tablets for data collection use CAPI software. Data are uploaded daily from the field to secure cloud servers in an encrypted format. The downloadable ODK software TANGO uses does not have any mechanisms that might allow ODK to access or control TANGO's devices or systems. TANGO contracts with an IT specialist who follows a protocol to ensure that TANGO IT systems (hardware and software) are equipped with current anti-virus, malware, and other relevant tools

to ensure the maintenance and security of the data and information that TANGO collects and produces in the course of business.

During the inception phase, the evaluation team and WFP staff communicated regularly for planning, logistics, document and information sharing and progress reporting. This involved regular email communication and remote meetings, and an in-person inception mission. As data collection progresses, regular emailing and remote meetings may also serve as a forum for validating preliminary findings, specifically emerging themes and/or issues requiring clarification.

TANGO was in regular contact with the EM data collection commenced. Calls will serve as progress updates and an opportunity to quickly resolve any fieldwork concerns. All meetings were documented via a follow-up email to close communication loops with colleagues who could not attend.

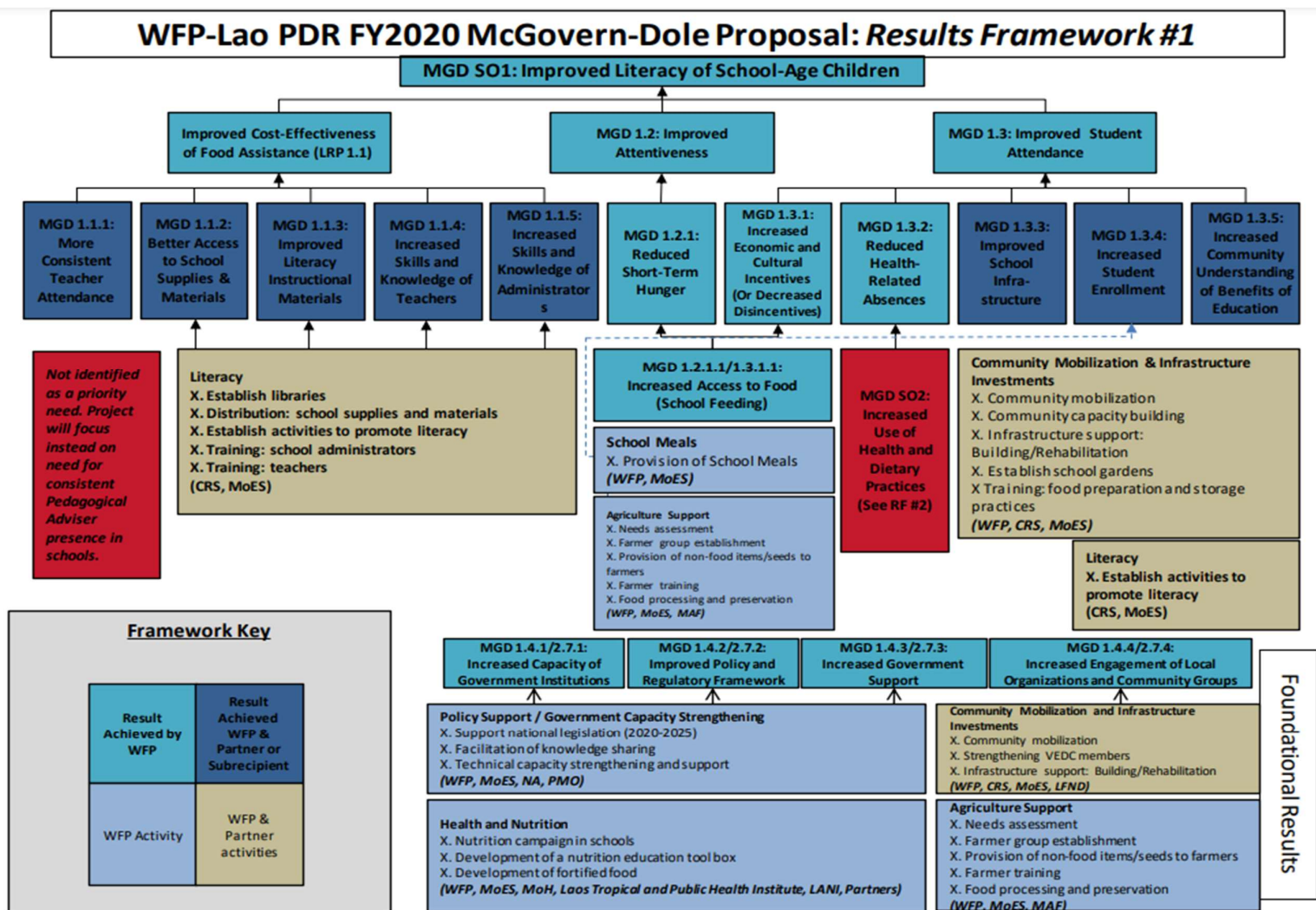
The international team members concluded data collection with two remote debrief session; one between TANGO and the EM directly after completing data collection to provide an overall summary and a second more structured debrief session with wider colleagues (including members of the ERG, CO and RBB).

After the submission of the draft midterm evaluation report, TANGO will work with the evaluation manager to organize a validation session with WFP and selected external stakeholders to be determined. The purpose of the workshop is to present the findings, insights, and analysis in an accessible forum that encourages dialogue between the evaluation team and internal and external stakeholders, with a view to validate results and discuss the implications of the conclusions for future project design and strategy.

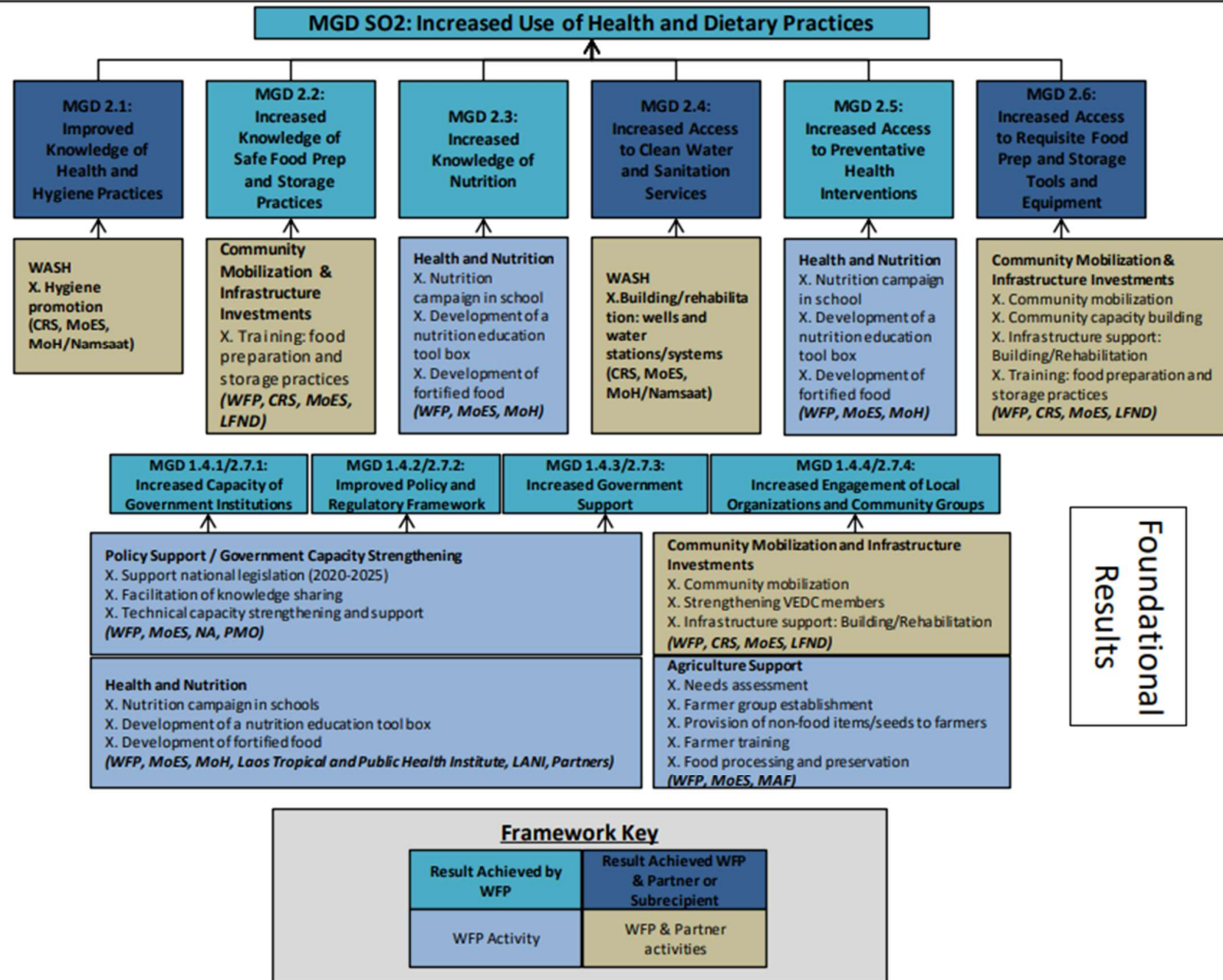
TANGO understands and will prepare for the necessary rounds of review and revision of report drafts by the CO, DEQS in line with DEQAS, the ERG, the School-Based Programmes unit in Rome, and USDA. The timeline in [Annex 2](#) was shared with the evaluation manager early in the inception phase and reflects adjustments per WFP input to date. TANGO will ensure phase timelines and submission deadlines are met; if unforeseen circumstances raise a need for timeline adjustments, whether on the side of TANGO or WFP or due to changes in the operational context, the evaluation team leader and the evaluation manager will discuss the matter in a timely fashion and agree on appropriate adjustments.



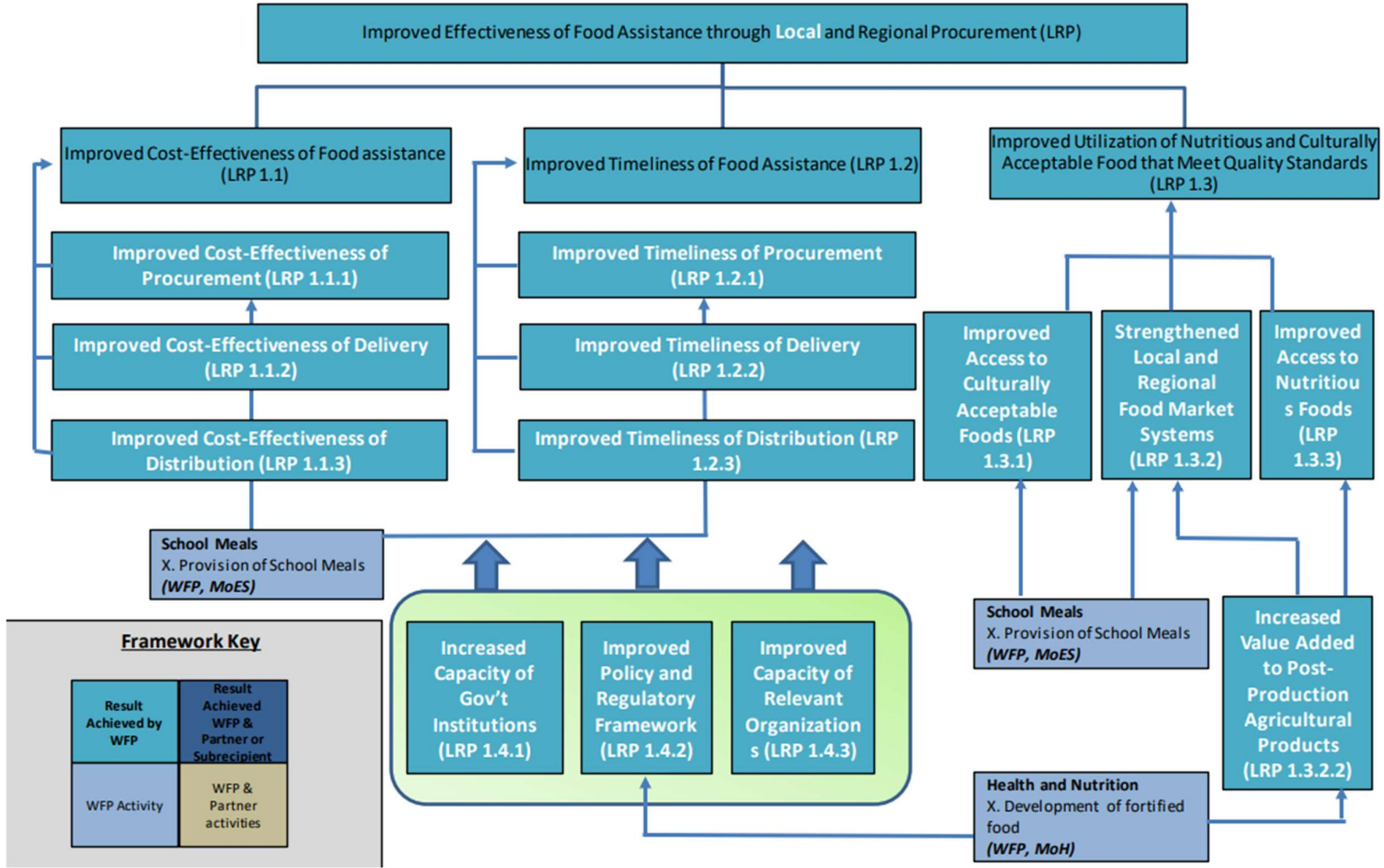
# Annex 5: Results Framework



# WFP-Lao PDR FY2020 McGovern-Dole Proposal: *Results Framework #2*



# WFP-Lao PDR FY2020 McGovern-Dole Proposal: Results Framework #3 (LRP)



## THEORY OF CHANGE

The project's causal pathway for SOs 1 and 2 considers that **if** children have access to high-quality learning material for extra practice in school and at home; **if** teachers regularly apply methods of formative literacy assessment and remedial instruction in classroom; **if** district staff provide regular coaching and mentoring to early-grade teachers; **if** schools have knowledge and infrastructure that contribute to a healthier environment; **if** children have knowledge of and access to diversified and nutritious food; **if** schools and communities have knowledge of nutrition; **if** children have access to preventative health interventions; **if** communities are engaged in and are aware of the benefits of education; **then** schools will witness improved quality of literacy instruction, student attentiveness, student attendance and health and dietary outcomes **because** experience by school feeding partners in Laos indicates that a comprehensive package of education interventions centered around school meals enables schools to promote regular participation of children in education activities.

## Annex 6: Performance Indicators Overview

USDA Standard Indicator Number	Results Framework	Performance Indicator	Disaggregation	How results/ progress is monitored	Baseline Source	Baseline Survey / Question No.	Existence of monitoring data (as of Semi-Annual Apr-Sep 23)	Data source for MTE	Responsibility for MTE data collection / providing data
<b>MGD Standard 1</b>	MGD SO 1	Percent of students who, by the end of two grades of primary schooling, demonstrate that they can read and understand the meaning of grade level text	Total Female; Male	Literacy assessment at baseline, mid-line, end-line.	Primary Survey	Literacy Assessment -Children: Module: Comprehension passage / Red Ant Family	Values at baseline exist	MTE Literacy Assessment	TANGO
<b>MGD Standard 2</b>	MGD 1.3	Average student attendance rate in USDA supported classrooms/schools	Total Female; Male	Attendance data through LSM app	Secondary data, Primary Survey	IDI – School Heads / Question 26	Values exist but LSM app need updating	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP
<b>MGD Standard 3</b>	MGD 1.1.2	Number of teaching and learning materials provided as a result of USDA assistance	N/A	CRS distribution reports	Monitoring Data	-	Values exist	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP / CRS
<b>MGD Standard 4</b>	MGD 1.1	Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants in target schools who demonstrate use of new and quality teaching techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance	Total Female; Male	Literacy Techniques Observation Tool	Monitoring Data, Primary (Qualitative)	IDI – Teachers / Question 17-19	Values are 0	Indicator will be collected in Oct 23 – no data in latest report	WFP
	MGD 1.1.4			Literacy Techniques Observation Tool			Values are 0		

USDA Standard Indicator Number	Results Framework	Performance Indicator	Disaggregation	How results/ progress is monitored	Baseline Source	Baseline Survey / Question No.	Existence of monitoring data (as of Semi-Annual Apr-Sep 23)	Data source for MTE	Responsibility for MTE data collection / providing data
<b>MGD Standard 5</b>	MGD 1.1.4	Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants trained or certified as a result of USDA assistance	Total Female; Male	Training Tracking Database / training sign-in sheet	Monitoring Data	-	Values exist	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP
<b>MGD Standard 6</b>	MGD 1.1.5	Number of school administrators and officials in target schools who demonstrate use of new techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance	Total Female; Male	School visits by CRS	Monitoring Data, Primary (Qualitative)	IDI – School Heads / Question 15-16	Values are 0	Indicator will be collected in Oct 23 – no data in latest report	WFP / CRS
<b>MGD Standard 7</b>	MGD 1.1.5	Number of school administrators and officials trained or certified as a result of USDA assistance	Total Female; Male	Training Tracking Database / training sign-in sheet	Monitoring Data	-	Values exist	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP / CRS
<b>MGD Standard 8</b>	MGD 1.3.3	Number of educational facilities (i.e. school buildings, classrooms, improved water sources, and latrines) rehabilitated/constructed as a result of USDA assistance	Total Classrooms; Kitchens/Cook Areas; Improved Water Sources; Other: Dining rooms; Other: School storage; Other: Hand washing stations	Activity Progress reports – FO/DESB	Monitoring Data	-	Values exist but no targets for classrooms, latrines	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP / CRS
	MGD 2.4								
	MGD 2.6								



USDA Standard Indicator Number	Results Framework	Performance Indicator	Disaggregation	How results/ progress is monitored	Baseline Source	Baseline Survey / Question No.	Existence of monitoring data (as of Semi-Annual Apr-Sep 23)	Data source for MTE	Responsibility for MTE data collection / providing data
<b>MGD Standard 9</b>	MGD 1.3.4	Number of students enrolled in school receiving USDA assistance	Total Pre-Primary Female; Pre-Primary Male; Primary Female; Primary Male; Secondary Female; Secondary Male	Education Management Information System – MoES	Monitoring Data	-	Values exist	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP
<b>MGD Standard 10</b>	MGD 1.4.1	Number of policies, regulations, or administrative procedures in each of the following stages of development as a result of USDA assistance	Total Education (Stage 1-5); Health (Stage 1-5)	Meeting Minutes	Secondary Data, Monitoring Data	-	Values exist	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP
	MGD 1.4.2								
	MGD 2.7.2								
<b>MGD Standard 11</b>	MGD 1.4.3	Value of new USG commitments, and new public and private sector investments leveraged by USDA to support food security and nutrition	Total (in USD) Host Government; Other Public Sector; Private Sector; New USG Commitment	Internal records	Monitoring Data, Semi-Annual Reports, Progress Reports	-	Values exist	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP
	MGD 1.4.4								
<b>MGD Standard 13</b>	MGD 1.4.4	Number of Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) or similar “school” governance structures supported as a result of USDA assistance	N/A	Education Management Information System – MoES School Meals App	Monitoring Data	-	Values exist	Data provided via monitoring reports.	WFP
<b>MGD Standard 14</b>	MGD 1.2.1.1	Quantity of take-home rations provided (in metric tons) as a result of USDA assistance	Commodity Type (rice)	Distribution Report	Monitoring Data	-	Values Exist	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP



USDA Standard Indicator Number	Results Framework	Performance Indicator	Disaggregation	How results/ progress is monitored	Baseline Source	Baseline Survey / Question No.	Existence of monitoring data (as of Semi-Annual Apr-Sep 23)	Data source for MTE	Responsibility for MTE data collection / providing data
<b>MGD Standard 15</b>	MGD 1.2.1.1	Number of individuals receiving take-home rations as a result of USDA assistance	Total New, Other, Female; Continuing, Other, Female; New, Other, Male; Continuing, Other, Male; New, Pregnant and Lactating Women; Continuing, Pregnant and Lactating Women; New, Other; Continuing, Other	Distribution Report	Monitoring Data	-	-	-	WFP
<b>MGD Standard 16</b>	MGD 1.2.1.1	Number of daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) provided to school-age children as a result of USDA assistance	Lunch	Education Management Information System – MoES	Monitoring Data	-	Values exist	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP

USDA Standard Indicator Number	Results Framework	Performance Indicator	Disaggregation	How results/ progress is monitored	Baseline Source	Baseline Survey / Question No.	Existence of monitoring data (as of Semi-Annual Apr-Sep 23)	Data source for MTE	Responsibility for MTE data collection / providing data
<b>MGD Standard 17</b>	MGD 1.2.1	Number of school-age children receiving daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) as a result of USDA assistance	Total New, Female; Continuing, Female; New, Male; Continuing, Male	Education Management Information System – MoES School Meals App	Monitoring Data	-	Values exist	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP
	MGD 1.2.1.1			Education Management Information System – MoES School Meals App			Values exist		
<b>MGD Standard 18</b>	MGD 1.2.1.1	Number of social assistance beneficiaries participating in productive safety nets as a result of USDA assistance	Total Community Assets; Household Assets; Human Assets/Capital, Female, New; Human Assets/Capital, Female, Continuing; Human Assets/Capital, Male, New; Human Assets/Capital, Male, Continuing	Education Management Information System – MoES	Progress Reports	-	Values exist	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP
	MGD 1.3.1.1								
	MGD 2.5								
<b>MGD Standard 19</b>	MGD SO 2	Number of individuals who demonstrate use of new child health and nutrition practices as a result of USDA assistance	Total Female; Male	Education Management Information System – MoES School Meals App Distribution Reports	Progress Reports	-	Values exist	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP
<b>MGD Standard 20</b>	MGD SO 2	Number of individuals who demonstrate use of new safe food preparation and storage	Total Female; Male	Education Management	Progress Reports	-	Values exist	Data provided via	WFP

USDA Standard Indicator Number	Results Framework	Performance Indicator	Disaggregation	How results/ progress is monitored	Baseline Source	Baseline Survey / Question No.	Existence of monitoring data (as of Semi-Annual Apr-Sep 23)	Data source for MTE	Responsibility for MTE data collection / providing data
		practices as a result of USDA assistance		Information System – MoES				monitoring reports	
<b>MGD Standard 22</b>	MGD 2.2	Number of individuals trained in safe food preparation and storage as a result of USDA assistance	Total Female; Male	Project activity report	Monitoring Data, Progress Reports	-	Values exist	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP
<b>MGD Standard 23</b>	MGD 2.3	Number of individuals trained in child health and nutrition as a result of USDA assistance	Total Female; Male	Project activity report	Monitoring Data, Progress Reports	-	Values exist	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP
<b>MGD Standard 27</b>	MGD 2.4	Number of schools using an improved water source	N/A	Education Management Information System – MoES	Monitoring Data, Progress Reports	-	Values exist	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP / CRS
<b>MGD Standard 30</b>		Number of individuals participating in USDA food security programs	Total Female; Male	Project activity report	Monitoring Data, Progress Reports	-	Values exist	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP
<b>MGD Standard 31</b>		Number of individuals benefiting indirectly from USDA-funded interventions	N/A	Education Management Information System – MoES	Monitoring Data, Progress Reports	-	Values exist	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP
<b>MGD Standard 32</b>	MGD SO 1	Number of schools reached as a result of USDA assistance	N/A	Education Management Information System – MoES	Monitoring Data, Progress Reports	-	Values exist	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP
	MGD SO 2								

USDA Standard Indicator Number	Results Framework	Performance Indicator	Disaggregation	How results/ progress is monitored	Baseline Source	Baseline Survey / Question No.	Existence of monitoring data (as of Semi-Annual Apr-Sep 23)	Data source for MTE	Responsibility for MTE data collection / providing data
<b>LRP Indicator 1</b>	LRP 1.3	Number of individuals participating in USDA food security programs that include an LRP component	Total (age: 5 – 10 yrs) Female Male	Education Management Information System – MoES Project Activity Report	Monitoring Data, Progress Reports	-	Values exist	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP
<b>LRP Indicator 6</b>	LRP 1.3.2	Quantity of commodity procured (MT) as a result of USDA assistance (by commodity and source country)	Fortified oil (MT), Country of Origin: Malaysia	Logistics Execution Supportive System (LESS)	Monitoring Data	-	Values exist	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP
			Canned fish (MT) Country of Origin: Thailand	Logistics Execution Supportive System (LESS)	Monitoring Data	-	Values exist	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP
			Fortified rice (MT) Country of Origin: Lao PDR	Logistics Execution Supportive System	Monitoring Data	-	Values exist	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP
<b>LRP Indicator 10</b>	LRP 1.4.2	Number of policies, regulations, or administrative procedures in each of the following stages of development as a result of USDA assistance	Stage and type of policy	WFP meeting minutes	Secondary Data, Monitoring Data, Semi-Annual Reports, Progress Reports	-	Values exist	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP

USDA Standard Indicator Number	Results Framework	Performance Indicator	Disaggregation	How results/ progress is monitored	Baseline Source	Baseline Survey / Question No.	Existence of monitoring data (as of Semi-Annual Apr-Sep 23)	Data source for MTE	Responsibility for MTE data collection / providing data
<b>LRP Indicator 11</b>	MGD 1.4.4/2.7.4	Number of individuals who have received short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security training as a result of USDA assistance	Total (Type: 3-5-day workshop) Female Male	Activity reports	Monitoring Data, Progress Reports	-	Values are 0	Activities will begin 2023-2024 school year	WFP
<b>LRP Indicator 12</b>	MGD 1.2.1.1/1.3.1.1	Number of individuals in the agriculture system who have applied improved management practices or technologies with USDA assistance	Total (small-holder farmer; age: 18 - 60 yrs) Female Male	Follow-up and monitoring records	Monitoring Data, Progress Reports	-	Values are 0	Activities will begin 2023-2024 school year	WFP
<b>LRP Indicator 16</b>	LRP 1	Number of schools reached with LRP activities as a result of USDA assistance	N/A	Education Management Information System – MoES	Monitoring Data, Progress Reports	-	Values exist	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP
<b>CUSTOM INDICATORS</b>									
<b>1</b>	MGD SO1	Average number of food items recalled by students as measured by the CRS expressive vocabulary test.	G1	Baseline Data MTE Survey	Progress Reports, Primary Survey	Literacy Assessment -Children / Module: Expressive Vocabulary	-	MTE Literacy Assessment	TANGO
		Average number of animals recalled by students as measured by the CRS expressive vocabulary test.	G2	Baseline Data MTE Survey	Progress Reports, Primary Survey	Literacy Assessment -Children / Module: Expressive Vocabulary	-	MTE Literacy Assessment	TANGO
<b>2</b>	MGD 1.2.1.1	% of daily key micronutrient requirements met through school meals	N/A	MoDA	Monitoring Data, Progress Reports	-	Values exist	Performance Indicator in results framework reads:	WFP

USDA Standard Indicator Number	Results Framework	Performance Indicator	Disaggregation	How results/ progress is monitored	Baseline Source	Baseline Survey / Question No.	Existence of monitoring data (as of Semi-Annual Apr-Sep 23)	Data source for MTE	Responsibility for MTE data collection / providing data
								Feeding days as percentage of total school days	
3	MGD 1.2.1.1	Number of school gardens established and functioning	N/A	Education Management Information System	Monitoring Data, Progress Reports	-	Values exist	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP
	MGD 1.3.1.1								
4	MGD SO 2	The percentage of school days where four food groups were provided	N/A	Education Management Information System	Monitoring Data, Progress Reports	-	Values exist	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP
5	MGD 1.3.5	Percentage of smallholder farmers, including women, supported to produce quality food surplus and contributed to school meals programs	N/A	School Observation Survey	Progress Reports, Primary (Qualitative)	IDI – Farmers / Question 16-20	-	Data provided via MTE survey -	TANGO
	MGD SO 2								
6	MGD SO1	Percent of students at the end of two grades of primary schools that show proficiency reading familiar words.	Total Female Male	Baseline Data MTE Survey	Primary Survey	Literacy Assessment -Children / Module: Most Used Words	-	MTE Literacy Assessment	TANGO
7	MGD 2.1	Number of individuals trained in improved WASH practices as a result of USDA assistance.	Total Female Male	Training tracking database	Monitoring Data, Progress Reports	-	-	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP
8	MGD 2.1	Number of schools where principals report improved WASH practices as a result of USDA assistance.	N/A	Principal interview form	Monitoring Data, Progress Reports	-	Values are 0	-	WFP

USDA Standard Indicator Number	Results Framework	Performance Indicator	Disaggregation	How results/ progress is monitored	Baseline Source	Baseline Survey / Question No.	Existence of monitoring data (as of Semi-Annual Apr-Sep 23)	Data source for MTE	Responsibility for MTE data collection / providing data
9	MGD 1.1.3	Number of schools with improved literacy instructional materials as a result of USDA assistance	N/A	Distribution records	Monitoring Data, Progress Reports	-	-	Data provided via monitoring reports	WFP / CRS
10	MGD 2.3	Number of individuals reached in child health and nutrition campaign as a result of USDA assistance	Total Female Male	Project activity report	Monitoring Data, Progress Reports	-	Values are 0	-	WFP
11	MGD 1.2	% of schools where teachers report higher concentration/attention by children during the day	Total Female Male	Baseline Data MTE Survey	Primary Survey	IDI – School Head / Question 24	Baseline values exist	MTE School Survey	TANGO
12	MGD 1.3.1	Drop-out rate	Total Female Male	Baseline Data MTE Survey	Primary Survey	IDI – School Head / Question 25	Baseline values exist	MTE School Survey	TANGO
	MGD 1.3.5								



USDA Standard Indicator Number	Results Framework	Performance Indicator	Disaggregation	How results/ progress is monitored	Baseline Source	Baseline Survey / Question No.	Existence of monitoring data (as of Semi-Annual Apr-Sep 23)	Data source for MTE	Responsibility for MTE data collection / providing data	
13	MGD 2.3	Proportion of children who have knowledge, believe in and practice the consumption of a diverse and healthy diet, including fruit and vegetable consumption and avoiding unhealthy food and beverages	Knowledge	Total Female Male	-	Primary Survey	Children Survey / Question 17.6	Baseline targets exist	MTE Child Survey	TANGO
			Attitudes	Total Female Male		Primary Survey	Children Survey / Question 18.1-18.5		MTE Child Survey	
			Behaviours	Total Female Male		Primary Survey	Children Survey / Question 17.7		MTE Child Survey	
14	MDG 2.1	Proportion of children who have knowledge, believe in and practice washing hands before and after meals and washing hands before and after going to the toilet	Knowledge	Total Female Male	-	Primary Survey	Children Survey / Question 32, 34	Baseline targets exist	MTE Child Survey	TANGO
			Attitudes	Total Female Male		Primary Survey	Children Survey / Question 30, 31		MTE Child Survey	
			Behaviours	Total Female Male		Primary Survey	Children Survey / Question 29, 35		MTE Child Survey	
15	MGD 2.3	Proportion of teachers who have knowledge, believe in and practice the importance of a diverse and healthy diet, and	Knowledge	Total Female Male		Primary Survey (Qualitative)	IDI – Teachers / Question 14a, 14c, 15	Baseline targets exist	MTE School Survey	TANGO

USDA Standard Indicator Number	Results Framework	Performance Indicator	Disaggregation	How results/ progress is monitored	Baseline Source	Baseline Survey / Question No.	Existence of monitoring data (as of Semi-Annual Apr-Sep 23)	Data source for MTE	Responsibility for MTE data collection / providing data	
		avoiding unhealthy foods and beverages, for child growth and development and the impact on child well-being	Attitudes	Total Female Male		Primary Survey (Qualitative)		MTE School Survey		
			Behaviours	Total Female Male		Primary Survey (Qualitative)		IDI - Teachers / Question 14b		MTE School Survey
16	MGD 1.3.1	Proportion of caregivers who have knowledge, believe in and practice the provision of a diverse and healthy diet, and avoiding unhealthy foods and beverages, for the growth and development of their children	Knowledge	Total Female Male		Primary Survey		MTE Parent Survey	TANGO	
			Attitudes	Total Female Male		Primary Survey		Parents Survey / Question 23		MTE Parent Survey
			Behaviours	Total Female Male		Primary Survey		Parents Survey / Question 24		MTE Parent Survey
			Behaviours	Total Female Male		Primary Survey	Parents Survey / Question 21	MTE Parent Survey		

## Annex 7: Summary of Project Activities

Activity and Objective	Implementer(s)	Location	Partners
1 <b>School Meals:</b> To increase enrolment, reduce dropout, alleviate short-term hunger and improve student learning, concentration and access to nutritious food by providing on-site, hot school meals.	WFP, CRS, MoES	All project districts	
2 <b>Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH):</b> To increase the use of healthy practices by providing increased access to clean water and improved knowledge on hygiene practices.	CRS	130 schools across Khammouane, Savannakhet and Champasak Province	MoES, NamSaat
3 <b>Community Mobilization and Infrastructure Investments:</b> To ensure communities are fully engaged and equipped with adequate infrastructure, management and problem-solving skills to gradually take ownership of the SFP	WFP, CRS, MoES	All project districts	MoH, Lao Women’s Union, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao Front for National Development
4 <b>Literacy:</b> To improve students’ emergent literacy skills in the early primary years through increased access to learning materials, targeted teacher support, and community engagement.	CRS	90 schools in Khammouane Province	MoES
5 <b>Agriculture Support:</b> To enhance capacities of farmers in producing sufficient nutritious foods for the School Feeding Program, while also improving household food security and nutrition	WFP, MoES	All project districts	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
6 <b>Policy Support &amp; Government Capacity Strengthening:</b> To strengthen the capacity of the Government in delivering the school feeding program, with a view to transitioning to national ownership.	WFP, MoES	National	
7 <b>Health and Nutrition:</b> To promote the adoption of healthy dietary and hygiene practice through social behaviour change communication (SBCC)	WFP	All project districts	MoES, MoH (National Nutrition Center)

## Annex 8: Indicator Progress Against Targets

USDA Standard Indicator	Results Framework	Performance Indicator	Disagg.	How results/ progress is monitored	Baseline	FY 22 - FY 23			At midterm (Actual)	LOP Target
						Actual (Oct 21- Sept 22)	Actual (Oct 22 - Sept 23)	Target vs Actual		
MGD Standard 1	MGD SO 1	Percent of students who, by the end of two grades of primary schooling, demonstrate that they can read and understand the meaning of grade level text	Total	Literacy assessment at baseline, mid-line, end-line.	3%	No data	No data	No data	2.1%	11%
			Female		6%	No data	No data	No data	0%	11%
			Male		1%	No data	No data	No data	3.8%	11%
MGD Standard 2	MGD 1.3	Average student attendance rate in USDA supported classrooms/schools	Total	Attendance data through LSM app	95.09%	98.66%	No data	No data	73.5%	99%
			Female		95.52%	No data	No data	No data	-	99%
			Male		94.66%	No data	No data	No data	-	99%
MGD Standard 3	MGD 1.1.2	Number of teaching and learning materials provided as a result of USDA assistance	N/A	CRS distribution reports	0	11,787	28,901	207.1%	40,688	19,647
MGD Standard 4	MGD 1.1	Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants in target schools who demonstrate use of new and quality teaching techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance	Total	Literacy Techniques Observation Tool	0	-	78	59.1%	78	132
			Female		0	-	32	40.51%	32	79
	MGD 1.1.4		Male		0	-	46	86.8%	46	53
MGD Standard 5	MGD 1.1.4	Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants trained or certified as a result of USDA assistance	Total	Training Tracking Database / training sign-in sheet	0	195	275	267.1%	470	176
			Female		0	86	128	198.2%	214	108
			Male		0	109	147	355.6%	256	72
MGD Standard 6	MGD 1.1.5	Number of school administrators and officials in target schools who demonstrate use of new	Total	School visits by CRS	0	-	27	270%	27	10
			Female		0	-	5	83.3%	5	6
			Male		0	-	22	550%	22	4

		techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance								
<b>MGD Standard 7</b>	MGD 1.1.5	Number of school administrators and officials trained or certified as a result of USDA assistance	Total	Training Tracking Database / training sign-in sheet	0	12	13	208.3%	25	12
			Female		0	5	8	216.67%	13	6
			Male		0	7	5	200%	12	6
<b>MGD Standard 8</b>	MGD 1.3.3	Number of educational facilities (i.e. school buildings, classrooms, improved water sources, and latrines) rehabilitated/constructed as a result of USDA assistance	Total	Activity Progress reports – FO/DESB	0	2,052	343	70.1%	2,395	3,419
			Classrooms		0	0	0	0	0	-
			Kitchens/Cook areas		0	636	343	138.5%	979	707
	Improved Water Source		0		31	147	25.6%	178	696	
	Latrines		0		0	0	0	0		
	Dining Room		0		320	102	59.7%	422	707	
	School Storage		0		703	174	124.0%	877	707	
MGD 2.4		Hand Washing Station	0	325	218	77.4%	543	702		
MGD 2.6										
<b>MGD Standard 9</b>	MGD 1.3.4	Number of students enrolled in school receiving USDA assistance	Total	Education Management Information System – MoES	64,156	66,998	61,772	-	61,772	102,650
			Pre-Primary Female		2,099	5,143	5,362	-	5,362	3,358
			Pre-Primary Male		2,120	5,092	5,483	-	5,483	3,392
			Primary Female		29,012	28,126	24,824	-	24,824	46,419
			Primary Male		30,925	28,637	26,104	-	26,104	49,480
<b>MGD Standard 10</b>	MGD 1.4.1	Number of policies, regulations, or administrative procedures in each of the following stages of development as a result of USDA assistance	Total	Meeting Minutes	0	1	4	55.6%	5	9
	MGD 1.4.2		Education (Stage 1-5)		0	1	4	55.6%	5	9
	MGD 2.72		Health (Stage 1-5)		0	0	0	-	0	0

<b>MGD Standard 11</b>	MGD 1.4.3	Value of new USG commitments, and new public and private sector investments leveraged by USDA to support food security and nutrition	Total (in USD) Host Government; Other Public Sector; Private Sector; New USG Commitment	Internal records	Total:	\$10,800	\$10,800	19.6%	\$10,800	\$55,000
	MGD 1.4.4				Host Government:	\$10,800	\$10,800	19.6%	\$10,800	\$55,000
<b>MGD Standard 13</b>	MGD 1.4.4	Number of Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) or similar “school” governance structures supported as a result of USDA assistance	N/A	Education Management Information System – MoES School Meals App	0	707	705	199.7%	1,412	707
<b>MGD Standard 14</b>	MGD 1.2.1.1	Quantity of take-home rations provided (in metric tons) as a result of USDA assistance	Commodity Type (rice)	Distribution Report	0	117	375.05	60.0%	492.05	820
<b>MGD Standard 15</b>	MGD 1.2.1.1	Number of individuals receiving take-home rations as a result of USDA assistance	Total	Distribution Report	0	2,342	7,346	413.7%	9,688	2,342
			New, Other, Female		0	1,706	20	106.3%	1,726	1,624
			Continuing, Other, Female				3,675	226.3%	3,675	1,624
			New, Other, Male		0	636	11	90.1%	647	718
			Continuing, Other, Male				3,640	506.9%	3,640	718
<b>MGD Standard 16</b>	MGD 1.2.1.1	Number of daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) provided to school-age children as a result of USDA assistance	Secondary Female	Education Management Information System – MoES	0	1,502,095	2,411,928	27.3%	8,339,220	44,909,200
	MGD 1.2.1	Number of school-age children receiving daily	Total	Education Management	0	66,998	61,772	125.4%	128,770	102,650

<b>MGD Standard 17</b>	MGD 1.2.1.1	school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) as a result of USDA assistance	New, Female	Information System – MoES School Meals App	0	33,269	4,528	75.9%	37,797	49,778
			Continuing, Female	Education Management	0	0	25,657		25,657	
			New, Male	Information System – MoES School Meals App	0	33,729	4,738	72.8%	38,467	52,872
			Continuing, Male	Education Management	0	0	26,849		26,849	
<b>MGD Standard 18</b>	MGD 1.2.1.1	Number of social assistance beneficiaries participating in productive safety nets as a result of USDA assistance	Total	Education Management	0	69,340	65,259	128.2%	134,599	104,992
			Community Assets	Education Management	0	0	0	-		
	MGD 1.3.1.1		Household Assets	Education Management	0	0	0	-		
			Human Assets/Capital, Female, New	Information System – MoES	0	34,975	13,143	93.6%	48,118	51,402
	MGD 2.5		Human Assets/Capital, Female, Continuing	Education Management	0			-		
			Human Assets/Capital, Male, New	Information System – MoES	0	34,365	14,708	91.6%	49,073	53,590
			Human Assets/Capital, Male, Continuing	Education Management	0		14,095	-	14,095	
<b>MGD Standard 19</b>	MGD SO 2	Number of individuals who demonstrate use of new child health and nutrition practices as a result of USDA assistance	Total	Education Management	0	0	605	40.7%	605	1,485
			Female	Information System – MoES	0	0	441	59.4%	441	742
			Male	School Meals App Distribution Reports	0	0	164	22.1%	164	742
	MGD SO 2	Number of individuals who demonstrate use of new	Total	Education Management	0	0	605	36.9%	605	1,639



<b>MGD Standard 20</b>		safe food preparation and storage practices as a result of USDA assistance	Female	Information System – MoES	0	0	441	38.8%	441	1,137
			Male		0	0	164	32.6%	164	503
<b>MGD Standard 22</b>	MGD 2.2	Number of individuals trained in safe food preparation and storage as a result of USDA assistance	Total	Project activity report	0	2,342	605	125.8%	2,342	2,342
			Female		0	1,706	441	132.2%	2,147	1,624
			Male		0	636	164	111.4%	800	718
<b>MGD Standard 23</b>	MGD 2.3	Number of individuals trained in child health and nutrition as a result of USDA assistance	Total	Project activity report	0	0	705	33.2%	705	2,121
			Female		0	0	491	46.3%	491	1,061
			Male		0	0	214	20.2%	214	1,061
<b>MGD Standard 27</b>	MGD 2.4	Number of schools using an improved water source	N/A	Education Management Information System – MoES	0	0	30	6.5%	30	461
<b>MGD Standard 30</b>		Number of individuals participating in USDA food security programs	Total	Project activity report	0	69,340	95,456	156.96%	164,796	104,992
			Female		0	34,975	52,543	170.3%	87,518	51,402
			Male		0	34,365	42,913	144.2%	77,278	53,590
<b>MGD Standard 31</b>		Number of individuals benefiting indirectly from USDA-funded interventions	N/A	Education Management Information System – MoES	0	170,700	170,700	125.5%	341,400	272,021
<b>MGD Standard 32</b>	MGD SO 1	Number of schools reached as a result of USDA assistance	N/A	Education Management Information System – MoES	0	707	705	100%	705	707
	MGD SO 2									
<b>LRP Indicator 1</b>	LRP 1.3	Number of individuals participating in USDA food security programs that include an LRP component	Total (age: 5 – 10 yrs)	Education Management Information System – MoES Project Activity Report	0	69,340	95,456	160.5%	164,796	102,650
			Female		0	34,975	52,543	175.8%	87,518	49,778
			Male		0	34,365	42,913	146.2%	77,278	52,872
	LRP 1.3.2	Quantity of commodity procured (MT) as a result of	Fortified oil (MT),	Logistics Execution	0	157.10	0	35.7%	157.10	440

<b>LRP Indicator 6</b>		USDA assistance (by commodity and source country)	Country of Origin: Malaysia	Supportive System (LESS)						
			Canned fish (MT) Country of Origin: Thailand	Logistics Execution Supportive System (LESS)	0	197.52	151.929	67.2%	349.45	520
			Fortified rice (MT) Country of Origin: Lao PDR	Logistics Execution Supportive System	0	0	0	0	0	608
<b>LRP Indicator 10</b>	LRP 1.4.2	Number of policies, regulations, or administrative procedures in each of the following stages of development as a result of USDA assistance	Stage and type of policy	WFP meeting minutes	0	1	1	200%	2	1
<b>LRP Indicator 11</b>	MGD 1.4.4/2.7.4	Number of individuals who have received short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security training as a result of USDA assistance	Total (Type: 3-5-day workshop)	Activity reports	0	0	0	0	0	1,200
			Female		0	0	0	0	0	600
			Male		0	0	0	0	0	600
<b>LRP Indicator 12</b>	MGD 1.2.1.1/1.3.1.1	Number of individuals in the agriculture system who have applied improved management practices or technologies with USDA assistance	Total (small-holder farmer; age: 18 - 60 yrs)	Follow-up and monitoring records	0	0	0	0	0	840
			Female		0	0	0	0	0	420
			Male		0	0	0	0	0	420
<b>LRP Indicator 16</b>	LRP 1	Number of schools reached with LRP activities as a result of USDA assistance	N/A	Education Management Information	0	707	705	199.7%	1,412	707

				System - MoES						
Source: WFP Lao PDR, 2023. FY20 McGovern-Dole Semi-Annual Report: Indicator Spreadsheet. Reporting Period 1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023.										

## CUSTOM INDICATORS

Custom Indicator	Results Framework	Performance Indicator	Disagg.	How results/ progress is monitored	Baseline	FY22	FY23	Target vs Actual	At midterm	LOP Target
1	MGD SO1	Average number of food items recalled by students as measured by the CRS expressive vocabulary test.	G2	Baseline Data MTE Survey	8	N/A	N/A	57.2%	6.3	11
		Average number of animals recalled by students as measured by the CRS expressive vocabulary test.	G2	Baseline Data MTE Survey	16.5	N/A	N/A	50%	9.0	18
2	MGD 1.2.1.1	% of daily key micronutrient requirements met through school meals	N/A	MoDA	0	100%	75%	75%	75%	100%
3	MGD 1.2.1.1	Number of school gardens established and functioning	N/A	Education Management Information System	0	341	628	137.06%	969	707
	MGD 1.3.1.1									
4	MGD SO 2	The percentage of school days where four food groups were provided	N/A	Education Management Information System	0	30%	48%	96%	48%	50%
5	MGD 1.3.5	Percentage of smallholder farmers, including women, supported to produce quality food surplus and contributed to school meals programs	N/A	School Observation Survey	0	0	0	0	-	30%
	MGD SO 2									
6	MGD SO1	Percent of students at the end of two grades of primary schools that show proficiency reading familiar words.	Total	Baseline Data MTE Survey	21%	0	0	204.4%	55.2%	27%
			Female		16%	0	0		52.4%	22%
			Male		26%	0	0	0	58.6%	32%

7	MGD 2.1	Number of individuals trained in improved WASH practices as a result of USDA assistance.	Total	Training tracking database	0	0	245	92.1%		266
			Female		0	0	45	33.1%		136
			Male		0	0	212	163.1%		130
8	MGD 2.1	Number of schools where principals report improved WASH practices as a result of USDA assistance.	N/A	Principal interview form	0	0	0	0	0	104
9	MGD 1.1.3	Number of schools with improved literacy instructional materials as a result of USDA assistance	N/A	Distribution records	0	0	45	50%	45	90
10	MGD 2.3	Number of individuals reached in child health and nutrition campaign as a result of USDA assistance	Total	Project activity report	0	0	0	0		134,006
			Female		0	0	0	0		67,739
			Male		0	0	0	0		66,267
11	MGD 1.2	% of schools where teachers report higher concentration/attention by children during the day	Total	Baseline Data MTE Survey	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	92.1%	70%
			Female		0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	70%
			Male		0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	70%
12	MGD 1.3.1	Drop-out rate	Total	Baseline Data MTE Survey	6%	5.89%	4.4%	-	3%	4%
	MGD 1.3.5		Female		6%	5.24%	3.9%	-	-	4%
	Male		6%		6.55%	4.8%	-	-	4%	
13	MGD 2.3	Proportion of children who have knowledge, believe in and practice the consumption of a diverse and healthy diet, including fruit and vegetable consumption and avoiding unhealthy food and beverages	Knowledge	Validated knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) survey	77.8%	0	0	64%	54.5%	85%
			Attitudes		16.4%	0	0	103.5%	23.8%	23%
			Behaviours		27.5%	0	0	143.6%	47.4%	33%
14	MDG 2.1	Proportion of children who have knowledge, believe in and practice washing hands before and after meals and washing hands before and after going to the toilet	Knowledge	Validated knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) survey	81.1%	0	0	2.3%	2.0%	85%
			Attitudes		85%	0	0	110%	93.5%	85%
			Behaviours		82.9%	0	0	106.2%	90.3%	85%

15	MGD 2.3	Proportion of teachers who have knowledge, believe in and practice the importance of a diverse and healthy diet, and avoiding unhealthy foods and beverages, for child growth and development and the impact on child well-being	Knowledge	Validated knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) survey	88.2%	N/A	N/A	47.4%	45.5%	96%
			Attitudes		25.3%	N/A	N/A	183.6%	65%	35.4%
			Behaviours		78.8%	N/A	N/A	81.9%	65.5%	80.0%
16	MGD 1.3.1	Proportion of caregivers who have knowledge, believe in and practice the provision of a diverse and healthy diet, and avoiding unhealthy foods and beverages, for the growth and development of their children	Knowledge	Validated knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) survey	88.2%	N/A	N/A	83%	78.0%	94.0%
			Attitudes		25.3%	N/A	N/A	119.5%	42.3%	35.4%
			Behaviours		78.8%	N/A	N/A	101.6%	81.3%	80.0%

# Annex 9: Survey Results

## STUDENT SURVEY

### School Information

Table 18. Average age of students by grade

	All - Baseline		
	All	Male	Female
Primary grade 1	6.3	6.3	6.3
Primary grade 2	7.4	7.5	7.4
Primary grade 3	8.7	8.7	8.6
Primary grade 4	9.7	9.7	9.7
Primary grade 5	10.6	10.7	10.6
All Grades	8.5	8.6	8.9
<b>n</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>272</b>
	All - Midterm		
	All	Male	Female
Primary grade 1	6.6	6.4	6.2
Primary grade 2	7.3	7.4	7.2
Primary grade 3	8.8	9.0	8.7
Primary grade 4	9.0	9.5	8.7
Primary grade 5	10.6	10.5	10.6
All Grades	8.2	8.3	8.1
<b>n</b>	<b>679</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>365</b>
Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5%(**) and <1% (***)			

Table 19. Percentage of students by grade

	All - Baseline		
	All	Male	Female
Primary grade 1	18.8	18.0	19.5
Primary grade 2	18.8	20.2	17.3
Primary grade 3	25.0	25.8	24.3
Primary grade 4	18.8	16.9	20.6
Primary grade 5	18.8	13.1	18.4
<b>n</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>272</b>
	All - Midterm		
	All	Male	Female
Primary grade 1	19.7	21.9	17.8
Primary grade 2	30.4	28.3	31.5
Primary grade 3	16.8	16.6	17.0
Primary grade 4	17.7	15.9	19.2
Primary grade 5	15.8	17.2	14.5
<b>n</b>	<b>679</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>365</b>
Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5%(**) and <1% (***)			

**Table 20. How students commute to school (percentage)**

All - Baseline	All	Male	Female
Walk	80.0	78.7	81.3
Private Motor-vehicle	10.1	8.8	11.4
Public Motor-vehicle	0.0	0.0	0.0
Bicycle	9.9	12.5	7.4
Others	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>n</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>272</b>
All - Midterm	All	Male	Female
Walk	7.9	70.0	77.3
Private Motor-vehicle	13.7	16.9	11.0
Public Motor-vehicle	0.0	0.0	0.0
Bicycle	9.1	10.5	8.0
Others	3.1	2.6	3.5
<b>n</b>	<b>679</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>365</b>
Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5%(**) and <1% (***)			

**Table 21. Language spoken at home, as reported by student (percentage)**

Midterm	All	Male	Female
Lao	65.8	68.5	63.6
Phouthay	1.0	1.0	1.1
Makong	6.6	7.3	6.0
Tri	2.1	2.6	1.6
Taoy	0.0	0.0	0.0
Katang	2.1	1.0	0.3
Hmong	5.9	5.7	6.0
Khumu	3.1	1.6	4.4
Other (Specify)	9.9	8.9	10.7
<b>n</b>	<b>679</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>365</b>

## Repeat Learners

Table 22. Percentage of students that repeated a grade only once, as reported by students

Midterm	All Schools			Meals Only			Meal & WASH			Meal, WASH & Literacy			Meal & Literacy		
	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female
Total Percent Repeated	16.4	18.2	14.9	20.0	23.3	16.7	21.2	27.9	16.7	10.6	10.5	10.7	13.6	12.2	14.7
Repeated Pre-Primary	9.9	7.0	13.0	14.7	10.0	21.4	5.6	5.3	5.9	11.1	11.1	11.1	8.7	0.0	14.3
Repeated P1	43.2	49.1	37.0	64.7	65.0	64.3	36.1	42.1	29.4	33.3	44.4	22.2	30.4	33.3	28.6
Repeated P2	24.3	19.3	29.6	11.8	10.0	14.3	30.6	21.1	41.2	33.3	33.3	33.3	26.1	22.2	28.6
Repeated P3	7.2	8.8	5.6	5.9	10.0	0.0	8.3	10.5	5.9	5.6	0.0	11.1	8.7	11.1	7.1
Repeated P4	9.9	10.5	9.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	13.9	15.8	11.8	5.6	11.1	0.0	21.7	22.2	21.4
Repeated P5	2.7	3.5	1.9	2.9	5.0	0.0	2.8	5.3	0.0	5.6	0.0	11.1	0.0	11.1	0.0
<b>Total Students</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>14</b>

Table 23 Percentage of students that attended School Readiness Camp

	All Schools	Total	Meals Only	Total	Meal & WASH	Total	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Total	Meal & Literacy	Total
All Students	10.5	<b>679</b>	14.7	<b>170</b>	9.4	<b>170</b>	14.1	<b>679</b>	3.6	<b>169</b>
Male Students	9.2	<b>314</b>	11.6	<b>86</b>	7.4	<b>68</b>	14.0	<b>86</b>	2.7	<b>74</b>
Female Student	11.5	<b>365</b>	17.9	<b>84</b>	10.8	<b>102</b>	14.3	<b>84</b>	4.2	<b>95</b>



## Absenteeism

**Table 24: Percent of students absent for at least one whole or half day during the week**

All - Baseline		All	Male	Female
Percent of Student absent during the last week of school		12.7	13.6	11.8
<b>Total Students</b>		<b>544</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>272</b>
All - Midterm		All	Male	Female
Percent of Student absent during the last week of school		37.9***	38.9***	36.8***
<b>Total Students</b>		<b>679</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>365</b>

**Table 25. Percent of students absent for at least one whole day during the week**

	All - Baseline		
	All	Male	Female
<b>Percent of Student absent for at least one whole day during the week</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0
I fell sick/health issues	15.9	13.5	18.8
My parents asked me to stay at home to help them out with household chores (taking care of siblings)	47.8	43.2	53.1
My parents asked me to stay at home to help them out with farm work	2.9	5.4	0.0
My home is far away from school/ I did not feel like walking back to school	0.0	0.0	0.0
Teacher was not in school	2.9	5.4	0.0
I was hungry and sufficient food was not available for breakfast	1.4	2.7	0.0
Due to bad weather conditions	1.4	0.0	3.1
There was a festival in my village/ family function at home	10.1	10.8	9.4
No particular reason	1.4	2.7	0.0
Others (Specify)	21.7	24.3	18.8
<b>n</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>32</b>
	All - Midterm		
	All	Male	Female
<b>Percent of Student absent for at least one whole day during the week</b>	71.9***	70.3***	73.5***
I fell sick/health issues	19.7	19.8	19.4
My parents asked me to stay at home to help them out with household chores (taking care of siblings)	9.19***	8.6***	9.7***
My parents asked me to stay at home to help them out with farm work	20.0***	22.6***	17.2***
My home is far away from school/ I did not feel like walking back to school	0.1	0.0	0.1
Teacher was not in school	5.6**	5.1	6.3**
I was hungry and sufficient food was not available for breakfast	0.0	0.0	0.0
Due to bad weather conditions	1.4	0.0	2.8
There was a festival in my village/ family function at home	2.8	3.3*	2.2
No particular reason	11.2**	15.0*	7.1*
Others (Specify)	11.3***	3.9***	18.8
<b>n</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>164</b>

**Table 26: Percent of students absent for at least one afternoon during the week**

	All - BL		
	All	Male	Female
<b>Percent of Student absent for at least one afternoon during the week</b>	97.1	100.0	93.8
I fell sick/health issues	15.9	13.5	20.0
My parents asked me to stay at home to help them out with household chores (taking care of siblings)	47.8	46.0	53.3
My parents asked me to stay at home to help them out with farm work	2.9	5.4	0.0
My home is far away from school/ I did not feel like walking back to school	0.0	0.0	0.0
Teacher was not in school	4.3	5.4	3.3
I was hungry and sufficient food was not available for breakfast	1.4	0.0	0.0
Due to bad weather conditions	1.4	0.0	3.3*
There was a festival in my village/ family function at home	10.1	10.8	10.0
No particular reason	0.0	0.0	0.0
Others (Specify)	21.7	24.3	20.0
<b>n</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>32</b>
	All - Midterm		
	All	Male	Female
<b>Percent of Student absent for at least one afternoon during the week</b>	55.3***	53.9***	56.7***
I fell sick/health issues	10.4**	11.2	9.5
My parents asked me to stay at home to help them out with household chores (taking care of siblings)	6.5***	1.2***	12.0***
My parents asked me to stay at home to help them out with farm work	7.7	8.7	6.6
My home is far away from school/ I did not feel like walking back to school	1.6	0.4	2.8
Teacher was not in school	0.3	0.2	0.4
I was hungry and sufficient food was not available for breakfast	0.0	0.0	0.0
Due to bad weather conditions	0.1	0.2	0.0
There was a festival in my village/ family function at home	1.8***	2.6***	0.9***
No particular reason	10.3*	16.8***	3.7*
Others (Specify)	18.4***	13.5***	23.5
<b>n</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>164</b>

## Student Diet

**Table 27. Student's meals at school in the last 24 hours**

GRADES	ALL			MALE			FEMALE		
	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.
Percentage of students that had a meal at school in the last 24 hours	26.5	86.8	***	25.7	90.1	***	27.2	83.8	***
Percent of students that said at least one meal during the day was sufficient	100.0	97.6		100.0	98.6		100.0	96.7	
<i>Type of Meal</i>									
Breakfast	0.0	11.9	***	0.0	13.6	***	0.0	10.2	***
Mid-Morning Snack	5.5	10.2	***	5.5	9.9	***	5.5	10.4	***
Lunch	15.3	79.3	***	15.4	80.5	***	15.1	78.1	***
Mid-Afternoon Snack	8.3	8.5		7.4	7.1		9.2	10.0	
Dinner	0.0	1.3	***	0.0	1.5	***	0.0	1.1	***
<i>n</i>	<b>544</b>	<b>679</b>		<b>272</b>	<b>314</b>		<b>272</b>	<b>365</b>	
Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5% (**) and <1% (***)									

**Table 28. Source of student meal**

Baseline	Breakfast			Mid-Morning			Lunch			Mid-Afternoon			Dinner		
	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female
Bring own food and eat at school	0.0	0.0	0.0	44.3	40.0	46.7	3.6	4.8	2.4	44.4	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Went home for lunch then came back	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.7	6.7	6.7	96.4	95.3	97.6	2.2	0.0	4.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
School provided meal	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Purchase food from local vendors/market	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other (specify)	0.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	53.3	46.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	53.3	50.0	56.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>n</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Midterm	Breakfast			Mid-Morning			Lunch			Mid-Afternoon			Dinner		
	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female
Bring own food and eat at school	22.5	12.3	36.0	7.9	1.9	13.7	2.5	3.0	2.0	1.7	3.1	0.7	22.6	9.5	41.9
Went home for lunch then came back	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.1	5.0	5.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
School provided meal	4.8	7.3	1.4	17.1	21.5	13.1	91.8	91.3	92.2	13.2	14.1	12.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
Purchase food from local vendors/market	69.7	77.7	49.0	74.2	76.7	72.0	0.4	0.4	0.3	79.3	82.8	76.8	12.6	4.6	24.3
Other (specify)	3.0	2.5	3.6	0.7	0.0	1.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	5.8	0.0	9.9	26.8	22.1	33.8
<b>n</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>533</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>18</b>

## Student knowledge and attitudes about food

Table 29. Foods that should be consumed, as reported by students

	ALL			MALE			FEMALE			COMBINATION OF INTERVENTION (MIDTERM ONLY)			
	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Rice	98.9	80.2	***	99.3	80.3	***	98.5	80.2	***	80.6	71.8	79.4	81.2
Lentils	47.8	6.2	***	44.5	6.0	***	51.1	6.4	***	5.8	28.8	8.2	9.4
Vegetables	83.3	58.3	***	80.9	56.8	***	85.7	59.9	***	58.2	5.3	65.4	59.4
Meat/Fish/Poultry/Sea Food	96.9	74.6	***	97.1	67.5	***	96.7	81.6	***	74.1	50.0	80.0	74.7
Eggs	N/A	24.7	***	N/A	19.8	***	N/A	29.5	***	26.5	76.5	20.0	11.1
Milk and milk products	56.7	8.4	***	54.7	9.7	***	58.1	7.0	***	8.8	14.1	4.7	6.4
Fruits	72.1	26.5	***	71.7	22.0	***	72.4	31.1	***	28.2	64.0	20.0	16.4
Fats, oil or butter	30.1	2.7	***	28.3	4.3	***	32.0	1.2	***	2.9	1.5	2.4	1.2
Sweetened soda or sweetened juice drinks	46.1	4.8	***	46.7	6.0	***	45.6	3.6	***	4.7	2.9	8.2	4.1
Sugary foods such as chocolates, candies, cookies and cakes	58.3	16.0	***	58.1	18.1	***	58.5	13.9	***	15.3	16.0	21.8	20.0
Others	0.0	14.8	***	0.0	12.9	***	0.0	16.7	***	12.9	28.8	24.7	22.4
<b>Total Students</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>679</b>		<b>272</b>	<b>314</b>		<b>272</b>	<b>365</b>		<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>169</b>
Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5%(**) and <1% (***)													

**Table 30. Foods consumed in the last 24 hours, as reported by students**

	ALL			MALE			FEMALE			COMBINATION OF INTERVENTION (MIDTERM ONLY)			
	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Rice	99.6	91.5	***	99.6	94.3	***	99.6	88.8	***	92.4	87.7	84.1	88.2
Lentils	20.6	12.3	***	21.7	11.5	***	19.5	13.2	***	12.9	5.3	7.6	12.9
Vegetables	76.3	52.0	***	74.3	49.3	***	78.3	54.7	***	51.8	46.5	59.4	52.4
Meat/Fish/Poultry/Sea Food	84.4	83.4	***	85.7	81.1	***	83.1	85.7	***	84.7	75.3	80.0	73.5
Eggs	N/A	26.0	***	N/A	22.8	***	N/A	29.2	***	28.2	15.3	14.1	12.9
Milk and milk products	18.4	3.8	***	18.0	3.3	***	18.8	4.3	***	4.1	3.6	0.6	2.9
Fruits	29.0	5.8	***	29.0	7.0	***	29.0	4.5	***	5.3	10.0	7.7	76.5
Fats, oil or butter	9.4	0.7	***	11.0	0.5	***	7.7	0.8	***	0.0	2.3	3.5	58.8
Sweetened soda or sweetened juice drinks	17.8	4.4	***	18.8	3.9	***	16.9	4.9	***	4.1	3.5	8.3	5.3
Sugary foods such as chocolates, candies, cookies and cakes	44.3	20.4	***	44.9	18.3	***	43.8	22.5	***	20.0	23.5	18.8	25.3
Others	1.1	21.7	***	1.1	26.4	***	1.1	17.1	***	19.4	40.0	37.6	27.1
<b>n</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>679</b>		<b>272</b>	<b>314</b>		<b>272</b>	<b>365</b>		<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>169</b>
Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5%(**) and <1% (***)													

**Table 31 Student knowledge and attitudes about healthy food**

	ALL			MALE			FEMALE			COMBINATION OF INTERVENTION (MIDTERM ONLY)			
	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Percent of Students that like eating home-cooked meals?	97.3	98.4		96.0	97.6		98.5	99.3		98.8	98.8	96.5	94.7
Percent of students that like eating fruits and/or vegetables?	83.8	98.9	***	79.0	99.5	***	88.6	98.3	***	99.4	95.3	95.9	97.0
Percent of students that think package/junk food is a healthy snack or meal	63.6	49.1	***	56.6	47.1	***	70.6	51.1	***	50.0	46.5	40.6	45.6
Percent of students told by parents or teachers that packaged/junk food is bad for your health?	52.2	45.4	***	48.3	40.7	***	56.1	50.0	**	45.3	39.4	34.7	39.1
Percent of students that eat foods like candies and chocolates and cold drinks frequently (daily).	N/A	45.5		N/A	46.3		N/A	44.7		45.3	44.7	42.4	52.1
<b>Total Students</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>679</b>		<b>272</b>	<b>314</b>		<b>272</b>	<b>365</b>		<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>169</b>
Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5%(**) and <1% (***)													

**Household environment of students**

**Table 32. Student household environment**

	ALL			MALE			FEMALE			COMBINATION OF INTERVENTION (MIDTERM ONLY)			
	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Percent of students who have a (family members / relatives / neighbors but not private teachers) to help you with reading or writing at home	63.8	74.0		61.8	78.3	**	65.8	69.8		75.3	67.7	74.7	60.4
Percent of students who saw someone reading at home	50.0	59.0		48.9	58.4		51.1	59.7		61.8	44.1	51.2	38.5
Percent of students encouraged to study by someone from their home	67.1	84.2	***	66.5	87.6	***	67.7	81.0	***	85.9	72.9	78.8	77.8
Percent of students who were read to at home	49.6	60.4		50.7	61.4		48.5	59.4		62.9	53.5	50.6	38.5

Percent of students that usually have enough time to study and complete your homework	N/A	90.9		N/A	93.3		N/A	88.5		91.8	88.2	85.8	85.2
Percent of students that reported <b>NOT</b> having household chores or any other type of work	9.0	8.3		11.8	13.5		6.6	3.2		91.2	85.3	94.7	91.8
<b>n</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>679</b>		<b>272</b>	<b>314</b>		<b>272</b>	<b>365</b>		<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>169</b>
Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5% (**), and <1% (***)													

**Table 33. Extracurricular study habits of students**

	ALL			MALE			FEMALE			COMBINATION OF INTERVENTION (MIDTERM ONLY)			
	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Percent of students that take extra lessons after school	5.5	15.5	***	4.8	13.9	***	6.3	17.0	***	15.9	15.9	16.5	9.4
Percent of students engage in reading books on digital devices for learning, such as phones?	N/A	23.8		N/A	24.3		N/A	23.4		26.5	9.4	12.4	7.1
Percent of students that read extracurricular books?	31.1	44.0	***	29.0	42.9	***	33.1	45.1	***	44.1	38.2	44.1	46.2
<b>n</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>679</b>		<b>272</b>	<b>314</b>		<b>272</b>	<b>365</b>		<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>169</b>
Percent of students that have read an extracurricular book in the last 7 days?	81.1	73.2		78.5	68.8		83.3	77.4		75.0	78.5	80.0	80.8
<b>n</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>293</b>		<b>79</b>	<b>132</b>		<b>90</b>	<b>161</b>		<b>75</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>78</b>
Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5% (**), and <1% (***)													

**Table 34. Reasons why students do not complete their homework, as reported by students**

	All - Midterm		
	All	Male	Female
I have no reading area	5.9	6.3	5.8
I have no time	14.3	15.6	13.7
I have too much work/chores	11.9	6.3	15.7
I am not interested	52.4	53.1	53.9
I have no reading material	1.2	3.1	0.0
I don't have light at home	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other (specify)	15.5	12.5	17.6
<b>n</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>51</b>



## School environment and resources

**Table 35. School environment and student resources, as reported by students**

	ALL			MALE			FEMALE			COMBINATION OF INTERVENTION (MIDTERM ONLY)			
	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Percent of students that like going to school	98.2	96.7	***	97.4	96.2		98.9	97.1	**	97.1	96.5	94.7	92.9
Percent of teacher that at least once a week told a story or read a poem which was not in the textbook	49.8	61.1	**	48.3	61.4	***	51.1	60.9		62.4	59.4	58.8	47.7
Percent of schools that have story books other than textbooks for you to read	49.3	79.5	**	49.6	78.3	*	50.0	80.1	*	79.4	64.7	90.0	79.9
Percent of school that have reading corners or book banks?	38.4	47.8		38.6	47.5		38.2	48.1		44.7	35.9	75.3	66.3
<b>n</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>679</b>		<b>272</b>	<b>314</b>		<b>272</b>	<b>365</b>		<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>169</b>
Frequency that students utilize these reading corners/ book banks in a week (where available)	5.2	20.1	***	4.4	21.1	***	5.9	20.0	***	18.8	22.4	40.0	26.5
<b>n</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>679</b>		<b>272</b>	<b>314</b>		<b>272</b>	<b>365</b>		<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>169</b>
Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5%(**) and <1% (***)													

**Table 36. What students liked about school**

Indicators	ALL			MALE			FEMALE			COMBINATION OF INTERVENTION (MIDTERM ONLY)			
	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Being with my friends	82.5	44.5	***	81.6	46.6	***	83.8	42.5	***	43.5	41.7	56.4	50.0
Participating in class activities	50.4	8.6	***	46.3	8.8	***	54.4	8.4	***	8.2	9.4	9.4	12.9
Working in groups	18.9	2.7	***	17.6	3.1	***	20.2	2.4	***	2.9	1.2	1.7	2.4
Physical education/ sports at school	31.4	5.7	***	39.3	9.1	***	23.5	2.4	***	5.9	1.2	7.1	5.3
Learning new things	42.1	51.5	***	41.9	47.6	***	42.3	55.4	***	48.8	62.9	68.2	66.5
Others (specify)	4.2	34.4	***	4.4	33.4	***	4.0	35.4	***	36.4	24.1	18.2	26.4
<b>Total Students</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>679</b>		<b>272</b>	<b>314</b>		<b>272</b>	<b>365</b>		<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>169</b>

Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (\*), <5%(\*\*) and <1% (\*\*\*)

## Student Health and Hygiene

Table 37. Student's health and hygiene practices, as reported by students

Indicators	ALL			MALE			FEMALE			COMBINATION OF INTERVENTION (MIDTERM ONLY)			
	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Percent of teachers that teach about health and nutrition (as reported by students)	50.0	65.5	***	47.8	64.1	***	52.2	67.0	**	65.3	67.1	61.8	71.0
Percent of students that wash hands even when no one is around/no one is looking	89.9	93.5	**	90.1	88.6		89.7	98.4	***	92.9	97.1	97.1	95.9
Percent of student that wash hands at school?	N/A	90.3		N/A	91.5		N/A	89.2		91.2	80.6	81.8	92.3
Percent of students that wash hands with soap at school?	N/A	58.6		N/A	53.6		N/A	63.5		45.2	40.6	53.5	50.0
Percent of students that can identify 3 hygiene practices	N/A	40.6		N/A	38.5		N/A	38.5		40.6	27.1	42.4	48.5
<b>Total Students</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>679</b>		<b>272</b>	<b>314</b>		<b>272</b>	<b>365</b>		<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>169</b>
Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5%(**) and <1% (***)													

**Table 38. Times you should wash your hands, as reported by students**

Percent of students that say you should wash your hand	ALL			MALE			FEMALE			COMBINATION OF INTERVENTION (MIDTERM ONLY)			
	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Before eating a meal	99.0	90.6	***	100.0	89.8	***	98.2	91.5	***	90.5	88.8	92.9	90.5
After eating a meal	96.0	48.1	***	95.2	46.1	***	96.7	50.1	***	45.3	48.8	62.4	74.1
Before feeding a child	65.4	2.1	***	61.8	3.1	***	69.1	1.1	***	2.4	0.0	1.2	0.0
Before preparing/handling food	74.4	6.6	***	72.1	65.7	***	76.8	5.8	***	7.1	4.1	8.8	1.2
After using toilet	88.2	2.0	***	85.7	3.2	***	90.8	0.7	***	1.8	0.0	4.1	4.2
After handling farm work/animals	77.2	6.6	***	75.7	9.3	***	78.7	3.9	***	6.4	5.3	7.1	8.2
Others (specify)	0.0	24.9	***	0.0	21.5	***	0.0	28.9	***	25.3	23.5	27.6	18.2
<b>Total Students</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>679</b>		<b>272</b>	<b>314</b>		<b>272</b>	<b>365</b>		<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>5.8</b>

Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (\*), <5%(\*\*) and <1% (\*\*\*)

**Table 39. Reasons for skipping washing hands when no one is around or looking, as reported by students**

	ALL			MALE			FEMALE			COMBINATION OF INTERVENTION (MIDTERM ONLY)			
	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
% of student skipped washing hands when no one is around or looking	10.1	6.5		9.9	11.4		10.3	1.6	***	7.1	2.9	2.9	3.5
<b>n</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>679</b>		<b>272</b>	<b>314</b>		<b>272</b>	<b>365</b>		<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>169</b>
My hands looked clean	38.2	1.4	***	25.9	0.4	*	50.0	8.3	*	0.0	20.0	20.0	12.5
Washing hands every time is not important	1.8	0.0		3.7	0.0		0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Not enough time	0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lack of water	20.0	0.9		14.8	0.6		25.0	3.1		0.0	20.0	0.0	12.5
Lack of washing basin	14.5	0.0		18.5	0.0		10.7	0.0		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lack of soap	23.6	0.0	***	22.2	0.0	**	25.0	0.0	*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other (specify)	16.4	24.7		22.2	26.2		10.7	15.6	*	25.0	20.0	40.0	12.5
Don't like to wash hands	N/A	63.2		N/A	62.8		N/A	69.0		66.7	40.0	20.0	25.0
<b>n</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>30</b>		<b>27</b>	<b>17</b>		<b>28</b>	<b>11</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>

Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (\*), <5%(\*\*) and <1% (\*\*\*)

**Table 40. Reasons for not washing hands at school, as reported by students**

	All - Midterm		
	All	Male	Female
My hands looked clean	0.7	0.7	0.7
Washing hands every time is not important	0.0	0.0	0.0
Not enough time	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lack of water	54.5	61.5	49.4
Lack of washing basin	11.1	0.7	19.3
Lack of soap	5.8	12.4	0.7
Other (specify)	21.6	12.3	29.1
Don't like to wash hands	16.1	23.4	10.5
<b>n</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>59</b>

**Table 41. Why students do not use soap at school, as reported by students**

	All - Midterm		
	All	Male	Female
No soap available	95.4	96.9	94.3
Don't like soap	0.3	0.3	0.3
Forgot	0.9	2.0	0.0
Was in a hurry	0.1	0.1	0.1
Other (Specify)	3.0	0.3	5.2
<b>Total Students</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>204</b>

## PARENTS/CAREGIVERS SURVEY

### Parents' attitude to food

**Table 42. Parents attitudes about children's diet**

.Indicators	ALL			COMBINATION OF INTERVENTION (MIDTERM ONLY)			
	BL	MTE	Sig.	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
I encourage my child to eat fruits	83.5	90.1	***	89.4	91.8	94.1	95.3
I encourage my child to eat vegetables	85.3	89.4	***	88.2	92.9	98.8	95.3
It is difficult to persuade children to give up outside food and beverages	41.1	45.3	**	43.5	43.5	56.4	61.2
It is not always possible to prepare 'school lunch' for children	37.6	59.4	***	57.6	69.4	69.4	68.2
On certain days, it is difficult for us to arrange for a diverse and healthy diet	45.3	66.5	***	65.9	77.6	64.7	69.4
I am able to provide healthy and diverse meals/nutritious food to my children on most days	41.8	81.3	***	83.5	83.5	65.9	62.4
I am able to provide all vegetables/ fruits to my child that he/she likes to eat	51.2	87.9	***	89.4	84.7	82.4	74.1
I can prepare healthy meals that my child finds tasty	50.5	78.0	***	77.6	85.9	80.0	75.3
There is not much that I can do to influence the long-term health of my children	16.4	50.0	***	48.2	61.2	64.7	54.1
The school my child goes to has helped me better practice healthy food practices	n/a	87.2		85.9	91.8	94.1	96.5
<b>n</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>340</b>		<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>
Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5%(**) and <1% (***)							

**Table 43. Parents attitudes towards healthy and sugary food**

Indicators	ALL			COMBINATION OF INTERVENTION (MIDTERM ONLY)			
	BL	MTE	Sig.	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Healthy food is not tasty	34.7	59.3	***	61.2	60.0	42.4	52.9
Eating fruits and vegetables helps in preventing diseases	80.6	89.5	**	89.4	98.7	91.8	89.4
Consuming sugary foods and beverages leads to tooth decay	55.3	32.8	**	29.4	41.6	51.8	60.0
Healthy food is not enjoyable for children	44.2	42.2		41.2	49.3	49.5	49.4
It is okay to buy sugary food and soft drinks for children because they are young and healthy	14.1	57.7	***	56.5	87.3	57.6	63.5
Not providing sugary food and soft drinks will be beneficial for my child's health	51.8	37.9	***	38.8	36.4	28.2	34.1
<b>n</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>340</b>		<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>
Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5%(**) and <1% (***)							

**Parents' attitudes to school feeding**

**Table 44. Parent attitudes to school feeding**

Indicator	ALL			COMBINATION OF INTERVENTION (MIDTERM ONLY)			
	BL	MTE	Sig.	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Percent of parents that think schools should provide meals to children during school hours	77.1	99.9	***	100.0	98.8	100.0	100.0
Percent of parents that think household costs on food will reduce since school's started a school meals program	84.1	77.4	***	76.5	76.2	89.4	81.2
Percent of parents that think school lunch program at schools improved students' health and nutrition status	99.4	97.4		97.7	91.7	95.3	98.8
Percent of parents that think a school lunch provision have improved children's willingness to attend school/interest in school/attentiveness towards education	95.3	98.3		98.8	94.1	100.0	91.8
<b>n</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>340</b>		<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>
Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5%(**) and <1% (***)							

**Table 45. Benefits of a school feeding program**<sup>326</sup>

Indicators	ALL			COMBINATION OF INTERVENTION (MIDTERM ONLY)			
	BL	MTE	Sig.	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Improves literacy rate	89.4	86.4	*	87.1	74.1	89.4	82.4
Improves future opportunities of work for children	67.1	28.2	***	27.0	38.8	35.3	30.6
Helps child's skill development	68.2	33.0	***	32.9	25.9	23.5	45.9
Helps girls to remain in school and delay early marriage	36.5	0.2	***	0.0	1.2	1.2	1.2
Helps children from different social and ethnic groups to bond	41.2	4.5	***	4.7	4.7	1.8	3.5
Helps children learn more about the world	48.2	11.2	***	10.6	15.3	11.8	16.5
Helps break the cycle of poverty	28.8	0.6	***	0.0	1.8	4.7	4.7
Others	1.8	10.4	***	10.6	11.8	5.9	10.6
<b>Total Students</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>340</b>		<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>
Difference between WFP Treatment and Control Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5%(**) and <1% (***)							

**Table 46. Benefits of school garden**

Indicator	ALL			COMBINATION OF INTERVENTION (MIDTERM ONLY)			
	BL	MTE	Sig.	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Source of food material for school lunch	86.3	79.1	*	78.8	72.9	85.9	81.2
Knowledge and skill for children	70.2	33.3	***	34.2	27.1	24.7	32.9
Knowledge and skill for community members	43.0	4.2	***	5	0	2	2
Any other (specify)	3.1	3.7		3.5	7.1	1.2	5.9
<b>n</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>340</b>		<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>
Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5%(**) and <1% (***)							

### Parents attitude to student education

**Table 47. The primary benefits of education**<sup>327</sup>

Indicators	ALL			COMBINATION OF INTERVENTION (MIDTERM ONLY)			
	BL	MTE	Sig.	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Improves literacy rate	89.4	86.4	*	87.1	74.1	89.4	82.4
Improves future opportunities of work for children	67.1	28.2	***	27.0	38.8	35.3	30.6
Helps child's skill development	68.2	33.0	***	32.9	25.9	23.5	45.9
Helps girls to remain in school and delay early marriage	36.5	0.2	***	0.0	1.2	1.2	1.2
Helps children from different social and ethnic groups to bond	41.2	4.5	***	4.7	4.7	1.8	3.5

<sup>326</sup>Data was not statistically compared from baseline to endline. Please see limitations.

<sup>327</sup>Data was not statistically compared from baseline to endline. Please see limitations.

Helps children learn more about the world	48.2	11.2	***	10.6	15.3	11.8	16.5
Helps break the cycle of poverty	28.8	0.6	***	0.0	1.8	4.7	4.7
Others	1.8	10.4	***	10.6	11.8	5.9	10.6
<b>n</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>340</b>		<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>
Difference between WFP Treatment and Control Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5%(**) and <1% (***)							

**Table 48. Facilities available in school to improve children's literacy and learning**

Indicators	ALL			COMBINATION OF INTERVENTION (MIDTERM ONLY)			
	BL	MTE	Sig.	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Reading corners	57.1	3.6	***	2.4	5.9	12.9	11.8
Book banks	34.1	7.7	***	7.1	1.2	15.3	14.1
Materials on agriculture	21.2	8.7	***	9.4	3.5	2.4	7.1
Materials on health and nutrition	34.7	12.9	***	12.9	14.1	10.6	12.9
Green box	N/A	3.4		3.5	2.4	2.4	3.5
Any other (specify)	1.8	36.2	***	49.4	29.4	27.1	38.8
<b>n</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>340</b>		<b>78</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>81</b>
Difference between WFP Treatment and Control Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5%(**) and <1% (***)							

**Table 49. Assistance to meet educational/ learning needs of students**

Indicator	ALL			COMBINATION OF INTERVENTION (MIDTERM ONLY)			
	BL	MTE	Sig.	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Did your child have assistance to meet educational/ learning needs?	10.6	64.7		55.3	67.1	71.8	64.7
<b>n</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>340</b>		<b>78</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>81</b>
Reading materials	38.9	47.8		47.1	26.2	26.6	39.7
Online counselling	11.1	0.0	***	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Online teaching	100.0	0.0	***	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Parent Tutoring-assisting with homework, counselling (HH member or Parent)	55.6	21.9	**	1.7	21.3	32.8	39.7
Private Tutoring-assisting with homework, counselling (other than a HH member or parent)	N/A	13.6		13.7	4.9	4.7	12.1
Any other (specify)	5.6	53.4	***	41.2	54.1	64.1	51.7
<b>n</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>234</b>		<b>51</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>58</b>
Difference between WFP Treatment and Control Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5%(**) and <1% (***)							

**Table 50. Family members' contributions to the school meal**

Indicator	ALL			COMBINATION OF INTERVENTION (MIDTERM ONLY)			
	BL	MTE	Sig.	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Percent of family members that can contribute to the school for school lunch in some way	83.5	98.1	***	92.9	92.6	97.7	91.8
<b>n</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>340</b>		<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>
In kind, by providing vegetables	83.3	65.6	***	64.3	64.6	67.5	83.3
In kind, by helping in cooking the school meal	78.3	30.8	***	27.4	38.0	53.0	56.4
In kind, by providing labour in the school garden	85.0	16.5	***	16.7	17.7	14.5	14.1
In cash, by giving a fixed amount to school	46.0	30.1	***	31.0	8.9	25.3	35.9
Average Amount	29695	43927		70334	7478	217033	68711
Any other (specify)	6.3	29.5	***	31.0	22.8	31.3	11.5
<b>n</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>324</b>		<b>84</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>78</b>
Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5%(**) and <1% (***)							

## LITERACY ASSESSEMENT

**Table 51. Number of animals - P2 students**

LITERACY SCORE	ALL			MALE			FEMALE		
	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.
0-3 animals	0.0	13.6	***	0.0	11.1	***	0.0	15.8	***
4-6 animals	14.1	25.7	***	14.0	28.9	**	14.1	22.8	
7-10 animals	85.9	36.6	***	86.0	32.2	***	85.9	40.6	***
11+ animals	0.0	24.1	***	0.0	27.8	***	0.0	20.8	***
Average	8.6	7.7	***	8.7	7.7	**	8.4	7.7	*
Median	9.0	8.0	***	10.0	7.0	**	9.0	8.0	*
<b>n</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>191</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>90</b>		<b>99</b>	<b>101</b>	
Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5%(**) and <1% (***)									

**Table 52. Number of food items - P2 students**

LITERACY SCORE	ALL			MALE			FEMALE		
	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.
0-3 food items	1.0	28.3	***	1.0	30.0	***	1.0	26.7	***
4-6 food items	26.6	30.4		26.0	30.0		27.3	30.7	
7-10 food items	72.4	27.7	***	73.0	27.8	***	71.7	27.7	***
11+ food items	0.0	13.6		0.0	12.2		0.0	14.9	
Average	7.9	6.3		7.9	6.1	***	7.9	6.3	***
Median	8.0	5.0	***	8.0	5.0	***	8.0	6.0	**
<b>n</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>191</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>90</b>		<b>99</b>	<b>101</b>	
Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5%(**) and <1% (***)									

**Table 53. Percent of correct letters - P2 students**

LITERACY SCORE	ALL	MALE	FEMALE
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	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.
0-20 letters	24.6	23.4		30.0	29.9		19.2	18.1	
21-25 letters	25.1	27.6		23.0	32.2		27.3	23.8	
26-27 letters	18.6	14.1		19.0	11.5		18.2	16.2	
28-33 letters	31.7	34.9		28.0	26.4		35.4	41.9	
Average	23.5	23.4		22.5	22.5		24.6	24.2	
Median	26.0	25.0		25.0	24.0		26.0	27.0	
<b>n</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>192</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>87</b>		<b>99</b>	<b>105</b>	

Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (\*), <5%(\*\*) and <1% (\*\*\*)

**Table 54. Percent of syllables - P2 students**

LITERACY SCORE	ALL			MALE			FEMALE		
	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.
0-1 Syllables	36.7	60.7	***	32.0	65.6	***	41.4	56.4	**
2-3 Syllables	63.3	24.1	***	68.0	24.4	***	58.6	23.8	***
4 + Syllables	0.0	15.2	***	0.0	10.0	***	0.0	19.8	***
Average	1.8	1.5	**	1.9	1.3	***	1.7	1.7	
Median	2.0	1.0	***	2.0	1.0	***	2.0	1.0	
<b>n</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>192</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>87</b>		<b>99</b>	<b>105</b>	

Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (\*), <5%(\*\*) and <1% (\*\*\*)

**Table 55. Identify phrases -- P2 Students**

Baseline - Literacy	All	Male	Female
0 Pictures	3.5	2.0	5.0
1 to 4 Pictures	41.7	47.0	36.4
5+ Pictures	54.8	51.0	58.6
Average	5.9	5.2	6.7
<b>n</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>99</b>
Midterm - Literacy	All	Male	Female
0 Pictures	8.9**	4.4	12.9*
1 to 4 Pictures	26.17***	31.1**	21.8**
5+ Pictures	64.9**	64.4*	65.3
Average	7.1	6.4	7.7
<b>n</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>101</b>

Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (\*), <5%(\*\*) and <1% (\*\*\*)

**Table 56. Commonly used words - P2 Students**

LITERACY SCORE	ALL			MALE			FEMALE		
	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.
0 words	43.2	18.8	***	42.0	18.4	***	44.4	19.0	***
0-4 words	68.3	34.4	***	72.0	33.3	***	64.6	35.2	***
5-9 words	10.6	8.9		12.0	5.7		9.1	11.4	
10-14 words	4.0	25.0	***	4.0	28.7	***	4.0	21.9	***
15-19 words	17.1	31.8	***	12.0	32.2	***	22.2	31.4	
Average	4.9	9.0	***	4.1	9.3	***	5.7	8.7	***
Median	2.0	13.0	***	2.0	13.0	***	2.0	12.0	***
<b>n</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>192</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>87</b>		<b>99</b>	<b>105</b>	

Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (\*), <5%(\*\*) and <1% (\*\*\*)

**Table 57. Percent of students who can read and understand grade level text - P2 Students**

Baseline - Literacy		All	Male	Female
Student Reader		13.6	7.0	20.2
	<b>n</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>99</b>
Midterm - Literacy		All	Male	Female
Student Reader		2.1***	0.0	3.8***
	<b>n</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>105</b>

Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (\*), <5%(\*\*) and <1% (\*\*\*)

**Table 58. Correct words per minute - P2 students**

LITERACY SCORE	ALL			MALE			FEMALE		
	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.	BL	MTE	Sig.
0-4 words	88.9	88.5		89.0	93.1		88.9	84.8	
5-8 words	11.1	9.4		11.0	6.9		11.1	11.4	
9 words or more	0.0	2.1	**	0.0	0.0		0.0	3.8	**
Average	1.9	2.7	***	2.0	2.2		1.8	3.1	***
Median	1.0	2.0	**	1.5	2.1		1.0	2.0	**
<b>n</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>192</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>87</b>		<b>99</b>	<b>105</b>	

Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (\*), <5%(\*\*) and <1% (\*\*\*)

## SCHOOL RECORDS

### Enrolment

Table 59. Student enrolment

2022-2023 School Year	All Schools			Meal Only			Meal & WASH			Meal, WASH & Literacy			Meal & Literacy		
	Total	Boy	Girl	Total	Boy	Girl	Total	Boy	Girl	Total	Boy	Girl	Total	Boy	Girl
Pre-primary	765	396	369	350	184	166	70	32	38	218	116	102	127	64	63
1st Grade	1396	735	661	566	309	257	226	93	133	282	159	123	322	174	148
2nd Grade	1163	611	552	417	217	200	180	85	95	298	169	129	268	140	128
3rd Grade	1132	575	557	400	201	199	169	83	86	270	141	129	293	150	143
4th Grade	1207	624	583	439	236	203	157	74	83	284	137	147	327	177	150
5th Grade	1033	597	436	376	208	168	110	62	48	260	158	102	287	169	118
<b>n</b>	<b>6696</b>	<b>3538</b>	<b>3158</b>	<b>2548</b>	<b>1355</b>	<b>1193</b>	<b>912</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>483</b>	<b>1612</b>	<b>880</b>	<b>732</b>	<b>1624</b>	<b>874</b>	<b>750</b>
<b>Average students per school</b>	<b>98.5</b>	<b>52.0</b>	<b>46.4</b>	<b>37.5</b>	<b>19.9</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>13.4</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>7.1</b>	<b>23.7</b>	<b>12.9</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>23.9</b>	<b>12.9</b>	<b>11.0</b>
2023-2024 School year	All Schools			Meal Only			Meal & WASH			Meal, WASH & Literacy			Meal & Literacy		
	Total	Boy	Girl	Total	Boy	Girl	Total	Boy	Girl	Total	Boy	Girl	Total	Boy	Girl
Pre-primary	693	345	346	296	172	124	61	31	30	158	65	93	176	77	99
1st Grade	1293	701	592	490	264	226	207	111	96	280	158	122	316	168	148
2nd Grade	1204	627	577	486	260	226	157	67	90	256	135	121	305	165	140
3rd Grade	1109	557	552	400	208	192	177	76	101	260	137	123	272	136	136
4th Grade	1138	581	557	399	204	195	136	65	71	289	149	140	314	163	151
5th Grade	1028	519	509	358	181	177	97	46	51	264	127	137	309	165	144
<b>n</b>	<b>6465</b>	<b>3330</b>	<b>3133</b>	<b>2429</b>	<b>1289</b>	<b>1140</b>	<b>835</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>1507</b>	<b>771</b>	<b>736</b>	<b>1692</b>	<b>874</b>	<b>818</b>
<b>Average students per school</b>	<b>95.1</b>	<b>49.0</b>	<b>46.1</b>	<b>35.7</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>16.8</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>22.2</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>24.9</b>	<b>12.9</b>	<b>12.0</b>

Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (\*), <5%(\*\*) and <1% (\*\*\*)

**Table 60. Number of students that graduate to the next grade level**

Baseline - Students	All Schools		
	Total	Boy	Girl
Pre-primary	557	301	276
1st Grade	1310	677	633
2nd Grade	1118	588	530
3rd Grade	977	498	479
4th Grade	1153	583	570
5th Grade	966	564	402
<b>n</b>	<b>6081</b>	<b>3211</b>	<b>2890</b>
Midterm - Students	All Schools		
	Total	Boy	Girl
Pre-primary	532	242	290
1st Grade	1179	631	548
2nd Grade	1099	574	525
3rd Grade	1026	508	518
4th Grade	1059	537	522
5th Grade	939	459	480
<b>n</b>	<b>5834</b>	<b>2951</b>	<b>2883</b>
Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5%(**) and <1% (***)			

**Table 61 Graduation rates**

Baseline - Students	All Schools		
	Total	Boy	Girl
Pre-primary	72.8	76.0	74.8
1st Grade	93.8	92.1	95.8
2nd Grade	96.1	96.2	96.0
3rd Grade	86.3	86.6	86.0
4th Grade	95.5	93.4	97.8
5th Grade	93.5	94.5	92.2
<b>n</b>	<b>90.8</b>	<b>90.8</b>	<b>91.5</b>
Midterm - Students	All Schools		
	Total	Boy	Girl
Pre-primary	76.8	70.1	83.8
1st Grade	91.2	90.0	92.6
2nd Grade	91.3	91.5	91.0
3rd Grade	92.5	91.2	93.8
4th Grade	93.1	92.4	93.7
5th Grade	91.3	88.4	94.3
<b>n</b>	<b>90.2</b>	<b>88.6</b>	<b>92.0</b>
Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5%(**) and <1% (***)			

## Dropout rates

**Table 62: Number of dropout students**

Baseline - Students	All Schools		
	Total	Boy	Girl
Pre-primary	0	0	0
1st Grade	4	4	0
2nd Grade	3	1	2
3rd Grade	4	3	1
4th Grade	11	8	3
5th Grade	11	8	3
<b>n</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>9</b>
Midterm - Students	All Schools		
	Total	Boy	Girl
Pre-primary	0	0	0
1st Grade	5	4	1
2nd Grade	3	1	2
3rd Grade	1	1	0
4th Grade	3	2	1
5th Grade	5	2	3
<b>n</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>

Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (\*), <5%(\*\*) and <1% (\*\*\*)

**Table 63: Drop out rates of students**

Baseline - Students	All Schools		
	Total	Boy	Girl
Pre-primary	0.0	0.0	0.0
1st Grade	0.3	0.5	0.0
2nd Grade	0.3	0.2	0.4
3rd Grade	0.4	0.5	0.2
4th Grade	0.9	1.3	0.5
5th Grade	1.1	1.3	0.7
<b>n</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>0.3</b>
Midterm - Students	All Schools		
	Total	Boy	Girl
Pre-primary	0.0	0.0	0.0
1st Grade	0.4	0.6	0.2
2nd Grade	0.2	0.2	0.3
3rd Grade	0.1	0.2	0.0
4th Grade	0.3	0.3	0.2
5th Grade	0.5	0.4	0.6
<b>n</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.2</b>

Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (\*), <5%(\*\*) and <1% (\*\*\*)

## School meals served

**Table 64 : Number of students served in school meals**

Midterm - Students	All Schools		
	Total	Boy	Girl
Pre-primary	570	260	310
1st Grade	1228	659	569
2nd Grade	1171	612	559
3rd Grade	1078	539	539
4th Grade	1105	563	542
5th Grade	992	497	495
<b>n</b>	<b>6144</b>	<b>3130</b>	<b>3014</b>

Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (\*), <5%(\*\*) and <1% (\*\*\*)

**Table 65: Percentage of students served in school meals**

Midterm - Students	All Schools		
	Total	Boy	Girl
Pre-primary	82.3	75.4	89.6
1st Grade	95.0	94.0	96.1
2nd Grade	97.3	97.6	96.9
3rd Grade	97.2	96.8	97.6
4th Grade	97.1	96.9	97.3
5th Grade	96.5	95.8	97.2
<b>n</b>	<b>95.0</b>	<b>94.0</b>	<b>96.2</b>

Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (\*), <5%(\*\*) and <1% (\*\*\*)

## Attendance and attentiveness rates

**Table 66: Average attendance, as identified by teachers**

Grade	All Schools - Baseline	All Schools - Midterm
Boys - Pre-primary	33.4	35.0
Boys - Grade 1	76.1	79.2
Boys - Grade 2	73.0	81.6*
Boys - Grade 3	72.2	73.9
Boys - Grade 4	66.5	71.2
Boys - Grade 5	69.4	65.3
Girls - Pre-primary	32.8	33.8
Girls - Grade 1	74.8	80.6
Girls - Grade 2	75.4	81.5
Girls - Grade 3	70.3	76.6
Girls - Grade 4	70.0	70.1
Girls - Grade 5	64.9	66.5
<b>n</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>67</b>

Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (\*), <5%(\*\*) and <1% (\*\*\*)

**Table 67: Percent of students that are attentive at school**

Midterm - Students	All Schools		
	Total	Boy	Girl
1st Teacher	92.1	38.3	53.9
2nd Teacher	26.9	9.6	17.2
Both Teachers	26.2	9.2	17.0
<b>n</b>	<b>941</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>535</b>

Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (\*), <5%(\*\*) and <1% (\*\*\*)

## SCHOOL OBSERVATIONS

### School information

Table 68: School information - classrooms

Baseline	All	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Schools with pre-primary	82.4				
Percent of schools with above primary grades	0.0				
Average number of classrooms in schools	5.4				
Average number of schools with separate classrooms	64.7				
<b>n</b>	<b>34</b>				
Midterm	All	Stratum 1	Stratum 2	Stratum 3	Stratum 4
Schools with pre-primary	44.1***	52.9	17.7	41.2	64.7
Percent of schools with above primary grades	5.9	0.0	5.9	5.9	11.8
Average number of classrooms in schools	4.5*	5.4	3.1	4.3	5.0
Average number of schools with separate classrooms	29.4***	35.3	11.8	35.3	35.3
<b>n</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>

Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (\*), <5%(\*\*) and <1% (\*\*\*)

Table 69: School information - facilities

Baseline	All	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Percent of schools that have a Library or a place where books are stored	32.3				
Percent of schools that have a storage room/facility	20.6				
Percent of schools that have a kitchen?	8.8				
Percent of schools that have a dining area?	0.0				
Percent of school that have chairs/benches and tables in the dining area	0.0				
<b>n</b>	<b>34</b>				
Midterm	All	Stratum 1	Stratum 2	Stratum 3	Stratum 4
Percent of schools that have a Library or a place where books are stored	51.5*	35.3	11.8	82.4	76.5
Percent of schools that have a storage room/facility	69.1***	64.7	47.1	70.6	94.1
Percent of schools that have a kitchen?	98.5***	94.1	100.0	100.0	100.0
Percent of schools that have a dining area?	82.4***	29.4	100.0	100.0	100.0
Percent of school that have chairs/benches and tables in the dining area	98.2	100.0	94.1	100.0	100.0
<b>n</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>

Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (\*), <5%(\*\*) and <1% (\*\*\*)

## School observations – water

Table 70: School water sources

Baseline	All	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Percent of Schools with a water source	35.3				
<i>n</i>	34				
Percent of Schools with an improved water source	26.5				
Percent of Schools that treat the drinking water	8.3				
Percent of school that have drinking water available for students throughout the day (improved or not)	41.7				
Water sources					
Tap water	25.0				
Bottled water	8.3				
RO plant within school	0.0				
Borehole	50.0				
Protected dug well	0.0				
Unprotected well	8.3				
Protected spring	0.0				
Unprotected spring	16.7				
Rainwater collection	0.0				
Rivers or ponds	0.0				
Vendor-provided water	8.3				
Tanker truck water	0.0				
Other (Specify)	0.0				
<i>n</i>	12				
Midterm	All	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Percent of Schools with a water source	36.8	52.9	29.4	23.5	41.2
<i>n</i>	68	17	17	17	17
Percent of Schools with an improved water source	11.8*	23.5	5.9	17.7	0.0
Percent of Schools that treat the drinking water	44.0**	55.6	20.0	50.0	42.9
Percent of school that have drinking water available for students throughout the day (improved or not)	16.0*	22.2	25.0	14.3	14.3
Water sources					
Tap water	0.0***	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Bottled water	56.0***	23.5	23.5	5.8	29.4
RO plant within school	4.0	5.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
Borehole	24.0	11.8	5.9	17.6	0.0
Protected dug well	4.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Unprotected well	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Protected spring	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Unprotected spring	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Rainwater collection	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Rivers or ponds	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Vendor-provided water	7.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	14.3
Tanker truck water	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other (Specify)	12.0	11.1	0.0	0.0	28.6
<i>n</i>	25	9	5	4	7
Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5%(**) and <1% (***)					



**Table 71: Alternative water sources for students in schools**

Baseline	All	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Buy Bottled water from shops	21.1				
Children carry water from home	79.0				
Get water from neighbours	26.3				
Teachers/cooks bring water	10.0				
School provided water when available	N/A				
<b>n</b>	<b>19</b>				
Midterm	All	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Buy Bottled water from shops	4.2**	10.0	0.0	0.0	9.1
Children carry water from home	87.5	80.0	75.0	93.3	100.0
Get water from neighbors	10.4*	0.0	25.0	13.3	0.0
Teachers/cooks bring water	6.3	0.0	8.3	6.7	9.1
School provided water when available <sup>328</sup>	8.3	30.0	0.0	6.7	0.0
<b>n</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>

Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (\*), <5%(\*\*) and <1% (\*\*\*)

### School observations – sanitation

**Table 72: Presence and types of toilets in schools**

Baseline	All	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Percent of Schools with toilets	91.2				
Percent of schools that male toilets	32.4				
Percent of schools that female toilets	29.4				
Percent of toilets that are for both males and females	61.8				
<b>n</b>	<b>34</b>				
Percent of Schools with separate toilets for boys and girls	48.4				
Type of Toilet					
Flush or pour/flush facilities connected to a: (Piped sewer, septic, pit latrine)	64.5				
Flush or pour/flush toilets without a sewer connection	25.8				
Pit latrines with a slab	0.0				
Pit latrines without slab/open pit	0.0				
Ventilated improved pit latrines	0.0				
<b>n</b>	<b>31</b>				
Midterm	All	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Percent of Schools with toilets	70.6**	88.2	58.8	64.7	70.6
Percent of school that have toilets for males	14.7	29.4	5.8	0.0	23.5
Percent of school that have toilets for females	13.2	29.4	5.8	0.0	17.6
Percent of school that have toilets for males and females	60.3*	64.7	52.9	64.7	58.8
<b>n</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>
Percent of Schools with separate toilets for boys and girls	37.5	53.3	20.0	18.2	50.0
Type of Toilet					
<i>Flush or pour/flush facilities connected to a: (Piped sewer, septic, pit latrine)</i>	50.0	66.6	50.0	36.4	41.7
<i>Flush or pour/flush toilets without a sewer connection</i>	27.1	6.7	50.0	45.5	16.7
<i>Pit latrines with a slab</i>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Pit latrines without slab/open pit</i>	8.3*	26.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Ventilated improved pit latrines</i>	12.5**	0.0	0.0	18.2	33.3

<sup>328</sup> Alternative sources of water provided by the school, but not the primary source.

	<b>n</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5%(**) and <1% (***)						

**Table 73: Average number of toilets in schools**

Baseline	All	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy	
Average number of toilets per school	2.9					
Average number of functioning toilets per school	2.2					
Average number of male toilets per school	0.5					
Average number of female toilets per school	0.4					
Average number of both male and female toilets per school	1.4					
Average number of toilet's that have a locked	1.2					
Average number of toilets with water inside for use	1.9					
<i>Piped Connection</i>	0.4					
<i>Kept in Container</i>	1.5					
Average number of toilets with a small mug inside	1.6					
<b>n</b>	<b>31</b>					
Midterm	All	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy	
Average number of toilets per school	2.7	3.1	2.0	2.6	3.0	
Average number of functioning toilets per school	2.4	2.5	1.8	2.5	2.6	
Average number of male toilets per school	0.3	0.4	0.1	0.0	0.5	
Average number of female toilets per school	0.3	0.5	0.1	0.0	0.3	
Average number of both male and female toilets per school	1.7	1.5	1.6	2.4	1.6	
Average number of toilet's that have a locked	0.6***	0.5	0.2	0.5	1.0	
Average number of toilets with water inside for use	1.3**	1.8	1.1	0.9	1.1	
<i>Piped Connection</i>	0.8	0.7	1.1	0.3	1.1	
<i>Kept in Container</i>	0.5***	1.1	0.0	0.6	0.0	
Average number of toilets with a small mug inside	1.3	1.7	1.0	1.0	1.3	
<b>n</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	
Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5%(**) and <1% (***)						

### School observations – handwashing practices

**Table 74: School Toilets – Handwashing Facilities**

Baseline	All	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Percent of schools that have a functioning hand washing facilities within their area or within the school premises?	44.1				
<b>n</b>	<b>34</b>				
Percent of school that have handwashing facility with access to water for washing purposes?	86.7				
Percent of schools that have a hand washing facility with soap?	33.3				
<b>Percent of schools experiencing insufficient water for the hand washing facility</b>					
Never	46.7				
Rarely	6.7				
Sometimes	46.7				
Always	0.0				
<b>n</b>	<b>15</b>				
Midterm	All	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy

Percent of schools that have a functioning hand washing facilities within their area or within the school premises?	66.2**	76.5	58.8	47.1	82.4
<b>n</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>
Percent of school that have handwashing facility with access to water for washing purposes?	73.3	84.6	80.0	62.5	64.3
Percent of schools that have a hand washing facility with soap?	20.0	23.1	20.0	37.5	7.1
<b>Percent of schools experiencing insufficient water for the hand washing facility</b>					
Never	8.9***	0.0	20.0	12.5	7.1
Rarely	8.9	7.7	10.0	12.5	7.1
Sometimes	6.7***	7.7	0.0	0.0	14.3
Always	75.7	84.6	70.0	75.0	71.4
<b>n</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>14</b>
Difference between WFP Baseline and Midterm Schools are statistically significant at <10% (*), <5%(**) and <1% (***)					

### School observations – school nutrition (Midterm only)

**Table 75: Use of food safety guidelines in schools**

Midterm	All	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Percent of schools using the nutrition and food safety guides developed for cooks and food store managers - As reported by school official	95.6	100.0	100.0	94.1	94.1
Percent of schools using the nutrition and food safety guides developed for cooks and food store managers - As reported by school cook/storekeeper	91.5	86.7	92.9	100.0	87.5
<b>n</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>

**Table 76: Safe food preparation/storage practices, identified by school cooks/storekeepers**

Midterm	All	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Food must be handled and prepared with utmost cleanliness, including proper hand washing before preparing food	42.6	47.1	41.1	35.3	47.1
All staff handling food in school must receive training on basic hygiene	27.9	23.5	35.3	41.2	11.8
Contact between raw foodstuffs and cooked food must be avoided.	16.2	35.3	11.8	5.9	11.8
Food should be cooked thoroughly	45.6	58.8	29.4	35.3	58.8
Food must be kept at safe temperatures.	26.5	41.2	11.8	17.6	35.3
Safe water and safe raw ingredients must be used in food preparation	54.1	64.7	64.7	52.9	35.3
Other	14.7	11.8	5.9	29.4	11.8
Percent of cooks/storekeepers that can identify 3 or more food safety practices	23.5	41.1	11.8	23.5	17.6
<b>n</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>

## School observations – school feeding (midterm only)

**Table 77: Percent of schools with a school meals program**

Baseline	All	Stratum 1	Stratum 2	Stratum 3	Stratum 4
Does your school have a school meals program for its students during the 2022-2023 school year?	0.0				
<i>n</i>	<b>34</b>				
Midterm	All	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Does your school have a school meals program for its students during the 2023-2024 school year?	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Average number of meals provided at schools	1.1	1.0	1.2	1.0	1.0
Which grades did your school provided meals for during the 2023-2024 school year?					
Pre-primary students only	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Primary grade only (P1-P5)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Both pre-primary and primary grades (P1-P5)	47.1	58.8	11.8	52.9	64.7

**Table 78: Type of Meal served by schools**

Midterm	All	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Mid - morning (Snack)	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.8
Average number per day	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.0
Mid-day (lunch time)	98.5	100.0	100.0	100.0	94.1
Average number per day	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.6	4.8
<i>n</i>	<b>68</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>

## School observations – Funding (Midterm only)

**Table 79: School Meals - Sources of money for purchasing food**

Midterm	All	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
Percent of schools with a partnership with a farmer's groups for food during the school year	19.1	23.5	5.9	17.7	29.4
<b>Sources of money for purchasing food</b>					
Donor organizations	17.6	5.9	5.9	23.5	35.2
Parents	82.4	88.2	70.6	76.5	94.1
School budget	26.4	17.6	41.1	11.8	35.3
Donations	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.9
Other	25.0	52.9	11.8	17.6	17.6
<b><i>n</i></b>	<b>68</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>

**Table 80: School Meals - Sources of food for school meals obtained during the 2023-2024 school year**

Midterm	All	Meal Only	Meal & WASH	Meal, WASH & Literacy	Meal & Literacy
WFP	89.7	88.2	70.5	100.0	100.0
Farmer groups	7.4	11.8	0.0	5.9	11.8
Government	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
NGOs provided	89.7	100.0	94.1	88.2	76.5
Parents provided	5.9	5.9	0.0	0.0	17.6
Local markets	16.2	11.8	5.9	11.8	35.3
Kitchen garden	7.4	5.9	11.8	5.9	5.9
<b><i>n</i></b>	<b>68</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>

# Annex 10: Sites visited

The evaluation visited 68 schools across the 17 districts for the midterm evaluation; the student, parent/caregiver and school surveys were conducted in all 68 schools; the literacy assessment was conducted in 20 schools in 4 districts; and deep dives were conducted in 14 schools across 11 districts.

Province	District	Student, Parent/Caregiver and school survey	Literacy Assessment	Deep Dives
Attapeu	Xaysetha			
Bokeo	Meung			
Champasak	Bachiangchaleunsook			
Champasak	Khong			
Champasak	Moonlapamok			
Champasak	Sukhuma			
Khammouan	Bualapha			
Khammouan	Mahaxay			
Khammouan	Nhommalath			
Khammouan	Xaybuathong			
Louangphabang	Park ou			
Salavan	Lakhonepheng			
Savannakhet	Xonbuly			
Vientiane	Feuang			
Vientiane Capital	Sangthong			
Xekong	Lamarm			
Xiengkhouang	Nonghed			
<b>TOTAL</b>		68 schools in 17 districts	20 schools in 4 districts	14 schools in 11 districts

# Annex 11: Key Informant and Focus Group Overview

## SENIOR STAKEHOLDERS

Key informants were interviewed multiple times across the data collection and analysis phase.

Organization	F	M
WFP Lao PDR Country Office	5	7
WFP Regional Bureau Bangkok	2	1
WFP Headquarters	1	
Catholic Relief Services	-	1
National Government of Lao PDR	1	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>9 F</b>	<b>12 M</b>

## FIELD-LEVEL INFORMANTS

### Deep dives

14 schools were selected for deep dives where the following activities were conducted: 2 KIIs (school heads/teachers) and 1 FGD (VEDC)

Number of KIIs in deep dive schools		
District	F	M
Lakhonepheng	-	2
Sukuma	-	2
Bualapha A	1	1
Bualapha B	1	1
Mahaxay	2	-
Xaybuathong	1	2
Xonbury	-	2
Munlapamoke	1	1
Kong	2	-
Saysettha	-	2
Pak ou A	-	2
Pak ou B	2	-
Nonghad A	1	1
Nonghad B	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>11 F</b>	<b>18 M</b>

FGD sessions in deep dive schools		
District	F	M
Lakhonepheng	1	5
Sukuma	3	4
Bualapha A	1	4
Bualapha B	2	-
Mahaxay	1	3
Xaybuathong	1	3
Xonbury	1	4
Munlapamoke	-	8
Kong	-	5
Saysettha	2	2

Pak ou A	-	6
Pak ou B	4	-
Nonghad A	1	4
Nonghad B	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>18 F</b>	<b>49 M</b>

## FIELD-LEVEL INFORMANTS

### DESB and PESS FGDs

Stakeholder	FGDs
District Government Officials (DESB)	17
Provincial Government Officials (PESS)	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>

FGD Breakdown - DESB	M	F
Xaysetha	2	1
Meung	2	0
Bachiangchaleunsook	3	1
Khong	2	2
Moonlapamok	2	2
Sukhuma	1	3
Bualapha	4	0
Mahaxay	2	1
Nhommalath	5	0
Xaybuathong	3	1
Pak ou	2	1
Lakhonepheng	1	2
Xonbuly	2	2
Feuang	2	1
Sangthong	2	2
Lamarm	3	1
Nonghed	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>39 M</b>	<b>21 F</b>

FGD breakdown - PESS	M	F
Attapeu	0	2
Bokeo	1	1
Champasak	2	1
Khammouan	3	1
Louangphabang	2	1
Salavan	2	0
Savannakhet	0	1
Vientiane	0	1
Vientiane Capital	1	0
Xekong	1	2
Xiengkhouang	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>13 M</b>	<b>11 F</b>



# Annex 12: Findings-Conclusions-Recommendations Mapping

Recommendation	Conclusions [by paragraph #]	Findings [by paragraph #]
<b>Recommendation 1 (strategic):</b> Based on the need to strengthen partnerships with key Government agencies involved school meals planning and coordination, continue to strengthen the Technical Working Group for School meals, to foster inter-ministerial collaboration.	208, 231, 232	109 - 112, 114- 117
<b>Recommendation 2 (operational):</b> Given its nascency in this project and strong potential for results, strengthen the agricultural component and market linkage of the project by learning from similar initiatives within the WFP Lao PDR portfolio. Set the foundations for strong agriculture-focused work in future initiatives.	226, 233, 236	158 – 161, 193, 215
<b>Recommendation 3 (operational):</b> To promote harmonization of approaches and results across the project, update Standard Operating Procedures for each activity component, based on experience and reflections from implementation.	226, 233	201 – 203, 206 – 209, 211 - 213
<b>Recommendation 4 (strategic):</b> Strengthen district-level capacity for monitoring and community engagement,	221, 227, 228	196 - 200, 206 – 214, 215 – 217
<b>Recommendation 5 (operational):</b> To understand community contribution and school-level needs more comprehensively, strengthen the monitoring system of the project, and ensure information is shared to the national School Lunch Program.	221, 227, 228	196 - 200
<b>Recommendation 6 (operational):</b> Ensure key lessons and good practices on project processes and results are efficiently and effectively documented to shape future initiatives in school feeding and catalyze innovation in the national School Lunch Program.	221, 227, 228	196 - 200, 203 - 205
<b>Recommendation 7 (operational):</b> Document all modalities of capacity strengthening provided to Village Education Development Committees, given they play an instrumental role in ensuring the success of school meals implementation in Lao PDR.	232	144, 163, 199, 215 – 217

<b>Recommendation 8 (operational):</b> As transition planning is currently underway, work with project schools to develop a continuation plan for school meals under the national program.	234	213 – 214
<b>Recommendation 9 (operational):</b> Expand the scope of work for the endline evaluation to include methodological considerations proposed at midterm: (i) recalculate baseline values, (ii) mirror midterm sampling approach, (iii) include a cost-analysis of the project	235	70, 104 - 105, <sup>329</sup> 178

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<sup>329</sup> Recommendation developed in view of the limitations arising from the midterm.

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# Annex 14: Acronyms

<b>BMZ</b>	Federal Ministry for Economic Development and Cooperation (Germany)
<b>CCL</b>	Cooperative Committee for Lao PDR
<b>CCS</b>	Country Capacity Strengthening
<b>CO</b>	Country Office
<b>CRS</b>	Catholic Relief Services
<b>CSP</b>	Country Strategic Plan
<b>DCF</b>	District Community Facilitators
<b>DESB</b>	District Education and Sports Bureau
<b>EQ</b>	Evaluation Question
<b>FGD</b>	Focus Group Discussion
<b>GAM</b>	Gender and Age Marker
<b>GEWE</b>	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
<b>HDI</b>	Human Development Index
<b>IEPC</b>	Inclusive Education Promotion Center
<b>KII</b>	Key Informant Interview
<b>LESMIS</b>	Lao Education and Sport Management Information System
<b>LOP</b>	Life-of-Project
<b>LRP</b>	Local and Regional Procurement
<b>LSB</b>	Lao Statistics Bureau
<b>LSR</b>	Lao Social Research
<b>LWU</b>	Lao Women's Union
<b>MAFRA</b>	Ministry of Agriculture, food and Rural Affairs (Republic of Korea)
<b>NNC</b>	National Nutrition Committee
<b>NNSPA</b>	National Nutrition Strategy and Action Plan
<b>NSEDP</b>	National Socio-Economic Development Plan
<b>SLP</b>	National School Lunch Program



<b>ODK</b>	Open Data Kit
<b>OEV</b>	Office of Evaluation
<b>PA</b>	Pedagogical Advisors
<b>PESS</b>	Provincial Education and Sports Services
<b>PII</b>	Personally Identifiable Information
<b>PMP</b>	Performance Monitoring Plan
<b>PPS</b>	Probability Proportional to the Size
<b>RIES</b>	Research Institute for Educational Sciences
<b>RMNCAH</b>	Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health
<b>RTI</b>	Tangerine data collection software
<b>SABER</b>	System Approach for Better Education Results
<b>SBCC</b>	Social Behaviour Change Communication
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SFP</b>	School Feeding Program
<b>SLP</b>	School Lunch Program
<b>SM-TWG</b>	School Meals Technical Working Group
<b>SNAP</b>	School Nutrition and Agriculture Promotion
<b>ToR</b>	Terms of Reference
<b>UN-SWAP</b>	United Nations System-Wide Action Plan
<b>UNEG</b>	United Nations Evaluation Group
<b>USD</b>	US Dollars
<b>USDA</b>	US Department of Agriculture
<b>VEDC</b>	Village Education Development Committees
<b>WASH</b>	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme

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