



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Lao PDR Country Brief

May 2025

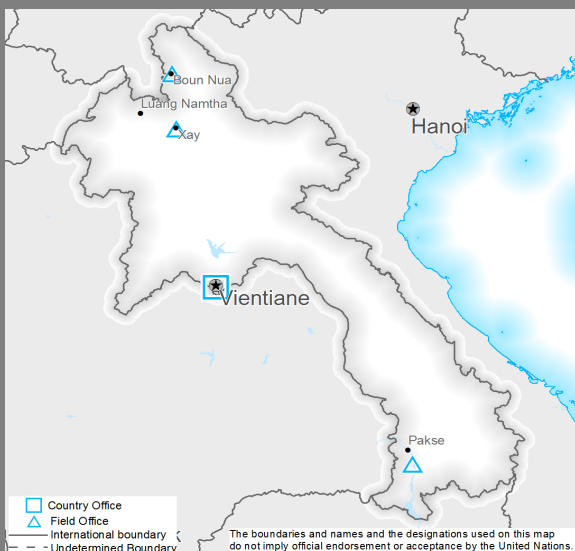


Operational Context

Lao PDR is a least developed country, with one of the lowest population densities in Asia. Eighteen percent of the population lives below the national poverty line (US\$2.15/day), with a GDP per capita of US\$2,067 (World Bank 2023). The country is ranked 89 out of 146 countries in the Gender Inequality Index 2024. While the poverty rate in Lao PDR more than halved in the past two decades, the 2024 Global Hunger Index rates hunger levels as “moderate”.

Climate change is a key challenge facing the rural population, and the country is vulnerable due to its low adaptability and high dependence on climate-sensitive natural resources. Changing climate patterns, combined with poor access to both markets and diverse livelihoods, further worsen the situation in remote upland areas, where over 20 percent of households are food insecure.

WFP has been present in Lao PDR since 1975.



Population: **7.5 million**

2022 Human Development Index: **147 out of 193 countries**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

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

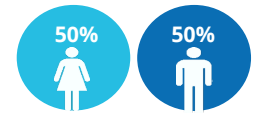
In Numbers

179 mt of food dispatched

US\$ 628,782 cash distributed

US\$ 2.34 million six-month (June-November 2025) net funding requirements

82,931 people assisted in May



Operational Updates

- Organized by the Ministry of Planning and Investment, WFP, the International Fund for Agriculture and Development (IFAD) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations attended the inception meeting of the Home-Grown School Meals initiative in Vientiane. This event showcased the Government's strong commitment to continue expanding school meals.
- WFP distributed US\$99,800 to 701 households who have completed the farmer nutrition school modules, in Thateng district, Sekong province. Each household received a one-off assistance, amounting to US\$142. The support targeted women and farmer groups, particularly households with pregnant and breastfeeding women and caregivers of children under 2 years of age. Families can use the grants to grow vegetables or raise small animals for both household consumption and sale to schools for preparing lunches. The integration of nutrition and school meals programmes has contributed to improving the health of mothers, young children, and schoolchildren.
- WFP, in collaboration with IFAD and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, visited three villages in Attapeu and Oudomxay provinces, where the Agriculture for Nutrition 2 project is being implemented. The team engaged with farmer nutrition schools, agriculture producer groups, nutrition facilitators, and village authorities. They assessed the progress of the implementation and confirmed that malnutrition remains a critical issue in the visited areas.
- WFP, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, distributed US\$528,982 to 3,261 smallholder farmers across 71 villages in four provinces. Each farmer received a grant of US\$162 to purchase farming inputs such as seeds, tools, fertilizers, and machinery. This cash support aims at increasing the production of high-value wet season crops as a key component of the Asian Development Bank's Sustainable Rural Infrastructure and Watershed Management Sector Project.

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Country Strategic Plan (2022-2026)

Total Requirement (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in US\$)
100.72 m	113.93 m	2.34 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

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

Focus area: Root causes

Activities:

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

Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition

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

Focus area: Root causes

Activities:

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

Strategic Result 4: Food systems are sustainable

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

Focus area: Resilience building

Activities:

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

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

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

Focus area: Crisis response

Activities:

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

Donors

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

- WFP, in partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, delivered logistics and supply chain trainings to 66 government officials from various line ministries across eight provinces. The trainings covered the disaster management cycle, humanitarian actors, supply chain and procurement during emergencies, relief item management, emergency coordination, and the legal framework in Lao PDR
- WFP, in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, completed an assessment on the use of national social registry for early recovery food security targeting. This was piloted during the flood response in Luang Namtha province. The findings confirmed that, with targeted adaptations, community engagement, and stronger coordination with government systems, the national social registry can serve as an effective platform for shock-responsive assistance. Key recommendations included improving the accuracy of social registry data, refining targeting criteria with additional food security indicators, strengthening grievance mechanisms, and leveraging upcoming research to better align assistance to the social registry data with food security data.
- WFP celebrated the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Interphobia, and Transphobia with the theme "The Power of Communities." The event featured a panel discussion with representatives from four local civil society organizations. It focused on raising staff awareness, reaffirming WFP's and the UN's commitment to equality and dignity for all, and promoting a safe, inclusive, and respectful workplace free from discrimination based on gender identity or sexual orientation.

Story from the field



Toumkham picks vegetables in her backyard. ©WFP/Vilakhone Sipaseuth

Toumkham, a 24-year-old farmer, lives in Phonkham village, Xiengkhouang province. She is expecting her second child. Toumkham once believed that resting during pregnancy was a sign of laziness. In her village, women are expected to keep working hard, regardless of how they feel during their pregnancy.

After joining the Farmer Nutrition Club - a nutrition initiative supported by the EU and ADB, Toumkham began to understand the importance of balanced diets and proper rest for her and her baby's health. Using the grant, she also started growing fresh, nutritious leafy vegetables in her backyard. "Before, I never allowed myself to slow down, now I know it's part of being a strong mother," Toumkham says with a smile.