



World Food Programme

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# WFP Lao PDR Country Brief

August 2025

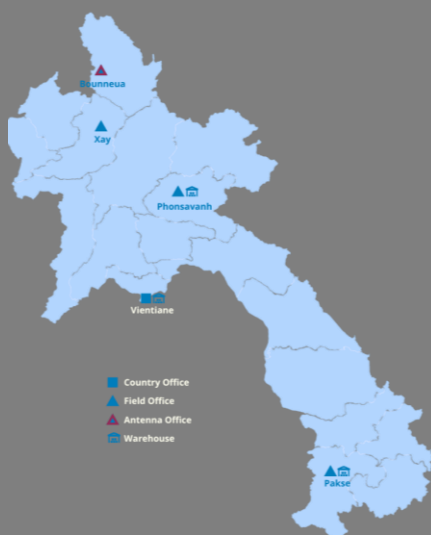


## Operational Context

Lao PDR is a least developed landlocked country, with one of the lowest population densities in Asia. Eighteen percent of the population lives below the national poverty line (USD 2.15/day), with a GDP per capita of USD 2,067 (World Bank 2023). The country is ranked 89 out of 146 countries in the 2024 Gender Inequality Index. 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

**USD1.98 million** six-month (September 2025 – February 2026) net funding requirement

**3,219** people received capacity strengthening support in August

78%

22%

## WFP's food security monitoring April-June 2025:

- Food insecurity dropped to 6 percent in June, the lowest level since 2022.
- Food security worsened in Salavan and Khammouan provinces, due to recent floods and persistent structural vulnerabilities.
- Education, income source, and household sizes strongly influence families' coping strategies.

## Operational Updates

- WFP supported a study facilitated by the Ministries of Health, Education and Sports to test whether children, parents and school cooks accept to eat glutinous rice fortified with vitamins and minerals. The positive findings showed the potential for fortified rice to be produced in Lao PDR to help address micronutrient deficiencies.
- WFP and the Ministry of Health co-chaired the first Technical Working Group meeting for the Cost of Food and Nutrition (COFAN) study. The working group is responsible for facilitating technical coordination and ensuring the validation of data required for the study and its findings. Participants from ministries across nutrition, health, education, finance and agriculture, along with development partners, provided their inputs and feedback on the COFAN methodology and implementation plan.
- In August, 302 village nutrition facilitators from 75 villages were trained as part of the Agriculture for Nutrition Phase 2 project. These facilitators will engage with households on home gardening and will lead cooking demonstrations (see photo above), to help families learn practical ways to prepare nutritious meals using produce from their gardens. This approach enhances household food production and promotes diverse, healthy diets.
- With support from WFP, the Ministry of Health organized its first national workshop on rice fortification. Over 70 participants from government ministries, the National Assembly, technical experts, development partners, and private sector stakeholders attended the event. Experts shared global, regional, and national experiences and evidence, and discussed roles and coordination mechanisms. The workshop launched the process of drafting national rice fortification standards and regulatory frameworks. Subsequently, a Food Fortification Technical Working Group will be established to develop policies, rice fortification standards, guidelines, and a fortification pilot.

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## Country Strategic Plan (2022-2026)

Total Requirement (in US\$)	Allocated Contributions (in US\$)	Six Month Net Funding Requirement (in US\$)
100.72 m	114.39 m	1.98 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.

### Strategic Result 5: Countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDGs

**Strategic Outcome 5:** The Government of Lao PDR, humanitarian and development partners have access to reliable common services on demand.

**Focus area:** Crisis response

#### Activities:

- Provide coordination and on-demand services to the Government of Lao PDR, humanitarian and development partners.

- WFP organized a Disaster Risk Finance Orientation workshop with participants from government ministries, including Labour and Social Welfare, Agriculture and Environment, and Finance, as well as representatives from international organizations and development partners, such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and the Bank of Lao PDR. The workshop focused on securing funding before disasters ("money-in") and rapidly releasing funds to disaster-affected households ("money-out"). It provided a platform to strengthen coordination and improve financial readiness to enhance disaster resilience in Lao PDR.
- As part of WFP's community engagement efforts, organizations of persons with disabilities were, for the first time, involved in planning the emergency response for the upcoming cash assistance related to Tropical Storm Wipha.
- WFP staff, including Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse focal points, took part in a dedicated training week organized by the UN partners to strengthen knowledge and skills in these areas.

## Story from the field



Dedkeo enjoys meals with her children. Photo: WFP/Vilakhone Sipaseuth

Dedkeo Thor, a 24-year-old Hmong woman in Luang Prabang province, is a village facilitator. She helps other women in her community understand the importance of nutrition and how to grow healthy food for their families to address malnutrition.

When a Japan-supported coffee project started in her village last year, jointly implemented by WFP, the Japanese company Saka no Tochu and the local business Saffron Coffee, Dedkeo saw an opportunity: not only to earn more income, but also to protect her community's land and forest through sustainable farming techniques.

"I hope we will have a good harvest of coffee beans. Together with the healthy produce I plant in the garden, my kids can eat well, grow strong and go to school to learn," Dedkeo says with a smile. For her, a better life for her children means not only good health through nutritious food, but also a healthier environment where they can grow up safely.

## 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