



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
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WFP Lao PDR Country Brief

October 2025



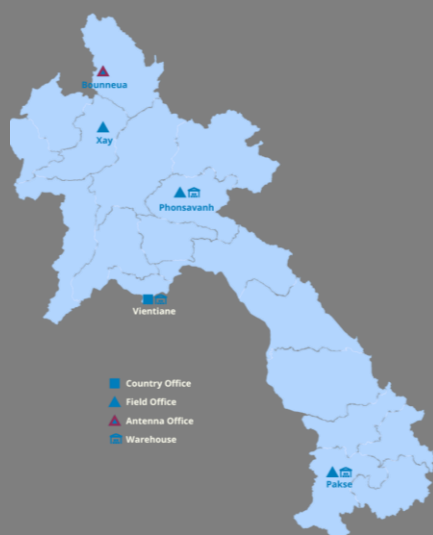
Farmers in Nga district, Oudomxay province prepare a microorganism fertilizer for plant cultivation. Photo: WFP/ Chansamai Phommachan

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 89th 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

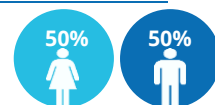
Chronic malnutrition: 33% of children
between 6-59 months

In Numbers

172 mt of food dispatched, **USD 284,592** cash distributed

USD 1.6 million six-month (November 2025 – April 2026) net funding requirement

140,119 people assisted



Operational Updates

- WFP and the Ministry of Education and Sports participated in the Rockefeller Foundation's [AsiaXchange](#) forum in Jakarta, Indonesia. The event provided Lao PDR with an opportunity to share experiences from its national school meals programme and learn from best practices across the region. The event underscored the importance of regional collaboration and multi-sectoral partnerships in driving sustainable development, and explored ways to harness Public-Private-Philanthropy alliances as powerful enablers for scaling up innovation and localised initiatives.
- WFP conducted a training on cash-based assistance in emergency response, targeting 42 participants from the Department of Social Welfare, Lao Red Cross, and Organizations of Persons with Disabilities. The training enhanced participants' capacity to plan, implement, and monitor cash-based interventions in emergency contexts. Key topics included beneficiary targeting, delivery mechanisms, accountability, and coordination, while strengthening national readiness for inclusive and timely responses during future shocks.
- To facilitate recovery of communities from the impacts of tropical storm Wipha in July this year, WFP, in coordination with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and the Lao Red Cross distributed cash assistance. In total, USD 284,592 was handed out to 12,390 severely affected people in Houaphan and Xiengkhuang provinces. This cash assistance supported immediate food and livelihood needs of families following the disaster.
- WFP, in collaboration with the Centre of Nutrition under the Ministry of Health, organized a technical training for medium- and large-scale rice millers to advance rice fortification. The event aimed to raise awareness among private sector stakeholders about nutrition and micronutrient deficiencies in Lao PDR, while strengthening the technical capacity of rice millers in fortification processes, blending operations, and quality assurance and control. Eight companies including seven rice milling companies and one food processing company from Vientiane Capital, Khammouane, and Savannakhet provinces participated in the training. Joined by the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, site visits to these companies were organised to assess their operational capacity, technical readiness, and facility conditions for participation in the rice fortification initiative. These

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Country Strategic Plan (2022-2026)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Six Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
116.4 m	114.4 m	1.6 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.

assessments represent a critical step toward establishing a public-private partnership model, positioning the private sector as key contributors to the production and scale-up of fortified rice in Lao PDR.

- Under the Agriculture for Nutrition Phase 2, a series of agricultural trainings were provided to 284 Village Nutrition Facilitators and lead farmers across six districts in Oudomxay and Attapeu provinces. These local leaders will serve as peer educators, transferring knowledge to villagers in their communities to help increase household food production and improve nutrition and dietary diversity. The training covered topics such as microorganism fertilizer production, soil preparation, plant grafting and propagation, plant disease management, poultry vaccination, and livestock care with awareness and prevention of common animal diseases.

Story from the field



Phonesida feels grateful as she watches her four-month-old baby grow healthy. Photo: WFP/Vilakhone Sipaseuth

Phonesida, a 32-year-old mother, lives in Poungsieng village in Houaphan province, Northeastern Lao PDR. This July was a time of mixed emotions for her: joy at welcoming her newborn baby, and fear as tropical storm Wipha brought devastating damage to her home and community.

"Our house and our village were totally destroyed by the storm. The whole area was flooded, and we had to move to the highland in the mountains, where the forest offered the only safe place. I carried my newborn baby through the forest, not knowing what we would find there. I was scared. Luckily, we survived," Phonesida recalls with a relieved smile.

To help families like Phonesida's recover from the disaster, WFP and the Government of Lao PDR, with support from Ireland and Luxembourg, provided cash assistance to meet families' immediate needs and support their recovery from the flood.

Holding her now four-month-old baby and the money she just received, Phonesida says: "I am so thankful for this. It is such a relief that my baby is healthy and that we can receive support to buy food for her. It is very important for us in this difficult situation."

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.