



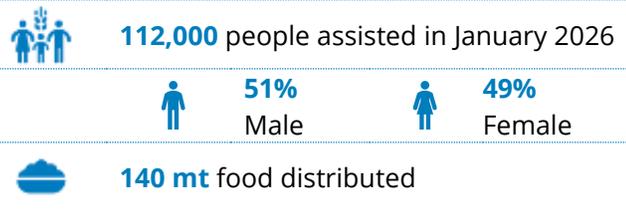
# WFP Lao PDR

COUNTRY BRIEF  
January 2026

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- WFP dispatched 140 mt of rice, oil, canned fish, assisting 112,000 students with school meals throughout the second half of the academic year.
- WFP assists Lao PDR in improving school meal programs by training 63 participants on effectively use data collection tools and supporting the transition to a national lunch initiative, working with government and partners to boost child nutrition.
- Community Feedback Mechanism (CFM) task force members received refresher training on protection, accountability, and knowledge-sharing to enhance field performance.

## IN NUMBERS



**Photo Caption & Credit:** Children happily eating lunch prepared with ingredients sourced locally from farmers in Sekong. WFP/Vilakhone Sipaseuth

## SITUATION OVERVIEW

- The Lao People's Democratic Republic is a landlocked, least developed nation with a population of 7.8 million. As of 2024/2025, about 15 percent of its people live below the national poverty line of USD 1.10 per day. Despite poverty dropping by over half in the past twenty years, the 2024 Global Hunger Index rates the country's hunger as "moderate."
- Climate change is a major challenge facing the rural population and the country is vulnerable due to its low adaptability and heavy dependence on climate-sensitive natural resources. Changing climate patterns, limited access to markets and varied livelihoods, further worsen the situation in remote upland areas: Over 20 percent of households are food insecure. Chronic malnutrition affects 33 percent of children under five, while micronutrient deficiencies are high and overnutrition is on the rise in urban areas.
- WFP has been present in Lao PDR since 1976.



## OPERATIONAL UPDATES

- WFP conducted two trainings for data collectors on community capacity assessment for the school meals programme, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to effectively use data collection tools prior to field deployment. Findings from the assessment will inform the transition plan from the WFP's school meals to the National School Lunch Programme, led by the Ministry of Education and Sports with support from WFP and Catholic Relief Services (CRS). Sixty-three participants, representing the Ministry, sub-national education offices, CRS, and WFP field offices from 17 districts across 11 provinces attended.
- Progress on rice fortification continued through sustained engagement with policymakers, technical experts, and private sector stakeholders, advancing national standards and regulatory approval. The third Rice Fortification Technical Working Group meeting finalized draft ministerial agreement articles, and rice fortification standard. A consultative meeting with private sector actors gathered practical inputs to ensure the proposed articles are appropriate, feasible, and implementable, supporting the development of a legal framework for mandatory rice fortification in Lao PDR.
- WFP, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and the Lao Red Cross, concluded an after-action review to assess the effectiveness of emergency assistance provided in 2025 and identify improvement priorities. Cash-based assistance was highly valued by affected communities for its flexibility and relevance, and that strong partner collaboration enabled timely and accountable delivery. Key challenges include limited disaster management capacities at district level, insufficient community coordination, tight planning and preparation timelines, and issues with beneficiary identity management due to the limited use of unique beneficiary IDs. Strengthening geographic and beneficiary targeting is a priority for 2026.
- Community Feedback Mechanism (CFM) task force members received refresher training on protection and accountability to affected populations, to strengthen their skills and improve CFM performance at field level, while supporting ongoing knowledge-sharing with staff and communities. Newly recruited staff also received an introduction to CFM roles and key ethical standards, including the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, as well as fraud and corruption, ensuring they have the essential knowledge for their work.

## Story from the field



Syved lives in Sekong, a highland province in southern Lao PDR, with the country's highest food insecurity rate at 22 percent.

For most of her life, she cared for her family's coffee trees, but depending solely on coffee wasn't enough to sustain her household. Unpredictable weather and pests often cut her harvests short and reduced her earnings. When WFP's home-grown school meals initiative, supported by the Government of Germany, began in her village, Syved saw a new opportunity. After gaining knowledge in soil management and vegetable cultivation, she started a home garden. She now sells fresh, nutritious vegetables to local schools for school lunches, and sells any extra produce at the local market. "Previously, I only made money once a year after the coffee harvest. With this garden, I can grow crops consistently and earn an income all year round. It has truly changed my life." Syved says, smiling. Syved takes particular pride in supplying vegetables that contribute to healthier meals for children, including her own son's school lunch plates, supporting their growth and ability to focus academically.

## FUNDING OVERVIEW

### Country Strategic Plan (2022-2026)

2026 FUNDING	US\$14.55 M	US\$29.20 M
6-MONTHS NFR	US\$.0 M	
■ REQUIREMENT ■ RECEIVED ❌ NET FUNDING REQUIREMENT		

### Donors:

Asian Development Bank (ADB), Australia, 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.