



WFP Lao PDR Country Brief

Highlights

- The Ministry of Planning and Investment and WFP officially launched the Country Strategic Plan (CSP) for 2017-2021 and signed the Memorandum of Understanding. The CSP will support the Government in its journey toward middle income status, and in achieving the Sustainable Development Goal targets.
- The Ministry of Health and WFP held a consultation workshop with development partners on "Filling the Nutrient Gap" in Lao PDR.

WFP Country Strategy

	Total Requirements (in USD)	Total Received (in USD)	6 Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)*
Lao PDR Country Strategic Plan 2017-2021	85.5 m	11.5 m (13%)	6.7 m (8%)
Strategic Outcome 1: Schoolchildren in remote rural areas have sustainable access to food by 2021.			
SR: 1 Focus area: Root causes	48.7 m	3.8 m (8%)	4.0 m (8%)
Strategic Outcome 2: Stunting levels among children under 2 in provinces with high levels of malnutrition meet national targets by 2025.			
SR: 2 Focus area: Root causes	23.6 m	5.9 m (25%)	1.7 m (7%)
Strategic Outcome 3: Vulnerable households in climate-sensitive districts are more resilient to seasonal and long-term shocks and stresses.			
SR: 4 Focus area: Resilience	8.4 m	0.2 m (2%)	0.4 m (5%)
Strategic Outcome 4: National and local governance institutions are strengthened to improve service delivery, especially in hard-to-reach areas, by 2025.			
SR: 5 Focus area: Root causes	4.7 m	1.6 m (34%)	0.6 m (13%)

*May 2017 – March 2021

GENDER MARKER 2A 

Strategic Outcome 1: Schoolchildren in remote rural areas have sustainable access to food by 2021.

Strategic Outcome 2: Stunting levels among children under 2 in provinces with high levels of malnutrition meet national targets by 2025.

Strategic Outcome 3: Vulnerable households in climate-sensitive districts are more resilient to seasonal and long-term shocks and stresses.

Strategic Outcome 4: National and local governance institutions are strengthened to improve service delivery, especially in hard-to-reach areas, by 2025.

WFP's long-term goal in Lao PDR is to support the Government's vision of "a prosperous country, with a healthy population, free from food insecurity, malnutrition and poverty". WFP will gradually shift from the provision of food assistance to policy engagement and capacity development for a gradual handover of food assistance.

The Country Strategic Plan takes important steps towards WFP's strategic direction for strengthened national and local capacity, whereby the Government and communities independently own, manage and implement food and nutrition security programmes by 2030.

The Country Strategic Plan is based on whole-of-society consultations, which included the Government, communities, donors, UN agencies, financial institutions and civil society. The four strategic outcomes focus on key challenges faced by Lao PDR: food insecurity, malnutrition, low resilience to climate change, and the governance structure that is needed to address these priorities.

The Country Strategic Plan contributes to the achievement of the Government's 8th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2016-2020), sectoral strategies and plans of action, the United Nations Partnership Framework (2017-2021), and the Sustainable Development Goals 2, 4, 5, 13 and 17.

In Numbers

160,216 people assisted

May 2017



Main Photo

Credit: WFP/Bart Verweij
Caption: Women selling vegetables at a local market in Sing District, northern Lao PDR.

May 2017

Operational Updates

- The Country Strategic Plan 2017-2021 was launched on 5 May, and a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Ministry of Planning and Investment and WFP defining roles and responsibilities for the implementation of the CSP. The Government and WFP have also organised a workshop to agree on work plans with relevant line ministries for 2017.
- The Ministry of Health and WFP presented the key findings of the “Fill the Nutrient Gap” analysis, which identified: i) factors that influence the cost of a healthy and nutritious diet, and ii) context-specific and cost-effective solutions for improving children’s nutritional intake during the first 1,000 days of life. The final report is expected in August.
- Cash-based transfers started in 70 schools in Luang Namtha and Oudomxay provinces, in alignment with the National Policy on Promoting School Lunch. Schools receive a transfer of US¢ 10 per student per day to procure fresh food from local farmers to complement the rice and oil provided by McGovern-Dole and the vegetables from the school gardens.

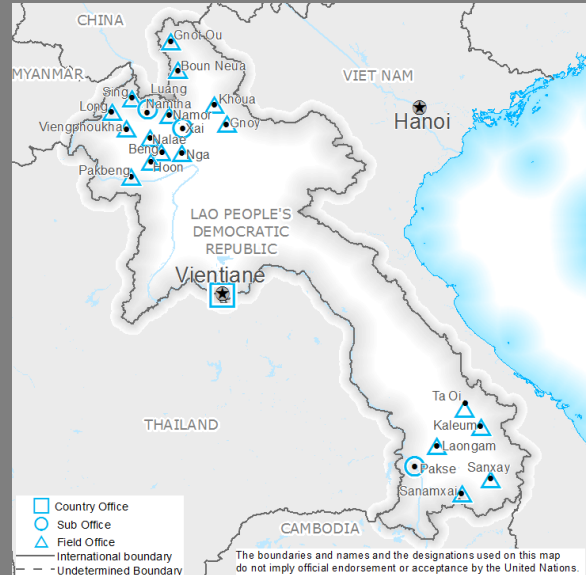
Challenges

- Raising sufficient contributions to ensure children aged 6-23 months have access to specialised nutritious food is difficult, as donors are funding regular food items. The activity will face a pipeline break in the coming months if funds are not secured by mid-2017.

Partnerships

- Within the framework of the joint Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry/International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)/WFP project, funded by the Global Agriculture Food and Security Programme, to support food and nutrition security in targeted vulnerable areas: i) 61 villages will receive training on how to prepare nutrition-sensitive investment plans by identifying their infrastructure priorities; and ii) farmer nutrition schools will be established. Women will receive grants to cover individual and collective investments in vegetables, aquaculture, or small livestock production to address seasonal gaps in household food and nutrition security.
- The implementation of the joint project between the National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute (NAFRI) and WFP on improving farmers’ adaptation and resilience to climate change has started. The Institute has: i) developed crop management strategies for rice and shared them with farmers; ii) installed rainfall measurement systems in villages; and iii) established seven climate-smart field schools to further build farmers’ capacity through practical demonstrations. In addition, the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology has agreed to share information on seasonal and sub-seasonal climate forecast, which will be relayed to the farmers by NAFRI.

Country Background



Lao PDR is a least developed country, ranking 138 out of 188 countries in the 2015 Human Development Index. It has one of the lowest population densities in Asia at 27 people per km². Up to 28 percent of the population lives below the national poverty line (USD 1.25/day), with a GNI per capita of USD 1,740 (World Bank 2015). The country is ranked 57 out of 145 nations in the Global Gender Gap Index 2015.

While Lao PDR has managed to reduce the proportion of hungry poor to 23 percent, the 2015 Global Hunger Index still rates hunger levels as “serious”. Malnutrition remains a major challenge with stunting affecting 37.6 percent of boys and 33.6 percent of girls (Lao Child Anthropometry Assessment Survey).

Climate change is a key challenge facing rural livelihoods, and the country is the world’s 73rd most vulnerable to climate change due to its low adaptability and its 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 25 percent of households are food insecure.

WFP has been present in the country since 2000.

Population: **6.5 million**

2015 Human Development Index: **141 out of 188**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **35.6% of children between 6-59 months**

Donors

USA, Australia, Japan, Luxembourg, European Union, Lao PDR, Private Donors

Contact info: lao.communication@wfp.org

Country Director: Sarah Gordon-Gibson

Further information: www.wfp.org/countries/lao-peoples-democratic-republic