

Highlights

- On 03 October, WFP Lao PDR welcomed a new McGovern Dole contribution totalling USD27.4 million that will provide daily school meals for nearly 150,000 children, in seven provinces, over four years.
- WFP supported and participated in the first Lao National Nutrition Technical Symposium; the Minister of Health chaired the opening and closing sessions, which were co-chaired by the US Ambassador and WFP Country Director, respectively.

WFP Lao PDR Country Brief

WFP Country Strategy

	Total Requirements (in USD)	Total Received (in USD)	6 Month Funding Requirements (in USD)*1
Lao PDR Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021)	85.3 m	24.3 m (28%)	9.4 m
Strategic Outcome 1: School children in remote rural areas have sustainable access to food by 2021			
SR: 1 - Everyone has access to food Focus area: Root causes	48.7 m	16 m (32%)	6.3 m
Strategic Outcome 2: Stunting levels among children under 2 in provinces with high levels of malnutrition meet national levels by 2025			
SR: 2 - No one suffers from malnutrition Focus area: Root causes	23.6 m	5.1 m (22%)	2.1 m
Strategic Outcome 3: Vulnerable households in climate-sensitive districts are more resilient to seasonal and long-term shocks and stresses			
SR: 4 - Food systems are sustainable Focus area: Resilience	8.4 m	0.8 m (10%)	0.4
Strategic Outcome 4: National and local governance institutions are strengthened to improve service delivery, especially in hard-to-reach areas, by 2025			
SR: 5 - Developing countries have strengthened capacities to implement the SDGs Focus area: Root causes	4.6 m	2.4 m (52%)	0.6

*November, 2017 – April, 2018



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.

Main Photo

Credit: WFP/Rein Skullerud
Caption: A student of a WFP-supported school in Northern Lao PDR.

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 to facilitate a hand-over of activities to government counterparts.

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.

¹Figures for received funding and six month funding requirements are as per Country Office pipeline.

In Numbers

512,261 people assisted

October 2017



October 2017

Operational Updates

- In early October, WFP received the final 2017 McGovern Dole in-kind food donations, from USDA: 3,900mt of rice, 1,060mt of lentils and 230mt of fortified vegetable oil for the provision of school-lunches to just under 150,000 children. The in-kind ingredients are complimented with: 1) local produce from dietary diversity initiatives, such as fish farming; and 2) fresh fruit and vegetables contributed by the community, sourced from school gardens, or bought from farmer groups participating in the USDA-funded Local and Regional Procurement Programme.
- The first Lao National Nutrition Technical Symposium took place from 31 October to 01 November and was organized by the National Nutrition Committee Secretariat together with various government ministries, international donors and UN agencies, including WFP. Over 400 delegates—government and development partners, academia, clinicians, students, media and private sector—attended 30 scientific presentations in ten technical sessions. Formulated recommendations will be presented for endorsement at the National Nutrition Forum.

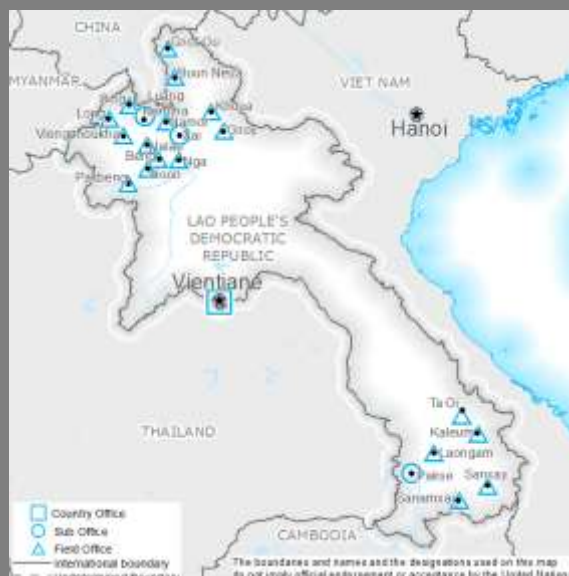
Challenges

- As of early 2018, funding gaps for Strategic Outcome 2—which aims to reduce stunting rates to national targets by 2025—necessitate prioritization of activities. With current forecasts, the phasing out of specialised nutritious food provision for pregnant and lactating women, planned for 2019, will be advanced to commence in 2018.

Partnerships

- On 19 October, the WFP Country Director met with the Minister of Education to share news of the new McGovern Dole contribution and discuss the road map for the SMP hand-over. The Minister acknowledged the importance of allocating government budgets and establishing governance structures for a successful transition to national ownership.
- An agreement has been signed with the Lao Disabled People's Association to build the capacity of all staff in disabilities and mainstream disabilities in its activities. In addition, WFP is: i) providing support to two special schools for children with disabilities in Vientiane and Luang Prabang; ii) carrying out a disability targeted nutrition communication campaign; and iii) recording the number of disabled people WFP is supporting.
- Within the framework of the school meals programme, an agreement has been signed with the Association for Aid and Relief-Japan to establish frog ponds in schools.
- WFP continues to enhance its partnership with the World Bank through the signed joint Letter of Cooperation for the provision of cook stoves to reduce exposure to smoke among women and children. WFP will be providing cook stoves in 50 villages in Nalae district, Luang Namtha province.

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 - 2015).

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

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