In Numbers

392.779 mt of food assistance distributed

US$ 0.26 million (May-Oct 2019) net funding requirements

157,848 people assisted

49% of female, 51% of male

Operational Updates

- WFP's Agriculture for Nutrition project is supporting target villages in their preparation of village development plans, with the aim of improving agricultural productivity and quality of life in the communities. 88 village development plans have been submitted to the district authorities, after which the communities can apply for grants to fund agricultural infrastructure projects.

- Preparations for handing over the first batch of 515 school meals programmes in northern provinces to Government and communities are in full swing. The handover ceremony will happen at Bor primary school, Lar District, Oudomxay Province, in the presence of the Deputy Ministers of Education and Sports and Agriculture and Forestry, as well as WFP's Executive Director and FAO's Director General.

- The next shipment of food from USDA through the McGovern Dole school feeding initiative has arrived in Bangkok and is being trucked to Vientiane. This shipment is comprised of 2200 mt of rice, 660 mt of lentils, and 260 mt of oil. These quantities will cover school meal activities for the period of September 2019 until May 2020.

120 mt of rice has arrived which will support the continued recovery of people affected by the floods of 2018 in the south of the country.

Operational Context

Lao PDR is a least developed country, ranking 139 out of 189 countries in the 2017 Human Development Index. It has one of the lowest population densities in Asia. 23 percent of the population lives below the national poverty line (USD 1.25/day), with a gross national income per capita of USD 2,270 (World Bank 2017). The country is ranked 64 out of 144 in the Global Gender Gap Index 2017.

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”. Climate change is a key challenge facing rural livelihoods, and the country is 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 Lao PDR since 1975.

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“I didn’t understand the connection between food and health. I just did what everybody does here - follow what our grandparents taught us”, Chan, from Naphan Village in Xieng Khouang Province says. “But now I have new knowledge, and I understand that changes are needed to protect the future of my family. I am willing to break with tradition.”

In WFP-supported Farmer Nutrition Schools, women learn about the six food groups and how to vary their diets to include all of them in their family's daily meals.

“Earlier, when my husband and I went to work in the fields, we would leave our children with my parents and leave some food for them. The health of my first child suffered and she was often sick. I wasn't breastfeeding because I was in the fields all day. Now, with my second child, I know the importance of exclusive breastfeeding until 6 months of age and how to prevent stunting with healthy food. I decided to stay home so I could feed my baby throughout the day and my husband manages the farm alone. I am also eating more and better foods, and I have more milk for the baby,” Chan says with satisfaction.

**Donors**

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