



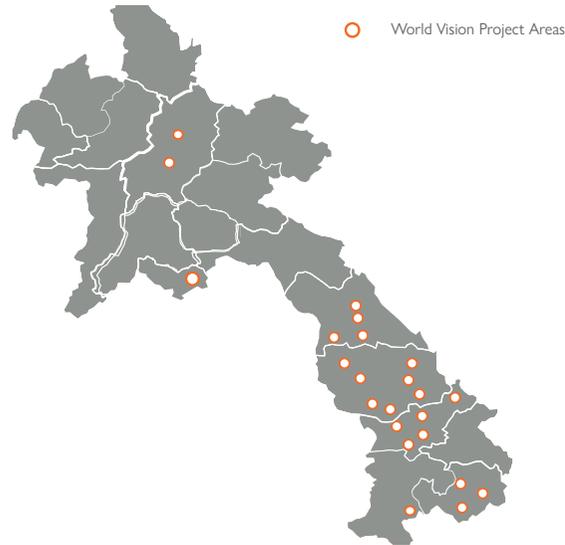
Lao PDR Situation Report

14 May 2021

COVID 19 Update

Covid-19 cases rapidly increased after the Lao New Year celebration in mid-April, with 15 of 18 provinces recording positive cases. All Provinces issued an initial 14 day-lockdown following the lead of the central government from April 22, 2021 to control the outbreak. On 4 May, the lockdown was extended to 20 May 2020, with restrictions varying per province.

The Ministry of Health together with UN, development and civil societies partners are accelerating the COVID-19 vaccination program, with the 2021 target for vaccination increased from the original plan of 22% to 50% of the population (19% of the target had been reached by 5 May). All Provinces have a dedicated hotline number easing access to medical consultation and support on COVID-19 (covid19.gov.la).



World Vision Project Areas

Overview of Covid-19 Cases

- New cases: 16**
- Total cases: 1,498**
- Total deaths: 2**
- Total recoveries: 513**

Source: Ministry of Health covid-19 bulletin (14th of May 2021)

World Vision's Operations

- 7 Provinces**
- 23 Districts**
- WVI-L staff 161**
- Direct beneficiaries 178,869**
- Children 58,068**



COVID Response

In March 2021, World Vision has conducted a barrier analysis with its staff in Lao PDR on COVID-19 vaccination acceptance. Following the key findings of this survey, and in addition to a household survey conducted in March and April among its target villages, World Vision Laos is currently working with UNICEF, WHO, and the Center of Information and Education on Health (CIEH) from the Lao Ministry of Health to pilot COVID-19 vaccine education sessions at the community level, once the lockdown restrictions have eased. The aim is to expand the "Vaccinate Laos" campaign led by UNICEF from urban to rural areas, in alignment with the new vaccination target set by the Government of Lao PDR of 50% of the population by the end of 2021. This pilot in World Vision's project areas would pave the way for a national scale-up. Additional infographics designed to raise awareness on COVID-19 protective behaviors and processes are in the stage of approval by UNICEF and the Ministry of Health.

Our Recommendations

- Draw on listening to what boys and girls have told us (World Vision's [Act Now](#) report)
- * Ensure social protection measures are in place for the most vulnerable and equitable access to Vaccines.
- * Children and young people must be protected from violence, equipped with practical help to fight the spread of COVID-19, supported to continue their education, and their families provided with livelihood opportunities.
- * Improve access to and availability of age-appropriate and gender-responsive distance education methods to reach the most vulnerable children and young people.
- * Distance learning curriculums should include life skills education to help children and young people to recognize and mitigate violence, exclusion, stigmatization and poverty-associated risks. This is crucial to preventing increased rates of child labor and child marriage.
- * Act to scale up responses to malnutrition by investing in public health, food security, and water, sanitation, and hygiene to address root causes of child malnutrition.

Key Concerns

- Recent measures approved to reduce the negative impact of the COVID-19 outbreak (i.e. reduction of water and electricity tariffs, agriculture aid, tourism industry aid, public debt and SME Promotion) may not cover the most vulnerable segment of the population, such as poor people and lower-income group in rural, hard-to-reach local communities of the country, given that these groups are normally part of the informal sector. The National Taskforce for COVID-19 Prevention and Control asked for mobilization of assistance to address this concern.
- There are limited resources to operate safe isolation and quarantine facilities. Incorporation of best practices for physical distancing, vaccination, hygiene, WASH standards, mental health needs of people in both Isolation and Quarantine Centers along with safety/security of those in quarantine centers are needed, in addition to continuing the provision of basic food and shelter needs.
- Lockdown is affecting all students with school closures. While positive distance learning initiatives are increasing through radio and TV broadcasting, and the new Kangpanyalao learning database, students living in remote areas, or from families belonging to the lowest wealth quintile, and from different ethnicities, have limited access to these solutions.

* *Quarantine Camps in Savannakhet*. In partnership with WFP and the Savannakhet Province Government, World Vision Lao continued the food assistance program supporting migrant returnees, mainly travelling from Thailand, in the Kaysone and Songkhone Quarantine Centers. Between February to April 2021, 4,950 migrants, including 2,433 women, entered the quarantine centers, and were assisted with 3 meals a day. On 6 April 2021, WFP and the Ministry of Health extended the partnership via multilateral donations received, enabling meal support to continue through to July 2021, recognizing the quarantine protocol has been an essential element in preventing major outbreaks. Please click the below link to view video of a recent visit to the Kaysone Quarantine Centre in Savannakhet, where donors' support is helping to bring nutritious meals to 500 people daily. [WFP video](#)

Other response and community based disaster risk reduction and preparation

* World Vision, in partnership with the district offices of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, has completed the 2020 flood and early recovery response for Thaphangthong District, Savannakhet Province. The project funded by World Vision Japan provided humanitarian assistance to affected communities through a multi-sectorial response including

- Unconditional cash transfer to the most affected 337 households
- 8,880 kg of rice seed and water filter distribution to 296 vulnerable households
- School renovation, including school furniture provision, to 2 flood-damaged schools
- Distribution of school uniforms.

Child protection and community feedback and complaint

mechanisms emphasized during the humanitarian intervention the importance of child rights and accountability of the project.

* As part of the ongoing Building Secure Livelihoods project, World Vision has increased resilience of households to environmental shocks by facilitating the hazard, vulnerability, and capacity assessment and mapping in 85 villages in Savannakhet and Khammauane Provinces, in partnership with the District Offices of Labor and Social Welfare, and Agriculture and Forestry. This intervention was designed to align with, and strengthen the rollout and operationalization of the recent Lao Law on Disaster Management (2020). The actions included: organizing inclusive meetings with community village members (ensuring participation of women, youth children and people living with disabilities); raised awareness on the new Law; supported the nomination of the village disaster preparedness committee by District Governor; prepared village hazard maps, disaster calendars, and disaster risk reduction plans. The maps and plans produced by the community collaborative effort were fixed onto the Village Hall as an ongoing reminder of the contingency actions agreed upon.



Impact Story

Kern, 27 years old, is a returning migrant from Thailand, who quarantined in the Kaysone centre. She was 5 months pregnant with her second child during her quarantine period and had left Thailand after the garment factory where she used to work closed due to the impact of COVID-19. Her other nine-year-old child had stayed in Laos living with her parents while she migrated to Thailand for work together with her husband. “Before the COVID-19 outbreak, our living was good, the job and the factory were providing us employment and food every day. After COVID-19, everything is challenging, we couldn't work and earn money as usual” said Kern. Kern decided to return home since she was pregnant but she is worried because her main family income has stopped. She



We would like to thank our generous donors, partners, and supporters including:

WFP, European Union, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, WHO, UNICEF and EDF Fondation
 Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, Ministry of Health
 Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

