



FOOD SECURITY

Subsistence farming remains the main source of income for families in poor areas of Lao PDR. More than 70 per cent of Lao people live in the countryside and rely on agriculture and raising animals as their main source of income. Most families grow rice but often do not have a surplus to sell for much needed income. World Vision is working with families to improve yields of existing crops and to diversify the crops being grown. We support communities in gaining access to markets to sell their surplus harvest. The following summarizes our main activities in food security in 2013.

2,228 farmers trained in 15 districts on improved rice cultivation and animal care techniques. In addition, 483 farmers from poor families were prioritized to receive improved rice seeds. Assistance was provided for construction of small irrigation facilities in 189 villages so that there is sufficient water for crops during the dry season. As a result, farmers in the irrigated areas were able to harvest up to 2.5 tons of rice per hectare. This increased yields by 25 per cent and enabled poor families to sell their surplus for additional income.





Supported construction of small bridges and roads in 33 villages to ensure that communities have better access to transport their agricultural products to markets. Six villages also received market infrastructure improvement. Furthermore the rice bank activities were expanded to 51 villages now reaching a total of 298 villages in 24 districts of five provinces. The village rice banks assisted many poor families from taking loans out of the private schemes with higher interest, hence preventing families from having debts.



Provided micro-finance options to 63 communities through Village Development Funds. Currently, more than 200 communities have established their micro finance and credit schemes – providing villagers with access to small loans of about \$400 for small businesses or assistance during family difficulties. The scheme also promotes saving amongst villagers and is managed by a local committee consisting of five villagers who received special training from the project. As a result, villagers now have access to funds, helping them to secure a better future for their families.

Promoted animal husbandry in target areas, providing communities with extra income to support their families. The projects provided farmers from 762 poor households with pigs, chickens, goats, and cows through a revolving fund scheme. Farmers were trained on raising and breeding livestock to improve their family's food security and are able to sell excess livestock for much needed income. This activity has led to many villagers' income increasing, with some families earning more than \$1000 annually.

