

Food Security and Economic Growth Opportunities



Subsistence farming remains the main source of income for families in poor areas of Lao PDR. Most families grow rice but often do not have any surplus to sell for income. World Vision works with families to help improve their earning opportunities.

FAST FACTS



Two out of every three people live on less than \$2 per day



80% of the population is engaged in subsistence agriculture



Two thirds of rural households would be at risk of not having any food if a natural disaster hit, as they have little or no savings



WHAT WE DO

World Vision works with local authorities to empower families to become self-sufficient and resilient to disasters. We work with communities to improve yields on existing crops by training new farming techniques, encouraging crop diversification, and helping farmers gain access to markets. Opportunities for microfinance through local village development funds are created to help families start a small business or recover from emergencies. We are currently focusing on:

IMPROVING HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY

INCREASING HOUSEHOLD INCOME

- Working with farmers to get their crops to market.
- Helping set up microfinance options for communities through Village Development Funds.
- Training committee members on how to make wise investments in their community. Villagers are also able to keep savings and receive shares on these savings at the end of the year.

- Working with families to ensure they have the right tools, seeds and training to maximize their yields.
- Helping communities build better irrigation facilities so they have more water available for their crops during the dry season.
- Setting up animal banks and providing them with livestock. After the farmers receive a set of animals, they return the breeding pair after they have produced offspring. Farmers are also trained in animal rearing and have access to basic veterinary services and animal drug funds.
- Supporting rice banks so families can access rice when they run out and gain access to rice seeds for their next planting season.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN FY14

More than 2000 farmers received training resulting in target communities having a 30% average increase in productivity. World Vision also provided rice seeds and supported the construction of irrigation. As a result, farmers in the irrigated areas were able to harvest 4.5 tons of rice per hectare which increased their yields by 40 per cent.

World Vision promoted animal husbandry, women's livelihood groups, provided micro-finance options to 68 communities and supported approximately 980 households in flood relief and rehabilitation projects.



DREAMING OF A DIFFERENT INHERITANCE

For generations, 10-year-old Tha and his family struggled to grow enough rice. His father's fields were small and didn't have enough water, so the annual yield was small. Year in/year out, Tha and his 4 younger siblings never had enough to eat. After four months, the rice would run out and the family would be forced to go into the forest to pick bamboo shoots, wild herbs and whatever else they could find. Things started to change last year when Tha's family was given four goats from World Vision's animal fund. The animals quickly reproduced and now there are seven goats. "Once they have reproduced, I have to return them so that another family can loan them. I also received a water filter from World Vision so now we have clean water for drinking and cooking," says Koung, Tha's father.

WATER GATES IMPROVING LIVELIHOOD FOR THE COMMUNITY

The community produces enough food to support their families and have surplus to sell at the market. World Vision Collaborated with the Lao Government to support local authorities and communities to actively participate in the construction of water gates and concrete bridges in Kouthin village, in the Atsaphone District of Savannakhet Province. The completion of this project has brought benefits to more than 1,550 people including 300 children.

Atsphone a 13 year old boy is studying in his first year of the secondary school, in an Area Development Programme and is one of hundreds of children benefiting from the project. He is happy that his family has enough rice to eat and has more food on the table.

Aside from building the water gate, World Vision provides his parents training on how to prepare the land, and adopting new skills for planting rice, manage the water and irrigation. This year Atsphone's family was able to harvest more rice to properly feed themselves. "I am no longer missing out on school to help my parents gather food anymore. Thanks World Vision and other sponsors for supporting this project" he says with a smile.



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