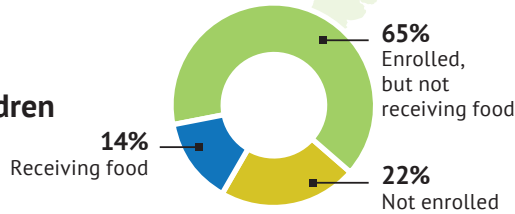


# Lao People's Democratic Republic

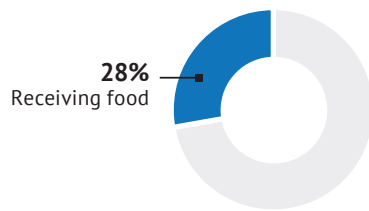


## School Meal Coverage (2022-2023)

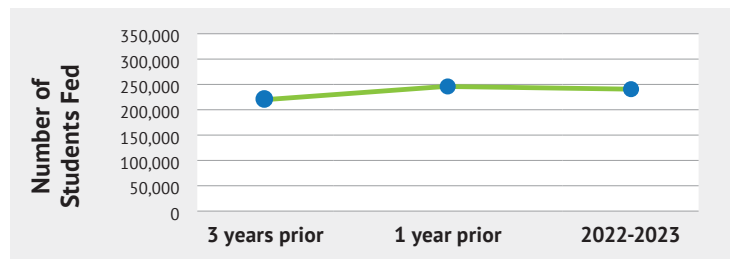
### All Primary and Secondary School-age Children



### Only Enrolled Primary Students



| School Level     | Total            | # Enrolled       | # Receiving Food |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Preschool        | 361,934          | 241,435          | 20,000           |
| Primary School   | 710,042          | 739,370          | 210,000          |
| Secondary School | 915,989          | 535,158          | 10,000           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     | <b>1,987,965</b> | <b>1,515,963</b> | <b>240,000</b>   |



## National Laws, Policies, and Standards

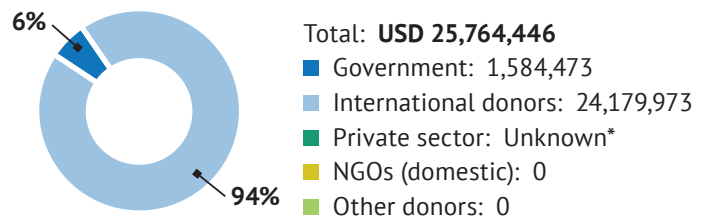
### National school feeding policy

- Nutrition
- Health
- Food safety
- Smallholder farms
- Agriculture (apart from smallholders)
- Climate/environment policy
- Private sector involvement

### The country had ...

- Inter-sectoral coordination committee for school feeding
- National system for monitoring school feeding

## Budget



\* The Hydro Power Company in Khammuan Province provided some funding for school lunches in the Promoting Schools Lunch Program. However, the exact amount provided was unknown.

- Line item in the national budget for school feeding

## School Foods and Beverages

- Whole grains
- Refined/milled grains
- Blended grain-based products
- Legumes
- Nuts and seeds
- Eggs
- Dairy
- Poultry and game meat
- Red meat
- Processed meat

- Fish and shellfish
- Deep orange vegetables and tubers
- White roots and tubers
- Fruits
- Dark green leafy vegetables
- Cruciferous vegetables
- Other vegetables
- Deep-fried foods
- Sweets

- Liquid oils
- Semi-solid and solid fats
- Salt
- Dairy milk
- Yogurt drink
- 100% fruit juice
- Other fruit drink
- Tea
- Other sugar-sweetened beverages

### Prohibited food items

Expired food and items containing monosodium glutamate

### Food Sources

- Purchased (domestic)
- Purchased (foreign)
- In-kind (domestic)
- In-kind (foreign)

Special Notes: None

## Nutrition

### School feeding program(s) include/involve the following

- Fortified foods**
- Bio-fortified foods
- Micronutrient supplements**
- Nutritionists involved**
- Special training for cooks/caterers in nutrition**
- Objective to meet nutritional goals**
- Objective to reduce obesity

### Limitations on food and beverage marketing...

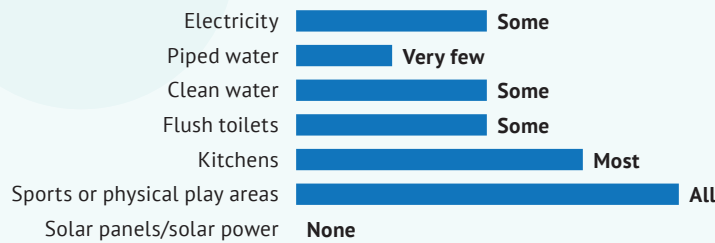
- On school grounds**
- To school age children**

## Additional Information

In the Promoting Schools Lunch Program, food was supplemented with micronutrient supplements or powders containing iron, zinc, calcium, and vitamins A and D. Efforts to mitigate obesity included limiting food/ beverage marketing to children, and the provision of food and nutrition education. Both the Promoting Schools Lunch and the LEAPS programs engaged two nutritionists and served rice that was fortified with vitamin D. In the School Lunch Project, rice and vegetable oil were fortified with iron, zinc, folic acid, thiamine, and vitamins A, B12, and D.

## Infrastructure, Employment, and Complementary Features

### Share of Schools with ...



### Employment

Total number of cooks/caterers: **9,159**

- Percent paid: Unknown
- 75-99% women

### There was a focus on creating job opportunities for...

- Women**
- Youth
- Other Groups**

### Complementary Activities

- Handwashing with soap**
- Height measurement
- Weight measurement
- Testing for anemia
- Deworming treatment
- Eye testing/eyeglasses
- Hearing testing/treatment
- Dental cleaning/testing
- Menstrual hygiene
- Drinking water**
- Water purification**
- School gardens**

### Complementary Education Programs

- Food and nutrition**
- Agriculture**
- Environment/climate/sustainability**
- Hygiene**
- Health**
- Reproductive health
- HIV prevention
- Physical education**
- Mental health

## Additional Information

In the LEAPS program, small-scale farmers were successful in competitive tendering, and, in the case of the Promoting Schools Lunch Program, they received preferential treatment. The School Lunch Project did not adopt competitive tendering. Although the Promoting Schools Lunch and LEAPS programs did not involve farmers directly, the School Lunch Project engaged small-scale farmers, providing them with agricultural subsidies; tools and advice to prevent post-harvest losses and to promote production of specific crops; training specific to school feeding; and forward contracts. In all programs, students' families made voluntary in-kind contributions.

## Environmental Sustainability

### Targeted climate-friendly foods

- Yes  No

### Steps taken to limit food waste

- Sealed food storage
- Fumigation/pest control in storage area
- Use of hermetic bags or larger hermetic storage system
- Routine testing/monitoring of dry food storage
- Use of nearly-expired food
- Use of usable but “imperfect” commodities or produce
- Campaign to reduce how much food students throw away

### Steps taken to limit package waste

- Re-use of bags/containers
- Recycling
- Use of compostable materials
- Use of “bulk serve” containers
- Prohibiting specific types of packaging

### Additional Information

To minimize food waste, all three programs allowed students to take leftover food home, and both the Promoting Schools Lunch and the LEAPS programs composted uneaten or unusable food onsite. In the Promoting Schools Lunch and LEAPS programs, school garden produce was either consumed by students or sold, while in the School Lunch Project, it was consumed or used as part of school lessons. To reduce wood and charcoal use, the School Lunch Project used fuel-efficient stoves and alternative fuel. In the LEAPS program, students were expected to provide charcoal or wood.

## Emergencies

### Experienced disruptions to school feeding due to emergencies

- Yes  No

### Strategies to address the impact of emergencies

- Seek alternative food sources or suppliers
- Changes in numbers of students fed
- Negotiate better prices with existing suppliers
- Establish alternative supply routes or transportation methods
- Source different or alternative food
- Release of food reserves
- Increase funding or budget allocation for school feeding
- Collaborate with local producers or suppliers to reduce dependence on global supply chains
- Changes in delivery method
- Changes in feeding modality
- Changes in feeding frequency
- No particular strategy was used

### Additional Information

All three programs were affected by natural disasters, economic crises, and health pandemics. Due to these emergencies, some schools closed, and school feeding operations ceased for about two months, slightly decreasing food accessibility (availability and affordability). Mitigation strategies included increasing the use of local produce, encouraging community contributions, and enhancing stakeholder multi-sectoral collaboration.

## Successes and Challenges

### Successes

1. Policy and Decree on Promoting School Lunch
2. Dedicated budget for School Lunch
3. Support by the World Food Program (WFP), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), and other international agencies
4. Increased student enrollment

### Challenges

1. Lack of clean water
2. No database system for school lunch records
3. Limited budget for school lunch program

# Promoting Schools Lunch Program

(Government)

## Management

- Lead implementer(s): Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES)
- The program was in transition between centralized and decentralized decision-making (Semi-decentralized).
- Implementing partner procured the food

## How Many Students Received Food

| School Level     | # of Students  | % Girls  | % Boys   |
|------------------|----------------|----------|----------|
| Preschool        | Unknown        | –        | –        |
| Primary School   | 142,990*       | –        | –        |
| Secondary School | 0              | –        | –        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     | <b>142,990</b> | <b>–</b> | <b>–</b> |

\* The number fed is inclusive of both primary school and preschool students.

## Elements of Home-Grown School Feeding

- Objective for small-scale farmers to benefit from access to a stable market**
- Local food sourcing**
  - Small-scale farmers involved by selling directly (or through their farmer organization) to the program or the schools
  - Additional support provided to small-scale farmers
  - Country had a law/policy/standard related to small-scale farmers and school feeding programs
- Preferential treatment for small-scale farmers/small farmer organizations/small companies in tendering procedures**
- Effort is made to reduce food miles**

## Objectives

- To meet educational goals
- To provide a social safety net
- To address gender-specific challenges
- To reduce hunger

## Modalities of Providing Students With Food

- In-school meals

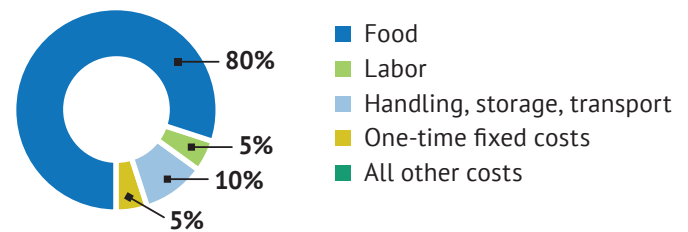
## Frequency and Duration

- 5 times per week
- During the school year

## Targeting

- Grade levels (pre-school and primary school) and school type (boarding schools and special needs schools)

## Expenses



## Food Sources

5% Purchased (domestic)      15% In-kind (domestic)  
0% Purchased (foreign)      80% In-kind (foreign)

## Additional Information

The program began operating in 2002. In the 2022-2023 school year, the program served semi-sweet soy milk to the students. Students' families and the community were encouraged to contribute with labor and provision of non-food items.

# School Lunch Project (WFP)

## Management

- Lead implementer(s): Inclusive Education Promotion Center (IEPC) under the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES); and the World Food Programme (WFP)
- An international donor agency or other implementing partner managed the program (WFP)
- Implementing partner procured the food

## How Many Students Received Food

| School Level     | # of Students | % Girls    | % Boys     |
|------------------|---------------|------------|------------|
| Preschool        | 11,633        | 51%        | 49%        |
| Primary School   | 56,506        | 49%        | 51%        |
| Secondary School | 0             | –          | –          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     | <b>68,139</b> | <b>49%</b> | <b>51%</b> |

## Foods and Beverages

- Refined/milled grains
- Legumes
- Nuts and seeds
- Eggs
- Poultry and game meat
- Red meat
- Fish and shellfish
- Deep orange vegetables and tubers
- Fruits
- Dark green leafy vegetables
- Other vegetables
- Liquid oils
- Salt

## Elements of Home-Grown School Feeding

- Objective for small-scale farmers to benefit from access to a stable market
- Local food sourcing
- Small-scale farmers involved by selling directly (or through their farmer organization) to the program or the schools
- Additional support provided to small-scale farmers
- Country had a law/policy/standard related to small-scale farmers and school feeding programs
- Preferential treatment for small-scale farmers/small farmer organizations/small companies in tendering procedures
- Effort is made to reduce food miles

## Objectives

- To meet educational goals
- To provide a social safety net
- To address gender-specific challenges
- To reduce hunger
- To meet nutritional and/or health goals
- To meet agricultural goals

## Modalities of Providing Students With Food

- In-school meals

## Frequency and Duration

- 5 times per week
- During the school year

## Targeting

- Geographic and school type targeting, in which districts were prioritized according to their level of vulnerability (districts with food insecurity, high levels of poverty, and poor education indicators).

## Food Sources

20% Purchased (domestic)      40% In-kind (domestic)  
0% Purchased (foreign)      40% In-kind (foreign)

## Additional Information

The program began operating in 2020. In the 2022-2023 school year, the WFP supported about 3,400 smallholder farmers in 85 villages across 17 districts, helping them raise chickens, fish, and frogs, and cultivate fruits and vegetables. Training was provided to the Village Education Development Committees (VEDC) in each community, with the Lao Women's Union as a member. Additionally, canned fish was also served to students.

# Learning and Engaging All in Primary School (LEAPS) Phase III (CRS)

## Management

- Lead implementer(s): Catholic Relief Services (CRS)
- An international donor agency or other implementing partner managed the program.
- Implementing partner procured the food

## How Many Students Received Food

| School Level     | # of Students | % Girls  | % Boys   |
|------------------|---------------|----------|----------|
| Preschool        | 5,238         | 52%      | 48%      |
| Primary School   | 23,633        | 49%      | 51%      |
| Secondary School | 0             | —        | —        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     | <b>28,871</b> | <b>—</b> | <b>—</b> |

## Foods and Beverages

- Refined/milled grains
- Nuts and seeds
- Eggs
- Poultry and game meat
- Fish and shellfish
- Dark green leafy vegetables
- Other vegetables
- Liquid oils

## Elements of Home-Grown School Feeding

- Objective for small-scale farmers to benefit from access to a stable market
- Local food sourcing
- Small-scale farmers involved by selling directly (or through their farmer organization) to the program or the schools
- Additional support provided to small-scale farmers
- Country had a law/policy/standard related to small-scale farmers and school feeding programs
- Preferential treatment for small-scale farmers/small farmer organizations/small companies in tendering procedures
- Effort is made to reduce food miles

## Objectives

- To meet educational goals
- To provide a social safety net
- To address gender-specific challenges
- To reduce hunger
- To meet nutritional and/or health goals

## Modalities of Providing Students With Food

- In-school meals

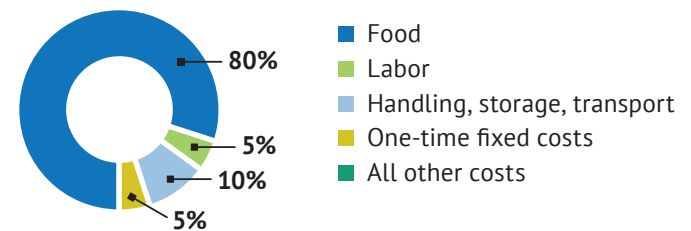
## Frequency and Duration

- 5 times per week
- During the school year

## Targeting

- Geographic, grade levels (pre-primary and grades 1–5), school type, and school characteristics

## Expenses



## Food Sources

- 4% Purchased (domestic)
- 1% Purchased (foreign)
- 15% In-kind (domestic)
- 80% In-kind (foreign)

## Additional Information

The program began operating in 2013. Take-home rations were not distributed to children, but were used as payment for school cooks, storekeepers, and teachers.

The Global Survey of School Meal Programs® collects data from government sources and is funded, in part, by the United States Department of Agriculture. Contact [info@gcnf.org](mailto:info@gcnf.org) for more information.

**Citation:** Global Child Nutrition Foundation (GCNF). 2024. Global Survey of School Meal Programs Country Report, Laos.

<https://gcnf.org/country-reports/>