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Decentralized Evaluation

USDA Mc-GOVERN DOLE FY17 BASELINE STUDY IN LAO PDR
[FY 17-21]
Final Report

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WFP Country Office Lao PDR

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World Food Programme

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List of Acronyms

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BBM	Big Brother Mouse (Local NGO)
BEQUAL	Basic Education Quality and Access in Lao PDR
CAP	Computer Aided Personal Interview
CBR	Crude Birth Rate
CDR	Crude Death Rate
CFSA	Comprehensive Food Security Assessment
CO	Country Office
CP	Country Programme
CPE	Country Programme Evaluation
CSP	Country Strategic Plan
CRF	WFP Corporate Results Framework
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (of the OECD)
DAFO	Department of Agriculture and Forest
DDS	Dietary Diversity Score
DEQAS	Decentralized Evaluation Quality Assurance System (of WFP)
DESB	Department of Education and Sports Bureau
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)
DID	Difference-in-Difference
DP	Development Partner
DPPE	Department of Pre-Primary and Primary education
EB	Executive Board (of WFP)
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ED	Executive Director
EDF	Education Development Fund
EFA	Education for All
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
EM	Evaluation Manager
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EMOP	Emergency Operation
EP	Evaluation Plan
EQ	Evaluation Question
EQAS	Evaluation quality assurance system (of WFP)

ER	Evaluation Report
ESDF	Education Sector Development Framework
ESDP	Education Sector Development Plan
ET	Evaluation Team
EU	European Union
FAD	Food Assistance Division
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FFA	Food assistance For Assets
FFR	Food for Relief
FFT	Food for Training
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGS	Gravity Fed Water Supply Schemes
FSNS	Food Security and Nutrition Survey
GAIN	Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition
GDI	Gender Development Index
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEEW	Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women
GFD	General Food Distribution
GIF	Global Innovation Fund
GIZ	Deutsche Gessellschaft fur Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GNR	Global Nutrition Report
GoL	Government of Lao PDR
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GPI	Gender Parity Index
HQ	Headquarters
HDI	Human Development Index
HDR	Human Development Report
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
ILO	International Labour Organization
INGO	International non-governmental organization
IR	Inception Report
LBW	Low birth weight
LECS	Laos Expenditure and Consumption Survey
LFNC	Lao Front for National Construction

LFND	Lao Front for National Development
LIC	Low Income Country
LMIC	Low Middle Income Country
LRP	Local and Regional Procurement – USDA
LSIS	Lao Social Indicator Survey
LWU	Lao Women’s Union
MA	Monitoring Assistants
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MGD	Mc-Govern Dole
MMS	Mid-Morning Snack
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MoH	Ministry of Health
MPI	Ministry of Planning and Investment
MT	Metric Ton
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
NAN	National Plan of Action on Nutrition
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NNS	National Nutrition Strategy
NNSPA	National Nutrition Strategy and Plan of Action
NSEDP	National Socio-Economic Development Plan
NSMP	National School Meals Programme
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OEV	WFP Office of Evaluation
OLA	UN Office for Legal Affairs
OpEv	Operation Evaluation
PA	Pedagogical Advisors
PAFO	Provincial Agriculture and Forest
PDR	People’s Democratic Republic – Lao
PI	Plan International
PLW	Pregnant Lactating Women
PESS	Provincial Education and Sports Services – sub national ministry
RBB	Regional Bureau Bangkok

RC	United Nations Resident Coordinator
REACH	Renewed Effort against Child Hunger and Undernutrition
RIES	Research Institute of Educational Science
SEAMEO	Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SFP	School Feeding Programme
SNF	Specialized Nutritious Food
SNV	SNV Netherlands Development Organisation
SO	Strategic Objective
SPR	Standard Project Report
SRF	Strategic Results Framework
STH	Soil-Transmitted Helminthiasis
SUN	Scaling-up Nutrition Movement
THR	Take Home Rations
TOC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VEDC	Village Education Development Committee
WASH	Water Sanitation and Hygiene
WATSAN	Water and Sanitation
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation
ZHC	Zero Hunger Challenge

Executive Summary

- 1 On completion of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Mc-Govern Dole Food for Education Grant (MGD) supported School Feeding Programme (SFP) FY14-16 award, MGD plans to continue it through a new FY17–FY21 award (herein referred to as FY17) in Lao PDR. Commissioned by WFP Country Office Lao PDR (WFP CO), this study presents the baseline situation in March 2018 along with conclusions and recommendations for the FY17 award.
- 2 The purpose of this study is to establish baseline values for all performance indicators outlined in the ToR. It also undertakes a formative evaluation drawing inputs from the end-line evaluation of the FY 14 award to enable WFP to undertake necessary course correction for the FY 17 award and also contribute to designs of future SFPs. Based on the results chain model, the study also presents the Theory of Change (ToC) for the programme which provides the necessary context for the midterm and end-line evaluations of FY17 program. In addition, a gender analysis of the programme is included.
- 3 The primary stakeholders and users of this study are a) WFP-CO, and its partners in decision-making, b) USDA as funder for the project and the evaluation, c) The Regional Bureau Bangkok is expected to use the study findings to provide strategic guidance, programme support and oversight, d) WFP HQ and Office of Evaluation, e) Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), f) Other partners such as Big Brother Mouse (BBM), Plan International (PI), SNV, Australian Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), UNICEF, and The World Bank.
- 4 The US\$ 27.4 million MGD SFP commenced from September 2017 and will continue till 2021. MGD SFP will continue supporting interventions on the supply side that aim at building capacities of school teachers and administrators, improving access to school supplies and materials, enhancing teaching capabilities towards creating an enabling environment that is likely to augment regular attendance in the schools, and improve the learning outcomes for students. Activities such as training on commodity management, safe food preparation, storage practices, and better access to water and sanitation services in school will promote safe health and hygiene. Establishment of school gardens will demonstrate the possibility of diet diversification with home-grown foods. Through capacity development of the Village Education Development Committees (VEDC), the programme also aims to engage community groups and strengthen local capacities. These, in turn, are expected to translate to the Government of Laos (GoL) to continue the programme after WFP's support ends.
- 5 Despite, the socio-economic progress made by Lao PDR, the Human Development Index (HDI) of the country was estimated at 0.58 (2016). The net enrolment rate (2016) is 94.7 percent (boys-95.4%, girls-93.9%), and primary school dropout rate decreased from 7.65 percent in 2010¹ to 4.40 percent in 2017 (girls-4.10; boys-4.70)². As per the Global Hunger Index 2015, about 44 percent children under the age of five³ are malnourished. In 2015, 35.6 percent of children under five years of age were stunted (37.6% boys and 33.6% girls), 25.5 percent were underweight and 9.6 percent were wasted. Under-5 mortality rate (U5MR) was 67⁴ in 2015⁵. Poor nutrition causes 45 percent of the deaths among children under the age group of 5⁶ and leads to stunting and delays in physical development (HDR 2016).
- 6 GoL aims at moving from Least Developed Country status to Middle Income country by 2020. Towards this, WFP with support from MGD is implementing the SFP FY17 across 31 select districts in eight provinces⁷ characterized by poverty, malnutrition and low literacy rates.
- 7 The US\$ 27.4 million⁸ award commenced from September 2017 and will continue till 2021. The programme aims to provide lunch through the 175-day school year to 146,000 students⁹ (of which

¹ <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/161641483590757065/pdf/111627-REVISED-PUBLIC-Lao-PDR-Root-Causes-of-Early-School-Leaving-f.pdf>

² LAO Eduinfo database

³ Nutrition Country Profile (2015), Lao PDR International Food Policy Research Institute. (Source: UNICEF, WHO, WB 2015)

⁴ <http://www.la.one.un.org/sdgs/sdg-3-health> accessed on 16 April 2018

⁵ U5MR for 2016 is slightly lower at 66.7 (HDR 2016)

⁶ UNDP (2016). Human development report 2016: Human development for everyone. USA: UNDP

⁷ Attapeu, Khammuane, Saravane, and Sekong provinces located in the south, and LuangNamtha, LuangPrabang, Oudomxay, Phongsaly provinces in the north

⁸ As per Project agreement between FAS and WFP FFE-439-2017-/022-00, the exact amount is US\$ 27,400,078.69

⁹ Study ToR

approximately 71,600 are girls) in 1,454 schools across 31 districts. As an incentive, cooks and storekeepers will receive 50kg of USDA supplied rice per semester¹⁰. The phased handover of schools to the communities and the government is planned for 2019-20 and 2020-21.

- 8 WFP has established strategic partnerships, leveraged support, and is closely coordinating with the MoES, Ministry of Planning & Investment (MPI), Ministry of Agriculture & Forestry (MAF), UNICEF, World Bank, WHO, Australian DFAT, BBM, PI, EDF, and CRS.

Methodology

- 9 The study methodology for the baseline study was guided by the ToR underpinned by the results framework of the FY17 programme. Central to the design of the study is the principle of counterfactual analysis that will serve as the foundation for the midline and end-line evaluations. The difference in status of indicators was examined through comparison of the control schools (who do not provide any type of meal to the students) vis-à-vis schools supported by MGD SFP. The control group had similar characteristics to the treatment group in terms of gender, ethnicity, and remoteness.
- 10 The study establishes baseline values for performance indicators and presents findings on relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability for FY17 program. Under the criteria of relevance, the study examined the alignment of FY 17 programme design with the GoL's priorities and WFP Country Strategic Plan (CSP) 2017-21. In addition, the study also examined the relevance of the programme design and activities to the local needs and the gender policy of GoL, and that of WFP. It examines whether local gender issues have been integrated into the implementation strategy and their intended outcomes. To assess the effectiveness of the programme, the baseline study has established the values of enrolment, attendance, attentiveness, and health-related absence.
- 11 The methodology entailed desk review and primary survey. Data from primary survey was triangulated to assess its reliability and validity. In order to mainstream GEEW throughout the analysis, all school-level data have been disaggregated by sex, and the sampling of students was done in a way so as to ensure equal representation of boys and girls.
- 12 The baseline sample was spread across seven programme provinces covering ten districts. 60¹¹ schools were sampled of which 58 were surveyed. 45 of these were common with the end-line evaluation FY14. For control group, 20 schools were sampled from the same provinces as the treatment schools.
- 13 Two significant limitations to this study are a) unavailability of data for all indicators, and b) method of assessing attentiveness. Attentiveness of a student is a function of different variables one of which is short-term hunger. Other functions may include poor teaching methods, lack of interest in the subject matter being taught in class, incidents of violence at home and household responsibilities (which pertain to both boys and girls). The attentiveness of children has been measured through the opinion of their school teachers which may be biased based on the teacher's perception of the child.

Key baseline findings

- 14 Literacy levels have improved from 1.9 percent (FY14 baseline) to 6.9 percent students, who have demonstrated at least 75 percent reading comprehension of the Lao language. Teachers have reported about 21 percent inattentive students in project schools as against 19 percent in control schools. Inattentiveness is more prevalent among girls than boys (24% of girls as compared to 17% of boys). A similar pattern was also observed in control schools.
- 15 Till March 2018, 138,790 students (70,783 boys and 68,007 girls) have benefitted directly from USDA-funded MGD-SFP. Another 145,980 students and 5000 cooks and storekeepers will benefit in 2018-19. The mean dietary diversity score (DDS) for children in project schools was high (6.1 out of a maximum score of 8) and is higher than the mean DDS (4.7) of children in control schools.
- 16 About 69, 40, and 63 percent points of the sampled project schools reported construction of kitchen, dining facility, and storerooms (warehouses), respectively, with MGD-SFP assistance. Two-third of the sampled project schools reported having a school garden with 64 percent reporting contribution from gardens to the school lunch at least twice a month in the first semester, which decreases to 36 percent during the second semester. Availability of water is a critical factor in effectiveness and utility of school

¹⁰ WFP FY17 MGD Proposal

¹¹ Two schools in Ngoy district in LuangPrabang were closed during the time of the survey. However, this would have no bearing on the results since the sample required was 56 schools.

gardens. It was learnt that majority of the school gardens were non-operational during the dry season, owing to water scarcity.

- 17 A fourth of the schools do not have access to water for cooking and one-third reported not having access to water for washing purposes. A total of 10,575 individuals were trained on safe food preparation and storage practices under FY14 award. About 88 percent of cooks, mostly women, scored at least 80 percent when tested for knowledge about safe food preparation and storage practices. About 12,578 individuals have been trained in child health and nutrition.

Findings from formative evaluation

- 18 **Relevance:** The programme is relevant and is responsive to the educational and nutritional needs of the communities. It is well aligned with GoL's vision for improving the educational and nutritional status of the children and meeting the SDG goals. MGD-SFP activities are aligned with Education Sector Development Plan (ESDP 2016-20), providing school meals, and complementing with literacy and education support in the highest priority locations.
- 19 The programme also stresses on activities to improve literacy levels among the community, especially of girls and women. The literacy activities will encourage the communities to appreciate the need for education and nutrition. MGD-SFP FY17 will continue to promote consumption of vegetables, protein-rich diet, and micro-nutrient fortified food. It will also promote gender and social equality by giving equal opportunity to volunteer for partnering with SFP.
- 20 The MGD design provides a platform for WFP to engage with GoL for attaining the WFP Strategic Outcomes¹². WFP is co-chair of the coordination group on school meals and is also supporting MoES on finalisation of handover policy from SFP to NSMP. GoL will provide cash for purchasing additional food for ensuring dietary diversity (SO1). MGD activities on nutrition awareness will contribute towards achieving SO2. Promotion of greenhouses for school gardens will build resilience of schools against heavy rains and flooding will contribute to SO3. WFP is already engaging with government departments at different levels and is a member of various groups and committees on food and nutrition in the country, thus contributing to SO4. The CSP also articulates that WFP intends to move from food assistance to policy level engagements. The FY17 award along with capacity building activities also has inbuilt transition and withdrawing activities that reiterate WFP's plan for policy level engagements.
- 21 **Effectiveness:** There is substantial evidence to display the contributions made by MGD-SFP in enhancing knowledge around health and nutrition, and improving dietary practices among its beneficiaries. The programme is valued by children, their parents and other stakeholders. However, in terms of literacy and quality of education, there is a need for further improvements in order to bring children in the project schools at par with children from other areas.
- 22 School gardens introduced under the project are improving the knowledge on gardening techniques but nutrition education needs to be further strengthened. Most gardens have been usefully contributing to the lunch programme in the first semester. However, the contribution reduces during the dry season, particularly in the Northern provinces. Water scarcity is a serious issue threatening the sustainability of school gardens. Majority of schools relying on open water sources further aggravates the situation.
- 23 The Lao Women's Union (LWU) is providing critical support by offering voluntary services for cooking the school lunch. Additionally, they are also responsible for collecting firewood, vegetables and fetching water. However, they feel that the incentives provided to them are not commensurate to the efforts that they are required to put in. There still are a number of cooks who need to be trained on safe food preparation and storage practices. Lack of availability of safe water is also a serious concern for ensuring regularity in cooking and increases the workload of women in water scarce areas. Moreover, while communities are contributing vegetables to the school, the supply is affected during the winter months. Even on regular days, this is contingent on the family's economic condition and available surplus. It also was observed that the responsibility of both collecting vegetables and cooking falls on

¹² SO1: Schoolchildren in remote rural areas have sustainable access to food by 2021; SO2: Stunting rates among children under 2 in provinces with high levels of malnutrition meet nation targets by 2025, SO3: Vulnerable households in climate sensitive districts are more resilient to seasonal and long-term shocks and stresses, SO4: National and local governance institutions are strengthened to ensure improves service delivery, especially in hard-to-reach areas.

the cooks (mostly women). Cooks also complained about children wasting food as they get bored of eating the same cuisine daily.

- 24 The evidence for robustness of monitoring mechanisms under MGD-SFP was found to be weak. Although schools were provided with registers for maintaining records such as monthly food utilisation, number of meals served, and number of students receiving the meals, the evaluation team did not find them either at the schools or with other stakeholders.
- 25 Educational facilities such as classrooms, kitchen, dining facilities and store rooms had been constructed/ rehabilitated with USDA assistance as part of the FY14-16 award cycle. There still remains a sizeable proportion without access to such improved facilities and those schools need to be targeted. Also, maintenance of these facilities is critical as these are subjected to harsh weather conditions.
- 26 **Capacity development:** The MGD programme includes capacity building at all levels of the governance structure. Using a Training of Trainers model, MoES staff will train provincial level officials who, in turn, will train MGD and NSMP supported communities on school gardening. WFP and MoES are discussing setting up of a School Meals Centre of Excellence as part of GoL's contribution to SEAMEO.
- 27 **Gender:** Issues around GEEW have been mainstreamed throughout the programme activities. The programme design for MGD-SFP and WFP-CO's implementation and monitoring plan have shown considerable attention to issues of gender equality and conforms to national gender commitments and policies. However, increased focus is desired with respect to certain field-level activities such as gender-balanced selection of cooks and storekeepers, and improved participation of women in VEDC, especially in leadership roles. Such efforts will help impact gender relations in the society.

Conclusions

- 28 About 6.9 percent students have demonstrated at least 75 percent reading comprehension of the Lao language. Teachers have reported about 21 percent inattentive students in project schools as against 19 percent in control schools. Nearly 146,000 students and 5000 cooks and storekeepers will benefit in 2018-19. The DDS for children in project schools was high (6.1 out of a maximum score of 8). Two-third of the sampled project schools reported having a school garden with 64 percent reporting contribution from gardens to the school lunch at least twice a month in the first semester, which decreases to 36 percent during the second semester. A fourth of the schools do not have access to water for cooking and one-third reported not having access to water for washing purposes. A total of 10,575 individuals were trained on safe food preparation and storage practices under FY14 award.
- 29 MGD FY17 is well positioned to continue with the FY14 activities and smoothly handover to MoES at the end of the project in 2021. The MGD-SFP proposal has clearly specified the pathway for implementing the FY17 award including engagement with GoL, other UN agencies and donors, NGOs, and with communities and village level institutions.
- 30 The MGD-SFP programme selected the provinces and districts with the maximum needs based on Comprehensive Food Security Assessment (CFSA) 2016, and through consultation with MoES. By targeting school going children, the programme is contributing to the overall objective of improving the education and nutrition status in the country. Community contribution for school meals promotes ownership among the communities. The establishment of school gardens will help demonstrating agriculture techniques for cultivating different vegetables and enhancing nutrition education among children and communities. The programme design is completely aligned with GoL's NSMP and contributes towards meeting the SDG targets. Aligning with the National Nutrition Strategy and Plan of Action (NNSPA), MGD also promotes gender and social equality by giving equal opportunity to volunteer for SFP.
- 31 Further efforts are needed to improve literacy levels to achieve the target of 25 percent. PI is envisaged to work with Research Institute of Educational Science (RIES) towards implementing the "Teaching Lao to non-Lao students". With MGD support, Reading and Literacy Needs assessment will be conducted at the beginning of each academic year for Grade 1 students by WFP and PI with support from DESB.
- 32 There is substantial evidence to display the contributions made by MGD-SFP in improving dietary practices among its beneficiaries. Consumption of legumes and beans, nuts and seeds, dairy products, and eggs has increased. School gardens are helping in improving knowledge around gardening techniques among children but nutrition education needs to be strengthened. Water scarcity is a serious

issue threatening the sustainability of school gardens. The availability of water is a critical factor for sustaining the programme as it is closely linked to school gardens, cooking, health, and hygiene. Lack of availability of water is affecting the regularity in cooking and increasing the workload of women in water scarce areas.

33 LWU is providing critical support by offering their voluntary services for cooking the school lunch and are also responsible for collecting firewood, vegetables and fetching water. Capacity building of cooks, storekeepers, and teachers needs emphasis. While training on safe food preparation, storage practices, and warehouse management have been conducted, there are a number of cooks, storekeepers, and teachers who have not yet been trained. The robustness of monitoring mechanisms under MGD-SFP was also found to be weak. As part of the handover process, GoL has assured that with gradual decreasing of the MGD financial support, government would increase the spending to meet the financial requirements of school meals. In due course, the financial allocation will be included as part of the national budget.

34 **Gender:** Issues around GEEW have been mainstreamed throughout the programme activities. The programme design for MGD-SFP, and WFP-CO's implementation and monitoring plan have shown considerable attention to issues of gender, and conforms to national gender commitments and policies. However, gender needs to be focussed upon more with respect to certain field-level activities such as gender-balanced selection of cooks and storekeepers, and improved participation of women in VEDC, especially in leadership roles. Such efforts will help impact gender relations in the society in the medium and long-term.

35 **Sustainability:** MGD-SFP FY14 has created an effective platform for creating knowledge on health and nutrition, and the importance of education. The programme complements GoL's NSMP. For institutionalising the program, MoES, PESS, and DESB have been made responsible at the national, provincial, and district levels, respectively, for implementation, monitoring, and record keeping.

36 Contributions from community members have been critical for the programme and the government is attempting to increase accountability of communities by contractually obligating them to support school meals. To motivate communities to participate in this model, government will also reward the best performing communities through model school nominations. VEDCs are envisaged to play an important role and therefore to empower them, capacity building activities like training, workshops and exchange programmes are included.

37 Few areas that necessitates WFP's attention has been presented in the recommendations table below.

Sl. No.	Recommendations	Proposed actions
1	Children should not be leaving school during lunch break	A government order needs to be issued directing schools to keep children in school during lunch break, after they have their meals. Currently the programme mandates provisioning of school lunch after which children still have one more hour of lunch break left. Given that teachers go back home and classrooms are locked during this period, children too go back home. WFP in collaboration with BEQUAL, PI, and BBM may design extra-curricular activities for lunch break to engage the children. This will ensure that teachers as well as students stay back in school and the lunch break is utilised properly. This will also help reduce accident related death of children.
2	Improving access to water in schools	Under SFP-FY17 award, WFP will support UNICEF to install 25 FGS and 25 boreholes and improve access to water. While this will take care of the schools with no water points, it will still fall short of the water requirements for all schools. For schools which are drawing water from surface water, pipelines can be drawn and connected to a pump-set irrigating the school garden. WFP with MGD or Non-MGD fund and in collaboration with other donors can install rainwater harvesting units to compensate for the groundwater drawn for school gardens. The funding can be arranged from WFP's climate change initiatives and support from other stakeholders.
3	Training of a group of cooks in each school	Adopting a tree structure approach, master trainers from each village should be trained in cooking. These in turn should train multiple groups in their villages. VEDC should be responsible for maintaining the roster for cooking and informing the groups. In addition, groups should also remind the ones responsible for cooking meals the subsequent day. Incentivisation of cooks needs to be improved.

Sl. No.	Recommendations	Proposed actions
4	Strengthening gender dimensions of the project-cooking	The youths (both girls and boys) should be encouraged to volunteer for the school meals programme activities such as cooking, gardening, fetching water and collecting wood. This will have three benefits; 1) that it will help in breaking down the stereotyping of gender roles at the household level, 2) it will help in lowering the burden of the current cooks and bring in values of shared responsibility, and 3) it will ensure that women do not suffer any kind of drudgery resulting from such responsibility. Lao Youth Union can be engaged along with LWU for taking this initiative.
5	Strengthening gender dimensions of the project-managing commodities	It is important that warehouses are designed in a manner that it becomes safe for both men and women. The technical specifications for constructing a warehouse maybe developed and circulated among the schools. Schools should encourage equal participation of both men and women for handling operational activities. The prevailing norms around traditional gender roles need to be changed.
6	Convergence between the horizontal and vertical structures of the government	Joint workshop of all the three ministries should be conducted by WFP and a roadmap should be presented by MoES for successful transition from SFP to NSMP. The expectations of each ministry should be clearly articulated. The ministries should conduct workshops on expected roles and responsibilities for their respective provincials and district departments. The third step would be a workshop at the provincial level and district levels where officials from these departments should collaborate for the future course of action. The successful handover of SFP to NSMP is highly dependent on the availability of funds for the programme. MoES through MPI has to ensure that funds are disbursed timely to the schools for effective and efficient implementation of SFP after the handover.
7	Harmonisation of MAF's technical support to school gardens and crop diversification for farmers	MAF is providing technical inputs to 'School Garden Training Guidelines' and is expected to conduct district and school-level training on school gardens and greenhouses. DAFO officers are expected to visit communities on a regular basis. Additionally, WFP and MoES should collaborate with MAF and identify schools and areas which are progressive in nature and appreciate crop and food diversity. In these schools and areas, pilot agriculture projects should be initiated. This will enable peer and cross learning.
8	Capacity building of all stakeholders to deepen their understanding around community led school feeding programme.	For a successful handover of the SFP, it will be essential that all stakeholders are aligned with the programme objectives and have clarity on their roles and responsibilities. Officials from MoES, PESS, and DESB who will be responsible for school lunch should be trained together for at least two sessions for clarity of roles and responsibilities. DESB members should then train VEDC members, school teachers, cooks and storekeepers on implementing the programme effectively. DESB members with support from VEDC should train the community on their support for successful implementation of the programme. In addition teachers, cooks and communities should be trained repeatedly on issues of hygiene, education, health, and nutrition.
9	Strengthening of M&E systems	Maintaining school records on enrolment, attendance, dropout, and repetitions should be made mandatory. This information should feed into government data systems. This will help in standardisation of the targets achieved. However, limited government records have been found to be a common feature across many of the South East Asian countries. In order to improve maintaining of school records, further advocacy and collaboration with the education sector is needed. A template to capture teacher's attendance and details of school lunch should be submitted by schools to DESB each month. PESS should compile all DESB data and submit it to MoES. The data should be validated either by LWU or Lao Front for National Development and counter signed before it submission to DESB.

1. Introduction

- 1 On completion of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Mc-Govern Dole Food for Education Grant (MGD) supported School Feeding Programme (SFP) FY14-16 award, MGD plans to continue SFP through new FY17–FY21 award (herein referred to as FY17) in Lao PDR. Commissioned by WFP country office Lao PDR (WFP CO), this study presents the baseline situation in March 2018 along with conclusions and recommendations for FY17 award.
- 2 **Study Objectives:** The purpose of this study is to establish baseline values for all performance indicators mentioned in the ToR. The study is expected to be used for concurrent monitoring to measure activity outputs, performance indicators for MGD's twin strategic objectives that feed into the larger foundational results. In addition, the study is also expected to undertake a formative evaluation drawing inputs from End-line evaluation of the FY 14 award to enable WFP to undertake necessary course correction for the FY 17 award and also contribute to designs of future SFPs. Based on the results chain model, the study prepared the Theory of Change (ToC) for the programme which provides the necessary context for the midterm and end-line evaluation. In addition, gender analysis for the programme has been prepared.
- 3 **Scope of the Study:** The study is covering MGD-SFP FY17 award, including all activities and processes related to its formulation, implementation, resourcing, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting relevant to answer the evaluation questions. The scope for the baseline study is presented in Annex A.
- 4 **Primary Users of the Report:** The primary stakeholders and users of this study are a) WFP-Country Office (CO) Lao PDR and its partners in decision-making, b) USDA as funder for the project and the evaluation, c) The Regional Bureau Bangkok (RBB) is expected to use the study findings to provide strategic guidance, programme support and oversight, d) WFP HQ who may use the study for wider organizational learning and accountability, and the Office of Evaluation (OEV) who may use the findings to feed into evaluation syntheses and for reporting to the Executive Board, e) MoES, Lao PDR will use the findings as input for its handover strategy, f) Other partners such as BBM, Plan International, SNV, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), UNICEF, and The World Bank are interested in the results of the study.¹³ Detailed stakeholder and user list of the report is presented in Annex B.

1.1. Overview of the Study Subject

- 5 The subject of the study is the MGD-SFP FY17 award implemented by WFP in Lao PDR. While the first MGD support (FY 2008-10) enabled expansion of school meals in three Southern Provinces¹⁴, the second MGD FY 2014-16 helped in transition from mid-morning snack (MMS) to school lunch programme including establishment of school gardens. SFP FY17 will now be implemented in 31 select districts across eight provinces¹⁵ characterized by poverty, malnutrition and low literacy rates. The FY17 programme area and a list of programme districts are presented in Annexes C and D.
- 6 **Programme Design:** The programme design can be understood via the MGD SFP project level results framework (Annex E) which also is the foundation for constructing the Theory of Change (ToC). MGD-SFP FY17 is underpinned by two strategic objectives: a) improving literacy of school-age children (SO1), and b) increasing use of health and dietary practices (SO2) and associated strategic outcomes and activities. The programme intends to improve the literacy of school going children and enhance their learning outcomes so as to advance their future health, productivity, and capabilities for overall well-being. The distribution of fortified school lunch will aid in alleviating short-term hunger leading to improvement in attentiveness of children during classes, and improve the nutrition status of children.
- 7 MGD SFP will continue supporting interventions on the supply side that aims at building capacities of school teachers and administrators, improving access to school supplies and materials, enhancing teaching capabilities towards creating an enabling environment that is likely to augment regular

¹³ ToR End-line-Baseline of USDA Mc Govern Dole - final ver. 21112017

¹⁴ Sekong, Attapeu, Saravane

¹⁵ Attapeu, Khammuane, Saravane, and Sekong provinces located in the south, and LuangNamtha, LuangPrabang, Oudomxay, Phongsaly provinces in the north

attendance in school and improve learning outcomes for students. Activities such as training on commodity management, safe food preparation, storage practices and better access to water and sanitation services in school will promote safe health and hygiene. Establishment of school gardens will demonstrate the possibility of diet diversification with home-grown foods¹⁶. With the capacity development of the Village Education Development Committee (VEDC), the programme also aims to engage community groups and strengthen local capacities to demand improved education. Detailed strategic objectives, outcomes, and activities are presented in Annex F. Target details for the planned outcomes have been provided in Annex G.

- 8 **Programme Timeline and Funding:** The US\$ 27.4 million¹⁷ MGD SFP commenced from September 2017 and will continue till 2021. WFP Lao expects to mobilize approximately US\$ 1.64 million per year of non-USDA funding, which will support MGD SFP activities. The funding details are presented in Annex H. Over a period of five years, the programme will provide school lunch to 1,454 schools, support inclusion of agriculture and nutrition education as part of school curriculum, build capacities of community in continuing the programme, support government in scaling up the MGD SFP to include all schools, establish M&E systems, and gradually exit from SFP. The phased handover of schools to the communities and government is planned for 2019-21 (Annex I).
- 9 **Planned Outputs and Beneficiaries:** The programme aims to provide lunch throughout the entire 175-day school year to a total of 146,000 students (of which approximately 71,600 are girls) (WFP ToR, 2017). The cooked meal will consist of 100g rice, 40g lentils, and 10g vegetable oil (fortified with vitamins A and D). The ration will also be complemented with vegetables and protein provided by communities. The proposed commodity requirements under the programme are 6,477.4 MT of rice, 2,221 MT of lentils, and 555.25MT of oil. As an incentive, cooks and storekeepers will receive 50kg of USDA rice per semester.
- 10 The MGD SFP FY17 award has an inbuilt transition and exit strategy for WFP wherein over the programme period, the responsibility of provisioning the commodities will be progressively transferred to the community. Accordingly, the number of direct food transfer beneficiaries under the MGD SFP will decrease (Table 1).

Table 1: MGD SFP beneficiaries

Beneficiary type	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Students	145,980	121,674	49,628	0
Cooks and storekeepers	5,000	4,250	0	0
Total	150,980	125,924	49,628	0

- 11 As part of the transition and exit strategy, WFP will support capacity building activities of the government at national, provincial, and district levels. Further, at the community level, the programme will continue with capacity development of the Village Education Development Committees (VEDC) towards ensuring the sustainability of the SFP after WFP's exit.
- 12 **Partners:** WFP has established strategic partnerships and leveraged support from government institutions, UN agencies, donors, and NGOs towards achieving the MGD goals. For implementing the MGD SFP FY 17, WFP is closely coordinating with MoES, MPI, MAF, UNICEF, World Bank, WHO, DFAT, BBM, PI, EDF, and CRS. The detailed roles of different partners for various activities of MGD SFP are presented in Annex J.
- 13 **Gender Dimensions of the Intervention:** Stunting rates are four times higher among children of uneducated women¹⁸. The Lao Social Indicator Survey (LSIS) report observes...*"the percentage of children who are underweight and stunted increases dramatically and steadily with the decreasing education level of the mother"*. The report further highlights that mothers' education is inversely related to children's risk of dying. For example, under-five mortality decreases from 116 deaths per 1,000 live births for children of mothers with no education to around 40 for children of mothers with

¹⁶ FAO. 2010. *A new deal for school gardens*: FAO, Rome, 2010 <http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i1689e/i1689e00.pdf>

¹⁷ As per Project agreement between FAS and WFP FFE-439-2017-/022-00, the exact amount is US\$ 27,400,078.69

¹⁸ Save the Children, 2017. *Stolen childhoods: End of childhood report*

post-secondary or higher education. This perhaps stems from lower awareness and understanding about nutrition. Further, lack of education/illiteracy is often linked with early marriage leading to early child-birth and even repeated pregnancies. Adolescent child bearing has been found to be closely linked with poor maternal, infant and child health outcomes¹⁹. In this context, WFP promoted knowledge around nutrition and the importance of education among all, particularly caregivers, and encouraged them to participate in programme activities. The WFP School Feeding Policy (2013) and Gender Policy for 2015-2020 emphasised recognizing and including specific needs of young girls, ethnic and religious minorities, and children with special needs. WFP advocated the importance of education (particularly attendance) at the community level through the distribution of posters that emphasised on the importance of regular attendance for boys and girls.

1.2. Context

- 14 **Indicators and Trend Data:** Lao PDR with a population of 6.9 million people is inhabited by 47 officially recognised ethnic groups. The economic growth of the country has aided in improving the Human Development Index (HDI) from 0.4 in 1990 to 0.56 in 2015. However, it still ranks 141 out of 188 countries (2015) and remains among the least developed countries²⁰. While there has been an overall decline in poverty since 2005, the Laos Poverty Atlas shows a higher decline in the north. Saravane Province is the poorest in Lao PDR (Annex K). The geographical pattern of poverty has changed with more number of poorer districts in the southern provinces.
- 15 **Education:** There has been a significant improvement in the status of children's education in the recent years. The net enrolment rate (NER) for primary school has increased from 65 percent in 1990 to 98 percent in 2014²¹. However, it is not uniform across the country and inter-province differences exists as per census 2015 (Annex K). Gender parity is observed in enrolment with 98 percent of girls of age six to ten years being enrolled in primary school (2014)²². The mean years of schooling have increased to 5.6 for boys and to 4.5 for girls (2015)²³. Primary school dropout rates have decreased from 7.65 percent in 2010²⁴ to 5.40 percent in 2014 (girls-4.90; boys-5.90)²⁵.
- 16 **Food and Nutrition:** Lao PDR with a score of 27.5 falls in the "serious" category as per 2017 Global Hunger Index. Overall, about 14 percent of the rural population in the country is food-insecure. As per the Global Hunger Index 2015, about 44 percent children under the age of five²⁶ are malnourished. About 35.6 percent of children under five years of age were stunted (37.6% boys and 33.6% girls) in 2015, 25.5 percent were underweight (2016) and 9.6 percent were wasted (2016)²⁷. Inter and Intra province disparity around food and nutrition security exists in the country (Annex K and L).
- 17 **Health:** Under-5 mortality rate (U5MR) was 63.9²⁸ in 2016. According to HDR 2016, 45 percent of the U5MR deaths are caused by poor nutrition²⁹ leading to stunting and delays in physical development.
- 18 **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene:** Lack of good hygiene practices is a major reason for health-related absenteeism among students in the country. The unhygienic practices also lead to high levels of Soil-Transmitted Helminths (STH) and thus increasing the need for deworming. The problem is further accentuated with only half of the schools having WASH facilities.³⁰.
- 19 **Government Strategy, Policies and Programmes:** GoL aims at moving from Least Developed Country status to Middle Income country by 2020. Towards achieving this objective and in alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the GoL through its 8th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDPP) 2016-2020 and other policy instruments is striving towards sustainable

¹⁹ Gibbs CM, Wendt A, Peters S, et al.: The impact of early age at first childbirth on maternal and infant health. *Paediatr Perinat Epidemiol.* 2012;26 Suppl 1:259–284. 10.1111/j.1365-3016.2012.01290.x

²⁰ <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/LAO#>

²¹ World Bank, 2016. Reducing Early Grade Drop Out and Low Learning Achievement in Lao PDR.

²² LAO Eduinfo database

²³ <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/LAO#>

²⁴ <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/161641483590757065/pdf/111627-REVISED-PUBLIC-Lao-PDR-Root-Causes-of-Early-School-Leaving-f.pdf>

²⁵ LAO Eduinfo database

²⁶ Nutrition Country Profile (2015), Lao PDR International Food Policy Research Institute. (Source: UNICEF, WHO, WB 2015)

²⁷ <http://www.la.one.un.org/sdgs/sdg-2-zero-hunger>

²⁸ <https://data.unicef.org/country/lao/>

²⁹ UNDP (2016). Human development report 2016: Human development for everyone. USA: UNDP

³⁰ WFP FY17 MGD Proposal

economic growth and equitable social development³¹. The NSEDP includes sectoral plans of various departments including School Meals Action Plan 2016-2020. Complimenting this plan is the Agriculture Development Strategy (2025), through which GoL intends to combat malnutrition by promoting dietary diversity.

- 20 Towards, achieving universal access to primary education, GoL has made primary education free and compulsory. The National Policy on Inclusive Education (2010) and Plan of Action (2011-2015), that guided to eliminate disparities in access to education for disadvantaged groups, especially girls and women, ethnic groups, people with disabilities, and people in socio-economic difficulty. ESDP (2016-20) further stressed the need for expanding and maintaining school feeding programmes to encourage the disadvantaged children in lower primary grades to remain in school³². One of the sub-sectoral policies under ESDP is the provision of school meals which led to the development and adoption of the Policy on Promoting School Lunch (2014). The policy encourages and promotes the implementation of five aspects of education. These are i) Attainment of EFA goal; ii) Increase in NER, class progression, completion rate, reduce repetition and dropout rate; iii) Mobilize resources to ensure programme institutionalization and sustainability; iv) Food security through school based food production integrated with local food production system and; v) Develop and upgrade capacity for effective management of school meals operations³³.
- 21 The National Nutrition Strategy (2016-2025) and Plan of Action (2016-2020) (NNSPA) aims at promoting equitable gender roles, placing emphasis on increasing women's access to health services, to nutrition and food security information, and to food. In 2012, GoL launched the National School Meals Programme (NSMP)³⁴ with support from Global Partnership for Education (GPE) Under GPE-II (2015-2019), The World Bank has allocated US\$ 28 million for a five-year duration Early Childhood Education project, of which US\$ 8.5 million will be utilised towards school lunch.
- 22 **Gender Dimensions:** The Gender Development Index (GDI) reflects gender inequalities in the three dimensions of the HDI: health (measured by female and male life expectancy at birth), education (measured by female and male expected years of schooling for children and mean years for adults aged 25 years and older) and command over economic resources (measured by female and male estimated GNI per capita). As per the GDI categorization, with a value of 0.924, Lao PDR fell under group 4, which indicates medium-low equality in HDI achievements.
- 23 In terms of education, there exists gender-based differences in years of schooling and overall education level. The overall youth literacy rate amongst females was around 87 percent as compared to 93 percent among males (HDR 2016). Several studies suggest that the dropout rate for girls after completion of primary school is higher than that of boys. One of the causes is the higher burden of household work shared by the girls (HDR 2016).
- 24 **Development Assistance in Lao:** Development Partners have supported Lao PDR with almost US\$ 1,970 million during 2011 to 2015. Of this, international financing institution provided US\$ 577 million, bilateral donors from Asia Pacific regions provided US\$ 566 million and European Union provided US\$ 363 million. Infrastructure, Health, Education, Natural Resource Management and Environment, and Agriculture and Rural Development were the top five sectors supported from ODA (Annex M).
- 25 For the school lunch programme, WFP is one of the three main providers of school meals in Laos, providing lunch in 1446 schools across 30 districts in seven provinces. GoL provides lunches in 312 schools to 30,000 children in 10 districts across five provinces and CRS supports 40,000 children in 360 schools across seven districts. In addition, Education Development Fund (EDF) provides meals to four schools and International NGO Humana People to People supports two schools³⁵.

³¹ Lao PDR, National Plan of Action 2003-2015

³² <http://moe.gov.la/data/publications/ESDF%20English%20version.pdf>

³³ MoES policy on promoting school lunch, 2014

³⁴ The GoL's NSMP currently operates in five provinces and is funded by GPE, a World Bank managed trust fund. None of GoL's NSMP covered schools are covered by WFP with entirely separate district coverage.

³⁵ WFP FY17 MGD Proposal

26 WFP is working with Plan and BBM emphasising on inclusion of disadvantaged children, increased engagement with parents, and equipping teachers with improved instruction materials. Targeting the 65 educationally disadvantaged districts, the BEQUAL programme funded by Australia and the EU is the largest single-donor-funded education programme. WFP is a member of Education Sector Work Group chaired by the Minister of Education and co-chaired by Australia and EU. The role of subgroups is to ensure coordinated approach of all stakeholders towards achieving inclusive education. An integrated nutrition and WASH project (NURTURE) is supported by USAID and implemented by Save the Children in collaboration with SNV Netherlands. Underpinned by the community-led total sanitation approach, the project aims at improving the hygiene and child feeding practices.

1.3. Study Methodology and Limitations

- 27 The study was conducted during February-August 2018 (Mission schedule presented in Annex N). The tenure under study was from September 2015 to March 2018. The data was collected between March-May 2018 due to which information on certain data points such as attendance, attentiveness, and food utilisation were from the previous academic year (September 2017-March 2018). The evaluation team undertook a five-day scoping mission to Lao during 12-16 February 2018 and subsequently submitted the Inception Report for finalising the study approach and methodology in consultation with WFP-CO.
- 28 Central to the study design was the counterfactual analysis that will serve as foundation for the midline and end-line evaluations. The difference in the status of indicators was examined through comparison of the controls schools (who do not provide any type of meal to the students) vis-a-vis schools supported by MGD SFP. The control group had characteristics similar to the treatment group, in terms of gender, ethnicity, and remoteness. These groups were matched based on agreed characteristics. The detailed statistical matching technique is presented in Annex O.
- 29 The study establishes baseline values for performance indicators and presents findings on relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability of the programme. Under the criteria of relevance, the study examined whether the programme design is aligned with the national priorities and the WFP CSP 2017-21. It also examined whether the design and implementation of the programme are relevant to the local needs of the most vulnerable groups and are gender inclusive. It assesses the alignment of the programme design with gender policy of Government of Lao PDR and that of WFP and whether local gender issues have been integrated into the implementation strategy. To assess the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of the programme during the midline and end-line evaluations, the baseline study has established the values of enrolment, attendance, attentiveness, and health-related absenteeism. The key baseline questions are presented in Annex P. The key end-line evaluation questions are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: MGD FY17 End-line evaluation questions

Relevance
To what extent was the design of the School Lunch programme contributing to realizing the Government of Lao's National School Meal Policy and WFP's Country Strategic Plan 2017-21?
To what extent is the School Lunch programme in line with the needs of the most vulnerable groups (men and women, boys and girls)?
To what extent was the School Lunch programme based on a sound gender analysis?
To what extent was the design and implementation of the School Lunch programme gender-sensitive?
Has the School Lunch programme made any difference to gender relations in the medium or longer term?
Effectiveness
To what extent has the project contributed to increased enrolment of school age children (boys and girls) in WFP covered schools and the comparison schools in these 8 provinces
To what extent has the project contributed to increased attendance of school age children (boys and girls) in WFP covered schools and the comparison schools in these 8 provinces
How do literacy and health related absence outcomes compare across the WFP covered schools and the comparison schools in these 8 provinces?
Is there evidence of a positive impact of the project on literacy and literacy instruction, in WFP covered schools and the comparison schools in these 8 provinces

Is there evidence of boys and girls students who demonstrate use of new child health and nutrition practices in WFP covered schools and the comparison schools in these 8 provinces
How does health related illnesses causing students (boys and girls) absence at WFP covered schools and the comparison schools in these 8 provinces
What are the intended and unintended outcomes of school gardens in WFP covered schools in these 8 provinces?
Do stakeholders view school gardens as a learning tool on agriculture and nutrition in WFP covered schools in these 8 provinces?
How often are schools utilizing produce from their school gardens, to supplement USDA donated food, in WFP covered schools in these 8 provinces?
Efficiency
Was the School Lunch programme implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives?
Did the targeting of the School Lunch programme mean that resources were allocated efficiently?
Impact
Is there evidence that school gardens are effective at increasing knowledge of nutrition in WFP covered schools in these 8 provinces
Is there evidence of boys and girls students who demonstrate use of new child health and nutrition practices in WFP covered schools and the comparison schools in these 8 provinces
What were the gender-specific impacts of school lunch and the related activities on girls and boys students? Did the School Lunch programme influence the gender context?
Sustainability
To what extent did the School Lunch programme implementation arrangements include considerations for sustainability, such as capacity building of national and local government institutions, communities and other partners?
To what extent is it likely that the benefits of the School Lunch programme will continue after WFP's work ceases?
To what extent did the School Lunch programme implementation were tailored to local needs

- 30 Further, through qualitative evidence, the evaluation has assessed the project's impact on literacy in WFP covered schools through analysis of variables such as regularity of provision of school lunch, school infrastructure, and teacher's attendance in school. Further, the role and utility of school gardens as perceived by the beneficiaries and school authorities were examined to understand whether the gardens are viewed as a learning tool on agriculture and nutrition and whether the current resources allow sustenance of the gardens without any additional pressure on the schools.
- 31 The baseline has imported the findings from the end-line evaluation (FY14), MTE (FY14), and impact evaluation (FY14) to assess whether the learnings have been integrated into FY17 programme. The methodology entailed desk review (a list of documents presented in Annex Q) and primary survey. Data from primary survey was triangulated to assess the reliability and validity of the data. The evaluation matrix (Annex P) presents the preliminary sources of data, their availability, and reliability. Triangulation was undertaken for comparison of perspectives of different stakeholders. Further, complementary observations and comments made by stakeholders were considered in the analysis. GEEW was mainstreamed by disaggregating all school-level data by sex, and the sampling of students was done in a way so as to ensure equal representation of boys and girls.
- 32 A mixed method approach was deployed to collect information using structured interviews for quantitative data and semi-structured interviews and discussions for qualitative data. This ensured that voices from all stakeholders were heard and taken into consideration during the study. A summary of the methods of data collection, the sources of information, the nature of the interviews, and the indicative outputs are presented in Table 3.
- 33 **Data Collection:** The quantitative tools administered were: **i) School Schedule** (school-level information through interviews with the head teacher, observation and data from school records), **ii) Student Schedule** (sample of 15 randomly selected pupils in each school), **iii) EGRA Schedule** (five selected students each from second grade and third grade of each school), **iv) Parent Schedule** (parents of the 15 selected pupils), **v) Teacher Schedule** (one teacher from each school), **vi) Cook Schedule** (one cook from each school plus direct observation of the cooking area) and, **vii)**

Storekeeper Schedule (person responsible for the storage of SFP food in each school plus direct observation of the storeroom).

- 34 To ensure that the information being provided by the respondents from various ethnic groups is captured accurately, the data collection team comprised of members from both Northern and Southern provinces. The quantitative tools were translated into Lao and were piloted after training the enumerators. Further, the team included an equal number of male and female enumerators.
- 35 Quantitative data was collected through Computer Aided Personal Interview (CAPI) method using tablets. The software was programmed to minimize data entry errors using built-in constraints and skip-pattern logic. The data collection teams were trained to cross-check the data before it was uploaded to the server daily, and the evaluation team conducted range and consistency checks on the data to identify and address errors and inconsistencies.

Table 3: Summary of the evaluation methodology

Methods of data collection	Primary Survey		Secondary Review
	Quantitative (Structured interviews)	Qualitative (Focus group discussions, key informant interviews)	
Target Group/ Source of Information	• Children • Parents • School head • School teachers • School cook • School Storekeeper • School Observation	• Children • Parents • School head • School teachers • School cook • School Storekeeper • School Observation • Network Partners • Government officials of MAF, MoES, and MoH • VEDC and Farmer Groups	• A literature review of available public sources • Project documents and results framework • Standard project reports and semi-annual reports • Community strength assessments • End-line evaluation Fy14 • MIS and monitoring data
Indicative outputs of data collection	• Establish baseline values of key indicators • Establish values of enrolment and attentiveness (from direct and indirect influence) • Availability and access to food supplies and other school materials • Identify key change agents <i>Wherever appropriate sex disaggregated analysis will be provided</i>	• Children and parents: Quantity and quality of receipt and consumption of school lunch, dietary diversity, regularity to school, change in attentiveness, reasons for change, economic incentives • School: observed changes, infrastructural support, school gardens, gender considerations in implementation, perceived risks • Others: Implementation modalities, changes and reasons, policy perspective, province and district level initiatives, resources and partnerships, innovation and learning	• Build context and relevance of the programme • Establish alignment of the programme with government initiatives and WFP's country strategy • Resources utilised • Provide a benchmark for performance indicators • Key design elements that contribute to direct and indirect change • Pathways created for sustainability; scope of replicability; key considerations for recommendations

- 36 Qualitative discussions were held with the stakeholders. Focused Group Discussions were conducted with VEDC members and parents. Key Informant Interviews were held with GoL officials at the national, provincial, and district levels, and with school teachers, cooks, and storekeepers. The best practices, challenges, and learnings were captured through qualitative data.
- 37 The baseline sample was spread across seven programme provinces covering ten districts³⁶. 60 schools were sampled randomly for the baseline FY17 of which 45 schools are common with the end-line evaluation FY14. For the control group, 20 schools which did not receive any form of school meals were sampled from the same provinces as the treatment group. The sample distribution is detailed in

³⁶ In addition to the end-line evaluation provinces, the baseline study covered LuangPrabang province (which was not included in the baseline FY14).

Annex R and a list of sample schools is presented in Annex S. Overall, 548 boys, 607 girls, 828 men, and 531 women were interviewed.

- 38 **Data Analysis:** The quantitative data analysis included descriptive analysis of sex disaggregated data setting the benchmark values in treatment and control areas. A cross-section analysis was applied treating the baseline as a cross-section. This technique helped to benchmark the key indicators of the intervention by comparing the treatment and control groups. Further, the baseline data allows the midterm and end-line evaluations to apply pooled cross-section analysis and panel data analysis using Difference-in-Difference (DID) method (Detailed in Annex T). Qualitative data was analysed using content analysis focused on providing the reasons for the change observed. It also provided insights on the relevance and sustainability of the programme and highlights strategic issues.
- 39 **Integration of Gender into the Methodology:** The conceptual framework adopted for FY17 baseline study looked at the interplay between factors at different domains (Individual, Institutional, Social, and External environment) acting as triggers or barriers and influencing each of the actors and structures within these domains. The cross-cutting factors are integral for developing the gender analysis for the study and enabled a better understanding on alignment of the programme with the priorities of women, men, girls and boys.
- 40 The study analyses sex disaggregated data in school feeding, literacy, attendance, attainment of programme outcomes related to enrolment, attendance, attentiveness, and health-related absenteeism of the students, and health and nutrition practices of the community. Further, the study examines the gender roles envisaged in the design and implementation of the MGD SFP with respect to participation in local community groups and involvement in school feeding management committees. Qualitative data have been analysed to identify reasons that lead to drop-out or affect attendance of boys and girls in schools. In addition, the study examines the role and nature of participation of women in the programme specifically through the VEDC, LWU, or other local school feeding management and support committees.
- 41 The study has captured the perspectives of men, women, boys, and girls. The data collection team was adequately trained to ensure that the views of all key groups are considered, reflected and triangulated, with due attention to issues focussing on gender. The data collection team was gender balanced. For quantitative interviews, parents (men and women), boys, and girls were interviewed separately. FGD participants included both men and women in equal numbers, as far as possible, and questions to assess their views on gender issues were included as part of the FGD checklist. Further, the qualitative team included one male and one female moderator.
- 42 Data on gender-related questions were analysed to report on the gender dimensions of the study. Data on attainment of outputs and outcomes have been disaggregated by sex. Gender analysis was conducted through assessment of qualitative data on causalities that lead to drop-out or affect attendance of boys and girls in schools.

Limitations and Risks

- 43 Discussions with the WFP CO and the observations from the scoping visit had highlighted the unavailability of past year student attendance data in several schools. To address this issue, the questionnaire included a roll-call attendance which was measured by counting the total number of boys and girls present in each class in the school on the day of the survey. Additionally, student's self-reported absence from school in the past week was also captured through the questionnaire.
- 44 As reiterated earlier, the method to capture attentiveness of students was based on information from their school teachers which may be biased based on the teacher's perception of the child.
- 45 FY14 Baseline used the Learning Boost tool developed by Save the Children to assess students' learning levels. This tool is very similar to the EGRA tool which was used for this evaluation. The baseline FY14 tool used Lao as the language for reading and writing. However, two sections of this tool were not available and therefore could not be adapted in the EGRA tool for baseline FY17. Thus, those specific sections were reconstructed in consultation with WFP CO. WFP has been providing assistance to remote rural areas with diverse ethnic compositions where Lao is not spoken at home. The pace of learning by children is thus challenged by the limited exposure to Lao at home and is

heavily dependent on teaching at the school. Thus, the evaluation findings on learning are to be read in light of the above context.

- 46 The EGRA tool is administered to students who are either ending Grade 2 or beginning Grade 3. Baseline FY14 was conducted in September which marks the start of the semester in Laos. Therefore, they administered to students who were beginning with Grade 3 while FY14 evaluation was conducted during the end of an academic year. Therefore, it was administered to Grade-2 students.
- 47 The primary survey was conducted between March and May 2018 due to which enrolment and attendance data for the current school year was limited to that of six months (September-February). However, no issues in the analysis resulted due to this.
- 48 In absence of availability of a student list from the selected schools prior to the survey, the students were sampled on the day of the survey for the interviews. Thus, some of their parents were not available on the same day, as they were engaged in their daily works and chores. In some cases, the data collection team revisited the school site for conducting the interviews with parents, and on some occasions, they visited the farms to meet the parents. However, some parents could not be contacted and the sample fell short than what was envisaged. However, given the buffer in the sample, the analysis was not affected.
- 49 Two schools in Ngoy district in LuangPrabang were closed during the time of the survey. Given the poor road and weather conditions, the team could not revisit the schools in this district which resulted in a reduction in the sample size for programme schools from 60 to 58. However, this would have no bearing on the results since the sample required was 56 schools³⁷.
- 50 Since children from grades one to five were interviewed, there was a risk that they may not be able to provide reliable data due to low recall. To address this, support from class teachers were sought to corroborate the data for school level information. Further, interviews were conducted with parents of sampled children to validate the information collected from the children.
- 51 The control schools are from the south as all the schools in the north are covered either through MGD-SFP or NSMP. Households in the south predominantly speak Lao at home and hence the EGRA results of students from south will be better than the results of students from north.
- 52 Further, the availability of bilingual teachers for teaching Lao in the north schools may affect the programme results. While Lao government have institutionalised bilingual teachers in north schools, the sustainability of this action (as it includes teachers who are not from north and may find it difficult to adjust with the environment and culture) can have a direct bearing on the programme performance indicators.

Ensuring Quality

- 53 WFP's DEQAS defines the quality standards expected from this evaluation and sets out processes with in-built steps for quality assurance, templates for evaluation products, and checklists for review. DEQAS is closely aligned to the WFP's evaluation quality assurance system (EQAS) and is based on the UNEG norms and standards and good practice of the international evaluation community and aims to ensure that the evaluation process and products conform to best practice. DEQAS was systematically applied to this evaluation guiding the evaluation team at NRMC.
- 54 Having a rich experience of working with UN agencies, NRMC has a deep understanding of the UNEG norms, standards, and ethical guidelines and adhered to the same. In addition, NRMC's internal quality protocols were integrated with the process for information collection, collation, analysis, and delivery.
- 55 The data collection team comprised of Lao-based personnel who were well versed with the local language and had prior experience of collecting and collating field-level information. The team included members from both northern and southern provinces and was gender balanced. Separate teams were deployed for quantitative and qualitative survey. Discussions with the GoL officials, WFP field offices, and partners were conducted by NRMC core team assisted by a translator.
- 56 A three day training session on field ethics and data collection tools was conducted for the data collection team by NRMC. Specific sessions were conducted on ethical issues faced during data collection and integrity. Mock sessions were conducted on interacting with children for data

³⁷ Four schools were to be covered from Khammuane

collection. The team was provided with translated tools to overcome language barriers. A pilot study was also conducted on the last day of the training.

- 57 As part of quality control and to ensure timeliness of data collection, NRMC developed detailed field movement plan in advance of the survey. Daily team movement plan was shared well in advance with the team. At least one member of the core evaluation team of NRMC was present in the field during the entire period of data collection accompanying the qualitative and quantitative interviews.

2. Study Findings

- 58 This section presents the main findings related to the SFP performance indicators jointly identified by WFP and USDA. While section 2.1 presents key baseline findings, findings from formative evaluation is presented section 2.2.

2.1. Key baseline findings

- 59 Until March 2018, 138,790 students of which 70,783 are boys and 68,007 are girls have benefitted directly from USDA funded MGD-SFP (Annex V). Another 145,980 students and 5000 cooks will benefit in 2018-19.
- 60 Students' literacy levels (at least 75 percent reading comprehension of the Lao language) has improved from 1.9 percent (FY14 Baseline report) to 6.9 percent. This is lower than the control group (12.4%) and way below the target of 25 percent. The importance of familiarity with Lao language as a measure of literacy is reflected as Lao-tai students outperformed students from other ethnic groups.
- 61 Teachers have reported about 21 percent inattentive students in project schools as against 19 percent in control schools. Inattentiveness is more prevalent among females than males with a higher proportion (24%) of female students classified as inattentive in project schools as compared to 17 percent of male students. A similar pattern was also observed in control schools.

Increased access to requisite food preparation and storage tools and equipment

- 62 In terms of infrastructure, nearly all schools (93%) in the sample reported having a dedicated room as a kitchen; 97 percent schools further reported that the kitchen is well-ventilated. The programme guidelines had specified construction of raised pallets for cooking. Although, in around half of the schools (50%) food was being cooked off the ground, majority of them (83%) were using improvised raised pallets for cooking, adhering to the guidelines.
- 63 While with community participation, kitchen has been constructed in all 1146 schools under the FY14 award, 860 schools still lack dining space. Continuing with approach from FY14 award, the new SFP award will also engage community for construction and rehabilitation of kitchen, dining area, storage, and hand washing stations in the schools. VEDCs will oversee the construction work to be undertaken by the community. WFP will provide nails, zinc sheets, and hinges under SFP while the community will provide timber and labour. WFP will also encourage communities to make savings for maintaining these structures. Communities will also be encouraged to participate in school meals programme by contributing vegetables or cash.
- 64 While it is encouraging that 28 percent of the schools had access to piped water for cleaning and cooking food, 38 percent were dependent on water from river or streams. These sources dry up during the winter leading to irregularities in cooking school meals. Further, non-availability of a nearby water source puts an additional burden on the cooks (who happen to be mostly women) to collect water. Figure 1 shows that lack of water for cooking is an issue for over a fourth of the cooks.

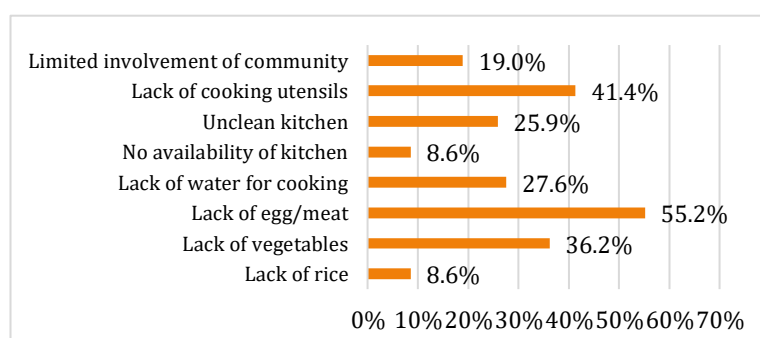


Figure 1: Issues faced by cooks in preparing school lunch

- 65 Cookbooks (or menu books) on recipes for nutritious food were circulated by WFP recently in the Northern provinces. DESB in Oudomxay and LuangNamtha shared that they held meetings for cooks

where this book was distributed and. However, only 21 percent of the cooks reported receiving them. With cooks not being adequately trained and not having access to such cookbooks, they end up cooking the same recipe daily which is rejected by children. Discussions with parents indicated that the children have raised this issue at home and parents have discussed this with the cooks. Also, all the cooks in the sample expressed the desire for a variety in the menu. Currently, they do not know what else to cook with the same set of ingredients although they understand that it is getting monotonous. Moreover, cooks need better awareness on the nutrition content of various food items.

- 66 Another issue that came up during discussions was that the recipes in the current cook book were more suited for the food habits in the southern provinces. Quite a few of the vegetables mentioned in the recipes were not consumed or even produced in the Northern provinces. The cookbook has now been sent to GoL for revision based on local food habits across the country.
- 67 As shown in Figure 1, cooks are of the opinion that eggs and meat would be preferred by the children and should be made available for the school lunch. Lack of cooking utensils is a challenge for 41 percent of the cooks while another 36 percent feel lack of vegetables is an issue that they face.
- 68 Smoke reducing stoves were piloted in 2017 to reduce smoke exposure and risk of lung diseases among cooks. About five percent of the schools had received smoke reducing stoves for cooking.

Increased knowledge of safe food preparation and storage practices

- 69 WFP monitoring reports indicate a total of 10,575 individuals were trained on safe food preparation and storage practices as result of USDA assistance (Annex V). About 88 percent of cooks scored at least 80 percent on knowledge about safe food preparation and storage practices. Against an overall target of 4500 storekeepers, the monitoring report shows that 3,415 storekeepers (76%) were trained in safe food preparation and storage practices with USDA assistance. However from the primary survey it emerges that about 65 percent were only trained. Monitoring reports indicate that 12,578 individuals have been trained in child health and nutrition as a result of USDA assistance between 2014 and 2016, while the primary survey findings indicate this figure to be 40 percent.
- 70 58 cooks from the sampled project schools were tested for their knowledge and attitude regarding safe food preparation and storage practices. Cooks were tested on whether they practice the following: (i) use of apron or uniform in the kitchen, (ii) clean the kitchen before and after food preparation, (iii) clean pots and utensils before cooking, (iv) clean pots and utensils after cooking, (v) use of soap to wash pots and utensils, (vi) cleaning vegetables and rice before cooking, (vii) washing hands before food preparation, (viii) washing hands before and during food preparation with water and soap, (ix) checking for the following in food before cooking- expiry date, packaging, colour of the food, presence of pests, and (x) storing cooked food in covered cooking pots in a clean, safe place before serving. 88 percent of cooks, mostly women, scored at least 80 percent, indicating a high knowledge about safe food preparation and storage practices (Annex U).
- 71 However, it is to be noted that only around 55 percent of cooks in the sample have been trained in safe food preparation and storage practices. Training of cooks is critical to ensure hygienically prepared nutritious food to children.
- 72 Initially the programme had planned for one-to-two cooks per village who were trained in safe food preparation and storage techniques. However, there was a need for a greater number of cooks. As a result, a number of cooking groups were formed in the villages with support from the *Naiban* and LWU. Many women in a village then started contributing voluntarily towards cooking school meals. With respect to training, the programme envisaged that the cooks that were initially trained in each of these villages would then train these new cooks. However, this did not get implemented and around 45 percent of the cooks in the sample had not received any special training to do their job.

Dietary Practices

73 The quality of students' diet was assessed in terms of dietary diversity. The evaluation team collected detailed information on the food and drinks consumed by each child during the last 24 hours prior to the interview for 706 school children through interviews with parents.

74 The mean dietary diversity score (DDS) for children in project schools was high at around 6.1 (out of a maximum score of 8³⁸). Although this is higher than the mean dietary diversity score among children in control schools (4.7), it is not statistically significant. Disaggregated by sex, there is no such variation between the dietary diversity scores for male and female students (Annex U).

75 Figure 2 shows that more than two-third of the students in project schools had a DDS higher than the mean (for treatment schools). However, in control schools, the proportion is about one-third.

76 Figure 3 shows a significant difference between DDS in project and control areas when disaggregated into categories. Individual DDS were categorised into three classes: high, medium and low. Majority students in project schools (68%) fall in the high DDS category (6-8) while for control school, majority fall in medium DDS (41%) followed by low DDS (27%). This clearly establishes that children in the project schools have a diverse food basket as compared to the control schools.

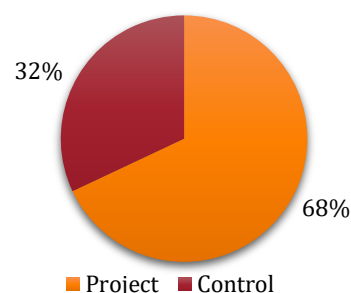


Figure 2: Proportion of respondents with Dietary Diversity Score >=6, by intervention type

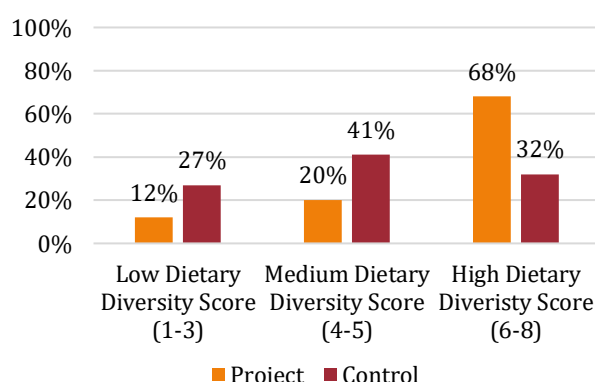


Figure 3: Categorising Dietary Diversity Score, by intervention type

77 Overall, the food that were commonly consumed by students over the last 24 hours from different food basket includes (a) grains, roots and tubers (93% (P³⁹), 89% (C⁴⁰)); (b) flesh food including organ meat and miscellaneous small animal protein (90% (P), 87% (C)); (c) vitamin A rich green leafy vegetables (87% (P), 81% (C)); (d) other vegetables (78% (P), 66% (C)); (e) legumes and beans (67% (P), 17% (C)); (f) nuts and seeds (56% (P) 28% (C)); (g) dairy products (61% (P), 39% (C)), and (h) eggs (79% (P), 68% (C)).

78 Lentils are being provided to address protein deficiencies. However, the evaluation team observed that its consumption was rather low. Also, the cooks complained that children were wasting lentils. Since lentils are not a part of the Lao diet, cooks also do not know how to cook it and they generally mix it with the rice and boil it. Children do not like this preparation and end up wasting rice as well.

79 Discussions with WFP-CO highlighted that they recognize that increasing protein intake requires time. However, since animal protein is more expensive than the plant-based protein, the chances of switching dietary practices is high. There has been an increase in access to lentils and beans (including soybeans), and it is expected that with increasing income, better awareness of nutrition, and improved dietary practices will boost the demand for both animal and plant-based protein.

³⁸ Feed the Future Guidance (2014) suggests grouping food items into 10 food groups. However, classification of food as "other fruits" and "other vegetable" was not possible. Therefore, the scale of food options is that of 8 in this case.

³⁹ (P)- Project schools

⁴⁰ (C)- Control schools

- 80 It was also found that a high proportion of students (55%) reported having consumed dairy products in the last 24 hours, with the proportion being higher in the north (61%) as compared to the south (39%). Although milk from cows and goats is not widely consumed in Laos, soy milk is widely consumed. Condensed milk is also being consumed.

Handwashing practices

- 81 Presence of functioning handwashing stations could be observed in only a few sample schools in project areas. Water scarcity was affecting the functionality of handwashing units.
- 82 The evaluation team observed that children were washing their hands before and after meals. However, use of soap was not widespread. Also, children were often washing their hands and utensils by dipping them in a bucket of water.

2.2. Relevance of MGD SFP FY17 in Lao PDR

Need in Lao PDR

- 83 Section 1 has presented the country context along with the design of MGD-SFP FY17 as response to the nutrition and education needs of the country. 47 out of 142 districts were categorised as poor under census 2015. Most of these districts are located in the hilly areas and inhabited by ethnic groups. The census observed that ethnic groups often have poorer housing and sanitary conditions, lesser access to roads and markets, and lower levels of health and education.
- 84 The MGD-SFP programme provinces and districts were identified and selected based on the Comprehensive Food Security Assessment (CFSA) 2016 and in consultation with MoES⁴¹. Underpinned by Laos Expenditure and Consumption Survey (LECS)⁴² 2012/13, Laos Social Indicator Survey (LSIS)⁴³ 2011/12, and Food Security and Nutrition Survey (FSNS)⁴⁴ 2015, the CFSA provides a clear picture of the highest priority geographic areas and beneficiaries in need of economic access to nutritious foods and addressing long-term nutritional deficiency.
- 85 The CFSA categorises Phongsaly, Bokeo, Huaphanh and Sekong as level 5, Xiengkhuang and Saravane as level 4, and LuangNamtha, Oudomxay, LuangPrabang, Khammuane and Attapeu as level 3 on status of food and nutrition security. Out of these 11 provinces, WFP continues to target beneficiaries in eight provinces which have the greatest needs. Within these provinces, WFP will work in 31 selected districts which features among the 65 disadvantaged districts identified by BEQUAL⁴⁵.
- 86 WFP school lunches consisting 100g rice, 40g lentils, and 10g vegetable oil fortified with Vitamins A and D will meet 37 percent of the caloric needs of children. The remainder will be fulfilled by contribution of vegetables, meat, eggs etc. from community. Through MGD-SFP, children will have access to a diverse meal and the establishment of school gardens will help in sustaining the diversity after WFP's exit.
- 87 MGD FY17 will promote literacy activities with emphasis on girls and mothers to overcome the social taboos around food and nutrition for pregnant and lactating women, and contribute towards reducing stunting in the country. To reduce health related absenteeism, WFP will collaborate with UNICEF to improve access to water, construct separate toilets for boys and girls, and training on hygiene. WFP will work with MoH for de-worming activities in school and carrying out hand washing campaigns.

Coherence with Government Policies

- 88 GoL is attempting to combat malnutrition by promoting dietary diversity both at household and community levels (at schools) by implementing SMAP (2016-2020), Policy on Promoting School Lunch (2014) and Agriculture Development Strategy (2025). Discussions with PESS and DESB officials indicates that MGD-SFP is aligned with these strategies and will contribute towards achieving nutritional security through dietary diversity.

⁴¹ WFP FY17 MGD Proposal

⁴² LSCS was prepared by the Lao Statistics Bureau (LSB) in Ministry of Planning and Investment supported by WB

⁴³ LSIS was prepared by Ministry of Health and LSB supported by multi donors such as UNICEF and UNFPA

⁴⁴ FSNS was prepared by LSB supported by WFP and UNICEF

⁴⁵ WFP FY17 MGD Proposal

- 89 MoES is the nodal agency for implementation of nation-wide school meals programme in Laos. MoES has setup a dedicated IEC unit for oversight and scaling up of NSMP. MoES is already implementing NSMP and WFP has been closely coordinating with MoES for MGD-SFP. This well-entrenched relationship between WFP and MoES will aid in integrating SFP with NSMP with joint action on addressing challenges and shaping the future of the school meals programme.
- 90 The NNSPA aims at promoting equitable gender roles, placing emphasis on increasing women's access to health services, nutrition and food security information, and to food. Women and girls are to be supported with education and training and enabled to earn an income and participate in household and community decision making on an equal basis with men. Aligning with the government objectives, MGD also promotes gender and social equality through equal opportunity to volunteer for SFP. Men and boys are sensitised and motivated to take up cooking. Images of male members cooking school lunch are circulated within the village and elsewhere to challenge unsuitable traditional gender roles. THRs are given to cooks and storekeepers as incentives for volunteering. Training of GoL staff and communities are designed to be inclusive and equitable giving equal opportunity to everyone to participate.
- 91 Towards, achieving universal access to primary education, GoL has made primary education free and compulsory. For implementing the activities under ESDP (2016-2020), GoL plans to spend 17 percent of the GDP on the education sector and envisages an outlay of US\$ 3,124 million in the next five years. WFP through MGD-SFP⁴⁶ is expected to contribute 13 percent of the sector requirements. MGD-SFP activities are completely aligned with ESDP, providing school meals, and complementing literacy and education support in the highest priority locations.
- 92 WFP has been collaborating with MAF and MoES for formulating guidelines for school gardens and following up with training and establishment of the gardens⁴⁷. This collaboration will continue for the current award and will help schools to get technical knowledge from PAFO and DAFO. WFP will also partner with FAO on developing curriculum on nutrition and school agriculture.
- 93 WFP attends meetings organised by GoL and chaired by MPI for programme formulation with ODA support which will continue under the FY17 award. WFP will advocate for increased spending on access to water in the MGD supported schools⁴⁸. Additionally, WFP in partnership with UNICEF will construct 25 Gravity Fed Water Supply Schemes (FGS) in Phongsaly and 20 boreholes in Saravan/ Attapeu for providing access to water. To improve hygiene practices, handwashing stations are to be established in 100 schools having access to water.
- 94 WFP already supports VEDCs with trainings to empower them to oversee implementation of government policies. LWU makes significant contributions to recipe development and trains cook at the village level. Under FY17 award, LWU will be encouraged to assess food taboos among pregnant and lactating women and train them on improved food habits. WFP has signed a MoU with Lao Front for National Construction (LFNC) for training them on monitoring of school meal programme.

Coherence with WFP CSP

- 95 WFP Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021) is underpinned by four strategic outcomes: i) School children in remote rural areas have sustainable access to food by 2021 (SO1), ii) Stunting rates among children under 2 in provinces with high levels of malnutrition meet nation targets by 2025 (SO2), iii) Vulnerable households in climate sensitive districts are more resilient to seasonal and long-term shocks and stresses (SO3), and iv) National and local governance institutions are strengthened to ensure improves service delivery, especially in hard-to-reach areas (SO4).
- 96 The MGD design provides a platform for WFP to engage with GoL for attaining SO1. The first activity under SO1 includes policy support, technical assistance and capacity transfer. WFP is co-chair of the coordination group on school meals and is also supporting MoES on finalisation of the handover policy from SFP to NSMP. The MGD FY17 monitoring system would also provide inputs to WFP's support on developing a robust M&E system for monitoring programme implementations and progress.

⁴⁶ WFP FY17 MGD Proposal

⁴⁷ WFP FY17 MGD Proposal and Discussions with MoES, MAF, PESS and DESB

⁴⁸ WFP FY17 MGD Proposal

- 97 The second activity under SO1 aims at supporting GoL plan of action on school meal programme. Towards ensuring supply of the desired dietary options, WFP with MGD support will continue to facilitate establishment of school gardens, fishponds and raising of poultry. The third activity aims at supporting the government on handover of school meals to the community supported by government.
- 98 MGD activities on creating awareness on nutrition and climate change will contribute towards achieving WFP CSP SO2. Promotion of greenhouses will build resilience against climate vagaries. This activity contributes to SO3 of the CSP. As part of MGD support, WFP is already engaging with government departments at different levels and also building their capacities for improved service delivery. WFP is a member of various groups and committees on food and nutrition in the country. These activities contribute to SO4 of CSP.
- 99 The CSP also articulates that WFP intends to move from food assistance to policy level engagements. During the course of transition, efforts will be made towards building the capacities of communities towards designing, implementing, and managing the programme. To that extent, the previous SFPs and have helped in carrying out the capacity building exercises with communities and government. The FY17 award along with capacity building activities also has inbuilt transition and exiting activities that is in line with WFP's plan of moving towards policy level engagements⁴⁹.

2.3. Effectiveness of MGD-SFP FY17

- 100 This section begins with presenting the integration and potential of the FY14 baseline and mid-term evaluation recommendations towards strengthening the FY17 program. The section also presents a comparative picture between programme and control schools on level of enrolment, attentiveness, literacy, health related absenteeism, and nutrition practices. Annex W presents indicator wise findings, while Annex U and Annex V presents the detailed results in tabular format.

Integrating recommendations from FY14 baseline and mid-term evaluation: Findings

- 101 The FY14 baseline study recommended that WFP should maintain a strong partnership with MoES, as the GoL eventually will take over and run the programme. Building on this and subsequent recommendations made during the FY14 MTE, WFP and MoES signed a joint School Feeding Handover Plan in May 2018. The critical role played by MAF and MPI in achieving the targets has also been recognised. A strong convergence between WFP, MoES, MAF, and MPI will help in sustaining the programme beyond 2021.
- 102 Community contribution is a key enabler of the school meals programme. This has been highlighted in FY14 baseline study and FY14 MTE. Recognising the pivotal role played by VEDCs in ensuring community contribution, FY14 MTE had recommended piloting a cash-based local procurement models of school feeding. The same has been initiated in Beng district of Oudomxay province and Nalae district in LuangNamtha with support from USDA Local Regional Procurement (LRP). Community contribution will be the cornerstone to the success of SFP post WFP exit.
- 103 WASH facilities were identified as another critical aspect for the success of the programme. MTE suggested that WFP should work with UNICEF to meet infrastructure requirements and advocate for WASH activities. WFP collaborated with UNICEF for constructing toilets and GiZ for constructing hand washing stations. Good coverage of toilet facilities was observed. Despite WFP's planned involvement for improving access to water under FY 17 program, it will still need involvement from other stakeholders like Nam Saat and UNICEF to decrease health related absenteeism.
- 104 Capacity building of stakeholders, particularly cooks and storekeepers, was identified for strengthening during the FY14 baseline study. The MTE reiterated this need along with capacity building of government officials, VEDC members, and cooks. Training programmes and exchange visits for government staff and capacity development activities for VEDC members have been undertaken and more are planned under FY 17 program. For ensuring sustainability of the programme, it will be essential that all stakeholders are trained on the aspects of community managed SFP.
- 105 With respect to monitoring systems, limited records were found to be maintained during the FY14 baseline and MTE. Following the MTE recommendations, reporting formats have been simplified. However, the record keeping at school, DESB, and PESS levels needs to improve. Without proper

⁴⁹ WFP FY17 MGD Proposal

monitoring system, it will be difficult to ascertain the progress made and the contribution of SFP in achieving the results. The MoU with Lao Front for National Development to support monitoring activities may prove to be useful.

- 106 FY14 MTE provided recommendations to mainstream gender into field activities by using new literacy materials to challenge traditional gender roles. From field study it emerged that literacy material have been developed and circulated. However, gender equality is yet to be achieved in activities like cooking and commodity management. The primary survey shows that women are responsible for activities such as collecting firewood and vegetables, fetching water, and cleaning as most cooks are women.

Improved Literacy of School-age Children

- 107 **Children's background:** Lao population has four broad ethno-linguistic families⁵⁰ namely, Lao-Tai (67%), Mon-Khmer (21%), Hmong-Lu Mien (8%) and Sino-Tibetan (3%)⁵¹. Interestingly, MoES categorises language based on three topological groups; "*Lao Loum*", or "Lowland Lao", "*Lao Theung*", or "Upland Lao" or "Midland Lao" and "*Lao Soung*", or "Highland Lao"⁵². About 66 percent of the population reside in Lowland areas (<200 metres above mean sea level) and speak Lao. About 20 percent of the population reside in Midland Lao (mountain slopes in the range 200 – 800 metres) and speak different tribal languages with Khmu spoken by 11 percent of the people. About 14 percent of the population resides in Highland Lao (upper mountain slopes, typically above 800 metres) and speak Hmong and Chinese.

- 108 From the primary survey, similar patterns emerge among the sampled children. While Mon-Khmer emerges as the predominant ethnic group in Northern regions (45%), its presence is comparatively lower in the South (34%). Lao-Tai is the most predominant ethnic group in the South (60%). Children belonging to Lao-Tai ethnic group speak Lao at home and therefore, are less likely to face problems in school in terms of medium of instruction. However, those belonging to other ethnic groups are learning to read in a second language. Further, student belonging to ethnic groups Hmong-Lu Mien and Sino-Tibetan were only found in the Northern provinces (7% and 16%, respectively), its presence in the South is negligible. Thus, we see that higher proportion of students in the southern provinces are comfortable with Lao as compared to those in the Northern provinces (non Lao-Tai ethnic groups).

- 109 With respect to socio-economic characteristics, no statistically significant differences were found between boys and girls across both geographies and intervention type.

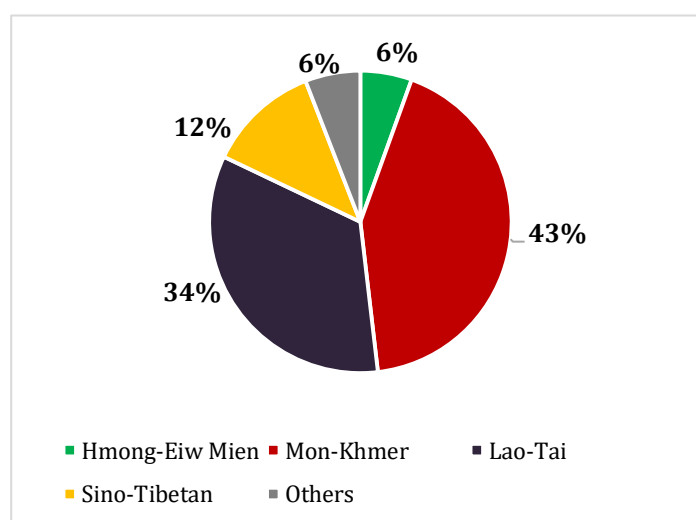


Figure 4: Student ethnicity, Project schools

N=1155

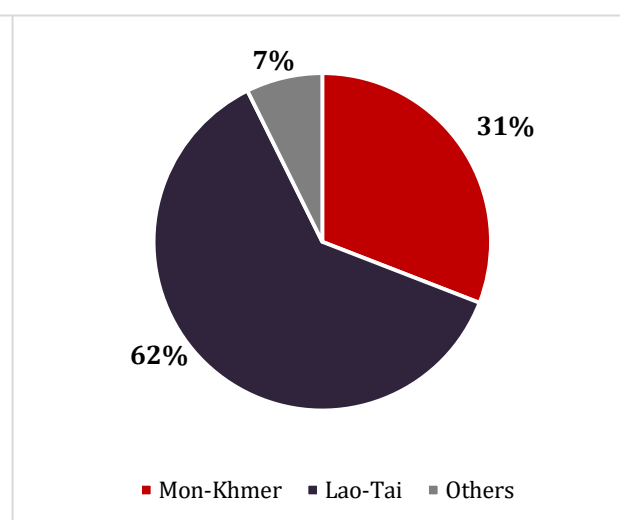


Figure 5: Student ethnicity, Control schools

N=1155

- 110 A significantly (statistically) higher proportion of students in project schools in southern provinces reported taking extra classes (64.1%) as compared to northern provinces (47.8%). A similar trend

⁵⁰ As defined by the Lao Census 1995 and the classification of ethnic minorities based on Ethno-linguistic Family by LFNC

⁵¹ King, Elizabeth M., Indigenous Peoples, Poverty and Development, 2010

⁵² Gender and Ethnicity in the Context of Equality and Access in Lao Education, UNESCO

was observed in the home literacy environments available to boys and girls across the provinces. Therefore, it is likely that they would have similar literacy levels (Figure 6 & Figure 7).

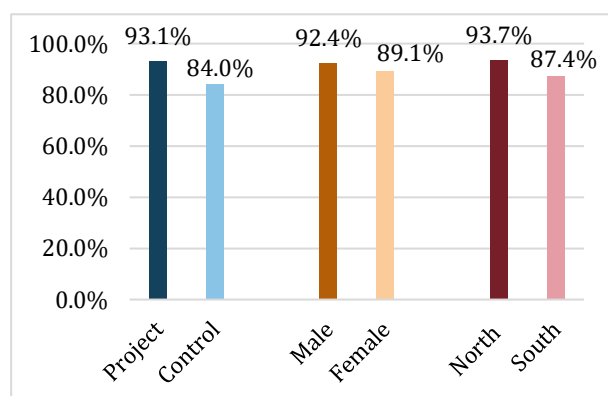


Figure 6: Proportion of students reporting having someone at home (not private teachers) to help them with reading and writing

N=1155

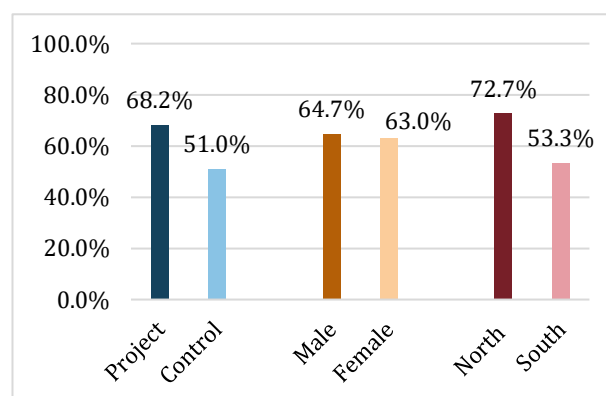


Figure 7: Proportion of students reported reading any kind of extracurricular book

N=1155

111 Teaching materials and methodologies used at school are in Lao language. However, given the wide ethnic and linguistic diversity in the country, exposure to Lao language at home is limited for a vast majority of children and their pace of learning is slower. WFP, with support from PI and BBM have been aiding remote rural areas with diverse ethnic composition where Lao language is not spoken at home under the MGD-SFP programme to improving learning abilities among school-age children.

112 Secondary literature⁵³ suggests that of students who speak Lao at home, 30 percent of 2nd graders could not read a single word. This proportion was even higher (54%) for students who do not speak Lao at home. To assess learning levels among Grade-2 students, EGRA tool was administered to 175 students in project schools and another 76 in control schools. Additionally, a sample of 148 Grade 3 students in project schools and 66 students from the same Grade in control schools were covered. The EGRA tool used Lao as the language for reading and writing. The tool used six sub-tests for assessing the learning levels among children, namely, letter recognition, familiar word recognition, decoding words (invented word reading), fluency, reading comprehension, and listening comprehension.

113 On one hand, it was found that only 6.9 percent students in project schools were able to demonstrate at least 75 percent reading comprehension of the Lao language compared with a target of 25 percent⁵⁴. On the other hand, 12.4 percent students in control schools demonstrated similar comprehension level of Lao language. While schools in control area were found to perform better, however, there is no statistically significant difference. The findings for reading comprehension disaggregated by sex and geographical location (northern vs southern provinces) do not reveal any statistically significant difference (Figure 8 and Annex U).

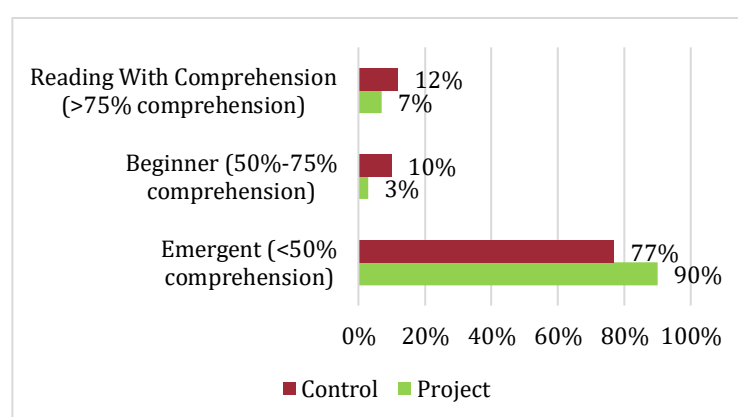


Figure 8: Reading comprehension categorisation based on EGRA

114 With respect to ethnic variations, findings from EGRA shows that literacy among Lao-Tai children in project schools is considerably higher (statistically significant) as compared to children from other non-Lao-Tai ethnic groups, based on their reading comprehension ability.

⁵³ Save the Children (2013). Literacy Boost Lao PDR: Baseline report

⁵⁴ June 2018. Semi-Annual report for MGD-SFP

- 115 An interesting aspect emerges if we examine the EGRA findings for both Grades 2 and 3 students together. Across project and control schools it differs widely from those among only Grade 2 students. With Grade 3 included, the proportion of students who demonstrated at least 75 percent reading comprehension of Lao language is high (15.8% in project schools and 26.8% in control schools). Therefore, this indicates that Grade 3 is doing better and that it does take time for children to grasp a new language. Moreover, there emerges statistically significant difference between the findings across intervention type (project and control), sex, or geographical location (northern vs southern provinces) with respect to Grade 3. Overall, students from control schools have significantly high literacy levels with respect to reading Lao (higher than the national target of 25%). Moreover, level of literacy among boys was found to be higher (statistically significant) than that among girls.
- 116 To improve the quality of education in Laos, USAID's five Ts- "Time, Teaching, Text, Mother tongue and Testing" have been identified as important elements of success. WFP will provide support through training of DESB and programme staff on concepts, rationale and approach for community-based reading festivals, reading camps and parenting awareness sessions. This would support in conducting these sessions as part of the MGD-SFP programme.

Box 1: Support from Partner Organisation towards improving literacy and quality of education

WFP, in collaboration with Big Brother Mouse (BBM), is doing commendable work in terms of aiding early grade reading ability among children in Ngoy district of LuangPrabang. Provisioning of grade appropriate books in Lao language for extra-curricular reading is a promising effort towards building reading comprehension skills of children. The design and content of the books espouse interest among children towards reading. In consonance with Goal 22 and 23 of DESB's agenda for improving early grade learning, "reading corners" have also been established in these targeted schools. BBM has provided 80 books for each classroom. Through their community mobilisers, they have also engaged with students on how to read books, explained the process of making books, and taught them how to interpret and appreciate pictures. The idea is to make children more comfortable with books and encourage them to pick up reading as a hobby. Book parties are also being organised to further promote the culture of reading. BBM officials shared that improved learning abilities among children start to show up grade 4 onwards, as also reiterated in the EGRA findings from the primary survey.

BBM has also organised teacher's training on how to use these books and teach them Lao language (given that the teachers themselves come from different ethnic backgrounds). In the words of the Founder Director for BBM, *"Food is important for survival. Education gives you the ability to decide what you want to eat and gain access to those foods"*.

Plan International (PI), a partner in the BEQUAL NGO Consortium, is also working towards promoting full enrolment and completion of quality primary school education of all children, including non-Lao speakers, and children with disabilities. They are supporting MGD-SFP in Nga district in Oudomxay province since July 2016 up till June 2018. It is supporting grade 1 non-Lao students through a transition course that helps them pick up Lao language. Along with this, they are also providing teaching material for teachers to follow while teaching Lao to students. PI volunteers (four per village) are also engaged in organising weekly reading activities and monthly reading camps. It was found that children were not too familiar with books, so the idea behind such activities was to "make reading fun for children". However, it was soon realised that volunteers themselves were not very confident of organising these activities since they too were mostly from non-Lao background. Eventually, a Master training was held for the volunteers, however, progress has been very gradual.

PI has also engaged with parents of school-aged children through caregiver trainings. This includes seven modules on teaching Lao language to parents and encouraging them to promote learning among their children. In line with MGD-SFP's focus on promoting nutrition education, parents were encouraged to start kitchen gardens at home and thus promote health and nutrition practices at home too, in addition to increasing community's knowledge around these aspects. This can be considered as a critical step to ensure sustainability of outcomes achieved by MGD-SFP.

Further, PI's efforts of engaging with the VEDC to promote bottom-up approach to education will have long-term impact on ensuring that children are going to school and their parents understand its importance.

- 117 PI is envisaged to work with Research Institute of Educational Science (RIES) towards implementing the "Teaching Lao to non-Lao students". The modules are part of the Lao speaking course approved by the Department of Pre-Primary and Primary education (DPPE) and piloted in six provinces by BEQUAL. As part of the approach, a master trainer programme will be held at the district level to train

DESB staff including Pedagogical Advisors (PAs). The Grade 1 teachers of target schools would then be trained on oral Lao teaching methods, introduction of reading corners in classrooms, routine extra-curricular reading activities and child-to-child support in classroom. Teachers, PAs, and DESB staff together will ensure the proper implementation of the modules for inculcating the culture of reading and supporting peers in reading. A set of 15 books as guidance materials will be provided to teachers to aid them in using books in school and also appreciate the importance of reading.

- 118 To ensure easy access to reading materials, PI will support establishment of community book banks. These will provide reading opportunities for older children and parents. BBM will also setup a swap box at schools for children to exchange books. The programme has targeted to provide 170,000 age appropriate books to 50,000 children and 30,000 teaching materials to 2,000 teachers.
- 119 With MGD support, Reading and Literacy Needs Assessment will be conducted at the beginning of each academic year for Grade 1 students by WFP and PI with support from DESB. DESB staff will be trained to assess the proficiency levels of children using approved tools from DPPE. The exercise will be repeated at the end of the session to measure the progress made by the students and the efficacy of the Literacy activities designed under the programme.

Increased Enrolment

- 120 The baseline survey team aimed to collect enrolment data from school records for the past five academic years in order to examine trends in WFP supported schools. Around two-third (65.5%) of the schools did not maintain these records at the time of the survey. About 40 percent of schools had records for at least one of the years, and 34 percent (20 out of 58 schools) had complete enrolment records for all five years. Similarly, 5 of the 20 control schools (25%) maintained complete enrolment records of all five years.
- 121 Percent change in school enrolment in the current academic year (2017-18⁵⁵) was calculated by comparing the number of students in 2017-18 to the previous academic year (2016-17⁵⁶). There has been a minuscule increase in enrolment (1%) in project schools since the last academic year. However, it was noted that there has been a decrease in enrolment of girls by a percentage point over the last one year in project schools. There emerges no statistically significant variation in percent change in enrolment rate in project schools vis-à-vis control schools, as well as that for boys and girls (Annex U).
- 122 The female to male enrolment ratio was 0.95 during the last academic year (2016-17), indicating that the number of girls enrolled was five percent less than the number of boys. However, for control schools, the number of girls enrolled was four percent more than number of boys enrolled (Annex U).
- 123 The average dropout rate for the last academic year was two percent in both project and control schools showing no variation by intervention type. The dropout rate among boys (2%) and girls (1%), in both project and control schools, were found to be similar (Annex U). The primary study figures conforms to the census 2015 figures⁵⁷ and slightly lower than the MoES figures⁵⁸.
- 124 Overall, eight percent students in project schools had to repeat the grade during the last academic year, while the corresponding rate for control schools is around six percent⁵⁹. This variation is not statistically significant (Annex U). The repetition rate is slightly higher among boys (11%) than girls (5%) in project schools, however this difference is not statistically significant.

Improved Student Attendance

- 125 Complete information on monthly student attendance over the last academic year was available from 77 percent of the project schools, and an additional 7 percent of the schools had partial data on attendance. Overall, data for only 690 students in project schools (out of 1162 in the sample) were available for calculating average student attendance and percentage of students attending school regularly. With respect to control schools, complete attendance record for the last academic year was

⁵⁵ 2914 students from 20 schools

⁵⁶ 2885 students from 20 schools

⁵⁷ Dropout rate- 2.84%; Boys- 2.86%; Girls- 2.82%

⁵⁸ Source: LaoEduInfo database. Dropout rate- 4.4%; Boys- 4.7%; Girls- 4.1%

⁵⁹ The national average for repetition rate is 6.9 percent (UNESCO, MoES 2014).

available from 50 percent of the schools, and an additional 20 percent of schools had partial records. Overall, data was available for 208 students in control schools (out of 292 in the sample).

126 Student attendance was measured in two ways:

- a. The monthly school attendance records of fifteen students per school for the last academic semester (September 2017- February 2018). Both average attendance and regular school attendance (defined as greater than or equal to 80 percent attendance) were calculated.
- b. The average school attendance was computed from the number of students present at school on the day of the survey compared to the number of students enrolled in each school. Although just a snapshot of the day, this indicator can be used to triangulate the reliability of school records.

127 In comparison to 82.9 percent attendance at primary level as reported by Census 2015, average student attendance is high at around 98 percent in project schools. It is similar for both sexes and intervention type (Annex U). According to the monitoring report for the period October 2017 to March 2018, 67,952 males and 64,607 female students were attending school regularly (more than 80%) (Annex V). Census 2015 observes that about 82.9 percent girls and about 82.8 percent boys are attending school. Census data also reveals an interesting pattern where attendance level peaks at 11 years of age of a student and then tapers down highlighting the high dropouts post primary education.

128 Student attendance on the day of the survey was slightly lower than the average attendance and regular attendance, at 91 percent in project schools and 80 percent in control schools. There is no significant variation across sex⁶⁰ (Annex U). It is to be noted that this value was worked out using the figures on all children at the schools.

129 Poverty is the primary cause for children being out of school as parents cannot afford the education expenses. Further, a lack of interest in studying is a common cause for absenteeism among boys as shared by parents during FGDs. For girls, however, parents shared that they are expected to stay back at home on some days and help with household chores and take care of younger siblings. Further, in certain ethnic groups like Akha and Hmong, girls are married off at a very early age (after grade 5) which results in drop-out after completing primary school.

130 Overall, in sample schools, 10.5 percent students were reported to be absent for the whole day in the last one week (from the date of survey). Further, there are statistically significant differences across geography: around seven percent students were reported to be absent in the north while in the south it was around 21 percent. The corresponding figure for control schools was 20.7 percent (statistically significant). USDA support may have contributed to the low proportion of absenteeism in project schools as compared to control schools.

131 About 86.5 percent of the students reported taking leave in the last one week. About 43 percent student were absent for a day and another 31 percent were absent for two days. Disaggregating by sex or intervention type did not highlight any variation. However, as presented in Box 2, seasonal absenteeism in the North increases during the harvesting season and also during establishment of new banana plantations.

132 While the primary reason for absenteeism was illness, a small proportion of students (around 12.5% in project schools) also reported that they were absent because their parents asked them to stay at home and help out with household chores, farm work, or to take care of siblings. Disaggregating this

Box 2: Migration related absenteeism

Involvement in farming activities is a common reason for absence among both boys and girls. This is particularly high during the sowing and harvesting seasons. Absenteeism among school students is at its peak during the months of April and May, especially in the Northern provinces where a large number of banana plantations have come up. Families migrate to these plantations along with their children and stay there for weeks. This leads to a steep fall in attendance during the last part of the second semester. In this context, it is suggested that the school calendar may be aligned with the agriculture season to prevent seasonal migration to impact children's education.

⁶⁰ According to The World Bank (2016) report on "Reducing early grade dropout and low learning achievement in Lao PDR: Root causes and possible interventions", gender difference in attendance and enrollment starts to be significant after age 14, with early drop out being more common for girls than for boys.

by sex does not highlight any gender-based variation in finding- an equal proportion of boys and girls reported this (12.5%).

- 133 The most common illnesses in both project and control schools were reported to be fever, headache, cold, and cough. Disaggregating data by geography, a considerably higher proportion of students (statistically significant) reported health related absence in the north (83%) as compared to south (53%). This highlights the need for better health, nutrition, and hygiene practices in the north.

Improved Attentiveness

- 134 Around 21 percent students in project schools were classified as inattentive by their teachers while the corresponding figure for control schools is 19 percent (Annex U). A higher proportion of female students were classified as inattentive (24%) in project schools as compared to male students (17%). Inattentiveness was found to be higher among females in control schools as well.
- 135 A total of 138,790 social assistance beneficiaries (children) are participating in productive safety nets as a result of USDA assistance. This includes 70,783 boys and 68,007 girls. 111,032 beneficiaries are part of continuing schools and 27,758 beneficiaries have been reached out in the new schools (Annex V). Provisioning of school lunch enhances the social protection enjoyed by these children with respect to access to food and nutrition.

School Gardens

- 136 By provisioning school lunch, MGD-SFP aims that children will stay in school during and after lunch. This also acts as an economic incentive for parents. The parents shared that mothers usually had to be at home to serve lunch to the children. This meant that they would have to return from the fields which leaves them with comparatively lesser amount of time to engage in economic activities. However, now that children don't need to come home to eat, they can spend longer hours at work thus enhancing their productivity.
- 137 School gardens have been globally recognised as an effective means of promoting good diet, nutrition education, and development of livelihood skills among students. It also has the power to extend this learning to the larger community. Two-third of the sampled project schools reported having a school garden (Annex V).
- 138 A major achievement of the programme is that around 85 percent of parents reported that their household costs on food have reduced after the school lunch programme commenced. The proportion of people who reported this positive impact is higher (statistically significant) in the north as compared to the southern provinces. This could be attributed to the fact that a significantly higher proportion of parents in the north (95%) are contributing for the school lunch as compared to the south (76%). Therefore, with a higher number of families supporting the school lunch program, the cost for each family has gone down and as a result, their household expenditure on food is perceived to be lower.
- 139 About 64 percent of the schools were able to contribute to the school lunch at least twice a month in semester 1. This falls to as low as 36 percent during the second semester. The situation is particularly worse in schools in the north with only about 31 percent reporting the ability to contribute twice a month in semester 2 as compared to 50 percent schools in south (Annex V).
- 140 Availability of water is a critical factor for the effectiveness and utility of school gardens. It was learnt that majority of the school gardens were non-operational during the dry season owing to water scarcity. [Figure 9](#) shows that the proportion of school gardens that do not provide vegetables for the school lunch is considerably higher in the second semester, which happens to be the dry season. Nearly half of the school gardens in the northern provinces, do not provide vegetables at all in the second semester. While the proportion of school gardens providing vegetables for school lunch during the second semester also goes down in the southern provinces, the decrease is slightly less as compared to the northern schools. Given the mountainous terrain in the north, water scarcity is an even more serious issue with respect to the functioning of school gardens during the dry season.

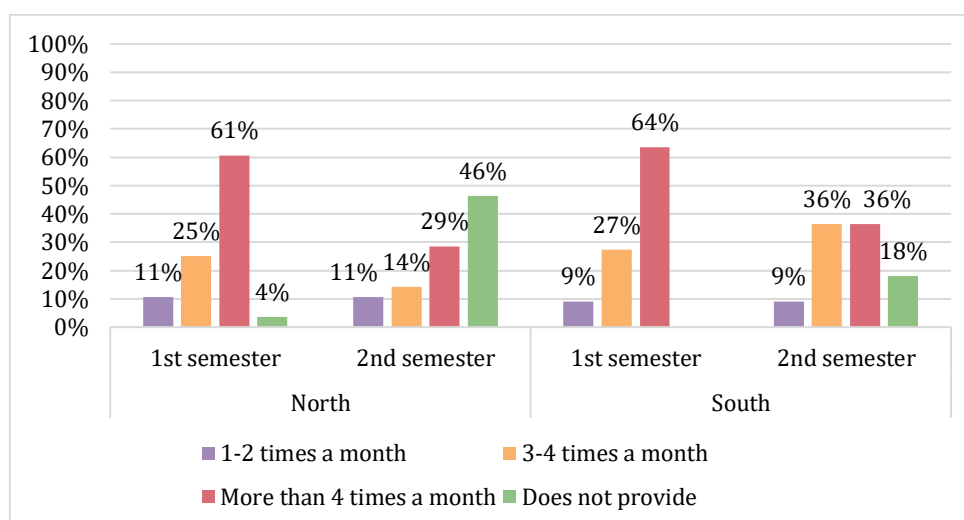


Figure 9: Harvest from school gardens for school lunch in the last one year, by geography

141 During the survey (end March to early May), nearly 50 percent of the cooks in sample schools reported that they have not been able to use vegetables from the school garden in the last one month as the school gardens remained non-operational due to low soil moisture and lack of irrigation opportunities.

Box 3: Setting up Model Schools: Key to boost effectiveness and utilisation of school gardens

The Education Department, with technical support from WFP, has been working towards setting up model schools in targeted districts in order to demonstrate the utility of school gardens. The Agriculture Department is providing technical support to this. This can be further scaled up to cover all districts to promote community knowledge and awareness. The evaluation team also witnessed some exemplary model schools that have used innovative ways of sustaining school gardens and the overall school lunch program. Depending on the resources available (water, finance, etc.), they have adopted various methods to sustain the activity.

In Kokhai village of Sekong district, the school staff had planted fruit trees (guava, banana Due to low moisture content in the soil and lack of irrigation opportunities, and papaya) along with vegetables in the school garden. They made a good profit by selling the fruits and, in turn, use the money for vegetables and meat for school lunch. They also made a fish pond in the school premises to supplement the supply of proteins to the children. The school head also expressed a desire to start a poultry farm.

Ban Thiao village in LuangNamtha presents another very inspiring story. With government support, the villagers set up a greenhouse. This boosted their vegetable production throughout the year. During the year 2017, they managed to sell vegetables worth 2,343,000 Kips in seven months, which was used to buy food items for school lunch. However, the green house was not found to be in good shape during the evaluation team's visit. The school head shared that the plastic used for the green house lasts around two years. Exposure to strong winds and heavy rainfall had destroyed it and they do not have adequate money to replace it. They hoped that the government would provide financial support for this.

Such examples put forth the idea of creating "multiple models of school gardens" depending on the prevalent circumstances. In areas where there is acute water shortage, water resistant cash crops such as cassava can be promoted to complement the earnings of the school. Similarly, green houses can be promoted in areas prone to flooding. This will provide greater incentive to school authorities to maintain the school gardens and also help ensure continuity of the school lunch program.

142 VEDCs from 45 schools reported receiving training by WFP under MGD-SFP FY14. Under MGD-SFP FY17, DESB will train seven master trainers from each of the VEDCs. Based on the 'School Garden Training Guidelines (SGTG)', these will be conducted on an annual basis. These master trainers will then oversee the construction of school gardens and greenhouses.

143 To improve access to animal protein, WFP under FY14 award had supported the establishment of fishponds and promotion of small livestock in the model schools. This will be expanded to other

schools under the current award depending on the community's interest towards fishpond and livestock maintenance.

Increased knowledge of nutrition

- 144 Monitoring reports for the period October 2017 to March 2018 indicates that 11,200 individuals have demonstrated the use of new child health and nutrition practices. The primary survey shows that school gardens have helped in increasing knowledge among students on gardening. Their involvement in sowing of seeds, watering, harvesting, and overall maintenance of the school gardens assisted this. In an agrarian economy, this is also helping students build their livelihood skills. However, evidence for increased awareness around nutritional value of vegetables was found to be weak among students. Most students were not aware of the vegetables growing in the garden.
- 145 Nutrition education through school gardens has led to an increased knowledge among the community (teachers, parents, cooks, store keepers, and other VEDC members). This in turn has also led to positive changes in dietary practices at the household level as evident from the DDS. Qualitative discussions with stakeholders indicated that these changes are at a preliminary stage and are mainly dependent on the availability of water and economic status of households.
- 146 Monitoring reports indicate that 12,578 individuals have been trained in child health and nutrition as a result of USDA assistance between 2014 and 2016. Primary survey findings indicate that 40 percent teachers (64 male and 56 female) have been trained through this assistance (Annex V).

Analysing the gender dimensions of MGD-SFP FY17

Alignment of the programme with the priorities of women, men, girls, and boys

- 147 Secondary literature indicates that “women’s literacy is lower than men’s, especially in rural areas without road access, amongst the poorest group and ethnic groups living in remote areas” (MTE FY14⁶¹). Moreover, it has been found that stunting rates are four times higher among children of uneducated women than among children of mothers with secondary or higher education.
- 148 The causes for absenteeism among boys and girls were found to be different. For boys, it was primarily because of involvement in farming and a lack of interest in studies, while girls were required to attend to household chores and care for their younger siblings. This conforms to the conventional gender roles of women being the “care giver” and men as the “breadwinner” in a family. Further, it was reported that girls from certain ethnic groups such as Akha and Hmong were married off at an early age leading to their dropping out after completion of primary education. However, as reported in MTE FY14, primary school drop-out rate for boys is higher than girls.
- 149 In order to address these issues and change the perception of gender roles in the society, WFP intends to encourage community members to participate in literacy activities. The WFP School Feeding Policy (2013) and Gender Policy 2015-20 lay emphasis on recognizing and including specific needs of young girls, ethnic and religious minorities, and children with disabilities. To promote inclusion and equality in education, WFP has supported GoL’s efforts to increase enrolment and attendance of schoolgirls. WFP will advocate the importance of education at the village and household level with men, women, boys and girls through parenting awareness sessions, creating book banks, and distributing of poster emphasising on the importance of regular attendance for boys and girls, including disabled children.

Gender sensitive design and implementation

- 150 The MGD FY17 programme design is gender sensitive and has integrated gender-related recommendations from previous evaluations. This includes measures such as the promotion of sharing of tasks in school gardens between boys and girls without defining tasks by gender, strengthening of nutrition education, and mainstreaming of gender equality into field-level activities by using new literacy materials to challenge unsuitable gender roles and improve sensitivity.
- 151 The number of beneficiaries reached through the programme is gender balanced covering equal numbers of boys and girls (Annex V). MGD-SFP has maintained gender parity in promoting enrolment rates and handling issues of drop-outs among both boys and girls. Awareness generating and

⁶¹ As stated in the 8th Five Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan

community sensitisation activities that were conducted have focussed adequately on the importance of education for girls. During field visits, the evaluation team observed that the project was benefitting boys and girls equally (Annexes U and V).

- 152 With respect to school gardens, the evaluation team witnessed equal participation of boys and girls in activities such as sowing, watering, and cleaning.
- 153 In order to prevent increased workload for women cooks in collecting water for school lunch, the programme advocates for a shared responsibility. However, this has fallen short of expectations. This translates to an increased workload, especially in schools where water availability is scarce. Cooks also are responsible for collecting firewood and vegetables. The workload of women in cooking school lunch is way higher than that on the men. Instances of women not turning up for cooking as they could not collect firewood or vegetables were reported.
- 154 For preventing smoke-related ailments, reducing the use of firewood and emissions that contribute to climate change, smoke reducing stoves were piloted in 2017 for cooking school lunch. This has not been implemented in all the schools yet. Under MGD FY17 award, WFP plans to spend about US\$ 147,000 towards installing such stoves in partnership with The World Bank.

Impact on gender roles in the medium and long-term

- 155 MGD-SFP has also encouraged VEDCs to have both male and female cooks for school meals to gradually change social beliefs on cooking. However, it emerged from field discussions that the community largely persists with the conventional perception that cooking is a woman's chore. VEDCs were encouraged to share photographs of men cooking to challenge this notion but many men were uncomfortable with the public display of their photographs of cooking food. Nonetheless, encouraging instances of husbands cooking school meals on behalf of their wives when she was unwell were noted. Social engineering requires time and WFP proposes to work further on this under the FY17 award.
- 156 Another finding pertaining to gender roles is that while cooks predominantly are women, storekeepers were mostly men in two-third of the sample schools. Yet again, this reinforces conventional gender roles. A factor hindering more women taking up the responsibility as storekeepers was the design of the storerooms. These usually are constructed on stilts and climbing into them is not very easy. Depending on the height of the storerooms, storekeepers usually use wooden planks or jump to access it.

Role and nature of participation of women in the program, specifically VEDC, Lao Women Union, and other local school feeding management and support committees

- 157 By forging partnerships between VEDC and LWU, women have been encouraged to take up leadership roles in school management committees. However, the role of women in leadership roles in VEDC appeared to be weak with only one women participant present during discussions held separately with four VEDCs. A report⁶² on the functionality and impact of VEDCs in Laos also indicates that the proportion of women (mostly LWU representative) in VEDCs is about 20 percent and in remote areas about 10 percent. The report further opines that *"... women are often passed over due to a perceived lack of pre-requisite skills, notably basic literacy and, sometimes, lesser abilities in Lao language...."* Representation of women in VEDCs need to be promoted and their capacities augmented.

Sustaining the gender-based outcomes

- 158 It can be reasoned that GEEW has been mainstreamed throughout the programme activities involving school aged boys and girls. The programme design for MGD-SFP and WFP-CO's implementation and monitoring plans have paid considerable attention to gender, and conforms to the national gender commitments and policies. The programme was found to benefit boys and girls in an equal manner, and reflects responsiveness to gender-based needs and differences. As emphasised above, it would be critical to enhance participation of women in leadership roles in VEDCs and change conventional perceptions around gender roles. It would also be crucial to mainstream gender equality into field level activities such as cooking of school meals and storekeeping. The workload of cooks needs to be addressed by promoting sharing of responsibilities between men and women. Further, best practices in this regard should be disseminated among schools and communities in other areas.

⁶² Village Education Development Committees in Lao PDR: Their functionality and impact (2015)

- 159 The gender implementation plan developed by WFP-CO must continue to be operationalized. Building on the gender focus that already exists, the programme should work with other partners and the government to strengthen monitoring and draw their attention to gender issues highlighted above.

2.4. Sustainability of MGD-SFP FY17

- 160 Sustainability of any social sector programme is driven by a combination of community needs, perception and ownership, stakeholder capacities, role clarity, resource availability, and intent of stakeholders from both demand and supply ends. These elements play a critical role in ensuring the continuity of a programme after the exit of the donor/ implementing agency. In the long run, communities on the demand side and the government on the supply side will have to work in tandem with a common understanding to continue and improve upon the achievements. This section presents the community profile in the programme provinces and observations on the programme design which are preliminary in nature and will have to be closely monitored throughout the programme period.

Community Profile

- 161 MGD-SFP FY17 covers eight provinces- Phongsaly, LuangNamtha, Oudomxay, LuangPrabang, Khammuane, Saravane, Sekong, and Attapeu. Sekong is the smallest province with a population of 113,048 persons while LuangPrabang is the largest and populated by 431,889 persons. About 69 percent of the population resides in the rural areas of the provinces. The sex ratio in the provinces varies from 97 (Saravane) to 104 (Phongsaly). Phongsaly has the lowest population density in the country with 11 people per square kilometre closely followed by Attapeu (14) and Sekong (15), while Saravane has the highest density (37) - Table 12. The major ethnic groups residing in these provinces are Lao Tai in Saravane, Sino-Tibetan and Mon-Khmer in Phongsaly, Sino-Tibetan and Mon-Khmer in LuangNamtha, Mon-Khmer in Oudomxay, Mon-Khmer, Lao and Hmong-Lu Mien in LuangPrabang, Mon-Khmer in Sekong, and Lao-Tai and Mon-Khmer in Attapeu⁶³.
- 162 Literacy rate in the eight programme provinces is lower than the national level of 90. Phongsaly with 70.6 is the lowest while Khammuane with 90.6 has the highest literacy rate. Female literacy rate is the lowest in Phongsaly (54.3) followed by LuangNamtha (54.7). Among the programme provinces, Khammuane has the highest female literacy rate (80.3). Table 13 presents the details.
- 163 Literacy among the various ethnic groups varies. Socio-economic factors along with geographical location and cultural traits impact literacy rates. In some ethnic groups about 50 percent of the population have never attended school, such as Lahou (63%), Akha (50%), Tri (54%), Katang (41%) etc. The predominant group, Lao-Tai, had the highest literacy rate - 95 and 92 percent points, for males and females, respectively. Mon-Khmer (71%) and Hmong-lu mien (70%) also have decent scores on literacy. The lowest literacy was observed among the China-Tibet ethnic group (47%).
- 164 In Laos, education is compulsory at the primary and lower secondary level. It is expected that children from 6 years of age should complete education till lower secondary level. However, due to economic status of households, distance to schools etc., few children are unable to enrol in schools or drop out after completing primary education. Khammuane, Phongsaly, and Saravane have lower school attendance rates than the national rate. Six out of the eight programme provinces have higher non-enrolment rate of children in schools in comparison to the national rate (7%) - Table 14. The Gender Parity Index (GPI) for primary school is close to 1.00, indicating no difference in the attendance of girls and boys (Table 15).
- 165 Stunting is higher in the northern provinces (51%) as compared to the southern provinces (47%). Four programme provinces (Phongsaly-16%, LuangNamtha-17%, Saravane-14%, and Sekong-15%) have the highest proportion of underweight children in the country. Further, a high proportion of children are severely stunted in Phongsaly (37%), LuangNamtha (29%), Oudomxay (28%), Saravane (27%), and Sekong (37%). LuangNamtha has the highest prevalence of wasting in the country (9.2%). The Lao LSIS report observes that the proportion of underweight and stunted children in Chinese-Tibetan households is much higher than the national average (20% severely underweight and 38% severely stunted). Table 16 presents the details.

⁶³ <http://www.na.gov.la/files/appf17/population.html>

- 166 Phongsaly and Khammuane provinces have the highest U5MR rates, at 151 and 138 deaths per 1,000 live births, respectively. Phongsaly has the highest infant mortality rate. For all types of early childhood mortality, children in Chinese-Tibetan households have higher rates than children of other ethno-linguistic groups (Table 17).
- 167 Crude birth rate (CBR)⁶⁴ is a measurement of fertility in a population. Among the programme provinces, Sekong and Attapeu have the second and third highest birth rates in the country. Crude death rate (CDR) measures mortality, and the highest death rate was in Oudomxay Province (11.4). Except for Saravane, all other programme provinces have a death rate higher than the national rate LuangNamtha (11.1), Phongsaly (10.8) and Sekong (10.4) are the provinces with highest death rate after Oudomxay (Table 18).
- 168 Nearly half of the households in the programme provinces do not have a drinking water source in their premises. This deprivation is the highest in Saravane (71%). The responsibility for collecting water falls on the female members. In 85 percent of these households, the female member is responsible for collecting drinking water (Table 19).
- 169 Improved sanitation helps in reducing diarrheal deaths and decrease household's health expenditure. More than half of the households defecate in the open. In Saravane only 22.3 percent of the households use improved sanitation facilities and is the lowest in the country. The percentage of households using both improved drinking water sources and improved sanitation facilities varies from a low of 15 percent (Saravane) to 66 percent (LuangNamtha) (Table 19).

Programme Design Observations

- 170 Overall, MGD FY17 programme design positions activities among all critical stakeholders from the demand and supply side that will help in sustaining the programme beyond 2021. It lays emphasis on the roles of the government, school, community, aid partners, and the involvement of private organisations. The current activities like school gardens will need better access to water. The role of communities for sustaining school lunch is envisaged to increase under NSMP and communities have to be made aware of their expected roles and contributions. Policy makers and departmental officials have to be trained to move from food assistance mode to a community-led school meals mode.
- 171 **Alignment with GoL policies:** As presented in section 2.1, the SFP is well aligned with government policies on attaining nutritional security and improving quality of education in the country. Close collaboration with MoES, MPI, and MAF will help in continuing SFP as part of NSMP. National and international exchange visits by government staff will help in deepening the understanding of community-led school meal programme and will contribute towards sustain the programme.
- 172 **Community participation:** Within the ambit of MGD supported programmes, WFP has been training the communities on school gardens and on the importance of nutrition. The MGD-SFP FY14 end-line evaluation shows that there has been an improvement in the dietary diversity of children and, to a certain extent, at the household level. The import of knowledge of food diversity into household consumption practices augurs well for the sustainability of school meals as it is expected that families will support school meals by providing vegetables and other raw materials. MGD FY14 was stopped in 63 schools due to a lack of progress. These schools were either harvesting cash crops instead of the desired crops beneficial for school meals, were located where supplying food items were difficult or the locations of the schools did not allow for establishing school gardens.
- 173 Communities have to provide vegetables for school meals. With a nation-wide roll out of school gardens and school meals programme, the government is attempting to enhance ownership by communities through participation in school meals. To motivate communities, the government will reward the best performing communities by nominating them as model schools.
- 174 One of the challenges to sustainability is the changing cropping pattern. Private companies are setting up large banana and tobacco plantations. Children are dropping out as they have to migrate with their parents to these plantations and is beyond the control of the MGD programme. Further, being cash crops, farmers have started planting these for enhancing their income and therefore may not be willing to grow vegetables that would contribute to school lunch.

⁶⁴ CBR is total number of births in a year for every 1,000 population living in an area

- 175 Cooks will be central to the success of SFP and NSMP. Hence it is imperative that a structured approach be adopted towards hiring, training, and ensuring regularity of cooks to sustain the school meals programme. The concept of multiple groups (each with 3-4 persons) cooking on a rotational basis is a practical approach as it reduces the burden on fewer groups. It needs to be ensured that the rostering is done and intimated to all the groups. At the same time, it could be the group's responsibility to intimate the group responsible for next day's cooking. Under NSMP, cooks would be responsible for purchasing the raw materials and hence it will be a burden on one person and may impede the cooking efficiency. To adopt the group based approach, it needs to be ascertained that all those who are involved with cooking are trained on safe cooking methods. Under this approach, THR can be stopped as each person is going to support for 1-2 days in a month. Through this approach, youths especially boys can be persuaded to participate in school meals programme.
- 176 By design, MGD has attempted to compensate for lentils by promoting animal based protein. For this, the programme will support establishment of fishponds and poultry. It will be desirable that the fishpond and poultry is managed in a manner that together they can meet the daily protein requirements of the children. This should then be complemented by eggs which the cook can purchase. A monthly diet chart can be prepared using the recipe book.
- 177 While the schools are confident that they will be able to continue the programme, they were concerned about the timely transfer of funds from the government. Their second concern was the amount (800 kip per student per day) that will be transferred for school lunch. With the cost of one egg at 1000 kip, it is insufficient to sustain school meals. For a successful transition and sustaining the school lunch, training support needs to be provided to school officials and VEDC members on balanced utilisation of the combination of resources- financial from government and material from community.
- 178 **Partner contributions to MGD results:** Meeting the SOs of MGD FY17 are dependent on partner support. Through ESDP (2016-2020), MoES will ensure that adequate number of teachers are present in schools and that their salaries are paid on time. A lag in this target will effect MGD 1.1.1 result and may influence the quality of education (MGD1.1). PI is part of the consortium on literacy that is involved with producing improved teaching materials, teacher guides and community outreach programmes. PI is sub-recipient of MGD and will use the same materials for the 40 schools under SFP. MGD result 2.5 is dependent on MoH's regular supply of deworming medicines. Global Partnership for Education (GPE) supports MoES on implementing GoL's education policy framework. GPE is expected to support MoES on developing guidelines and policies related to school meals.
- 179 **Gradual handover:** The design of MGD-SFP FY17 is scheduled to end in 2021. An exit strategy has been designed which is geared towards ensuring sustainability of school meals beyond 2021. Multiple activities planned within the MGD SO1 & 2 and MGD Foundational Results will support the handover process to the GoL and ensure its continuity under NSMP.
- 180 Towards ensuring a smooth handover of SFP, WFP is adopting a three-step approach: a) assessing the community strength of managing SFP, b) analysis of results, and c) provisioning a targeted support package. Discussions with WFP indicated that the community strength assessment for managing SFP are nearly complete for a majority of schools (1200 of the 1456 by the end of 2017). Further, packages of support have been identified and targeted. WFP will be supported by LWU in the training of women in villages and by the Lao Front for National Development for monitoring and the implementation of the programme.
- 181 The transition planned under the FY17 award seeks to progressively decrease food transfers and increase the financial support from the government and community. Towards this, 500 schools will be handed over to the GoL for subsuming under NSMP in 2019 and 940 more in 2021. The decrease in food transfers will be matched with an increase in technical assistance through knowledge transfers and will be useful to handle issues arising during the handover process. The phase-wise transiting of schools from SFP to NSMP will help the government to gradually take over the responsibility to finance the initiative and will WFP in preparing the schools for the second phase of transit.
- 182 For smooth transition of schools from SFP to NSMP, WFP and MoES have drawn up a joint School Feeding Handover Plan which details out the phased approach of the transition (approved and signed in May 2018). Towards sustaining the school meals programme, workshops have been planned for National Assembly Members to sensitise them. The plan also emphasises on MoES to include the

school meal expenditure of current WFP supported schools in the national budget. Alongside, efforts will be made to involve the private sector to contribute to school meals. On complete handover of all schools to MoES, WFP plans to continue monitoring, supervising, and providing technical support.

- 183 Discussions with PESS and DESB officials and schools in the Northern Province indicated that they are aware about the transition of school meals from WFP to GoL. Recently a workshop was held, where they were informed about the transition. However they are uncertain on their roles and responsibilities. They were also unaware about the transfer of fund both in quantum and the process. Support and guidance needs to be provided to the officials at the provincial and district levels. Discussions with WFP indicated that the roles and responsibilities will be agreed upon with MoES around June 2018 and communicated to PESS and DESB.
- 184 **Capacity Building:** The MGD programme design ensures capacity building activities at all levels of the governance structure. At the national level, WFP has facilitated an exchange programme for MPI, MoES, and MAF officials to Brazil. This has encouraged the departments in detailing out a clearer outline of roles and responsibilities at the national, provincial, and district levels.
- 185 WFP is in discussion with MoES for setting up of a School Meals Centre of Excellence as part of GoL's contribution to Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO). WFP plans to use MGD support for facilitating the setup of this centre, impart training on school meals implementation, identify best practices, and facilitate exchange visits to countries.
- 186 Using a ToT model, MoES staff will train provincial level officials who in turn will train the MGD and NSMP supported communities on school gardening and meaningful engagement with farmer groups for sustaining the supply of raw materials for school meals. WFP will also engage with the Provincial Governor's office for overseeing the implementation process as well as ensuring efficient use of budgetary resources.
- 187 Understanding that there is a possibility of human resource reforms within MoES for implementation of school meals, WFP has drawn up plans for building capacities of the personnel at the provincial and district levels for smooth institutional coordination. At the district level, WFP will conduct joint training to build capacities of MoES, MoH, and MAF officials for providing technical assistance to communities on school agriculture and nutrition, education, hand-washing, and hygiene.
- 188 For promoting life-skills and improved nutrition through awareness, WFP is working towards including nutrition and school agriculture in the primary education curriculum. Based on the results of a pilot implementation of the curriculum, it will be circulated across the country. WFP will support the formulation of SMAP 2016-2020 & 2020-2025, review of NNSAP, and provide inputs to the current policy on handover of MGD- jumping or using SFP and upscaling of school meals cross the country.
- 189 WFP will continue its engagement with Laos National Assembly members involved with the formulation of social safety net policy in which school meals is included. As part of this engagement, WFP will facilitate field trips for the members to both the MGD and NSMP supported schools. These visits along with workshops would promote a better understanding of the nuances of school feeding, school agriculture and nutrition, and facilitate the handover process.
- 190 **Monitoring of the programme:** The baseline study provides the benchmark values for assessing the effectiveness of the programme during the midline and end-line evaluations. In addition, data from the monitoring system will also be required for the evaluations. Concurrent monitoring through a robust M&E structure is essential in assessing the progress being made, identifying the issues hampering implementation, and finding solutions. Significant gaps were noticed in the maintenance of records on attendance and school feeding by the schools. Information on enrolment, attendance, dropout and repetition, number of meals served, students benefitted, THR provided, utilisation of food supply, etc. were rarely recorded. Maintaining such records is critical for monitoring performance and identifying areas that require strengthening.
- 191 WFP has initiated a mobile based IVR system to reach programme staff. Discussions with WFP staff at the Pakse field office indicated that very few people have used this service. Communities instead prefer to meet the WFP official in-person. This is constrained by the limited staffing in the field offices. WFP is now engaging LFND for monitoring of the school meals programme. Since, LFND members are present in all the villages, it will be convenient for them to monitor and report. Also, after MGD's exit, this structure can support MoES on monitoring and reporting on the performance of NSMP.

192 WFP with support from monitoring assistants aims to collect regular data on food distribution management, school meal packages, student attendance, and attentiveness etc. However, observations from field office (Pakse) highlighted the difficulties the team faced in providing the field level information. It is important that the field offices also collect and maintain data regularly as envisaged by WFP-CO.

193 MoES also has Education Management Information System (EMIS) through which it collects information on the condition of schools, number of classrooms, student enrolment data, repetition data, ethnicity disaggregated grade graduating data, and a list of teachers. While assessing the reliability of the EMIS data is beyond the purview of the baseline, data on student enrolment, dropout, and repetition were difficult to access. It will be useful to include school meals programme data in EMIS.

2.5. Theory of Change for MGD-SFP FY17

194 A Theory of Change (ToC) describes the causal links within an intervention and explains why and how the intervention will achieve the intended outcomes. Among the many models like logic model, outcome model etc. that underpins a ToC, the Results Chain model has been used to develop the ToC for the MGD SFP programme. The results chain model aided in identifying the causal logic from the initiation of the SFP to the final outcome, examining the context, inputs, activities and outputs planned through the programme pathway (Figure 10 and Annex Y). The results chain model has four main elements:

- **Context**, presenting the prevailing situation and the need for SFP
- **Implementation**, comprising inputs, activities and outputs for SFP
- **Results**, consisting of intermediate outcomes and final outcome for SFP
- **Assumptions and risks**, outlining the assumptions on which the SFP is relying and the possible risks that might affect institutionalisation within the existing governance framework, as well as long-term sustainability of SFP

195 **Context:** Despite the significant improvement in the status of children's education in the recent years, the NER for primary school was not uniform across the country as per census 2015. Further, the challenge was in keeping the children in school and ensuring completion of their primary education⁶⁵. Census 2015 results highlighted the significant level of disparities existing between provinces and districts, with survival rates in certain provinces falling below 65 percent. GoL and BEQUAL programme have classified 65 districts as "educationally disadvantaged" based on low enrolment and survival rate to Grade 5. In addition, the 2015 HDI for the country highlights the low level of literacy in the country among the ASEAN countries.

196 Lao PDR with a score of 27.5 falls in the "serious" category as per 2017 Global Hunger Index with 44 percent children under the age of five⁶⁶ being malnourished. Reflecting the variations across geography and ethnic groups, stunting rates are higher in upland areas and minority ethnic groups have more elevated levels than the majority Lao-Tai communities. Further, about 77 percent of daily energy needs are met through consumption of rice and lacks essential proteins, fats and micronutrients. This leads to elevated levels of micronutrient deficiencies resulting in problems with motor and cognitive development (anaemia), eye-sight and the immune system (Vitamin A deficiency), and mental ability (iodine deficiency).

197 **Rationale for MGD-SFP:** Across the globe, countries have attempted at implementing food-based programs for tackling education, health and nutrition related issues. Results from different programs have shown that school feeding programs have helped in increasing children's enrolment, attendance, and retention. Result from a similar programme in Ghana opined "...it was discovered that the Ghana School Feeding Programme has contributed significantly to pupils' enrolment, attendance and retention compared to the period before the programme's implementation...." Thus, MGD-SFP was formulated and over the years, the programme was expanded in terms of geography, number of children supported, and the type of food provided in schools.

⁶⁵ Primary school dropout rate was 5.4 percent in 2014 (girls-4.90; boys-5.90)- LaoEduInfo

⁶⁶ Nutrition Country Profile (2015), Lao PDR International Food Policy Research Institute. (Source: UNICEF, WHO, WB 2015)

- 198 **MGD-SFP FY17 Causal Links:** The programme intends to achieve two strategic objectives (SOs); Improved Literacy of School-Age Children (SO1) and Increased use of Health and Dietary Practices (SO2). These SOs are supported by Foundational Results that will help in sustaining the programme beyond 2021.
- 199 The programme envisages that providing nutritious hot lunch in school will help in improving attendance, improving attentiveness of students by decreasing short-term hunger, and increasing completion of primary level of education among children. The ration will be complemented with vegetables and protein-rich commodities contributed by the community.
- 200 With majority of the targeted beneficiaries belonging to ethnic groups with low understanding of Lao language, the availability of trained teachers to teach non-Lao students will help in improving the understanding of class text taught in Lao language. Advocacy on the importance of education and nutrition will encourage disadvantaged children to enrol in schools and continue their education.
- 201 By establishing school gardens, greenhouses and fish ponds, the programme will help in increasing knowledge about improved agricultural techniques and nutrition among children, teachers, and community. The gardens and ponds will also help in provisioning of a variety of vegetables and supply of protein-rich foods for school lunch.
- 202 By increasing knowledge around safe hygiene practices, supported by water and sanitation infrastructure, it is expected that health related absenteeism will decrease.
- 203 By building capacities of all stakeholders, the programme will be able to facilitate the handover to the communities and MoES and sustain the programme beyond 2021 when MGD support for SFP culminates.
- 204 **Implementation:** The programme will target 140,000 students from 1446 schools across eight educationally and nutritionally disadvantaged provinces in Laos. The programme will work in coordination with MoES, MPI, MAF, PESS, Provincial Agriculture and Forest, DESB, Department of Agriculture and Forest, The World Bank, FAO, UNICEF, Australian DFAT, BBM, EDF, and PI.
- 205 The programme plans to implement 11 activities that will help in achieving the intended results. These include:
- 206 **i) Provide School Meals-** WFP will provide a daily hot lunch to 140,000 pre-primary and primary school students in all 30 districts across the seven provinces targeted by the project. EDF-Lao will as a sub-recipient to WFP provide a daily lunch in ten schools in Nakai district in Khammuane Province. WFP will provide meals throughout the entire 175-day school year which runs from September to May. Expecting an increase in community contribution, the direct food transfers (including incentive rations) will be phased out for 500 communities in 2019/ 2020 and the remaining 940 communities in 2020/2021 as part of the hand-over process by 2021/2022.
- 207 PESS and DESB staff will be responsible for conducting the school-level training to ensure that knowledge is disseminated to implement the lunch programme properly. Local communities will provide labour and resources. For instance, when they construct and renovate the school infrastructure, they contribute their voluntary labour force. For additional food commodities for the school lunch, community contributions will be made. For preparing the meals, community members will take turns to cook. Thus, the community is the driving force in implementing the program.
- 208 **ii) Support School Agriculture-** WFP will ensure continued support to school gardens in 940 schools over the course of the proposed project. EDF will ensure continued support to 10 schools in the course of the proposed project. Technical assistance includes tilling, selection of vegetable, seeding and planting through the training. In setting up the school garden, WFP provides the nails, zinc sheet and hinges
- 209 In addition, WFP will establish simple greenhouses in higher altitude schools primarily in the country's Northern provinces. The gardens and greenhouses will build school feeding and community resilience and serve as entry points to transfer knowledge and skills to students and communities on establishing low-cost solutions to improve agricultural practices, better understand the impacts of climate change, dietary/crop diversity, and good nutrition

- 210 WFP will update, print and distribute the 'School Garden Training Guidelines' in collaboration with its partners (CRS, EDF, FAO, IFAD, the University of Agriculture, and GoL). DESB will implement the annual 'train the trainer' programme to train up to seven members of VEDCs and teachers based on these guidelines. These individuals will in turn provide oversight for implementation of agricultural projects conducted by communities. MAF will provide the technical inputs and conduct the district and school-level training on school garden and greenhouses. WFP will explore opportunities for establishing fish ponds for communities that are proactively seeking to enhance ownership and leadership of community grown school meals.
- 211 **iii) Increased Access to Clean Water and Sanitation Services-** WFP and UNICEF will work together to improve the hygiene and access to water at school where school meals are served. UNICEF will construct 25 FGSs in Phonsaly province and 20 Boreholes in Saravan/Attapeu provinces in locations where access to water is a challenge. UNICEF will also establish handwashing stations in 100 schools in Phonsaly, Saravan, and Attapeu provinces. WFP will advocate for increased investments for access to water in MGD-supported communities and encourage positive hygiene behaviour and provide training to cooks and VEDC members.
- 212 **iv) Provide Incentives and Training to School Cooks and Storekeepers-** WFP will provide training, coaching and mentoring to school staff and cooks on food handling and preparation standards integrating MoES guidelines and recipe books. WFP Monitoring Assistants will provide oversight for correct usage of commodities and implementation of the program, and on a regular basis accompany district education authorities on school visits to address issues. Cooks will be responsible for recording community contributions and purchases to the school meal and cooking lunch; Teachers will ensure children wash their bowls and utensils and; Storekeepers will be responsible for ensuring commodities are properly stored, storage facilities are kept clean, and that the stock is kept off the ground to prevent dust and rodent infestation.
- 213 WFP will provide around 4,200 cooks and storekeepers with take-home rice as an incentive for their voluntary contribution to the school meals program. WFP will also use the MGD grant to train cooks on the use of smoke reducing stoves. WFP in partnership with LWU will train cooks on hygiene and appropriate food safety and food recipes. WFP will gradually phase out incentive rations and instead invest in community and school empowerment and ownership to create an alternative distribution of labour to ensure continuity of the school lunch activities after its complete withdrawal.
- 214 **v) Improve School Infrastructure-** WFP will oversee the improvement (construction or rehabilitation) of school assets that support the school meals programme. Activities will range from building infrastructure, including dining rooms, kitchens, smoke reducing stoves, hand washing stations, and storerooms. These activities will be carried out with the support of voluntary labour of the community mobilised by the VEDCs. WFP will encourage communities to contribute to funds for the maintenance of school infrastructure. WFP will use MGD funds to install the smoke reducing stoves in selected schools and together with The World Bank work on identifying local solutions for smoke reducing stoves.
- 215 **vi) Curriculum Development on Nutrition and School Agriculture-** WFP will build on ongoing activities to integrate nutrition and school agriculture with the curriculum for primary education. This engagement in curriculum development is an opportunity to promote, support, and reach primary students across Lao with nutrition awareness and food security messages. The curriculum aims at promoting life-skills that lead to improved nutrition.
- 216 WFP will support the development of educational material, books and kits for teachers on nutrition and school agriculture. WFP will also support the teaching of nutrition and school agriculture in seven Teacher Training Colleges in Lao and engage with the pedagogical advisors of MoES at the provincial and district levels who are visiting the schools every quarter for targeted support to the WFP-assisted schools.
- 217 **vii) Increased Access to Books for Schoolchildren-** WFP will partner with PI and BBM to increase the access to books for schoolchildren within and outside the classroom. PI will implement a package of literacy and education-related activities in 40 schools in Saravane province over 5 years. MoES approved reading material for Grades 1 and 2 will be distributed for

reading corners in target schools. PI will facilitate the establishment of book banks at the community level for older children and parents.

- 218 BBM will roll out their activities in 310 schools in Phongsaly and LuangNamtha over five years. On an average, 50-70 schools receive a year-long support. BBM has developed a concept of “book parties” which are a half day-long event where books are introduced to children in entertaining ways such as singing songs, playing games about books and providing activity booklets (colouring, puzzles, and mazes). Using BBM’s expertise, WFP will produce a book with messages on nutrition and school agriculture.
- 219 **viii) Improved Literacy Instruction Materials-** WFP through BBM will work on improving literacy instruction materials for teachers working with non-Lao speaking children. BBM will train and engage with these teachers who will also receive a set of 15 reading materials related to improved teaching.
- 220 **ix) Provide Training on Literacy Instruction to Teachers-** PI and BBM will provide the training to teachers in the target areas to improve their Lao language teaching skills, especially to non-Lao speaking children. The modules used will be the current Department of Pre-Primary and Primary Education (DPPE) approved intensive Lao language training modules which have been successfully piloted in six provinces and that are being utilized by BEQUAL. Grade 1 teachers in the WFP supported schools will also be trained. This will include oral Lao teaching methods and promotion of reading appreciation amongst children through the introduction of reading corners in classrooms where they do not currently exist, routine extra-curricular reading activities, and child-to-child support in the classroom.
- 221 **x) Increase the Engagement of School Management and Community on Literacy and Importance of Education-** WFP, PI, and BBM will sensitize the school management including VEDC and communities on raising the awareness on reading and education. PI will promote a culture and habit of reading among children beyond school time by organizing community-based reading festivals and camps. Parenting awareness sessions will be held three times a year in each community which will promote the idea of reading at home and provide parents with the tools to support their children’s reading activities. These sessions will be combined with reading festivals and camps to create an overall environment within the community that is encouraging for children to learn to read. After sensitizing the communities on the importance of reading, BBM will encourage parents to purchase additional reading material for their children.
- 222 **xi) Capacity Development-** WFP will implement a number of capacity building activities with a view to hand over implementation of all school meals activities to the GoL and local communities by the end of the project. Capacity building activities will be implemented at national, provincial, and district levels of GoL. WFP will utilise a community strength assessment tool to assess the strength of the communities and work towards strengthening the identified gaps. WFP will work for the integration of the assessment tool into the government’s school profiling system and a yearly school census to guide a nation-wide roll out of school meals. The tool will comprise key food security indicators (such as food consumption scores) and education indicators (on attendance, enrolment, completion rates absenteeism) in an effort to measure community-level investments in education and agriculture.
- 223 **National Level Capacity Development:** As a first step to promote linkages within ASEAN, WFP has agreed to support a government-led technical ASEAN meeting on school feeding (not MGD funded), which can ensure exchanges of lessons learned and good practices for national school meals programmes in the region. MGD funds will be used for training on school meal implementation and roles and responsibilities, best practices, and exchange visits to countries that have similar contexts to Lao PDR.
- 224 WFP will engage with Laos National Assembly members who will be involved in formulating the social safety net policy in which school meals is a tool and in the allocation of resources. WFP in collaboration with the MoES and CRS will conduct a workshop and organise a field trip to both the NSMP and WFP school meals schools to enhance the understanding of school feeding, school agriculture and nutrition, and to advocate for and prepare for handover leading to a nation-wide rollout.

- 225 **Provincial Level Capacity Development:** At the provincial level, WFP will use a training of trainers' model to enable MoES staff to support communities. MoES NSMP staff will be trained to train communities in school gardening. The training will be grounded in technical guidance developed with MGD funding. Benefits of the training will include increased coordination between WFP and NSMP areas, and will assist WFP to aligning with the national model as part of a full hand over of school meals activities. WFP will also facilitate the increased engagement of Provincial Governors office's in school meals through field visits
- 226 **District Level Capacity Building:** At the district level WFP will train MoES, MoH, and MAF officials to provide technical assistance to communities. These will focus on hand-washing, hygiene, access to water, school agriculture and nutrition, and education. WFP activities will continue to improve institutional coordination between the MoES, MoH, and MAF through joint trainings and activities.
- 227 **Community level engagement:** Since school meals fall under the purview of the VEDC at the local level, WFP will emphasise on strengthening the participation and collaboration of VEDC members to provide guidance related to implementation issues. The Lao Women Union will assist with training in the villages to ensure that women have equal access to participate and shape the school feeding implementation and ownership.
- 228 **Results:** The programme activities will contribute towards achieving the following envisioned results.
- 229 **i) Provide School Meals:-** The school meals programme will provide a meal that many students would otherwise go without, thus leading to increased access to food (MGD 1.2.1.1/1.3.1.1). This in turn will result in reduced short-term hunger (MGD 1.2.1) and thereby reduced health related absenteeism (MGD 1.3.2). The provision of school meals will reduce the amount families would otherwise spend on providing food for their children. This increased economic and cultural incentive (MGD 1.3.1) will lead to increased student attendance (MGD 1.3.4) and improved student attendance (MGD 1.3).
- 230 **ii) Support School Agriculture-** School gardens and greenhouses will directly contribute to the MGD result of Increased Access to Food (MGD 1.2.1.1/1.3.1.1). They will increase supplementary and complementary food supply to schools, thus increasing access to food, reducing short-term hunger (MGD 1.2.1), and improve attentiveness (MGD 1.2). School gardens and greenhouses will increase the engagement of parents, teachers, and community groups (MGD 1.4.4/2.7.4), thereby building the platform for future sustainability. In addition school gardens will be used as 'living classrooms' and will increase knowledge of agricultural practices, hygiene, and nutrition (MGD 2.1 and 2.3) and increase use of health and dietary practices (MGD S02).
- 231 **iii) Increased Access to Clean Water and Sanitation Services-** This activity will lead to the provision of adequate and quality sanitation services and increased access to clean water and sanitation services (MGD 2.4) as well as improved school infrastructure (MGD 1.3.3). This activity will also directly contribute to Improved Knowledge of Health and Hygiene Practices (MGD 2.1). Overall, increased access to clean water, and improved knowledge of hygiene practices will lead to increased use of health and dietary practices (S02).
- 232 **iv) Provide Incentives and Training to School Cooks and Storekeepers-** The training of cooks and storekeepers, if newly appointed, or refresher trainings if required, will translate to increased knowledge of safe food preparation and storage practices (MGD 2.2) as well as increased access to food preparation, storage tools and equipment (MGD 2.6), and improved knowledge of health and hygiene practices (MGD 2.1).
- 233 **v) Improve School Infrastructure-** The rehabilitation of kitchens, establishing handwashing stations, the construction or rehabilitation of warehouses and storerooms, and the provision of smoke reducing stoves will lead to improving school infrastructure (MGD 1.3.3). As the labour and some construction inputs for these activities will be implemented through VEDCs, they will also contribute to increased community understanding of benefit of education (MGD 1.3.5) and MGD 1.4.4/2.7.4 (increased engagement of local organization and community groups).
- 234 **vi) Curriculum Development on Nutrition and School Agriculture-** This will contribute to increased Knowledge of Nutrition (MGD 2.3) and Improved Knowledge of Health and Hygiene Practices (MGD 2.1) among school aged children. It will also contribute to improved literacy

outcomes, particularly through the development of education materials (MGD 1.1.3). Curriculum development will directly support the Government to increase their capacity and the regulatory framework on nutrition and agriculture learning in schools (MGD 1.4.1/2.7.1 and 1.4.2/2.7.2)

235 **vii) Increased Access to Books for Schoolchildren-** Provision of books as well as establishment of reading corners in the classroom and book banks for the community will increase access of books to children and communities. Establishment of child club facilitate the children's reading activities. These activities contribute to MGD 1.1.2 (Better access to school supplies & materials) which results in MGD1.1 (Improved quality of literacy instruction).

236 **viii) Improved Literacy Instruction Materials-** The provision of instruction materials and sessions with teachers leads to MGD 1.1.3 (Improved literacy instructional material) which results in MGD1.1 (Improved quality of literacy instruction).

237 **ix) Provide Training on Literacy Instruction to Teachers-** This will enhance their Lao teaching skills (MGD 1.1.4: Increased skills and knowledge of teachers) which results in MGD1.1 (Improved quality of literacy instruction).

238 **x) Increase the Engagement of School Management and Community on Literacy and Importance of Education-** The provision of training to teachers enhancing their Lao teaching skills leads to MGD 1.1.5 (Increased skills and knowledge of school administrators) which results in MGD1.1 (Improved quality of literacy instruction).

239 **xi) Capacity Development-** This will directly contribute to all four MGD Foundational Results: Increased Capacity of Government Institutions (MGD 1.4.1/2.7.1), Improved Policy and Regulatory Framework (MGD 1.4.2/2.7.2), Increased Government Support (MGD 1.4.3/2.7.3), and Increased Engagement of Local Organizations and Community Groups (MGD 1.4.4/2.7.4). The will also enable the handover process to GoL.

240 **Risks and assumptions:** The assumptions for achieving the intended outcomes and the associated risks for each assumption is presented in the table below:

Table 4: Assumptions and risks for SFP	
Assumptions	Risks
Community will continue supporting SFP by providing vegetables for school meals	In a community-led school meals programme, the role of community is central and if they deviate from the standard operating procedures for implementation, it may lead to the collapse of the programme. About 53 schools were suspended under FY14 programme as the community was not keen to participate. Land holding and more specifically the economic status of families will determine their eagerness to join and/ or continue with school meals. Directives from the <i>Naiban</i> or other VEDC members towards ensuring participation may result in children dropping out of school. Private companies setting up large plantations are influencing the agriculture pattern and people are moving towards cash crops. Large tract of banana plantations have been raised on forest land where people are working as daily wage labourers and families are migrating to these plantations and thus depriving the children from education and nutrition.
VEDC will anchor the school meals programme	Communities are supporting school meals because of constant persuasion by VEDC members including the <i>Naiban</i> . Villages where VEDCs are dysfunctional, there is a risk of disruption of the programme.
Training of 2 cooks in each school will ensure continuity of cooking school meal	Because cooking of school meals is a voluntary activity, it is difficult for 1-2 persons to cook daily. Events like illness, social functions etc. may lead to the cook being absent and the children being deprived of school meal.
Government will continue food	The SFP focussed on VAD and other micro-nutrient deficiencies by providing fortified vegetable oil and lentils. Under NSMP, GoL plans to transfer funds to

Table 4: Assumptions and risks for SFP

Assumptions	Risks
fortification to address issues of VAD and other micro-nutrient deficiencies	schools for purchasing of raw materials for cooking of school meal, there is a risk non-availability and thereby non-serving of fortified materials in school meals.
GoL will subsume SFP under NSMP and make budgetary provisions for the programme	Currently, NSMP is being supported by The World Bank and SFP by MGD-WFP. The successful handover of SFP from WFP to GoL and its sustainability is underpinned by the availability of financial resources with GoL. In case GoL falls short of allocating dedicated funds for SFP, the sustainability of the programme will be at risk.
Transfer of government funds	The NSMP model is based on cash transfers from the government to schools. Any delay in transfer of funds will hamper the purchase of raw materials for cooking school meals. While the schools with support from community can continue for a few weeks, further delay in receiving funds will disrupt the programme.
Government will ensure supply of teaching materials and books	Along with improving the skills and knowledge of teachers, SFP also ensured availability of improved literacy instruction materials. The NSMP in its current form only supports school lunch and does not include supply of education materials. Non-availability and/ or replacement of improved teaching materials for teachers and reading books for students will negatively impact the initiative.
Convergence between different ministries will ensure continuity of school meal programme	Currently the inter-ministerial and intra-ministerial convergence has been achieved partially. While WFP is working towards building capacities of departmental staff for having a clear sight on roles and responsibilities, both vertical and horizontal engagements between the departments is necessary for continuing with school meals programme in an effective and efficient manner. The plan to setup a dedicated school meals unit can help in mitigating this risk.
Availability of water in schools	It has been demonstrated that schools with sufficient water have been able to grow vegetables in the school gardens throughout the year. This has helped in reducing the burden on parents and at the same time schools have also earned by selling the surplus production. Under SFP, few of the schools have been provided with bore wells for irrigating school garden, cooking, and washing. The schools that will get left out from water points under SFP will have to be covered under NSMP. In case GoL does not make provision to support the remaining schools with water points and to repair the damaged ones, the utility of the school gardens will diminish. Non-availability of water will also impact the cooking of lunch as water has to be collected by the cooks from distant sources. This will continue the drudgery and at the same time will become a cause for non-regularity of school lunch. Also, the non-availability of water in schools will limit the practice of safe hand washing and safe sanitation and the programme may fall short of reducing health related absenteeism.

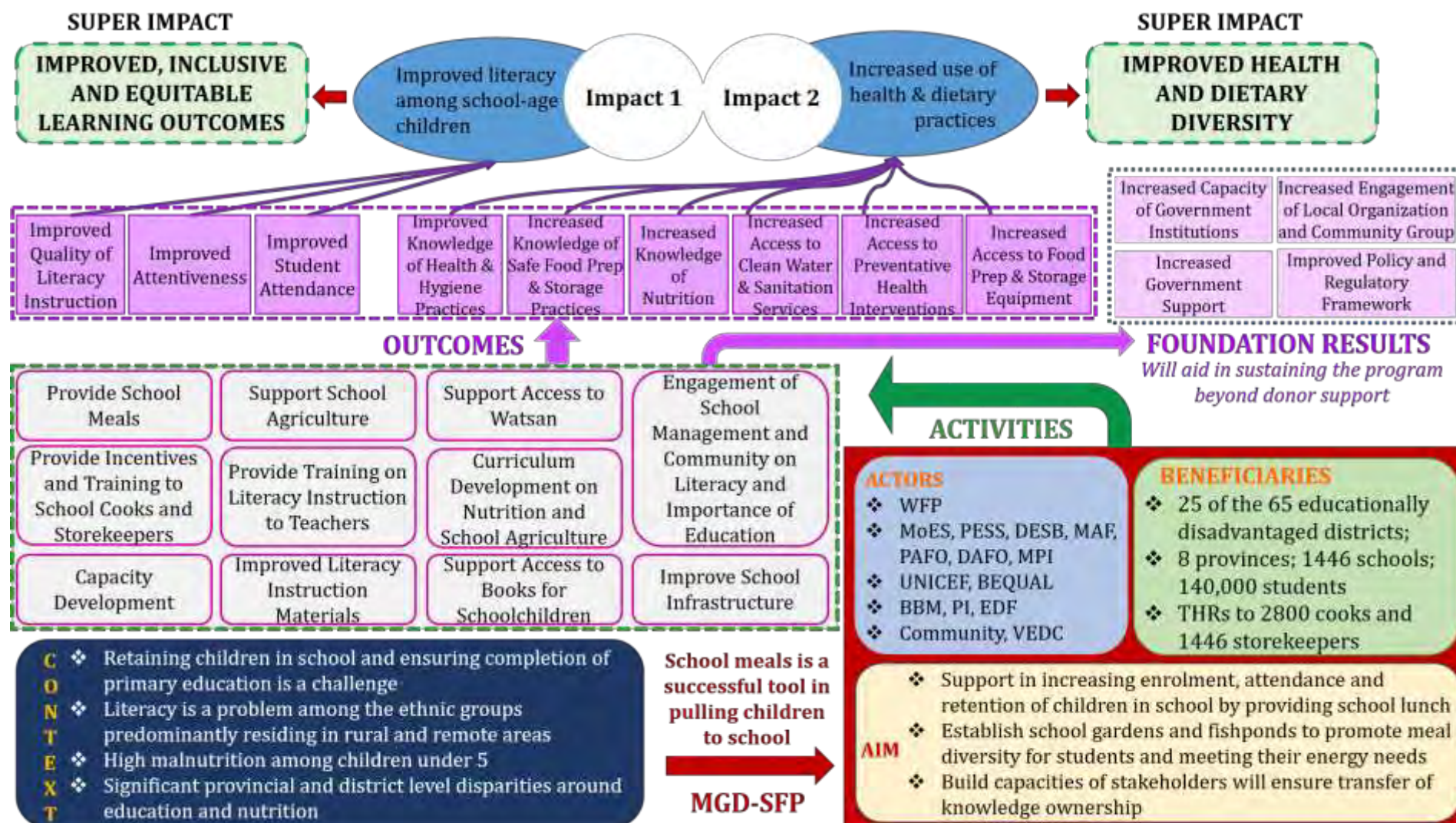


Figure 10: Summarised Theory of Change

3. Conclusions and Recommendations

3.1. Overall Assessment/Conclusions

241 MGD FY17 is well positioned to continue with the school meal activities carried out under FY14 award and smoothly handover to MoES at the end of the project in 2021. The MGD-SFP proposal has clearly specified the pathway for implementing the FY17 award. This includes engagement with GoL Ministries and Departments, collaboration with other UN agencies and ODA actors, partnerships with NGOs and close coordination with communities and village level institutions.

Conclusions from baseline findings

242 Nearly 146,000 students and 5000 cooks will benefit from MGD-SFP FY17 in 2018-19. Students' literacy levels (at least 75 percent reading comprehension of the Lao language) has improved from 1.9 percent (FY14 Baseline report) to 6.9 percent. Teachers have reported about 21 percent inattentive students in project schools as against 19 percent in control schools. Inattentiveness is more prevalent among females than males with a higher proportion (24%) of female students classified as inattentive in project schools as compared to 17 percent of male students.

243 In terms of infrastructure, nearly all schools (93%) in the sample reported having a dedicated room as a kitchen; 97 percent schools further reported that the kitchen is well-ventilated. Cookbooks (or menu books) on recipes for nutritious food were circulated by WFP. However, only 21 percent of the cooks reported receiving them. With cooks not being adequately trained and not having access to such cookbooks, they end up cooking the same recipe daily which is rejected by children.

244 WFP monitoring reports indicate a total of 10,575 individuals were trained on safe food preparation and storage practices as result of USDA assistance. The mean dietary diversity score (DDS) for children in project schools was high at around 6.1 (out of a maximum score of 8). Lentils are being provided to address protein deficiencies. It was also found that a high proportion of students (55%) reported having consumed dairy products in the last 24 hours, with the proportion being higher in the north (61%) as compared to the south (39%).

Conclusions against evaluation criteria

245 **Relevance:** The MGD-SFP programme provinces and districts were identified and selected based on the Comprehensive Food Security Assessment (CFSA) 2016 and in consultation with MoES, and eight provinces with the highest needs were selected for the programme. By targeting school going children, the programme is contributing to the overall objective of improving the education and nutrition status in the country. By promoting community contribution for school meals, the programme promotes ownership among the communities. The contribution of timber and labour by the community and zinc sheets and nails from WFP will lead to the construction of kitchens, dining areas, and storage infrastructure, thus contributing to the improvement of school infrastructure.

246 The school gardens can be used to demonstrate agriculture techniques for cultivation of different vegetables, as well as used for enhancing nutrition education among children and communities. It will help students to understand the benefits of food-based nutrition systems. The transfer of technical knowledge on nutrition and school gardens will help communities to diversify their food basket.

247 The promotion of literacy activities among the community emphasising on the participation of girls and mothers is aiding in communicating the importance of education and nutrition to the community. This activity also complemented the establishment of library and book corners in the school and thus created an enabling environment for children to study.

248 To reduce health-related absenteeism, WFP will use MGD support to collaborate with UNICEF to improve access to water, construct separate toilets for boys and girls, and impart training on hygiene. WFP will work with MoH on de-worming activities and hand washing campaigns.

249 The programme also stresses on activities to improve literacy levels of the community, especially girls and women. This will help in achieving the nutritional and educational targets.

250 The programme design is completely aligned with NSMP being implemented by MoES with a vision to improve the educational and nutritional target of the country and meet the SDG targets. WFP has been closely coordinating with MoES for MGD-SFP and this well-entrenched relationship will aid in

integrating SFP with NSMP with joint action on addressing challenges and shaping the future of the school meals programme. Aligning with the NNSPA, MGD also promotes gender and social equality by offering equal opportunities to volunteer for SFP.

- 251 Discussions with PESS and DESB officials indicate that MGD-SFP is aligned with the SMAP (2016-2020) and Agriculture Development Strategy (2025) strategies and will contribute towards achieving nutritional security by promoting dietary diversity by promoting consumption of vegetables, protein-rich diet, and micro-nutrient fortified food.
- 252 WFP has been collaborating with MAF and MoES for formulating guidelines for school gardens and following up with training and establishment of the gardens. This collaboration will continue for the current award and will help schools to get technical knowledge from PAFO and DAFO. WFP will also partner with FAO on developing curriculum on nutrition and school agriculture.
- 253 WFP is undertaking capacity building activities under the programme to support the demand and supply side stakeholders and processes. At the operational level, VEDC members are being trained. At the strategic level, training and exposure visits have commenced for officials at the central, provincial, and district levels for effective implementation of SFP.
- 254 MGD-SFP FY17 is coherent with WFP CSP 2017-21. It is aligned with the four strategic outcomes: i) Schoolchildren in remote rural areas have sustainable access to food by 2021 (SO1), ii) Stunting rates among children under 2 in provinces with high levels of malnutrition meet nation targets by 2025 (SO2), iii) Vulnerable households in climate sensitive districts are more resilient to seasonal and long-term shocks and stresses (SO3), and iv) National and local governance institutions are strengthened to ensure improves service delivery, especially in hard-to-reach areas (SO4).
- 255 The MGD design provides a platform for WFP to engage with GoL for attaining SO1. MGD activities on creating awareness on nutrition and climate change will contribute towards achieving SO2. Promotion of greenhouses in addition to school gardens will build resilience of schools against adverse climatic impacts and thereby contribute to SO3. WFP is already engaging with government departments at different levels and also building their capacities for improved service delivery. WFP is already member of various groups and committees on food and nutrition in the country. These activities contribute to SO4.
- 256 **Effectiveness:** There is substantial evidence to display the contributions made by MGD-SFP in improving dietary practices among its beneficiaries, creating awareness among parents about the importance of education, and improving the learning environment of children at school and at home. The programme is highly valued by children, their parents and other stakeholders (school head, teachers, cooks, and storekeepers).
- 257 In terms of improving literacy, there is need for further improvements in order to bring children in project schools at par with children from other areas (control). It was found that only 6.9 percent students in project schools were able to demonstrate at least 75 percent reading comprehension of the Lao language compared to 12.4 percent students in control schools, although there emerges no statistically significant difference between project and control school students.
- 258 It was learnt during discussions with WFP that in order to improve the quality of education in Laos, USAID's five Ts- "Time, Teaching, Text, Mother tongue and Testing" have been identified as important elements of success. WFP will provide support through training of DESB and programme staff on concepts, rationale, and approach for reading festivals and camps, and parenting awareness sessions.
- 259 PI is envisaged to work with Research Institute of Educational Science (RIES) towards implementing the "Teaching Lao to non-Lao students". With MGD support, Reading and Literacy Needs Assessment will be conducted at the beginning of each academic year for Grade 1 students by WFP and PI with support from DESB. DESB staff will be trained to assess the proficiency levels of children using approved tools from DPPE. The exercise will be repeated at the end of the session to measure the progress made by the students and the efficacy of the literacy activities under the programme.
- 260 The proportion of students reporting having someone at home (not private teachers) to help them with reading and writing was found to be higher in project schools (93.1%) as compared to control schools (84%). A higher proportion of students in project schools (68.2%) also reported reading any kind of extracurricular book as compared to control schools (51%). Contributions made by partner

organisations such as BBM and PI towards creating an enabling environment for children, both in school and at the community level have helped in achieving such encouraging results.

- 261 Further, it is encouraging to note that the proportion of students who were reported to be absent for the whole day in the last one week (from the date of survey) was lower in project schools (10.5%) as compared to control schools (20.7%).
- 262 The mean DDS was higher for children in project schools (6.1) as compared to control schools (4.7). Further, two-third (68%) of the students in project schools had a DDS higher than the mean (for project schools). However, in control schools, the corresponding proportion is only about one-third. Consumption of legumes and beans, nuts and seeds, dairy products, and eggs is considerably higher among students from project schools as compared to control schools.
- 263 School gardens introduced under the project is helping in improving knowledge around gardening techniques among children but nutrition education (for children as well as the community) needs to be strengthened further. Most gardens have been contributing to the lunch programme in the first semester. However, contribution during the dry season is very low, particularly in the Northern provinces. Water scarcity is a serious issue threatening the sustainability of school gardens. Majority of schools relying on open water sources further aggravates the situation.
- 264 For provisioning of school meals, LWU is providing critical support by offering their voluntary services for cooking the school lunch. Additionally, they are also responsible for collecting firewood, vegetables and fetching water. However, they feel that the incentives provided to them are not commensurate to the efforts. Cooks also complained about children wasting food as they were bored of eating the same food that is being cooked everyday with the given supplies. Lack of availability of water is affecting the regularity in cooking and increasing the workload of women.
- 265 Capacity building of cooks, storekeepers, and teachers needs emphasis. While training on safe food preparation, storage practices, and warehouse management have been conducted, there are a number of cooks, storekeepers, and teachers who have not yet been trained.
- 266 Access to improved sanitation facility, improved water source, and hand-washing facility is critical for improving health and hygiene conditions. Hand-washing stations were observed in very few sample schools and less than one-third sample schools had access to improved water source. However, more than two-third of the sample schools had access to improved sanitation facilities.
- 267 The robustness of monitoring mechanisms under MGD-SFP was found to be weak. Although schools were provided with registers for maintaining records, they are hardly maintained. There is further scope for improving the formats for reporting against performance indicators.
- 268 Educational facilities such as classrooms, kitchen dining facilities and store rooms had been constructed or rehabilitated with USDA assistance as part of the FY14-16 award cycle. There still remains a sizeable proportion without access to such improved facilities and those schools need to be targeted. Also, maintenance of these facilities would be critical since these are subjected to harsh weather conditions leading to wear and tear over the years.
- 269 The MGD programme design ensures capacity building activities at all levels of the governance structure. Using a ToT model, MoES staff will train provincial level officials who will train MGD and NSMP supported communities on school gardening. WFP is in discussion with MoES, for setting up of School Meals Centre of Excellence as part of GoL's contribution to SEAMEO.
- 270 Different departments (MoES, MPI, MAF) of GoL are involved with NSMP and have expressed support for continuing with the school meals programme. GoL has already formed the Education Sector Technical working Group on school meals in 2015. Ministerial staffs are going for exchange visits to understand the community owned school meals in other parts of the world.
- 271 As part of the handover process, GoL has assured that with gradual decreasing of the MGD financial support, government would increase the spending to meet the financial requirements of school meals. In due course, the financial allocation will be included as part of the country's budget, thus demonstrating the importance accorded to school meals.
- 272 **Gender:** Issues around GEEW have been mainstreamed throughout the programme activities. The programme design for MGD-SFP, and WFP-CO's implementation and monitoring plans have shown considerable attention to issues of gender, and conforms to national gender commitments and

policies. However, gender needs to be focussed upon more with respect to gender-balanced selection of cooks and storekeepers, and improved participation of women in VEDCs, especially in leadership roles. Such efforts will help impact gender relations in the society in the medium and long-term.

- 273 **Sustainability:** MGD-SFP FY14 has created an effective platform for creating knowledge on health and nutrition, and the importance of education. Its sustainability beyond external support depends upon GOL's capacity to maintain and operate the programme, community support for the programme, as well as support from other partners towards sustaining the benefits of the programme.
- 274 While the programme focusses on creating demand through community participation, it also aims to address supply side issues by involving the government and preparing them to meet these demands. To do so, the programme was designed to complement the government's NSMP. MoES, PESS, and DESB have been made responsible at the national, provincial, and district levels, respectively, for implementation of programme activities, monitoring, and record keeping. This will lead to institutionalisation of the programme.
- 275 Contributions from community members have been critical for the programme and the government is attempting to increase accountability of communities by contractually obligating them to support school meals. To motivate communities to participate in this model, the government will designate the best performing communities as model schools. Establishing school gardens and behaviour change communication around nutrition will assist in bringing the desired change among the community and address issues of malnutrition and stunting. VEDCs are envisaged to play an important role and therefore to empower them, capacity building activities like training, workshops and exchange programmes are being included. Exchange visits for VEDC members have been conducted in the last quarter of 2017 to draw lessons from the challenges encountered and the solutions adopted.
- 276 The programme will continue to work in close coordination with bilateral and multilateral organisations such as DFAT, BEQUAL, the World Bank, and UNICEF, and NGOs such as PI. Partnership with local government recognized groups such as VEDC, LWU and Lao Front for National Development will also help the programme in engaging with the community and promoting their participation.

3.2. Lessons Learned

- 277 Given that enrolment rate and attendance are already quite high among primary school students, it would be beneficial to focus more on retaining children in school and providing support to address issues of repetition and dropout. Support towards enhancing reading abilities of children and promoting healthy learning environments are highly effective for this.
- 278 It was also observed that children's performance on EGRA improves significantly in Grade 3 as compared to Grade 2. This is important for assessing children's literacy and comprehension abilities.
- 279 In order to retain children in school after lunch and utilise the lunch breaks, it is important that teachers also stay back in the school.
- 280 Cooks play a pivotal role in the provisioning of school meals and there are chances of their dropping off in the absence of adequate incentives.
- 281 The programme has the potential to impact long-term social relations and gender roles in the community. Sharing of cooking responsibilities by both men and women, taking up responsibilities of storekeeping, and leadership role in VEDCs would set the right precedence for challenging the prevailing gender roles.
- 282 Availability of water is a critical factor for continuing the programme. It is required for multiple purposes such as cleaning, cooking, washing, maintaining school gardens, and WASH.
- 283 Capacity building is critical in order to enable the stakeholders to fulfil their responsibilities more effectively and boost participation in the programme.

3.3. Recommendations

284 The recommendations, rationale and proposed actions against each recommendation is presented in the table below.

Table 5: Recommendations, Rationale and Proposed Actions						
Sl. No.	Recommendations	Rationale	Proposed actions	Type	Timeframe	Priority
1	Children should not be leaving school during lunch break	One of the objectives of MGD is to prevent accident related death of children many of which usually happens during lunch break when the children go unescorted.	A government order needs to be issued directing schools to keep children in school during lunch break, after they have their meals. Currently the programme mandates provisioning of school lunch after which children still have one more hour of lunch break left. Given that teachers go back home and classrooms are locked during this period, children too return home. WFP in collaboration with BEQUAL, PI, and BBM may design extra-curricular activities for lunch break to engage the children. This will ensure that teachers as well as students stay back in school and the lunch break is utilised properly. This will also help reduce accident related death of children.	Strategic	Short term	High
2	Improving access to water in schools	Many school gardens are functioning for one semester coinciding with the rainy season. For making school gardens an effective contributor to the school meals programme it is essential that access to water is provisioned. Water will also be required for fishponds. Many schools did not have water in the toilets.	Under SFP-FY17 award, WFP will support UNICEF to install 25 FGS and 25 boreholes and improve access to water. While this will take care of the schools with no water points, it will still fall short of the water requirements for all schools. For schools which are drawing water from surface water, pipelines can be drawn and connected to a pump-set to irrigate the school garden. WFP with MGD or Non-MGD fund and in collaboration with other donors can install rainwater harvesting units to compensate for the groundwater drawn for school gardens. The funding can be arranged from WFP's climate change initiatives and support from other stakeholders.	Strategic	Medium term	High
3	Training of a group of cooks in each school	Instead of resting the onus on 1-2 persons for cooking, it will be helpful if multiple groups are trained on cooking school meal.	Adopting a tree structure approach, master trainers from each village should be trained in cooking. These in turn should train multiple groups in their villages. VEDC should be responsible for maintaining the roster for cooking and informing the groups. In addition, groups should also remind the ones responsible for cooking meals the subsequent day. Incentivisation of cooks needs to be improved.	Strategic	Short term	High
4	Strengthening gender dimensions of the project-cooking	The design promotes gender inclusiveness in all its activities. However, socially defined gender roles prevail with cooking perceived as women's responsibility.	The youths (both girls and boys) should be encouraged to volunteer for the school meals programme activities such as cooking, gardening, fetching water and collecting wood. This will have three benefits: 1) breaking down the stereotyping of gender roles at the household level, 2) lowering the burden of the current cooks and bring in values of shared	Strategic	Medium term	High

Table 5: Recommendations, Rationale and Proposed Actions

Sl. No.	Recommendations	Rationale	Proposed actions	Type	Timeframe	Priority
			responsibility, and 3) ensure that women do not suffer any kind of drudgery resulting from such responsibility. Lao Youth Union can be engaged along with LWU for taking this initiative.			
5	Strengthening gender dimensions of the project-managing commodities	While the programme did not differentiate between men and women, operationally more men are involved with commodity management (storekeeper). The warehouses are constructed on stilts to prevent attacks from rodents. In absence of a SoP, different methods from wooden log to bamboo ladders are being used to access the warehouse which is a risk to both men and women. But more importantly, it inconveniences women and they rarely take up this activity. Another plausible explanation for the prevalent male dominance in commodity management stems from the idea around traditional gender roles wherein it is a 'man's job; to 'manage' things and 'provide' women cooks with the ingredients for cooking.	It is important that warehouses are designed in a manner that it becomes safe for both men and women. The technical specifications for constructing a warehouse may be developed and circulated among the schools. Schools should encourage equal participation of both men and women for handling operational activities. The prevailing norms around traditional gender roles need to be changed.	Operational	Short term	High
6	Convergence between the horizontal and vertical structures of the government	MPI, MoES, and MAF need to converge their approaches for achieving the target of nutrition and education.	Joint workshop of all the three ministries should be conducted by WFP and a roadmap should be presented by MoES for successful transition from SFP to NSMP. The expectations of each ministry should be clearly articulated. The ministries should conduct workshops on expected roles and responsibilities for their respective provincials and district departments. The third step would be a workshop at the provincial level and district levels where officials from these departments should collaborate for the future course of action. The successful handover of SFP to NSMP is highly dependent on the availability of funds for the programme. MoES through MPI has to ensure that funds are disbursed timely to the schools for effective and efficient implementation of SFP after the handover.	Strategic	Medium term	High

Table 5: Recommendations, Rationale and Proposed Actions

Sl. No.	Recommendations	Rationale	Proposed actions	Type	Timeframe	Priority
7	Harmonisation of MAF's technical support to school gardens and crop diversification for farmers	MAF is providing technical support for school gardens. Separately, MAF is also working on various initiatives on promoting crop diversification. If both these activities are conducted in common villages, it will help in ensuring sufficiency of vegetables for school meals.	MAF is providing technical inputs to 'School Garden Training Guidelines' and is expected to conduct district and school-level training on school gardens and greenhouses. DAFO officers are expected to visit communities on a regular basis. Additionally, WFP and MoES should collaborate with MAF and identify schools and areas which are progressive in nature and appreciate crop and food diversity. In these schools and areas, pilot agriculture projects should be initiated. This will enable peer and cross learning.	Strategic	Medium term	Medium
8	Capacity building of all stakeholders to deepen their understanding around community led school feeding programme.	While training and capacity building activities have been undertaken for VEDC members, government officials, cooks, storekeepers, and teachers, it needs to be followed up with refresher training. Additional training is required on the handover process, roles and responsibilities, and on thematic areas of education, health, hygiene, and nutrition.	For a successful handover of the SFP, it will be essential that all stakeholders are aligned with the programme objectives and have clarity on their roles and responsibilities. Officials from MoES, PESS, and DESB who will be responsible for school lunch should be trained together for at least two sessions for clarity of roles and responsibilities. DESB members should then train VEDC members, school teachers, cooks and storekeepers on implementing the programme effectively. DESB members with support from VEDC should train the community on their support for successful implementation of the programme. In addition teachers, cooks and communities should be trained repeatedly on issues of hygiene, education, health, and nutrition.			
9	Strengthening of M&E systems	A strong M&E system will measure the programme performance and will enable to undertake course corrections.	Maintaining school records on enrolment, attendance, dropout, and repetitions should be made mandatory. This information should feed into government data systems. This will help in standardisation of the targets achieved. However, limited government records have been found to be a common feature across many of the South East Asian countries. In order to improve maintaining of school records, further advocacy and collaboration with the education sector is needed. A template to capture teacher's attendance and details of school lunch should be submitted by schools to DESB each month. PESS should compile all DESB data and submit it to MoES. The data should be validated either by LWU or Lao Front for National Development and counter signed before it submission to DESB.	Operational	Short term	High

Annexes

Annex A Scope of Work for Baseline Study

Scope	Baseline FY17-21
Evaluation coverage	The evaluation will cover the WFP Lao School Feeding USDA McGovern-Dole FY17, including all activities and processes related to its formulation, implementation, resourcing, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting relevant to answer the evaluation questions.
Expectation	Expected to provide an evidence-based, independent assessment of performance of the operation so that WFP and programme partners can adjust course as necessary for the remainder of the programme term and to inform any future programme design.
Areas to be covered during Baseline	Phongsaly, Oudomxay, LuangNamtha, LuangPrabang, Khammuane , Saravane, Sekong and Attapeu
Focus of baseline	The end-line evaluation and baseline will focus primarily on the following three activities, throughout which Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (GEEW) will be fully mainstreamed: <u>Activity 1:</u> Review of relevant documents including project documents, internal/external administrative records, collected data, monitoring reports and Project-Level Results Framework; <u>Activity 2:</u> Field visits to WFP school feeding sites to conduct surveys and interviews with focus groups at the village level; <u>Activity 3:</u> Interviews with representatives and staff members of governmental implementing partners, as well as interviews with community participants impacted by the project.
Theory of Change	Evaluation team has to prepare Theory Of Change for MGD FY17-21 programme
Gender Analysis	Evaluation team has to prepare Gender Analysis for MGD FY17-21 programme
Results Framework	McGovern-Dole's SO 1: Improved literacy of school age children Results level: 1.1 (Improved Quality of Literacy Instruction), 1.2 (Improved Attentiveness), 1.3 (Improved Student Attendance). The activities are designed to achieve results 1.1.2 (Better Access to School Supplies & Materials), 1.1.3 (Improved Literacy Instructional Materials), 1.1.4 (Increased Skills & Knowledge of Teachers), 1.1.5 (Increased Skills and Knowledge of School Administrators), 1.2.1 (Reduced Short Term Hunger), 1.2.1.1 (Increased Access to Food). While result 1.1.1 (Consistent Teacher Attendance) achieved through partners. In addition, the project will contribute towards achieving results 1.3.1 (Increased Economic & Cultural Incentives), 1.3.2 (Reduced Health Related Absences), 1.3.3 (Improved School Infrastructure), 1.3.4 (Increased Student Enrolment), and

Scope	Baseline FY17-21
	1.3.5 (Increased Community Understanding of Benefits of Education) As well as the foundational results 1.4.1 (Increased Capacity of Government Institutions), 1.4.2 (Improved Policy and Regulatory Framework), 1.4.3 (Increased Government Support), and 1.4.4 (Increased Engagement of Local and Community Groups). McGovern-Dole's SO 2: Increased Use of Health and Dietary Practices Results level: 2.1 (Improved Knowledge of Health and Hygiene Practices), 2.2 (Increased Knowledge of Safe Food Prep and Storage Practices), 2.3 (Increased Knowledge of Nutrition), 2.4 (Increased Access to Clean Water and Sanitation Services), 2.6 (Increased Access to Requisite Food Preparation and Storage Tools and Equipment). Intermediate result 2.5 (Increased Access to Preventative Health interventions) is addressed by partners.
Partnership to achieve MGD results	Ministry of Education and Sports, World Bank, Australian DFAT, UNFPA, UNICEF, FAO

Annex B Stakeholders and Report Users

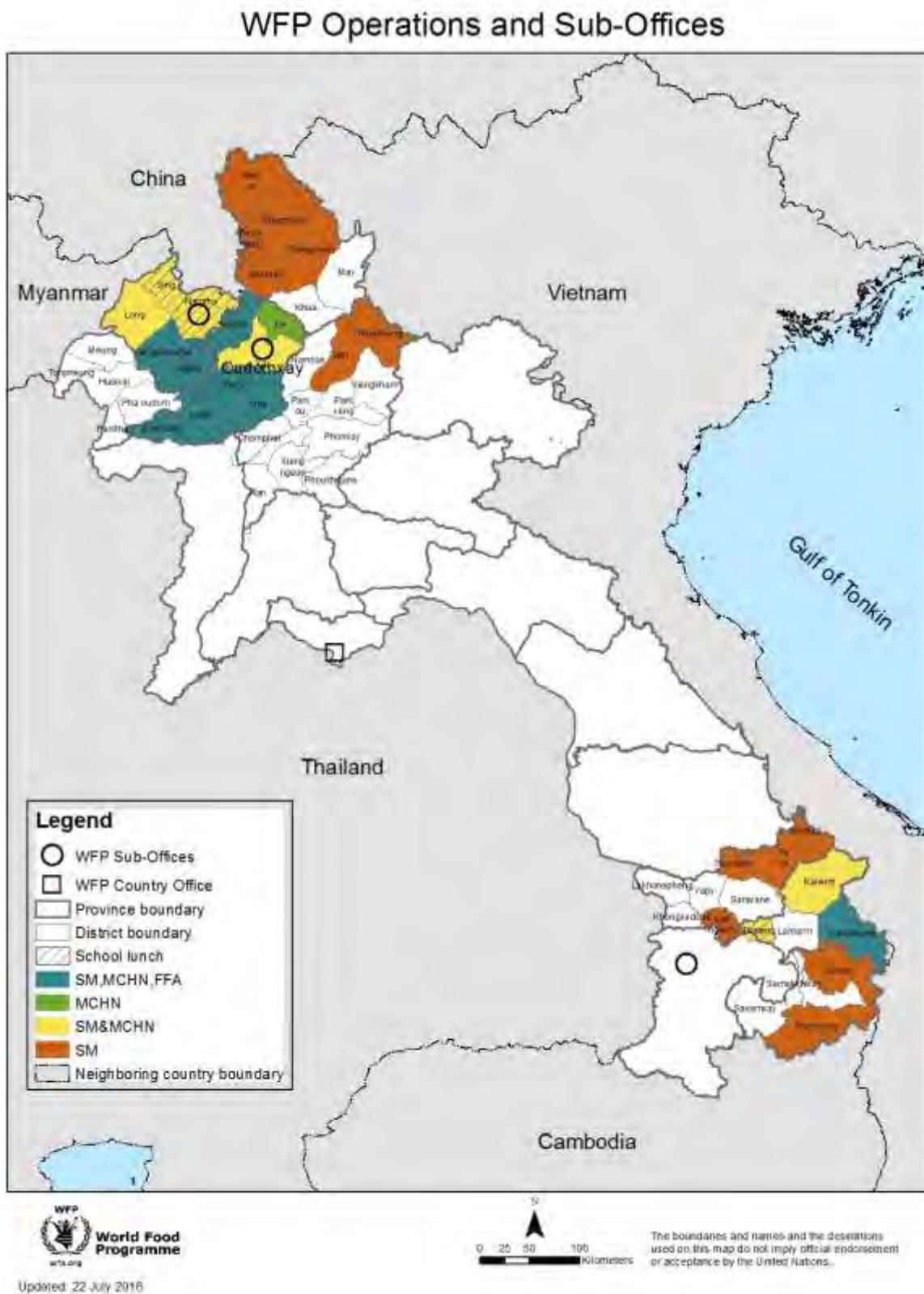
Table 6: Stakeholder mapping

Stakeholder	Interest in the [Intervention/Project/Operation]	Involvement in Evaluation and likely use	Who (specifically for the Evaluation)
Internal (WFP) stakeholders			
WFP CO Lao PDR	Responsible for decision making on the CSP implementation It has a direct stake in the evaluation and an interest in learning from experience to inform decision-making. It is also called upon to account internally as well as to its beneficiaries and partners for performance and results of its operation. Liaison with stakeholders outside and inside country Responsible for design of FY17-21 cycle of USDA Mc-Govern Dole	The key informant, primary stakeholders, and users of this study. Involved in using baseline findings for implementation and monitoring of USDA Mc Govern Dole FY17-21 grant Initial briefing and overview of WFP work in Lao PDR, programme documents, help evaluation team better understand the context of implementation and strategy for future; Support the evaluation team through an introduction to key stakeholders; Review Inception Report and Draft Baseline Report	• CD- Sarah Gordon Gibson • DCD- Hakan Tongul • Head of Programme- Nanna Skau • Utomo Tjipto (Evaluation Manager, M&E officer) • Strategic Outcome and Activity Managers of SO1- Serena Mithbaokar • Programme Policy Officer (School Lunch)- Air Sensomphone • National Officer (Government Partnership)- Yangxia Lee • Nutrition Officer- Khizar Ashraf • Agriculture for Nutrition Officer- Outhai Sihalath • M&E officer- Phetsamone Southalack • Head of Supply Chain- Kevin Howley <i>A workshop with the stakeholders has been conducted during the scoping visit. Further interviews with the stakeholders were carried out during the field mission.</i>
WFP Field Offices LuangNamtha, Oudomxay, Pakse	Responsible for day-to-day CSP implementation Liaise with stakeholders at subnational levels Direct contact with beneficiaries	The key informant, primary stakeholders. As users of the baseline study will be affected by outcomes.	Head of Field Offices, Programme Assistants, Field teams <i>Stakeholders in LuangNamtha and Pakse were interviewed</i>
RBB	Responsible for both oversight of COs and technical guidance and support, the RB management has an interest in an independent/impartial account of the operational performance. The Regional Evaluation Officer supports CO/RB	Key informant and primary stakeholder – involved in planning for next USDA Mc Govern Dole Interested in the independent account of USDA MGD performance Applying learning from evaluation to other country offices.	• Jennifer Shin • Yumiko Kanemitsu • Laura de Franchis • Domagoj Vrbos
WFP HQ Policy and Programme	WFP HQ technical units are responsible for issuing and overseeing the rollout of normative guidance on corporate programme themes, activities and modalities, as well as of overarching corporate policies and strategies.	They also have an interest in the lessons that emerge from evaluations, as many may have relevance beyond the geographical area of focus.	No interviews were conducted
WFP Executive Board (EB)	The WFP governing body has an interest in being informed about the effectiveness of WFP operations.	The WFP governing body has an interest in being informed about the	This evaluation will not be presented to the EB but its findings may feed

Stakeholder	Interest in the [Intervention/Project/Operation]	Involvement in Evaluation and likely use	Who (specifically for the Evaluation)
		effectiveness of WFP operations.	into annual syntheses and into corporate learning processes.
Office of Evaluation (OEV)	Provides indirect, independent oversight	DE Help Desk	No interviews were conducted
External stakeholders			
SFP beneficiaries	They are the ultimate recipients of WFP support beneficiaries and therefore, have a stake in WFP determining whether its assistance is appropriate and effective. As such, the level of participation in the review of women, men, boys, and girls from different groups will be determined and their respective perspectives will be sought.	Key informants and primary stakeholder – providing perspective on results, outcomes and emerging impact of WFP's intervention Will be affected by the decision to continue or to stop the intervention	A sample of schools were selected and within each school, a sample of the following persons were interviewed: • School-going children in primary schools (equal number of boys and girls) • Teachers, Cooks, Storekeeper, Administrator • Parents (mothers and fathers), Village Education Development Committee member (VEDC), Farmer Groups • Lao Women's Union Wherever possible equal numbers of women and men were consulted Individual and group interviews (structured and semi-structured)
Government of Lao			
Ministry of Education and Sports Ministry of Agriculture and Forest Ministry of health	Responsible for providing guidance on School Feeding priorities and approaches, and ensuring alignment with Government policy.	Key informant and primary stakeholder on government policy, priorities, views on support by WFP and on expanding school feeding, on GoL's commitment to providing/mobilize resources, issues, and opportunities in handing over of the programme, capacities, and convergence to be explored. Will have perspective on next F17-21 programme.	• Director General of Ministry of Education and Sports- Dr. Mithong Souvanvixay, • Deputy Director General, Early Childhood Education- Mdm Siphaphone Manivanh • Director and Director Additional of Ministry of Agriculture and Forest Individual interviews
Education authorities and province and district level (GoL's Provincial Education & Sports Services and District Education & Sports Bureau)	Responsible for overseeing education sector performance, including implementation of National School Meals Policy, and liaising with other government departments at a decentralized level	Primary stakeholder and key informant – on the implementation of the school feeding components. Will have perspective on challenges and achievements. May assist in facilitating field visits.	• Provincial Education and Sports Services • District Education and Sports Bureau Individual interviews
UN country team			
UNICEF	Involved in WASH policy and implementation	Secondary stakeholder – on overall context and delivering as one.	Bishnu Timilsina, Chief of WASH UNICEF Individual Interviews

Stakeholder	Interest in the [Intervention/Project/Operation]	Involvement in Evaluation and likely use	Who (specifically for the Evaluation)
UNFPA	Adolescent girls in education to reduce early marriages	The user of baseline for future planning	Individual Interviews
DONOR agency			
USDA	Funder of WFP school feeding programme	Primary stakeholder and informant - on the relationship with WFP and the priorities moving forward	• Ada Ihenachor (Programme Analyst FAS/USDA) • Tracy Johnson (M&E staff FAS/USDA)
NGOs			
PLAN International, Big Brothers Mouse, SNV, GIZ	PLAN International, Big Brothers Mouse are WFP's implementation partners for some of the activities, while SNV and GIZ are collaborative partners for the program	The results of the evaluation might affect future implementation modalities, strategic orientations, and partnerships.	<i>Individual interviews</i>
Others	WFP-Lao PDR also has established partnerships with the World Bank, Australian DFAT, UNFPA, UNICEF, and FAO to achieve project objectives.	Their respective perspectives will be sought as the engagement of these actors influences the effectiveness of the programme as well as its sustainability.	Relevant stakeholders from World Bank and Australian DFAT were interviewed

Annex C Map of the Intervention Area

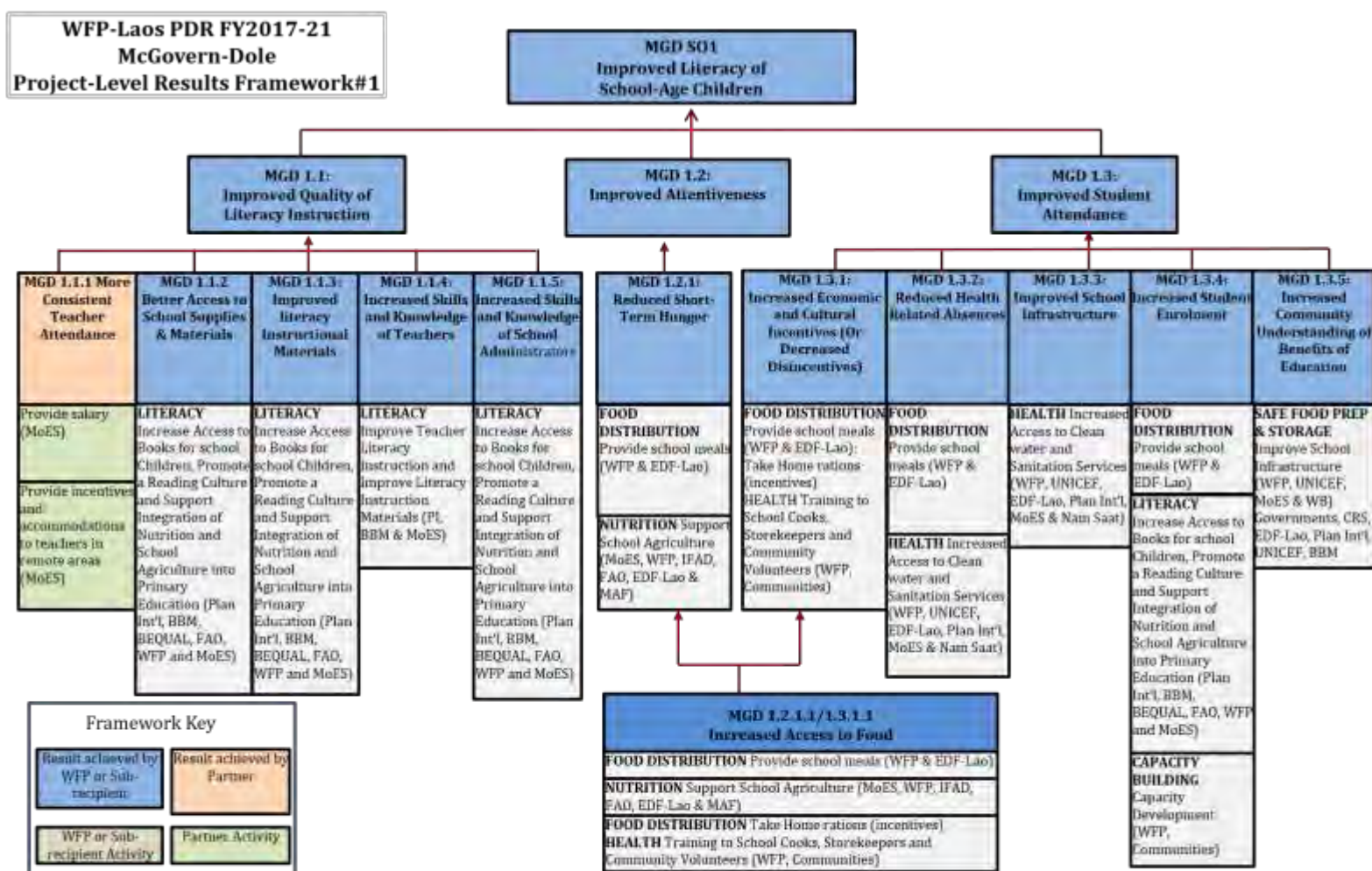


Annex D WFP SFP 2017-21coverage

Table 7: WFP SFP 2017-21coverage

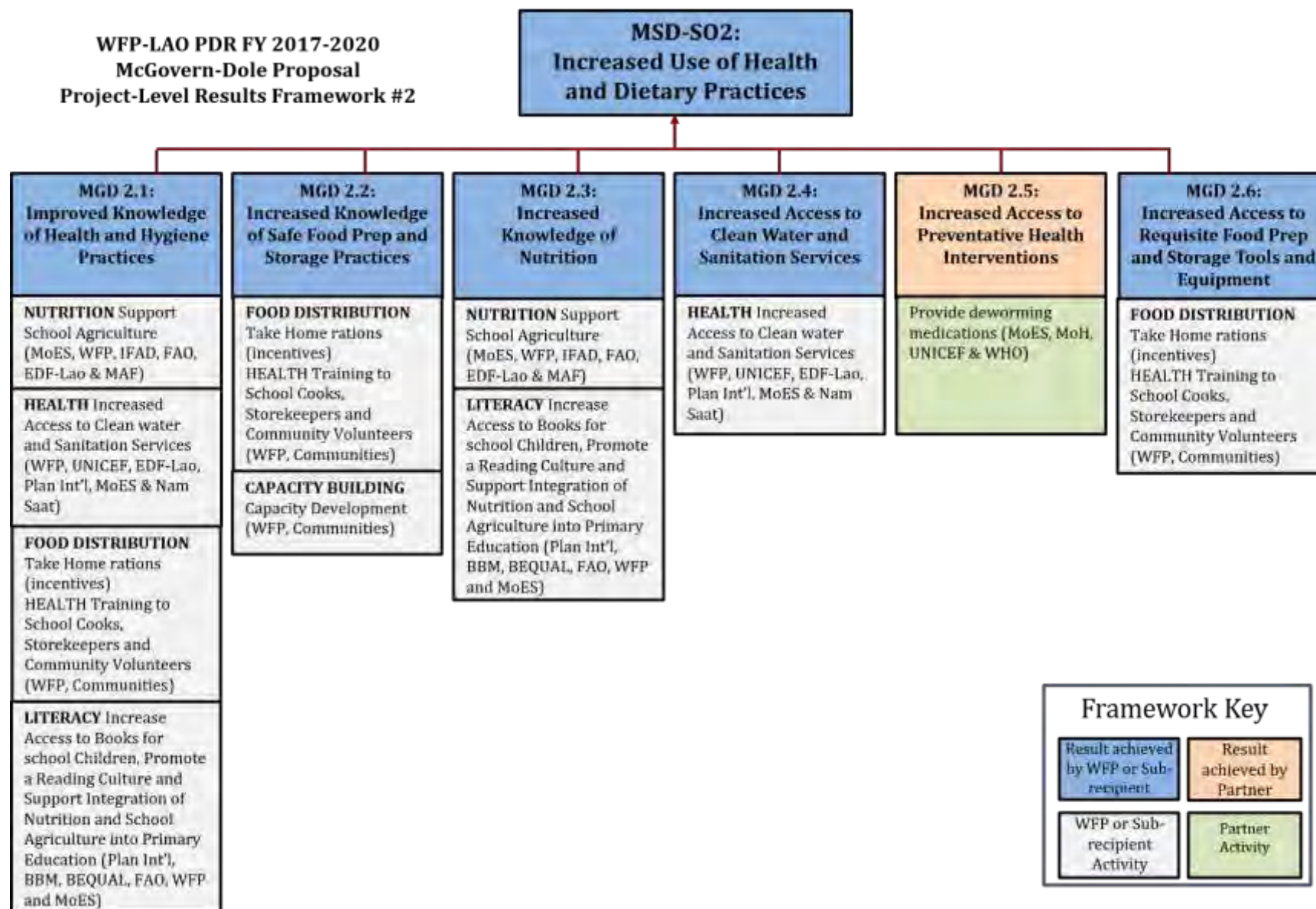
S.No	Province	District
1	Phongsaly	Phongsaly
2		Mai
3		Samphanh
4		Bounneau
5		Ngotou
6		Bountai
7	LuangNamtha	Namtha
8		Sing
9		Long
10		Viengpoukha
11		Nalae
12	Oudomxay	Xay
13		Namor
14		Nga
15		Beng
16		Houn
17		Parkbeng
18	LuangPrabang	Ngoi
19		Phonethong
20	Saravane	Ta Oy
21		Toumlam
22		Laongarm
23		Samouay
24	Sekong	Kaleum
25		Dakcheung
26		Thateng
27	Attapeu	Samakhixai
28		Sanamxai
29		Sanxai
30		Phouvong
31	Khammouane	Nakkai

Annex E Project-Level Results Framework of WFP-Laos PDR MGD FY17-21



WFP: World Food Programme, **MoES:** Ministry of Education and Sports, **MAF:** Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, **FAO:** Food and Agriculture Organization, **IFAD:** International Fund for Agricultural Development, **UNICEF:** United Nations Children's Fund, **PI:** Plan International, **BBM:** Big Brother Mouse
Village Education Development Committee (VEDC) members include: Village head, head teacher, parents, Lao Women Union, Lao Youth Union, Lao Front for National Construction and Lao Trade Union

**WFP-LAO PDR FY 2017-2020
McGovern-Dole Proposal
Project-Level Results Framework #2**

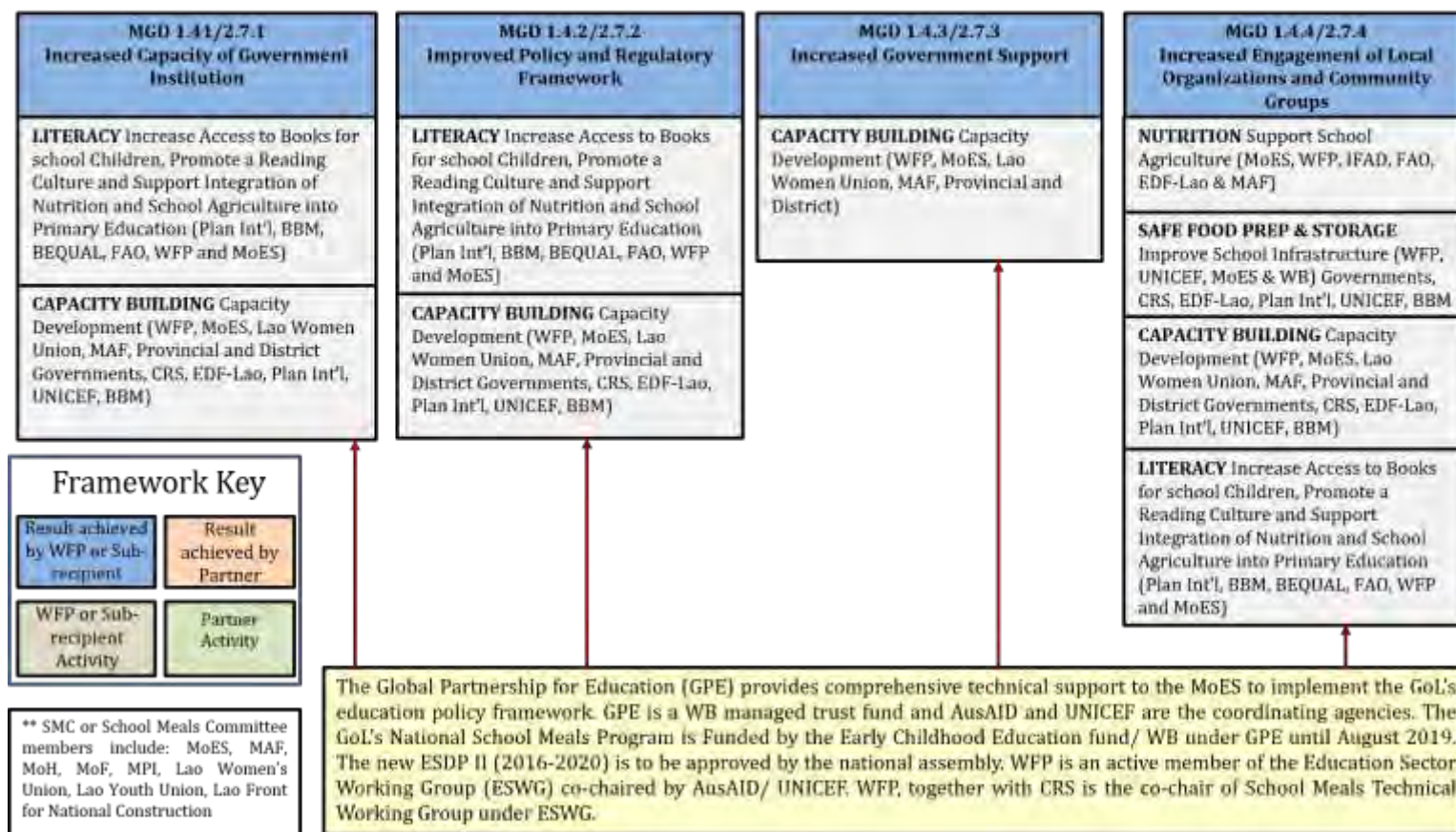


WFP-LAO PDR FY2017-20
McGovern-Dole
Project-Level Results Framework

Foundational Results

Critical Assumptions

- The government will take over WFP's program into the National school meals Program (NSMP).
- The government allocates budget line items for NSMP.
- The community resumes implementation of NSMP.



Annex F Programme Objectives, Outcomes and Activities

- Objectives, Outcomes and Activities:** The two strategic objectives of MGD-SFP are: improved literacy of school-age children (MGD SO1), and increased use of health and dietary practices (MGD SO2). Central to these objectives, are four foundational results that contribute to attaining sustainability of SFP. These results pertain to the strengthening of the external ecosystem vis-à-vis policy framework and capacities of the government. Further, they also relate to increasing engagement of the local organisations and community groups, thereby building community's ownership of the programme.
- Table 8 presents the expected outcomes and key activities under each of the strategic objectives of the programme.

Table 8: Strategic objectives, expected outcomes, and activities under the MGD SFP

Strategic Objective	Expected outcomes	Activities
MGD SO 1: Improved Literacy of School-Age Children	Better Access to School Supplies and Materials (MGD 1.1.2)	Increased Access to Books for Schoolchildren
	Improved Literacy Instruction Material (MGD 1.1.3)	- Curriculum Development on Nutrition and School Agriculture - Improved Literacy Instruction Materials
	Increased Skills and Knowledge of Teachers (MGD 1.1.4)	Provide Training on Literacy Instruction to Teachers
	Increased Skills and Knowledge of School Administrators (MGD 1.1.5)	Increase the Engagement of School Management and Community on Literacy and Importance of Education
	Reduced Short-Term Hunger (MGD 1.2.1)	- Provide School Meals - Support School Agriculture
	Increased Access to Food (MGD 1.2.1.1/ 1.3.1.1)	- Provide School Meals - Support School Agriculture
	Increased Economic and Cultural Incentives(MGD 1.3.1)	Provide School Meals
	Reduced Health Related Absences(MGD 1.3.2)	Provide School Meals
	Improved School Infrastructure (MGD 1.3.3)	- Increased Access to Clean Water and Sanitation Services - Improve School Infrastructure
	Increased Student Enrolment (MGD 1.3.4)	Provide School Meals
	Increased Community Understanding of Benefit of Education (MGD 1.3.5)	Improve School Infrastructure
MGD SO 2: Increased Use of Health and Dietary Practices	Improved Knowledge of Health and Hygiene Practices (MGD 2.1)	- Support School Agriculture - Increased Access to Clean Water and Sanitation Services - Provide Incentives and Training to School Cooks and Storekeepers - Curriculum Development on Nutrition and School Agriculture
	Increased Knowledge of Safe Food Preparation and Storage Practices (MGD 2.2)	Provide Incentives and Training to School Cooks and Storekeepers
	Increased Knowledge of Nutrition (MGD 2.3)	- Support School Agriculture - Curriculum Development on Nutrition and School Agriculture
	Increased Access to Clean Water and Sanitation Services (MGD 2.4)	Increased Access to Clean Water and Sanitation Services
	Increased Access to Requisite Food Preparation and Storage Tools and Equipment (MGD 2.6)	Provide Incentives and Training to School Cooks and Storekeepers
Foundational Results	Increased Capacity of Government Institutions (MGD 2.7.1)	Curriculum Development on Nutrition and School Agriculture

Strategic Objective	Expected outcomes	Activities
		Capacity Development
	Improved Policy and Regulatory Framework (MGD 2.7.2)	- Curriculum Development on Nutrition and School Agriculture - Capacity Development
	Increased Government Support (MGD 2.7.3)	Capacity Development
	Increased Engagement of Local Organization and Community Group (MGD 2.7.4)	- Support School Agriculture - Improve School Infrastructure - Capacity Development

3 *MGD 1.1.1 (More consistent Teacher attendance) and MGD 2.5 (Increased Access to Preventative health Interventions) are results to be achieved by Partners⁶⁷.*

⁶⁷ WFP FY17 MGD Proposal

Annex G Performance Indicator Targets for MGD-FY17 Program

Table 9: Performance indicators

USDA Standard Indicator Number	Results Framework	Performance Indicator	Targets				Life of project
			Year 1 FY18	Year 2 FY19	Year 3 FY20	Year 4 FY21	
1	MGD 1.3	Number of students regularly (80%) attending USDA supported classrooms/schools	1,16,784	1,16,784	1,16,784	1,16,784	1,16,784
2	MGD 1.1.2	Number of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials provided as a result of USDA assistance	11,314	11,314	10,314	10,314	43,256
3	MGD 1.1.5	Number of school administrators and officials in target schools who demonstrate the use of new techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance	10,411	10,411	10,411	10,411	10,411
4	MGD 1.1.5	Number of school administrators and officials trained or certified as a result of USDA assistance	13,014	13,014	13,014	13,014	13,014
5	MGD 1.1.4	Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants in target schools who demonstrate the use of new and quality teaching techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance	56	88	48	48	240
6	MGD 1.1.4	Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants trained or certified as a result of USDA assistance	70	110	60	60	300
7	MGD 1.3.3	Number of educational facilities (i.e. school buildings, classrooms, and latrines) rehabilitated/constructed as a result of USDA assistance	940	1,040	500	30	2,510
8	MGD 1.3.4	Number of students enrolled in school receiving USDA assistance	1,45,980	1,45,980	1,45,980	1,45,980	5,83,920
9	MGD 1.4.4	Number of Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) or similar “school” governance structures supported as a result of USDA assistance	1,446	1,446	1,446	1,446	5,784

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USDA Standard Indicator Number	Results Framework	Performance Indicator	Targets				Life of project
			Year 1 FY18	Year 2 FY19	Year 3 FY20	Year 4 FY21	
10	MGD 1.4.4	Number of public-private partnerships formed as a result of USDA assistance	289	289	289	289	1,156
11	MGD 1.4.3 & 1.4.4	Value of new public and private sector investments leveraged as a result of USDA assistance	6,38,313	13,28,312.5	25,53,250	38,29,875	83,49,750
12	MGD 1.4.2	Number of educational policies, regulations and/or administrative procedures in each of the following stages of development as a result of USDA assistance: Stage 1: Analysed Stage 2: Drafted and presented for public/stakeholder consultation Stage 3: Presented for legislation/decreed Stage 4: Passed/Approved Stage 5: Passed for which implementation has begun	1	1	1	1	4
13	MGD 1.2.1.1	Number of take-home rations provided as a result of USDA assistance	10,98,230	9,23,230	5,73,230		10,98,230
14	MGD 1.2.1.1	Number of individuals receiving take-home rations as a result of USDA assistance	12,441	11,441	9,442		33,324
15	MGD 1.2.1.1	Number of daily school lunch provided to school-age children as a result of USDA assistance	255,46,500	163,59,000	86,84,900	1,75,000	507,65,400
16	MGD 1.2.1.1	Number of school-age children receiving daily school lunch as a result of USDA assistance	1,45,980	93,480	49,628	1,000	1,45,980
17	MGD 1.2.1.1 & 1.3.1.1 & 2.5	Number of social assistance beneficiaries participating in productive safety nets as a result of USDA assistance	1,58,421	1,04,921	59,070	1,000	1,58,421
18	MGD 2.3	Number of individuals trained in child health and nutrition as a result of USDA assistance	5,160	5,160	4,520	2,000	16,840
19	MGD SO2	Number of individuals who demonstrate the use of new child health and nutrition practices as a result of USDA assistance	4,128	4,128	4,128	1,600	13,984

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USDA Standard Indicator Number	Results Framework	Performance Indicator	Targets				Life of project
			Year 1 FY18	Year 2 FY19	Year 3 FY20	Year 4 FY21	
20	MGD 2.2	Number of individuals trained in safe food preparation and storage as a result of USDA assistance	5,500	5,500	4,892		15,892
21	MGD SO2	Number of individuals who demonstrate the use of new safe food preparation and storage practices as a result of USDA assistance	4,400	4,400	3,914		12,714
22	MGD 2.4	Number of schools using an improved water source	250	300	150	30	730
23	MGD 2.4	Number of schools with improved sanitation facilities	250	300	150	30	730
25	MGD 2.7.2	Number of child health and nutrition policies, regulations, or administrative procedures in each of the following stages of development as a result of USDA assistance: - Stage 1: Analysed - Stage 2: Drafted and presented for public/stakeholder consultation - Stage 3: Presented for legislation/decreed - Stage 4: Passed/Approved - Stage 5: Passed for which implementation has begun	1	1	1		3
26	MGD SO1	Percent of students who, by the end of two grades of primary schooling, demonstrate that they can read and understand the meaning of grade level text		10%	12%	12%	12%
27	MGD SO1	Number of individuals benefiting directly from USDA-funded interventions	1,82,954	1,81,954	1,79,347	1,65,013	6,52,169
28	MGD SO1	Number of individuals benefiting indirectly from USDA-funded interventions	2,74,364	2,74,364	2,74,364	2,44,600	2,74,364
Project specific activities indicators							
1	MGD 1.3.1&1.3.3	Percent of students having reduced absenteeism due to USDA support	77	79	81	83	85

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USDA Standard Indicator Number	Results Framework	Performance Indicator	Targets				Life of project
			Year 1 FY18	Year 2 FY19	Year 3 FY20	Year 4 FY21	
2	MGD 2.1 & 2.2	Number of school garden able to contribute with food for lunch at least 2 times harvest to school lunch in a month	433	506	578	650	723
3	MGD 2.1 & 2.3	Number of climate change installations (green houses, irrigation systems etc.) established	0	100	100	100	300
4	MGD 2.1 & 2.4	Number of fishponds/ livestock schemes supported	100		100		200
5	MGD 1.3.3 & 2.4	Percentages of schools with access to water for school gardens, cooking and wash purposes	250	300	150	30	730
6	MGD 1.3.1 & 1.2.1.1 & 1.3.1.1	Number of Community Volunteers supporting SFP	7441	7441	7442		22324
7	MGD 1.3.5 & 1.4.4 & 2.7.4	Number of schools have well-functioning and clean dining facility	344	344	688	688	688
8	MGD 1.1.2 & 1.1.3 & 1.1.5 & 1.3.5 & 2.1&2.3	Number of children (boys and girls, 10 years +) benefitting from literacy campaigns, books, and new teaching material	7850	7850	6600	6400	28700
9	MGD 1.1.2 & 1.1.3 & 1.1.5, 1.3.5 & 2.1&2.3	Number of schools where Nutrition and School Agriculture teaching (curriculum) material is being applied	50	50	50	50	200
10	MGD 1.1.6	Number of teacher instruction sets/manuals, guidance's, teaching material and books	11,314	11,314	10,314	10,314	43,256
11	MGD 1.4.1 & 1.4.2 & 1.4.3 & 1.4.4 & 2.7.1 & 2.7.2 & 2.7.3 & 2.7.5	Number of platforms established to track WFP community package implementation.	1	1	1	1	1
12	MGD 1.4.1 & 1.4.2 & 1.4.3 & 1.4.4 & 2.7.1 & 2.7.2 & 2.7.3 & 2.7.6	Degree (in %) of WFP's Community Strength Assessment Tool (CST) being adopted, included and implemented by MoES monitoring system: - MoES agrees to adopt - MoES include and apply into their	0%	33%	66%	100%	100%

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USDA Standard Indicator Number	Results Framework	Performance Indicator	Targets				Life of project
			Year 1 FY18	Year 2 FY19	Year 3 FY20	Year 4 FY21	
		monitoring system - CST data in MoES monitoring system is being collected					
13	MGD 1.4.1 & 1.4.2 & 1.4.3 & 1.4.4 & 2.7.1 & 2.7.2 & 2.7.3 & 2.7.8	Number of community mobilisation activities in village	8,676	8,676	8,676	4338	8,676
14	MGD 1.4.1 & 1.4.2 & 1.4.3 & 1.4.4 & 2.7.1 & 2.7.2 & 2.7.3 & 2.7.9	Number of exchange visits between communities (peer to peer)	20	20	20	20	80
15	MGD 1.4.1 & 1.4.2 & 1.4.3 & 1.4.4 & 2.7.1 & 2.7.2 & 2.7.3 & 2.7.10	Number of Government people trained on governance, roles, and responsibilities.	14859	14859	14859	14859	59436
16	MGD 1.4.1 & 1.4.2 & 1.4.3 & 1.4.4 & 2.7.1 & 2.7.2 & 2.7.3 & 2.7.11	Number of representatives from government institutions that facilitate training of VEDC.	6	6	8	6	26
17	MGD 1.4.1 & 1.4.2 & 1.4.3 & 1.4.4 & 2.7.1 & 2.7.2 & 2.7.3 & 2.7.13	Number of study visits organised to learn about the handover from WFP to Government and how to expand school meals nationwide	1	1			2
18	MGD 1.4.1 & 1.4.2 & 1.4.3 & 1.4.4 & 2.7.1 & 2.7.2 & 2.7.3 & 2.7.14	Number of Advocacy activities aimed at decision makers promoting school meals	2	2	2	2	8

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USDA Standard Indicator Number	Results Framework	Performance Indicator	Targets				Life of project
			Year 1 FY18	Year 2 FY19	Year 3 FY20	Year 4 FY21	
19	MGD 1.4.1 & 1.4.2 & 1.4.3 & 1.4.4 & 2.7.1 & 2.7.2 & 2.7.3 & 2.7.15	Number of schools providing school lunch every day for the past 2 weeks	867	939	1012	723	1012

Source: Performance Monitoring Plan, WFP 2017

Annex H Funding for WFP School Feeding Programme

- 1 **Resource Requirements and Funding of MGD SFP:** USDA has allocated US\$ 27,918,470 for donations of commodities, transportation, and financial assistance for MGD FY17 award. The details are presented in Table 10 below:

Table 10: Activity wise financial assistance for MGD SFP

Activity	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY2021	FY2022	Total
Provide school meals	\$5,585,194	\$4,758,179	\$1,798,387	\$50,000		\$12,191,760
Support school garden	\$270,830		\$143,080	\$93,080	\$45,000	\$551,990
Increased access to clean water and sanitation services	\$181,186	\$384,486	\$273,688	\$319,558	\$259,317	\$1,418,236
Provide incentives and training to school cooks and storekeepers	\$73,000	\$75,000	\$73,000	\$0	\$0	\$221,000
Improve school infrastructure	\$447,500	\$156,500	\$116,500	\$0	\$0	\$720,500
Curriculum development on nutrition and school agriculture	\$176,000	\$150,000	\$155,000	\$226,000	\$120,000	\$827,000
Increased access to books for schoolchildren	\$159,616	\$200,778	\$151,826	\$173,841	\$159,423	\$845,484
Improved literacy instruction materials	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$10,000
Provide training on literacy instruction to teachers	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$60,000
Increase engagement of school management and community on literacy and importance of education	\$130,508	\$220,610	\$157,445	\$172,827	\$168,403	\$849,793
Capacity development	\$759,500	\$726,500	\$563,500	\$500,500	\$472,500	\$3,022,500
M&E	\$600,000	\$400,000	\$750,000	\$100,000	\$300,000	\$2,150,000
Indirect support costs	\$643,973.08	\$557,189.78	\$335,987.85	\$151,354.52	\$137,936.74	\$1,826,442
Total	\$9,843,588	\$8,517,043	\$5,135,814	\$2,313,561	\$2,108,461	\$27,918,470

- 2 As stated in the WFP FY 17 MGD proposal, Lao PDR, WFP Lao expects to mobilize approximately US\$ 1.64 million per year of non-USDA funding, which will support MGD SFP activities. WFP has also been awarded a USD\$ 1 million from the USDA Local Regional Procurement (LRP) contribution which will be implemented during the financial year 2016/2017 and is synergized with MGD SFP activities carried out through the current financial MGD support.
- 3 In addition, WFP expects to mobilize approximately \$1.64 million per year of non-USDA funding with support from Yum! Brands Australia, and the Japan Association for WFP and Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme (detailed in box below). The purpose of this funding is to cover any funding gaps for implementation of SFP and increase synergies with other activities such as nutrition and food for asset which can contribute towards achieving MGD Strategic Outcome 1.
- 4 It is expected that donors such as the EU and Australia will contribute to WFP's Country Strategic Plan and the 4 strategic outcomes which would directly or indirectly support MGD SFP and the education sector at large. Further, private sector partners such as Yum! Brands Australia and the Japan Association for WFP (JAWFP) are also expected to continue their support in the implementation of the school lunch programme.

In addition to funding from USDA's McGovern Dole program, WFP expects to receive the following from non-MGD donors:

- **Multi-year cash contributions from private sector partners (est. US\$ 980,000 annually):** Several private sector partners provide contributions to school meals and nutrition activities promoting access to nutrition dense foods for children below 2 years old: Yum! Brands, from 2016 to 2018 for three years, provides an annual US\$ 500,000⁶⁸ contribution to the school meals programme; Yum! Australia has given a two-year US\$ 400,000 contribution to nutrition education campaigns under WFP's nutrition programme and JAWFP has contributed an estimated US\$ 280,000 contribution to school meals which will support in the implementation of the cash-based transfers in schools under WFP school meals programme.
- **Technical assistance from WFP Brazil Centre of Excellence Against Hunger:** The Government of Brazil has committed to support the Government of Laos in implementing its 'Plan of Action on Promoting School Lunch 2016-2020', including technical support on social safety nets.
- **The Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme (GAFSP):** This trust fund will carry on over 2016 to 2022 for a sum totalling US\$ 30,000,000. WFP as a recipient entity is managing US\$ 6,000,000 for technical assistance to improve food security and nutrition in Laos. There is some overlap here with WFP school meals activities, particularly through measures to encourage local agriculture and introduce dietary diversity for local populations.

In addition to these contributions, the governments of France, Germany, Japan, and Luxembourg are committed to providing funds for emergency response, in the event of a natural disaster. This would include emergency provisions of school meals to the school age children affected by natural disasters.

Source: WFP FY17 MGD Proposal, Lao PDR

- 5 For implementing MGD SPF, WFP will provide financial support to its implementing partners for covering the direct programme costs and administration expenses. From the overall programme budget of US\$ 27,918,470, WFP will transfer US\$ 2,600,000 to PI, US\$ 300,000 to BBM, US\$ 1,300,000 to UNICEF and US\$ 200,000 to EDF.

⁶⁸ US\$ 500,000 is the minimum commitment. Depending on the result of fund raising, Yum! Brands would contribute up to US\$ 1,000,000 annually.

Annex I Programme Graduation Timeline

School year 2017- 2018 (<i>by the end of the ongoing MGD project</i>)	
i.	All 1,446 schools have completed the transition from snack to the lunch modality
School year 2018- 2019 (<i>start of the proposed MGD project</i>)	
i.	All 1,446 schools are providing lunch.
ii.	Continue capacity building activities to implement a community owned school meals programme.
iii.	Use the school meals programme as an entry point to advocate with the Government for a larger social protection programme.
iv.	Assist MoES with the implementation of the Plan of Action of the School Meals Programme.
v.	Exploring alternative financing solutions for enhancing the sustainability of school meals.
vi.	Deliver package of assistance: water, sanitation, hygiene, literacy as well as agriculture and nutrition education to strengthen the communities.
vii.	Implement the capacity building package in communities
School year 2019- 2020	
i.	Transition 500 schools to the new sustainable community grown school meal model developed by the Government and WFP: i) rice provided by communities; ii) school agriculture established; iii) cash provided to schools to procure food locally; and iv) cooking provided as in-kind contribution from communities (WFP food transfers till will stop) v) Agricultural knowledge about diversified crops and nutrition provided to communities.
ii.	Support and advocate for the inclusion of agriculture schools and nutrition education in the primary curriculum for all primary children in all schools throughout the country.
iii.	Support the Government in re-establishing/ re-defining a School Meals Unit to manage and implement the programme, including the set-up of an M&E system.
iv.	Develop agriculture and nutrition education materials.
v.	Continuation of points iv to vii from the school year 2018- 2019
School year 2020-2021	
i.	Continuation of points iv to vii from the school year 2018- 2019
School year 2021- 2022 (<i>by the end of the proposed project</i>)	
i.	The remaining 940 schools are handed over to communities
ii.	WFP will continue monitoring schools in very remote and isolated areas.
iii.	Continuation of points iv to vii from the school year 2018- 2019
Post 2022	
i.	Support the implementation of the 2021-2025 Education Development Plan.
ii.	Catalyse increased partnership between MoES and the Center of Excellence against Hunger
iii.	Document and share best practices in the implementation and hand over of school meals programme from WFP to Communities/ Government.
iv.	Provide technical support to the Government in establishing a country-wide national school meals programme (9000 primary schools).
v.	Continue strengthening the capacity of the school meals governance structures.
vi.	Support MoES with a countrywide M&E system, as well as lessons learnt and knowledge sharing.

Annex J Role of WFP's partners in MGD SFP

- 1 WFP has established strategic partnerships and leveraged support from government institutions, UN agencies, other donors and NGOs towards achieving the MGD goals. For implementing the MGD SFP FY 17 programme, WFP is closely coordinating with MoES. In order to achieve MGD's strategic objectives on education, WASH and school lunch activities, WFP is partnering with UN agencies and NGOs. For implementing literacy activities along with encouraging participation of disadvantaged children on Lao language skills WFP is engaging with PI. While BBM is instrumental in conducting book parties, establishing reading corners in schools and training teachers in promoting reading, UNICEF is engaged to provide access to water and sanitation and promoting hygiene and handwashing practice through campaigns. EDF is implementing community grown school feeding activities in Khammuane Province.
- 2 BEQUAL continues supporting the development of school curriculum and assisting GoL in implementing ESDP. WFP supports the deworming programme being jointly implemented by MoH, UNICEF and WHO to achieve MGD result 2.5. It will coordinate with Work Bank managed trust fund Global Partnership for Education (GPE) for implementation of policies and guidelines for school meals. The detailed roles of different partners for various activities of MGD SFP is presented in Table 11.

Table 11: Role of Partners

Activity	Implemented by	Partners	Role of Partners
Provide School Meals	WFP and EDF	MoES	• Training on school lunch • Mediation for resolving issues
Support School Agriculture	WFP and EDF (Khammouane Province)	MAF, FAO, IFAD	• Developing 'School Garden Training Guidelines' • Training of VEDC members • Support development of national curriculum on school agriculture
Increased Access to Clean Water and Sanitation Services	WFP, UNICEF	MoES, Nam Saat ⁶⁹ ,	• Improve access to water in 240 schools • Construction of 25 FGS⁷⁰ and 20 boreholes in identified schools • Establish 100 handwashing stations • Hand washing campaigns in 100 schools • Training to cooks on hygiene
Provide Incentives and Training to School Cooks and Storekeepers	WFP	Communities	• Distribution of labour for sustaining SFP beyond 2021 • Ownership of cooking activities • Ownership of managing store and supply
Improve School Infrastructure	WFP	MoES, World Bank	• Mobilisation of workforce and resources for construction of storeroom, kitchen, dining rooms etc. • Promotion of smoke reducing stoves • Assessment the readiness of the communities to manage SFP
Curriculum Development on Nutrition and School Agriculture	WFP, BBM	MoES, BEQUAL Consortium, FAO	• Integrate nutrition and school agriculture in school curriculum • Integration of math concepts with school gardening • Writing a book on nutrition and school garden

⁶⁹ Nam Saat under the Department of Hygiene in the Ministry of Health (MoH) is responsible for rural water supply services and the promotion of sanitation and hygiene in both urban and rural areas of Laos.

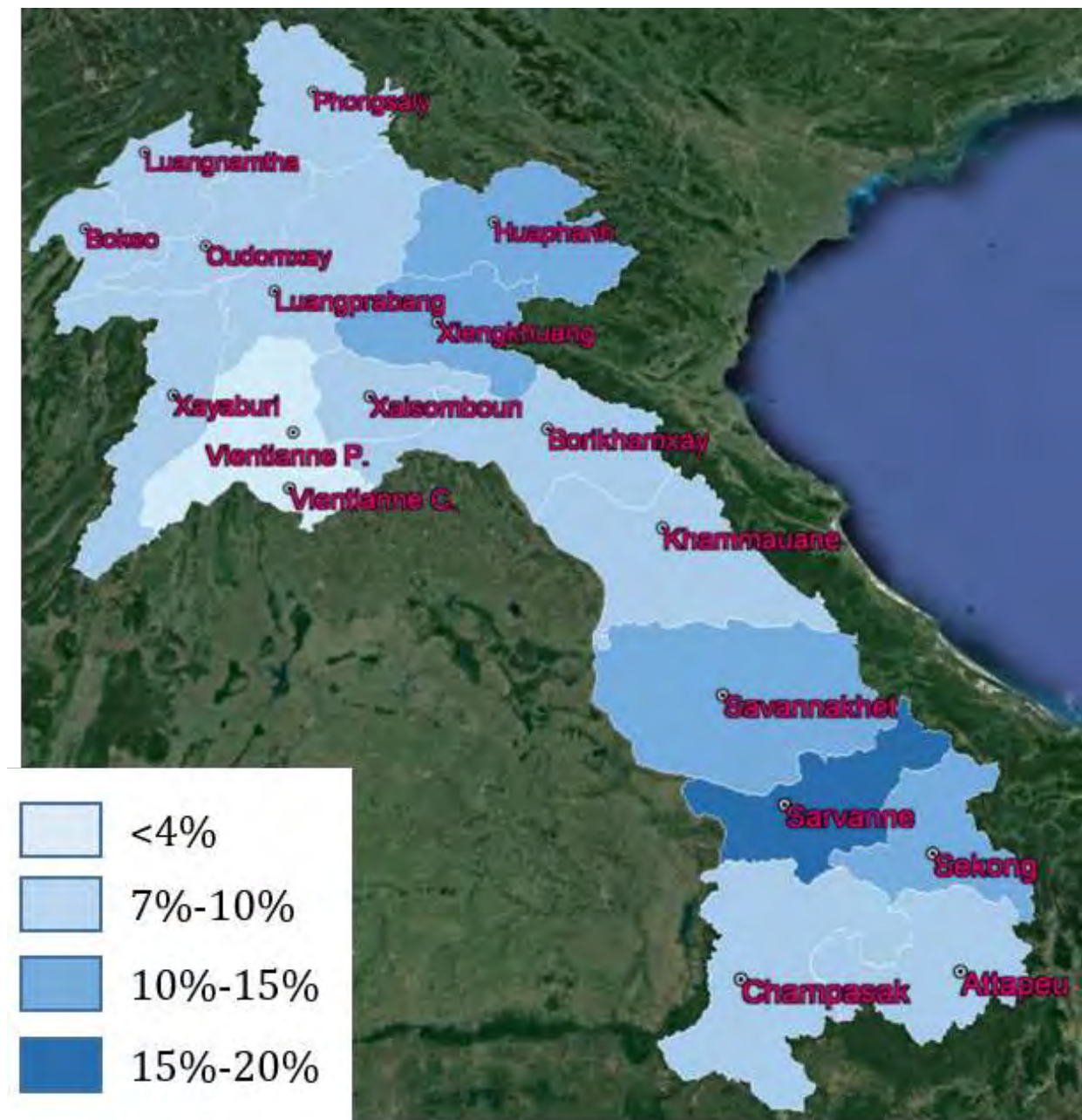
⁷⁰ Gravity Fed Water Supply Schemes

Activity	Implemented by	Partners	Role of Partners
Increased Access to Books for Schoolchildren	WFP, PI, BBM	MoES	- Provision of quality reading materials to 40 schools (PI) - Formation of child clubs (PI) - Initiate and support “reading buddies approach” (PI) - Provision of quality reading materials to 310 schools (BBM) - Promotion of “book parties” concept - Writing a book on nutrition and school garden (BBM)
Improved Literacy Instruction Materials	BBM	MOES	- Supply of teaching instruction materials for improving Lao teaching skills to non-Lao speaking children - Supply of reading materials to improve teaching - Train teachers on implementing ‘reading time’
Provide Training on Literacy Instruction to Teachers	PI, BBM	MoES	- Implement accelerated oral Lao language course - Training of Pedagogical Advisors from DESB and grade 1 teachers - Train teachers on implementing ‘reading time’
Increase the Engagement of School Management and Community on Literacy and Importance of Education	PI, BBM	MoES, USAID	- Promotion of reading habit (PI) - Workshop for teachers and DESB staff for promoting reading festivals and camps - Organising parenting awareness sessions for promoting reading at home - Encouraging additional purchase of books by parents
Capacity Development	WFP	MoES, MAF, VEDC, Lao Women Union, CRS	- Training at village level for ownership of SFP - Community training on greenhouse food production - Exposure visits for National Assembly members to enhance their understanding of school feeding, school agriculture and nutrition - Trainings for MoES, MoH, MAF provincial and district level staff for enabling them to provide technical assistance to communities

- 3 Additionally, with support from MGD, CRS has been implementing school feeding programme since 2012 in Savannakhet province. WFP closely liaises with CRS on operational matters, policy, and discussions on handover strategies to ensure coordination of efforts. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between CRS and WFP was signed in 2015 at the country level to strengthen the partnership for realizing the transition to handover and provide support to government to plan for a long term approach, where school meals programme is scaled-up nation-wide.

Annex K Status of Poverty, Nutrition and Education in Lao PDR, 2012

Poverty Gap Index



Source: Lao PDR 2015 Census-Based Poverty Map

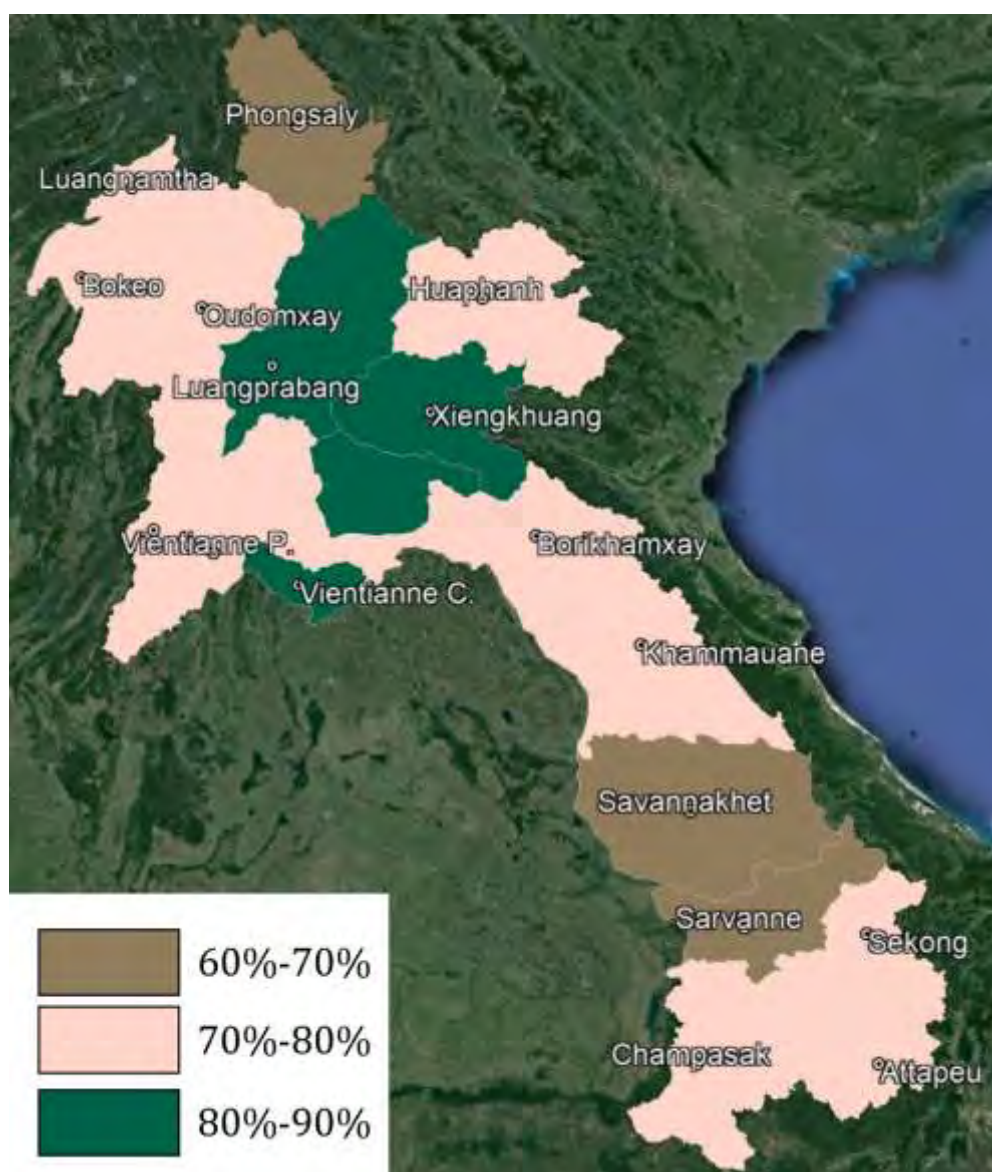
Food and Nutrition Security



Source: Food and Nutrition Security Atlas of LAO PDR

Net Enrolment in Primary Grades

Net School Enrolment in Primary (in %)



Source: Food and Nutrition Security Atlas of LAO PDR

Annex L Profile of Programme Provinces

Table 12: Population, Density and Sex Ratio

Province	Population				Sex Ratio
	Total	Female	Male	Density (Population per square km.)	
Phongsaly	177,989	87,322	90,667	11	104
LuangNamtha	175,753	88,414	87,339	19	99
Oudomxay	307,622	154,687	152,935	20	99
LuangPrabang	431,889	213,191	218,698	26	103
Khammuane	392,052	197,256	194,796	24	99
Saravane	396,942	201,285	195,657	37	97
Sekong	113,048	56,339	56,709	15	101
Attapeu	139,628	69,781	69,847	14	100

Table 13: Literacy Rate in Programme Provinces

Province	Total Literacy Rate	Female Literacy Rate	Male Literacy Rate
Phongsaly	62.6	54.3	70.6
LuangNamtha	64.9	54.7	75.3
Oudomxay	72.8	61.8	83.8
LuangPrabang	82.6	75.9	89.2
Khammuane	85.4	80.3	90.6
Saravane	79.3	72.7	86.2
Sekong	77.5	68.4	86.7
Attapeu	78.9	71.4	86.6

Table 14: School Attendance and Attendance Rate among Population 6 -25 years old

Province and Age Group	School Attendance Rate	Never Attended
Phongsaly	51.2	16%
6-16	73.7	12%
17-25	13.9	23%
LuangNamtha	56.9	12%
6-16	80.2	9%
17-25	21.5	17%

Province and Age Group	School Attendance Rate	Never Attended
Oudomxay	58.4	10%
6-16	81.3	9%
17-25	23.2	13%
LuangPrabang	62.1	5%
6-16	86.5	4%
17-25	26.5	7%
Khammuane	50.9	6%
6-16	76.5	6%
17-25	16.8	6%
Saravane	46.1	13%
6-16	69.2	12%
17-25	13.2	13%
Sekong	60.7	9%
6-16	80.7	9%
17-25	24.3	10%
Attapeu	53.1	12%
6-16	75.1	12%
17-25	19.2	13%

Table 15: Ratio of Adjusted Net Attendance Ratios of Girls to Boys, In Primary and Secondary School

Province	Primary school adjusted net attendance ratio (NAR), girls	Primary school adjusted net attendance ratio (NAR), boys	Gender parity index (GPI) for primary school adjusted NAR
Phongsaly	97.9	94.6	1.03
LuangNamtha	84.3	84	1.00
Oudomxay	80.7	88	0.92
LuangPrabang	87.8	88.4	0.99
Khammuane	85.2	84.2	1.01
Saravane	75.1	73.4	1.02
Sekong	85.2	85.3	1.00
Attapeu	76.5	77.8	0.98
<i>Ethnic Groups</i>			
Lao-Tai	92.5	91.1	1.02
Mon-Khmer	74.2	75.8	0.98
Hmong-Mien	79.6	86.2	0.92
Chinese-Tibetan	69.9	75.9	0.92

Table 16: Nutritional status of children under age 5

Province	Underweight	Stunted	Wasted
Phongsaly	15.6	36.6	1.8
LuangNamtha	16.9	29.2	9.2
Oudomxay	7	28	1.3
LuangPrabang	4.7	15.6	0.6
Khammuane	7.3	14.2	1.3
Saravane	13.8	26.9	1.6
Sekong	14.9	36.8	1.1
Attapeu	8.5	12.7	1.9

Table 17: Infant Mortality Rate and Under-5 Mortality Rate

Province	Infant Mortality Rate	Under- 5 Mortality Rate
Lao PDR		
Phongsaly	36	151
LuangNamtha	8	61
Oudomxay	15	100
LuangPrabang	26	107
Khammuane	8	138
Saravane	16	113
Sekong	24	93
Attapeu	21	77
<i>Ethnic Groups</i>		
Lao-Tai	7	76
Mon-Khmer	22	108
Hmong-Mien	18	74
Chinese-Tibetan	34	160

Table 18: Crude Birth Rate and Crude Death Rate

Province	CBR <i>Birth per 1000 population</i>	CDR <i>Death per 1000 population</i>
Lao PDR	28	8.2
Phongsaly	32	10.8
LuangNamtha	32	11.1
Oudomxay	32	11.4

Province	CBR <i>Birth per 1000 population</i>	CDR <i>Death per 1000 population</i>
LuangPrabang	32	9.7
Khammuane	28	9.6
Saravane	31	8
Sekong	39	10.4
Attapeu	35	9.9

Table 19: Status of Drinking Water and Sanitation

Province	Households without drinking water in premises	Adult woman usually collecting drinking water	Female child under age 15 collecting drinking water	Households with improved sanitation facility	Open defecation	Improved drinking water sources and improved sanitation
Phongsaly	64	88.7	3.2	34.1	61.8	31.4
LuangNamtha	42.9	82.1	9.8	67.3	32.6	66
Oudomxay	15.2	69.9	5.3	44.2	46.9	40.3
LuangPrabang	47.1	69.5	15.3	58.6	39.3	54.3
Khammuane	41.9	61	8.4	42.1	57	29.9
Saravane	70.5	81.7	5.5	22.3	77.5	15
Sekong	52.4	75.2	12.5	37.7	52.1	31.2
Attapeu	49	85.3	3.6	37.2	57.6	25.6
<i>Ethnic Groups</i>						
Lao-Tai	23.5	65.8	6.1	73.6	24.8	70.1
Mon-Khmer	59.4	74	11.2	29.9	63.8	34.2
Hmong-Mien	47.8	69.8	12	46.4	50.8	36.4
Chinese-Tibetan	59.3	86.5	5.3	30	65.5	15.4

Annex M ODA Assistance to Lao PDR

- 1 LAO PDR has been the beneficiary of economic assistance from development partners and over the years, this assistance has increased to support GoL in achieving the goals targeted under National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSED 2016 -2020). The following table presents the assistance received by Laos over 2011-2015 period⁷¹.

Table 20: Comparison of Planned and Actual ODA disbursements from 2011 to 2015

Year	Planned Disbursements	Actual Disbursements
2011	139	205
2012	412	452
2013	413	455
2014	341	451
2015	161	407
Total	1,466	1,970

- 2 While Table 21 presents the planned and actual disbursements by development partners, Table 22 presents the planned and actual disbursement for 2015-2016 and planned disbursement for 2017 disaggregated by SDGs.

Table 21: Disbursements by Development Partners

No:	Donor	Planned Disbursements 2015-2016	Actual Disbursements 2015-2016
1	UNDP	11,864,687.00	14,302,069.79
2	UNICEF	1,295,971.38	1,538,281.40
3	UNFPA	2,930,312.50	3,414,315.82
4	USAID	40,114,342.00	45,735,087.23
5	WHO	9,530,633.00	9,847,020.00
6	NEDA	17,207,310.11	17,515,419.76
7	IOM	545,000.00	545,000.00
8	UNHABITA	504,000.00	504,000.00
9	UNOCD	468,275.00	466,000.00
10	Luxdev	10,778,718.84	10,621,629.00
11	EU	20,813,243.42	19,635,724.62
12	UNIDO	959,000.00	881,324.60
13	UK	146,723.00	134,360.20
14	KFW	13,983,269.00	12,481,454.32
15	UNESCO	569,910.52	492,558.09
16	ILO	1,750,000.00	1,490,000.00
17	Finland	3,165,360.00	2,420,044.00
18	AFD	1,500,000.00	1,071,401.51
19	WFP	19,271,377.35	10,486,068.52
20	Germany	2,854,694.73	1,332,155.79
21	ADB	47,247,660.00	16,571,934.84
22	Japan	131,646,616.82	14,547,446.66
23	Australia	-	34,672,682.69

⁷¹ Source of information for this annex: Foreign Aid Implementation Report (FAIR) Fiscal Year 2015/16, Lao PDR

No:	Donor	Planned Disbursements 2015-2016	Actual Disbursements 2015-2016
24	FAO	3,221,878.77	-
26	France	1,703,110.20	-
27	IFAD	-	7,347,556.41
28	SDC	22,971,614.23	-
Total		367,043,707.86	228,053,535.24

Table 22: ODA projects by SDGs

SDGs	Number of Project	2015-2016		2017
		Plan	Actual	Plan
SDG 1	13	7,406,849.41	4,191,609.09	4,132,737.00
SDG 2	16	5,200,353.98	9,964,325.41	7,263,324.17
SDG 3	78	36,160,858.14	39,012,027.07	29,435,841.83
SDG 4	57	33,514,110.92	24,310,447.66	6,045,333.83
SDG 5	3	185,296.55	44,745.00	35,700.00
SDG 6	17	57,169,906.61	3,073,432.28	53,671,213.32
SDG 7	18	27,115,579.16	4,396,691.49	14,180,034.24
SDG 8	21	7,176,983.52	4,908,478.33	1,874,144.30
SDG 9	29	24,723,729.66	16,859,613.96	8,209,644.28
SDG 10	3	345,000.00	555,100.00	18,000.00
SDG 11	7	5,999,648.26	1,221,203.67	4,636,467.39
SDG 12	10	2,015,830.00	2,673,930.00	-
SDG 13	9	3,069,462.57	707,089.79	1,882,153.57
SDG 14	6	5,780,001.00	3,621,032.58	436,000.00
SDG 15	19	7,124,918.30	4,501,938.14	3,740,661.00
SDG 16	22	3,856,678.16	4,404,677.42	2,031,921.84
SDG 17	8	6,588,160.33	469,294.09	3,556,071.52
SDG 18	11	13,582,404.20	12,345,008.15	577,467.92
Multi SDGs	84	112,915,276.70	89,850,800.11	151,704,556.73
N/A	16	7,112,660.40	942,091.03	6,565,519.20
Total	447	367,043,707.86	228,053,535.24	299,996,792.14

- 3 Infrastructure, Health, Education, Natural Resource Management and Environment, and Agriculture and Rural Development are the top five sectors that had received ODA support. As presented in Figure 11, Infrastructure sector received the highest ODA percentage of 20% of total ODA between years 2011-2015. Other sectors received almost a quarter of ODA, including Governance, UXO and Illicit Drug Control.

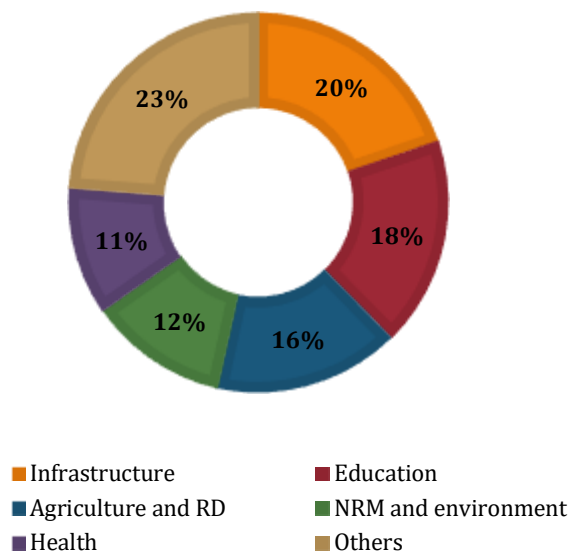


Figure 11: ODA disbursements by Sector Working Groups

Annex N Evaluation Mission Schedule

- 1 The timelines for the end-line evaluation were discussed with WFP-CO after the scoping visit during the debriefing meeting on 16 February 2018. The revised timelines were shared in the scoping visit report which was agreed upon by WFP-CO.
- 2 Data collection was divided into two phases owing to the celebrations around the Lao New Year (11-17 April 2018). Phase one took place between March 26 and April 6 2018 and the second phase was carried out between April 30 and May 11 2018. The data collection schedule is presented in the table below:

Table 23: Evaluation Mission Schedule

Days	Dates	Activity	Team member	Locations/sites	Stakeholders
Debriefing by WFP team					
Day 1	29 January 2018	Debriefing of NRMC team by WFP CO	WFP CO and NRMC core team	Vientiane and New Delhi	WFP CO and NRMC core team
Literature Review and Planning					
The NRMC team spent 2 weeks to review some of the documents shared by WFP CO to understand the programme. In this phase, the team also planned for the scoping mission.					
Scoping Mission					
Day 1	12 February 2018	First meeting with WFP CO to discuss the programme details and understand perspectives of the WFP CO in implementation and performance of the programme.	Team Leader, Evaluation Manager and Gender Specialist	Vientiane	WFP CO including the Country Head, Programme Head and Evaluation Manager
Day 2 and 3	13 and 14 February 2018	Visit to field sites in LuangNamtha	Evaluation Manager and Gender Specialist	2 programme schools in LuangNamtha	School going children of grade 1 to 5, VEDC, school head, school teachers, cooks and storekeeper, observation of school lunch, WFP field office representative
		Meeting with the MoES	Team Leader	Vientiane	The Deputy Director, Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES)
Day 4	15 February 2018	Meeting with the MAF	Team Leader and Evaluation Manager	Vientiane	Director and Director Assistant, Ministry of Agriculture and Forest (MAF)

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Days	Dates	Activity	Team member	Locations/sites	Stakeholders
		Internal discussion within NRMC to collate the observations from the scoping mission to propose changes in the evaluation design and methodology	Team Leader, Evaluation Manager and Gender Specialist	Vientiane	NRMC core team
Day 5	16 February	Debriefing meeting with WFP CO presenting the observations from the scoping visit and discussion of changes in proposed evaluation methodology	Team Leader, Evaluation Manager and Gender Specialist	Vientiane	WFP CO
		Meeting with Social and Behavioural Change Communication (SBCC) expert and Project Manager, Agriculture for Nutrition Project, WFP	Evaluation Manager and Gender Specialist	Vientiane	Social and Behavioural Change Communication (SBCC) expert and Project Manager, Agriculture for Nutrition Project, WFP
Preparation Phase					
	19 to 28 February 2018	Development of scoping mission report including proposed changes in evaluation methodology, mapping of indicators to the evaluation questions, development of quantitative and qualitative data collection tools, literature review of programme documents	Evaluation Manager and Gender Specialist, Technical inputs provide by Team Leader	New Delhi	NA
	1 March 2018	Presentation of revised evaluation methodology for approval to USDA. The methodology was approved on the same day.	Team Leader, Evaluation Manager and Gender Specialist	New Delhi	USDA, WFP CO and NRMC
	26 February to 12 March 2018	Development of draft inception report	Evaluation Manager and Gender Specialist, Technical inputs provide by Team Leader	New Delhi	NA

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Days	Dates	Activity	Team member	Locations/sites	Stakeholders
	12 March to 19 March 2018	Preparation of field work, translation of evaluation tools, software development, hiring of data collectors, development of field movement plan indicating movement of each team member including the data collection teams and the core teams	Lao-partners (Geo-Sys), Evaluation manager	Vientiane and New Delhi	NA

Days	Dates	Activity	Team member	Locations/sites	Stakeholders
Training					
Day 1 to 4	19 to 22 March 2018	Simultaneous classroom training of quantitative and qualitative teams on data collection tools and ethical guidelines.	Evaluation Manager and Gender Specialist and Geo-Sys	Vientiane	Data collection team
Day 5	23 March 2018	Pilot of tools in two schools in Vientiane and debriefing with the data collection teams	Evaluation Manager and Gender Specialist and Geo-Sys	Vientiane	School children, teachers, school head, cook and storekeeper
Day 6 and 7	24 and 25 March 2018	Incorporation of changes in the tools based on the pilot by NRMC and Geo-Sys. Data collection teams move to the field.	Evaluation Manager and Gender Specialist and Geo-Sys	NA	NA
Phase 1 of Field Mission					
Day 1	26 March 2018	Quantitative data collection in two schools by three teams Qualitative data collection in one school by one team Debriefing of team at the end of field day.	Data collection team. Monitoring of quantitative data by Evaluation Manager, Gender Specialist (one school each) and Field Manager from Geo-Sys. The gender specialist and researcher were present in the qualitative interviews as well.	Laongam in Salavan province	Children, parents, school head, school teachers, cooks, storekeeper, VEDC, farmer groups, village head

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Days	Dates	Activity	Team member	Locations/sites	Stakeholders
Day 2	27 March 2018	Quantitative data collection in three schools by three teams Qualitative data collection in one school by one team Debriefing of team at the end of field day.	Data collection team. Monitoring of quantitative data by Evaluation Manager, Gender Specialist and Field Manager from Geo-Sys. The Evaluation Manager and researcher were present in the qualitative interviews as well.	Laongam in Salavan province and Thateng in Sekong province	
Day 3-5	28 to 30 March 2018	Quantitative data collection in 15 schools (both project and control schools). Qualitative team collects data across 6 schools.	Data collection team. Monitoring of data by Field Manager from Geo-Sys supported by Evaluation Manager, Gender Specialist and researcher from NRMC	Lanam, and Thateng in Sekong province, Sanamxai and Xaixettha in Attapeu province	Children, parents, school head, school teachers, cooks, storekeeper, VEDC, farmer groups, village head
Day 4	29 March 2018	Discussion with Government official from agriculture department at provincial level	Evaluation Manager, Gender Specialist	Attapeu	Head of PAFO, Attapeu
Day 4	29 March 2018	Discussion with Government official from education department at district level	Evaluation Manager, Gender Specialist	Xaixettha	Head of DESB, Xaixettha
Day 5	30 March 2018	Discussion with Government official from education department at provincial level	Evaluation Manager, Gender Specialist and Researcher	Sekong	Head of PESS and WFP Liasoning Coordinator, Sekong
Day 5	30 March 2018	Discussion with Government official from agriculture department at provincial level	Evaluation Manager, Gender Specialist and Researcher	Sekong	Head of PAFO, Sekong
Day 6-7	31 march and 1 April 2018	Schools closed. Documentation of qualitative data. Data management and upload of quantitative data, preliminary checks on data quality and debriefing of field teams.	Data collection team, Geo-sys and NRMC team	NA	NA
Day 8-12	2 April to 6 April 2018	Quantitative data collection in 15 schools (both project and control schools). Qualitative team collects data across 5 schools.	Data collection team. Monitoring of data by Field Manager from Geo-Sys, Evaluation Manager and Researcher from NRMC	Vapi in Salavan province, Salavan in Salavan province	

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Days	Dates	Activity	Team member	Locations/sites	Stakeholders
				and Laongam in Salavan province	
Day 8-12	3 April 2018	Discussion with Government official from education department at provincial level	Evaluation Manager and Researcher	Salavan	Deputy Head, Academics, PESS and WFP Liasoning Coordinator, Salavan
		Discussion with Government official from agriculture department at provincial level	Evaluation Manager and Researcher	Salavan	Deputy General Manager, PAFO, Salavan
		Discussion with Government official from agriculture department at district level	Evaluation Manager and Researcher	Salavan	Head of DAFO, Laongam, Salavan
		Discussion with Government official from education department at district level	Evaluation Manager and Researcher	Salavan	WFP Liasoning Coordinator, DESB, Laongam, Salavan
	4 April 2018	Discussion with WFP Field Office, Pakse	Evaluation Manager and Researcher	Pakse	Head, and Project Officer, WFP Field Office, Pakse
	5 April 2018	Discussion with WFP-CO, Vientiane	Evaluation Manager and Researcher	Vientiane	WFP-CO Evaluation Manager and Programme Team for MGD-SFP
Break in field mission due to Lao New Year					
Phase 2 of Field Mission					
Day 0	27 April 2018	Refresher training on tools	Geo-Sys	Vientiane	Data collection team
Day 1	30 April 2018	Quantitative survey in 3 schools and qualitative survey in 1 school in Ngoy	Data collection team. Monitoring of data by Field Manager from Geo-Sys,	Ngoy	Children, parents, school head, school teachers, cooks, storekeeper and VEDC.
Day 2-5	1 May to 4 May 2018	Travel to Oudomxay	Data collection team. Monitoring of data by Evaluation Manager and Researcher from NRM.	Oudomxay	Children, parents, school head, school teachers, cooks, storekeeper, VEDC and Farmer Groups.
		Quantitative survey in 17 schools and qualitative survey in 6 schools in Oudomxay			
		Discussion with Government official from education department at district level	Evaluation Manager and Researcher from NRM.	Oudomxay	Deputy Head, DESB, Nga, Oudomxay

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Days	Dates	Activity	Team member	Locations/sites	Stakeholders
		Discussion with Government official from agriculture department at district level	Evaluation Manager and Researcher from NRMC.	Oudomxay	Deputy Head, DAFO, Nga, Oudomxay
		Discussion with Plan International	Evaluation Manager and Researcher from NRMC.	Oudomxay	Discussion with Plan International
		Discussion with Government official from education department at provincial level	Evaluation Manager and Researcher from NRMC.	Oudomxay	Head of Pre-Primary Education, PESS, Oudomxay
		Discussion with Government official from agriculture department at provincial level	Evaluation Manager and Researcher from NRMC.	Oudomxay	Project Coordinator, PAFO, Oudomxay
		Discussion with Government official from education department at provincial level	Evaluation Manager and Researcher from NRMC.	Oudomxay	Head, DESB, Beng, Oudomxay
		Discussion with Plan International	Evaluation Manager and Researcher from NRMC.	Oudomxay	Plan International Coordinator for Nga, Oudomxay
Day 6-7	5 May to 6 May 2018	Schools closed. Documentation of qualitative data. Data management and upload of quantitative data, preliminary checks on data quality and debriefing of field teams. Travel to Phongsaly (Data collection team) Travel to LuangNamtha (NRMC team)	Data Collection team, Geo-Sys and NRMC	NA	NA
Day 8-9	7 May to 8 May 2018	Quantitative survey in 11 schools and qualitative survey in 4 schools in Phongsaly	Data collection team.	Phongsaly	Children, parents, school head, school teachers, cooks, storekeeper, VEDC and Farmer Groups.
Day 8	7 May 2018	Discussion with Government official from education department at district level	Evaluation Manager and Researcher	LuangNamtha	Deputy Head, DESB, Viengphoukha, LuangNamtha
		Visited model school in Ban Thiao	Evaluation Manager and Researcher	LuangNamtha	Deputy School Head

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Days	Dates	Activity	Team member	Locations/sites	Stakeholders
		Visited primary school in Nongkham village	Evaluation Manager and Researcher	LuangNamtha	
		Discussion with Government official from education department at provincial level	Evaluation Manager and Researcher	LuangNamtha	Coordinator for Primary School Education, PESS, LuangNamtha
Day 10-12	9 May to 11 May	Travel to LuangNamtha			
		Quantitative survey in 11 schools and qualitative survey in 3 schools in LuangNamtha	Data collection team.	LuangNamtha	Children, parents, school head, school teachers, cooks, storekeeper, VEDC and Farmer Groups.
Day 10	9 May 2018	Visited project school in Nong-Gien, Ngoy district	Evaluation Manager, Gender Specialist and Researcher	LuangPrabang	School Head
		Visited project school in Huay Phouang, Ngoy district	Evaluation Manager, Gender Specialist and Researcher	LuangPrabang	
Day 11	10 May 2018	Discussion with Big Brother Mouse	Evaluation Manager, Gender Specialist and Researcher	LuangPrabang	Director, Bog Brother Mouse, LuangPrabang
Day 8-12	7 May to May 11	Meetings were held with the Government officials of the MoES, MoAF and MoH, representatives from World Bank, UNICEF and FAO. These meetings were scheduled in advance by NRMC in consultation with WFP-CO.	Team Leader, Evaluation Manager from NRMC	Vientiane	Government officials of the MoES, MoAF and MoH, representatives from World Bank and Australian DFAT, Director Assistant MoAF, Director of Agro Processing and Agri-Business Promotion Division
Day 13	May 11	Debriefing presentation to WFP-CO	Team Leader, Evaluation Manager, Gender Specialist and researcher from NRMC	Vientiane	WFP-CO and NRMC

Annex O Statistical Matching Technique

- 1 Statistical matching is a technique widely used in experimental studies, to create a sub-set of the control group which matches the treatment group, in terms of observable characteristics.
- 2 Matching at the school level: Given that WFP has adopted a saturation approach, all the control schools were sampled from districts where no school lunch is being provided under any donor or government run programme. Schools located in remote and non-remote areas were chosen similar to the process of selection of intervention schools. All the schools are government schools chosen from the list of schools provided by WFP-CO in the ToR. Beyond these criteria, the evaluation/baseline study cannot further match schools due to lack of availability of additional data on schools. However, since the evaluation/baseline study has conducted matching at the student level, the robustness of the comparison group is ensured.
- 3 Matching at student level: Three key variables were used for matching students from the intervention and control areas- 1) Gender, 2) Ethno-linguistic group, and 3) Remoteness of school. These three observable characteristics of the population covered by the evaluation/baseline study play a critical role in influencing the learning levels of students. While there exist various other variable that also affect the learning levels of students (such as learning environment at home), these have not been used for matching because of the poor reliability of such reported data.
- 4 These parameters were combined and thereafter used for matching students in the control schools. In order to keep the number of combinations to the minimum, all variables were turned dichotomous in nature. With three variables, the study had a total of 8 (2^3) combinations.
 - a. Gender: Boys were coded as 1 and girls as 2.
 - b. Ethno-linguistic group: Each of the ethnic groups covered during the data collection was categorised in the four ethno-linguistic groups as defined by the Lao Census 1995 and the classification of ethnic minorities based on Ethno-linguistic Family by LFNC. Post the grouping, Mon-Khmer was coded as 1 and the rest of the three groups was coded as 2.
 - c. Remoteness: Based on the location of the schools (in easy or hard to reach terrains) and the level of difficulty in reaching the schools, each school was noted for its remoteness. Schools which were not remote were coded as 1 and those that were remote were coded as 2.
- 5 Combining three dichotomous variables provided the study with eight distinct combinations, as listed in the table below. As a result, each student in intervention schools and control schools had a new three coded variable 'Combination'. This variable, as seen below, had a total of eight categories. The matching exercise would ensure that the matched student in control school has exactly same combination as her counterpart in intervention school.

Sex	Ethno-linguistic Group	Remoteness of school	Combinations
Male=1; Female=2	Mon-Khmer=1; Others=2	Non-Remote=1; Remote=2	
1	1	1	111
1	1	2	112
1	2	1	121
1	2	2	122
2	1	1	211
2	1	2	212
2	2	1	221
2	2	2	222

- 6 For example, in intervention school, a girl from the Mon-Khmer group who goes to a remote school would be coded as 212. We would have to find a girl in control villages with the same combination (212) to ensure both have matching demographics.
- 7 It was observed that the distribution of these combinations in the control group was different from that of the intervention group as shown in the table below.

Combinations	Distribution in intervention group (in %)	Distribution in control group (in %)
111	9.8	9.7
112	11.3	4.8
121	21.1	27.0
122	9.9	12.1
211	8.5	9.3
212	12.9	6.9
221	17.6	22.8
222	8.8	7.3

- 8 Thus, the control group combinations were normalised to match the distribution of the intervention group combinations. The resultant multiplication factors (weights) were then applied to the control group to enable comparison of intervention and control groups.

Annex P Key Baseline Questions and Evaluation Matrix

- 1 The study establishes baseline values that will help in assessing the programme through the lens of relevance, effectiveness and sustainability during Midline and End-line evaluation. The key baseline questions are presented in Table 24 below:

Table 24: MGD FY17 baseline questions

Criteria	MGD FY17 Baseline questions
Relevance	To what extent has the SFP design contributing to realizing the Government of Lao's National School Meal Policy and WFP's Country Strategic Plan 2017-21?
	To what extent has the design included issues related to education, WASH, health and nutrition and cutting across these sectors issues related to gender?
	To what extent has the SFP design ensured gender equality in selection of store managers and cooks?
	To what extent has the SFP design ensured gender equality for maintaining the school garden?
	To what extent has the SFP design ensured participation of women in the decision making process for implementing SFP?
	Whether guidance to schools included instructions for boys and girls to share tasks in school gardens without splitting the tasks as boy tasks and girl tasks
	In schools with limited water availability, whose responsibility is to collect water for cooking?
	Whether the school time is aligned with harvest season to stop drop-out for boys?
Effectiveness	What is the enrolment level (boys and girls) of WFP covered schools and the comparison schools in these 7 provinces?
	What is the attendance level (boys and girls) of WFP covered schools and the comparison schools in these 7 provinces?
	What is the literacy level (boys and girls) of WFP covered schools and the comparison schools in these 7 provinces?
	What is the level of health related absences (boys and girls) of WFP covered schools and the comparison schools in these 7 provinces?
	What is the level of students (boys and girls) who demonstrate use of new child health and nutrition practices as a result of USDA assistance of WFP covered schools and comparison schools in these 7 provinces?
	Is health related illnesses a significant issue in causing students (boys and girls) absence at WFP covered schools and the comparison schools in these 7 provinces?
	What are stakeholders' perceptions on school garden, in relation to nutrition sensitive agriculture?
	How often are schools utilizing produce from their school gardens, to supplement USDA donated food, in WFP covered schools in these 7 provinces?
Sustainability	Are elements to foster hand over schools to communities' in place?
	What is the profile of the communities in WFP covered school in these 7 provinces?

Table 25: Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Questions	Key information areas/indicators	Data Collection Method/Analysis	Target Groups/Sources of information	Availability and Reliability of Data and Methods of Triangulation
EVALUATION CRITERIA: RELEVANCE				
1. To what extent was the design of the school feeding programme contributing to realizing the Government of Lao's National School Meal Policy and WFP's Country Strategic Plan 2017-21?	• Policy and programme context of the Government of Laos and the respective provinces • Alignment of the programme design or implementation with respect to the NSMP and the WFP's Country Strategic Plan (CSP) (2017-21); • The scale of activities; • Alignment with Government's preferred mode of local procurement; • The relevance of the design in addressing issues related to education, WASH, health and nutrition and cutting across these sectors issues related to gender • Public private partnerships formed; Ownership of the communities and village level organisations	• Review of the WFPs country strategic plan (2017-21) • Review of NSMP (2014) • Review of programme results framework, programme ToC • Mapping of programme's inputs activities and outputs with goal and objectives and with National priorities and WFP's country mandate • Key informant interviews (KII) with WFP programme staff, MoES, MoH, MAF	• Programme documents (Theory of change, results in the framework, programme design) • NSMP and CSP 2017-21 • WFP Programme staff, MoES, MoH, MAF	• Documents related to NSMP and WFPs country strategic plan (2017-21) are available and reliable • Public private partnerships formed • Data from interviews with MoES, MoH, MAF was triangulated with that provided by WFP staff and secondary documents to assess reliability
2. To what extent is the school feeding programme responsive to the different needs and limitations of vulnerable groups?	• The demographic, social and economic context of the project provinces and districts • Assessment of needs of target population at the design stage, and significant trends • Effect of external administrative, social, political environment on the activities and change in course of implementation of	• Desk review of the context of school feeding in the project areas • Programme documentation • Use of secondary sources such as project baseline, midline, and other evaluations to identify the needs of target groups	• Project documents • Review of national school meal workshops held as a result of USDA assistance • Secondary data available in public domain including	• Data on project design and gender is available
3. To what extent were the school feeding programme				

Evaluation Questions	Key information areas/indicators	Data Collection Method/Analysis	Target Groups/Sources of information	Availability and Reliability of Data and Methods of Triangulation
implementation tailored to local needs? 4. To what extent was the school feeding (Lunch) programme based on a sound gender analysis? 5. To what extent was the design and implementation of the school feeding programme gender-sensitive? 6. Has the school feeding (School Lunch) programme made any difference to gender relations in the medium or longer term?	activities that was relevant and more suitable to the given situation • Implementation design in light of the NSMP and WFP's CSP and contextual factors • Assess alignment of operation's strategies with those needs, at the design and currently • Prevalent issues and concerns of affected population with respect to education, nutrition, and WASH • Infrastructure availability and access for poor and vulnerable groups • What are the key issues tackled by the programme that affect the targeted population • Responsiveness of service delivery • Inclusion of children from economically backward households highlighting inclusion and equity • How does the design address key concerns and needs of the population including primary and secondary stakeholders (in light of capacity building, interpersonal communication and continued dialogue on nutrition, literacy, and education) • Change in community's perception of issues over programme period reflecting the integration of priorities of children and women	• KII and focus group discussions (FGD) with secondary stakeholders including parents (mothers and fathers), school staff, programme staff and Government officials • KII with WFP programme staff • Comparison of primary data of the baseline study (FY17) with the mid-term and baseline (FY14) to identify the progress from the design stage.	country surveys conducted by UN • Data made available by the government on the District Health Services or District Educational Services • WFP programme staff, school authorities, Government authorities and community (especially girls and women)	

Evaluation Questions	Key information areas/indicators	Data Collection Method/Analysis	Target Groups/Sources of information	Availability and Reliability of Data and Methods of Triangulation
	• Who are the change agents that are relevant to the change brought about by the model? • The inclusion of gender strategy in design and implementation • How is gender integrated into the process (participation of women in school lunch) and as an outcome (enrolment, attendance, and attentiveness of girls) • Assess alignment of policy with national, WFP and other relevant gender policies or strategies. <i>(Using questions 2-6, the baseline study will prepare a gender analysis for the programme FY17-21)</i>			
EVALUATION CRITERIA: EFFECTIVENESS				
7. What components in the FY17-21 programme reflect the integration of recommendations made during FY14-16 baseline and mid-term evaluation, and whether these integrations have the potentials to strengthen the programme?	• Recommendations made during the baseline and mid-term (and evolving context of education in the country and the NSMP) • Map the recommendations and the review; examine alignment with the WFP country strategy and NSMP; assess the potential of the recommendation to strengthen the programmes vis-à-vis contextual factors and policy considerations. • Examine the changes in the indicators or addition of new indicators to the	• Review of the baseline and mid-term reports of FY14 in light of the FY 17 programme proposal • Examine the ToC assumptions and risks • Review of the performance indicators to assess the implementation changes • Primary data from the baseline survey (quantitative and	• Project documents (project proposal, performance plan, baseline and mid-term reports) • A quantitative survey in schools; • FGD and KII with primary and secondary stakeholders	• Based on review of programme documents, the data is available and reliable

Evaluation Questions	Key information areas/indicators	Data Collection Method/Analysis	Target Groups/Sources of information	Availability and Reliability of Data and Methods of Triangulation
	programme design specific to the recommendations and identify the trend of the indicators to assess the strength of the implementation Number of educational, child health and nutrition policies, regulations and/or administrative procedures in each of the following stages of development as a result of USDA assistance: Stage 1: Analysed; Stage 2: Drafted and presented for public/stakeholder consultation; Stage 3: Presented for legislation/decreed; Stage 4: Passed/Approved; Stage 5: Passed for which implementation has begun	qualitative) to analyse the level of success in strengthening the programme		
8. What is the attentiveness level (boys and girls) of WFP covered schools and the comparison schools in these 8 provinces?	- Number/percent of students in classrooms identified as inattentive by their teachers; total number of children in the classroom; <i>disaggregation by sex</i> - Reason for inattentiveness; missed school meals if any, and reasons to miss school lunch; <i>disaggregation by sex</i>	- Primary data from school - Comparison with control schools - Qualitative and quantitative survey of the school staff, parents, and WFP staff	School teachers, school going children, school heads, cooks, storekeepers and parents	Attentiveness: Method of data collection lacks reliability. While method entails asking two teachers about the attentiveness level of a student (indicating triangulation), the results may not truly reflect the reason for such the level of attentiveness. Thus, results cannot be attributed to the programme.
9. What is the enrolment level (boys and girls) of WFP covered schools and the comparison schools in these 8 provinces?	Number of children receiving and consuming daily school lunch; the number of daily meals provided; reasons for not receiving or consuming;	- Primary data from school - Enrolment data from school - Qualitative and quantitative survey of the school staff, parents, and WFP staff	- Attendance registers - School enrolment data - School teachers, school going children, school heads, cooks, storekeepers and parents	
10. What is the attendance level (boys and girls) of WFP covered schools and	The difference in attentiveness between treatment and control schools	Comparison with control schools	- School teachers, school going children, school heads, cooks, storekeepers and parents - Attendance registers	

Evaluation Questions	Key information areas/indicators	Data Collection Method/Analysis	Target Groups/Sources of information	Availability and Reliability of Data and Methods of Triangulation
the comparison schools in these 8 provinces?	• Number/percent of girls and boys enrolled in the school in last one year; last five years data • Gross and net enrolment ratio of districts • Reasons for change in enrolment, if any • Number of children receiving daily school lunch; daily meals provided • The difference in enrolment between treatment and control schools • <i>Disaggregated data by sex</i> • Number/percent of girls and boys who regularly attend school (at least 80 percent of school time) in last one year; Validation by parents • Reasons for change in attendance from FY14 (school lunch, teacher's interest and improved capacity, school's improved infrastructure, parent's increase in interest in education, children's improved attentiveness) • Number of children receiving daily school lunch; the number of daily meals provided • The difference in attendance between treatment and control schools • Disaggregated data by sex Overall: <i>Frequency of school lunch in a school week; reasons for non-receipt of food</i>	• Primary data from school, parents • School attendance register of selected students • The roll call for students • Self-reported data on attendance • Qualitative and quantitative survey with the school staff, parents, and children • Comparison with control schools	• School enrolment data • Monitoring data of the project • School teachers, school going children, school heads, cooks, storekeepers and parents • Attendance registers • School enrolment data	• Receipt and consumption of school meals: The data availability was limited to WFP's monitoring data. It was observed that schools, while have a format for filling the data, often did not complete the formats. • Enrolment: Partial data availability due to lack of maintenance of such data in all schools. • Attendance: Lack of availability and reliability of data as most schools do not maintain such attendance on a daily basis. Use of self-reported data from students may not be reliable, thus triangulation with data from parents. This data was only available for last one week.

Evaluation Questions	Key information areas/indicators	Data Collection Method/Analysis	Target Groups/Sources of information	Availability and Reliability of Data and Methods of Triangulation
	<i>supplies, if any; textbooks and teaching materials provided; schools having clean space for cooking and storage of supplies; classrooms and educational facilities provided; capacity building of school teachers, cooks and storekeepers; training on health and nutrition and hygiene</i>			Given the sources of information, where possible reported data was triangulated using information from different stakeholders (such as frequency of school meals cooked in the last week). Where possible, reported data was also triangulated using available records. In absence of such records such as attendance, the data could not be triangulated.
11. What is the literacy level (boys and girls) of WFP covered schools and the comparison schools in these 8 provinces?	- Number of health related absence (self-reported and validated by parents) of school going children between treatment and control schools; <u>disaggregated by sex</u> - Literacy levels of children; <u>disaggregated by sex</u> - The proportion of students passing grade 5 - Reasons for difference in literacy levels between treatment and control schools (school lunch, teacher's interest and improved capacity, school's improved	- Primary data from school, parents - School attendance register of selected students - EGRA and school tests and results for children - A qualitative and quantitative survey of the school staff, parents, and children - Comparison with treatment schools	- School teachers, school going children, school heads, cooks, storekeepers and parents - Attendance registers - School enrolment data - School test results of school going children	- Self-reported data by students on health related absence was triangulated with that of parents to increase reliability; - Attendance data, where available, was used to triangulate the data - Teachers of the students interviewed were asked to corroborate the

Evaluation Questions	Key information areas/indicators	Data Collection Method/Analysis	Target Groups/Sources of information	Availability and Reliability of Data and Methods of Triangulation
	infrastructure, parent's increase in interest in education, children's improved attentiveness and attendance) Overall: Amount of food provided to schools; reasons for non-receipt of food supplies; quality and quantity of school supplies; textbooks and teaching materials provided; schools having clean space for cooking and storage of supplies; classrooms and educational facilities provided; capacity building of school teachers, cooks and storekeepers; training on health and nutrition and hygiene			information provided by the student • EGRA is a tested method of assessing literacy levels. Data from EGRA is reliable. • Data on impact on literacy instruction is not available and could not be observed or documented by the evaluation during the primary survey. • Data on trainings of teachers is available.
12. What is the level of health related absences (boys and girls) of WFP covered schools and the comparison schools in these 8 provinces 13. What is the level of students (boys and girls) who demonstrate the use of new child health and nutrition practices as a result of USDA assistance of WFP covered schools and	• Number of health related absence (self-reported; validated by parents) of school going children; <u>disaggregated by sex</u> • Literacy levels of children; <u>disaggregated by sex</u> • Attendance of children; <u>disaggregated by sex</u> • Number of children/households/schools that practice safe health, hygiene and nutrition practices (<u>handwashing, cooking and hygiene</u>); (<u>safe food preparation and storage</u>); (<u>diversity in diet</u>) • <u>Reasons for missing school; weightage of illnesses in causing absence from school</u> • Difference between treatment and control areas	• Primary data from school, parents • School attendance register of selected students • School tests and results for children • Qualitative and quantitative survey with the school staff, parents, and children • Comparison with treatment schools	• School teachers, school going children, school heads, cooks, storekeepers and parents • Attendance registers • School enrolment data • School test results of school going children	•

Evaluation Questions	Key information areas/indicators	Data Collection Method/Analysis	Target Groups/Sources of information	Availability and Reliability of Data and Methods of Triangulation
comparison schools in these 8 provinces 14. Is health related illnesses a significant issue in causing students (boys and girls) absence at WFP covered schools and the comparison schools in these 8 provinces	• Overall: Amount of food provided to schools; reasons for non-receipt of food supplies; quality and quantity of school supplies; textbooks and teaching materials provided; schools having clean space for cooking and storage of supplies; classrooms and educational facilities provided; capacity building of school teachers, cooks and storekeepers; training on health and nutrition and hygiene			
15. What are stakeholders' perceptions on school garden, in relation to nutrition sensitive agriculture? 16. How often are schools utilizing produce from their school gardens, to supplement USDA donated food, in WFP covered schools in these 8 provinces?	• Number of schools with school gardens • Number of schools with school gardens that supplement school lunch (2 harvests in a month for school lunch) • What all is grown in the school gardens; is it climate resilient; what are the harvest patterns; what is the nutrition support from the harvest • Access to water for the school gardens • Knowledge of maintenance of school gardens • Schools with nutrition and school agriculture teaching material are being applied • Have school gardens helped in increasing children's preference for vegetables and demonstrably result in behavioural change?	• Qualitative and quantitative survey with the school staff, parents, and children • Qualitative interviews with <u>farmer groups and village level education development committees</u> • <u>Observation of schools</u> • <u>Success stories and learning from qualitative case studies</u>	• School teachers, school going children, school heads, cooks, storekeepers and parents • Farmer groups and village level education development committees • School budgets and resources registers	• Both secondary and primary data is available and reliable • Data was triangulated based on information received from different stakeholders and observation of schools.

Evaluation Questions	Key information areas/indicators	Data Collection Method/Analysis	Target Groups/Sources of information	Availability and Reliability of Data and Methods of Triangulation
	• Do school administrators, children and parents know (awareness) and understand the role of school gardens? • What are the changes in the diet of the children in school and at home • Volunteers for school gardens; Number of schools receiving food from farmer groups; Number of farmers benefiting from developed partnership to supply food to school as a result of USDA assistance • Perceived benefits of school gardens by stakeholders • Does it add extra effort for the school staff • <u>Do the current resources allow for the school gardens to continue without pressure on school/education budgets?</u> • Is there a change in beliefs and attitude towards a diet that affect health positively and negatively? • <u>Institutional, social and policy triggers and barriers to sustaining school gardens</u>			
EVALUATION CRITERIA: EFFICIENCY				
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
EVALUATION CRITERIA: IMPACT				

Evaluation Questions	Key information areas/indicators	Data Collection Method/Analysis	Target Groups/Sources of information	Availability and Reliability of Data and Methods of Triangulation
17. Current effectiveness level of school gardens?	• Change in dietary practices from baseline FY 14 and comparison with the control group • Knowledge, attitude, beliefs and practices towards nutrition of community • Comparison of schools with and without functional school gardens (within programme areas) • Triggers and barriers to increasing effectiveness of school gardens (capacities, institutional bearings, policy environment, support from external aid, the sufficiency of support, engagement of communities)	• Qualitative and quantitative interviews • Programme data	• A literature review of HGSF • School teachers, school heads, cooks, storekeepers and parents • Farmer groups and village level education development committees • Programme staff	• Secondary data is available and reliable • Primary data was available in a qualitative form • Primary data and secondary data was triangulated to arrive at the findings
18. What are gender specific characteristics of School Lunch and the related activities on girls and boys students? Will School Lunch further influence gender context?	• Above indicators/information areas disaggregated by sex • Gender participation in process and outcomes (VEDC, school cooks etc.) • Role of teachers, cooks, storekeepers, and school heads in improving outcomes disaggregated by sex • Number of girls and boys benefitted from receipt and consumption of school lunch • Enrolment of girls and boys in school (comparison with control schools) • Attentiveness, literacy, and attendance of girls and boys going to school (comparison with control schools) • Change in perception of parents with respect to girls' education • Reasons for change in above indicators	• Qualitative and quantitative interviews • Programme data • Analysis using the gender specific approach	• School going children, school heads, cooks, storekeepers, and parents • Farmer groups and village level education development committees • Programme staff	• Both secondary and primary on gender aspects is available and reliable • Quantitative and qualitative data was triangulated to arrive at the findings

Evaluation Questions	Key information areas/indicators	Data Collection Method/Analysis	Target Groups/Sources of information	Availability and Reliability of Data and Methods of Triangulation
	Dietary changes at home; treatment of boys and girls in school, at home and in the community (comparison with control schools)			
EVALUATION CRITERIA: SUSTAINABILITY				
19. Are elements to foster hand over schools to communities' in place?	- Handing over plan and processes for adoption of the programme by government agencies - Alignment of SFP with the NSMP	Quantitative data for the profile of the communities	WFP Programme staff and schools	Data is available and reliable
20. What is the profile of the communities in these 8 provinces?	- Which activities or outcomes continue to happen without the programme's support? For example, improved capacities of government institutions, school teachers, cooks and store-keepers ensure better information for children and parents. - Evidence of best practices that can be replicated or adopted <u>The capacity building required</u> for further scaling up/replication <u>Examine aspects of the programme that align with GOL's priorities</u> - Advocacy initiatives during the programme period <u>Number of educational, child health and nutrition policies</u>, regulations and/or administrative procedures in each of the following stages of development as a result of USDA assistance: Stage 1: Analysed;	- Community Strength Assessments - Review of programme documents - Qualitative interviews with WFP Programme staff and schools; government officials	- Education, nutrition, health department officials - Parents, community influencers - Farmer groups, community groups	Programme data, past evaluations, primary data and stakeholders' perspectives were triangulated to arrive at the findings.

Evaluation Questions	Key information areas/indicators	Data Collection Method/Analysis	Target Groups/Sources of information	Availability and Reliability of Data and Methods of Triangulation
	Stage 2: Drafted and presented for public/stakeholder consultation; Stage 3: Presented for legislation/decreed; Stage 4: Passed/Approved; Stage 5: Passed for which implementation has begun • <u>The commitment of government and school officials</u> to take forward or adopt best practices or innovations from the initiative • Critical factors for replication in other areas; <u>external social and cultural environment for implementation; clarity of objectives and processes; documented success stories</u> • Issues and concerns in the sustainability of the programme without external aid • Resources required for sustenance			

Annex Q Documents Gathered

1 WFP CO has shared a host of documents for the evaluation. The table below described the nature of documents received.

Table 26: Documents Gathered

Document Type	Comment / Titles & dates of documents received	Received - Y/N (N/A)	Link to matrix	Evaluation
Project related documents [if applicable]				
Appraisal mission report		N/A		
Project document (including Logical Framework in Annex)	Country Strategic Plan, Lao (2017-21), Project Proposal including the results framework	Y	Relevance	
Standard Project Reports	Standard project Reports (2014, 2015, 2016), Narrative reports.	Y	Relevance	
Budget Revisions	Budget increases to development activities—Lao People's Democratic Republic Country Programme 200242	Y	Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness	
Note for the record (NFR) from Programme Review Committee meeting (for original operation and budget revisions if any)		N/A		
Approved Excel budget (for original intervention and budget revisions if any)	- USDA Commitment letter for agreement #FFE-439-2014/049-00 Laos, 2014 - USDA Third Year Operational Plan for Agreement #FFE-439-2014/049-00-C Laos, 2016	Y	Relevance, Efficiency	
Intervention/Project Plan (breakdown of beneficiary figures and food requirements by region/activity/month and partners)	COMP 2017, 2018, Project Proposal including the results framework, Amendments, commitment letters	Y	Relevance	
Other				
Country Office Strategic Documents (if applicable)				
Country Strategy Document (if any)	Lao People's Democratic Republic Country Strategic Plan (2017–2021), WFP	Y	Relevance, Sustainability	
Other				
Assessment Reports [if applicable]				
Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessments	CLEAR, Levels and Trends in Child Malnutrition 2016, 2017	Y	Relevance, Effectiveness	

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Document Type	Comment / Titles & dates of documents received	Received - Y/N (N/A)	Link to Evaluation matrix
	Nutrition factsheets, Situation assessments, impact evaluations, project reports etc.		
Crop and Food Security Assessments (FAO/WFP)	Stakeholder mapping of the nutrition and agriculture sectors in the target areas of ENUFF project	Y	Relevance, Effectiveness
Emergency Food Security Assessments		N/A	
Food Security Monitoring System Bulletins		N/A	
Market Assessments and Bulletins		N/A	
Joint Assessment Missions (UNHCR/WFP)		N/A	
Inter-Agency Assessments		N/A	
Rapid needs assessments		N/A	
Cash and voucher feasibility studies	Cash Transfer WFP Lao monitoring findings -Nalae and Beng districts (2018)	Y	Relevance, Sustainability
Other			
Monitoring & Reporting (if applicable)			
M&E Plan	Performance Monitoring Plan	Y	Relevance, Effectiveness, Impact
M&E Policy	USDA Monitoring and Evaluation Policy	Y	Relevance
M&E Indicators and Definitions	USDA Food for Progress and McGovern-Dole Indicators and Definitions	Y	Effectiveness, Impact
Country Situation Report (SITREP)	WFP Lao Country Brief, Lao country fact sheet (FAO), Nutrition Country profile Lao (2015), Saber Country Report, IFPRI, various relevant reports	Y	Relevance
Country Executive Brief	WFP Lao Country Brief	Y	Relevance
Food Distribution and Post-distribution Monitoring Reports	- Mid-Term Evaluation of McGovern-Dole School Feeding in Laos 2015–2016 Evaluation Report - Impact Assessment Review on School Meals and WASH Activities (2002-2016) - Project reports - USDA Mc Govern Dole- Semi-Annual Reports - Others	Y	Relevance, Effectiveness, Impact

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Document Type	Comment / Titles & dates of documents received	Received - Y/N (N/A)	Link to matrix	Evaluation
Monthly Monitoring Reports	Semi-annual and annual project reports	Y	Effectiveness, Efficiency	Impact,
Beneficiary Verification Reports		N/A		
Donor specific reports	USDA Semi-annual Reports	Y	Effectiveness, Efficiency	Impact,
Output monitoring reports (if applicable)				
Actual and Planned beneficiaries by activity and district/ location by year	Actual and Planned beneficiaries by activity by year; location wise monitoring data is not available, USDA semi-annual reports	Y	Effectiveness, Efficiency	Impact,
Male vs. Female beneficiaries by activity and district/ location by year	Male vs. Female beneficiaries by activity by year, location wise monitoring data is not available, USDA semi-annual reports, USDA semi-annual reports	Y	Effectiveness, Efficiency	Impact,
Beneficiaries by age group		N/A		
Actual and Planned tonnage distributed by activity by year		N/A	Effectiveness, Efficiency	Impact,
Commodity type by activity		N/A		
Actual and Planned cash/voucher requirements (US\$) by activity by year		N/A		
Operational documents (if applicable)		N/A		
Organogram for main office and sub-offices				
Activity Guidelines				
Mission Reports				
Pipeline overview for the period covered by the evaluation				
Logistics capacity assessment				
Partners (if applicable)				
Annual reports from cooperating partners		N/A	Effectiveness, Sustainability	Impact,
List of partners (Government, NGOs, UN agencies) by location/ activity/ role/ tonnage handled	List of partners has been provided in ToR. Relevant documents have been shared for their roles.	Y	Effectiveness, Sustainability	

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Document Type	Comment / Titles & dates of documents received	Received - Y/N (N/A)	Link to matrix	Evaluation
Field level agreements (FLAs), Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs)	FLAs with BBM and Plan International have been shared	Y	Effectiveness, Sustainability	Efficiency,
Cluster/ Coordination meetings (if applicable)		N/A		
Logistics/Food Security/nutrition cluster documents				
NFRs of coordination meetings				
Other				
Evaluations/ Reviews				
Evaluations/ reviews of past or on-going operation	- Mid-Term Evaluation of McGovern-Dole School Feeding in Laos 2015–2016 Evaluation Report - Impact Assessment Review on School Meals and WASH Activities (2002-2016)	Y	Effectiveness, Sustainability	Impact,
Resource mobilisation (if applicable)				
Resource Situation	COMP 2017, COMP 2018	N/A		
Contribution statistics by month				
Resource mobilization strategy				
NFRs Donor meetings				
Maps (if applicable)		N/A		
Operational Map				
Logistics Map				
Food/Cash/voucher Distribution Location Map				
Food Security Map				
Other documents collected by the team (including external ones) (if applicable)				

Annex R Sample Size Covered by Provinces and Respondent Category

Quantitative

The following tables present the sample covered for the quantitative survey:

Table 27: Sample covered during quantitative survey Phase 1

DATA COLLECTION PHASE 1 (26 March to 6 April) (Southern Provinces)									
S. No.	Province	District	No. of Schools Visited	No. of students interviewed	No. of parents interviewed	No. of cooks	No. of storekeepers	No. of school heads	No. of teachers
1	Attapeu	Xaisettha	5	73	75			5	5
2	Attapeu	Sanamxai	4	60	42	4	4	4	4
3	Salavan	Salavan	5	71	62			5	5
4	Salavan	Vapi	5	69	65			5	5
5	Salavan	Laongam	7	102	91	7	7	7	8
6	Sekong	Lanam	5	75	73			5	5
7	Sekong	Thateng	5	75	64	5	5	5	6
Total	3	7	36	525	472	16	16	36	38

Table 28: Sample covered during quantitative survey Phase 2

DATA COLLECTION PHASE 2 (30 April to 11 May) (Northern Provinces)									
S. No.	Province	District	No. of Schools Visited	No. of students interviewed	No. of parents interviewed	No. of cooks	No. of storekeepers	No. of school heads	No. of teachers
1	LuangPrabang	Ngoy	3	45	20	3	3	3	3
2	Oudomxay	Xai	9	135	93	8	8	8	8
3	Oudomxay	Beng	6	90	76	6	6	6	6
4	Oudomxay	Nga	2	30	21	2	2	2	2
5	Phongsaly	Boun-Tai	5	75	61	5	5	5	5
6	Phongsaly	Phongsaly	6	90	96	6	6	6	6
7	LuangNamtha	Vientphoukha	11	165	145	11	11	11	11
Total	3	6	42	630	512	41	41	41	41

Qualitative

The following table presents the sample covered for the qualitative survey:

Table 29: Sample covered during qualitative survey Phase 1

DATA COLLECTION PHASE 1 (26 March to 6 April) (Southern Provinces)										
S. No.	Province	District	Project/ Control	No. of Schools Visited	FGD Parents	Cook IDI	Storekeeper IDI	School Head IDI	Teachers IDI	FGD VEDC
1	Attapeu	Xaisettha	Control	2	1			2		1
2	Attapeu	Sanamxai	Project	2	2		1	1	1	1
3	Salavan	Salavan	Control	2	2				1	1
4	Salavan	Vapi	Control	1	1				1	
5	Salavan	Laongam	Project	2	1	2	1	1	1	1
6	Sekong	Lanam	Control	1	1				1	
7	Sekong	Thateng	Project	3	3	2	2	2	1	
Total	3	7	6/7	13	11	4	4	6	6	4

Table 30: Sample covered during qualitative survey Phase 2

DATA COLLECTION PHASE 2 (30 April to 11 May) (Northern Provinces)										
S. No.	Province	District	Project/ Control	No. of Schools Visited	FGD Parents	Cook IDI	Storekeeper IDI	School Head IDI	Teachers IDI	FGD VEDC
1	LuangPrabang	Ngoy	Project	1	1	1			1	1
2	Oudomxay	Xai	Project	2	2	1	1	1		
3	Oudomxay	Beng	Project	2	2	1		1	1	
4	Oudomxay	Nga	Project	2	1	1	1	1	1	
5	Phongsaly	Boun-Tai	Project	2	2		1	1	1	
6	Phongsaly	Phongsaly	Project	2	2	1	1	1	1	
7	LuangNamtha	Vientphoukha	Project	3	3	1	2	1	1	1
Total	3	6	11	14	13	6	6	6	6	2

Annex S List of Sample Schools

Project Schools

Sl. No.	Province Code	Province Name	District Code	District name	Village Code	School Code	School Name	Latitude	Longitude
1	02	Phongsaly	201	Phongsaly					
2	02	Phongsaly	201	Phongsaly					
3	02	Phongsaly	201	Phongsaly					
4	02	Phongsaly	201	Phongsaly					
5	02	Phongsaly	201	Phongsaly					
6	02	Phongsaly	201	Phongsaly					
7	02	Phongsaly	207	Boun-tai					
8	02	Phongsaly	207	Boun-tai					
9	02	Phongsaly	207	Boun-tai					
10	02	Phongsaly	207	Boun-tai					
11	02	Phongsaly	207	Boun-tai					
12	03	LuangNamtha	304	Viengphoukha					
13	03	LuangNamtha	304	Viengphoukha					
14	03	LuangNamtha	304	Viengphoukha					
15	03	LuangNamtha	304	Viengphoukha					
16	03	LuangNamtha	304	Viengphoukha					
17	03	LuangNamtha	304	Viengphoukha					
18	03	LuangNamtha	304	Viengphoukha					
19	03	LuangNamtha	304	Viengphoukha					
20	03	LuangNamtha	304	Viengphoukha					
21	03	LuangNamtha	304	Viengphoukha					
22	03	LuangNamtha	304	Viengphoukha					
23	04	Oudomxay	401	Xai					

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Sl. No.	Province Code	Province Name	District Code	District name	Village Code	School Code	School Name	Latitude	Longitude
24	04	Oudomxay	401	Xai					
25	04	Oudomxay	401	Xai					
26	04	Oudomxay	401	Xai					
27	04	Oudomxay	401	Xai					
28	04	Oudomxay	401	Xai					
29	04	Oudomxay	401	Xai					
30	04	Oudomxay	401	Xai					
31	04	Oudomxay	401	Xai					
32	04	Oudomxay	405	Beng					
33	04	Oudomxay	405	Beng					
34	04	Oudomxay	405	Beng					
35	04	Oudomxay	405	Beng					
36	04	Oudomxay	405	Beng					
37	04	Oudomxay	405	Beng					
38	04	Oudomxay	404	Nga					
39	04	Oudomxay	404	Nga					
40	06	LuangPrabang	606	Ngoy					
41	06	LuangPrabang	606	Ngoy					
42	06	LuangPrabang	606	Ngoy					
43	14	Salavan	1407	Laongam					
44	14	Salavan	1407	Laongam					
45	14	Salavan	1407	Laongam					
46	14	Salavan	1407	Laongam					
47	14	Salavan	1407	Laongam					
48	14	Salavan	1407	Laongam					
49	14	Salavan	1407	Laongam					
50	15	Xekong	1504	Thateng					

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Sl. No.	Province Code	Province Name	District Code	District name	Village Code	School Code	School Name	Latitude	Longitude
51	15	Xekong	1504	Thateng					
52	15	Xekong	1504	Thateng					
53	15	Xekong	1504	Thateng					
54	15	Xekong	1504	Thateng					
55	17	Attapeu	1703	Sanamxai					
56	17	Attapeu	1703	Sanamxai					
57	17	Attapeu	1703	Sanamxai					
58	17	Attapeu	1703	Sanamxai					

Control Schools

Sl. No.	Province code	Province name	District Code	District name	Village Code	Village name	EMIS Code	latitude	longitude
1	17	Attapeu	1701	Xaysetha					
2	17	Attapeu	1701	Xaysetha					
3	17	Attapeu	1701	Xaysetha					
4	17	Attapeu	1701	Xaysetha					
5	17	Attapeu	1701	Xaysetha					
6	14	Saravane	1401	Saravane					
7	14	Saravane	1401	Saravane					
8	14	Saravane	1401	Saravane					
9	14	Saravane	1401	Saravane					
10	14	Saravane	1401	Saravane					
11	14	Saravane	1405	Vapi					
12	14	Saravane	1405	Vapi					
13	14	Saravane	1405	Vapi					

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Sl. No.	Province code	Province name	District Code	District name	Village Code	Village name	EMIS Code	latitude	longitude
14	14	Saravane	1405	Vapi					
15	14	Saravane	1405	Vapi					
16	15	Sekong	1501	Lamam					
17	15	Sekong	1501	Lamam					
18	15	Sekong	1501	Lamam					
19	15	Sekong	1501	Lamam					
20	15	Sekong	1501	Lamam					

Annex T Data Analysis Methods

Cross-Section Analysis

- 1 A cross-section analysis was applied treating the baseline as a cross-section. This technique would help benchmark the key indicators of the intervention by comparing the treatment and control group. Further, since the programme is already running in most of the project areas, it also helps ascertain the overall effectiveness of the intervention by similar comparison. The regression specification for this analysis can be written as follows:

$$y_i = \alpha + \beta_1 T + \beta_2 X_i + \varepsilon_i \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

- 2 Where, y_i is an outcome indicator of the beneficiary studying in school i ; T is dummy for participation in programme by individual ($T=1$ if participated, and $=0$ if otherwise); X is vector of observable social indicators and ε_i is usual stochastic random error. In equation (1), ' T ' provides the estimates of gains from the participation in the programme by individuals as indicated by the parameter estimates of β_1 . In order to check the robustness of the estimation, this analysis was repeated for the 'matched' and full sample alternatively.

Pooled Data Analysis

- 3 In the subsequent rounds of data collection during the mid-term and end-term of the phase FY 17-21, it will be possible to estimate changes in outcome indicators over successive rounds for the children enrolled in the project schools. Here, two fold strategy of analysis may be proposed- 1) 'simple' (one round data base) and 'pooled' (more than one round) cross section analysis; and 2) time trend analysis over successive rounds of data collection. What is important to note here is that pooling data from different rounds of survey adds strengths to the study at least in two different ways, a) pooling effectively increases the sample size by covering different seasons of reporting outcome indicators and b) following the same respondents in successive rounds reduces sample bias, if any, because of the non-random assignment of the scheme.

Difference-in-Difference Analysis

- 4 Using the baseline data as round 1 and mid-term and end-line data as round 2 and 3, respectively, the study would be able to provide data for undertaking panel data analysis. This will take the form of Difference-in-Difference techniques. Panel data analysis will base on a combination of regression and differencing techniques. In panel data analysis, a time dummy would be introduced to distinguish between beneficiaries of baseline and midline and other successive rounds. Regression analysis using the time dummy would ascertain the incremental change in the outcome indicators. The regression specification for the analysis will take the following functional form.

$$y_{it} = \alpha + \delta_t + \beta_1 T + \sum_2^3 t.T\beta_{2t} + \beta_3 X_{it} + \varepsilon_{it} \dots \dots \dots (2)$$

- 5 In equation (2) the additional term (compared to the equation 1), stand for time dummy for different successive rounds (mid-term and end-line) with t varying from 2 to 3, and the interaction term represents the gains from the programme in different successive rounds of data collection.
- 6 Since the base line period ($t=1$) contains beneficiaries (both treatment and control groups) after the programme intervention, the coefficient of the interaction term estimated from equation (2) essentially stands for the changes in the outcome indicators (gains from the programme) over time. Further, as in case of baseline, robustness checks of the estimations will be conducted with the matched and total sample alternatively.

Assumptions

- 7 The key assumption here is what is known as the “Parallel Paths” assumption, which posits that the average change in the comparison group represents the counterfactual change in the treatment group if there were no treatment. Any change observed in the treatment group during the subsequent rounds of evaluation may be attributed to the programme intervention as no external factors that may affect the findings are observed.
- 8 The second assumption is the composition of intervention and comparison groups. The composition of both the groups are stable for any number of repeated cross-sectional design. The programme has defined support for select number of schools and government currently does not plan to expand the government school meal programme, the study assumes that there would be no spill-over effect.

Annex U Baseline Values of Key Indicators

Table 31: Baseline values of MGD-SFP (FY17) performance indicators, disaggregated by intervention type and sex

Result level	Indicator	Source and measurement	Effective sample size (N)		Average value		Value by sex			
			Project	Control	Project	Control	Male		Female	
							Project	Control	Project	Control
MDG SO1	Percent of students who, by the end of two grades of primary schooling, demonstrate that they can read and understand the meaning of grade-level text	Pupils reading and understanding ability was assessed using the EGRA tool. Questionnaire was administered to 175 students in project areas and 76 students in control areas from Grade 2. Students were categorised into emergent, beginner and reader with comprehension ability based on comprehension sub-test score, as recommended in EGRA guidelines. Students demonstrating >75% comprehension are given here.	175	76	6.9	12.4	8.7	10.7	4.8	14.1

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Result level	Indicator	Source and measurement	Effective sample size (N)		Average value		Value by sex			
			Project	Control	Project	Control	Male		Female	
							Project	Control	Project	Control
MGD 1.1.1	Average teacher attendance rate	Teacher attendance was assessed using monthly school records of every teacher's attendance and comparing this data against the number of school days per month in the academic semester September 2017-February 2018.	294	78	96.9 ⁴	97.5 ^{2,4}	94.9	94	94.6	100
	Percent of teachers attending at least 90 percent of the school days	Regular teacher attendance was defined as attending more than or equal to 90 percent of school days; teacher attendance was assessed using monthly school records of all the teacher from sample schools and the number of working days per month for the academic semester September 2017-February 2018.	294	78	93.8 ¹	100 ¹	97.2	97.8	97.9	96.5

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Result level	Indicator	Source and measurement	Effective sample size (N)		Average value		Value by sex			
			Project	Control	Project	Control	Male		Female	
							Project	Control	Project	Control
MGD 1.1.4	Percent of teachers/ educators/ teaching assistants trained or certified in teaching techniques during the last one year		294	-	48.1	-	42	-	55	-
	Percent of schools with at least one teacher trained		57 (schools)	-	100	-	-	-	-	-
	Percent of teachers/ educators/ teaching assistants in target schools who demonstrate use of new and quality teaching techniques or tools as identified by their supervisor/ment or/coach	Teachers, educators, teaching assistants who have successfully completed a pre- or in-services training programme to teach in schools or equivalent non-school based settings over the past one year were then assess whether they are using the learned techniques. Use of techniques were assess by asking their supervisors whether the teacher is using	57 (Schools)	-	99	-	-	-	-	-

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Result level	Indicator	Source and measurement	Effective sample size (N)		Average value		Value by sex			
			Project	Control	Project	Control	Male		Female	
							Project	Control	Project	Control
		the techniques he/she learned in the classroom.								
MGD 1.2	Percent of students in classrooms identified as attentive by their teachers	Attentiveness of students was collected based on the majority view of two teachers on the attentiveness of fifteen sampled students from each school	870	292	20.7 ²	19.2 ²	17.4	15.5	23.9	23.4
MGD 1.3	Average student attendance	Student attendance was assessed using monthly school records of fifteen sample students from every school and comparing this data against the number of school days per month in the academic semester September 2017-February 2018	690	208	98.1	95.5	98.3	95.5	98.3	94.3

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Result level	Indicator	Source and measurement	Effective sample size (N)		Average value		Value by sex			
			Project	Control	Project	Control	Male		Female	
							Project	Control	Project	Control
	Percent of students regularly (at least 80 percent of the school days) attending school	Student attendance was measured using the attendance record of fifteen randomly selected students from every sample school for the last academic semester (September 2017-February 2018).	690	208	98.3	96.3	98.3	96.8	98.3	95.8
	Student attendance on the day of the survey	The proportion of enrolled students present at school during the survey day was calculated using direct observation to count the number of students present and comparing it against the number of enrolled students. The mean proportion of students in attendance is presented here.	57 (schools)	20 (schools)	91	80	90	77.7	92.8	82.4

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Result level	Indicator	Source and measurement	Effective sample size (N)		Average value		Value by sex			
			Project	Control	Project	Control	Male		Female	
							Project	Control	Project	Control
MGD 1.3.4	Annual percent change in students enrolled in WFP supported school	Enrolment figures from the past five academic years were collected from school records –where available; student numbers of each academic year were then compared with the previous academic year. Percent change of enrolment in the current academic year (2017-18) compared to the last academic year (2016-17) is presented here.	20 (schools)	5 (schools)	1	14	3	15	-1	13
	Average enrolment ratio of girls to boys at target schools	Total number of male and female students per school was recorded for past five academic year from the school records during the baseline survey. Ratio was calculated based on enrolment figures for the past academic years. Girl-boy enrolment ratio for last academic year	20 (schools)	5 (schools)	0.95	1.04	-	-	-	-

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Result level	Indicator	Source and measurement	Effective sample size (N)		Average value		Value by sex			
			Project	Control	Project	Control	Male		Female	
							Project	Control	Project	Control
		(2016-17) is presented here.								
	Average dropout rate	Dropout figures from the past academic years were collected from school records – where available. Dropout rate was calculated per school from number of students discontinuing their studies and enrolment figures for the same academic year. Dropout rate for last academic year (2016-17) is presented here.	51 (schools)	15 (schools)	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.02

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Result level	Indicator	Source and measurement	Effective sample size (N)		Average value		Value by sex			
			Project	Control	Project	Control	Male		Female	
							Project	Control	Project	Control
	Repetition rate	Total number of male and female students repeating in the same grade per school was recorded the baseline survey data collection. Repetition rate was calculated per school from number of repeating students and enrolment figures for the same academic year. Repetition rate for last academic year (2016-17) is presented here.	20 (schools)	5 (schools)	8	5.5	11	5	5	6
MGD 1.3.5	Percent of parents in programme schools who can name at least three benefits of primary education	Data was collected through interviews with parents and asking them about the benefits of primary education.	708	273	96 ⁴	98.1 ^{2,4}	96.2	96.7	95.5	100
MGD SO2	Average dietary diversity score (DDS) of school-aged children	Dietary history of pupils was measured through interviewing parents using a 24 hours recall method. Mean Dietary Diversity Score is presented here.	706	261	6.1	4.7	6.2	4.6	6	4.7

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Result level	Indicator	Source and measurement	Effective sample size (N)		Average value		Value by sex			
			Project	Control	Project	Control	Male		Female	
							Project	Control	Project	Control
MGD 2.1	Percent of students in target school who achieve a passing score on a test of good health and hygiene practices as a result of USDA assistance	The good health and hygiene practices were identified in collaboration with WFP during the questionnaire development phase and included into the questionnaire to test the baseline knowledge of students enrolled in WFP supported schools. Students in target schools receiving at least a score of 80 percent on the test of good health and hygiene practices were considered as passed.	The commitment letter and the monitoring data have not referred to this target at all							
MGD 2.2	Percentage of food preparers at target schools who achieve a passing score (80 percent correct answer) in a test of safe food preparation and storage practices	Percentage was calculated by testing cooks on safe food preparation and storage. The test contained ten questions, each worth one point. Respondents were asked to choose the best response for each question. The questions were	58 (schools)	-	87.9	-	92.8 ²	-	75 ²	-

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Result level	Indicator	Source and measurement	Effective sample size (N)		Average value		Value by sex			
			Project	Control	Project	Control	Male		Female	
							Project	Control	Project	Control
		developed in collaboration with the country office, to assess the baseline knowledge level and practices of food prepares on safe food preparation and storage practices.								
ns- No significant difference between intervention type or sex. 1- Only significant difference between average value for project and control. 2- Only significant difference between male and female, 3- Only significant difference by male (project and control), 4- Only significant difference by female (project and control)										

Annex V Baseline Values of Other Key Performance Indicators

USD A Stan dard Indic ator Num ber	Performance Indicator	Monitoring-(Oct 2017-March 2018)					Baseline Data										
		Over all	M	F	Ne w	Conti nuing	Overall	M	F	Proje ct	Con trol	Proj ect (N)	Con trol (N)	North	South	North (N)	South (N)
1	Number of students regularly (80%) attending USDA supported classrooms/schools		67,952	64,607			98.3%	98.3%	98.3%	98.3%		690					
2	Number of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials provided as a result of USDA assistance	71,536 (FY 14-16)					Not Available										
5	Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants in target schools who demonstrate the use of new and quality teaching						129	76	53	129		130		99	30	99	31

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USD A Stan dard Indic ator Num ber	Performance Indicator	Monitoring-(Oct 2017-March 2018)					Baseline Data										
		Over all	M	F	Ne w	Conti nuing	Overall	M	F	Proje ct	Con trol	Proj ect (N)	Con trol (N)	North	South	North (N)	South (N)
	techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance																
6	Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants trained or certified as a result of USDA assistance						130	76	54	130		298		99	31	224	74
7	Number of educational facilities (i.e. school buildings, classrooms, and latrines) rehabilitated/constructed as a result of USDA assistance	Kitchen 711, Dining 234, Warehouse 491					Kitchen (39) Dining (23) Warehouse (36)			Kitchen (39) Dining (23) Warehouse (36)		58		Kitchen (30) Dining (15) Warehouse (25)	Kitchen (9) Dining (8) Warehouse (11)	42	16
8	Number of students enrolled in school		70,783	68,007			2914	1509	1405	2914		2914		1360	1554	1360	1554

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USD A Stan dard Indic ator Num ber	Performance Indicator	Monitoring-(Oct 2017-March 2018)					Baseline Data										
		Over all	M	F	Ne w	Conti nuing	Overall	M	F	Proje ct	Con trol	Proj ect (N)	Con trol (N)	North	South	North (N)	South (N)
	receiving USDA assistance																
9	Number of Parent- Teacher Associations (PTAs) or similar “school” governance structures supported as a result of USDA assistance. Primary data presents no. of schools where VEDC have been trained by USDA assistance						45			45		58		35	10	42	16
10	Number of public-private partnerships formed as a result of USDA assistance	406					Only secondary										
13	Number of take-home	345,2 81					No data										

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USD A Stan dard Indic ator Num ber	Performance Indicator	Monitoring-(Oct 2017-March 2018)					Baseline Data										
		Over all	M	F	Ne w	Conti nuing	Overall	M	F	Proje ct	Con trol	Proj ect (N)	Con trol (N)	North	South	North (N)	South (N)
	rations provided as a result of USDA assistance																
14	Number of individuals receiving take-home rations as a result of USDA assistance				4,948	4,947	SK(41) Cook (29)	SK(29) Cook (0)	SK(12) Cook (29)	SK(41) Cook (29)		58		SK (34) Cook (22)	SK (7) Cook (7)	42	16
15	Number of daily school lunch provided to school-age children as a result of USDA assistance	14,323,128					Incomplete data										
16	Number of school-age children receiving daily school lunch as a result of USDA assistance	138,790	61,581	59,166	27,758	111,032	Incomplete data										

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USD A Stan dard Indic ator Num ber	Performance Indicator	Monitoring-(Oct 2017-March 2018)					Baseline Data										
		Over all	M	F	Ne w	Conti nuing	Overall	M	F	Proje ct	Con trol	Proj ect (N)	Con trol (N)	North	South	North (N)	South (N)
17	Number of social assistance beneficiaries participating in productive safety nets as a result of USDA assistance		70,783	68,007	27,758	111,032	Only secondary										
18	Number of individuals trained in child health and nutrition as a result of USDA assistance. Primary data here reveals the number of teachers trained in child health and nutrition practices as a result of USDA assistance.		12,578 (FY14-16)				120	64	56	120		298		68	52	224	74

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USD A Stan dard Indic ator Num ber	Performance Indicator	Monitoring-(Oct 2017-March 2018)					Baseline Data										
		Over all	M	F	Ne w	Conti nuing	Overall	M	F	Proje ct	Con trol	Proj ect (N)	Con trol (N)	North	South	North (N)	South (N)
19	Number of individuals who demonstrate the use of new child health and nutrition practices as a result of USDA assistance			11,177			Not available										
20	Number of individuals trained in safe food preparation and storage as a result of USDA assistance	10,575 (FY14-16)					SK(38) Cook (32) Teache rs (86)	Teac hers (38)	Teac hers (48)	SK(38)) Cook (32) Teach ers (86)		SK (58) Cook (58) Teac hers (298)		SK (30) Cook (23) Teache rs (54)	SK (8) Cook (9) Teache rs (32)	SK (42) Cook (42) Teacher s (224)	SK (16) Cook (16) Teache rs (74)
21	Number of individuals who demonstrate the use of new safe food preparation and storage practices as a result of USDA assistance						Teache rs (86)	Teac hers (38)	Teac hers (48)	Teachers (86)		Teachers (298)		Teache rs (54)	Teache rs (32)	Teacher s (224)	Teache rs (74)

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USD A Stan dard Indic ator Num ber	Performance Indicator	Monitoring-(Oct 2017-March 2018)					Baseline Data										
		Over all	M	F	Ne w	Conti nuing	Overall	M	F	Proje ct	Con trol	Proj ect (N)	Con trol (N)	North	South	North (N)	South (N)
22	Number of schools using an improved water source						20			16	4	58	20	7	9	42	16
23	Number of schools with improved sanitation facilities						53			42	11	58	20	30	23	42	16
26	Percent of students who, by the end of two grades of primary schooling, demonstrate that they can read and understand the meaning of grade level text						6.9	8.7	4.8	6.9	12.4	175	76				
27	Number of individuals benefiting directly from USDA-funded interventions		70,783	68,007			Only secondary										

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USD A Stan dard Indic ator Num ber	Performance Indicator	Monitoring-(Oct 2017-March 2018)					Baseline Data										
		Over all	M	F	Ne w	Conti nuing	Overall	M	F	Proje ct	Con trol	Proj ect (N)	Con trol (N)	North	South	North (N)	South (N)
28	Number of individuals benefiting indirectly from USDA-funded interventions	433,827					Only secondary										
Project specific activities indicators																	
2	Number of school garden able to contribute with food for lunch at least 2 times harvest to school lunch in a month						Sem 1 (37) Sem 2 (21)			Sem 1 (37) Sem 2 (21)		Sem 1 (58) Sem 2 (58)		Sem 1 (26) Sem 2 (13)	Sem 1 (11) Sem 2 (8)	Sem 1 (42) Sem 2 (42)	Sem 1 (16) Sem 2 (16)
5	Percentages of schools with access to water for school gardens, cooking and wash purposes						Garden (66%) Cookin g (76%) Washin g (67%)			Garde n (66%) Cooki ng (76%) Washi ng (67%)		58		Garden (64%) Cookin g (76%) Washin g (69%)	Garden (69%) Cookin g (76%) Washin g (63%)	42	16

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USD A Stan dard Indic ator Num ber	Performance Indicator	Monitoring-(Oct 2017-March 2018)					Baseline Data										
		Over all	M	F	Ne w	Conti nuing	Overall	M	F	Proje ct	Con trol	Proj ect (N)	Con trol (N)	North	South	North (N)	South (N)
6	Number of Community Volunteers supporting SFP. Primary data here represents the number of schools that reported community contribution (in any form) for MGD-SFP						54			54		58		38	16	42	16
7	Number of schools have well-functioning and clean dining facility						32			32		58		21	11	42	16
14	Number of exchange visits between communities (peer to peer)	3															

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USD A Stan dard Indic ator Num ber	Performance Indicator	Monitoring-(Oct 2017-March 2018)					Baseline Data										
		Over all	M	F	Ne w	Conti nuing	Overall	M	F	Proje ct	Con trol	Proj ect (N)	Con trol (N)	North	South	North (N)	South (N)
19	Number of schools providing school lunch every day for the past 2 weeks						28			28		58		19	9	42	16

Annex W Indicator wise Findings

MGD S01: Improved Literacy of School-age Children

Children's background

- 1 Lao population has four broad ethno-linguistic families⁷² namely, Lao-Tai (67%), Mon-Khmer (21%), Hmong-Lu Mien (8%) and Sino-Tibetan (3%)⁷³. Interestingly, MoES categorises language based on three topological groups; “*Lao Loum*”, or “Lowland Lao”, “*Lao Theung*”, or “Upland Lao” or “Midland Lao” and “*Lao Soung*”, or “Highland Lao”⁷⁴. About 66 percent of the population reside in Lowland areas (<200 metres above mean sea level) and speak Lao. About 20 percent of the population reside in Midland Lao (mountain slopes in the range 200 – 800 metres) and speak different tribal languages with Khmu spoken by 11 percent of the people. About 14 percent of the population resides in Highland Lao (upper mountain slopes, typically above 800 metres) and speak Hmong and Chinese.
- 2 From the primary study, similar patterns emerge among the sampled children. While Mon-Khmer emerges as the predominant ethnic group in Northern regions (45%), its presence is comparatively lower in the South (34%). Lao-Tai is the most predominant ethnic group in the South (and control areas) with around 60 percent students belonging to it. Children belonging to Lao-Tai ethnic group speak Lao at home and therefore, are less likely to face problems in school in terms of medium of instruction. However, those belonging to other ethnic groups are learning to read in a second language. Further, student belonging to ethnic groups Hmong-Lu Mien and Sino-Tibetan were only found in the Northern provinces (7% and 16%, respectively), its presence in the South is negligible. Thus, we see that higher proportion of students in the southern provinces are comfortable with Lao as compared to those in the Northern provinces (non Lao-Tai ethnic groups).
- 3 With respect to socio-economic characteristics, no statistically significant differences were found between boys and girls across both geographies and intervention type.

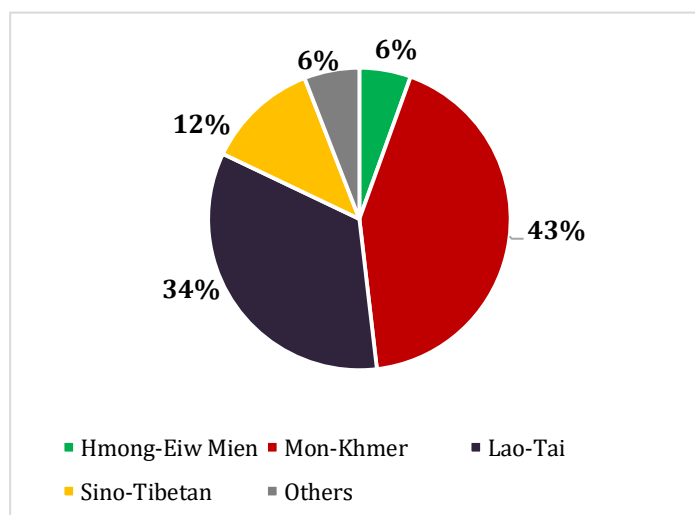


Figure 12: Student ethnicity, Project schools

N=1155

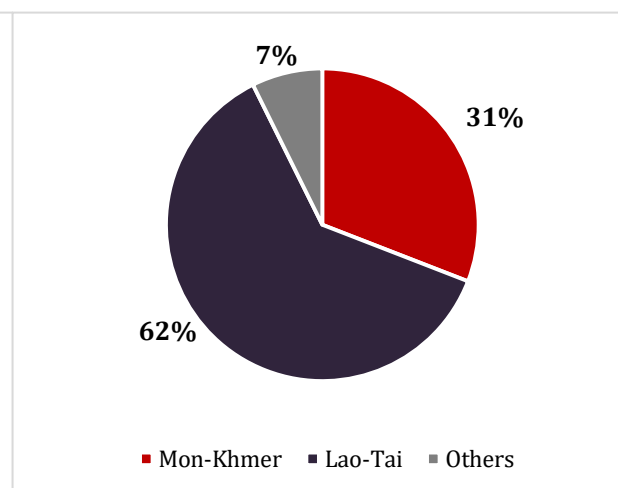


Figure 13: Student ethnicity, Control schools

N=1155

Children's home literacy background

- 4 With respect to proportion of students taking extra classes, a significantly (statistically) higher proportion of students in project schools in southern provinces reported ‘Yes’ (64.1 %) as compared to 47.8 percent in northern provinces.

⁷² As defined by the Lao Census 1995 and the classification of ethnic minorities based on Ethno-linguistic Family by LFNC

⁷³ King, Elizabeth M., Indigenous Peoples, Poverty and Development, 2010

⁷⁴ Gender and Ethnicity in the Context of Equality and Access in Lao Education, UNESCO

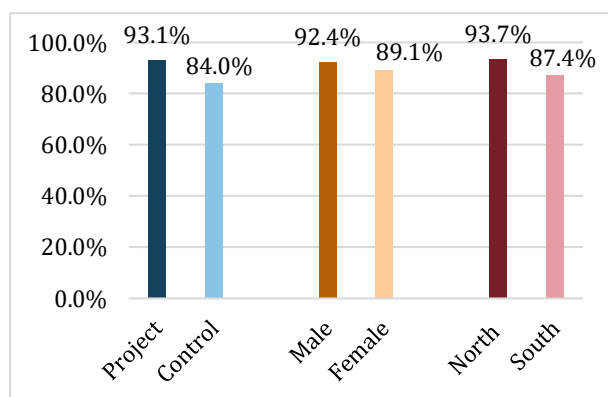


Figure 14: Proportion of students reporting having someone at home (not private teachers) to help them with reading and writing

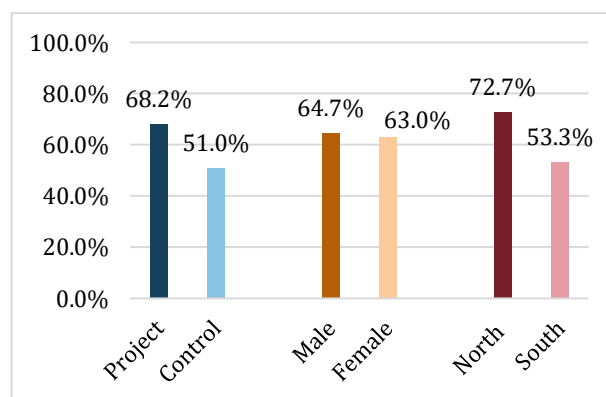


Figure 15: Proportion of students reported reading any kind of extracurricular book

N=1155

- Similar trend exists between the home literacy environments available to boys and girls across the provinces. Therefore, it is likely that they would have similar literacy levels (Figure 6 & Figure 7).

Indicator: Percentage of students who, by the end of two grades of primary schooling, demonstrate that they can read and understand the meaning of grade-level text.

- Teaching materials and methodologies used at school in Lao PDR follows Lao language. However, given the wide ethnic and linguistic diversity in the country, exposure to Lao language at home is limited for vast majority of children in the country. The pace of learning for such children is thus challenged. WFP, with support from partners PI and BBM have been providing assistance to remote rural areas with diverse ethnic composition where Lao language is not spoken at home under the MGD-SFP programme to improving learning abilities among school-age children.
- Secondary literature⁷⁵ suggests that of students who speak Lao at home, 30 percent of 2nd graders could not read one word. This proportion was as high as 54 percent for students who do not speak Lao at home. To assess learning levels among Grade-2 students, EGRA tool was administered to 175 in project schools and another 76 children in control schools. Additionally, a sample of 148 Grade 3 students in project schools and 66 students from the same Grade in control schools were covered. The EGRA tool used Lao as the language for reading and writing. The tool used six sub-tests for assessing the learning levels among children, namely, letter recognition, familiar word recognition, decoding words (invented word reading), fluency, reading comprehension, and listening comprehension.
- On one hand, it was found that only 6.9 percent students in project schools were able to demonstrate at least 75 percent reading comprehension of the Lao language compared with a target of 25 percent⁷⁶. On the other hand, 12.4 percent students in control schools demonstrated similar comprehension level of Lao language. While schools in control area were found to perform better, however, there is no statistically significant difference. The findings for reading comprehension disaggregated by sex and geographical location (northern

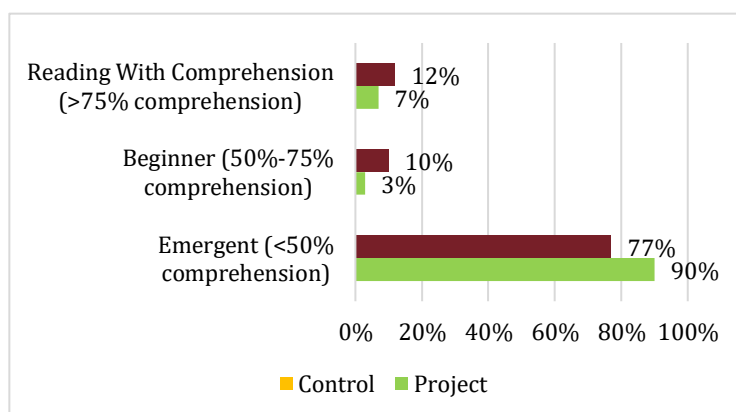


Figure 16: Reading comprehension categorisation based on EGRA

⁷⁵ Save the Children (2013). Literacy Boost Lao PDR: Baseline report

⁷⁶ June 2018. Semi-Annual report for MGD-SFP

vs southern provinces) do not reveal any statistically significant difference (refer Figure 16 and Annex U).

- 9 With respect to ethnic variations, findings from EGRA shows that literacy among Lao-Tai children in project schools is considerably higher (statistically significant) as compared to children from other non Lao-Tai ethnic groups, based on their reading comprehension ability.
- 10 An interesting aspect emerges if we examine the EGRA findings for both Grade 2 and Grade 3 students together. Across project and control schools it differs widely from those among only Grade 2 students. With Grade 3 included, the proportion of students who demonstrated at least 75 percent reading comprehension of Lao language is high (15.8 percent in project schools and 26.8 percent in control schools). Therefore, this indicates that Grade 3 is doing better in this respect. It further highlights that it does take some time for children to grasp a new language. Moreover, there emerges statistically significant difference between the findings across intervention type (project and control), sex, or geographical location (northern vs southern provinces) with respect to Grade 3. Overall, students from control schools have significantly high literacy levels with respect to reading Lao- overtaking the national target of 25 percent. Moreover, level of literacy among boys was found to be higher (statistically significant) than that among girls.

MGD 1.1: Improved quality of literacy instruction

MGD 1.1.1: More Consistent Teacher Attendance

Indicator: Average teacher attendance rates

- 11 Teacher attendance was assessed using monthly school records of every teacher's attendance and comparing this data against the number of school days per month in the academic semester September 2017-February 2018.
- 12 The average teacher attendance rate for the previous semester was high at around 97 percent in project schools. For control schools, it was only marginally higher at 97.5 percent. There is statistically significant difference between attendance of female teachers in project (94.6%) and control (100%) schools (Annex U).

Indicator: Percent of teachers attending at least 90 percent of the school days

- 13 Regular teacher attendance has been identified as a critical variable that can potentially affect project outcomes. Regular attendance for teachers, in this case, is defined as those attending school at least 90 percent of the school days. It was found that around 94 percent teachers regularly attend school in project areas. While that is encouraging, the corresponding figure for control schools is at 100 percent, which is (statistically) significantly higher than project schools. There are no significant difference in regular attendance among male and female teachers, across intervention type. (Annex U).

MGD 1.1.2: Better Access to School Supplies and Materials and MGD 1.1.3: Improved Literacy Instruction Materials

Indicator: Number of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials provided as a result of USDA assistance

- 14 For the award cycle 2014-16, 71,536 textbooks and other teaching materials were provided as a result of USDA assistance (Annex V). The corresponding figure for FY17-21 is not available yet. In the absence of physical records with school head, primary survey too could not capture this information.

Indicator: Number of children (boys and girls, 10 years+) benefitting from literacy campaigns, books, and new teaching material

- 15 For the award cycle 2014-16, WFP had partnership with BBM and PI. A total of 9,774 students (8,529 students from BBM & 1,245 students from PI) benefitted from these materials. The new partnership agreement (for FY 17 award) is expected to commence from the academic year 2018-19.

MGD 1.1.4: Increased Skills and Knowledge of Teachers

Indicator: Percent of teachers/educators/teaching assistants trained or certified in teaching techniques during the last one year

16 Around 48 percent of teaching staff reported receiving training in teaching techniques over the last one year. There is no significant difference across sex. However, it is encouraging to note that all surveyed schools (57 project schools) reported that at least one teacher has been trained in teaching techniques during the last one year (Annex V).

Indicator: Percent of teachers/educators/teaching assistants in target schools who demonstrate use of new and quality teaching techniques or tools as identified by their supervisor/mentor/coach

17 For teachers who had completed such trainings in the last one year, responses from the school head was used to assess their demonstration of these teaching techniques. School heads in nearly all schools (56 out of 57 surveyed project schools) reported that teachers were demonstrating use of new and quality teaching techniques or tools (Annex V).

Indicator: Number of teacher instruction sets/manuals, guidance, teaching materials and books distributed as a result of USDA assistance

18 As per the current monitoring system, school heads reported that they do not maintain records for these. This information was also not available in the monitoring report.

MGD 1.2: Improved Attentiveness

Indicator: Number of individuals benefitting directly from USDA-funded interventions

19 Until March 2018, 138,790 students of which 70,783 are boys and 68,007 are girls have benefitted directly from USDA funded MGD-SFP (Annex V). Another 145,980 students and 5000 cooks will benefit in 2018-19.

Indicator: Percentage of students in classrooms identified as inattentive by their teachers

20 Around 21 percent students in project schools were classified as inattentive by their teachers while the corresponding figure for control schools is 19 percent (Annex U). A higher proportion of female students were classified as inattentive (24%) in project schools as compared to proportion of male students (17%). A similar pattern was also observed in control schools- inattentiveness is more prevalent among females than males.

MGD 1.2.1: Reduced Short-Term Hunger

Indicator: Number of social assistance beneficiaries participating in productive safety nets as a result of USDA assistance

21 A total of 138,790 social assistance beneficiaries (children) are participating in productive safety nets as a result of USDA assistance. This includes 70,783 boys and 68,007 girls. 111,032 beneficiaries are part of continuing schools and 27,758 beneficiaries have been reached out in the new schools (Annex V). Provisioning of school lunch enhances the social protection enjoyed by these children with respect to access to food and nutrition.

Indicator: Number of daily school lunch meals provided to school-age children as a result of USDA assistance

22 According to secondary data (monitoring report for October 2017 to March 2018), a total of 14,323,128 daily school lunch had been provided to students (Annex V). Schools have partial records of lunch meals served which was not found to be reliable and hence has not been considered.

Indicator: Number of school-aged children receiving daily school lunch as a result of USDA assistance

23 According to secondary data (monitoring report for October 2017 to March 2018), 138,790 school-age children have received daily school lunch as a result of USDA assistance between October 2017 to March 2018. 61,581 boys and 59,166 girls have records of receiving it. Majority of the children are in the old (continuing) schools (111,032) while 27,758 children in new schools have been provided with school lunch (Annex V). As noted above, schools have partial records for number of children receiving daily school lunch which was not found to be reliable and hence has not been reported. Overall, discussions revealed that all the children in a school receive school lunch on the days it is being served.

Indicator: Number of schools providing school lunch every day for the past two weeks

24 The primary survey findings reveal poor performance of the school lunch programme in terms of regularity. Nearly half of the schools in the sample (52%) reported that they have not been able to provide school lunch every day for the past 2 weeks (Annex V). Given that the survey was conducted between end-March to early-May, it is possible that lack of water and availability of vegetables in the school garden may have resulted in the irregularity in provisioning of lunch in these schools. Closure of schools for 2-3 weeks during the Lao New Year may also have contributed to the irregularity. This needs to be addressed in order to ensure effectiveness of the programme as well as continue to maintain interest among students and goodwill among parents and the community at large.

Indicator: Number of take-home rations provided as a result of USDA assistance

25 During the course of evaluation, the evaluation team learnt that there was an amendment to the MGD Grant that was approved on October 12, 2016⁷⁷. As part of this amendment, take-home rations for informal boarders at secondary school were stopped. Therefore, provision of take-home rations (THR) were limited to cooks and storekeepers for baseline FY17. However, in order not to lose out on the nutrition aspect of the school meals in particular during lean season months, WFP also provided an additional one-off THR (50Kg of rice in each semester) to students, activity supporter and their families.

26 About 345,281 THRs were provided during the programme period, of which 19,854 THRs were provided to the cooks and storekeepers. Discussions with cooks, storekeepers and school authorities revealed that food supply that was left at the end of the semester was distributed among the cooks and storekeepers. According to the programme guidelines, cooks are entitled to receive 50 kilograms of rice per semester. However, this was designed with an understanding of engaging one cook. With cooking groups being formed, there are now multiple cooks in a village and since the prescribed quantity has not been revised, they reported that they received very small proportions of rice as incentive.

Indicator: Number of individuals receiving take-home rations as a result of USDA assistance

27 According to the monitoring reports for October 2017 to March 2018, 4,948 individuals are receiving THR as a result of USDA assistance. As per primary survey data, nearly 85 percent of the storekeepers were receiving take-home rations, however, the corresponding figure for cooks is only 50 percent (Annex V). Given that cooks are key to the school lunch program, there is a felt need to enhance the incentives for cooks to provide their services. Moreover, storekeepers, being in-charge of food supply, might be securing their ration resulting in cooks not getting their share. In the absence of physical records, it is difficult to monitor this activity.

MGD 1.3: Improved Student Attendance

28 Complete information on monthly student attendance over the last academic year was available from 77 percent of the project schools, and an additional 7 percent of the schools had partial data on attendance. Overall, data for only 690 students in project schools (out of 1162 in the sample) were available for calculating average student attendance and percentage of students attending school regularly. With respect to control schools, complete attendance record for the last academic year was available from 50 percent of the schools, and an additional 20 percent of schools had partial records. Overall, data was available for 208 students in control schools (out of 292 in the sample).

29 Student attendance was measured in two ways:

- a. The monthly school attendance records of fifteen students per school for the last academic semester (September 2017- February 2018). Both average attendance and regular school attendance (defined as greater than or equal to 80 percent attendance) were calculated.
- b. The average school attendance on the day of the survey was computed from the number of students present at school on the day of the survey compared to the number of students

⁷⁷ MGD commitment letter dated 12 October 2016

enrolled in each school. Although just a snapshot of the day, this indicator can be used to triangulate the reliability of school records.

Box 4: Status on partial absenteeism

Children going back home during lunch was recognised as a security issue for children as they would be crossing roads unescorted while there is high speed moving traffic. Moreover, it also meant that children sometimes would not come back for the latter half of school thus impacting their education. To address both these issues the school lunch programme aimed at retaining children in the school during lunch.

However, the evaluation team observed that children were going back home after having lunch and in few instances the children did not come back. About 40 percent students reported to be absent for post-lunch session at least once in the last week. This resulted a fall in attendance during the afternoon classes. Discussions with parents revealed that since the teachers also go back home during lunch, there is no one to look after the children and hence they are asked to go back home too.

Furthermore, around 64 percent parents overall shared that school lunch was served on all school days in the last one week. For the remaining parents, a very high proportion (90%) shared that children came home to eat lunch on days when school lunch was not served.

Indicator: Average student attendance

- 30 In comparison to 82.9 percent attendance at primary level as reported by Census 2015, average student attendance is high at around 98 percent in project schools. It is similar for both sexes and intervention type (Annex U). According to the monitoring report for the period October 2017 to March 2018, 67,952 males and 64,607 female students were attending school regularly (more than 80%) (Annex V). Census 2015 observes that about 82.9 percent girls and about 82.8 percent boys are attending school. Census data also reveals an interesting pattern where attendance level peaks at 11 years of age of a student and then tapers down highlighting the high dropouts post primary education.

Indicator: Percent of students regularly attending school (at least 80 percent of the school days)

- 31 Nearly all students (98% in project and 96% in control), across both project and control schools, were reported attending school regularly. There is no variation in terms of regular attendance among both the sexes (Annex U).

Indicator: Student attendance on the day of the survey

- 32 Student attendance on the day of the survey was slightly lower than the average attendance and regular attendance, at 91 percent in project schools and 80 percent in control schools. There is no significant variation across sex⁷⁸ (Annex U). It is to be noted that this value is determined from all children at the schools.
- 33 Poverty is the primary cause for children being out of school as parents cannot afford the education expenses. Further, a lack of interest in studying is a common cause for absenteeism among boys as shared by parents during FGDs. For girls, however, parents shared that they are expected to stay back at home on some days and help with household chores and take care of younger siblings. Further, in certain ethnic groups like Akha and Hmong, girls are married off at a very early age (after grade 5) which results in drop-out after completing primary school.

Indicator: Percent of students having reduced absenteeism due to USDA support

- 34 Overall, in sample schools, 10.5 percent students were reported to be absent for the whole day in the last one week (from the date of survey). Further, there are statistically significant differences across geography- around seven percent students were reported to be absent in the north while in the south it was around 21 percent. The corresponding figure for this was higher for control areas at 20.7 percent (statistically significant). USDA support may have contributed to the low proportion

⁷⁸ According to The World Bank (2016) report on “Reducing early grade dropout and low learning achievement in Lao PDR: Root causes and possible interventions”, gender difference in attendance and enrollment starts to be significant after age 14, with early drop out being more common for girls than for boys.

of absenteeism in project schools as compared to control schools that have not had any activity to promote education and literacy.

- 35 About 86.5 percent of the students reported taking leave in the last one week. About 43 percent student were absent for a day and another 31 percent were absent for two days. Disaggregating by sex or intervention type did not highlight any variation. However, as presented in Box 3, seasonal absenteeism in the North increases during the harvesting season and also during establishment of new banana plantations.
- 36 While the primary reason for absenteeism was illness, a small proportion of students (around 12.5% in project schools) also reported that they were absent because their parents asked them to stay at home and help out with household chores, farm work, take care of siblings. Disaggregating this by sex does not bring forth any gender-based variation in finding- an equal proportion of boys and girls reported this (12.5%).

MGD 1.3.1: Increased Economic and Cultural Incentives

Indicator: Number of school gardens constructed as a result of USDA assistance

- 37 A major achievement of the programme is that around 85 percent of parents reported that their household costs on food have reduced after the school lunch programme was started. The proportion of people who reported this positive impact is higher (statistically significant) in the northern region as compared to the southern provinces. This could be attributed to the fact that a significantly higher proportion of parents in the north (95%) are contributing for the school lunch as compared to the south (76%). Therefore, with a higher number of families supporting the school lunch program, the cost for each family has gone down and as a result, their household expenditure on food is perceived to be lower now.

"Involvement in garden activities also improves children's attitude to the natural environment. They develop practical understanding of the environment and its ecosystem. Given the current scenario around global warming, this understanding is very important".

-DESB, Thateng, Sekong Province

- 38 By provisioning school lunch, MGD-SFP aims that children will stay in school during and after lunch. This also acts as an economic incentive for parents. Earlier, parents shared, that somebody (usually mothers) had to be at home during lunch because children would come home to eat. This meant that they would have to come back early from the fields (given that women are mostly engaged in farming activities) which leaves them with comparatively lesser amount of time to engage in economic activities. However, now that children don't need to come home to eat, they can spend longer hours at work thus enhancing their productivity.

MGD 1.3.2: Reduced Health Related Absences

- 39 The primary reason for absenteeism among students in the last one week (from the date of survey) was health related (67% in project and 59% in control). The most common illnesses in both project and control schools were reported to be fever, headache, cold and cough. Disaggregating data by geography, a considerably higher proportion of students (statistically significant) reported health related absence in north (83%) as compared to south (53%). This highlights the need for better health, nutrition and hygiene practices in the Northern Province as compared to south.

Indicator: Number of cooks benefitting from training in food preparation and storage practices

- 40 Only about half of the cooks (55%) in sampled project schools had received training in food preparation and storage practices (Annex V).

Indicator: Number of storekeepers benefitting from training in food preparation and storage practices

- 41 38 out of the 58 storekeepers (65%) interviewed were trained in safe food preparation and storage practices as a result of USDA assistance. Of this, a higher proportion were in the north (70%, i.e. 30 out of 42) as compared to the south (50%, i.e. 8 out of 16) (Annex V).

MGD 1.3.3: Improved School Infrastructure

Indicator: Number of kitchens constructed or rehabilitated as a result of USDA assistance

- 42 Of the sample schools (57), 39 schools (68.4%) reported construction of kitchen as a result of USDA assistance. Of this 30 (out of 42) were in North and 9 in South (out of 16) (Annex Y). From WFP monitoring report it emerges that about 1037 schools (69.1%) have received support for construction or rehabilitation of kitchens against a target of 1500 schools.
- 43 Additionally, 23 out of 58 schools (39.6%) reported construction of dining facility as a result of USDA assistance- 15 were in North and 8 in South (Annex V). This is in line with the monitoring report findings showing 747 out of 1500 schools (49.8%) having received support for construction of dining facility.

Indicator: Number of storerooms constructed or rehabilitated as a result of USDA assistance

- 44 Of the 57 sample schools, 36 schools (63.1%) reported construction of storerooms (warehouse) with USDA assistance. Of this 25 (out of 42) were in North and 11 in South (out of 16) (Annex V). This is slightly higher than the monitoring report figures of 49.8% (748 schools out of 1500 schools).

Indicator: Number of school gardens constructed or rehabilitated as a result of USDA assistance

- 45 Two-third of the sampled project schools reported having a school garden (Annex V). School gardens have been globally recognised as an effective means of promoting good diet, nutrition education, and development of livelihood skills among students. It also has the power to extend this learning to the larger community.

Indicator: Number of school gardens able to contribute at least two times harvest to school lunch in a month

- 46 About 64 percent of the schools were able to contribute to the school lunch at least twice a month in semester 1. This falls to as low as 36 percent during the second semester. The situation is particularly worse in schools in Northern areas with only about 31 percent reporting ability to contribute twice a month in semester 2 as compared to 50 percent schools in south (Annex V).
- 47 Availability of water is a critical factor in effectiveness and utility of school gardens. It was learnt that majority of the school gardens were non-operational during the dry season, owing to water scarcity. Figure 17 shows that the proportion of school gardens that do not provide vegetables for the school lunch is considerably higher in the second semester, which happens to be the dry season. It follows that nearly half of the school gardens in the Northern provinces (46%), do not provide vegetables at all in the second semester. While the proportion of school gardens providing vegetables for school lunch during the second semester also goes down in the southern provinces, the decrease is slightly less as compared to the northern schools. Given the mountainous terrain in the North, water scarcity is an even more serious issue with respect to sustaining school gardens during the dry season.

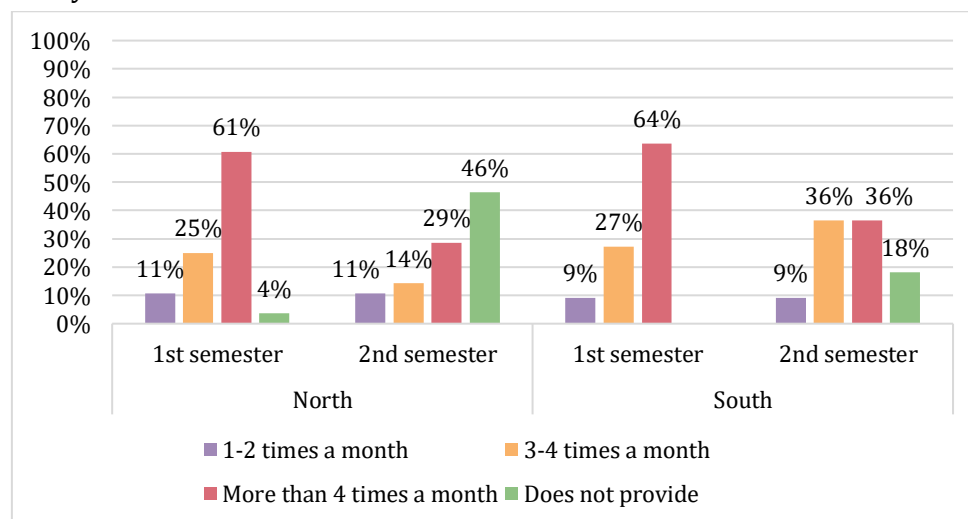


Figure 17: Harvest from school gardens for school lunch in the last one year, by geography

- 48 Rivers, streams and canals emerge as the most important source of water for irrigating school gardens in the north (32%). The remaining schools have access to either borehole or gravity feed water for irrigation. Availability of water becomes a pressing concern in the winter months when these open sources of water dry up due to low (or no) rainfall. About 72 percent of the school gardens in the south are dependent on borehole for irrigation. About 45 percent of the schools have constructed overhead tanks in which the water is pumped up and then using gravity feed, the water is supplied to the school gardens. This further underlines that majority school gardens in the north are dependent on surface water while in the south, they are dependent on ground water which is a more secure source during dry season. Access to piped water or pond within the school premises is negligible across both the provinces.
- 49 Given limited access to government irrigation schemes, in few instances (Phongkhom School, Nga district of Oudomxay) schools have also drawn water from individual households. Slightly well-off households have installed bore-wells for personal use; and the school has purchased water from these households during the winter months for irrigation.
- 50 During the survey (end March to early May), nearly 50 percent of the cooks in sample schools reported that they have not been able to use vegetables from the school garden in the last one month. Due to low moisture content in the soil and lack of irrigation opportunities, the school gardens remained non-operational. Thus, it is clear that availability of water is critical towards utilizing school gardens and ensuring regularity of school lunch.

Indicator: Percentage of schools with access to water for cooking purposes

- 51 One-fourth of the schools in project areas do not have access to water for cooking (Annex V). This raises serious doubts about the regularity and continuity of school lunch programme given that water availability is a very vital aspect of cooking. This may be the case particularly during the second semester (dry season) when the survey was conducted. The numbers do not vary according to geographical location.

Indicator: Percentage of schools with access to water for washing purposes

- 52 One-third of the schools in project areas reported not having access to water for washing purposes (Annex V). This is again a problem with respect to preparing school lunch as well as adhering to the health and hygiene standards mandated by the program.

Indicator: Number of schools having well-functioning and clean dining facilities

- 53 More than half of the sample schools (55%) had well-functioning and clean dining facilities (Annex V). Around 70 percent of the schools in south had access to such facilities while the corresponding figure in the north is quite lower at only 50 percent. The inter-region difference is primarily due to the type of materials used for constructing the dining spaces. While the USDA supported schools had zinc sheets as roofs and iron nets as walls to keep the space dry and airy, the non-USDA schools (mainly in the north) had used biomass for roofs and walls. As a result, during rainy season, water leaked from the roof making it unusable. Also, gusts during monsoon damaged the dining spaces. Few of the non-USDA schools did not have benches and tables in the dining area for children to sit and eat.

MGD 1.3.4: Increased Student Enrolment

- 54 The baseline survey team aimed to collect enrolment data from school records for the past five academic years in order to examine trends in student enrolment in WFP supported schools. Around two-third (65.5%) of the schools did not maintain enrolment records at the time of the survey. About 40 percent of schools had records for at least one of the years, and 34 percent (20 out of 58 schools) had complete enrolment records for all five years. Similarly, 5 of the 20 control schools (25%) maintained complete enrolment records of all five years.

Indicator: Average percent change in school enrolment

- 55 Percent change in school enrolment in the current academic year (2017-18⁷⁹) was calculated by comparing the number of students in 2017-18 to the previous academic year (2016-17⁸⁰). There

⁷⁹ 2914 students from 20 schools

⁸⁰ 2885 students from 20 schools

has been a minuscule increase in enrolment (1%) in project schools since the last academic year. However, it was noted that there has been a decrease in enrolment of girls by a percentage point over the last one year in project schools. There emerges no statistically significant variation in percent change in enrolment rate in project schools vis-à-vis control schools, as well as that for boys and girls (Annex U).

Indicator: Average enrolment ratio of girls to boys at target schools

- 56 The female to male enrolment ratio was 0.95 during the last academic year (2016-17), indicating that the number of girls enrolled was five percent less than the number of boys. However, for control schools, the number of girls enrolled was four percent more than number of boys enrolled (Annex U).

Indicator: Average student dropout rate

- 57 The average dropout rate for the last academic year was two percent in both project and control schools showing no variation by intervention type. The dropout rate among boys (2%) and girls (1%), in both project and control schools, were found to be similar (Annex U). The primary study figures conforms to the census 2015 figures⁸¹ and slightly lower than the MoES figures⁸².

Indicator: Repetition rate

- 58 Overall, eight percent students in project schools had to repeat the grade during the last academic year, while the corresponding rate for control schools is around six percent⁸³. This variation is not statistically significant (Annex U). The repetition rate is slightly higher among boys (11%) than girls (5%) in project schools, however this difference is not statistically significant.

MGD 1.3.5: Increased Community Understanding of Benefits of Education

Indicator: Percent of parents in programme schools who can name at least three benefits of primary education

- 59 In the structured interviews conducted with parents, they were asked about the benefits of education. A very high proportion of parents (96%) with children studying in project schools could name at least three benefits of primary education. A slightly higher proportion of parents in control areas (98.1%) could name at least three benefits, however, the difference is not statistically significant. Overall, a lesser proportion of parents of female students could list these benefits, as compared to parents of male students. A similar pattern was observed in control schools (Annex U). No significant difference was observed between male and female parents.
- 60 The three most common responses from parents for benefits of primary education were (i) Helps children's skill development, (ii) Improves literacy rate, and (iii) Improves future opportunities of work for children. Given that low perception about relevance of education and quality among parents have historically played a significant role in keeping children out of school⁸⁴, this can be construed a positive development.

MGD S02: Increased Use of Health and Dietary Practices

Indicator: Average dietary diversity score (DDS) of school-aged children

- 61 The quality of students' diets was assessed in terms of dietary diversity. The evaluation team collected detailed information on the food and drinks consumed by each child during the last 24 hours prior to the interview for 706 school children through interviews with parents.
- 62 The mean dietary diversity score (DDS) for children in project schools was high at around 6.1 (out of a maximum score of 8⁸⁵). Although this is higher than the mean dietary diversity score among children in control schools (4.7), it is not statistically significant. Disaggregated by sex, there is no

⁸¹ Dropout rate- 2.84%; Boys- 2.86%; Girls- 2.82%

⁸² Source: LaoEduInfo database. Dropout rate- 4.4%; Boys- 4.7%; Girls- 4.1%

⁸³ The national average for repetition rate is 6.9 percent (UNESCO, MoES 2014).

⁸⁴ The World Bank (2016). Reducing early grade dropout and low learning achievement in Lao PDR: Root causes and possible interventions.

⁸⁵ Feed the Future Guidance (2014) suggests grouping food items into 10 food groups. However, classification of food as "other fruits" and "other vegetable" was not clear during BL FY17. Therefore, the scale of food options is that of 8 in this case.

such variation between the dietary diversity scores for male students and female students (Annex U).

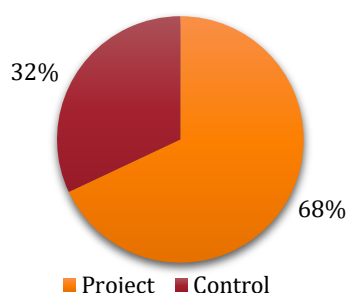


Figure 18: Proportion of respondents with Dietary Diversity Score ≥ 6 , by intervention type

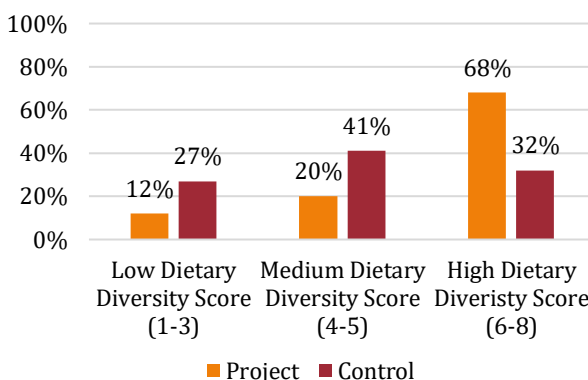


Figure 19: Categorising Dietary Diversity Score, by intervention type

- 63 Figure 18 represents that more than two-third (68%) of the students in project schools had a DDS higher than the mean (for project schools). However, in control schools, the corresponding proportion is only about one-third.
- 64 Figure 19 shows a significant difference between DDS in project and control areas when disaggregated into categories. Individual DDS were categorised into three classes: high, medium and low. Majority students in project schools (68%) fall in the high DDS category (6-8) while for control school, majority fall in medium DDS (41%) followed by low DDS (27%). This clearly establishes that children in the project schools have a diverse food basket as compared to the control schools.
- 65 Overall, the food that were commonly consumed by students over the last 24 hours from different food basket includes- (a) grains, roots and tubers (93% (P⁸⁶), 89% (C⁸⁷)); (b) flesh food including organ meat and miscellaneous small animal protein (90% (P), 87% (C)); (c) vitamin A rich green leafy vegetables (87% (P), 81% (C)); (d) other vegetables (78% (P), 66% (C)); (e) legumes and beans (67% (P), 17% (C)); (f) nuts and seeds (56% (P) 28% (C)); (g) dairy products (61% (P), 39% (C)), and (h) eggs (79% (P), 68% (C)).
- 66 Lentils are currently being provided under the programme to address protein deficiencies in the diet. However, the evaluation team observed that the consumption of lentil was rather low. Also, the cooks complained that children were wasting lentils. Moreover, since lentils are not a part of the usual Lao diet, cooks also do not know how to cook it and they generally mix it with the rice and boil it. Children do not like this preparation and end up wasting rice as well.
- 67 Discussions with WFP-CO highlighted that they recognize that getting the Lao population to increase the intake of protein will take time. However, since animal protein is more expensive than the plant-based protein, the chances of switching dietary practices is high. There has been an increase in access to lentils and beans (including soy beans), and it is expected that with increasing income, better awareness of nutrition, and improved dietary practices will boost the demand for both animal and plant based protein.
- 68 It was also found that a high proportion of students (55%) reported having consumed dairy products in the last 24 hours, with the proportion being higher in the north (61%) as compared to the south (39%). Although milk from cows and goats is not widely consumed in Laos, soy milk is widely consumed. Condensed milk is also being consumed.

Indicator: Number of individuals who demonstrated the use of new child health and nutrition practices as a result of USDA assistance

⁸⁶ (P)- Project schools

⁸⁷ (C)- Control schools

69 Monitoring reports for October 2017 to March 2018 indicates that 11,200 individuals have demonstrated the use of new child health and nutrition practices. This data point was however not captured in the primary survey (Annex V).

MGD 2.1: Improved knowledge of health and hygiene practices

70 The indicator for this result (*Percent of students in target school who achieve a passing score on a test of good health and hygiene practices as a result of USDA assistance*) was not captured through primary survey and no information was available from secondary reports.

MGD 2.2: Increased knowledge of safe food preparation and storage practices

71 According to secondary data from monitoring reports, a total of 10,575 individuals have been trained in safe food preparation and storage practices as result of USDA assistance in the award cycle 2014-16 (Annex V).

Indicator: Percent of food preparers in target school who achieve a passing score on a test of safe food preparation and storage practices

72 58 cooks from the sampled project schools were tested on their knowledge and attitude regarding safe food preparation and storage practices. Cooks were tested on whether they practice the following: (i) use of apron or uniform in the kitchen, (ii) clean the kitchen before and after food preparation, (iii) clean pots and utensils before cooking, (iv) clean pots and utensils after cooking, (v) use of soap to wash pots and utensils, (vi) cleaning vegetables and rice before cooking, (vii) washing hands before food preparation, (viii) washing hands before and during food preparation with water and soap, (ix) checking for the following in food before cooking- expiry date, packaging, colour of the food, presence of pests, and (x) storing cooked food in covered cooking pots in a clean, safe place before serving the students.

73 About 88 percent of cooks, mostly women, scored at least 80 percent, indicating a high knowledge about safe food preparation and storage practices (Annex U).

74 However, it is to be noted that only around 55 percent of cooks in the sample have been trained in safe food preparation and storage practices. This indicates that there still remains a large proportion of untrained cooks. Training of cooks is critical to ensure hygienically prepared nutritious food to children, as envisaged by the program.

75 Initially the programme had planned for one-to-two cooks per village who were trained in safe food preparation and storage techniques. However, it was soon realised that there was a need for more number of cooks. As a result, a number of cooking groups were formed in the villages with support from the *Naiban* and Lao Women Union. Most women members in a village then started contributing voluntarily towards cooking school meals. With respect to training, the programme envisaged that the cooks that were initially trained in each of these villages would then train these new cooks. However, this did not get implemented as planned which explains why around 45 percent of the cooks in the sample had not received any special training to do their job.

Indicator: Number of storekeepers trained in safe food preparation and storage practices as a result of USDA assistance

76 Against an overall target of 4500 storekeepers to be trained, the monitoring report shows that 3,415 storekeepers (76%) were trained. From the primary study, it emerges that 38 out of the 58 storekeepers (65%) were trained in safe food preparation and storage practices as a result of USDA assistance. Of this, a higher proportion in north were trained (70%) than the south (50%) (Annex V).

Indicator: Number of teachers trained in safe food preparation and storage practices as a result of USDA assistance

77 Only about 38 percent of the teachers covered in the sample have been trained in safe food preparation and storage practices. A (statistically) significantly higher proportion of teachers in the sample in south (43%) were trained as compared to north (24%), although the overall proportion of trained teachers is low (Annex V).

78 Thus, we see that maximum number of cooks have received such training (88%), followed by storekeepers (65%), while a fewer proportion of teachers were trained (38%). Given that

storekeepers are in charge of managing the stock and ensuring that it is stored properly, it is suggested that the training coverage needs to be expanded further. It would also be beneficial to increase the awareness among teachers for enhanced sustainability.

MGD 2.3: Increased knowledge of nutrition

- 79 According to the findings from the primary survey, school gardens had helped in increasing knowledge among students especially around gardening practices. Their involvement in sowing of seeds, watering, harvesting, and overall maintenance of the school gardens had helped in increasing awareness about farming techniques. In an agrarian economy, this is also helping students build their livelihood skills. However, evidence for increased awareness around nutritional value of vegetables was found to be weak among students. Most students did not know the vegetables in the garden well enough.
- 80 Nutrition education through school gardens has led to increased knowledge among the community at large (teachers, parents, cooks, store keepers and other VEDC members). This in turn has also led to positive changes in dietary practices at the household level. While comparison of DDS across project and control areas provide evidence to this finding, qualitative discussions with stakeholders bring forth that these changes are at a very preliminary stage and is mainly dependent on water availability and economic background of households.

Indicator: Number of individuals trained in child health and nutrition as a result of USDA assistance

- 81 Monitoring reports indicate that 12,578 individuals have been trained in child health and nutrition as a result of USDA assistance between 2014 and 2016. Primary survey findings reveal that, 40 percent teachers have been trained in child health and nutrition through this assistance. This includes 64 male teachers and 56 female teachers (Annex V).

MGD 2.4: Increased access to clean water and sanitation services

Indicator: Number of schools using an improved water source

- 82 Of the 58 project schools, only 16 schools (28%) were using an improved water source (Annex Y). This emerges as an issue particularly in the north with only 16 percent schools using an improved water source. Whereas around 56 percent schools in south have access to an improved source. In order to improve health and hygiene conditions, it would be important to have access to improved water sources (Annex V). The corresponding figure for control schools is lower at 20 percent.
- 83 Furthermore, 76 percent schools in project areas have access to water for cooking purposes and around 67 percent have access to water for washing (Annex Y). This indicates that there still are some schools that do not have water for cooking and washing. In the absence of this, preparing school lunch can be a problem and the programme is unlikely to be continued for a long time.

Indicator: Number of schools with improved sanitation facilities

- 84 More than two-third project schools (72%) have access to improved sanitation facilities (Annex V). An equal proportion of schools, with no statistically significant variation, in north and south have access to improved sanitation facilities. To give further impetus to behavioural change with respect to sanitation, this coverage needs to be expanded to cover all schools. Availability of water and financial support would be critical towards this.
- 85 The evaluation team observed separate toilets for boys and girls in nearly all schools. However, availability of water in certain schools is affecting their regular usage by the students.

Handwashing practices

- 86 Presence of functioning handwashing stations could be observed in only a few sample schools in project areas. Again, water scarcity was affecting the functionality of handwashing units.
- 87 The evaluation team observed that children were washing their hands before and after meals. However, use of soap was not widespread. Also, children were often washing their hands and utensils by dipping them in a bucket of water. Such practices need to be discouraged to fully achieve the goal of adequate hygiene practices.

MGD 2.5: Increased access to preventive health interventions

- 88 The MGD-SFP programme is also monitoring the consumption of deworming tablets provided by the health department in project schools. This activity will not be measured as part of MGD-SFP results framework.

MGD 2.6: Increased access to requisite food preparation and storage tools and equipment

- 89 Smoke reducing stoves were piloted in 2017 to reduce smoke exposure and risk of lung diseases among cooks (mostly women). About five percent of the schools had received smoke reducing stoves for cooking.
- 90 In terms of infrastructure, nearly all schools (93%) in the sample reported having a dedicated room as a kitchen, with 97 percent schools reporting that the kitchen is well-ventilated. The programme guidelines had specified construction of raised pallets for cooking. Although, in around half of the schools (50%) food was being cooked off the ground, majority of them (83%) were using improvised raised pallets for cooking, adhering to the guidelines.
- 91 While it is encouraging that 28 percent of the schools had access to piped water for cleaning and cooking food, majority (38%) were dependent on water from river or streams. This being an open source of water gets dried up in the winter months leading to irregularities in cooking school meals due to scarcity of water. Further, non-availability of a nearby water source puts an additional burden on the cooks (who happen to be mostly women) to collect water from a distance source. Figure 20 shows that lack of water for cooking is an issue for over a fourth of the cooks in the sample (28%).

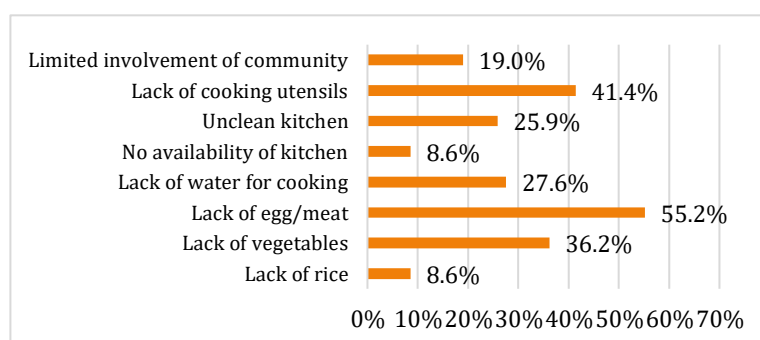


Figure 20: Issues faced by cooks in preparing school lunch

- 92 Cookbooks (or menu books) had been circulated by WFP recently in the Northern provinces. This provides various detailed recipes for nutritious food that can be cooked in schools. DESB in Oudomxay and LuangNamtha mentioned that they held meetings for cooks where this book was distributed and they were instructed on how to use it. However, its recall among cooks was found to be very low. Only one-fifth (21%) of the cooks in the sample reported receiving this cookbook. With cooks not being adequately trained and not having access to such cookbooks, they are mostly making the same kind of food almost every day which is causing children to reject them. Discussions with parents reveal that the children have complained about this. Parents have even approached the cooks regarding this issue. Also, all the cooks in the sample expressed the desire to have a variety in the menu. Currently, they do not know what else to cook with the same set of ingredients although they understand that it is getting monotonous. Moreover, it is important that nutritious food is served in schools. If the cooks are not made aware about the nutrition content of various food items, there are chances of falling short of achieving the health and nutrition goals.
- 93 Another issue that came up during the FY14 programme was that the recipes in the current cook book were more suited for the local food habits in the southern provinces. Quite a few of the vegetables mentioned in the recipes were not consumed or even produced in the Northern provinces. Therefore, it was feared that this would be difficult to adopt in the Northern provinces and hence, this cookbook has now been sent to GoL for revision based on local food habits across the country.
- 94 As shown in Figure 20, cooks are of the opinion that it would be better if eggs and meat were made available for the school lunch, they feel children would like it better. Lack of cooking utensils is a challenge for 41 percent of the cooks while another 36 percent feel lack of vegetables is an issue that they face.

Foundational Results

MGD 2.7.1: Increased Capacity of Government Institutions

- 95 **Capacity Building:** The MGD programme design ensures capacity building activities at all levels of the governance structure. For building capacity at the national level, WFP has facilitated an exchange programme for MPI, MoES and MAF officials to Brazil. The visit has encouraged the departments in detailing out a clearer oversight of roles and responsibilities at the national, provincial and district level.
- 96 WFP is in discussion with MoES, for setting up of School Meals Centre of Excellence as part of GoL's contribution to Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO). WFP plans to use MGD support for facilitating the setup of the Centre, trainings on school meals implementation, best practices and international exchange visits to countries with similar context. WFP will arrange visits for ministry officials to understand policy level initiatives on school meals, implementation challenges and solutions, best practices and also avenues for funding school meals.
- 97 Using a ToT model, MoES staff will train provincial level officials who in turn will train the MGD supported and NSMP supported communities on school gardening and meaningful engagement with farmer groups for sustaining the supply of raw materials for school meals. WFP will also engage with Provincial governor's office for overseeing the implementation process as well as ensuring efficient use of budgetary resources for communities and schools.
- 98 Understanding that there is a possibility of human resource reforms within MoES for implementation of school meals, WFP has already drawn up plans for building capacities of the personnel at the provincial and district level for smooth institutional coordination. At the district level, WFP will conduct joint trainings to build capacities of MoES, MoH and MAF officials for providing technical assistance to communities on school agriculture and nutrition, education, hand-washing and hygiene.
- 99 **Literacy:** To improve the quality of education in Laos, USAID's five Ts- "Time, Teaching, Text, Mother tongue and Testing" have been identified as important elements of success. WFP will provide support through training of DESB and programme staff on concepts, rationale and approach for community based reading festivals, reading camps and parenting awareness sessions. This would support in conducting these sessions as part of the MGD-SFP programme.
- 100 PI is envisaged to work with Research Institute of Educational Science (RIES) towards implementing the "Teaching Lao to non-Lao students". As part of the approach, a master trainer programme will be held at district level to train DESB staff including Pedagogical Advisors (PAs). The Grade 1 teachers of target schools would then be trained on oral Lao teaching methods, introduction of reading corners in classrooms, routine extra-curricular reading activities and child-to-child support in classroom. Teachers, PAs and DESB staff together will ensure the proper implementation of the modules for inculcating the culture of reading and supporting peers in reading. A set of 15 books as guidance materials will be provided to teachers to aid them in using books in school and also appreciate the importance of reading.
- 101 To ensure easy access to reading materials, PI will support establishment of community book banks at community level. The book banks will provide platform for older children and parents to read along with school-going children. BBM will also setup a swap box at school for children to exchange books when they finish reading. The programme has targeted to provide 170,000 age appropriate books to 50,000 children and 30,000 teaching materials to 2,000 teachers.
- 102 With MGD support, Reading and Literacy Needs assessment will be conducted at the beginning of each academic year for Grade 1 students by WFP and PI with support from DESB. DESB staff will be trained to assess the proficiency levels of children using approved tools from DPPE. The exercise will be repeated at the end of the session to measure the progress made by the students and the efficacy of the Literacy activities designed under the programme.

MGD 2.7.2: Improved Policy and Regulatory Framework

- 103 **Capacity Building:** For promoting life-skills and improved nutrition through awareness, WFP is working towards integrating nutrition and school agriculture with curriculum for primary education. Based on the results from a pilot implementation of the integrated curriculum, the revised curriculum will be made for nationwide deployment.

- 104 WFI will support the formulation of SMAP 2016-2020 & 2020-2025, progressing review of NNSAP and provide inputs to the current policy on handover of MGD_SFP and upscaling of school meals cross the country.
- 105 WFP will continue its engagement with Laos National Assembly members as they would be involved with formulation of social safety net policy in which school meals is a tool and thus ensure necessary allocation of resources. As part of this engagement, WFP will facilitate field trips for National Assembly members to both the MGD and NSMP supported schools. These visits along with workshops would help in understanding the nuances of school feeding, school agriculture and nutrition which in turn would support the handover process and upscaling of the school meals to all schools.
- 106 **Literacy:** As noted above, PI is envisaged to work with Research Institute of Educational Science (RIES) towards implementing the “Teaching Lao to non-Lao students”. The modules are part of the Lao speaking course approved by Department of Pre-Primary and Primary education (DPPE) and piloted in six provinces by BEQUAL.
- 107 Underpinned by SDGs and aligned with National Socio-Economic Development Plan, the Education Sector Development Plan (2016-2020) aims at measuring the progress made by children in becoming proficient in reading. With MGD support, WFP will provide inputs to RIES efforts of measuring reading proficiency of students by conducting Reading and Literacy Needs assessment for Grade 1 children at the beginning and end of the academic year.

MGD 2.7.3: Increased Government Support

- 108 **Capacity Building:** To assist GoL towards continuation of SFP as part of NSMP, number of capacity development activities has been included as part of the SFP programme design. These activities will be conducted at different levels of the government and would help in instilling confidence among the department staff for supporting the school meals. GoL has ensured that departmental staffs and community level government people also participates in the trainings and workshops. The programme has adopted a cluster level training model. Under this model, trainings will be held at the community level or at within a cluster of 6 villages (*kumban* village clusters) for all 1446 schools and the EDF supported schools also.
- 109 Different departments (MoES, MPI, MAF) of GoL are involved with NSMP and have expressed support for continuing with school meals programme. GoL has already formed the Education Sector Technical working Group on school meals in 2015. Ministerial staffs are going for exchange visits to understand the community owned school meals in other parts of the world.
- 110 As part of the handover process, GoL has assured that with gradual decreasing of the MGD financial support, government would increase the spending to meet the financial requirements of school meals. In due course, the financial allocation will be included as part of the country’s budget, thus demonstrating the importance accorded to school meals.

MGD 2.7.4: Increased Engagement of Local Organizations and Community Groups

- 111 **Nutrition:** Under the activity of supporting school agriculture, the SFP envisages for an increased engagement of the community for ensuring functioning of the school gardens and greenhouses. About 54 schools reported that communities have been contributing for school lunch through supply of vegetables, eggs and meat and by giving time for cooking. Building on the achievements of FY14 award, the SFP now intends to continue support to 940 schools during the programme period. 10 more schools will be supported by EDF in Khammuane province for developing school gardens under the current award. Further, to overcome the challenges of flooding and low temperatures in the higher altitude provinces, WFP through SFP funding, will construct greenhouses that will ensure availability of vegetables throughout the year.
- 112 The school gardens and greenhouses will help in generating knowledge on dietary/ crop-diversity, climate change, low cost agricultural solution among students and communities. To ensure that the school also benefits from the knowledge being transferred to community members on low cost agricultural solutions, people undergoing the training are mandated to provide timber and time for developing the school gardens and greenhouses and also share a part of their surplus produce to

the schools. Thus while the individuals learn and apply the modern agricultural techniques on their own farm, the school also benefits from receiving the surplus from these individuals.

- 113 VEDCs from 45 schools reported to have been trained by WFP under MGD-SFP FY14. Under MGD-SFP FY17, DESB will train up to seven master trainers from each of the VEDCs. Based on the 'School Garden Training Guidelines (SGTG)', these trainings will be conducted on an annual basis. These master trainers will then oversee the construction of school gardens and greenhouses in accordance with SGTG in their respective locations.
- 114 To improve access to animal protein, WFP under FY14 award had supported establishment of fishponds and promotion of small livestock in model schools. Under the current award, the programme envisages to expand this support to other schools. The support will be dependent on the interest shown by communities towards maintaining the fishponds and the livestock for usage and growth.
- 115 **Safe Food Preparation and Storage:** Continuing with approach from FY14 award, the new SFP award will also engage community for construction and rehabilitation of kitchen, dining area, storage and hand washing stations in the schools. VEDC will oversee the construction work to be undertaken by the community. While with community participation, kitchen has been constructed in all 1146 schools under the FY14 award, 860 schools still lacks dining space. For both type of infrastructures, new constructions as well as retrofits, WFP will provide nails, zin sheets and hinges under SFP while community will provide timber and labour. Further, under the programme, WFP will also encourage communities to make savings for meeting expenses of future repairs to these structures. Communities will also be encouraged to participate in school meals programme by contributing vegetables or cash for sustaining the programme.
- 116 From primary study it emerges that about 90 percent parents have contributed for the school meal, either in cash or in kind. The proportion of contributors is higher in north (95%) than in south (76%). The top two contributions were in the form of labour for cooking the school meal (72%) and providing vegetables (68%). Other forms of contribution included labour for constructing kitchen, dining space, storage, school garden, and contributing cash. On an average, household contribution towards school meal range between 27,000 kip (reported by school head) and 33,000 kips (reported by parents).
- 117 **Capacity Building:** With support from SFP, WFP will initiate a multi-level capacity building exercise to enable the stakeholders to continue the school meal programme without external support. The trainings will encompass commodity management, safe cooking and storage, health nutrition, programme management and will be conducted with government (national, provincial and district level) and communities.
- 118 National and international exchange visits for government staff have been carried out. WFP has facilitated an exchange programme for MPI, MoES, and MAF officials to Brazil. This has encouraged the GoL in detailing out a clearer oversight of roles and responsibilities at the national, provincial, and district levels. WFP, in collaboration with MoES, is also attempting to set up a School Meals Centre of Excellence. Joint training programmes are planned to build capacities of GoL officials on school agriculture and nutrition, education, hand-washing, and hygiene, using a ToT model.
- 119 To ensure sustainability of SFP, WFP has drawn up a strategy that focusses on building capacities of VEDCs. To empower the VEDC members, capacity development activities like training, workshops and exchange programmes have been included. Exchange visits for VEDC members have been conducted in the last quarter of 2017 to draw lessons from the challenges encountered and the solutions adopted.
- 120 Towards ensuring a smooth handover of SFP, WFP is adopting a three-step approach: a) assessing the community strength of managing SFP, b) analysis of results, and c) provisioning targeted support package. Discussions with WFP reveal that the community strength assessment for managing SFP are nearly complete for majority schools (1200 of the 1456 schools) till 2017. Further, packages of support have been identified and targeted. WFP will be supported by LWU in the training of women in villages and Lao Front for National Development for monitoring and implementation support for the programme.

- 121 The MGD programme also envisages informal partnerships between schools and farmer groups for ensuring a continuous supply of vegetables. The role of WFP monitoring assistants (MA) will expand and they will become the change agents for the community. The MAs will also be responsible for community mobilisation.
- 122 **Literacy:** Continuing with the idea of promoting culture of reading habits, and expanding reading opportunities beyond the school boundaries, WFO along with BBM and PI plans to organise reading festivals and camps in the villages. Adopting a holistic approach, the aim is to first increase awareness among DESB staff, teachers, and communities on the concepts, rationale and approach about the camps. The community engagement will include both parents and non-parents so as to build ownership about these camps among the community and further engaging interested individuals as community volunteers for taking forward the literacy agenda. These volunteers along with teachers will be provided specialised training so that they can conduct the cluster based training exercises.
- 123 To promote reading at home and also to aid parents to support their children with reading at home, parenting awareness sessions will be conducted three times in a year in each community. As a follow-up to the festival and awareness sessions, district wide dissemination workshops would be held to assess the reading progress being made in the communities and action plans will be drawn for the next sessions. To encourage volunteers', incentives will be given to them. The programme will also supply books and other reading materials that would be available at the community and household level.

Annex X Other Performance Indicators

The following indicators have not been included in the main report as relevant data for award cycle FY17-21 was not available.

USDA Standard Indicator Number	Results Framework	Performance Indicator
3	MGD 1.1.5	Number of school administrators and officials in target schools who demonstrate the use of new techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance
4	MGD 1.1.5	Number of school administrators and officials trained or certified as a result of USDA assistance
11	MGD 1.4.3 & 1.4.4	Value of new public and private sector investments leveraged as a result of USDA assistance
12	MGD 1.4.2	Number of educational policies, regulations and/or administrative procedures in each of the following stages of development as a result of USDA assistance: Stage 1: Analysed Stage 2: Drafted and presented for public/stakeholder consultation Stage 3: Presented for legislation/decreed Stage 4: Passed/Approved Stage 5: Passed for which implementation has begun
25	MGD 2.7.2	Number of child health and nutrition policies, regulations, or administrative procedures in each of the following stages of development as a result of USDA assistance: - Stage 1: Analysed - Stage 2: Drafted and presented for public/stakeholder consultation - Stage 3: Presented for legislation/decreed - Stage 4: Passed/Approved - Stage 5: Passed for which implementation has begun
1	MGD 1.3.1&1.3.3	Percent of students having reduced absenteeism due to USDA support
3	MGD 2.1 & 2.3	Number of climate change installations (green houses, irrigation systems etc.) established
4	MGD 2.1 & 2.4	Number of fishponds/ livestock schemes supported
8	MGD 1.1.2 & 1.1.3 & 1.1.5 & 1.3.5 & 2.1&2.3	Number of children (boys and girls, 10 years +) benefitting from literacy campaigns, books, and new teaching material
9	MGD 1.1.2 & 1.1.3 & 1.1.5, 1.3.5 & 2.1&2.3	Number of schools where Nutrition and School Agriculture teaching (curriculum) material is being applied
10	MGD 1.1.6	Number of teacher instruction sets/manuals, guidance's, teaching material and books
11	MGD 1.4.1 & 1.4.2 & 1.4.3 & 1.4.4 & 2,7.1 & 2.7.2 & 2.7.3 & 2.7.5	Number of platforms established to track WFP community package implementation.
12	MGD 1.4.1 & 1.4.2 & 1.4.3 & 1.4.4 & 2,7.1 & 2.7.2 & 2.7.3 & 2.7.6	Degree (in %) of WFP's Community Strength Assessment Tool (CST) being adopted, included and implemented by MoES monitoring system: - MoES agrees to adopt - MoES include and apply into their monitoring system - CST data in MoES monitoring system is being collected
13	MGD 1.4.1 & 1.4.2 & 1.4.3 & 1.4.4 & 2,7.1 & 2.7.2 & 2.7.3 & 2.7.8	Number of community mobilisation activities in village
15	MGD 1.4.1 & 1.4.2 & 1.4.3 & 1.4.4 & 2,7.1 & 2.7.2 & 2.7.3 & 2.7.10	Number of Government people trained on governance, roles, and responsibilities.

USDA Standard Indicator Number	Results Framework	Performance Indicator
16	MGD 1.4.1 & 1.4.2 & 1.4.3 & 1.4.4 & 2,7.1 & 2.7.2 & 2.7.3 & 2.7.11	Number of representatives from government institutions that facilitate training of VEDC.
17	MGD 1.4.1 & 1.4.2 & 1.4.3 & 1.4.4 & 2,7.1 & 2.7.2 & 2.7.3 & 2.7.13	Number of study visits organised to learn about the handover from WFP to Government and how to expand school meals nationwide
18	MGD 1.4.1 & 1.4.2 & 1.4.3 & 1.4.4 & 2,7.1 & 2.7.2 & 2.7.3 & 2.7.14	Number of Advocacy activities aimed at decision makers promoting school meals

Annex Y Theory of Change

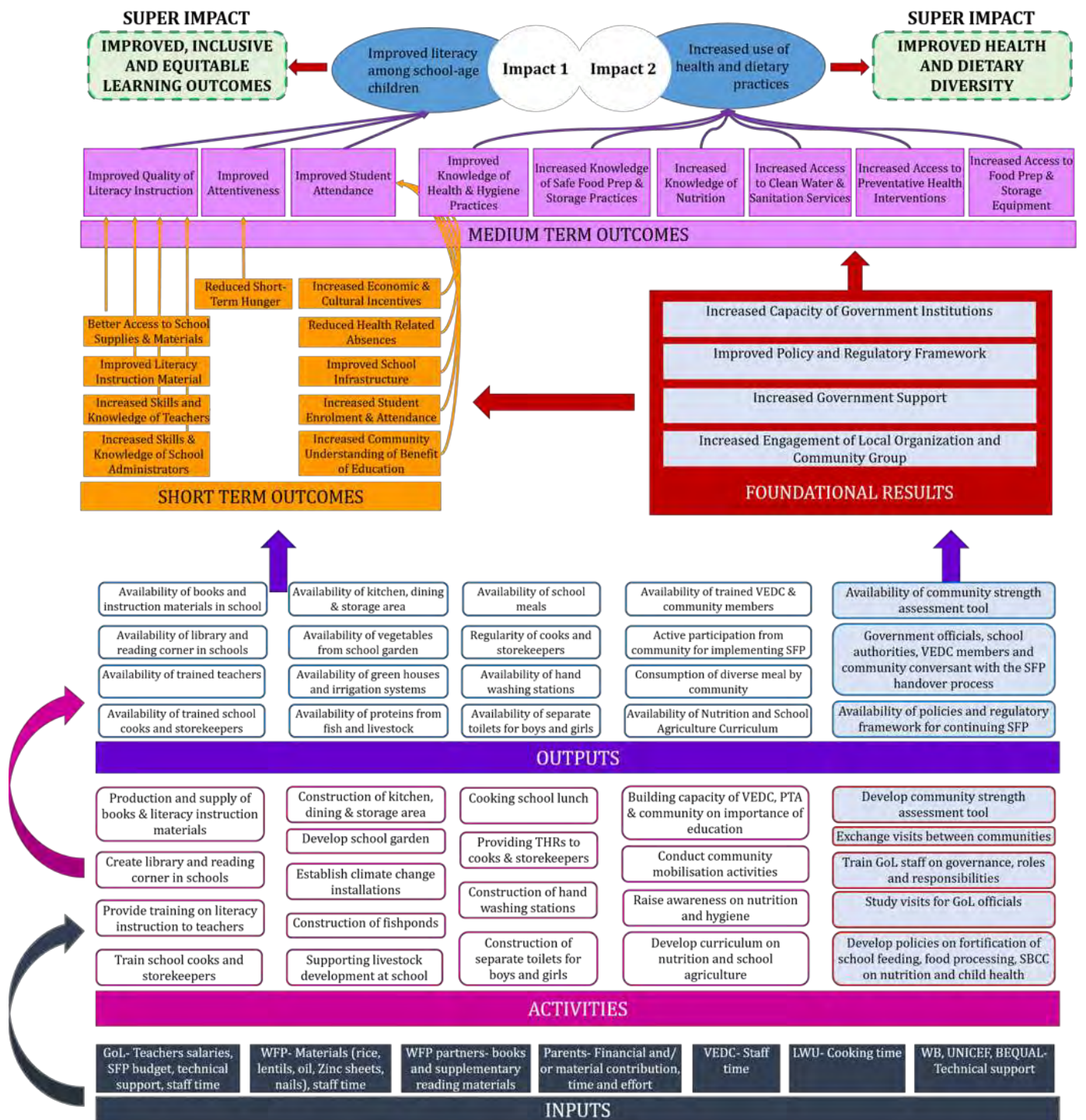


Figure 21: Implementation and result elements of Theory of Change

[New Delhi, October 2108]

[WFP Lao PDR Country Office]

