



Background

Lao PDR made impressive gains in water and sanitation access during its commitment to the Millennium Development Goals. From 1995 to 2015, access to improved water supply increased from 40 to 76%, and improved sanitation access increased from 21 to 74%. The overall gains in access belie the persistent inequalities that disproportionately affect the poor and the rural population (particularly in areas without road access). Institutional water supply and sanitation coverage also remains low: 48% of primary schools, and a quarter of health facilities do not have access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities.

Chronic malnutrition (stunting) levels also remain among the highest in the world. About 33% of children under five are estimated to be stunted. Progress toward reducing stunting can be enhanced through coordinated multisectoral approaches that effectively address the four key underlying determinants of nutritional status— food security, access to health care, child care practices, and access to water and sanitation. The Scaling-Up Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene Project is part of the current World Bank portfolio and supports multi-sector convergence. This and all other projects that are a part of the multi-sectoral convergence are designed to deliver nutrition-specific and nutrition sensitive interventions that are known to impact the underlying, basic, and immediate causes of malnutrition, which together lead to a reduction in child stunting.



About the Project

The project aims to provide access to improved water supply, and sanitation and hygiene services in selected areas identified for nutrition convergence, and strengthen the capacity of selected institutions to improve service delivery. This will be achieved through:

- **Delivery of infrastructure and sustainability of water supply and sanitation:** using a community driven approach, while integrating water supply, sanitation, hygiene, and nutrition behavior change to assure the ongoing sustainability of water supply and sanitation interventions. The project will cover villages and their associated schools and health centers.
- **Sustainability of community water supply, sanitation and hygiene:** strengthening the institutional capability of Ministry of Health to support the sustainability of the community managed water supply and sanitation systems; establishing monitoring and evaluation systems; and developing guidelines to support the sustainability and scaling up of sanitation and hygiene activities.
- **Implementation support and sector development:** overall project management support, including monitoring and evaluation; technical support, financial management, social and environmental safeguards; and other project implementation activities.

Beneficiaries

The project will target about 450 villages and a total population of approximately **192,000**, of which about 73% are ethnic groups and 50% are women. It is expected to benefit about **30,144** children under the age of 5 years. The project will cover about 55% of the total beneficiaries targeted under the nutrition convergence approach.

Locations

Xieng Khouang, Houaphan, Oudomxay, and Phongsaly

Financier

World Bank (International Development Association):
\$25 million

Implementing Agencies

- Ministry of Public Works and Transport
- Ministry of Health

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March 14, 2019

Closing Date

March 31, 2024

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