

# Lao People's Democratic Republic



Joined Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement: April 2011

National multi-stakeholder platform for nutrition: National Information Platform for Nutrition

SUN government focal point/country coordinator: Dr. Phonesavanh Keonakhone, Director of National Nutrition Centre, Ministry of Health

## COUNTRY NUTRITION STATUS

### → Annual country nutrition indicators from the Global Nutrition Report:

<https://globalnutritionreport.org/resources/nutrition-profiles/asia/south-eastern-asia/lao-peoples-democratic-republic>

### ● National multi-stakeholder platform (MSP)

Date established: 2011

### ● MSP annual action plan exists

### ● Subnational nutrition coordination mechanism

Subnational MSPs exist

### ● National nutrition plan

National Plan of Action on Nutrition (NPAN) 2021–2025 –

<https://scalingupnutrition.org/resource-library/national-nutrition-plan-lao-peoples-democratic-republic>

### ● Advocacy and communications framework/plan

### SUN networks in-country presence

● SUN Civil Society Network

● SUN Business Network

● UN Nutrition

● SUN Academia Network

● SUN Donor Network

● Others: e.g. youth, parliamentarian, media

### Finance for nutrition

● Resource mobilization strategy exists

● Budget tracking exercise done this year

● Funding gaps identified this year

● Domestic expenditures on nutrition tracked

● Yes ● In process ● No ● Costed ● M&E framework

## COUNTRY PRIORITIES 2022

→ Disseminating the NPAN 2021–2025 to all provinces and integrating it into national budget allocations to implement priority nutrition interventions.

→ Continuing to ensure that the decree on the marketing of breast milk substitutes is in place and effectively implemented.

→ Continuing to train health staff on the integrated management of acute malnutrition in target health-care facilities.

## PROGRESS TOWARDS

### SUN 3.0 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES (SO)

#### → SO.1 Strengthen and sustain strong policy and advocacy environments

The Government has endorsed the decree on the National Nutrition Committee. The rate of children under 5 years who are underweight should remain at 19 per cent of the target population, while the rate of children under 5 years with stunting should decrease to 31 per cent. Infant and young child feeding and maternal nutrition food fortification, including salt iodization, will be promoted. As in other parts of the world, the country experienced a period of inactivity in initiating new programmes. However, preparations for the Nutrition for Growth (N4G) Summit and Food Systems Summit generated new energy and motivated all those concerned to cooperate and work together towards a common goal.

#### → SO.2 Develop and align shared country priorities for action

The multi-sectoral nutrition platform (which includes the Ministries of Health, Agriculture and Forestry, Education and Sports, Planning and Investment and mass media) engages with development partners through meetings, forums, work agreements and partnerships to ensure that nutrition resources are aligned with the NPAN 2021–2025, which aims to address high levels of undernutrition in the country. Nutrition stakeholder national budget allocations have increased for some priority nutrition actions (e.g. procurement of nutrition commodities and capacity-building). International donors have allocated funds to NPAN 2021–2025 priorities.

#### → SO.3 Build and strengthen country capacity

Government officials were trained to ensure that various nutrition-related knowledge and skills are available locally. The Department of Hygiene and Health Promotion requested the provincial health department, including health-care facilities nationwide, to apply the guidelines for the management of acute malnutrition during the COVID-19 pandemic. A nutrition centre, in cooperation with a European Union/United Nations Children's Fund-funded drug and medical equipment supply centre, provided diagnostic and management services for children with acute malnutrition, especially to treat paediatric malnutrition and severe acute malnutrition, both in outpatient and inpatient screening settings.

#### → SO.4 Ensure governance of SUN that promotes country leadership and responsibilities of government, aligns the resources of all SUN Movement stakeholders behind country priorities and strengthens 360 mutual accountability

The Ministry of Health has developed strategies and guidelines on nutrition, such as the NPAN 2021–2025, which involved MSP members. Thanks to ongoing donor support, nutrition coordination and joint advocacy has improved through networks and other mechanisms. In addition, useful nutrition tools have been developed for implementation and dissemination, which helped stakeholders work together. Training was held on infant and young child feeding, including during the pandemic, and national nutrition information systems were strengthened at the national and subnational levels for effective monitoring and accountability of nutrition actions.