

# Xieng Nguen Area Development Programme

## Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR)



### Geographical Location

Xieng Nguen District, Luang Prabang province, Lao PDR

### Brief Information

People Group: Lao Loum (21.2 percent), Lao Theung (58.6 percent) and Lao Soung (20.2 percent)

Direct Beneficiaries: 31,467 persons

Children in programme: 2000 children

Project Lifespan: 2002 – 2017 (15 years)

Project Budget: SGD \$7,524,000

### Project Goals

The overall goal of Xieng Nguen Area Development Programme (ADP) is to alleviate poverty of the population, in particular the children by decreasing the number of households living under the poverty line from 28 percent to less than 5 percent through various integrated development interventions.

Through this programme, World Vision also seeks to improve the food, health and general livelihood conditions of the people in Xieng Nguen District in a sustainable manner by increasing and diversifying the food production, improving mother and child healthcare, and building and encouraging local capacity to address issues of poverty.

With the support and care of Singapore Child Sponsors, World Vision aims to help the children and families attain self-reliance by September 2017.



<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/maps/asia/laos/>

Map of Lao People's Democratic Republic

### Area of project implementation



★ Luang Prabang Province

## Background

The Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) is a land locked country inhabited officially by 47 ethnic groups. It has borders with Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar and China. According to the National Human Development Report presented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for Lao PDR at the end of 2002, Lao PDR belongs to one of the 49 "Least Developed Countries" (LDC's) of the world. Lao PDR is ranked as 143rd out of 173 countries in terms of human development. It is believed that poverty is very much a rural issue and over 80 percent of the population still lives in rural areas and more than 40 percent is estimated to live in poverty. This poverty is very much a deprivation of essential assets and opportunities to which every human being should be entitled to. It is associated with insufficient income, insufficient nutrition, illiteracy and lack of socio-economic security. A large number of people living in remote areas of the country cannot easily access resources such as schools and health facilities.

The Lao Government has intentionally pursued the policy of developing the least developed areas in remote provinces. Although the development status of Xieng Nguen district has improved a lot during the past years, a large number of villages are still unreached. Therefore the Provincial authorities welcome technical and financial assistance from Non-Governmental Organisations and international organisations to help alleviate poverty and provide long-term development in this district.

The people have an income of less than USD \$8.50 per month (about USD \$100 per year) and have poor housing conditions. Malaria, dengue and diarrhea are still very common problems in the community and only 9 percent of the households say they have access to a toilet. The availability of information especially for women of ethnic minority groups is a problem and needs improvement. Low literacy rates and the traditionally low status of women contribute to this situation.

Recognising the needs in the area, World Vision started Xieng Nguen Area Development Programme in the Xieng Nguen district to help the community become self-sustainable through various intervention programmes.

## Key Challenges

1. Lack of adequate food for survival;
2. Poor healthcare and sanitation in communities;
3. Children's lack of opportunity in education & lack of means to education; and
4. Lack of a community organisation structure.



## Key Interventions

### Food Security & Economic Development

A large section of the population does not produce adequate rice to be self-sufficient at a domestic level, hence the community's income is low and sources of income are still limited to the sale of rice, a few cash crops and some livestock. Through the programme, World Vision seeks to increase and diversify sources of household income and food security through activities such as:

- Training farmers in new production methods to improve rice production for better wet seasons harvest;
- Teaching 25 percent of farmers to adopt elements of the Slope Agriculture Land Techniques (SALT) for soil improvement and non-rice crop production to increase non-rice production such as vegetables and fruits, as alternatives during suitable seasons;
- Training the village vet to work in each target village to improve animal production;
- Ensuring 75 percent of large animals (buffalo and cattle) are vaccinated regularly;
- Improving feeds and fodder crops for animals;
- Establishing community rice banks or community-based food security management schemes as necessary; and
- Implementing Food for Work activities, an activity that give beneficiaries access to food and resources for production and marketing as they participate in various kinds of work to help in the sustainable development of their own community.

### Health, Sanitation & Water

Malaria, dengue and diarrhoea are very common problems in the community and only nine percent of the households say they have access to a toilet. The community has high infant mortality rates and many women lack knowledge on health and early childhood care. Hence, through the programme, World Vision seeks to improve the health of villagers through activities such as:

- Providing nutrition training, supplementary feeding and support to vulnerable children;
- Providing regular check-ups for mothers;
- Equipping mothers-to-be on with knowledge on childbirth and childcare;
- Improving health facilities;
- Providing training for health staff;
- Introducing a mosquito net revolving fund to make more nets and net dipping systems available to the households in the communities to be protected against malaria;
- Conducting HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns in 30 villages;
- Assessing the needs of the community and installing gravity fed eater systems where necessary and possible;
- Providing training to water management committees; and
- Assessing the needs in target communities and helping community members to improve their sanitation facilities.



## Key Interventions

### Education

The poverty of the target population impacts their education level. In some areas in particular along the Khan River education facilities are very poor. Permanent school buildings are hardly in place, and the existing facilities are very basic. Many children are unable to attend school due to poverty. Hence, through the programme, World Vision seeks to improve the education level of children by increasing school enrolment and decreasing the number of children dropping out through the following activities:

- Assessing needs for repair and provide additional equipment to school(s) where necessary;
- Appraising the quality of education to evaluate what can be improved in the school(s);
- Providing teachers with training and members of parent associations to encourage and advocate education;
- Constructing pre-primary schools and other levels of schools that are required;
- Providing equipment for newly constructed school(s); and
- Providing uniform for students.

### Community Organisation

For a sustainable improvement in livelihood securities of the people in Xieng Nguen District, the community needs to have the capacity to address and manage issues of poverty and their own community's development. Hence, World Vision seeks to encourage the community and build the local capacity to manage poverty issues by improving villages' understanding on the structures for sustainable development through activities such as:

- Setting up a Village Development Committee (VDC);
- Training villagers who are part of the development committee in community development issues;
- Assisting in economic development by actively support village participation through the management of credit schemes to give everyone equal access to capital so they can set up their own enterprises;
- Developing community plans with the community
- Training a committee to manage village funds
- Facilitating the use of funds in the community
- Conducting a study on how the quality of village development committee management can be improved; and
- Evaluating on gender, development and training in the community to seek improvement in these areas.

### Conclusion

Through these community interventions, World Vision aims to alleviate poverty of the population, particularly of children, by decreasing the number of households living under the poverty line from 28 percent to less than 5 percent and strengthening the leadership in the community by increasing their self-esteem and developing their potential to manage their own development process, moving them towards making sustainable change, development and building a better future for their children.

With the support and care of Singapore Child Sponsors, World Vision aims to help the children and families attain self-reliance by September 2017. The children and families in Xieng Nguen ADP can only do this together with your help!

Thank you for walking this journey of faith and transformation with the children, families and World Vision!