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# LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC COUNTRY PROFILE

As Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) looks to play a greater role with its neighbors – it borders Burma, Cambodia, China, Thailand and Vietnam – challenges remain in helping improve health and nutrition among women and children as well as ensuring that people with disabilities receive the quality care they need to contribute to the country's future.

USAID works to reduce child stunting in targeted areas of Lao PDR and supports women, men, girls and boys with physical disabilities to gain free access to prosthetic, orthotics and physical therapy. We are also helping modernize the country's economy, promote sustainable development and biodiversity conservation, and assist victims of unexploded ordnance. As expanded global connectivity further opens Lao PDR's borders, USAID works to mitigate the spread of infectious diseases and pandemic threats.

## OUR WORK

According to a 2011 Lao Government survey, 44 percent of children under five are stunted due to limited access to nutritious foods and sanitation. USAID programs in Lao PDR help to improve inclusive economic growth and trade and address key climate change, environmental and health and nutrition issues. USAID also promotes greater inclusion and engagement of people with disabilities by providing quality prosthetics and orthotics services and physical and occupational therapies.

PHOTO CREDIT: RICHARD NYBERG/USAID

## HEALTH AND NUTRITION

USAID helps Lao PDR respond to infectious diseases, including HIV and AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and pandemic threats such as avian influenza. The country is strengthening its response to tuberculosis based on findings from a USAID-supported study. Other key programs promote nutrition, water and sanitation hygiene, as well as maternal and child health to address high mortality and malnutrition rates. USAID assistance has also helped women and ethnic minorities in remote villages gain access to disability services and strengthened the referrals process through the country's health system.

## ECONOMIC GROWTH AND TRADE

To promote a diversified economy and sustainable, broadly-shared equitable growth, USAID is helping officials improve the country's trade and investment-related laws and regulations. USAID's programs engage Lao PDR Government ministries, the National Assembly and the private sector in policy and trade promotion activities to help meet Association of Southeast Asian Nations Economic Community commitments.

## GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT

USAID supports improving forest management practices that reduce carbon emissions from land use and assists communities in becoming more resilient to the adverse impacts of climate change. Lao PDR officials increasingly factor in environmental and social considerations as they plan for major infrastructure development projects thanks to USAID support. USAID also raises awareness on illegal wildlife trade and supports the Lao PDR Government Wildlife Enforcement Network's efforts to combat it.



USAID Regional Development Mission for Asia Mission Director Beth Paige visits a nutrition and sanitation project in Lao PDR.

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Veterinary officials in Lao PDR conduct regular surveillance to rein in pandemic threats.

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