

# Lao People's Democratic Republic

## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Thematic Report 2018 - Grant No SC149903



© UNICEF Laos/2018

Prepared by

UNICEF Lao PDR

March 2019

unicef  | for every child

## Table of Contents

Acronyms.....	ii
Situation Analysis.....	1
Strategic Context 2017-2021 .....	1
Results Achieved with Thematic Fund .....	2
Challenges/Bottlenecks.....	5
Way Forward.....	5
Acknowledgement.....	5
Annex 1: Financial Report .....	7
Annex 2: COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY .....	9

## ACRONYMS

---

CATS	Community Approach to Total Sanitation
CLTS	Community Led Total Sanitation
DWAp	District Wide Approach
JSR	Joint Sector Review
Lao PDR	Lao People's Democratic Republic
LSIS	Lao Social Indicator Survey
LWU	Lao Women's Union
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MFNSAP	Multi-sectoral Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MoH	Ministry of Health
ODF	Open Defecation Free
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SWA	Sanitation and Water for All
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WHO	World Health Organization

## SITUATION ANALYSIS

---

Lao PDR successfully met the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) targets on water and sanitation and has continued to attain more progress between 2011 and 2017. 83.9% of the population now have access to improved drinking water sources compared to 70% in 2012. The national average of people using improved sanitation facilities has grown to 73.8% (66.4% in rural compared to 95.4% in urban setting). Half of the country's population now have handwashing stations at home, complete with soap, to maintain cleanliness and avoid the spread of diseases.

Despite this important progress, challenges and disparities persist. Only 78.3 % of people in rural areas and 58.4% from the poorest quintile drink from improved water sources, compared to 96.7 % in urban settings. 32.6% of rural population and 4.25 % of urban population defecate in the open. Among those who practice open defecation, 71.8% are from the poorest quintile. In absolute numbers, this means that 1 million Lao people still don't have access to improved water and 1.5 million defecate in the open. The burden is carried mainly by poor ethnic groups living in rural areas. In addition, only 27.9% of children's (0-2 years) faeces are disposed of safely and 71.9% of those disposed unsafely are thrown to the garbage as they are considered "not harmful". There is, thus, room for improvement in terms of promotion of hygiene behaviors, like hand washing with soap at critical times.

In terms of water quality, as indicated by LSIS II in 2017, 86.3% of samples tested at household level and 83.1% tested at source have been found positive with the e-Coli bacteria – an indicator of faecal contamination. This means that a high percentage of population are at risk because of contaminated water which can cause outbreaks of diarrhoea and serious infections, especially for children whose immune system is still developing.<sup>1</sup>

In relation to other sectors, access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services in schools remains an issue. Only 66% of the 8,857 primary schools have both water supply and latrine facilities.<sup>2</sup>

Since there is a strong association between WASH and diarrhoea, underweight and stunting, WASH has been recommended as one of the nutrition-sensitive interventions in the Lao PDR's Multi-Sectoral Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan (MFNSAP: 2014-2020) with a key focus on:

- 1) community water supply systems;
- 2) elimination of open defecation through Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approach;
- 3) household level water treatment and safe storage.

## STRATEGIC CONTEXT 2017-2021

---

The Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and Climate Change Resilience programme is guided by UNICEF's Global WASH Strategy (2016-2030) and the Strategic Plan.

As part of the Country Programme 2017-2021, the programme is implemented through the 2017-2018 multi-year work plan signed between UNICEF, the Ministry of Health (MoH), and the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES). Planning and implementation of WASH programme interventions at national and sub-

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Lao Social Indicator Survey (LSIS) II 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Source: Education Management Information System (EMIS) 2018.

national levels with these two ministries are supported by the Lao Women's Union (LWU), a mass organisation with presence in every village of the country.

The WASH programme consists of 3 components - Outputs:

- 1) WASH in Schools and Early Childhood Education Centres,
- 2) WASH in Communities,
- 3) WASH in Emergencies and Climate Change Resilience.

The programme operates within the Government framework and seeks to leverage resources to scale up decentralized WASH approaches. UNICEF plays an important role in supporting its national counterparts in strengthening service delivery and capacity building at all levels.

Areas of cooperation include:

- a. Supporting communities and districts to improve sanitation, eliminate open defecation through Community Approaches to Total Sanitation, and declare communities/villages in Lao PDR "Open Defecation Free (ODF)". Taking advantage of the transformative process of achieving 'open defecation free' status, this will promote hand-washing with soap, household level water treatment and safe storage;
- b. Ensuring that communities, schools and health centres have access to safe water, with an emphasis on sustainability;
- c. Supporting improved gender-sensitive, sanitation and hygiene facilities for schools and health centres. All supported activities will focus on the most remote and disaster-prone areas.

At national level, the WASH programme is working to support policy implementation and advocacy in order to build an enabling environment. For delivery of WASH services, UNICEF is working in priority provinces (7 out of a total of 18 provinces).

In 2018, the programme continued its support to the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education and Sports, as well as concerned sub-national departments, to lead, coordinate, and facilitate rural WASH. Together with partners, UNICEF supported capacity development, disaster risk reduction, and advocacy for increased resources for the WASH sector.

UNICEF, as a key player of the Technical Working Group (TWG), is forging partnerships with other development partners and NGOs working in the WASH sector, under the guidance of the Ministry of Health. Key partners include WHO, UN-Habitat, World Bank, JICA, World Vision, Plan International, Netherland's Development Organization (SNV), GIZ, and Helvetas, among others.

## RESULTS ACHIEVED WITH THEMATIC FUND

---

The thematic funds were utilized to support upstream work at policy level and for expanding interventions as part of the WASH comprehensive approach to benefit women and children with improved hygiene and sanitation. UNICEF utilized the funds focusing on:

### **National Strategy on Rural WASH**

UNICEF supported a series of meetings to finalize the Rural WASH strategy. This includes a national consultation meeting to review and obtain feedback on areas for improvement from the provincial health

partners. The strategy is now with the Minister of Health for the endorsement. With the thematic funds, UNICEF also supported the development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for Community WASH Committees (WASHCOMs). The SOP are finalized and waiting for the MoH endorsement. The SOP defines the procedure to follow to establish Village WASHCOM, including the roles and responsibilities, as well as the contribution of the users, the village regulation for WASH activities, and the Operation and Maintenance (O&M) of WASH facilities.

### **Sanitation and Water for All (SWA)**

UNICEF provided technical and financial support to the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Public Works and Transport to prepare for the 2019 SWA Ministerial Meeting in Costa Rica and participate in the SWA technical meeting in Bangkok. Continued collaboration with these two ministries is essential as they are responsible ministries for urban and rural WASH. Advocacy efforts and upstream support for the SWA commitments have resulted in the development of an overarching WASH policy followed by a National Strategy on WASH.

### **Scaling up Sanitation through District Wide Approach (DWA)**

UNICEF continued to support the DWA to eliminate open defecation in Borikhamxay province which was the first province in the country to declare two districts ODF. Towards the end of 2018 another two districts were declared ODF bringing the total up to four ODF districts in Borikhamxay. The thematic funds have allowed UNICEF to support the development of ODF plans for all districts and a roadmap for the province to move the agenda forward. The province has set the target to declare the three remaining districts ODF by the end of 2019 and declare the whole province ODF by early 2020.

Many provinces are now visiting Borikhamxay to learn from their experience, especially about the DWA and categorization of villages to determine appropriate modality of implementation.

Saravane province is one of the provinces learning from the success of Borikhamxay and is currently developing district and provincial ODF plans with the support of UNICEF.

The thematic funds also supported the revision of the CATS/CLTS facilitator guideline. Together with the WASH partners, the guideline was revised to take into account the lessons learned on DWA and to better localize the content to the Lao context.

### **Raising Awareness**

The programme has used key platforms for raising awareness on the importance of WASH on Menstrual Hygiene Day, Global Handwashing Day and World Children's Day. The messages were disseminated through different channels using social media, TV, radio and newspapers.





## Comprehensive Approach to WASH Service Delivery

The thematic funds have allowed the programme to promote a comprehensive approach to WASH service delivery in selected districts including Sephon District of Savanakheth to achieve results for children. The comprehensive approach includes convergence of activities so that the supported villages can benefit from all WASH interventions ranging from hardware to software in schools and communities.

## Programme Monitoring and Support

The thematic funds supported key staff members' salaries and were utilized for project monitoring and supervision of interventions in the field. The WASH team conducted joint monitoring visits with government partners from the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education and Sports to ensure that activities are implemented as planned. Reviews and lessons learned meetings with Government counterparts were organized to facilitate progress updates and planning of activities. The funds received have been essential to deliver results as per targets set in the multi-year workplan.

## CHALLENGES/BOTTLENECKS

---

- The sector investment plans (Government) are not properly implemented, except for urban water supply;
- Inadequate Government annual budget allocations, especially for both rural and urban water supply and sanitation;
- Limited human resource capacity, at national and local levels, for the implementation of water and sanitation projects and for service delivery;
- Inadequate national programme to scale up rural sanitation and hygiene promotion based on tested operational approaches;
- Insufficient viable operation and maintenance arrangements to sustain rural water supply schemes;
- Weak WASH Sector Monitoring & Evaluation systems;
- Work schedule was delayed because Lao PDR was affected by massive flood in 2018.

## WAY FORWARD

---

The following activities will be implemented in 2019:

- WASH Joint Sector Review (3rd JSR): localizing WASH SDGs in the country.
- Development of national sanitation roadmap targeting SDG 6.2.
- Development of National Action Plan to improve the quality of water including the water safety planning.
- Support WASH bottleneck analysis to feed into provincial planning (at least two provinces)
- Upstream policy advocacy and capacity building at national and sub national levels for sustainable WASH services in rural communities.
- Provide support to implement the commitments made by Lao Government in SWA ministerial meeting in Costa Rica in 2019.
- Support sustainable water supply facilities in target communities of selected provinces.
- Promote Rural Sanitation and Hygiene through Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) in selected provinces to stop open defecation, thus contributing to reducing stunting and malnutrition;
- Promote good practices like group hand washing with soap and toilet use and maintenance, among others, to complement the provision of WASH facilities in schools.
- Knowledge management and capacity building (training and learnings) of government staff for WASH basic service delivery.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

---



UNICEF Lao PDR would like to thank the contributing UNICEF National Committees for their valuable support to the WASH sector through this funding. The funds have allowed UNICEF Lao PDR to deliver results for children in the country, especially for those most disadvantaged.

The Thematic funds received have allowed UNICEF to better support Government-led efforts at national and community levels. This in turn is generating more equitable outcomes for WASH programmes, particularly for women and children in Lao PDR.

## ANNEX 1: FINANCIAL REPORT

### 1. Expense by Results Area in Thematic Sector

Fund Category	All Programme Accounts	
Year	2018	
Business Area	Lao People's Dem Rep. - 2460	
Prorated Goal Area	24 Safe and Clean Environment	

Expense	Column Labels				
Row Labels	Other Resources - Emergency	Other Resources - Regular	Regular Resources	Grand Total	
24-01 Water	67	203,024	22,783	225,873	
24-02 Sanitation	68,662	868,172	444,229	1,381,063	
24-03 Disaster Risk Reduction	6	227	31,896	32,128	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>68,734</b>	<b>1,071,422</b>	<b>498,907</b>	<b>1,639,064</b>	

### 2. Thematic expense by Result Area

Fund Category	All Programme Accounts	
Year	2018	
Business Area	Lao People's Dem Rep. - 2460	
Prorated Goal Area	24 Safe and Clean Environment	
Donor Class Level2	Thematic	

Row Labels	Expense
Other Resources - Emergency	438
24-01 Water	67
24-02 Sanitation	366
24-03 Disaster Risk Reduction	6
Other Resources - Regular	410,813
24-01 Water	74,282
24-02 Sanitation	336,532
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>411,252</b>

### 3. Expenses by specific intervention codes

Fund Category	All Programme Accounts	▼
Year	2018	▼
Business Area	Lao People's Dem Rep. - 2460	▼
Prorated Goal Area	24 Safe and Clean Environment	▼
Fund Sub-Category	(Multiple Items)	▼
Row Labels	▼ Expense	
24-01-01 WASH - Enabling environment (policies/strategies, coordination, regulation, financing, planning-monitoring-review, sector capacity development and professionalization)	57,389	
24-01-06 Water supply - rural communities service delivery	145,139	
24-02-04 Sanitation and hygiene - eliminating open defecation in rural communities	216,560	
24-02-08 Sanitation and hygiene - institutions (schools, health carefacilities, ECD centres) including menstrual hygiene management	453,685	
24-02-11 WASH humanitarian cluster/humanitarian sector coordination	84,570	
24-02-99 Technical assistance - Sanitation	352,682	
24-03-02 Disaster risk reduction (including linkage to climate change)	17,708	
26-01-02 Programme reviews (Annual, UNDAF, MTR, etc.)	2,102	
26-02-02 MICS - General	97,779	
26-02-04 Stimulating demand for and capacity to use data	137	
26-02-05 Administrative data, registers and non-MICS household surveys and censuses	6,164	
26-02-08 Programme monitoring	8,646	
26-03-02 Capacity and skills development for social behaviour change	2,912	
26-03-03 Children, adolescent and youth engagement and participation	11,263	
26-03-99 Technical assistance - Cross - sectoral communication for development	16,928	
26-04-01 CO/RO Supply - technical assistance and collaboration in supply chain, procurement of goods and services, and logistics	687	
26-05-05 Evaluation innovation learning, uptake and partnerships forevaluation	2,242	
26-06-01 Parliamentary engagement for policy advocacy	1,591	
26-06-04 Leading advocate	16,122	
26-06-07 Leading brand	5,781	
26-06-09 CRC, CEDAW or CRPD - reporting	16,139	
26-06-12 Learning	2,138	
26-07-01 Operations support to programme delivery	111,531	
27-01-06 HQ and RO technical support to multiple Goal Areas	371	
28-07-04 Management and Operations support at CO	8,799	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,639,064</b>	

## ANNEX 2: COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

### Pakkading district declared Open Defecation Free and a Healthy Model

<https://www.unicef.org/laos/press-releases/pakkading-district-declared-open-defecation-free-and-healthy-model>



© UNICEF Laos/2018/Saykoon

A mother and her daughter are happy to be able to have clean water and a toilet at home.

**PAKKADING, 13 February 2018:** In a ceremony chaired by the Provincial Governor, Kongkeo Xaysongkham, Borikhamxay district, in Pakkading province, has been declared Open Defecation Free. This is the third district in the province, after Thapabhat and Paksan in 2016, which has been able to put an end to this practice.

### Khamkeut District Declared Open Defecation Free and a Healthy Model

<https://www.unicef.org/laos/press-releases/khamkeut-district-declared-open-defecation-free-and-healthy-model>



© UNICEF Laos/2018/Saykoon

**Khamkeut, 20 December 2018** – Khamkeut District, in Borikhamxay Province, has been declared open defecation free (ODF) and a healthy model in a ceremony chaired by the District Governor, Vanvilay Danphoulouang. This is the fourth district in the province which has been able to put an end to this practice after Pakkading in early 2018 and Paksan and Thapabhat in 2016.