

UN COUNTRY

ANNUAL RESULTS REPORT


2022

Lao People's Democratic Republic



UNITED NATIONS
LAO PDR





Under the reformed United Nations development system adopted by United Nations General Assembly Res. 72/279 in 2018, the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) is the most important instrument for planning and implementation of United Nations development activities at country level. It transforms the way that the UN will work with Lao PDR, building a functional platform for greater coordination, coherence, and effectiveness.

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Cover Photo: UNICEF

Vientiane, Lao PDR, February 2023

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CHINA

VIET NAM

MYANMAR

Phongsaly

Luang Namtha

Bokeo

Oudomxay

Luang Prabang

Houaphan

Xayaboury

LAO PEOPLE'S
DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLIC

Xiengkhouang

Xaysomboun

Vientiane

Mekong

Vientiane

Bolikhamxai

Vientiane Prefecture

Khammuan

Savannakhet

THAILAND

Salavan

Sekong

Champasack

Attapeu

CAMBODIA

GULF
OF
TONKIN

GULF
OF
THAILAND

FOREWORD BY THE UN RESIDENT COORDINATOR

With the successful rollout of the national vaccination campaign, 2022 saw the relaxation of most COVID-19 related restrictions, including the re-opening of international borders, and a movement toward economic recovery.

However, no sooner than one shock appeared to be managed, the country was confronted by another. In Lao PDR, as around the world, rapid increases in the cost of fuel, fertilizer, and food, and a global finance crisis posed fresh and urgent challenges to the pursuit of sustainable and inclusive development.

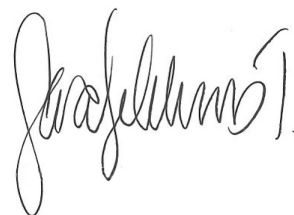
In that challenging context, the UN continued its strong partnership with Lao PDR in tackling some of the most difficult development challenges facing the country and its people, progressing towards shared development goals.

2022 marked the first year of implementation of the Lao PDR-UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2022-2026 (UNSDCF) under a reformed UN development system (UNDS) designed to deliver more integrated, effective, and efficient support in response to multidimensional challenges to sustainable development.

Under this framework, the 25 agencies, funds, and programmes that make up the UN country team (UNCT) have worked to support progress in four critical integrated priority areas: People's Wellbeing; Inclusive Prosperity; Governance and Rule of Law; and Environment, Climate Change, and Resilience. Importantly, this new framework represents a sea change in how the different capacities and expertise from across the UNDS- including non-resident UN entities- are combined to provide the most effective support possible.

This progress report summarizes highlights of 2022 achievements and lessons learned from this new way of working. It shows how we have worked in more integrated ways, seeking higher policy and programmatic coherence in our response to the most pressing needs, taking important steps towards addressing complex challenges in a more transformational manner.

These are the first steps that we will continue to build on over the remaining years of the Cooperation Framework, further strengthening partnerships, and working to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals to which we are all committed.



Ms. Sara Sekkenes Tollefsen
UN resident coordinator

UN COUNTRY TEAM

The United Nations country team (UNCT) in Lao PDR consists of all the 25 UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes serving the country to support the localisation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as well as the additional nationally-adopted SDG18 on 'Lives Safe from UXO' and Lao PDR's national development targets through sustainable and equitable socio-economic development.

The UNCT works as one to help the Government and people of Lao PDR fight poverty by ensuring a rights-based approach to development, supporting the sustainable use of natural resources and preservation of cultural heritage, and promoting human rights, gender equality and good governance. The UN focuses its assistance on the most vulnerable and poor, in particular women, children and youth.



FAO



IFAD



ILO



IOM



ITC



OHCHR



UNAIDS



UNCDF



UNCITRAL



UNCTAD



UN DESA



UNDP



UNDRR



UNEP



UNESCO



UNFPA



UN-Habitat



UNHCR



UNICEF



UNIDO



UNODC



UNOPS



UNV



WFP












WHO

KEY PARTNERS

The UN country team in Lao PDR wishes to express heartfelt thanks to our donor development partners. Without their crucial support, our work across the four strategic

priorities of the UNSDCF would not be possible. The graphic below presents the list of development partners and their support across the Cooperation Framework in Lao PDR.

		 Strategic Priority 1: People's well-being	 Strategic Priority 2: Inclusive prosperity	 Strategic Priority 3: Governance and Rule of Law	 Strategic Priority 4: Environment, Climate Change, and Resilience
	Australia	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Canada		✓	✓	
	China	✓	✓		
	European Union	✓	✓	✓	
	Finland	✓		✓	
	France	✓		✓	
	Germany	✓	✓	✓	
	Global Environment Facility (GEF)				✓
	Green Climate Fund (GCF)				✓
	Ireland	✓	✓		✓
	Joint SDG Fund		✓		

		 Strategic Priority 1: People's well-being	 Strategic Priority 2: Inclusive prosperity	 Strategic Priority 3: Governance and Rule of Law	 Strategic Priority 4: Environment, Climate Change, and Resilience
	Japan	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Korea	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Luxembourg	✓	✓	✓	✓
	New Zealand		✓		
	Norway	✓	✓	✓	
	Philippines	✓			
	Russia	✓	✓		✓
	Sweden			✓	
	Switzerland	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Thailand		✓	✓	
	UK	✓			
	USA	✓	✓	✓	✓

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

During 2022, following the achievement of high vaccination rates across the country, most of the measures put in place to slow the spread of COVID-19 were relaxed, including the opening of international borders. The USD 5.8 billion high-speed railway from Vientiane to the border with the People's Republic of China and (for freight) on to Kunming officially opened in December 2021, representing a meaningful step toward transforming Southeast Asia's only landlocked country into a land-link across the region.

However, this coincided with a period of intense global macro-instability with rapid increases in the costs of food, fertilizer, fuel, and finance, (4F Crisis) and a sharp depreciation in the value of the national currency, in turn affecting all areas of national development. Given Lao PDR's reliance on imports for key commodities, including all fuel and many important foods and medicines, this translated into a rapid increase in domestic inflation, reaching a record 39% at the end of 2022.¹ The depreciation, combined with a rapid increase in foreign currency debt liabilities, also contributed to increasing challenges in meeting debt service costs and significant cuts to Government social expenditure.

These more recent challenges compound the prolonged socio-economic impacts of the pandemic, making it more difficult to rebuild livelihoods, recover lost learning, and advance sustainable national development. Fuel shortages between April and June had knock-on effects for access to key services and economic activity,

including the planting of rice and other key staple crops. High food prices are now squeezing household incomes resulting in increased food insecurity with one in seven households affected, while four out of five young children² nationwide are living in "food poverty" lacking the minimum diverse diets required to sustain their health, growth and development, which could lead to long term adverse effects including on their future health and educational achievements.

In an unfavorable global context, economic recovery progressed slower than anticipated. National projections showed economic growth accelerating to 4.4%³, whilst more conservative estimates from the World Bank⁴ and ADB⁵ indicated a gradual recovery with growth of 2.5%.

In response to these challenges, in August 2021, the National Assembly adopted a *National Agenda for Addressing Economic and Financial Difficulties*. This remained an urgent priority throughout 2022 to address chronic issues and prevent the emergence of a severe economic crisis due to the weak economic base, high budget deficit, high public debt, foreign currency imbalance, and fragility in the banking system.

On 30 December 2022, H.E. Dr. Sonexay Siphandone, was appointed new Prime Minister of Lao PDR, committing immediately to efforts to improve macroeconomic stability, pursue sustainable development, poverty alleviation, and narrowing inequalities.

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1. Bank of Lao PDR
 2. National nutrition surveillance in Q1 of 2022 undertaken by Centre for Nutrition
 3. Government Report to the National Assembly, December 2022
 4. World Bank, Lao Economic Monitor, October 2022
 5. ADB, Asian Development Outlook 2022 Update, September 2022

OUR PROGRESS

OVERVIEW OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK RESULTS

Under the UNSDCF, UN work is structured according to four strategic priorities, and within these 21 more specific joint outputs, each working towards the realisation of the conditions identified as necessary to achieve our shared development goals in the theory of change.

Across all work, the six guiding principles of Leave No One Behind, the Human Rights-Based Approach, Gender Equality, Resilience, Sustainability, and Accountability are mainstreamed.

Progress against the strategic priorities and outputs in 2022 is reported in section 2.2. However, recognising the integrated nature of the overarching UNSDCF theory of change, 2022 also saw support to several strategic initiatives that bridged across these priorities to support a coherent response to cross-cutting challenges.

Supported by a joint programme implemented by UNDP, UNFPA, and UNCDF, and a growing engagement across the UNCT in support of Government efforts, including from UNEP, UN DESA, UNICEF, UNODC, and WHO, the **Financing Strategy for the 9th National Socio-Economic Development Plan** was finalised. To harness additional expertise, non-UN partners including the World Bank, Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and Australia substantively contributed to the work. With key Government counterparts from the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI), Finance (MoF), and Health (MoH), structured and sustained engagement was also built with 7 additional ministries and Government institutions showcasing a strong cross sectoral engagement

and whole of Government approach. With the Financing Strategy, the UNDS is working in an integrated manner to tackle pressing economic and fiscal issues crucial to unlocking progress in many other parts of the sustainable development agenda.

The UNCT supported the Development Research Institute of MPI in formulating the **Lao PDR Resilience Framework 2022-2025**. The Framework entails a set of broadly consulted short to medium-term actions to sustainably address and recover from the current crisis on energy, food and finance as well as the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, which still pose a threat to development progress. Additionally, the Resilience Framework highlights necessary steps to build resilience against future shocks and crises. Within the UN, this work was supported by ILO, IOM, ITC, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNEP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO, who all brought together their respective expertise to help set priorities and refine actions in the Framework.

The UNCT supported preparations in anticipation of **Least Developed Country (LDC) graduation** in 2026. Facilitating this ambition, the UN helped organise a south-south exchange in August 2022 bringing together Government focal points from Lao PDR, Bangladesh, and Nepal, (the three countries on the same graduation timetable). The event served to identify challenges and opportunities as well as to elaborate on the impact of the global 4F crisis and its implications for graduation. In follow-up, the UNCT is supporting the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) in developing a Smooth Transition Strategy to sustainably graduate from LDC status.

In preparation for the **Transforming Education Summit** in September 2022, the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), with support from UNICEF and UNESCO, arranged several pre-consultations and held a national consultation in August. During these, the Government reaffirmed its ambition to uphold the right to education for all and to transform its education system to address post-COVID-19 challenges. The need to improve the quality of education, strengthening innovation to the benefit of learning outcomes and the need to safeguard sufficient budget for education were emphasised. The results of the conversations were captured in a National Statement of Commitment to Action.

Together with the Lao Academy for Social and Economic Sciences (LASES), the UNCT set up a **Joint Programme on “High Frequency Data”** in the context of the rapidly depreciating value of the national currency, and rising cost-of-living, on top of the already exacerbated financial and socio-economic vulnerabilities. To capture these recent manifestations and their potential negative impact on people, the Joint Programme collected data from households and businesses across the country and analysed macro-economic developments. The data and related analysis were distributed to stakeholders through two bulletins focusing on *inter alia*, Vulnerable Groups, and Food Security and Livelihoods. Funded by the Joint SDG Fund’s Development Emergency Modality, the Joint Programme is a collaboration among the LASES, UNICEF, UNFPA, FAO, WHO, and WFP, with input from the World Bank.



Photo: UNICEF/
Bart Verweij

HOW THE UNSDCF WORKS

6 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

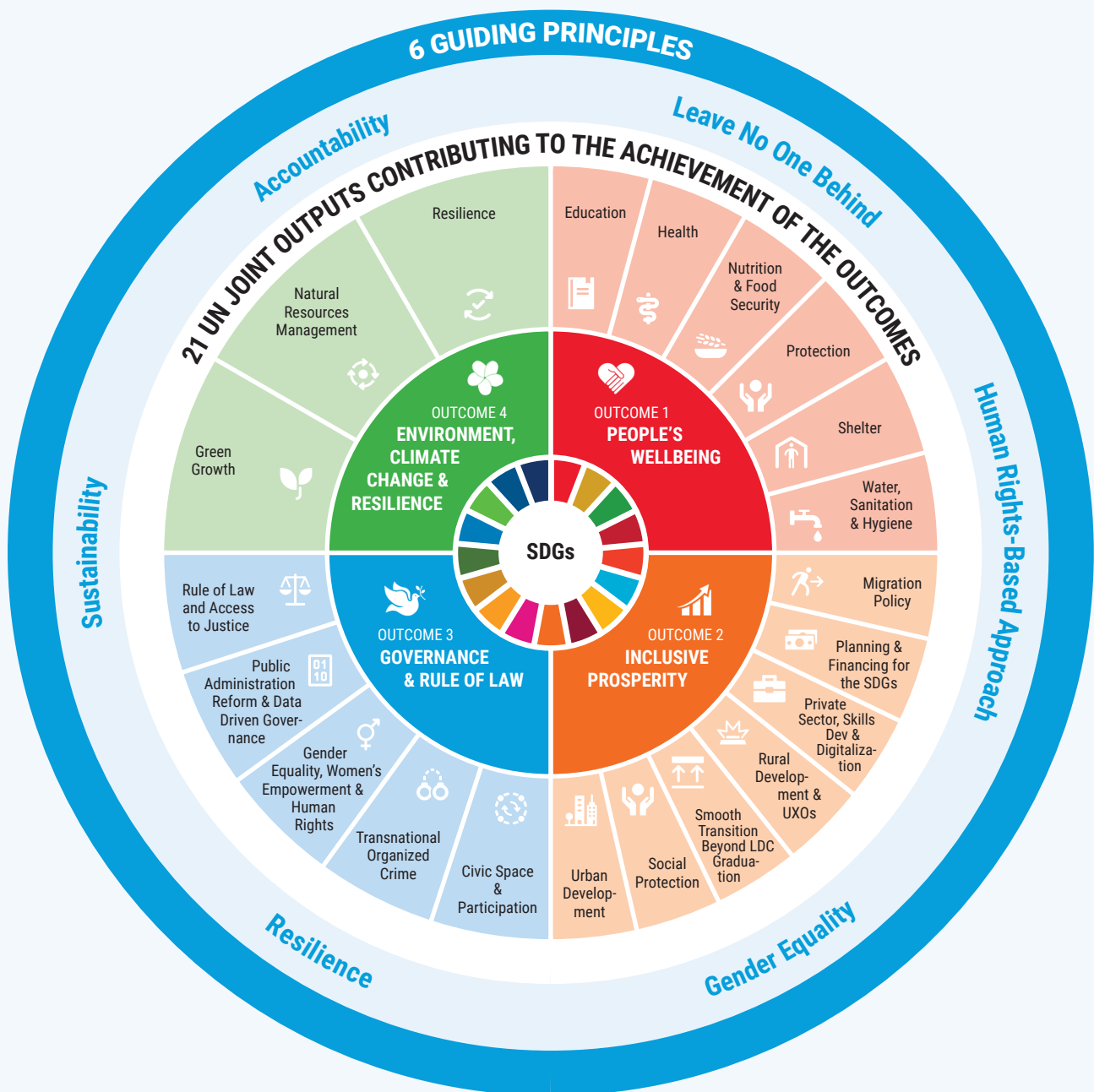
Throughout all of the work undertaken under the UNSDCF, six Guiding Principles will be consistently applied, which together support the achievement of the necessary transformative shifts to achieve sustainable development.

21 UN JOINT OUTPUTS

The 21 UN Joint Outputs of the UNSDCF are the specific contributions to the achievement of the four Outcomes that the UN in Lao PDR is accountable for. They represent the combined work of all UN agencies, funds, and programmes delivered both jointly and through single-entity initiatives.

4 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES & OUTCOMES

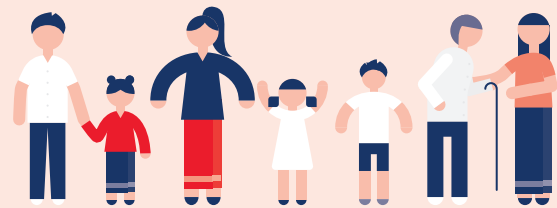
For each of the four Strategic Priorities, the UNSDCF defines a desired outcome that we want to achieve by the end of the programme cycle. Achieving these is dependent on efforts and contributions from all stakeholders.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

PEOPLE'S WELLBEING

By 2026, people, especially the most vulnerable and marginalised, will have more equitable and inclusive access to and will benefit from better quality health, nutrition, food, shelter, protection, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), and education and learning, including during emergencies.



SUPPORTING SDGs



SUPPORTING AGENCIES

FAO, IFAD, ILO, IOM, UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNICEF, UNOPS, WFP, and WHO

SUPPORTING 9TH NSEDP

Pillar 2: Improved quality of human resources to meet development, research capacity, science and technology needs, and create value-added production and services

Pillar 3: Enhanced well-being of the people

The COVID-19 pandemic and the 4F crisis had a significant impact on progress towards the more equitable and inclusive access to quality health, nutrition, food, shelter, protection, water sanitation and hygiene and education envisioned by the Government and UN under the UNSDCF. This adversely affected access to essential health services, food security, learning, and the protection of women and children. The already limited fiscal space for social sector investments became even more constricted, further limiting the capacity to respond to these shocks.

However, 2022 did see a strengthening of collaboration and Government-led joint efforts in finding more effective ways to address these challenges and make progress towards national development priorities.

In the health sector, the Government reconfirmed its commitment to prioritize Primary Health Care at the SDG Global Action Plan Primary Health Care Accelerator group meeting. To support progress towards this whilst recognizing economic challenges, partners worked together to put forward policy options for sustainable health financing, including through the 9th NSEDP Financing Strategy and the successful negotiation with GAVI for an extended transition by 2025 and other co-financing requirements.

Progress was also seen in joint efforts led by the MoH with UNAIDS, UNFPA and WHO to improve the targets on HIV/AIDS. Innovative approaches were put in place to expand beneficiary coverage, facilitate access, and ensure continuity and adherence to treatment and care services for people living with HIV.

Recognizing the needs for greater availability and more effective use of disaggregated data, continued efforts were made to strengthen the national system for data collection, monitoring and evidence-based planning. UNICEF supported Government in launching the Lao Education and Sports Information Management System, Personnel Management Information System, and online accounting system. With support from WHO and UNICEF, the District Health information Software 2 (DHIS 2) was further improved and digitalized. UNAIDS provided technical support to develop an M&E framework for the National Strategic Action Plan, which serves as an essential tool to track progress of HIV and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) integration into the broader health sector. UNFPA supported the MoH to revise the Maternal and Child Health form to enable age disaggregated service data for the District Health Information Software 2 system and supporting Ministry of Health (MoH), Lao Women's Union (LWU) and the National Commission for the Advancement of Women, Mothers and Children (NCAWMC) to develop forms for collecting GBV administrative service data. During the cropping season, WFP also produced the Seasonal Monitoring and forecast information to track the development of the growing season and assess possible impacts on the lives and livelihoods of vulnerable populations.

**LEARNERS
BENEFITTING FROM
UN EDUCATION
SUPPORT
PROGRAMMES**

16k



**PEOPLE REACHED
BY BEHAVIOR
CHANGE MESSAGES
TO REST MORE,
EAT BETTER AND
SEEK HEALTH
SERVICES DURING
PREGNANCY**

2.5M



**CALLS RECEIVED
FOR INFORMATION,
AND COUNSELING
VIA LWU #1362
HOTLINE**

2.5k





PROTECTION

UNICEF and UNFPA adopted integrated approaches to support the LWU and the Lao Youth Union (LYU) in protecting children and adolescents. Youth helplines managed by the LYU for mental health and psychosocial support counselling and identification of GBV against children victim were expanded to 8 provinces, reaching 3,289 people (1,998 female). LWU-run shelters and other health, social and

law enforcement services provided shelter, counselling, legal aid, and home visits for 3,530 children experiencing violence.

New approaches to raise awareness on protection included the broadcast of an education video produced by the NCAWMC with support from UNICEF through the 5 national TV channels and other online platforms, reaching 400,000 people including 128,000 children. Support was provided by UNFPA to LWU, as well as the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative Safe and Fair in disseminating messages in the ethnic languages during the 16 Days of Activism Against GBV, reaching an estimated 2 million people.

KUNMIN'S STORY: MALARIA ELIMINATION WITHIN REACH



My dream is to not have any [malaria] cases in the village," says Khounmy, "I will keep working until it is eliminated."



Photo: WHO/Enric Catala

A mother of two and part-time farmer, Khounmy is one of many village malaria workers contributing to cases in Lao PDR plummeting from an estimated 462,000 in 1997 to 2,305 in 2022. Going beyond villages to visit informal settlements at the highest-risk, Khounmy and others like her are dedicated to taking education, testing, treatment, disease surveillance, and items like bed nets to isolated groups of people and those most at-risk.

These efforts form part of "accelerator" strategies driven by the MoH that are key to the significant recent progress towards malaria elimination, and supported by WHO, The Global Fund, the United States Agency for International Development and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

While national malaria elimination is the ultimate goal, Khounmy and other malaria workers have shown it is within reach.



HEALTH

Monthly monitoring of the Essential Health Services uptake has been conducted by MoH and shared with partners, with support from WHO. It informs efforts on COVID-19 recovery across reproductive health, maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent health (RMNCAH), immunization, and communicable disease.

WHO and UNICEF supported the realization of national primary health care (PHC) priorities through the on-going development of the PHC Law and the first national VHV toolkit for RMNCAH home visits.

UNFPA supported the expansion of the Adolescent and Youth Friendly Services to provide integrated, quality reproductive services for children and adolescents under the UN Joint Programme on RMNCAH, and conducted an investment case on RMNCAH to improve health financing for RMNCAH as part of the joint UN financing programme.

UNFPA also supported the annual review of the Maternal (Perinatal) Death Surveillance and Response and assessment of three midwifery schools by the international Confederation of Midwives.

MoH, with the support of UNAIDS and WHO, expanded access to HIV treatment services to PLHIV, leading to an increase in percentage of PLHIV receiving anti-retroviral therapy from 54% in 2019 to 67% in 2022.



EDUCATION

Supporting Government efforts to compensate learning loss, UNICEF, UNESCO, and partners jointly supported the development of alternative national digital learning platforms and strengthening of teacher capacity on digital pedagogies and blended learning. As a result, 312,193 children had access to supplementary learning resources in print, 2,890,000 were reached through TV/videos and digital formats, and more than 330,000 children benefitted from the first national digital learning platform Kham Panya Lao.

With UNFPA support, comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) was integrated into the Grade-5 curriculum and CSE training delivered to schools reaching 64,000 secondary students, 3,500 TVET, 1,760 from non-formal education, and 629 teachers. 1,780 out-of-school adolescent girls including 80 from vulnerable groups, 1,200 boys and over 9,000 parents and community members were sensitized on basic essential life skills.

Via the Community Radio programme, UNESCO and UNDP jointly promoted girl's education via 18 radio pieces and 14 pieces in the ethnic language in 2022.

With WFP's support to the National School Meals Programme, food assistance helped to provide daily lunch for primary and pre-primary students in 2,130 schools and non-food items helped to develop basic facilities such as water systems and kitchens, to run a sustainable school lunch programme. The Prime Minister endorsed a decree for the promotion of school lunch.



NUTRITION AND FOOD SECURITY

The UN supported strengthening of the enabling environment for nutrition and food security including capacity to generate, analyze and use nutrition and food security data including the undertaking of household surveys in Bokeo, Huaphan, Phongsaly, and Saravane provinces, national nutrition surveillance, a Rapid Assessment on Food Security, the adoption of a proactive Early warning and Response approach, regular mVAM – a real-time analysis of food security situation across the country; and greater integration of nutrition in the routine health information system.

Multi-sectoral nutrition coordination and advocacy for nutrition was enhanced, including through support to the 7th Annual National Nutrition Forum and key technical working groups.

Support for the improved capacity of Government to deliver nutrition services was provided including support for both preventative and curative services, as well as significant efforts to improve the knowledge and skills for key nutrition behaviors.



WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE

The 4F crisis presented significant challenges in rolling out national programmes through higher material costs and restricted movement of people and equipment. In response, the UN adopted flexible approaches to minimize the negative effects and avoid disruption in programme delivery.

Vientiane Capital became the first capital in ASEAN to be declared open-defecation free (ODF), with ODF coverage reaching 65% of villages nationally. UNICEF is supporting the assessment of sanitation social mobilization approaches applied in-country in preparation for the development of the national ODF roadmap.

Capacity building training was provided to support 57 healthcare facilities, develop plans to improve WASH situation and maintain WASH facilities.

UNICEF and WFP collaborated to support the rollout of the 3-Star approach to WASH in schools to improve hygiene practices. Through MoH, capacity building training was provided to 57 HCFs aiming at an improved WASH situation and successful implementation of WASHFIT strategy.



SHELTER

Integrated effort to combine shelter and protection was seen in the preparatory work for the Safer Cities project led by UNFPA and UN-Habitat. While the Government received support to initiate the establishment of safe shelters and One-Stop-Service Centers (OSSCs), officials at both central and provincial levels in Bolikhamxay, Champassak, and Attapeu were sensitized on the interlinkages between construction and renovation of OSSCs and GBV foundation principles. UNFPA-supported standard operating procedures for establishing and operating safe shelters were circulated widely to the Government.

In partnership with the local Department of Public Works and Transport, UN-Habitat designed and implemented the construction of 15 disaster-resilient houses in Oudomxay, for the people displaced by landslides during the 2018 floods.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

INCLUSIVE PROSPERITY

By 2026, people, especially the most vulnerable and marginalised, will benefit from more inclusive, and resilient, transformative, and sustainable socio-economic opportunities to reduce poverty and inequalities.



SUPPORTING SDGs



SUPPORTING AGENCIES

FAO, IFAD, ILO, IOM, ITC, UNCDF, UNCITRAL, UNCTAD, UNDESA, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNOPS, WFP, and WHO

SUPPORTING 9TH NSEDP

Pillar 1: Continuous quality, stable and sustainable economic growth achieved

Pillar 3: Enhanced well-being of the people

Pillar 5: Engagement in regional and international cooperation and integration is enhanced with robust infrastructure and effective utilisation of national potential and geographic advantages

**STAFF TRAINED TO SUPPORT
DELIVERY OF SUSTAINABLE
AND INCLUSIVE SOCIAL
PROTECTION**

704



Global challenges during 2022 slowed progress toward the realization of the vision for all people to benefit from more inclusive, resilient, transformative, and sustainable socio-economic opportunities.

However, even with these challenges important areas of progress were achieved both at the strategic national policy level, and in the realization of increased practical opportunities. With the relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions, domestic and regional employment opportunities recovered, with a resumption of important remittance flows, and tourism slowly beginning to recover.

**PEOPLE BENEFITTING FROM
SAFER URBAN INITIATIVES**

73k



Recognizing the progress made, and in anticipation of the transitions expected as part of graduation from being an LDC, work also continued on the development of a comprehensive Smooth Transition Strategy.

The nascent national social protection system advanced on both strategic and practical levels. A pilot mother and early childhood grant scheme, offering cash grants and positive health messaging to vulnerable pregnant mothers demonstrated that it was possible for this support to be delivered even in the context of limited financial infrastructure in rural areas, through the use of the U-MONEY App. The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MoLSW) also took steps forward in modeling and legal assessment in preparation for an anticipated amendment to the Social Security Law.

**POLICIES REVIEWS FOR
IMPROVED BUSINESS AND
EMPLOYMENT ENVIRONMENT**

2



In rural areas, efforts to open up opportunities included tackling the continued challenge of unexploded ordnance, with a further 4,755 hectares of high-priority land cleared, and nearly halving of the number of casualties reported in 2022.

**HIGH-PRIORITY LAND
CLEARED OF UXO
CONTAMINATION**

479 ha





SMOOTH TRANSITION BEYOND LDC GRADUATION

Ahead of expected graduation in 2026, the UN has provided substantial support to the inter-ministerial committee led by MoFA on the development of a National Smooth Transition Strategy (STS) to facilitate a quality and sustainable graduation. With this essential support, MoFA has successfully led a whole-of-Government STS formulation with

extensive inter-ministerial and multi-stakeholder consultations on the specific priority actions that can facilitate a smooth graduation across four thematic pillars and nine policies, in alignment with other national development frameworks.

With support from UNDESA, and in collaboration with the UN-OHRLLS and UNESCAP, the UN partnered with Bangladesh and Nepal to organize a south-south exchange among the three governments to share graduation experiences and lessons; and prepare for a joint side-event at the LDC V Conference calling for enhanced support from the international community for their LDC graduation pathways.

GROWING AGRICULTURAL INCOMES



The project enabled me to learn more about business and agricultural good practice, which allowed me to increase my flock of chickens and to grow more vegetables.”



Photo: UNRCO/Basil Hurzeler

Phoumisay notes, “something I couldn’t have done without this support”. Phoumisay, 40, is a vegetable and livestock farmer in Hadaen village, in the northern Lao province of Oudomxay. He lives with his wife and three children – the youngest just 3 months old – next to the riverbank, and his chicken coop.

Together, they are one of the 916 households in his district working with the Agriculture for Nutrition project, which aims to reduce poverty and malnutrition in rural areas.

Phoumisay’s story shows the progress that is possible in improving the agricultural livelihoods on which so many depend, even in remote areas.

The project is financed by the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program and the Government of Lao PDR, and implemented by IFAD and WFP.



PLANNING AND FINANCING FOR THE SDGs

In support of progress towards an Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF), the UN jointly supported the development of the first Financing Strategy to support the implementation of the NSEDP. A key practical link between national planning and financing processes, this cross-Government plan details actions to increase financing from multiple sources, increasing impact of resources mobilized. Technical work on the Strategy was finalized in 2022.

To facilitate a better understanding of how resource allocation decisions align with plans, UNCDF developed and trained counterparts in the application of a budget tagging system, which could be integrated into ongoing public financial management reform efforts, and worked to strengthen the analytical capacity of key national institutions in economic modeling .

To support development of a more efficient and effective aid coordination structure, UNDP supported a review of the national Sector Working Groups, which will inform an update and restructuring processes in 2023.



SOCIAL PROTECTION

The UN Joint Programme (UNJP) Leaving no one behind: Establishing the Basis for Social Protection Floors, with technical support from ILO, UNICEF and UNCDF, concluded in June 2022. Important achievements included the adoption of the first-ever National Social Protection Strategy in April 2020, the establishment of a National Social Protection Commission in December 2021. The UNJP worked to build capacity and establish the foundations of the system; and to continually test the system through the Mother and Early Childhood Grant pilot which reached over 2,500 vulnerable households

Other work included a Training of Trainers (TOT) Toolkit for policy implementation and awareness developed by ILO and UNICEF; a Fiduciary Risk Assessment and Value for Money study for social transfer payment mechanisms conducted by ILO, UNCDF and UNICEF; and an Operational Cash Feasibility Study for Anticipatory Action Cash Transfers.

Supported by WHO and other development partners, the National Health Insurance (NHI) strategy 2021-2025 was developed and endorsed in September 2022.



MIGRATION POLICY

Good progress was made on the strengthening of the policy environment for safe, orderly, and regular migration, as well as building capacity to implement this. During the year, the Labour Law was amended with the provision of a minimum wage increment. IOM and ILO also worked alongside the Government to support the development of Decree 245 on Sending Migrants to Work Abroad; Agreement on the Management of the Employment Service Enterprise; the Manual on the Assistance of Migrant Workers; the Draft of the Regulation on the Lao Employment Service Association; the Standard of Operation on Social Welfare for the victim of Trafficking in Person. Key challenges remained related to the need for further harmonization of migration management, limited data for policy formulation, and legal compliance among the private sector.



URBAN DEVELOPMENT

The UN, led by UN-Habitat, worked to support a more integrated approach to the development of urban policy, in particular through support to the inaugural Lao National Urban Forum, held on World Cities' Day, and attended by 100+ participants from Government, non-profit, community, academic and other development partners.

In partnership with the Global Fund for Cities Development and United Cities and Local Governments, UNCDF is supporting Smart Green ASEAN Cities. The first of four high-level policy forums were held in December, aiming to support the development of a new architecture for city finance in ASEAN. With UNESCO's assistance, the World Heritage Site Management Plan was updated to respond to the current factors affecting the Vat Phou World Heritage site, and integrate matters related to socio-economic development and environmental protection.



RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND UXOs

With FAO assistance, 2,243 vulnerable farming households in Attapeu Province were supported with improved access to quality agricultural inputs through a market-based approach, along with training to adopt climate-resilient and eco-friendly agricultural practices.

As part of efforts to improve rural livelihood opportunities, 479 hectares of high-priority land, equivalent to the size of 671 football pitches, were cleared of UXO contamination with support of UNDP working with national partners, reducing risks and opening up more land for productive use.

In Attapeu and Sekong provinces, WFP distributed cash-based livelihood grants to 2,744 people (810 women) to enhance climate-smart agricultural practices and establish nutrition-sensitive and climate-resilient household assets. Through food assistance for assets (FFA) activities, WFP and partners helped establish and/or rehabilitate community assets, including water supply lines, domestic water ponds, bridges, feeder roads, and agricultural lands in 60 communities across Phongsaly and Savannakhet provinces, benefiting 36,708 people (17,885 women).



PRIVATE SECTOR AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND DIGITALIZATION

ILO continued to provide support to the tripartite of Government, employer, and employee organizations at both the national and provincial levels. Private sector support focused on the extension of business development services and improving access to finance. The MoLSW, with ILO support, provided capacity building and skill development training across 9 provinces. An initial draft of the Skills Development Law was completed, expected to be submitted to the National Assembly in 2024.

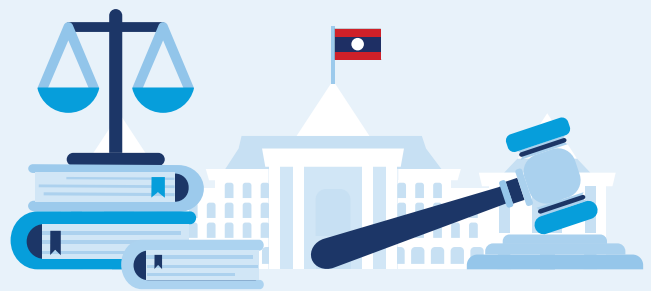
With a focus on agri-food systems, FAO undertook a systematic private sector mapping, which will guide future strategic engagement for the sustainable transformation of the food system. The study reviewed private sector entities nationwide, but with a particular focus on the economic corridor along the Lao-China railway.

Support was also provided by UNCITRAL to facilitate the legal ecosystem that enables trade, investment, and access to justice, which is fundamental to inclusive prosperity and strengthening rule of law.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

GOVERNANCE AND RULE OF LAW

By 2026, people, especially the most vulnerable and marginalised, are better served by public institutions at all levels in a transparent and inclusive manner, able to exercise their rights and obligations and the institutions shall be strengthened and more accountable while the rule of law and international human rights commitments made by Lao PDR are upheld.



SUPPORTING SDGs



SUPPORTING AGENCIES

FAO, ILO, IOM, OHCHR, UNCDF, UNDESA, UNDP, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, UNOPS, UNV, and WHO

SUPPORTING 9TH NSEDP

Pillar 6: Public governance and administration is improved, and society is equal, fair, and protected by the rule of law

The UN helped strengthen governance structures of public institutions by providing capacity development to over 1,200 officials from justice agencies on combatting transnational and organized crime, providing legal services, and increasing access to justice for vulnerable groups including survivors of gender-based violence, youth, children and communities living in rural areas. Data collection efforts were strengthened, including on vital statistics, data to improve health governance and in advance of the next Population and Housing census scheduled in 2025.

Government efforts to eliminate violence against women were supported through UN partnerships with NCAWMC and Government agencies from health, social and justice sectors to coordinate action to implement the 2nd National Plan of Action on Combating and Preventing Violence Against Women (2021-2026) and the Fourth National Plan of Action on Gender Equality (2021-2026).

On human rights, the UN provided technical and financial support to ministries responsible for reviews and reporting under human rights mechanisms including the UPR, UN Conventions Against Torture, on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Rights of the Child, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

The UN further supported the Government to accelerate digital transformation through the purchasing of ICT equipment for health, parliamentary, data, and other public institutions, in addition to the development of the Digital Master Plan for Lao PDR.

Public institutions were supported in strengthening their capacity to deliver quality and inclusive services that will help to improve the protection and promotion of human rights. Critical in the design of capacity development programmes and the monitoring of public services has been the increased participation of affected groups in decision making processes, including through efforts to enlarge civil society space and by directly engaging citizens.

The UN supported CSOs through capacity development programmes on data collection, advocacy and improving the representative role of civil society groups. For the first time, 18 national civil society groups were supported to participate in international human rights reporting mechanisms including CRPD and CEDAW.

The UN also supported strengthening community governance structures, including by supporting farming communities to transition from illicit to sustainable coffee production. This resulted in increased capacity of both CSOs and people directly to better protect the rights of marginalized and vulnerable groups in particular by building awareness, and engaging in development processes by feeding back their concerns and issues to strengthen the delivery of public services.

**# OF ESSENTIAL PUBLIC
ONLINE SERVICES
PROVIDED**

19



**# OF OFFICIALS TRAINED
ON LEGAL AID AND
POLICING**

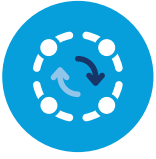
800



**# OF UN INTERVENTIONS
TO STRENGTHEN DUTY
BEARERS ON GENDER
EQUALITY, WOMEN
EMPOWERMENT AND
HUMAN RIGHTS**

1,338





CIVIC SPACE AND PARTICIPATION

UNICEF, UNV, and UNDP organised discussions as platforms for youth engagement in development processes. Extensive consultations and a country-wide survey of over 7,000 young people informed UNDP's National Human Development Report on youth as drivers for sustainable development. UNFPA also supported the monitoring of the Lao Youth and Adolescent Development Strategy, provided training on sexual and reproductive health and rights and advocated for investment in adolescents.

At local level, WHO strengthened governance for health equity for women, children, and elderly in 161 villages in 18 districts across eight provinces by improving local collaboration between health officials, ministries, and communities.

Regionally, twenty OHCHR-supported CSO representatives attended the 2022 ASEAN Civil Society Conference/People Forum in Cambodia, strengthening knowledge about development and human rights challenges.

With UNDP support, Organizations of Persons with Disabilities prepared a parallel report to the CRPD Committee and helped develop SOPs for the Justice Sector response to GBV.

OPENING UP ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



“Violence against women doesn't exist in our village”.

When asked, women in Done village in Bokeo province replied that.



Photo: UNDP/Namchaythip Souvannavong

With the topic surrounded by stigma, understandably, they were reluctant to risk embarrassing themselves, their family, and even their community.

In Lao PDR, more than a third of women experience violence, but less than 2% report it. Destigmatizing the phenomena is crucial to ensuring survivors speak up and report cases so that perpetrators can be held accountable.

With support from KOICA, the LWU and UNDP developed the “Storytelling” method to make this appear less threatening and the difference in engagement was huge. By asking for imagined stories rather than real experiences, both men and women felt comfortable to speak up, sometimes even volunteering personal experiences. As a result, the LWU can begin to create the necessary behavioral change to allow survivors of violence to speak up and seek justice.



GENDER EQUALITY, WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT, AND HUMAN RIGHTS

UNFPA and UNDP supported the Government in rolling out the Essential Service Package for institutional response to GBV. UNFPA supported the development and endorsement of Social, Health and Coordination/Referral SOPs while UNDP supported Justice SOP.

Joint UNICEF-UNFPA research on "Understanding Pathways to Adolescent Pregnancy in Lao PDR" will inform future activities.

The Output members joined the UNFPA-lead International Women's Day and 16 Days of Activism Against GBV which mobilized 77 partners reaching 4,000,000+ right holders/duty bearers. For Human Rights Day, the UNCT led by OHCHR launched the year-long campaign #UDHR75.

All Output Members contributed to the 10th periodic national CEDAW report, supported by UNFPA. After Government approval, it will be submitted to the CEDAW Committee in 2023. Internally, guided by UNFPA, the UNCT assessed the mandatory Gender Scorecard and put in place strengthening actions.



RULE OF LAW AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE

The UN supported MoJ to review and amend the Law on Protection of the Rights and Interests of Children through inclusive consultations. MoJ was further assisted to develop the first Legal Aid Action Plan to coordinate legal aid provision across all 18 provinces.

UNDP hosted a knowledge exchange between lawyers from Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Nepal, alongside consultations on the development of the Lao Bar Association's long-term vision to strengthen lawyers' role in advancing the rule of law.

UNFPA supported LWU to organize the International Day of the Girl Child celebration in Vientiane where 35 entities and over 350 participants discussed joint advocacy and programming for empowering adolescent girls.

UNICEF assisted the Juvenile Justice Coordination Committee in training the Child Prosecutor Unit and police officers on juvenile proceedings. Additionally, 100 village authorities received training on legal aid and community-based diversion, improving knowledge and access to quality legal aid.



COMBATTING TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (TNOC)

The UN provided training on TNOC related topics including on drugs and precursors, border management, Sustainable Alternative Development, drug treatment and rehabilitation, forest and wildlife crime, anti-money laundering, and cybercrime. While no direct change in policies took place during the year, noteworthy achievements have been made such as the on-site assessment as part of the Mutual Evaluation under the Financial Action Task Force and the establishment of six new Community Based Treatment centres for drug users.

The UN supported the reviewing process of the COMMIT Sub-regional Plan of Action (SPA IV), identifying challenges related to the issue of Trafficking in Persons. In addition, specific attention was given to an Action Plan on Legal Aid to improve quality and accessibility of legal aid service and system in Lao PDR. UNDP further supported the Digital Legal Platform as a tool to enhance access to justice for Lao people.



PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM AND DATA-DRIVEN GOVERNANCE

The UN assisted Government capacity-building efforts, including through UNDP's support to MoHA in establishing four One Door Service Centres to provide easier and faster services to the public. UNDP further assisted MoTC with the consultative process in conducting a Digital Maturity Assessment and a Digital Master Plan.

UNFPA supported the Government through LSB to conduct a GIS and ICT infrastructure assessments

as preparation for the 2025 Population and Housing Census, and capacity building on vital statistics productions using the available data sources including census, Lao Social Indicator Survey and District Health Information Software 2 and paper based Civil Registration and Vital Statistics data. UNICEF and UNFPA provided technical and financial support to LSB in all phases of LSIS III preparation including household listing, questionnaires development and capacity building activities. WHO supported MoH in generating data required for strengthened governance in the health sector. This includes monitoring of essential health service delivery and key indicators required for policy and strategic direction.

Photo: UNDP/Pongpat Sensouphone



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE, AND RESILIENCE

By 2026, people, especially the most vulnerable and marginalised, and institutions will be better able to sustainably access, manage, preserve, and benefit from natural resources and promote green growth that is risk-informed, disaster and climate-resilient.



SUPPORTING SDGs



SUPPORTING AGENCIES

FAO, IFAD, IOM, ITC, UNCDF, UNDESA, UNDP, UNDRR, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNOPS, WFP, and WHO.

SUPPORTING 9TH NSEDP

Pillar 4: Environmental protection enhanced and disaster risks reduced

OF PEOPLE TRAINED ON
DISASTER PREPAREDNESS,
ASSESSMENT, RESPONSE AND
REPORTING

2,587

56% female



OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS
ADOPTING AND
IMPLEMENTING LOCAL
DISASTER RISK REDUCTION
STRATEGIES SUPPORTED BY
THE UN

3 provinces, 1 district,

2 villages



OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES
SUPPORTED BY THE UN
TO SUSTAINABLY MANAGE
NATURAL RESOURCES

102



Despite existing and increasing legislation and policy frameworks, efforts remain insufficient to curb pressures on biodiversity and natural resources; biodiversity is still rapidly decreasing across Lao PDR, in particular wildlife and high-value timber tree species. Legislation and policy frameworks to promote sustainable development are in place and being implemented. However, due to challenges in implementation biodiversity is still rapidly decreasing across Lao PDR, in particular wildlife and high-value timber tree species. Air quality is worsening, and progress towards targets on emissions reduction is slow. Activities driving economic development (e.g., cash crop concessions, mining, largescale infrastructure projects) put pressure on efforts to protect the environment and promote green growth.

Concerns regarding green growth and natural resource management are also reflected in the Environmental Performance Index which showed a decrease from 34.8 in 2020 to 30.7 in 2022. Categories which had the biggest drop in score over the last 10 years were species, habitat, and grassland loss and pollution emissions. The largest gains were in sanitation and drinking water and sustainable nitrogen management in agriculture. The 9th NSEDP Financing Strategy seeks to address some of these issues with actions to prioritize financing for green investment and environmental protection.

Regarding resilience and disaster risk reduction, in 2022, three provinces, one district, and two villages adopted local disaster risk reduction plans, which aid local government units in disaster preparedness, response, risk reduction, and recovery. While the pace of progress towards the associated UNSDCF target is currently insufficient for achieving the target by 2026, the multi-year development process for local plans suggests an increasing number may be adopted towards the end of the UNSDCF period (e.g., 15 village level preparedness and response plans foreseen for 2023). A drought trigger methodology for Luang Prabang and Savannakhet (two of the most vulnerable provinces) was developed in 2022, and an update of vulnerability index maps for flood and drought to better inform risk assessment and early action is ongoing.

At the national level, the National Resilience Framework finalised by MPI with UN inter-agency support identifies priority actions to strengthen resilience to environmental and climate shocks amongst others.



GREEN GROWTH

In the agricultural sector (61% of the workforce), coordinated support from FAO, GIZ, SDC, and others strengthened institutional capacity on “responsible investment” principles. Through the Hand in Hand and Investment Forum, FAO partnered with private sector and IFIs to develop investment plans to support the Government’s plans for the Green Growth Economic Corridor. Five UN agencies initiated support to the Government to develop and implement a National Action Plan for Food Systems Transformation.

The final draft of the cross-sectoral 9th NSEDP Financing Strategy, validated in September 2022, includes “Green and Climate Finance” as a priority sector. A specific policy objective focuses on “green growth and climate-resilient development” with concrete actions to address Lao PDR’s economic and financial challenges in an environmentally sound manner.

The UN also supported cross-ministry COP27 participation, strengthening Lao PDR’s engagement in international climate discussions, and enabling further integration of climate priorities in national development planning.

CHER’S STORY: REDUCING WASTE AND IMPROVING LIVELIHOODS



Although I have limited education, I can now dream of being able to send my children to university with the income from my work at the salt factory” said Ms. Cher.



Photo: UNIDO/Kaikeo Saiyasane

Cher and her family have lived and worked at the Vernkham salt factory in urban areas of Xaythany District, Vientiane Capital for many years. The work is hard and done in addition to rice and vegetable farming to keep her family afloat.

However, with support from UNIDO and funding from the Global Environment Facility, working conditions at the factory have shown steady improvement, whilst keeping traditional salt cooking practices alive. With this support, the factory is now switching from burning firewood collected in the forest to a new furnace using cleaner and more sustainable biomass pellets made from agriculture residual biomass and wood waste from other industries. This helps to make her workplace safer, reduce the environmental impact of the factory, and to keep her livelihood going.



NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

With UN-REDD programme (FAO, UNEP, UNDP) support, the Government adopted a National Forest Certification System facilitating access to sustainable forest product markets and submitted a zero-quota for trade of the two Dalbergia species under suspension of trade under CITES – clearly indicating it will prohibit commercial trade of species until scientific basis demonstrates sustainable populations. A lesson learned is the need for rapid support in a changing environment where fiscal constraints may undermine forestry objectives (e.g., if giving way to fiscal priorities through provision of mining concessions).

UN-REDD also provided technical assistance to implement REDD+ investment plans, incubating small and medium size enterprises and supporting forest community groups accelerating sustainable forest business models in collaboration with the Restoration Factory (partnership with Bridge For Billions and WWF).

With UNDP's support, the Government established first National Wildlife Sanctuary in southern Lao PDR covering 130,745 hectares of forest and strengthening sustainable livelihoods for resident ethnic groups.



RESILIENCE

UNDRR supported MoLSW's Mid-Term Review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction implementation to guide actions throughout the next seven years (2023-2030). UNDRR and WFP started updating vulnerability index maps for flood- and drought-prone areas informing risk assessment and early action.

FAO led the ECHO Pilot Programmatic Partnership which introduced Anticipatory Action concepts to central and target provincial governments in Savannakhet and Luang Prabang Provinces. WFP supported this initiative by introducing anticipatory action concepts and sensitization to Government officials in Saravan, Champassak, Sekong and Attapeu Provinces. FAO supported drafting the Drought Anticipatory Action Protocol with Government, local communities, and development partners, while WFP supported Government's capacities for anticipatory action by developing guidelines and an action plan for multi-hazard impact-based forecasting and warning, endorsed by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, as well as an operational cash feasibility study for anticipatory actions. Additionally, FAO supported Provincial and District Agriculture Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Adaptation Action Plans were also developed in Attapeu province and integrated in the 2023 Annual Agriculture Development Plan.

WFP supported over 480 government officials and village committee members through capacity-strengthening initiatives on emergency preparedness and response (including logistics and supply chain management), community asset management, community-based disaster risk management, and anticipatory actions. WFP, in partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, developed a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for a National Emergency Rice Reserve.

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIP

The work of the UN in Lao PDR recognises that we are one part of a larger group working towards the achievement of national priorities. The UN makes direct contributions through the work of the output groups under the UNSDCF, however the UN is only one part of the broader group of stakeholders necessary to achieve the anticipated outcomes across the four strategic priorities. As such, particular importance is attached to developing effective partnerships with other stakeholders in this process, to enhance the effectiveness of all our efforts.



STRENGTHENED PARTNERSHIP TO SUPPORT SMOOTH LDC GRADUATION

In November 2021, Lao PDR, Bangladesh, and Nepal, officially qualified to graduate out of the LDC category by 2026. The three countries are very different, yet they share the common prospect of graduating in the aftermath of the biggest pandemic in living memory, followed by the reverberating effects of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, and the multidimensional impact of an escalating climate crisis.

To coordinate approaches, facilitate peer learning, and support the three countries in aligning their positions for international talks and negotiations, the UN in Bangladesh, Lao PDR, and Nepal have had regular discussions at the technical level, and the three Resident Coordinators at the strategic level to support an inter-governmental partnership.

In August 2022, this culminated in bringing the three governments together. The UN teams with support from UNDESA and in collaboration with the UN-OHRLS and UNESCAP organized a south-

south exchange on formulating smooth transition strategies in Bangkok.

The partnerships facilitated through this effort have supported peer exchange and cross-country learning on how to best manage the challenging graduation process, and led to joint plans for advocacy and international engagement, including the co-organization of a side-event in the margins of the LDC V Conference in Doha in March 2023.



INSTITUTIONALIZED UN-INGO COLLABORATION PLATFORM

From scattered and siloed cooperation, progress has been made to institutionalize International Non-Government Organization (INGO) partnerships with quarterly meetings and frequent exchange on development issues. Convened by the UN Resident Coordinator and the INGO Network Board, a dialogue platform has been established for the 76 INGOs and 25 UN Agencies in Lao PDR to share information and exchange views on the issues of common interest. The UN has also used the platform to coordinate the UN-development partner approach to better support NGOs and enhance understanding between the Government and the INGOs. Via the platform, initiatives for joint activities structured around the 2022-2026 UNSDCF have been successfully implemented, notably in the partnership with WWF to organize Earth Hour with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, and the UN Day dialogue with youth on the topic of the Triple Planetary Crisis, in partnership with WWF, the UK and the Mekong River Commission.



INTENSIFIED PARTNERSHIP TO EMPOWER THE VOICE OF THE YOUTH

In January 2022, UNICEF, in partnership with the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism, the LYU, the National University of Laos, ChildFund and Global Shapers organised a series of talks by Lao youth to present their perspectives on the most pressing issues affecting children and young people in Lao PDR, including topics related to education, climate change, health, child protection, nutrition and gender equality. The event has inspired other youth members to continue share their opinion across different channels, creating a momentum for youth dialogues in Laos, particularly in the areas of youth participation and engagement. Following the event, UNICEF, UNV and UNDP, together with the US organised a youth panel discussion focusing on volunteerism, which attracted the engagement of more than 6,000 viewers across various social media tools.

In 2022, UNFPA, LYU, National University of Laos and Global Shapers jointly organized a youth innovation challenge in December 2022 that received 44 innovative ideas and solutions from young innovators to prevent unplanned pregnancies, promoting mental health and wellbeing and addressing climate change.



ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP TO CREATE SPACE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY IN LAO PDR

In a collective effort to shape a more disability-inclusive development trajectory, UNDP, in collaboration with OHCHR, UNFPA, World Education and Humanity and Inclusion in Laos worked to support Organisations of People with disabilities on disability data collection to gain a better understanding of the barriers faced by people with disabilities. As a result, members of 11 OPDs operating in 10 provinces produced high-quality data for the National Committee on the Rights of Persons with disabilities ahead of Lao PDR's review under the Convention in August 2022.

Photo: UN RCO/ Phongsady Keopakaipin



THE UN WORKING MORE AND BETTER TOGETHER

With the rollout of the UNSDCF 2022-2026, the UN's working modalities in Lao PDR underwent a major change. The UNCT's work is now coordinated through four Results Groups. The 21 output groups within these provide platforms for technical specialists of UN AFPs to exchange information, discuss projects and cooperate and coordinate on a wide range of activities.

At the beginning of the year, the Results Groups established **Joint Workplans**. Co-chairs of the respective Results Groups led the process in close collaboration with output group leads, which provided more focused technical contributions. The Joint Workplans translated the strategic objectives of the UNSDCF into tangible activities. The Workplans outlined joint advocacy activities, created new synergies, and set the pathway for new joint initiatives. The UNSDCF coordination mechanism ensured that all 25 resident and non-resident agencies were able to shape the Joint Workplans relevant to their mandate and area of work.

Crucially, the Joint Workplan process served as a structured quality assurance process on the extent to which current and planned programming was addressing the necessary challenges identified in the **theory of change** and upholding the six guiding principles through programme implementation.

Another important element of the reformed programming process was the **annual update of the Common Country Analysis (CCA)** as the evidence-based assessment of the development context in Lao PDR. The annual update serves as a repository to monitor major trends that could impact achieving the UNSDCF objectives and the SDGs and should therefore guide the projects and programmes of the UNCT. The 2022 update was conducted in an efficient and effective manner in which output groups provided information on major changes in their area of work and

Result Groups processed the analysis. The RCO translated it into a coherent narrative and presented it to the UNCT. The CCA update was shared with Government in December 2022, and will inform the Joint Workplans in 2023.

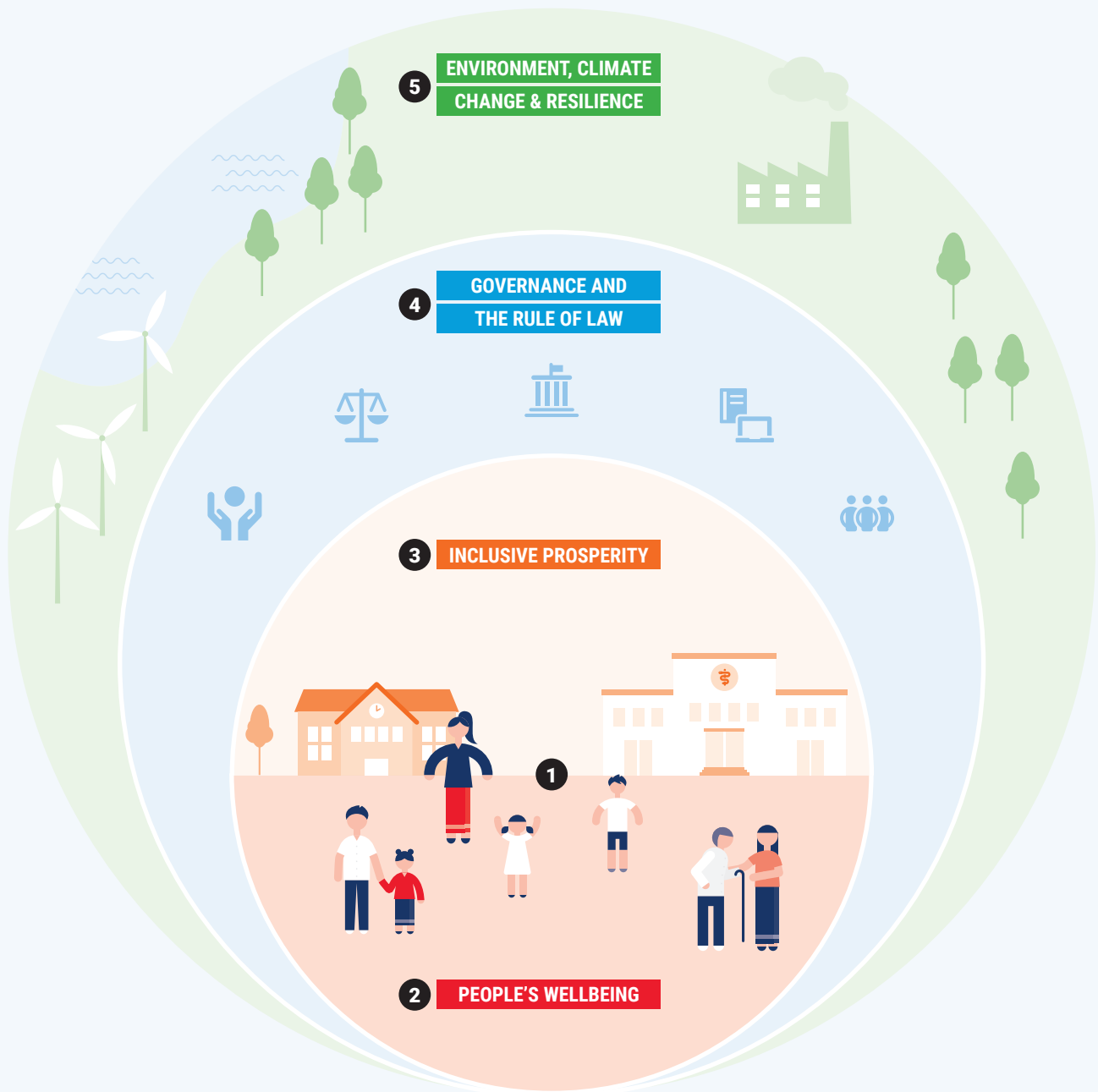
Responding to the UN Secretary General's **Call to Action for Human Rights**, the UNCT also engaged in a system-wide dialogue to reflect on opportunities for the UNDS to work together more effectively to advance promotion and protection of human rights. The outcomes from this exchange will be fed into strategic programming discussions and decisions through the annual joint work planning process.

The Government– UN Joint Steering Committee (JSC) met in May 2022. The purpose of the JSC is to provide strategic oversight of the UNSDCF implementation and to ensure its rollout is in line with Government processes and priorities. The meeting was chaired by H.E. Thongphane Savanphet, Deputy Minister, MoFA and Ms Sara Sekkenes, UN Resident Coordinator. The inclusive participation involving Result Groups leads and focal points from line ministries brought together key stakeholders of the Lao PDR - UNSDCF and served to replace time-intensive and often siloed bilateral consultations. A further JSC exchange took place in December 2022.

The **Programme Oversight Group (POG)** is a systemwide technical group activated with the start of the new UNSDCF. It consists of the agencies' Deputy Heads and senior officials, reporting to the UNCT. The POG ensures programmatic coherence and collaboration on a technical level across the four strategic priorities and upholds the guiding principles for an efficient and effective implementation throughout the UN footprint in Lao PDR. The POG was actively engaged in all key processes in 2022 from planning to reporting and commissioned two research initiatives to inform UN programming.

THEORY OF CHANGE

For the UNSDCF, and for each strategic priority, theories of change (ToC) describe the interdependent changes that must take place for the achievement of the desired outcomes, in Lao PDR's current development context.



1 At the core of the UNSDCF overarching theory of change are the relationships between the Lao PDR's people wellbeing and their prosperity.

2 Only healthy, safe and well-nourished, protected, education, and sheltered people can enjoy fulfilment and prosperity.

3 Series of systemic changes - in development of the country, in economy, in national planning and in the labour market - are needed to support inclusive prosperity.

4 A set of social boundaries, inclusive of the protection of human rights, the rule of law, good governance, evidence-based and robust public administration, and participation of all into decision-making, is the backbone of improvements in well-being and prosperity of all.

5 There are nine planetary boundaries beyond which we cannot push Earth Systems without endangering Lao PDR's development progress at risk.

EVALUATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

2022 saw the completion of two important joint programmes, supporting progress on social protection and financing for development. The end-of-programme evaluation and reporting process for both initiatives underlined the contribution that these joint programmes made to improve the coherence of the UN's work in tackling key cross-cutting development issues.

Reflections on the implementation of both joint programmes also reinforced the position that working with and through Government structures is the right approach to achieve lasting results, however this requires taking a longer-term time horizon compared to the duration of a typical individual project. This underlines the importance of building clear structures that go beyond individual projects to allow for sustained and consistent engagement for national counterparts.

The UNCT plans future joint programmes, notably in the areas of financing for development and environment and climate change, to further strengthen policy coherence. These will be facilitated through the relevant output groups,

as structures that can provide oversight and continuity beyond the duration of individual projects.

Strengthening partnership with key development actors remains essential to achieve the goals of the UNSDCF. 2022 has seen various efforts by the UNCT to consolidate, expand and deepen partnerships with other stakeholders for greater impacts and results. These achievements also underline the importance of maintaining the fundamental core of a good partnerships for greater sustainability and effectiveness.

As 2022 was the first year of implementation of the new UNSDCF, which operationalized new ways of working and organizational structures, a joint reflection on the new processes is planned as part of the planning process for 2023. This will provide an opportunity for both the UNCT and Government to review progress during this first year and identify necessary updates to the processes that could facilitate further effective implementation of the vision agreed under the UNSDCF.

Photo: UNDP/Pongpat Sensouphone



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

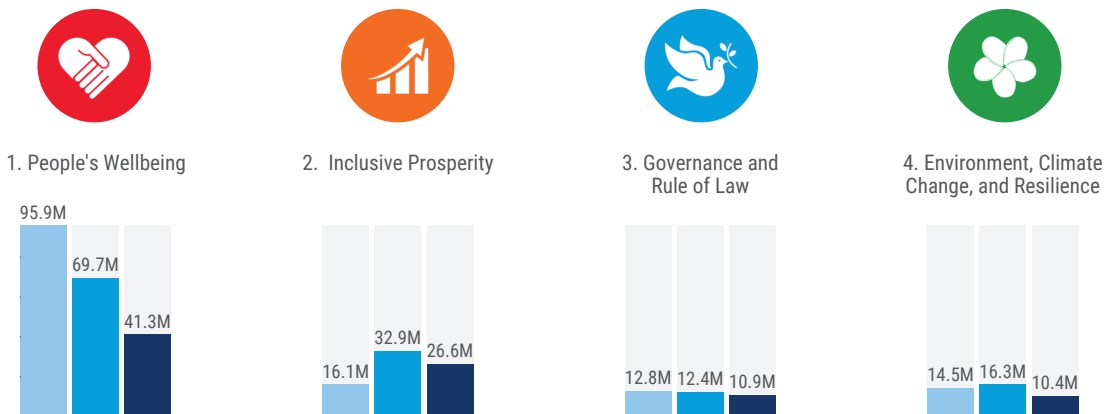
TOTAL 2022 BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE (US\$)

The 2022 total required and available budget includes some resources for future year(s) since some UN agencies have multi-year project cycles.

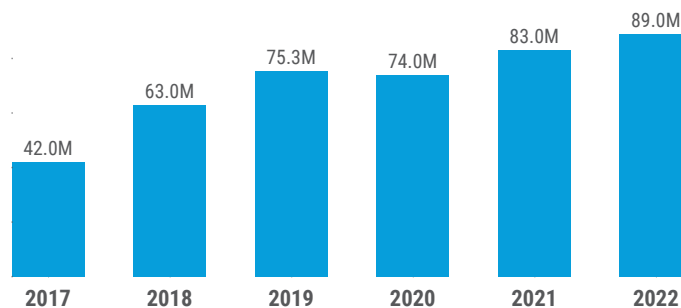


BY OUTCOME

2022 budget in US\$: ■ Required ■ Available ■ Expenditure

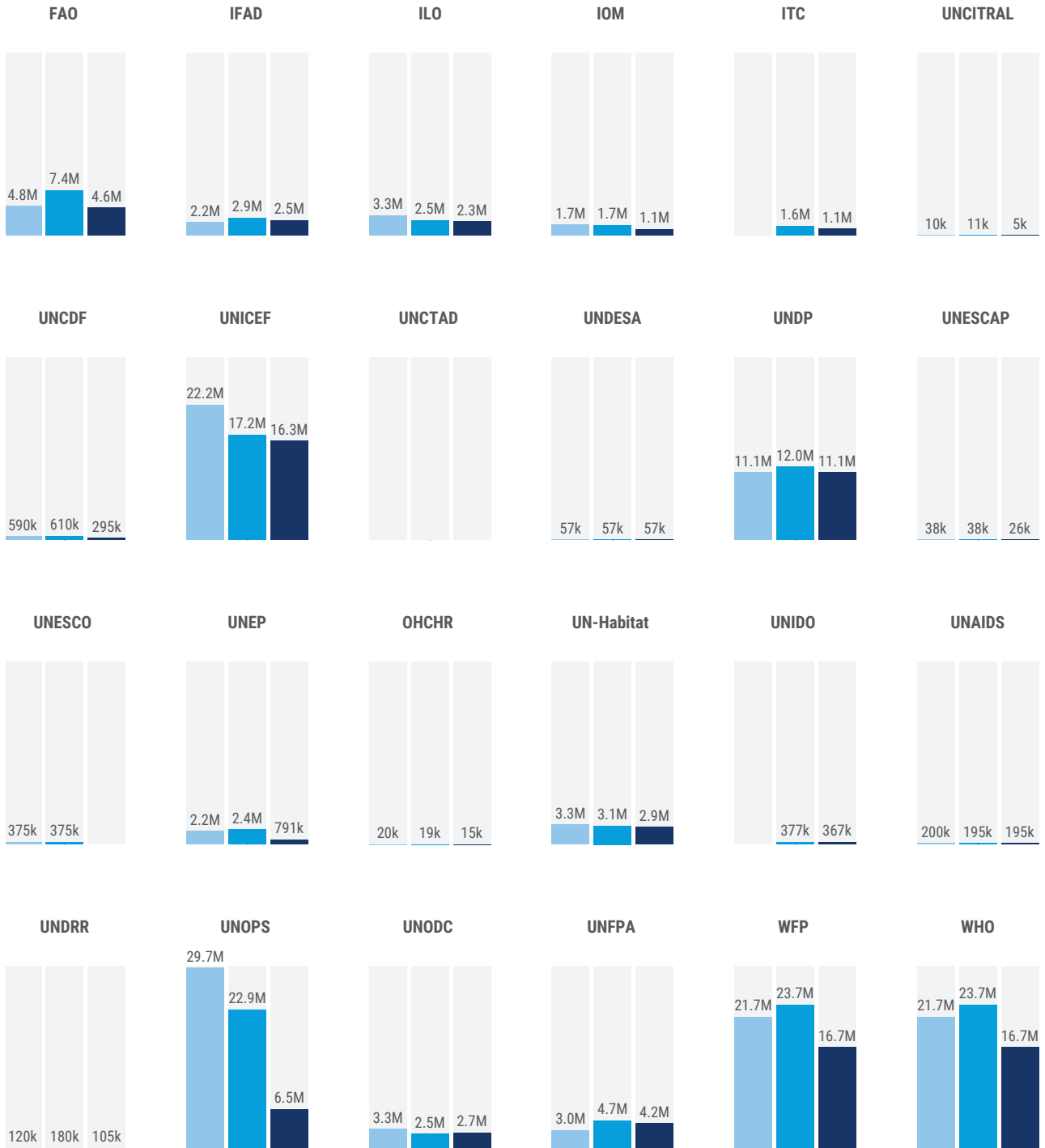


TOTAL ANNUAL EXPENDITURE 2017-2022



BY AGENCY

2022 budget in US\$: ■ Required ■ Available ■ Expenditure



UNCT KEY FOCUS FOR 2023



LDC GRADUATION

Building upon preparatory work, **2023 is foreseen to be a milestone for Lao PDR's progress towards graduation from LDC status.** Key events include the LDC-V conference in Doha, 5-9 March 2023, where High-Level participation from Lao PDR engaged with international counterparts on the steps necessary to manage a smooth transition. A key focus of the UNCT for 2023 will be in supporting the Government in preparation for this event, including in developing a comprehensive STS, and – upon finalization and endorsement – offering coordinated inter-agency support to implement the actions of the Strategy in 2023 and throughout Lao PDR's extended graduation period until 2026.



ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT

A second key focus for the UNCT in 2023 will be **supporting Lao PDR's economic and financial recovery** from the combined economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the global "4Fs" crisis posing a risk to virtually all areas of sustainable development exemplified e.g. the 30% reduction in the national health budget in 2022¹.

Accordingly, a key focus for the UNCT in 2023 will be supporting Lao PDR to address and overcome these challenges **through the implementation of the 9th NSEDP Financing Strategy.** The Financing Strategy is expected to be formally endorsed at the start of 2023, paving the way for whole-of-UN support to the Government for the implementation of its 54 concrete actions. As objectives and actions are broader in scope than exclusively economic matters (e.g., seeking to prioritize investment in human capital and the environment, and reduce environmental degradation as a current by-product of revenue generation and economic growth), contributions from various specialized agencies and funds are foreseen to be drawn upon in line with their specific expertise.

1. National Assembly of Lao PDR.



ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND GREEN GROWTH

Relatedly, another key focus area for the UNCT will be to **strengthen the coordinated efforts under Outcome 4 on “Environment, Climate Change and Resilience”**. Environmental sustainability was identified as an area of concern in the 2022 CCA update, seeing challenges increase and posing a threat to any improvements over the past year for Green Growth and Natural Resource Management and consequently deemed to have de facto regressed. In response, a UNCT key focus for 2023 will be to increase inter-agency efforts and joint programme(s) development to address priority environmental concerns. While details are to be discussed among key agencies during joint workplans development throughout the first quarter of 2023, UNCT efforts in this area will broadly seek to support the Government in reorienting the current economic growth model (largely based on natural resource extraction) towards greater environmental sustainability (e.g., through environmental fiscal reform, strengthened environmental safeguards around private and public investment, greater enforcement of natural resource and biodiversity conservation laws). Besides and more specifically, the UN, jointly with the World Bank, will seek to offer support to the Government of Lao PDR on the topic of carbon finance in response to government requests.

In addition, with a view to increasing knowledge and promoting recognition and understanding among UNCT of the links between human rights and climate change and the environment, UNEP and OHCHR will offer workshops on substantive and procedural environmental rights, the role and protection of environmental human rights defenders, and dialogue with Civil Society Organizations and other non-UN actors on human rights and the environment.



STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE

Finally, an urgent priority and key focus for the UNCT will be supporting the Government’s efforts in **strengthening resilience to various shocks** (e.g., economic, environmental, health-related, etc.) – to which the country remains highly exposed and vulnerable. This will be **guided by the Lao PDR National Resilience Framework**, finalised with UN support and expected to be signed for implementation at the start of 2023.

Overall, these overarching initiatives will be referred to as guidance throughout 2023 ensuring – alongside the multi-year UNSDCF – that the UN agencies’ efforts are coordinated within a broader support efforts to the Government of Lao PDR as the country seeks to complete its recovery from recent crises, enhance its resilience to any future shocks, and progress towards a smooth, sustainable and irreversible graduation from LDC status on its pathway towards sustainable development that leaves no one behind

ACRONYMS

4F	Food, Fertilizer, Fuel, and Finance
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CCA	Common Country Analysis
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (of Wild Fauna and Flora)
COP27	27th Conference of Parties (to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change)
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability
CRVS	Civil Registration and Vital Statistics
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DHIS2	District Health Information Software 2
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation (of the United Nations)
GAVI	Vaccine Alliance
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GGGI	Global Green Growth Institute
GIS	Geographic Information System
HCF	Healthcare Facilities
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IFI	International Financial Institutions

ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMAM	Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition
INGO	International Non-Government Organization
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
JSC	Joint Steering Committee
KOICA	Korea International Cooperation Agency
Lao PDR	Lao People's Democratic Republic
LASES	Lao Academy of Social and Economic Sciences
LDC	Least Developed Country
LGBTIQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, transgender, Intersex or Questioning
LSB	Lao Statistics Bureau
LSIS	Lao Social Indicator Survey
LWU	Lao Women's Union
LYU	Lao Youth Union
MCH	Maternal and Child health
MEB	Minimum Expenditure Basket
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial support
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoJ	Ministry of Justice

MoTC	Ministry of Technology and Communication
MPI	Ministry of Planning and Investment
NCAWMC	National Commission for the Advancement of Women, Mothers and Children
NSEDP	National Socio-Economic Development Plsn
ODF	Open-defecation free
OECD	Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OHRLLS	Office of the High Commission for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, and Small Island Developing States
OPD	Organisations of Person with Disabilities
OSSCs	One-Stop-Service Centers
PHC	Primary Health Care
PLHIV	People Living with HIV/AIDS
POG	Programme Oversight Group
RMCAH	Reproductive, Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
STS	Smooth Transition Strategy
TNOC	Trans-national Organized Crime
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNCITRAL	United Nations Commission on International Trade Law
UNCT	UN Country Team
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Social and Economic Affairs
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNDS	UN development system
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UN-REDD	United Nations Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries
UNSDCF	Lao PDR United Nations Sustainable Development Coeoperation Framework
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

2022 UNSDCF RESULTS FRAMEWORK



PEOPLE'S WELLBEING

Indicators	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 update	Target 2026
Completion rate (primary)	Education Management Information System	%	92.6 (2020)	80.1%	96
DPT3/Pentavalent immunization coverage	Health Management Information System, Ministry of Health	%	90.1 (2020)	86.7 (2021)	100
TB Treatment success rate	National TB Control Programme	%	89 (2019)	89.4 (2021)	90
Percentage of people living with HIV currently receiving antiretroviral therapy (ART)	National Center for HIV, AIDS and STIs	%	54 (2019)	10,029/ 15,000 (67%)	95
Key populations (MSM, FSW and PWID) at risk of HIV infection have access to comprehensive HIV prevention services.	GAM Report	%	2020: MSM = 7 %FSW = 67%PWID = 0% (2020)	A. MSM and TG = 4,989/24,879 (20%) B. FSW = 11,294/16,386 (69%) C. Drug User = 209/1,754 (12%)	95
Medical doctors per 1000 people	Dept. of Health Personnel, Ministry of Health	Rate	0.62 (2018)	0.57 (2021)	0.72
Percentage of girls aged 15-19 years currently married or in union	CRVS (MoHA) / LSIS III	%	23.5 (2017)	No new data	7.2
Adolescent birth rate per 1000 people	LSIS II, CRVS (MoHA)	Rate	83 (2017)	No new data	63.2
Maternal mortality ratio per 100,000 people	MoH	Rate	185 (2019)	No new data	<70
Modern contraceptive prevalence rate	LSIS	%	49 (2017)	53%	67
Children whose birth are registered per year	MoHA	%	51 (2019)	UNICEF: 1,872 children (F783; M1,089) were reached and received birth certificate.	70
Completion rate (lower secondary)	Education Management Information System	%	54 (2017)	UNICEF Total 88.3% M: 87.3% F: 89.3%	>74
Use of basic Sanitation Services	LSIS/JMP/Census	%	71 (2017)	No data available	85
Use of basic water supplies	LSIS/JMP/Census	%	78.1 (2017)	No data available	95

Indicators	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 update	Target 2026
Proportion of children and young people achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in(i) reading and (ii) mathematics (male/female) according to national student performance assessments:(a) at the end of primary; education (grade 5)(b) at the end of lower secondary education (grade 9)	Source: (a) SEA-PLM 2019: regional learning assessment (b) ASLO Grade 9 national learning assessment	%	(a) Lao language 2% / Math 8% (b) Lao language 28.2 %/ Math 0.9% (2019)	No new data	a) Lao language 20% / Mathematics 40%(b) Lao language 40% / Mathematics 20%
Dropout rate for grade 1	EMIS	%	6.4 (2020)	6.5	4
Number of participants (15-30) in the lower secondary education equivalency programme	MOES	No	30,065 (2018)		140,000
Prevalence of stunting (low height-for-age) in children under 5	LSIS	%	33 (2017)	No new data	tbd
Prevalence of wasting (low weight-for-height) in children under 5	LSIS	%	9 (2017)	No new data	tbd
Prevalence of overweight (high weight-for-height) in children under 5	LSIS	%	3.5 (2017)	No new data	tbd
Coverage of skilled birth attendance	HMIS, Ministry of Health	%	79.8 (2020)	No new data	90

Protection

Indicators	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 update	Target 2026
Number of children, women and girls who experienced violence reached by multi-sectoral response services supported by the UN (including health, social service, justice, rehabilitation).	UN Agency Report	Number	14,590 (2020)	UNICEF: 3,350 + 278 + 1,998 UNFPA: 635 women and girls	60,000
Number of children, girls, women, boys and men who participated in knowledge building and awareness-raising behaviour change interventions supported by the UN to eliminate all forms of violence, discrimination, exploitation, and abuse against children, women and girls.	UN Agency Report	Number	48,167 (2020)	UNICEF: 444,128 UNFPA: 2,296,307	1,050,000
Number of protection actors, social, health and justice service providers (government authorities, NGO/CSO, etc.) trained on protection issues supported by the UN.	UN Agency Report	Number	591 (2021)	UNFPA: 1,911 duty bearers UNICEF: 903	5,500



Health

Indicators	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 update	Target 2026
a. Number of community health systems strengthening priority districts implementing Essential Health Services Package with focus on RMNCAH at primary health care level including strengthening service delivery models through enhanced community engagement and efficiency across programs	Agreed set of indicators to monitor EHSP delivery through service records. MOH/DHHP annual report	Number	0 (2021)	1 (2022) VHV toolkit for RMNCAH home visit is developed and being field tested in one district.	12
b. Number of provinces where AYFS guidelines on operational delivery models (including the facility standards) have been rolled out	MOH (provincial) report on the roll-out of AYFS guidelines	Number	6 (2021)	7 (2022)	16
c. Number of quarterly recommendations based on routine monitoring of essential health services delivery and uptake data which will be jointly developed and shared with Ministry of Health	Quarterly recommendations documented	Number	0 (2021)	4 (2022)	20 Quarterly recommendations through routine monitoring of essential health services



Education

Indicators	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 update	Target 2026
a. Number of policies, strategies, guidelines, standards developed with support by UN agencies to expand access to and improve quality inclusive early childhood, primary, secondary, tertiary education, TVET and non-formal education*	UN Agencies Annual Report	Number	0 (2021)	UNICEF: 1 UNESCO: 1 WFP: 1	10
b. Number of education service providers (MoES, provincial, district and schools) provided with capacity development support by UN agencies, including for remote and hybrid education delivery	UN Agencies Annual Report	Number	0 (2021)	UNICEF: 10,533 UNESCO: 16 WFP: 2,166 (18 Province =18 PESS 17 Districts =17 DESB 1 IEPC 2,130 Schools)	10
c. Number of learners benefiting from early childhood, primary, secondary, tertiary education, TVET and non-formal education programmes supported by UN agencies*	UN Agencies Annual Report	Number	0 (2021)	UNICEF: 14,999 UNESCO: 458 WFP: 330	123,000



Nutrition and Food security

Indicators	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 update	Target 2026
Number of national nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive policies, strategies, guidelines, regulations, frameworks, and standards, amended or endorsed, during 2022 – 2026, that are supported by the UN.	UN Agencies Annual Report	Number	0 (2021)	(WFP): 3	315 (WFP/IFAD only)
Number of people who receive direct support from the UN, that enables them to meet their food and nutrition security needs.	UN Agencies Annual Report	Number	0 (2021)	(WFP): 40,515	WFP: 500,000 people IFAD: 113,500 people
Number of UN programme/projects that aim to promote and improve dietary, care and service seeking practices and behaviours, skills, and knowledge, to enhance food and nutrition security.	UN Agencies Annual Report	Number	0 (2021)	WFP = 6	WFP: 25 IFAD: 2



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Indicators	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 update	Target 2026
a. Number of schools and health care facilities receiving access to water, sanitation or hygiene facilities	UN Agencies Annual Report	Number	0 (2021)	UNICEF: Schools:1,604 +109 (WFP) HCF: 57 + 20	1,250 (1,000 schools; 250 HCFs)
b. Number of people in ODF declared villages as a result of UN direct or indirect support	UN Agencies Annual Report	Number	0 (2021)	UNICEF: 953,232	1,000,000
c. Number of people with access to affordable drinking water	UN Agencies Annual Report	Number	0 (2021)	UNICEF: 17,627	220,000



Shelter

Indicators	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 update	Target 2026
a. Number of provinces with enhanced capacities on shelter development and management	UN Agencies Annual Report	Number	2 (2021)	4	5
b. Number of persons able to access shelter (protection/ evacuation/ emergency) or disaster-resilient housing	UN Agencies Annual Report	Number	0 (2021)	145	20,000



INCLUSIVE PROSPERITY

Indicators	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 update	Target 2026
Proportion of population living below national poverty line	LECS- UNICEF	%	18.6 (2020)	No Update	13.9
Proportion of children who are multidimensionally deprived according to national definitions	LSIS	%	50.4 (2018)	No Update	NSEDP 35% / localised SDGi 25%
*) Share of population that is covered by the National Social Security System	MoLSW	%	4.4 (2019)	10% (2022)	7
Households who have received social transfers (cash and in-kind) in the last three months.	LSIS	%	12.4 (2017)	No update	20
Unemployment rate (% of total labor force)	ILOSTAT database	%	20 (2020)	No Update	15
Youth unemployment	ILOSTAT database	%	18.2 Female 15.5: Male (2017)	No Update	15
Adult literacy rate (15 and above)	UNESCO	%	84.66 (2015) M/F: 89.96/79.39	No Update	M 94%/F 88% for 15-24
Total revenue as a % of GDP	MoF/IMF	%	13.3 (2020, Updated)	17.4	20
Proportion of total government spending on essential services (education, health and social protection)	Official Gazette	%	13.6 (2021)	No Update	tbd
Remittance contribution to the GDP	World Bank	%	1.49 (2017)	2.29 (2021)	tbd
Ratio of export over GDP (disaggregated merchandise and services)	ITC/UNCTAD/WTO	%	29.5 5.1 (2018)	Goods: 46.2 (2021) Services; 6.3 (2019)	tbd
Exports (disaggregated by World/ASEAN/ other major trading partners and goods/ services)	ITC/UNCTAD	Bn US constant	6.23; 921.4 3.09; NA 2.16; NA (2018-2019)	Goods (2021): 8.58/4.28/4.30 Services (2019): 1.18	tbd
Export diversification index (markets and products)	ITC/UNCTAD/WTO	3-1	0.68 0.90	Markets: 0.75 (2021) Products; 0.91 (2021)	tbd
B2C e-commerce index	UNCTAD technical notes on ICT for development	0-100	40.6 (Rank 101)	No Update	45
Competitive Industrial Performance Index	UNIDO	Ranking	109	109	Tbd
FDI inflows	IMF	% of GDP	7.8	NA	Tbd
Manufacturing in total value added	UNIDO	%	7.8 (updated)	No Update	9.10%
Percentage of high priority hazardous areas remaining to be cleared (disaggregated by village poverty levels)	MoLSW	%	99.25	99.15 (2021)	98.78%
Number of reported UXO casualties	MoLSW	%	33	17 (2022)	<15

*) Indicator narrative: The methodology for calculating “Share of population that is covered by the National Social Security System” has been updated. The 2022 figure includes dependants—children, spouses and/or elderly parents—who are essentially covered if one family member is insured.

Smooth Transition Beyond LDC Graduation

Indicators	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 update	Target 2026
a. National Smooth Transition Strategy linked with NSEDP development priorities, implementation, monitoring and reporting processes, developed and endorsed by the Government, with UN support.	Lao PDR's annual participation (consultation and submitting report) in the Enhanced Monitoring Mechanism by the Committee for Development Policy. Government website References in Government Policy Statements/ Announcements, national policy documents, legislative inputs, roadmaps, communications from international development and funding partners.	Binary	0 (2021)	0 (2022)	Yes
b. % of STS measures implemented with defined graduation support from the UN system and partners	Government annual review of the smooth transition strategy (STS) Government annual report on STS implementation to the CDP Government mid-term review of NSEDP	Percentage	0 (2021)	0(2022)	80

Planning and Financing for the SDGs

Indicators	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 update	Target 2026
a. Number of trainings provided by UN agencies for planning and budgeting officials on results-based management, public financial management, data and information management, integrated planning and budgeting	agencies' reports	Number	0 (2021)	7(2022)	10
b. Number of plans and strategies supported by UN agencies with thematic assessments and diagnostics, financial assessments, multi-stakeholder coordination, policy formulation, and monitoring and evaluation	agencies' reports	Number	1 (2021)	2(2022)	4
c. Financing strategy updated to inform the implementation of the 9th NSEDP and the preparation of the 10th NSEDP containing options to finance policy priorities based on the Integrated National Financing Framework approach	agencies' reports	Text	1 (2021)	Financing strategy finalised and awaiting formal endorsement (2022)	Strategy implemented

Social Protection

Indicators	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 update	Target 2026
a. Number of social protection related (including health insurance, social security and social welfare as defined in the NSPS) policies or reforms and financing mechanisms supported by the UN for improved shock-responsive, inclusive social protection based on a life-cycle approach in Lao PDR	National Assembly, Official Gazette	no. of policies / legislations	1 policy (National Social Protection Strategy) / 2 legislations (Social Security Inspection ministerial agreement and Decree on Establishment of the National Social Protection Commission) (2021)	2 policies, 2 legislations (National Social Protection Strategy, National Health Insurance Strategy 2021-2025, Social Security Inspection ministerial agreement, Decree on Establishment of the National Social Protection Commission)	1 policy / 5 legislations
b. Number of initiatives supported by the UN to strengthen national capacities to deliver sustainable, inclusive social protection and to advocate for strengthened social protection measures that address the different life-cycle risks and vulnerabilities-stakeholder coordination, policy formulation, and monitoring and evaluation	agencies' reports	no. of staff trained, no. of events held	0 (2021)	No. of staff trained: 704 No. of female staff trained: 252 No. of events held: 16 (2022)	700 staff trained (at least 350 female staff trained, at least 300+ provincial staff trained) / 16 advocacy events conducted
c. Number of people, partially or wholly assisted by UNCT, who receive social protection benefits and services through the national social protection system	NHIB annual report, NHIB, LSSO annual reports, MOLSW	population covered	Health insurance: 94% of population legally covered, Social security: 4% of population insured (314753 insured) Social welfare: 10,470 (NSMP), 1,000 (MECG) (2021)	Health insurance: 94% of population legally covered Social security: 10% of population (744,735 persons) insured Social welfare: 192,513 (93,700 girls) covered by the NSMP with WFP's assistance. MECG: 2,596. (2022)	Health insurance: 100% of population legally covered, Social security: 7% of population insured (469675 insured) Social welfare: 15,000 (NSMP), 5,000 (child benefits).

Migration Policy

Indicators	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 update	Target 2026
a. Number of new or revised policies relevant to migration and with a clear reference to migration-related evidence (disaggregated by policy area, mobility flows) supported by the UN.	Drafts, amendments, reviews, approvals of policy documents, consultation workshops, technical inputs,	Number	0 (2021)	3 - The revision of Labour Law; the Decree 245 on Sending Migrants to Work Abroad; Agreement on the Management of the Employment Service Enterprise (2022)	2
b. Number of capacity building trainings, workshops and direct service deliveries provided by the UN aiming at supporting migrants throughout the migration cycle	Capacity building trainings, workshops and direct service deliveries	Number	Missing inputs	55 capacity building trainings, workshops and direct service deliveries provided by IOM and ILO (2022)	Missing inputs

Urban Development

Indicators	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 update	Target 2026
a. Number of Master plans developed/updated	Drafts, amendments, reviews, approvals of policy documents, consultation workshops, technical inputs,	Master plan	0 (2021)	2 (2022)	9
b. Number of persons benefiting from safer urban projects/initiatives	Capacity building trainings, workshops and direct service deliveries	Person	0 (2021)	72,462 (2022)	50,000

Rural development and UXO

Indicators	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 update	Target 2026
a. Number of hectares (development and agricultural land) (hectare) cleared from UXO contamination with UN support.	MLSW / NRA IMSMA database	ha	492 (2021)	479 (2022)	6500
b. Number of policy, strategy, and legislation framework development with UN support to facilitate new and inclusive opportunities in rural areas, including as the results of UXO clearance in affected areas.	MAF/ MoLSW/ILO/ NRA	Unit	0 (2021)	2 (2022)	3
c. Number of rural women and men, including people with disabilities and youth, received livelihood support from UN interventions.	MAF & FAO project report; MoLSW/ILO projects' report	Person	25 youth (16 females) and 208 rural men and women (99 females)	9,800 (5,300 M, 4,500 F)	28000 (15,400 M, 12,600 F)

Private sector skills development and digitalization

Indicators	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 update	Target 2026
a. Number of policy and regulatory reviews supported by the UN for an improved employment and business environment through participatory dialogue with stakeholders	ARISE Plus Lao PDR project reports, UNDP Government Digitalization project report, DESA Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (MSME) project report, EU and Lao official trade data, ASEAN reports (where available), TRTA Projects reports in country where available, Trade Surveys	Review	0 (2021)	-1 policy brief on challenges facing SMEs -1 Initial draft of Skills Development Law	31
b. Number of vulnerable people, especially women, young people and people with disabilities, who have benefited from skills development including vocational skills, entrepreneurship and financial literacy, essential life skills and digitization through public-private partnerships and initiatives supported by UN agencies	UNFPA, ILO, ITC, UNDP, DESA and MAF/FAO progress reports	People	n/a (2021)	-Strengthening capacity for 121 people at 9 provinces to register unemployment by using Labour Market Information -Promoting internship programme for 41 participants from enterprise, skill development provider and TVET, -Completed 4 TOT online training on web-design programme, digital video, technology, e-commerce and elevator technology for 51 participants; -Capacity building workshop on digital skills development and industry for 44 participants - Complete training on carpenter and tailoring for 50 participants and 20 participants completed Air conditioner repair and electrician installation	327/5,530
c. Number of UN initiatives/tools made available through national institutions to support increased private sector development	MAF/FAO Project report (TCP/Lao/3803), ILO Skills Dev Progress report, MAF/FAO Project report (TCP/Lao/3803), ITC project reports	Unit	0 (2021)	- 25 MSME Resilience video (regional initiative) produced to provide advice on how to survive during the pandemic/crisis - 6 package of activity Based Learning modules introduce to MSMES -Employment Skills Needs Survey 2022 report is available and for dissemination in 2023	2



GOVERNANCE AND RULE OF LAW

Indicators	Custodian agency	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 update	Target 2026
Statistical Capacity Indicator	UNDESA	World Bank	%	67.8 (2017)	Not available until later Q1 2023	75
*) Proportion of births of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with the civil registration / A proportion of children under 5 years of age are registered at different ages	UNICEF	MoHA	%	45.5 (2019)	28.7 (2021)	93
Corruption Perception Index	UNDP	Transparency International	Index	29 (Rank 134) (2020)	30 (rank 128) (2021)	>40
Number of people using legal aid services across the country	UNDP	MoJ	Number	1059 (2019)	2,266	3500
Government Effectiveness Index	UNDP	World Bank	Index	-0.78 (Rank 153/193) (2019)	0.62 (2021)	<-0.5 (top 120)
Voice and Accountability Index	UNDP	World Bank	Index	1.8 (Rank 187/194) 2019	-1.68 (2021)	<-0.9 (top 140)
E-government Index	UNDP	UNDESA	Index	0.3288 (Rank 167/193) (2020)	0,37640 (rank 159)	>0.55 (top 130)
Number of country visits by Special Procedures accepted by Lao PDR (subject to UPR Action Plan)	OHCHR	OHCHR	Number	0 (2020)	0	tbc
Number of reports to Treaty Bodies submitted by Lao PDR (number of action plans developed for implementation on recommendations received by Treaty Bodies)	OHCHR	OHCHR	Number	0 (2020)	2	6
Percentage of recommendations agreed on by Lao PDR from the Third Cycle Universal Periodic Review and issued by human rights Treaty Monitoring Bodies that have been implemented	OHCHR and UNDP	GoL UPR M&E framework	%	0 (2020)	N/A	10

*) Birth registration coverage has declined from 45.5% in 2019 to 28.7% in 2021. Between 2020 and 2021, the birth registration coverage saw a decline of 11.9 percentage points which clearly outlines challenges in registration during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is also noteworthy that wide disparities were observed in birth registration coverages across provinces ranging from 11.3 in Salavan to 59.2 in Xiengkhouang .

Civic space and participation

Indicators	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 update	Target 2026
a. Number of networks, standing mechanisms, platforms, policy dialogues and partnerships with Non-Profit Associations through which the UN ensures meaningful participation by formal & informal civil society actors along with a wider set of stakeholders.	UN AFPs	Number	5 (2021)	19	25
b. Number of interventions, including workshops, training visioning support/strategic planning support and human rights education to strengthen the capacities and awareness amongst civil society to strengthen their abilities to participate meaningfully as active stakeholders in decision-making (for example in human rights mechanisms).	UN AFPs	Number	7 (2021)	11	55
c. Number of advocacy activities, including knowledge products, public speeches and communications, aimed at promoting a conducive environment for civil society to operate freely and participate in decision-making as active stakeholders.	UN AFPs	Number	5 (2021)	11	80

Gender equality, women's empowerment, and human rights

Indicators	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 update	Target 2026
a. Number of rights-holders/beneficiaries reached (including but not limited to women, girls, children and marginalized groups) through Information Education Communication (IEC) and outreach activities designed to increase knowledge and/or ability to claim their human rights, including to women's empowerment and gender equality, child rights and sexual and reproductive health	UN AFPs	Number	81,379 (2021)	2,825,921	3,900,000
b. Number of interventions/capacity building activities (including but not limited to trainings, workshops, online refreshers, sensitisation workshops) aimed at strengthening awareness and capacities of duty bearers working on gender equality, women empowerment and human rights to support the development and implementation of national legal and policy frameworks that are aligned with and/or mainstream relevant international human rights treaties and mechanisms (eg. CEDAW, CRC, ICPD25)	UN AFPs	Number	361 (2021)	1,338	2,100

Rule of Law and access to justice

Indicators	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 update	Target 2026
a. Number of justice and police officials to undergo capacity development programmes supported by the UN on legal aid service provision and policing for marginalized and vulnerable groups, in line with international human rights commitment and standards	MOJ, MPS	Number	100	415	800
b. Number of interventions supported by the UN aimed at raising people's awareness about their rights	UN agency reporting, Law Dissemination Department (MOJ) and other line ministries, data from CSO/NGO	Number	2	4	8

Combatting Transnational Organised Crime

Indicators	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 update	Target 2026
Number of national policies developed and implemented following recommendations from UN to prevent/tackle crime and illicit trafficking , including the drug problem, in-line with international commitments and standards	Government Gazette and Government Rulings	Number of policies	N/A	N/A	N/A
b. Number of people supported (M/F) by UN agencies on topics relevant to counter Transnational Organized Crime	UN agency reporting	Number of people	N/A	1,263 people	N/A

Public administration reform and data driven governance

Indicators	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 update	Target 2026
a. Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority, by age	MoHA	Number of children	Missing inputs	No update data, CRVS is under development. It is expected data from LSIS III in 2023	Missing inputs
b. Proportion of essential public services provided online (e-service)	MPT	%	Missing inputs	19 services (no data on what total amount of services are to calculate %)	50%
c. Production of high quality disaggregated socio-economic and population data for planning, policy and strategy formulation, and monitoring the National Social-Economic Development Plan (NSEDPlan) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) through 5th PHC 2025 and other household surveys, i.e. LSIS III, LECS, etc	LSB (MPI)	Number of surveys	Missing inputs	1,census preparation for 2025 is underway and LSIS III training for data collection is ongoing.	Missing inputs



ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND RESILIENCE

Indicators	Custodian agency	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 update	Target 2026
Number of local governments that have adopted and implemented local disaster risk reduction strategies, disaggregated by province, district and village	UNDRR	MoNRE	Number	2 Provinces 0 district 0 village (2020)	3 Provinces, 1 District, 2 Villages (2022)	10 Prov 15 Dist 50 Village
Number of functional weather stations	FAO	MoNRE	Number	51 (2021)	72	101
Persons per 100,000 population directly affected (dead, missing, homeless/ displaced) by natural disaster	UNDRR	International Disaster Database, Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters/ MONRE	Number	738 per 100,000 (2015)	N/A	Tbd
Greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (tCO2e/year)	UN-Habitat	Biennial Update report and National Communication to the UNFCCC	tCO2e/year	37,291,634 (2017/2018)	N/A	30,000,000
PM2.5 air pollution, mean annual exposure (micrograms per cubic meter)	UNEP	World Bank	microgram per cm	25.11 (2017)	N/A	10
Environmental Performance Index (EPI)	UN-Habitat	Yale University	Index	34.8 (2020)	30.7	Tbd
Red List Index of species survival	UNDP	Red List/ IUCN	Index	0.83 (2020)	0.83 (2020)	Tbd
Forest area as a percentage of total land area	FAO	FAO	%	Government estimation 57.5 (2020)	62	70

Green Growth

Indicators	Custodian agency	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 update	Target 2026
a. Number of tools, plans and strategies developed with UN support that promotes more sustainable production and consumption	UNDP	MoNRE/ WB	Number	0 (2021)	4	15
b. Number of legislation/policies and area of land (ha) supported by UN stimulating efficient utilization of agricultural land and sustainable agriculture.	UNDP	MAF/ NSEDP	Number	0 (2021)	0	5 policies / Legislations and 15000ha, 5 policies / Legislations and 15000ha in at least 9 provinces of the country
c. Number of beneficiaries supported by UN to use clean energy alternatives (including energy from agricultural waste- biogas, woody biomass, solar, wind, micro hydro, energy efficiency cooking stove and fuel etc.).	UNDP	MoNRE/ MAF	Person	0 (2021)	N/A	10,000 (50% are women, 50% of total beneficiaries should be ethnic group in vulnerable areas, covering at least 9 provinces or 50% of total provinces in the country)

Natural Resource Management

Indicators	Custodian agency	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 value	Target 2026
a. Number of tools, plans and strategies developed with UN support that strengthen agriculture and natural resource and environmental management.	FAO- UNDP	MAF and UN project reports	Unit	51 (2021)	6	101
b. Number of communities/villages and towns supported by UN to sustainably manage natural resources.	FAO- UNDP	MAF and UN project reports	Number	0 (2021)	102	250

Resilience

Indicators	Custodian agency	Source	Unit	Baseline (Year)	2022 update	Target 2026
a. Number of local governments that have adopted and implemented a local disaster risk reduction strategies supported by the UN and in line with the national DRR strategy	UNDRR	MONRE, MLSW and Sendai Framework Monitor	Number	2 Provinces 0 Districts and 0 Villages (2020)	3 Provinces, 1 District, 2 Villages (2022)	8 Provinces 15 Districts 50 Villages
b. Number of people trained with support of the UN in disaster preparedness, assessment, response, reporting and provide service supported by at national and sub-national level	UNDRR	MONRE, MLSW	Number	0 (2020)	2,587 (1455 female)	500 (at least 250 female)
c. Percentage of villages/communities that have direct access to information on climate, disaster and weather risks through UN support	UNDRR	MONRE, MLSW	%	0 (2020)	0	75%

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