



LAO PDR

Development Cooperation: fact sheet:
October 2019



ESTIMATED AUSTRALIAN ODA 2019-20	\$37.9 MILLION
GROSS NATIONAL INCOME PER CAPITA	US\$2,460 (2018)
POPULATION	7 MILLION (2018)

A Least Developed Country, Laos is one of the poorest countries in the Mekong region. Over 23 percent of its population live below the national poverty line. Education standards are lacking, with literacy and numeracy rates lagging behind the region. Maternal mortality rate is 197 per 100,000 live births, worse than Myanmar and Cambodia. In 2019, Laos ranked 154 out of 190 on the World Bank's *Ease of Doing Business* index.

Strategic direction

Australia has a strong interest in supporting Laos' efforts to develop its economy and contribute to regional security and prosperity. Major bilateral programs contribute towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals relating to basic education, human resources development and private sector development.

For more details, see [Australia's Aid Investment Plan for Laos 2015-16 to 2019-20](#).

Program highlights (2018-19)

- Supported 212 ethnic minority students graduate as trained **teachers**.
- Completed **Grade 1 curriculum** materials, introducing major changes to teaching practices of Lao language and other subjects.
- Supported a new **teacher training system**, with 60 master trainers and 611 provincial trainers selected.
- Awarded tertiary **scholarships** to 103 Lao students to study in Laos and Australia.
- Equipped 51 Lao **women with new skills** and networks for career advancement and leadership.
- Trained over 13,000 villagers in **financial literacy**.
- Improved **access to financial services** for 27,613 rural people.
- Delivered training and liquidity services to 283 new community-based **village banks**.
- Facilitated **government-business dialogue**, attended by the Prime Minister, addressing issues facing the private sector.
- Developed a **Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Strategy**, embedding these issues across the development program in Laos.

Australian ODA	2017 -18 Actual (\$m)*	2018-19 Outcome (\$m)*	2019-20 Budget Estimate (\$m)*
Country Programs	22.1	24**	20.6
Regional	9.6	5.9	5.3
Global	9.3	9.5	9.3
Other Government Departments	4.6	4.3	2.7
Total Australian ODA to Lao PDR	45.6	43.8**	37.9
% of Total Australian ODA	1.1%	1.0%**	0.9%

*Due to rounding, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

** Includes additional \$3 million in humanitarian funding for the 2018 dam collapse and for UXO clearance.

