

Health and Nutrition

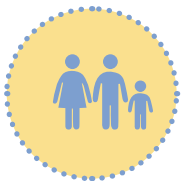


World Vision believes that every child deserves a good start in life. Child malnutrition rates in Lao PDR continue to be among the highest in Asia and, as a result, children continue to die from preventable illnesses such as diarrhea, pneumonia and malaria.

FAST FACT



40% of children in Laos are exclusively breastfed for the first six months of their life



44% of Laos children are stunted



43% of people in Laos do not have access to improved sanitation facilities



- Supporting and training local health workers and village health volunteers to promote good health practices and monitor illnesses, deaths and malnutrition.
- Training traditional birth assistants on safe child birth practices, child care and family planning.
- Supporting mobile clinics to administer childhood immunisations, health supplements and provide health check-ups.
- Giving communities access to basic medication through a Village Medicine Fund.

WHAT WE DO

World Vision works with government, local health workers and village volunteers to improve health care for mothers and their young children so they are well-nourished and protected from disease. We promote breastfeeding and good hygiene practices, as well as increased access to clean water and proper sanitation. We also operate mobile clinics to administer life-saving immunizations and health supplements. We are currently focusing on:

- Supporting new mothers to give their babies a good start in life by educating women on pre-post natal care, nutrition, breastfeeding, complementary feeding and basic newborn care.

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN FY14

World Vision supported the national immunization program treating about 7,842 children, with an average of 87% of children reported as fully vaccinated within our targeted areas.

World Vision has equipped village volunteers and district health staff to monitor the growth and development of 500 children and provided training to 90 members of the village development committee on managing and using emergency health funds. World Vision has also supported the establishment of 17 drug revolving fund schemes in target villages.

Targets

Increasing Access to Water and Sanitation

- Improving sanitation and access to clean water.
- Working closely with the local government to help communities install latrines, build boreholes, and set up community water taps and water gravity-fed water systems.

Addressing Child Malnutrition

- Taking a life-cycle approach and targeting interventions during the first 1,000 days of a child's life, the window of opportunity in which they can prevent harm caused by under-nutrition.
- Promoting good child care, hygiene and nutritional cooking with locally-available food.
- Ensuring healthy vegetables are available to families by working with World Vision's agricultural projects.
- Providing gardener's tools, seeds and training on how to grow crops.



► Happiness Comes from Learning about Nutrition

"My 2 year old daughter was not healthy because of malnutrition," says Thom. "I didn't have knowledge about taking care of my child and I was worried I would not be able to raise her well because we do not have enough food for our family."

She continues, "After attending the 12 day [World Vision] activity, I learned about which foods we have from nature that we can cook for children."

In the sessions, participants also learn about breastfeeding and hand washing, among other things.

► Giving birth to new health practices

"I helped deliver 28 babies over the last five years and I have already helped 13 be born this year," Khamtan says. "Before, women had to give birth by themselves. Once the baby arrived, they had to cut the cord themselves."

But five years ago, there was a change, when World Vision came to the community. After a community meeting, the village decided they needed a midwife. Khamtan spent several weeks in the city learning to be a village midwife.

No longer are charcoal sticks used to cut umbilical cords, no longer do women drink an alcoholic mixture after childbirth.

"I show new mums how to bathe newborns and how to breastfeed them. I advise them to breastfeed until they are six months old and then I tell them they can introduce water and other food."



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