



# Introduction to project on “Improving Food Security in the Northern Upland Lao PDR: identification of drivers and barriers”

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FOOD SECURITY NORTHERN UPLANDS



Australian Government

Australian Centre for  
International Agricultural Research

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# I. Food Insecurity Status in Lao PDR

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## Lao Definition of Food Security:

“to assure enough food and Foodstuffs for every person at anytime, both in material and economic aspects, with increasing demand on nutritional quality, hygiene and balance so as to improve health and enable normal development and efficient work” (NAPP, 2000).

The central policy issue surrounding food security in Laos is impressive economic growth has not been followed by improvements in food security.

# I. Food Security Status in Lao PDR

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WHO (reported by Vientiane times 17/10/2017):

- The Lao People's Democratic Republic has one of the highest rates of child under nutrition in the Western Pacific Region and is currently off track to achieve the nutrition target of Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 1
- Among children under the age of 5, 44% suffer from stunting, 27% are underweight and 6% suffer from wasting. Children in the poorest households are three times more likely to be stunted than children in the richest households.

# I. Food Security Status in Lao PDR

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- The stunting rate among young children living in households with poor water and sanitation facilities is higher (51%) than that of children in households with access to improved water and sanitation facilities (34%).
- Infant and young child feeding practices are generally poor. Only 40% of children are exclusively breastfed for 6 months.

# I. Food Security Status in Lao PDR

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Laos Expenditure and Consumption Survey (LECS) found little change in percentage of population that was food insecure between 2002 (23%) and 2008 (22%)

NAFRI and WFP: Importance of food insecurity has been on Northern provinces, particularly upland areas.

➡ Lack of relation between economic growth and improvement in food security, particularly in northern Upland.

## II. Research Questions and Objectives

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### 2.1. Research question 1: What drives food security status in the Northern Uplands of Lao PDR?

- Objective 1: Identify the past determinants of food security in the northern Uplands of Lao PDR, focus on the identification of the causes of persistent vulnerability to food insecurity,
- Objective 2: Identify current constraints and opportunities to improvements in food security at household level in the Northern Uplands of Lao PDR.

## II. Research Question and Objectives

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2.2. Research question 2: What are the impact of interventions selected to address food insecurity in the Northern Upland of Lao PDR?

- Objective 3: Define, implement and evaluate pilot interventions aimed at improving food security status of household.

## III. Activities

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3.1. Objective 1: To identify the past determinants of food security in the northern Uplands of Lao PDR

- ▶ *Activity 1.1 – Collation and linkage of existing biophysical and socio-economic data, namely LECS and Agricultural Census as well as the available datasets on soil, climate and land use;*
- ▶ *Activity 1.2 – Identification of the hierarchy of drivers of food security, in the last 10 years, through the statistical analysis of the data collated in Activity 1.1.*

# III. Activities

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3.2. Objective 2: Identify current constraints and opportunities to improvements in food security at household level in the Northern Uplands of Lao PDR.

- ▶ *Activity 2.1 Review of past and current interventions in the areas of food security, in particular those focused on natural resource management and agricultural commercialisation in the Northern Uplands of Lao PDR;*
- ▶ *Activity 2.2 Characterization of key agricultural markets, paying particular attention to regulation, structure and spatial integration;*
- ▶ *Activity 2.3 Identify opportunities and threats to food security at household level, in particular those arising from the new emphasis on commercial agriculture*

## III. Activities

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3.3. Objective 3: To implement and evaluate pilot interventions aimed at improving food security status of households

- ▶ *Activity 3.1 Implement and evaluate the impact of pilot interventions*, in terms of selected indicators of food security (consumption of calories and macronutrients, dietary diversity, nutrition/anthropometry) and identify the mechanisms through which such interventions drive improvements in food security.

## IV. Project Outcome and Duration

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### 4.1. Outcome

The definition of interventions that address the problem of food insecurity. The indirect outcome is future interventions to improve food security will be better targeted and therefore more effective when scaled-up. This will have important positive consequences for the livelihoods of those sub-populations that are most vulnerable to food insecurity.

### 4.2. Project's duration: 2015-2019

# VI. Project's Partners

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## I. Australian Partners

- Monash University - leading Institution
- University of Sydney
- James Cook University

## II. Lao Partners

- Faculty of Agriculture, National University of Laos

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<p>Handwriting practice area 4 (bottom-left)</p>	<p>Handwriting practice area 5 (bottom-middle)</p>	<p>Handwriting practice area 6 (bottom-right)</p>
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**Thank you very much!**

