



## LAOS COUNTRY PROFILE

2010



A health worker disinfects a motorcycle at a checkpoint during an avian influenza simulation exercise in Savanaket. The USAID-funded exercise is one of several held in Laos to prepare health workers for outbreaks and educate local residents about the procedures needed to contain the disease. (Photo: USAID)

### EXAMPLES OF OUR IMPACT

- USAID strengthens the Disabled People's Organization, which advocates for inclusive employment and economic opportunities for disabled people.
- USAID provides assistance and training to the Laos government on implementing reforms necessary to gain accession to the World Trade Organization and fully integrate into the ASEAN Economic Community.
- USAID helps Laos prepare for a pandemic by strengthening response capabilities.

### OVERVIEW

Since the mid-1980s the people of Laos have experienced a gradual transition from a centrally planned economy to an increasingly market-oriented financial system. The country still



Vientiane, Laos

faces serious infrastructure and human resource challenges, however. The Government of Laos recognizes the need for technical assistance, training, and investment in order to modernize its economy and address critical health, education, and employment issues, and has welcomed USAID programs designed to address these needs.

### PROGRAMS

#### INVESTING IN PEOPLE: SOCIAL SERVICES AND PROTECTION FOR VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

USAID provides assistance to improve the quality of medical services for victims of the unexploded ordinance that remains from the Indochina conflict more than 30 years ago. The program promotes improvement in the quality of emergency, orthopedic, rehabilitation, and surgical care, as well as medical services management. It also works at the community level to assist with the daily challenges that people with disabilities face, including health, hygiene, and learning how to care for themselves. USAID also works to strengthen the ability of the Disabled People's Organization in Laos to advocate for inclusive employment and economic opportunities for disabled people.

In addition, USAID supports inclusive education to ensure that children with disabilities are able to attend and succeed in school. Working with teachers and administrators in preschools and primary schools, USAID's program promotes the development of education resources and local expertise, strengthens community networks, and promotes advocacy to increase social awareness with respect to disabilities.

#### INVESTING IN PEOPLE: HEALTH

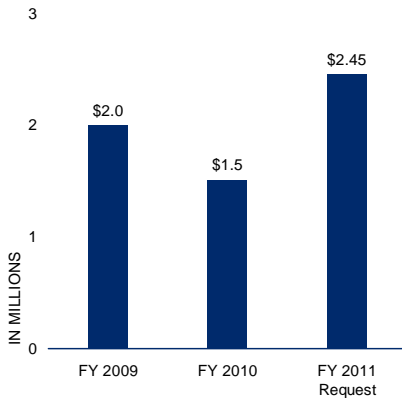
USAID engages in activities in Laos to reduce the incidence of malaria and dengue fever as part of its regional health program. Due in part to this assistance, the number of reported cases of dengue fever has decreased from nearly 7,000 in 2007 to approximately 4,000 in 2008.

CONTINUES >



## COUNTRY PROFILE CONTINUED

### USAID ASSISTANCE TO LAOS



Funding Sources: Development Assistance and Global Health and Child Survival Funds

For more information, see the  
FY2011 Congressional Budget Justification  
<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/budget/>

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#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

<http://www.usaid.gov/locations/asia/countries/laos/>

USAID also supports drug quality monitoring and management, and works to strengthen laboratory testing methods.

USAID seeks to build the Lao government's HIV program's capacity, reduce the incidence of HIV/AIDS, and mitigate its impact on at-risk and infected people and their families. A USAID-developed HIV/AIDS comprehensive prevention package is being used in six provinces. The avian influenza program strives to contain the H5N1 virus within the animal population, as well as help the country prepare for a pandemic by strengthening response capabilities.

#### ECONOMIC GROWTH: TRADE REFORM

USAID provides technical assistance and training to the Government of Laos in implementing reforms necessary to gain accession to the World Trade Organization, implement the Lao PDR-U.S. Bilateral Trade Agreement, and collaborate in the development of an Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Economic Community by 2015.

#### ECONOMIC GROWTH: ENVIRONMENT

USAID supports capacity building for the Government of Laos, in collaboration with other countries in the region, to promote responsible timber trade and the sustainable management of forest resources. USAID programs promote biodiversity conservation and combat illegal wildlife trafficking. USAID works to expand access to safe water and sanitation in rural areas.

In southern Laos, USAID is helping to launch a factory that manufactures ceramic pot filters, which are effective and inexpensive household water purification systems. USAID also is assisting health authorities in their promotion of household water treatment and safe storage as effective, low-cost strategies to reduce waterborne diseases.