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**Executive Board
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REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ON OPERATIONAL MATTERS

Agenda item 7

*For information**



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DEVELOPMENT PROJECT APPROVED BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (1 JULY–31 DECEMBER 2001)— LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC 10078.0

Primary Education for Girls and Boys in Remote Areas of Lao

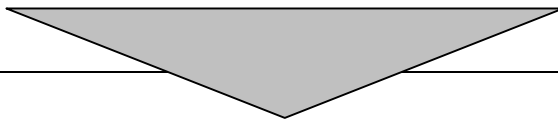
Number of beneficiaries	155,500
Duration of project	Three years (1 August 2001–31 July 2004)

Cost (United States dollars)	
Total cost to WFP	5,996,435
Total cost to Government	394,300
Total food cost	2,907,633

* In accordance with the Executive Board's decisions on governance, approved at the Annual and Third Regular Sessions, 2000, items for information should not be discussed unless a Board member specifically requests it in advance of the meeting and the Chair accepts the request on the grounds that this is a proper use of the Board's time.

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Note to the Executive Board



This document is submitted for information to the Executive Board.

The Secretariat invites members of the Board who may have questions of a technical nature with regard to this document to contact the WFP staff focal points indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

Regional Director, Asia Bureau (ODB): Mr J. Powell

Senior Liaison Officer, ODB: Mr K. Sato tel.: 066513-2383

Should you have any questions regarding matters of dispatch of documentation for the Executive Board, please contact the Supervisor, Meeting Servicing and Distribution Unit (tel.: 066513-2328).



1. In the Lao People's Democratic Republic, over 50 percent of the population has no formal education and only 33 percent has access to primary school grades 1–5. The enrolment figures are particularly low in remote poor and food-insecure areas. Children belonging to ethnic minorities are particularly disadvantaged.
2. In the light of this challenge, the Ministry of Education initiated a three-year project with WFP assistance. It targets vulnerable poor and food-insecure areas, where education achievements are low, the gender gap in education is high and where international partners are providing complementary support to district education departments, schools and teachers. Nine districts have been identified in three provinces: Phongsaly, Oudomxay and Luang Namtha.
3. The project uses food aid for three different interventions:
 - daily mid-morning snacks in primary schools to alleviate short-term hunger;
 - monthly take-home rations as income transfer to attract girls from poor households; and
 - weekly rations provided to improve the dietary intake of “informal” boarders at primary schools.
4. The project will be coordinated with the following programmes that support the education sector: (i) the Asian Development Bank (ADB)/AusAID-supported basic girls' education project; (ii) the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ)/German Development Service (DED) poverty-oriented rural development programme; (iii) UNICEF's basic education programme; and (iv) the World Health Organization (WHO) healthy school programme.
5. At a cost to WFP of US\$5,996,435, 7,306 metric tons of rice, corn-soya blend, canned fish, salt and sugar will be provided over the three-year period. The number of students reached will increase from 34,600 during the first year—of whom 14,400 will be girls—to 69,400 in the third year—of whom 37,800 will be girls. Experience during the three-year phase is expected to provide the basis for development of a more widespread intervention in other highly vulnerable areas.

