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de Alimentos

**Executive Board
Second Regular Session**

Rome, 17 - 19 May 2000

REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ON OPERATIONAL MATTERS

Agenda item 7

For information



Distribution: GENERAL

WFP/EB.2/2000/7-A/4

11 April 2000

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

DEVELOPMENT PROJECT APPROVED BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (1 JULY–31 DECEMBER 1999)— LAOS 5874.00

Improvement of Household Food Security

Number of beneficiaries	154,450
Duration	Three years
Cost (United States dollars)	
Total cost to WFP	4,224,783
Total food cost	2,766,080
Total cost to Government	515,000

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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 point(s) indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

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Should you have any questions regarding matters of dispatch of documentation for the Executive Board, please contact the Documentation and Meetings Clerk (tel.: 066513-2645).



1. The Lao People's Democratic Republic is one of the least developed countries in the world, and one of the poorest in the Southeast Asia region. Its human development indicators are very poor.
2. The economy is based almost entirely on rural agriculture with a predominantly single-season rice crop heavily dependent on the Southeast monsoon. Under normal conditions, over a third of total households experience insufficient food intake; access to food is further constrained by scarce off-farm employment opportunities, lack of access to services and markets, and limited irrigation schemes. Continuous and regular localized drought or floods also diminish households' asset and coping foundations. This situation leads to further pressure on the already shrinking forest areas and on the availability of alternative food supplies from forest products. Different nutrition surveys have called attention to the prevalence of malnutrition, both acute (10 percent of the population) and chronic (47 percent). The Government has limited resources to respond to the ongoing household food insecurity experienced by the population.
3. Following seven years of continuing annual emergency food assistance responses to drought and floods, this project will support activities to promote food security, mitigate natural disasters and develop village infrastructure in six provinces. The project aims to improve the food security of small households located in areas that face food shortages and/or rely on non-sustainable livelihood systems by enabling them to invest their time in development activities.
4. In accordance with decision 1999/EB.A/2 of the Executive Board, WFP focuses its development activities on five objectives. This project addresses objectives 3, 4 and 5: make it possible for poor families to gain and preserve assets; mitigate the effects of natural disasters, in areas vulnerable to recurring crises; and enable households which depend on degraded natural resources for their food security to make a shift to more sustainable livelihoods.
5. The selected project areas are those that face annual food gaps of four to ten months, where serious food shortages are experienced. The beneficiaries targeted will be those with less access to services, and those who rely on non-sustainable livelihood systems. There will be approximately 154,450 direct beneficiaries, who will participate in food-for-work activities in about 150 to 200 villages a year, over three years. The project will also be implemented where partners have already been contacted and the food aid will be an input into integrated projects conceived and implemented by partners (NGOs, United Nations agencies and, donors), many of which are ongoing. The activities are those that meet such projects criteria and goals.