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## United Nations Children's Fund

Executive Board

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Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda\*

### **Draft country programme document\*\***

#### **Lao People's Democratic Republic**

##### *Summary*

The draft country programme document (CPD) for the Lao People's Democratic Republic is presented to the Executive Board for discussion and comment. The draft CPD includes a proposed aggregate indicative budget of \$8,635,000 from regular resources, subject to the availability of funds, and \$70,840,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period 2027 to 2031.

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\* [E/ICEF/2026/25](#).

\*\* In accordance with Executive Board decision 2014/1, country programme documents (CPDs) are considered and approved in one session, on a no-objection basis. This draft CPD, and a costed evaluation plan, will be presented to the Executive Board for review from 9 to 29 June 2026. The final CPD will be posted to the Executive Board web page in English six weeks in advance of the 2026 second regular session and in the other designated languages four weeks in advance.

## Programme rationale

1. The Lao People's Democratic Republic is home to 7.7 million people, with approximately 37 per cent of the population under the age of 18 years and a median age of 25 years.<sup>1</sup> This demographic structure, compounded with the declining fertility rate of 6.3 children per woman in 1980 to 2.5 in 2023 and rising life expectancy, presents opportunities for development through a potential demographic dividend, contingent upon investing in the survival, well-being and rights of children and youth. The country has 50 ethnic groups, categorized in four ethno-linguistic groups with the Lao-Tai group as the largest. Although three fifths of the population lives in rural areas, the country is experiencing considerable urbanization.

2. The Lao People's Democratic Republic, which is currently classified as a lower-middle-income country, aims to achieve upper-middle-income status by 2030. After a significant setback during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, macroeconomic conditions have improved.<sup>2</sup> The Government projects that the electricity, mining and manufacturing sectors will drive an average of 6 per cent growth in the gross domestic product between 2026 and 2030. Nevertheless, debt servicing, limited public spending on social services and reliance on official development assistance continue to constrain investment in children's well-being and equitable access to quality services.

3. The national poverty headcount ratio fell from 24.6 per cent in 2012/13 to 15.0 per cent in 2024/25.<sup>3</sup> Yet 8 per cent of children live in extremely poor households, and 37 per cent of children live in poor households earning less than \$3.65 a day (2022).<sup>4</sup>

4. The formulation of the 10th Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan 2026–2030 (NSED), the scheduled graduation from least developed country status in November 2026, and recent government restructuring signal focus on macroeconomic stability, climate resilience and human development, aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. However, the 2024 voluntary national review highlighted three cross-cutting challenges: financing for the Sustainable Development Goals in the context of repeated shocks; climate and environmental vulnerability; and governance and institutional capacity strengthening.

5. The Government has demonstrated strong commitment to child rights. Under the leadership of the Ministry of Justice and the National Commission for the Advancement of Women, Mothers and Children, the 2006 Law on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of Children was reviewed and amended in 2024, reflecting follow-up to some of the 2018 concluding observations of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child.<sup>5</sup> Despite progress, children living in remote and rural areas, those from non-Lao-Tai ethno-linguistic groups, adolescent girls, children with disabilities, and children in the poorest households continue to experience the greatest child rights deprivations.

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<sup>1</sup> Lao Statistical Information Service, <https://laosis.lsb.gov.la/>, accessed on 25 March 2026.

<sup>2</sup> World Bank, *Lao People's Democratic Republic Economic Monitor: December 2025*, Washington, D.C., 2025.

<sup>3</sup> Lao Statistics Bureau, *Preliminary Findings from the Lao Expenditure and Consumption Survey, 2024/2025*, Vientiane, 2025.

<sup>4</sup> Salmeron-Gomez et al., 'Global Trends in Child Monetary Poverty According to International Poverty Lines', *Policy Research Working Paper No. 10525*, World Bank, Washington, D.C., 2023.

<sup>5</sup> Concluding observations related to birth registration fee and prohibitions of corporal punishment.

6. The maternal mortality ratio and under-5 mortality rate have declined in recent decades. However, preventable risks remain high, particularly for adolescent mothers and children living in remote and non-Lao-Tai ethno-linguistic communities. Only 47 per cent of children received all basic vaccines and 37 per cent completed the full recommended schedule in 2023,<sup>6</sup> underscoring persistent barriers on both supply and demand sides.

7. Malnutrition remains a major constraint on child survival and development. Stunting affects 32.8 per cent of children under 5 years of age and wasting affects 10.7 per cent, with severe wasting substantially increasing mortality risk. The rate of exclusive breastfeeding has slightly improved to 50.6 per cent in 2023, while 71.9 per cent of children aged 6 to 23 months still do not receive an adequate diet, undermining their healthy growth.

8. Access to essential health services remains limited in many rural and remote areas, reflecting persistent inequities. This challenge is compounded by a shortage of qualified community-level health workers. Limited availability of malnutrition commodities, which cover only 7 per cent of children in need, has constrained early detection and care.<sup>7</sup>

9. Young children in the Lao People's Democratic Republic receive insufficient responsive caregiving and early stimulation. Forty-two per cent of children aged 2 to 4 years are not developmentally on track across health, learning and psychosocial well-being, with large disparities by wealth, geography and language. Approximately 44 per cent of children aged 1 to 2 years experience violent discipline at home. Birth registration declined from 73 per cent in 2017 to 65 per cent in 2023, undermining legal identity and access to services. Poverty, social norms and limited support systems leave parents and caregivers under strain, affecting their ability to meet their children's developmental needs.

10. Gender norms shape opportunities, service access and outcomes. Women deliver much of the front-line care and community workforce, yet limited support, safety and incentives undermine service quality and continuity. Women spend more than twice as many hours on unpaid work compared to men,<sup>8</sup> and have unequal decision-making power, limiting access to care-seeking, education, livelihoods and information. This is compounded for families facing language and literacy barriers.

11. Learning outcomes remain a critical bottleneck. While 64.5 per cent of children aged 3 to 5 years attend early childhood education, many enter Grade 1 without adequate school readiness, contributing to weak foundational learning. Only 11 per cent of Grade 5 students demonstrate minimum reading proficiency and 32 per cent minimum mathematics proficiency, among the lowest levels in the region, with children from poorer households and from non-Lao-Tai ethno-linguistic groups most disadvantaged.<sup>9</sup> Teaching quality constraints are significant: due to severe teacher shortages, around 30 per cent of primary schools are multi-grade, teacher assessments reveal gaps in Lao language and mathematics competencies and many teachers report limited information and communications technology training.

12. Out-of-school rates are rising for both boys and girls, 13.8 per cent of primary school-aged children and 29 per cent lower secondary ones are not attending school.

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<sup>6</sup> Henceforth, unless otherwise indicated, data on situation of children come from the Lao Social Indicator Survey III (LSIS III), 2023.

<sup>7</sup> UNICEF calculation based on Digital Health Information System 2 data and LSIS III.

<sup>8</sup> Lao Statistics Bureau, *Lao PDR Gender Factbook: Bridging Economics and Social Empowerment Gaps*, Vientiane, 2024.

<sup>9</sup> Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics, 2024.

By upper secondary, the national rate of children out of school reaches 58 per cent, rising to 67.3 per cent in rural areas. School dropout rates are around 11 per cent for lower secondary and 11.5 per cent for upper secondary, with more boys than girls dropping out. These patterns reduce opportunities for skills development for work and life and increase children's vulnerability to exploitation.

13. Adolescents, particularly girls, face intersecting deprivations that severely limit their development and future potential. Child marriage remains critically high, with 30.5 per cent of women and 10 per cent of men married before age 18 years nationally, with the rate exceeding 50 per cent for girls in some provinces. Moreover, 17.4 per cent of women have their first child before the age of 18 years. Economic pressures often force families to pull adolescents from school, and girls who marry early are 75 times more likely to drop out. This results in annual economic losses of \$40 million, with cumulative losses over a generation reaching into the billions.<sup>10</sup>

14. Limited information on youth employment and training, the absence of reliable disability-disaggregated data and critical gaps in evidence on adolescent agency and digital safety limit comprehensive understanding of adolescent vulnerabilities and hinder effective programming.

15. Climate and environmental risks pose unprecedented threats to children's survival, health and development. More than 1 million children in the country are highly exposed to riverine flood risks and more than 2 million to either cyclones, heatwaves or air pollution, disproportionately affecting poor and rural populations.<sup>11</sup> These risks drive significant disease burdens, with 5 per cent of under-5 deaths linked to diarrhoeal disease and 18 per cent to air pollution globally.<sup>12</sup>

16. At least one third of children lack access to safe water and sanitation, while climate-related shocks repeatedly damage transport networks, schools, health facilities and water systems, disrupting essential services and exacerbating health and education deprivations. Fragmented climate and disaster risk assessments, limited integration with child deprivations, lack of real-time child-focused disaster data, and missing education sector data on school preparedness for disasters reduce the ability to understand how climate hazards impact children's access to basic health, nutrition, education, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services.

17. The 2022–2026 country programme evaluation provided key findings for the design of the new programme, including that:

(a) A convergent, multisectoral approach, integrating services such as health, nutrition and education at the community level, yields effective outcomes;

(b) Sustainability is strengthened when interventions are both institutionalized in national systems (e.g. health legislation, child protection laws and education reforms) and implemented through strong community ownership and engagement;

(c) Generating and using high-quality data and evidence is critical for prioritizing interventions and scaling up effective models.

18. Consultations with stakeholders also informed the programme design. Children and youth aged 10 to 25 years emphasized quality education, skills for work and life,

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<sup>10</sup> Taylor, K., *Economic impacts of child marriage in the Lao People's Democratic Republic*, Lao Academy of Social and Economic Sciences and UNICEF, Vientiane, 2025

<sup>11</sup> Joshi, M., N. Rees and S. Gaya, *Over the Tipping Point*, UNICEF East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office, Bangkok, 2023.

<sup>12</sup> Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, *Global Burden of Disease 2023: Findings from the GBD 2023 Study*, Seattle, WA, 2025.

contributions to community development and safe spaces for expression as enablers of their well-being and development. Private and public sector partners recognized the critical contributions made by UNICEF in generating evidence and shaping policies, the value of its field presence, and the importance of its leadership in innovation, sustainability and climate action.

19. Building on these learnings, the country programme, 2027–2031 will prioritize integrated and convergent programming, strengthen subnational institutional capacities and deepen partnerships to ensure sustainable, equitable results for all children in the country.

## **Programme priorities and partnerships**

20. The country programme, designed jointly with the Government, is aligned with and contributes to the vision set out in the NSEDP and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2027–2031. It is underpinned by robust data, equity analyses, the gender programmatic review and recommendations made by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, as well as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The programme is further informed by consultations with national authorities, development partners, civil society, children and youth, the private sector and other United Nations entities.

21. This country programme adopts a life-course approach to realize children's rights across all critical developmental stages – from early childhood through adolescence. By 2031, more children in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, particularly those from vulnerable and marginalized communities, will enjoy coordinated, multisectoral and resilient services and nurturing care that ensure optimal health, nutrition, education, protection and meaningful opportunities to develop in a safe and clean environment with reduced exposure to environmental risks. Through these strengthened systems, children will acquire the knowledge, skills and agency needed to thrive in and contribute to a rapidly changing world.

22. UNICEF will leverage its normative mandate, convening power and comparative advantage to help to translate child rights commitments into cost-effective, scalable delivery. The organization will focus on systemic changes that link policy and financing with service quality at the provincial and district levels, support convergence across sectors, and institutionalize proven models through government systems. The programme will prioritize equity-focused interventions, with intensified support in the provinces and districts selected based on the level of child rights deprivations and exposure to environmental risks. UNICEF will support meaningful adolescent participation in ways that are safe, inclusive and connected to real decision-making processes.

23. To ensure that no child is left behind, UNICEF will support stakeholders to advance gender equality, disability inclusion and social inclusion through targeted actions for children from the poorest households and those living in remote or climate-vulnerable areas, with a focus on girls and adolescents, children with disabilities and vulnerable ethno-linguistic groups.

24. UNICEF will prioritize three strategic accelerators where investments generate the greatest impact: adolescent girls; community and front-line systems; and digital innovation. Aligned with the UNICEF Gender Equality Action Plan, 2026–2029, adolescent girls will be catalysts for change by ensuring they learn through quality education, lead in their communities, and are protected and empowered with skills for work and life, while men and boys will be engaged as agents of change to challenge harmful norms. UNICEF will strengthen government-owned front-line systems and

community engagement mechanisms, including the child protection network, by supporting decentralized government structures to bridge service delivery gaps and strengthening partnerships with community-based organizations and youth-led groups. UNICEF will leverage open-source digital public goods to enhance accountability, enable real-time monitoring and strengthen governance. Support will include helping the Government to develop interconnected child-related service databases and exploring artificial intelligence applications for training and community empowerment, with attention to equity, safety and user capacity.

25. UNICEF and partners will use these strategies in the implementation of the programme: advocacy and partnerships; policy and programme advice; evidence generation and use; engagement of families and communities; child and youth participation; service delivery strengthening; humanitarian action; and external relations and communications.

26. To achieve sustainable results for all children, UNICEF will partner with government institutions at all levels, including the National Assembly, and with other United Nations entities, mass organizations, civil society organizations, academia, the media, children, technical and financial partners and the private sector.

### **First 1,000 days**

27. This component will seek to ensure that, by 2031, all children in the country benefit from quality and coordinated nurturing care that promotes optimal maternal and child health, nutrition, early stimulation, safety, security and responsive caregiving. The programme will primarily focus on pregnant women, children aged 0–3 years, and children with disabilities and those at risk of being left behind. It will advance relevant NSED and UNSDCF outcomes, with a particular focus on child survival, nutrition, early childhood development, protection from violence, and resilient primary healthcare.

28. Under the leadership of the Ministry of Health, UNICEF will support the Government to strengthen the enabling environment for nurturing care through coherent policies, regulations and guidelines aligned with national development priorities. Support will reinforce coordination and planning mechanisms at the national and subnational levels, address bottlenecks in financing, skilled human resources and data use, and promote community engagement, recognizing families and caregivers as central to sustained improvements in child health, nutrition and development.

29. Integrated community-based reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health and nutrition services, delivered through national platforms, health workers and village health volunteers, will strengthen the continuum of care from pregnancy through early childhood. Support will include prevention, growth monitoring and management of childhood illnesses, with a focus on wasting. Special attention will be given to adolescent mothers through age-appropriate counselling and to early identification and referral of children with developmental delays or disabilities.

30. To address wasting, essential nutrition commodities, including micronutrients and treatment supplies, will be procured and distributed through a coordinated supply chain aligned with national health systems. UNICEF will support efforts to make social protection policy frameworks more nutrition-sensitive and to strengthen pathways for reducing stunting.

31. UNICEF will continue to strengthen routine immunization through targeted risk-communication and social behaviour change approaches to reach missed children and address vaccine hesitancy, alongside supply chain improvements, including cold

chain strengthening, and support to outbreak response. Digital health tools aligned with the national Digital Health Strategy 2023–2027 will enhance vaccination tracking and data quality.

32. Aligned with the 2023 amended Law on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of Children, UNICEF will support community-based parenting programmes that promote healthy and responsive caregiving, early stimulation, positive discipline and safe home environments. Parenting groups, including mothers, fathers and caregivers, will receive practical guidance on communication, play, bonding and equitable caregiving responsibilities.

33. In support of the civil registration and vital statistics strategy, UNICEF will assist the Government in strengthening interoperability across civil registration, health information, the social registry and child protection systems, supporting multisectoral coordination and improved identification and follow-up of vulnerable children.

### **Learning and skills**

34. This component aims to ensure that children and adolescents aged 3 to 15 years attend and complete quality early childhood and basic education in a safe, healthy and protective environment, and acquire foundational literacy, numeracy and essential skills. It will advance the related NSEDP and UNSDCF outcomes, with primary emphasis on school readiness, foundational learning, retention, and skills for work and life in safe and inclusive learning environments. The component will be led by the Ministry of Education and Sports, in line with education sector plans and strategies for digital learning and inclusive education.

35. UNICEF will expand equitable access to quality early childhood education through cost-effective community-based school readiness approaches and will strengthen institutionalization and monitoring of quality standards. Transitions into primary school will be improved through strengthened early grade pedagogy and simple child-tracking approaches that support the continuum of learning.

36. To improve learning outcomes, UNICEF will strengthen pedagogy, formative assessment and continuous support for foundational learning, alongside school-based management and quality standards. Safe digital learning tools and platforms will be scaled up to accelerate foundational literacy and numeracy, strengthen digital skills for teachers and learners, and help to narrow the digital divide.

37. To prevent school dropout, UNICEF will support early warning and referral mechanisms to psychosocial services. Outreach to adolescents and caregivers, peer-support approaches and protective school policies, including on school re-entry, will strengthen safe, clean, gender-responsive, inclusive and supportive learning environments.

38. Skills initiatives will empower adolescents to strengthen digital, green and transferable skills, promote healthy lifestyles and online safety, and challenge harmful social and gender norms through experiential learning in schools and communities. School-to-work pathways will be strengthened through career guidance and linkages to employability and vocational training and responsible private sector partners.

39. UNICEF will support evidence-informed education reforms and strengthen leadership, including the advancement of female school leadership. Improvements to the Education Management Information System, capacity development for provincial and district authorities, and strengthened decentralized planning and budgeting will support more equitable resource allocation. UNICEF will engage responsible private

sector partners to help to expand access to learning resources and connectivity in rural and remote areas.

### **Adolescent empowerment and inclusion**

40. This component aims to ensure that more adolescents in the country have safe and meaningful opportunities to participate, build skills for work and life, and access protection and social support services. The programme will prioritize out-of-school adolescents, girls at risk of child marriage, violence and exploitation, adolescent parents and adolescents with disabilities. This component will advance the related NSEDP and UNSDCF outcomes and align with national strategies and relevant legislation on child protection, social work, disability inclusion and social protection. The component will be led by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, in coordination with relevant stakeholders.

41. Working with the Lao Youth Union, Lao Women's Union and local authorities, UNICEF will support safe intergenerational dialogue with adolescents, parents and community leaders to promote positive social norms, address child marriage and support adolescent mental health and well-being. The approach will build on positive family values, shift messaging from fear-based warnings to opportunity-focused guidance and integrate approaches that promote equitable gender norms and relationships, alongside linkages to mental health and psychosocial support, where feasible.

42. UNICEF will support practical, certified non-formal packages of skills for out-of-school adolescents, linked to learning and livelihood pathways and complemented by safe and meaningful adolescent participation. Adolescents will be engaged as peer educators and mentors, co-designing and delivering community activities that promote learning, healthy behaviours and protection. Mobile outreach and community-based service points will help to reach adolescents outside formal school settings and reduce stigma associated with non-enrolment. Proven approaches will be scaled up through government and community platforms, with attention paid to safeguarding, inclusion and accountability and feedback mechanisms for adolescents.

43. In line with the 2025 Law on Social Work, UNICEF will support the professionalization of social workers and para-social workers and boost the capacity of duty-bearers for child protection case management. Support will focus on competencies for risk assessment, safe referral, documentation and follow-up, supported by supervision and institutionalization within government systems. Decentralized multisectoral protection structures will be strengthened with clear accountability and communication protocols, building on experience from pilot provinces. Safe digital tools will be used to improve case tracking while maintaining strict confidentiality.

44. To address the heightened vulnerability of adolescents with disabilities, the programme will strengthen disability-inclusive social protection and link social assistance to services such as assistive devices, rehabilitation and inclusive education support. Interventions will be designed to be accessible and inclusive from the outset.

45. UNICEF will support the country to develop and operationalize a disability management information system and enhance identification and referral processes. Improved administrative data and interoperability will support service planning and stronger referral pathways. Disaggregation of data by disability, gender, geography and, where feasible, ethno-linguistic background, will support more equitable targeting and resource allocation.

### **Safe and clean environment for children**

46. This component aims to ensure that national and subnational systems prevent and reduce climate, environmental and disaster risks for children, with strengthened governance, risk information systems, and resilient WASH, health and education services. The primary beneficiaries will be children in climate-vulnerable and disaster-prone areas, children with disabilities, and children from poor and rural households at heightened risk of climate and environmental impacts. The component will be implemented by UNICEF with the Ministries of Agriculture and Environment; Labour and Social Welfare; Health; and Education and Sports, mass organizations, academia and civil society organizations. This component will advance the related NSEDP and UNSDCF outcomes and align with national strategies and relevant legislation on climate resilience and sustainable development.

47. The programme will work with national and local governments and communities to strengthen risk information, surveillance and community-based early warning systems. UNICEF will develop national capacities to collect, analyse, disseminate and utilize child-centred vulnerability and risk information, strengthening disaster risk resilience at the provincial and district level, and building disaster risk preparedness and response capacities, including on public health emergencies and cross-border outbreaks. Children in high-vulnerability settings will be supported through village-level programming that reduces disaster risks, with attention to the most vulnerable.

48. UNICEF will assist Ministry of Health and the water supply state enterprises to establish decentralized and climate-resilient WASH monitoring and budgeting plans for communities, schools and health centres. UNICEF will support rural, remote and water-scarce areas to update WASH infrastructure and services to be climate-resilient, safely managed, and accessible to all children. UNICEF will promote climate-resilient WASH designs and technologies and develop community capacities in water safety planning and system management.

49. The programme will integrate climate and environmental health education in formal and non-formal curricula, strengthen school preparedness and resilience, and support climate-smart school improvements through green schools and environmental health initiatives that reduce children's exposure to air pollution, heatwaves, flooding and other climate-related risks.

50. In collaboration with relevant ministries, UNICEF will support climate-resilient healthcare facilities and reduce environmental footprints through solarization, with children and their families covered by climate and environmental health risk monitoring systems and prevention services in primary healthcare.

### **Programme effectiveness**

51. This component will strengthen the enabling functions that make results possible across all programme components:

(a) Strategic planning, coordination and programme quality assurance for convergent delivery;

(b) Monitoring, evaluation, learning and knowledge management to support adaptive management and scale up;

(c) Data systems and evidence generation, including support to national statistic systems, equity analysis and child rights monitoring;

(d) Advocacy, strategic communication and community engagement to translate evidence into decisions and increase the demand for inclusive, quality services;

(e) Partnerships and resource mobilization;

(f) Operational support, including risk management, supply functions and field support, to ensure that results are delivered efficiently and accountably.

## Summary budget table

<i>Programme component</i>	<i>(In thousands of United States dollars)</i>		
	<i>Regular resources</i>	<i>Other resources</i>	<i>Total</i>
First 1,000 days	1 727	29 200	30 927
Learning and skills	1 727	11 700	13 427
Adolescent empowerment and inclusion	1 727	3 700	5 427
Safe and clean environment for children	1 727	14 700	16 427
Programme effectiveness	1 727	11 540	13 267
<b>Total</b>	<b>8 635</b>	<b>70 840</b>	<b>79 475</b>

## Programme and risk management

52. This country programme document sets out the contributions of UNICEF to the NSEDP and UNSDCF, in support of the Sustainable Development Goals. It serves as the primary unit of accountability to the Executive Board for the alignment of results and resources assigned to the programme at the country level. Accountability of managers at country, regional and headquarters levels with respect to country programmes are prescribed in the programme and operations policies and procedures of the organization.

53. The programme will be implemented through multi-year workplans under the coordination and oversight of the Ministry of Finance. UNICEF will pursue resource mobilization and leveraging strategies to support the achievement of programme results and broader outcomes for children. To strengthen efficiency and cooperation, UNICEF will coordinate with bilateral and multilateral development partners, United Nations entities and other actors, including through government-led sector working groups and the round table process.

54. UNICEF will regularly assess programmatic and operational risks, including those generated by climate shocks, disease outbreaks and emergencies, and will apply mitigation measures to protect the quality and continuity of results. The country office will implement risk-informed programming and preparedness measures in line with the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, including coordination and accountability to affected populations where UNICEF has a designated role. UNICEF will maintain communications preparedness as part of risk management, including agreed coordination protocols with partners, pre-cleared messaging frameworks for priority risks, and community engagement approaches that strengthen trust and reduce misinformation during emergencies and service disruptions. Fiduciary risks will be managed through the harmonized approach to cash transfers

and related assurance activities, and safeguarding risks will be managed through the organization's zero-tolerance approach towards sexual exploitation and abuse and strengthened child safeguarding across partnerships. Risks related to under resourcing will be addressed through a partnership and resource mobilization strategy aligned with the programme priorities and the UNSDCF.

## **Monitoring, learning and evaluation**

55. Programme monitoring and evaluation will be conducted in collaboration with the Government, based on the results and resources framework and the costed evaluation plan, aligned with the NSEDP and UNSDCF monitoring and evaluation plans. UNICEF will continue developing equity analyses to understand inequities across sex, age, ethno-linguistic groups and geographies. Regular joint field monitoring will be conducted with the Government and United Nations entities to assess progress against targets, guide course corrections and support reporting. UNICEF will report UNSDCF contributions through United Nations information platforms.

56. To strengthen national monitoring and statistical systems, UNICEF will collaborate with government institutions and other partners to enhance national capacities for systematic collection, analysis and use of disaggregated data. UNICEF will support national household surveys, such as the Lao Social Indicator Survey, and will strengthen administrative data collection through sector-specific information management systems.

57. Guided by the costed evaluation plan, UNICEF will coordinate with the Government and other partners to generate credible, evaluative and child-focused evidence on programme performance and results. Evaluations will assess the effectiveness, efficiency, equity and sustainability of UNICEF-supported interventions. Evidence will inform programme improvement, resource allocation and policy dialogue, while strengthening accountability and learning to scale up effective approaches that improve outcomes for children.

## Annex

## Results and resources framework

## Lao People's Democratic Republic – UNICEF country programme of cooperation, 2027–2031

<p><b>Convention on the Rights of the Child:</b> Articles 2–9, 12–20, 23–24, 26–37, 39–42.</p> <p><b>National priorities:</b> 10<sup>th</sup> Five-Year NSEDP 2026–2030 – Outcomes 2 (high-quality human capital), 3 (improved people's well-being), 4 (natural resources and the environment safeguarding), 6 (public governance and administration); Sustainable Development Goals 1–6, 8, 10, 13, 16–17.</p>
<p><b>UNSDCF outcomes involving UNICEF:</b></p> <p><b>Outcome 1: People's wellbeing:</b> By 2031, people in Lao PDR have greater capabilities, opportunities, skills and equitable access to services to lead safe, healthy and productive lives, participate more fully in public life, and better adapt to the impacts of socio-economic, technological and demographic change.</p> <p><b>Outcome 2: Governance and institutions:</b> By 2031, Lao PDR's institutions at all levels are more accountable and responsive to the needs of people, uphold human rights and the rule of law, promote participatory governance, gender, disability and digital inclusion and open civic space, and safeguard against risks of transnational crime;</p> <p><b>Outcome 3: Environment and sustainable growth:</b> By 2031, Lao PDR's economy is greener and more diversified, inclusive and climate-resilient, with shared prosperity across urban and rural communities safe from UXO [unexploded ordnance], while protecting natural resources and biodiversity.</p>
<p><b>Related Impact Results of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2026–2029:</b> 1–5</p>

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
1, 2	1. By 2031, more children under 5 years of age, with a focus on the first 1,000 days from conception, particularly those in vulnerable and marginalized situations, have increased and more equitable access to and use of coordinated	<p>Percentage of children receiving at least three doses of diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis vaccine*</p> <p>B: 86.5% (2024) T: 95%</p> <p>Percentage of children aged 6–59 months who received two annual doses of vitamin A supplementation</p>	<p>Digital Health Information System 2 (DHIS2)</p> <p>DHIS2</p>	<p>1.1 Government and community providers deliver equitable, integrated and quality maternal, newborn and child health services across the continuum of care, with increased coverage and quality standards met at primary-care level.</p> <p>1.2 Government and community providers deliver equitable, integrated, high quality</p>	<p>Ministry of Health (MOH) Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (MAE) Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MOLSW), Ministry of Finance (MOF)</p>	1 727	29 200	30 927

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
	nurturing care services including health, nutrition, early stimulation, WASH, protection, safety and security, and responsive caregiving.	B: 43% (2025) T: 75%	DHIS2	nutrition services, improving prevention and management of malnutrition and promoting positive nutrition practices among caregivers.  1.3 Caregivers practice responsive care, early stimulation and positive, non-violent discipline through multisectoral parenting programmes and community outreach linked to the social service workforce.	Lao Women's Union (LWU) Lao Front for National Development (LFND)			
Number of children under 5 years of age who benefit from a minimum package of nutrition interventions for the early detection and treatment of the more severe forms of child wasting and other forms of acute malnutrition*								
B: 38,481 (2025) T: 250,000		Percentage of mothers/caretakers who believe that physical punishment is needed to bring up, raise, or educate a child properly	Lao Social Indicators Survey (LSIS)					
1, 2	2. By 2031, more children and adolescents, especially from disadvantaged and non-Lao-Tai ethno-linguistic groups, are school-ready, achieve foundational literacy and numeracy, complete lower secondary, and	Gross enrolment ratio in pre-primary education B: 64.5% (2026) T: 70%	Education Management Information System (EMIS)	2.1 Education stakeholders deliver inclusive, safe and effective early learning and primary education, with the support of families and communities.  2.2 Education stakeholders ensure equitable, gender-responsive and relevant lower secondary education that improves retention, completion and skills development.	Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES), MOLSW, MOH, MAE, Ministry of Technology and Communications, MOF  LWU, LFND, Lao Youth Union (LYU)	1 727	11 700	13 427
		Proportion of children at the end of primary education achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (a) reading and (b) mathematics* B: (a) 11% (b) 32% (2024) T: (a) 15% (b) 40%	Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics					

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
	acquire skills for work and life in safe, inclusive, gender-responsive and protective learning environments.	Out-of-school rate (a) primary school age and (b) lower secondary school age)* B: (a) 13.8%; (b) 29.1%; (2023) T: (a) 10%; (b) 17%	LSIS	2.3 National and subnational education authorities ensure evidence-based and coordinated planning, budgeting and implementation for quality learning and skills development of school-aged children.				
1, 2	3. By 2031, adolescents, especially out-of-school girls, adolescents in rural and non-Lao-Tai ethnolinguistic groups and adolescents with disabilities, use inclusive child protection and social protection services and participate in skills pathways for work and life.	Youth (aged 15–24 years) not in employment, education or training* B: 38.7% (2022) T: 35%  Percentage of women and men age 20–24 years who were first married or in union before the age of 18 years* B: 30.5%; 10% (2023) T: 24%; 9 %  Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems B: 15.5% (2024) T: 18.5%	National Labour Force Survey  LSIS  World Social Protection Database	3.1 Adolescents, especially those who are out-of-school, have increased skills and agency to participate safely in their communities, build their livelihoods and challenge harmful norms and risky behaviours.  3.2 Social service workforce at national and subnational levels delivers coordinated, adolescent-friendly and gender-responsive child protection and justice services, with a particular focus on vulnerable and out-of-school adolescents.  3.3 Government implements social protection to protect the most vulnerable adolescents, with a specific focus on those with disabilities.	MOES, MOLSW, Ministry of Justice (MOJ), MOH, MOF  National Commission for the Advancement of Mothers and Children, LYU, LWU, civil society organizations, National University of Laos (NUOL)	1 727	3 700	5 427
3	4. By 2031, more children and families in climate- and disaster-vulnerable areas	4.1: Number of children covered by child-sensitive disaster risk reduction strategies, or early warning or anticipatory action systems	Government early warning/ disaster risk reduction database	4.1 Government authorities at national and subnational levels implement child-centred disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation plans, early	MAE, MOLSW, MOH, MOES, Ministry of Public Works and Transport	1 727	14 700	16 427

UNSDCF outcomes	UNICEF outcomes	Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)	Means of verification	Indicative country programme outputs	Major partners, partnership frameworks	Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)		
						RR	OR	Total
	are protected by child-sensitive risk information and early-warning systems and use climate-resilient WASH, health and education services.	B: 0 (2025) T: 500,000		warning systems, and community-based preparedness mechanisms.	LYU, Lao Red Cross, NUOL			
		4.2: Number of children reached with climate-resilient drinking water or sanitation service  B: Not available (2025) T: 125,000	District WASH plans, water safety plan audits, MOH reports	4.2 Government authorities at national and subnational levels deliver climate-resilient water and sanitation services in communities, schools and health facilities.				
		4.3: Number of children reached with education services adapted to climate, environmental or disaster risks  B: Not available (2025) T: 50,000	Climate smart school infrastructure assessment, EMIS green school module					
	5. Effective and efficient programme management delivers results for children	Percentage of key performance indicators meeting scorecard benchmarks  B: 81% (2025) T: 96%	UNICEF InSight	Effective implementation and coordination of multisectoral programmes, accelerators, strategies and enablers.	MOF	1 727	11 540	13 267
<b>Total resources</b>						<b>8 635</b>	<b>70 840</b>	<b>79 475</b>

\* Outcome indicator aligned with UNSDCF indicator.