



**PROJECT AT A GLANCE**

**Title**

Enhancing Nutrition of Upland Farming Families

**Budget**

Current Phase:  
(01/07/2020-30/06/2024)  
CHF 6,799,860

**Partners**

Department of Hygiene and Health Promotion, Ministry of Health with technical support from SNV Netherlands Development Organization



**SDC contributes to Government of Lao PDR’s efforts to improve nutritional status of upland farming communities through knowledge and skills about nutrition, sanitation and hygiene practices, increase access to nutritious food and institutional frame conditions at local levels.**

**PROJECT LOCATIONS**

Houaphanh and Oudomxay



**BACKGROUND**

The Government of Lao PDR (GoL) has made considerable efforts to address this situation but has been able to achieve only limited results. Chronic malnutrition is declining at a very slow pace. The current stunting prevalence throughout the country is 33% as per LSIS II, which is still very high. The percentage of children from upland ethnic communities suffering from stunting exceeds 40%.

Under-nutrition leads to enormous economic costs in Lao PDR. The current rates of maternal and child malnutrition represent a loss of human capital potentially costing the Lao PDR an estimated 2.4% of the GDP annually.

In recognition of the persistently high rates of malnutrition in the country, the GoL has shown strong commitment to address the root causes

by implementing the National Nutrition Strategy to 2025, which provides the framework and strategic direction to combat malnutrition.

Tackling Malnutrition is a multi-sectoral issue and by linking nutrition sensitive agriculture practices, natural resources management and nutrition, significant and meaningful impact can be achieved for targeted communities.

Switzerland, through the ENUFF project will contribute to the implementation of the national Multi-sectoral Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan (MSFNSAP), where various aspects like nutrition-sensitive farming, health, hygiene and care practices will be addressed through a convergent approach, leading to behaviour changes and an improved nutritional status in particular of women, caregivers and children.

## OVERALL GOAL

**Improve family nutrition in remote and ethnically diverse upland farming communities in Oudomxay and Houaphan.**

## OBJECTIVES

The ENUFF project applies an integrated agriculture, nutrition and WASH approach to achieve the following four key objectives:

1. Women, in particular mothers' and caregivers' knowledge and skills about nutrition, health, child feeding practices improved and dietary diversity of women of reproductive age (WRA), including adolescent girls and infants increased.
2. Access to safe water, hygiene and sanitation facilities increased and sanitation and hygiene practices improved through behavioural change and communication at intra-household level.
3. Increase access of farming communities to nutritious food through practical agricultural trainings at the village level provided by trained extension agents.
4. Policy, strategic and institutional framework is more conducive to address and prevent food and nutritional insecurity through evidence-based policy briefs and capacity building of nutrition centre and similar structure at the local level.

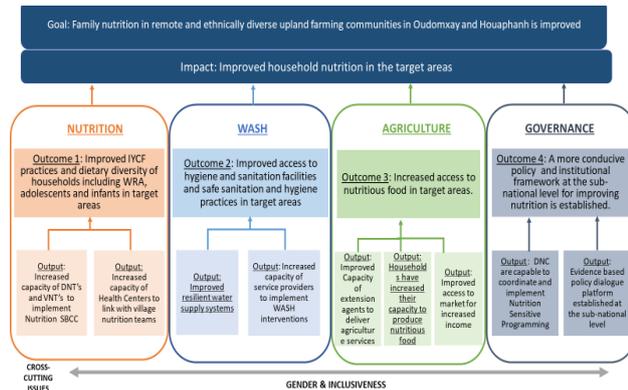
## STRATEGY

The ENUFF II is in line with the initial concept of the 9th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2021 – 2025) is to enhance people's physical and mental well-being. This is in line with the National Nutrition Strategy 2025 by addressing malnutrition issues in the country.

ENUFF II will support SDG2 "End hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture", and is as well linked to SDGs 3, 5, 6 and 12. It will also support the Swiss Cooperation Strategy for Laos under Agriculture and Forestry domain to improve Smallholder farmers' food security, nutrition awareness and resilience by accessing resources, services and knowledge.

## APPROACH

ENUFF II builds on experiences of the first phase of the project and on lessons learned by other nutrition projects being implemented in Lao PDR. The following Theory of Change demonstrates the approach:



## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS PHASE I

The main key findings of the end line survey conducted in 40 villages are as follows:

- There has been increased awareness of the importance of exclusive breast feeding. The current rate of exclusive breast feeding is 89% which is a significant increase compared to the rate of 53% at baseline.
- There is a substantial increase in the number of toilets and toilet use (less open defecation), and a cleaner village. There are less outbreaks of diarrhoea and that people gain weight. 1,042 toilets have been constructed, 27 villages have been declared open defecation free and 80% of household have hand washing stations with soap.
- There are indications that food habits originating from the traditional food and livelihood systems of different (ethnic) groups. 1,067 households (27%) in the target villages have introduced at least 4 new food crops in their farm. A total of 3,223 families (74%) have received practical trainings/demonstrations/information to diversify and improve at least one of their production systems.