



CENTRE ON INTEGRATED RURAL
DEVELOPMENT FOR ASIA AND
THE PACIFIC (CIRDAP)



LAO PEOPLE'S
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

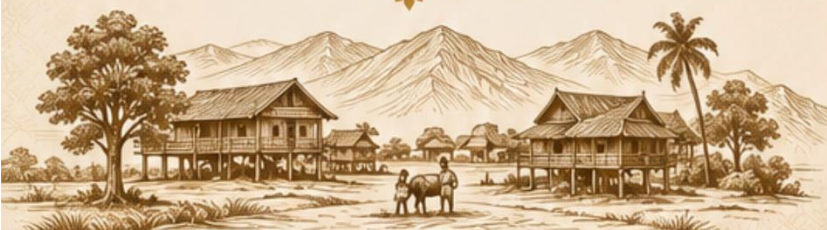
The second celebration of

WORLD RURAL DEVELOPMENT DAY 2026

(July 6)

Special Edition of CIRDAP

The future of Lao PDR
begins in its villages—
where resilient communities
build a resilient nation



THEME 2026

“Towards Vibrant,
Prosperous and Happy
Rural Communities”



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The future of Lao PDR begins in its villages—where resilient communities build a resilient nation

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1. Introduction: A Moment of Historic Synthesis

On this landmark occasion of World Rural Development Day, July 6th, 2026, on behalf of the Executive Committee (EC) of the Lao PDR extends its warmest fraternal greetings and congratulations to the Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP) Secretariat, our esteemed fellow Member States, and our dedicated development partners across the region.

July 6th represents a powerful moment of synthesis for our collective mission. It marks both the globally recognized day honoring rural communities and the 47th anniversary of CIRDAP's founding in 1979. For nearly five decades, our intergovernmental alliance has consistently championed the philosophy that true national prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region begins within our agrarian roots.

As a proud and active member of CIRDAP, Lao PDR is honored to present its progress, systemic institutional shifts, and grassroots achievements within this widely disseminated Special Edition. Our national story is a testament to the fact that when strategic regional guidance is fused with bold domestic political will, the transformation of rural landscapes becomes an achievable reality.

2. Navigating the LDC Graduation and the 10th NSEDP

The year 2026 stands as an unprecedented historical juncture for the Lao People's Democratic Republic. As our nation stands on the threshold of graduating from Least Developed Country (LDC) status, the Government of Lao PDR recognizes that sustainable economic transition cannot be achieved through urban advancement alone. The core of our national sovereignty, food security, and cultural heritage lies within our rural villages.

Guided by the transition from our 9th to our newly minted 10th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDP 2026–2030), Lao PDR has placed inclusive, people-centered rural upliftment at the absolute apex of our public policy. Our foundational regulatory framework, Decree No. 348 on Poverty Graduation and Development, has systematically reshaped local governance. Rather than applying superficial, short-term poverty relief, our focus has pivoted toward building self-reliant structural resilience.

By employing rigorous, quantifiable indicators to define "poverty-free households" and "developed villages," we have successfully lifted thousands of families into sustainable livelihoods, bridging the socio-economic divide between remote mountainous ethnolinguistic communities and urban economic centers.

3. Institutional Reformation: The Integrated Approach

Lao PDR's rural development breakthroughs are our historic institutional reform. Acknowledging that rural livelihoods, ecological preservation, and food production are completely inseparable, the state successfully consolidated its administrative architecture by establishing the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment (merging the former portfolios of Agriculture and Forestry with Natural Resources and Environment).

Historically, rural development initiatives across the developing world have suffered from administrative fragmentation. By eliminating these institutional silos, Lao PDR has pioneered a truly integrated approach. For the first time, our planning departments manage agricultural targets, forestry management, land-use zoning, water preservation, biodiversity protection, and climate change adaptation under one singular, holistic blueprint.

This administrative convergence allows us to implement nature-positive rural development models across our national focal zones, ensuring that infrastructure expansion never comes at the cost of our vital ecological capital.

4. Operationalizing Food Systems Transformation

At the heart of our rural achievements is the official launch and implementation of the **National Action Plan to Transform Food Systems (2025–2030)**. Developed in close alignment with the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub's Convergence Initiative, this strategic roadmap directly addresses the global "5F crisis"—Food, Feed, Fuel, Fertilizer, and Finance—which has disproportionately affected smallholder farmers.

Lao PDR has rejected unsustainable, chemical-intensive agricultural practices in favor of a **Green Sustainable Agriculture (GSA)** framework. Through community-led agricultural cooperatives, our rural farmers are shifting from subsistence operations into high-value, climate-resilient agribusinesses.

Through targeted public-private financing, we have successfully scaled up the regional competitiveness of premium, geographically unique Lao products. The organic coffee of the **Bolaven Plateau** and our traditional, highly nutritious **Khao Kai Noi** aromatic rice are no longer merely local staples; they have become high-value commodities in regional markets, driving foreign exchange and injecting tangible financial capital directly back into village economies.

5. Human Capital: Prioritizing Health, Nutrition, and Social Equity

The Lao PDR Executive Committee firmly believes that physical infrastructure is fragile without a corresponding investment in human capital. Consequently, our rural strategies are intricately balanced with aggressive social protection, maternal health, and infant nutrition interventions.

Through multi-agency convergence, Lao PDR has achieved record milestones in rural healthcare. We have dramatically scaled up national immunization coverages and school

meal programs in disadvantaged districts, actively fighting childhood stunting and food insecurity. Furthermore, by expanding digital civil registration networks into remote provincial areas, we ensure that newborn children receive immediate legal recognition and access to essential state healthcare from day one.

Simultaneously, our rural strategies explicitly treat women as the primary engines of rural economic transformation. By legalizing and fostering village-level savings groups, providing vocational business training, and unlocking micro-loans, rural Lao women are transitioning from unpaid agrarian laborers into thriving micro-entrepreneurs, managing local supply chains and elevating household incomes.

6. Digital Connectivity and Community-Based Eco-Tourism

As we embrace the technological advancements of 2026, Lao PDR is actively dismantling the concept of rural isolation through digital extension frameworks. By introducing localized digital platforms, our remote smallholders now receive real-time weather analytics, advanced pest-control strategies, and direct market commodity pricing on their mobile networks, eliminating exploitative intermediary practices.

Furthermore, we have harnessed our pristine natural landscapes to pioneer Community-Based Eco-Tourism (CBET). Through frameworks like the Lao Landscapes and Livelihoods Project, rural communities are legally empowered to manage local eco-tourism zones. From our northern heritage sanctuaries to our southern riverine networks, this low-impact hospitality model provides sustainable, non-extractive alternative livelihoods, proving to our rural populations that environmental conservation pays direct, life-changing dividends.

7. A Renewed Pledge for Regional Solidarity

While the achievements of Lao PDR are substantial, we recognize that the road ahead presents persistent challenges. Our rural communities remain intensely vulnerable to severe climate anomalies, including seasonal floods and prolonged droughts, which demand continuous infrastructural adaptation and substantial financial investments.

However, the resilience of the Lao people, backed by our structural and institutional reforms, demonstrates the absolute validity of CIRDAP's integrated rural development philosophy. No nation can conquer poverty in isolation; it requires shared frameworks, mutual accountability, and cross-border knowledge exchanges.

On this World Rural Development Day 2026, on behalf of the Executive Committee of Lao PDR re-affirms its unshakeable commitment to the CIRDAP charter. We stand fully prepared to share our institutional blueprints, our food systems roadmaps, and our community governance models with all fellow Member States. Let us move forward with collective determination, ensuring that our rural landscapes remain places of economic prosperity, environmental sustainability, and profound human dignity.

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