



Health official taking temperature of returning migrants at Vangtao-Xongmek Checkpoint, Champasak.

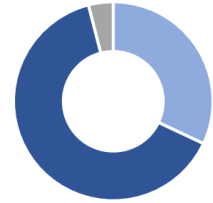
KEY FACTS

Population: 7.1 million

Urban Population: 33%

Population Density: 27 people/ km²

Age Structure:



■ Age 0-14 ■ Age 15-64 ■ Age 65+

✈ International Airports: 4

➔ Points of Entry (PoEs): 107

** all border checkpoints remain closed*

Migration Status

No. of Foreigners in country: 48,275

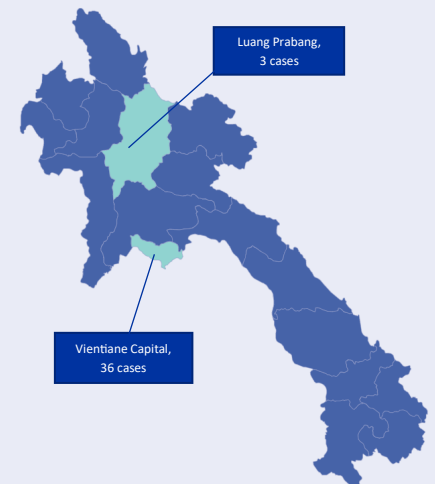
No. of Laotians abroad: 483,021

COVID-19 Situation in Lao PDR:

39 confirmed, 26 recovered, 0 death.

Quarantine & Isolation Facilities: 35

People in Quarantine facilities: 2,690



SITUATION OVERVIEW

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused more than 62 million confirmed cases, and over 1.4 million deaths around the globe since 16 January 2020. The outbreak has caused unprecedented impacts on human mobility and leave migrants and mobile populations among the most vulnerable as they often lack access to social security.

Lao People's Democratic Republic confirmed 14 newly imported cases on 23 November 2020, and one imported case on 17 November 2020. All 15 cases entered the country via charter flights and were tested positive during mandatory quarantine. The country has had no new local infections since 12 April 2020. International, local and traditional Points of Entry (PoEs) nation-wide remain closed, except for designated PoEs that are approved to open for logistics purposes. Lao migrant workers are allowed to return via various PoEs.

According to Prime Minister's Notice No.1291 /PMO issued on 26 November, the Lao Government will stop issuing entry visas for people travelling from countries with community outbreak. Charter flights between countries with community outbreak are also suspended, with humanitarian flights being the exception.

The Royal Thai Government further extended the State of Emergency until mid-January. [A Cabinet Resolution has been approved](#) to allow eligible migrant workers in Thailand to extend their Non-LA visa for one year and work permit for two years. IOM is closely monitoring for further development regarding the relaxation of re-entry requirements for Lao migrant workers returning to Thailand.

A STORY FROM A MIGRANT'S SISTER

"I need to look after my two nephews, their mother is still in Thailand without a job and experiencing financial difficulties..." Nang (alias) has been a full-time caretaker since her sister, La (alias) went to work in Thailand last year. La was laid off due to business closure in Thailand, and has been seeking for a new job since July. Nang's family experience financial difficulties as La could not send back remittances as she did before.

Nang is living in a small village in Savannakhet. She didn't have the money to pay the electricity bill for two months. Luckily, people in the village were willing to lend her money. "I hope the situation gets better soon and La can have a job again, we need the money for my nephews to enter pre-school."



PROPOSED RESPONSE AND ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED DURING NOVEMBER, 2020

COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIP



Radio professional broadcasting Safe Migration Radio program, Khammouan Provincial Radio Station, Khammouan Province

- Ongoing monitoring and sharing on the situation of migrant workers returning from neighbouring countries.
- Shared COVID-19 and safe migration related Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials with radio broadcasters under UNDP's programme Enhancing People's Participation through Community Radio (EPPCR) for wider dissemination of key messages in 36 districts and nine provinces alongside Lao-Thai border.

RISK COMMUNICATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Villagers participating in safe migration community campaign, Vang Vieng, Vientiane Province

- 18 village chiefs who received Safe Migration Training from IOM completed the delivery of safe migration community campaign, reaching 2,069 villagers (956 women) in 18 villages with high mobility flows in Vientiane Province.
- IOM participated in the rapid assessment on the flooding in Savannakhet. The team visited the quarantine centre to assess existing capacities and discussed ways forward as the stadium has to now shelter both villagers displaced by floods and returned migrants.
- Continued the [bus campaign](#) on safe migration and COVID-19 prevention. The number of passengers reached is estimated at 2,461 people per day across five routes.

SURVEILLANCE



Northern bus station, Vientiane Capital

- Using the Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) flow monitoring survey tool, IOM completed the interviews with 347 Lao migrants at frequently used internal transit points and bus routes since July. The survey sets to enhance the understanding of human mobility amid COVID-19 and support evidence-based interventions.
- Published the [COVID-19 Related Vulnerabilities and Perceptions of Non-Lao Populations Survey](#), which provides insights into the perceived conditions non-Lao populations in Lao People's Democratic Republic. Questions were asked to 140 identified Key Informants (KIs) on perceived vulnerabilities of foreign migrants.

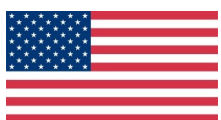
POINTS OF ENTRY (PoEs)



IOM leading SOP consultation with Ministry of Public Security and frontline border officials in Vangtao-Xongmek Checkpoint, Champasak

- Handed over [essential Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](#) supports to Wattay International Airport and Lao-Thai Friendship Bridge I in urgent response to the newly confirmed imported cases.
- In cooperation with UNODC, WHO, and government counterparts, IOM provided Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Training to 205 (51 women) PoE frontline officials from Boten International Checkpoint, Lao-Thai Friendship Bridge II, IV, Pakse International Airport, and Vangtao-Xongmek Checkpoint to strengthen border management response under the COVID-19 pandemic.

IOM'S COVID-19 RESPONSE IS SUPPORTED BY...



Australian Government



From the People of Japan



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LAO PDR



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
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INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION

IN LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

3rd Floor UN House, Lane Xang Avenue, P.O. Box 345 Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR



+856 21 267 734



iomlaopr@iom.int