



IOM and the Department of Immigration observing facility upgrades at the Wattay International Airport, Vientiane Capital.

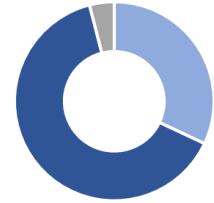
KEY FACTS

Population: 7.3 million

Urban Population: 35.7%

Population Density: 32 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:

44 confirmed, 41 recovered, 0 death.

Quarantine & Isolation Facilities: 39

People in Quarantine facilities: 2,428

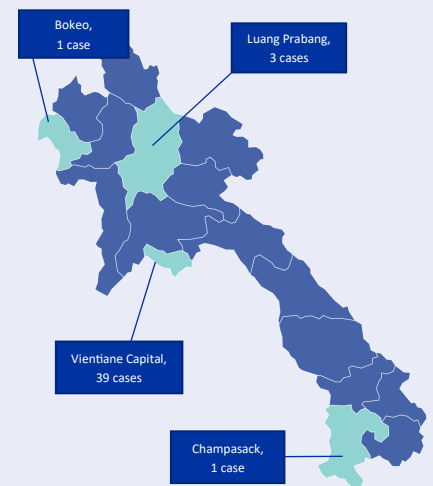
SITUATION OVERVIEW

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused more than 105 million confirmed cases and over 2.3 million deaths around the globe since 16 January 2020. The outbreak has caused unprecedented impacts on human mobility, leaving migrants and mobile populations among the most vulnerable.

Lao People's Democratic Republic confirmed a newly imported case when a Lao national tested positive upon arrival at Wattay International Airport via charter flight from Malaysia on 24 January. Champasack Province confirmed its first case when a Lao national re-entered the country via Chongmek-Vangtao Border; a Chinese national who irregularly entered Bokeo Province also tested positive, marking the first case in Bokeo Province. The country has recorded 44 cases of COVID-19 so far. 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 and nationals are allowed to return via international PoEs.

Thailand, a popular destination and a source of transit country for Lao migrant workers, had seen a surge of virus infections originating from the outbreak at the country's Central Shrimp Market in Samut Sakhon District. Mobility restrictions imposed in prevention of COVID-19 have left many stranded overseas; most recently, a large group of Lao migrant fishermen found themselves stranded in Malaysia.

The country's first vaccination roll-out began on 27 January, with at-risk groups including key frontline medical staff receiving the first doses of COVID-19 vaccines.



A STORY OF A FRONTLINE OFFICIAL IN LUANG NAMTHA

Pol. Mayor General Oulay Saypanya, the member of Boten-Mohan Point of Entry (PoE) Management Committee, participated in the mapping assessment and the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) training led by IOM at the PoE from September to November 2020.

He expressed his gratitude for how the training had benefited the frontline officials at the PoE. "The training had enhanced our knowledge on COVID-19 risks and self-protection measures, prevention of disease transmission and ways to manage suspected cases." He added that the SOP will not only help prepare for COVID-19; it will also guide responses for future public health emergencies.



PROPOSED RESPONSE AND ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED DURING JANUARY, 2021

COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIP



Villagers reading the IEC materials on COVID-19 precautions and prevention, Sayabouly 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



IOM distributing direct assistance packs to returned migrants at the Quarantine Centre KM27, Vientiane Capital

- Provided 451 direct assistance packs and 2,000 IEC materials on COVID-19 prevention and self-protection measures to the Quarantine Centre KM27 in Vientiane Capital, which were initially distributed to 405 (199M/206F) returned migrants staying at the centre.
- 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 ten routes, including internal routes in Vientiane Capital and five routes connected to the provinces.

POINTS OF ENTRY (PoEs)



IOM handing over essential management equipment to Wattay International Airport, Vientiane Capital

- Supported facility upgrades (handwashing stations, protective glass shields, LED screens, etc.) and [handed over essential management equipment](#) to Wattay International Airport, following the completion of joint mapping assessment and trainings of frontline officials across ten PoEs in the previous year.
- Continued to lead consultations on the development of Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) in cooperation with UNODC, WHO and government counterparts, which will formalize first-line response processes for frontline border officials amid COVID-19 and other public health emergencies.

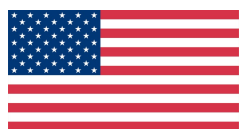
SURVEILLANCE



Migrants heading to the Northern bus station, Vientiane Capital

- Continued to monitor mobility flows and the COVID-19 situation across the Lao People's Democratic Republic using the [Global Displacement Tracking Matrix \(DTM\) Data Collection system](#). The tool sets to monitor international travel restrictions, enhance the understanding of human mobility amid COVID-19 and support evidence-based interventions.

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



Australian Government



From the People of Japan



UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund
#RecoverBetterTogether



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