In 2007, Alaska Canned Salmon became an integral part of the successful Landmine Removal and Food for Education programs of Humpty Dumpty Institute (HDI) and International Relief and Development (IRD) in Laos. Canned Salmon is part of a take-home ration given to thousands children annually in primary schools.

Starting in 2008, the World Food Program (WFP) included Canned Salmon, to improve the diets of 100,000 children in their new Food for Education Program in Laos. WFP has been working in the country since 1976, targeting households affected by natural disasters and policy-induced shocks such as opium eradication, resettlement, and the ban on shifting agriculture (WFP White Book, 2008).

The Laos Government is making education a top priority. HDI/IRD and WFP partner with the Government to increase enrollment and retention of children, especially girls, in primary schools.

To improve the safety of students, HDI is working to remove landmines from school grounds.

The HDI/IRD and WFP programs have been effective in building school attendance in Laos, where historically only 50% of children complete primary school. Laos, where 39% of the population lives below the poverty line, is one of Southeast Asia’s least developed countries. Alaska Canned Salmon provides the high quality protein and other nutrients the students need to grow healthy bodies and strong bones. For most children, Salmon is the only animal protein they consume.

Alaska Canned Salmon is distributed through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program (FFE).

HDI/IRD and WFP provide food as an incentive to keep children in school. The FFE program offers students and their teachers a nutritious mid-morning snack and distributes monthly take-home rations to students who attend at least 80% of school days.

Starting September 2010, the program expects to feed 19,000 children daily, serving 3.45 million snacks yearly.

Alaska Canned Salmon is Well Accepted in Laos

School children and their families find Alaska Canned Salmon tasty and easy to prepare. It fits well with local recipes, is easy to integrate with local ingredients in the family food basket.

Program participants find the flavor of the Salmon superior to sardines in tomato sauce and other available fish.