

# The First 1000 Days of Life



Local women feel comfortable going to the health center.

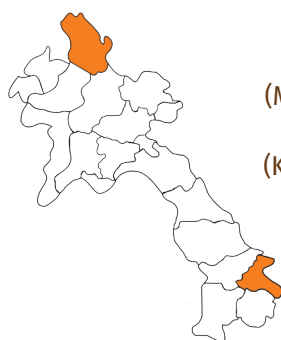
## BACKGROUND

The first 1000 days of life - between a woman's pregnancy and her child's second birthday (from conception to 24 months old) - is a unique period of opportunity when the foundations for optimum health and development across the lifespan are established. The right nutrition and care during the 1000-day window influences not only whether the child will survive, but also their ability to grow, learn and rise out of poverty. As such, it contributes to society's long-term health, stability and prosperity.

This project focuses on capacity strengthening of health volunteers, midwives, and health center staff by facilitating access to and improving quality health and nutrition services for mothers (15 to 49 years of age) and their children. Local governance structures are included in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the interventions.

Building and strengthening capacity among political counterparts is an essential building block of any CARE program to guarantee sustainability. In Laos, health staff at district and village levels work to support RMNCH through training and engagement in village level activities.

## GLIMPSE



### Location

Phongsaly Province  
(Mai, Khua, Samphan Districts)  
Sekong Province  
(Kaleum, Dak Cheung Districts)

### TimeFrame

January 2020 - December 2023

### Beneficiaries

Direct- 35,676 (17,838 women)

- 2% are mothers under 18 years old
- 46% are mothers 19 - 25 years old
- 52% are mothers 26 - 45 years old

Youth Volunteers - 180 (50% female)

Indirect 140,815 (70,407 women)

### Partners

Ministry of Health, Provincial and District Health Offices, Lao Women's Union



## OBJECTIVES

Improve RMNCH services in Phongsaly and Sekong Provinces.

## FUNDED BY

The Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Luxembourg



## OUTCOMES

### ■ Improve access and quality of RMNCH services

- Training and capacity development of health care staff
- Adapt and Update a Healthy Mother App
- Promote and Uptake of Decree on Lao Code of Marketing Breast Milk Substitutes (BMS)
- Support equipment to local health centers
- Improve Water and Sanitation Facilities in the Health Centers
- Encourage Positive Maternal and Newborn health Behaviors in Communities
- Provide counselling to young men and women who are planning to get married, newly married, planning for pregnancy or caring for young children

### ■ Improve women's economic empowerment and socio-economic development

- Life Skills training to support women's decision-making, reduced workload, and control over resources and health
- Community reflection on gender and social equality to overcome barriers to accessing health services

### ■ Improve/Strengthen Nutrition and Health Governance at all levels

- Support provincial and district and village committees to improve functioning and include RMNCH in their development plans.
- Advocate for draft MOH decree on International Code of Marketing Breast Milk Substitutes (BMS)
- Increase engagement between local authorities (Provincial Nutrition Committees (PNC) and District Nutrition Committees (DNC) and the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Alliance, in particular the SUN CSA

## IMPACTS

### ■ Improve access and quality of RMNCH services

### ■ Improve women's economic empowerment and socio-economic development

### ■ Improve/Strengthen Nutrition and Health Governance at all levels



CARE International in Lao PDR  
Vientiane Office  
P.O Box 4328, Nongsangthor Rd  
Ban Nongsangthor, Saysettha District,  
Vientiane, Lao PDR  
Tel: (+856-21) 217 727

Phongsaly Office  
Khoua District, Phongsaly Province, Lao PDR  
Tel: (+856-88) 210 819  
Sekong Office  
DakCheung District, Sekong Province, Lao PDR  
Tel: (+856-38) 215 010