



# The First 1000 Days

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## OVERVIEW

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.

The project continues to focus on capacity strengthening of health volunteers, midwives and health center staff as well as facilitating access to and improved quality health and nutrition services for mothers (15-49 years of age) and children. Sustainability in the health and food security interventions can only be guaranteed if local governance structures are included in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the interventions. Building and strengthening capacities among political counterparts are essential building blocks for any CARE program. In Laos, health staff at District and Village levels will be supported on specific topics related to RMNCH (through training and engagement in village level activities), rather than aiming at improving the RMNCH service delivery as a whole.

## PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Contribute to an improvement of RMNCH services in Phongsaly and Sekong province

### OUTCOMES



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

### Location

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



### Timeframe

January 2020 - December 2023

### Beneficiaries

Direct 35,676 people,  
female 17,838  
Indirect 140,815 people,  
female 70,407

### Project Partners

Lao Women’s Union,  
Ministry of Agriculture & Forestry,  
Ministry of Health,  
Provincial and District Health  
Departments



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## KEY ACTIVITIES

### Improve access and quality of RMNCH services

- >> Training and capacity development of health care staff
- >> Adapt and Update a Healthy Mother App
- >> Promote the Uptake of International Code of Marketing Breast Milk Substitutes (BMS)
- >> Support equipment of local health centers
- >> Improved Water and Sanitation Facilities in the Health Centers
- >> Encouraging Positive Maternal and Newborn health Behaviors in Communities
- >> Counselling to young men and women who are planning to get married, newly married, planning for pregnancy and care of young children

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

- >> Life Skill 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, district and village committees to in their function and include RMNCH in their development plans
- >> Advocate for endorsement, dissemination and implementation of 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.



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