

UNITED NATIONS JOINT PROGRAMME:

Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn
Child and Adolescent Health in
Lao PDR Phase 3



LAO PDR - 2023



Background

Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) with a population of 7.2 million is a low-income country in Southeast Asia. Despite economic development, Lao PDR is still characterized by a limited health care system. Although maternal, newborn, and child mortality and adolescent fertility have declined, the levels are still high compared to neighboring and other countries in the region.

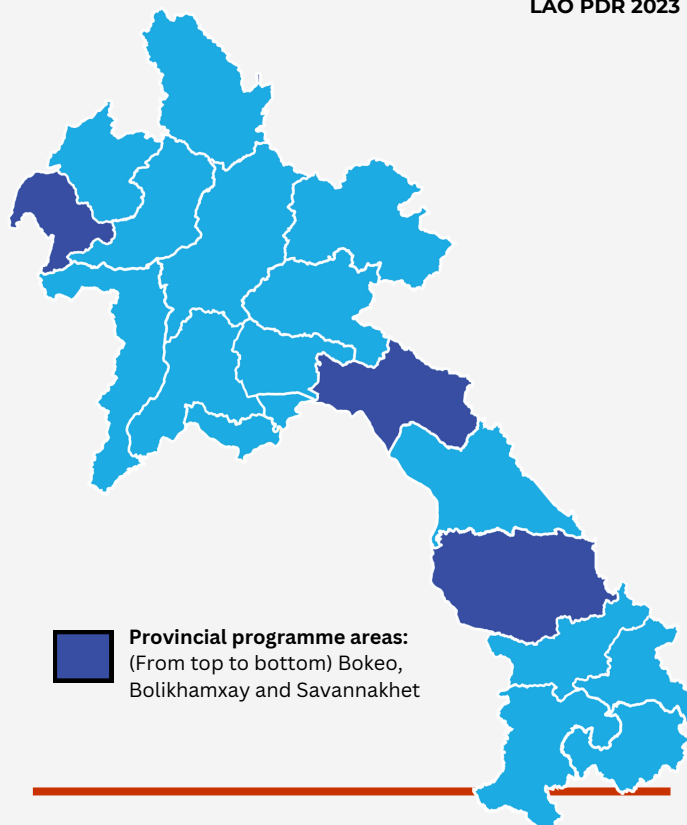
Several factors contribute to this situation, including limited availability and access to primary health care services, geographical location, population density, wealth quintile, ethnicity, gender and maternal education, further influencing maternal and child survival and development outcomes as well as Lao PDR's progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

A complete package of improved healthcare services for women and children in Lao PDR

In response to this situation, the Ministry of Health of Lao PDR, Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and World Health Organization (WHO) are working together under a United Nations Joint Programme with the aim of improving reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health (RMNCAH) in Lao PDR. The programme was founded on the understanding that investments in RMNCAH directly supports human capital development while enabling women, children and young people in Lao PDR to thrive.

Phase 1 (2011-2016) and phase 2 (2017-2021) of the programme helped set the stage for improved RMNCAH in Lao PDR by supporting the Ministry of Health in delivering a package of integrated and quality RMNCAH services and developing national guidelines, tools and models to improve RMNCAH service delivery.

LAO PDR 2023



Provincial programme areas:
(From top to bottom) Bokeo,
Bolikhamxay and Savannakhet

Key Information:



Implementing parties:

Ministry of Health of Lao PDR with technical and financial support by UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO



Donor:

Grand Duchy of Luxembourg



Total funding:

6.5 Million EUR



Duration:

2022 - 2025

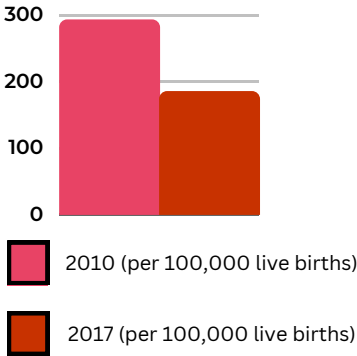
RMNCAH PHASE 3

LAO PDR - 2023

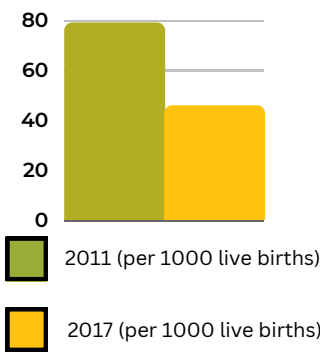


Since the launch of the programme, Lao PDR has made significant progress in improving RMNCAH*:

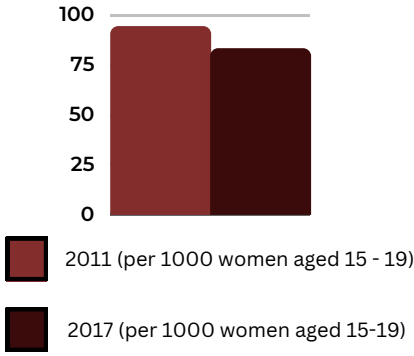
Maternal deaths



Under 5 years old mortality



Adolescent birth rate

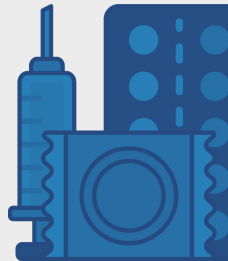


However, challenges remain in terms of accessibility, equity and quality of healthcare services for mothers, children and young people.

As such, phase 3 (2022-2025) will focus on addressing these challenges while building upon the progress achieved in the previous phases and providing harmonized support that is directly aligned to Lao PDR's National RMNCAH Strategy 2016-2025 and Action Plan for 2021-2025. Strategic focus during phase 3 will be on supporting the Ministry of Health to further improve the quality, efficiency and sustainability of integrated RMNCAH services and the equity of health outcomes. Particular attention will be given to institutionalizing the standards, guidelines, tools and innovations developed during phase 2 and to addressing emerging priorities, one of which is to strengthen governance and promote better ownership and leadership of the programme at subnational levels to ensure sustainable community engagement and scale-up efforts around RMNCAH services. Moreover, greater emphasis is also being placed on a more people-centered and integrated approach by enhancing responsiveness of services to community needs. Phase 3 of the programme is currently being implemented in the three target provinces of Bokeo, Bolikhamxay and Savannakhet, which were also the target provinces of the previous phases.

Focus areas of RMNCAH Phase 3

Sexual and Reproductive Health



- Increase modern contraceptive prevalence rate to 65 per cent and reduce unmet need to 10 per cent by 2025
- Increase modern contraceptive prevalence rate among 15-19-year-olds to 35 per cent by 2025 through adolescent and youth friendly services

Maternal Health



- Strengthen antenatal care and ensure 80 per cent of pregnant women receive at least 4 quality antenatal care visits by 2025
- At least 85 per cent of pregnant women deliver with skilled birth attendant and have access to high quality routine or high-risk care in line with the national standards by 2025

Newborn Health



- Increase the quality and coverage of early essential newborn care and breastfeeding and ensure that 70 per cent of newborns initiate breastfeeding within 90 minutes of birth by 2025

Child and Adolescent Health



- Provide integrated well child services, such as immunization, nutrition and early childhood development, and ensure all children who come to outreach or a health facility receive fully integrated well child care by 2025
- Improve the integrated management of newborn and child illness and ensure that 80 per cent of children with diarrhea, pneumonia and acute malnutrition receive quality care in line with the national guidelines by 2025
- Sustainable, institutionalized approach to adolescent and youth friendly services, expanding coverage, strengthening quality of services, improving data availability for services used by adolescents

*WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, WB Group and the UN Population Division; Trends in Maternal Mortality 2000 to 2017; 2019