

Response to Gender Based Violence (GBV)

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The health providers are the first point of contact who provide first-line support for survivors of GBV. We support the health sector response to GBV by building and strengthening the capacity of health providers to care for survivors and guide them through the referral system to claim their rights and access social justice. In the humanitarian context, we support the government to ensure that the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) is included in the response.

Humanitarian response

We work alongside the government and partners to respond in crises including natural disasters and disease outbreaks by providing dignity kits, hygiene products, and essential supplies for safe motherhood, for protection, shelter and prevention of violence against women and girls; healthcare including mental and psychosocial services to women and girls.



- Training 1 adolescent and youth-friendly service provider who can support adolescents and youth, costs **\$848**.
- Training and equipping 1 health provider to provide services through telehealth who can reach out to women in remote areas with limited access to health facilities costs **\$2200**



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Sexual and Reproductive Health

Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) – including voluntary family planning and maternal health – for all women and young people is a human right and critical to saving lives, advancing development and promoting gender equality. It is at the core of sustainable development. The Lao Government has integrated this in national frameworks and for SDG Indicator 5.6.2 which seeks to measure the extent to which countries have national laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education, Lao PDR scores 96 out of 100.



How can you support making sexual and reproductive health information and services accessible to all women and girls in Laos?
Some itemised costs are below, efficiencies of scale are required for any implementation.

- Training 1 midwife who can support 1,003 women of reproductive age per year costs **\$3,000**
- Training 1 health care provider on Family Planning who can provide information and service to 3,600 women of reproductive age annually costs **\$900** for a ten-day training.

Partnership

Our main implementing partner is the Ministry of Health. The Government of Luxembourg has been a main in-country donor. We work in partnership with health partners including KOFIH, KOICA, PSI, CHAI, Plan International, ADRA, WB, SRC, PFHA, LaoPHA.

To partner with us or for more information Contact:

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**Delivering a world where
Every pregnancy is wanted,
Every childbirth is safe, and
Every young person's potential is fulfilled.**



Context

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Lao PDR remains the country with the highest maternal mortality ratio in the region (185 per 100,000 live births, 2017). The ratios are highest among the poorest population quintile and among ethnic minorities in mountainous areas.

Unmet need for contraceptives (women who want to stop or delay pregnancy but do

not have access to contraception) for women aged 15-49 is 14.3% (over 262,000 women).

More than half of the Lao population are young people aged below 25. Adolescent pregnancy remains the highest in the region - 83 of every 1,000 girls aged 15-19 has started childbearing.

What we do

UNFPA's Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) program assists the government to improve quality and use of integrated Sexual and Reproductive Health services, particularly among the most vulnerable groups, including ethnic groups and young people. We support the full implementation of the National Family Planning Action Plan and the Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health Strategy to address disparities in accessing Sexual and Reproductive Health and family planning. We support the country to build an effective midwifery programme towards safe motherhood and childbirth. Our interventions are heavy on prevention and where returns on investment are highest for cost effectiveness.

Our program works towards achieving the UNFPA Strategic Goal of universal access to sexual and reproductive health, to reduce preventable maternal deaths and unmet need for family planning with a focus on women and girls most left behind.

Contributing to SDG3, our work aims to address the unmet needs for family planning and ensure safe childbirth.



Towards the fulfillment of ICPD commitments

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We support the government to accelerate action towards universal access to sexual and reproductive health, to reduce preventable maternal deaths and unmet need for family planning to meet the national commitment at the ICPD25 by:

- Strengthening the health system at national and subnational levels.
- Strengthening the capacity of health providers in priority provinces to deliver high-quality integrated comprehensive sexual and reproductive health information and services for all, focusing on women and girls, including those vulnerable and left behind.

Our Activities

Midwifery:

With universal access to quality midwifery care through supporting the Lao Midwife Association and strengthened capacities of midwives and regulation of the midwifery profession, we could reduce stillbirths, neonatal and maternal death rates by about 60% (The Lancet, 2020). We support the government to train midwives to international standards, have strong regulations in place, and advocate for midwives to be deployed to remote and hard-to-reach areas.



Family Planning:

Access to safe, voluntary family planning is a human right. Family planning is central to gender equality and women's empowerment, and it is a key factor in reducing poverty. We support the government to provide supply of quality contraceptives, gather data on family planning and advocate for policy support to increase access to family planning for all. One dollar invested in Family Planning could give a return of \$7.



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Telehealth:

As COVID-19 interrupted maternal health and SRH services, we innovated. Health providers' capacity was strengthened to provide services remotely via telehealth and ensure continuity of essential reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health services. Remote support for ensuring service providers own wellbeing is also being rolled out.

Adolescent and Youth Friendly Services:

We support the government to create a conducive environment for the provision of youth-friendly health services that address the needs of young people. We strengthen the capacity of service providers in providing SRH information and services to adolescents and youth, including the mental health psychosocial support through the Vientiane Youth Centre Hotlines.



Zero Maternal Deaths, Zero Unmet Need for Family Planning, Zero GBV and Harmful Practices by 2030!