



Call for Proposals for The First 1000 Days Project: Innovative Approaches Grant

Organizational Overview

CARE International is a global NGO working to end poverty and achieve social-justice. We rebuild and improve the lives of the most vulnerable groups, especially women and girls who are often the most marginalised individuals in their communities and face unequal access to social and economic rights. In 2024, CARE worked in more than 100 countries around the world, supporting 200 million people from vulnerable communities to fight poverty and social injustice. To date, CARE supported over 52 million participants to promote lasting change in their lives, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

CARE International in Lao PDR began its operations in 1992 and has worked since then to improve the lives of vulnerable groups in both rural and urban areas, particularly the ethnic minority communities. CARE works in partnership with community members, the government, local civil society organisations, and the private sector. CARE currently implements projects in seven provinces: Vientiane Capital, Phongsaly, Luang Namtha, Luangprabang, Salavan, Champasack and Sekong.

CARE's "Marginalized Women and Girls" program in Laos empowers women and girls through integrated initiatives focusing on women's health, economic empowerment, and climate resilience, utilizing evidence-based practices to drive sustainable socio-economic justice. This is achieved by strengthening health systems, combating gender-based violence, improving food access, fostering resilient livelihoods and inclusive value chains, and enhancing climate adaptation through community-driven action plans that combine scientific and traditional knowledge, ultimately contributing to poverty reduction and a more equitable society. CARE Laos commits to women and girl empowerment, locally led and globally scaled through a comprehensive approach to long-term commitment to building local capacity as central to our mission.

Project Overview

The first 1000 days: Phase III Project is a co-financed by the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (MoFA) Luxembourg and CARE Luxembourg a.s.b.l. (CARE LUX), with a project duration of 48 months (from January 2024 to December 2028). Its goal is to reduce maternal and child mortality and improve health outcomes for women, adolescents, and children in the first 1,000 days of the life of a child in Sekong and Provinces as well as to support poor and vulnerable households in remote, rural areas to facilitate access to and improve the quality of nutrition-related health services for mothers and children, food and nutrition security for women, men, girls and boys in the targeted areas. To achieve these objectives, it focuses on health and nutrition related capacity strengthening of health volunteers, peer mobilisers, 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 (below 2 years of age, CU2).

The project is mainly implemented through CARE International in Laos (CARE Laos) and with the Ministry of Health together with technical support by Mother and Child Health/ Nutrition Centers at the national level and works closely with Provincial Health Office, Provincial Lao Women Union, District Health Office District Lao Women Union Offices, and the Provincial and District Education and Sports Bureau to ensure local ownership and alignment of national objective subsequently from the central level down to district level.

The specific objective (SO) is to 1) improve access to good quality health services for mothers and children, 2) improve food security/nutrition of women of reproductive age, men, children and other vulnerable groups in the targeted communities, 3) strengthen the economic/financial independence of women and young boys/girls, and 4) develop strong partnerships with local stakeholders such as Govt authorities, village authorities and locally led CSOs. As part of the result framework, the project aims to **support capacity building of locally led CSOs & SUN CSA that focus on locally led solutions for health, GBV, and disability inclusion.**

Grant Availability and Eligibility

An Innovation Grant will be made available for innovative initiatives that focus on women's health, violence against women and girls, and/or disability inclusion. The innovation grant aims for localised solutions to long term challenges, focusing on creating/innovating new ways of working (*for example new approaches to community facilitation*) or new types/approaches of advocacy (*for example to conducting research or innovative advocacy events*), development or piloting of new technologies (*for example digital apps, digital games for behavior change communication*) or new ways of working with existing technologies (*for example social media platforms, virtual influencers*)

Preference will be given to organisations that have a working history including previous initiatives on the following topics: women's health, adolescent sexual reproductive health, food security and nutrition, behavior change approaches, violence against women and girls, and women's leadership.

Eligibility Criteria

Project Eligibility

- The grant must fall between a minimum of 5,000 USD and a maximum of 12,000 USD
- Project implementation must not exceed 05 months and must be completed before November 31st, 2025 (reports to be sent to CARE by 31st December 2025).

Beneficiaries of small grants are:

- Non-profit associations (NPAs) locally registered according to Lao PDR legislation;
- Registered organisations that have previous experiences implementing development projects in Laos and previous experiences with receipt of funding from other donors.
- Eligible NPAs must have a bank account registered in the name of organization.
- Eligible NPAs are required to submit copies of their organizational registration and audited financial reports.

GRANT PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

Full proposal (Annex 1) & detailed budget plan: Applicants (registered NPAs/organisations) will be required to write up a project proposal and detailed budget based on their interests and experiences and submit to CARE by **13th June 2025**. Submission will be made in soft copy to Manolattthida Litthiboulom, Partnership and Business Support Coordinator - manolattthida.litthiboulom@care.org . Shortlisted proposals will be invited to provide a short presentation at the CARE Office.

An information session (online) will be held on **5th June 2025**. Please register your interest to attend this session by emailing Manolattthida Litthiboulom, Partnership and Business Support Coordinator - manolattthida.litthiboulom@care.org

Partnership Agreement: The agreement will be signed with successful applications and approved by the CARE International in Lao PDR committee and country director

Fund Transfer: The fund transfer process will be detailed in the partnership agreement. The funding is based on a fund request *and it only can be processed with detailed budgeting including the submission of the activity and budget plan*

Due Diligence and Capacity Building: As part of CARE International's commitment to locally led solutions and the capacity building of CSOs, due diligence assessments will be conducted for the potential receivers of the grant. As a result of the due diligence, selection for grant recipients may/may not go ahead. The results of the due diligence will also inform as to any capacity building as part of the partnership agreement e.g. finance, safeguarding.

Implementation: Partners will independently implement project activities based on the full proposal and budget details. In case partners would like to adapt or make changes to implementation, CARE should be informed and agree in writing prior to any change.

Report: Both financial and narrative reports are required, including the following: Monthly financial report, monthly progress report and final report at the end of project implementation.

CARE follows a strict Zero tolerance policy to Prevention of Sexual Harassment, Exploitation, and Abuse (PSHEA/Safeguarding) and to a strict Conflict of Interest policy. We work to ensure transparency in our selection process. Any contact to CARE staff to obtain specific information or lobbying of our staff on the part of the applicants/relevant individuals will result in the applicant being considered ineligible for the grant.

How to apply

Interested organizations are requested to submit their applications including (1) full proposal, (2) detailed budget, (3) copy of organizational registration, and (4) the latest audited financial report to: manolatthida.litthiboulom@care.org. **Please include the text: "Application for 1000 Days Innovation Grant"** in the subject of your email. Deadline for submission is **13th June 2025, 5pm Laos time**. Applications later than deadline will not be accepted. **We strongly encourage applications from local CSOs led by Women, Youth, and Marginalized Groups.**

For specific technical and/or further information, please contact manolatthida.litthiboulom@care.org no later than **11th June 2025**.