

CARE International in Lao PDR

Lao Civil Society Strengthening Support & Partnership Framework

Overview of Programme

Since 1992, CARE Laos has worked with a wide range of actors from civil society, government and the private sector, recognizing each of these actors has a critical and complementary role to play in facilitating sustainable and inclusive development in Laos. Building on our own expertise and knowledge, we aim to be the partner of choice for governments, civil society, private sector, and donors who seek strategic solutions in alignment with our Long-Term Program impact goals. In 2020, 90% of CARE Laos' projects are being implemented through local partner organizations, with CARE supporting their organizational and technical capacity development as well as promote enabling environment of the CSOs.

Through CARE Laos partnerships, we commit to playing our part in strengthening a vibrant civil society in Laos by supporting, respecting, and backing the work of local organizations, ensuring appropriate resource sharing and capacity development, and building alliances for greater impact.

Lao Civil Society Strengthening Framework

The rationale for focusing on strengthening the development of thriving and accountable Non-Profit Associations (NPA), and civil society more broadly is to support voices to marginalized ethnic communities and urban poor, as well as traditionally marginalized women thereby strengthen the interface between marginalized communities and local and national government. Besides playing a facilitative and supportive role in opening up dialogue and constructive engagement between local communities and government institutions, NPAs have a role as providers of policy input into government policy formulation processes. This support can also include elements on strengthening partners' capacity to implement project activities, promote their presence at sub-national level and implement grants and to a lesser extent on supporting the organizations as change agents in their own right.

Domains of change

The three specific objectives will contribute to change in the three corresponding domains of change in which change needs to happen:

Leadership and
organizational
capacity of CSOs

Civil society
collaboration
and networking

Government
policy
formulation and
implementation



CSOs engage in advocacy strategies and campaigns for the International 16 Days of Activism Campaign



Local NPA represents Laos Civil Society at the 2019 Universal Periodic Review in Geneva

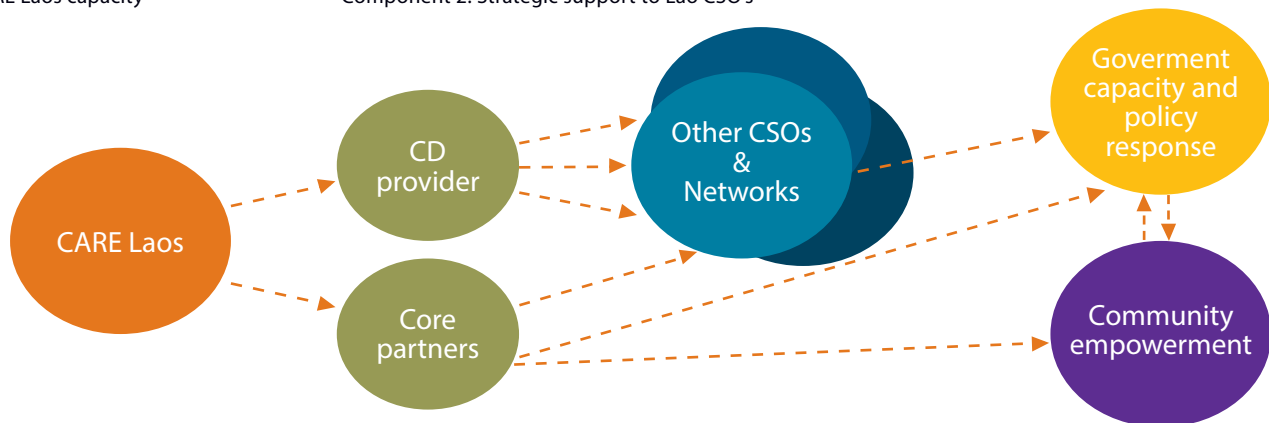


More than 10 CSO partners receive Capacity Strengthening and technical support since 2018

INTERVENTION FRAMEWORK

1. CARE Laos capacity

Component 2: Strategic support to Lao CSO's



Sphere of control

1. **Capacity development of CARE Laos** in support of a shift to more strategic CSO partnerships and organizational capacity development support.

Sphere of direct influence

- 2.1 CARE Laos develops long-term partnership with a few **core partnership** and supports capacity development in relation to internal capacity, outreach to marginalized groups, external relations and policy dialogue.
- 2.2 **Small grant mechanism** enables CSO's to carry out strategic and innovative activities.
- 2.3 CARE Laos supports LDA as part of a strategy to **reach a wider group of CSO's** with organizational and technical capacity development.
- 2.4 CARE Laos supports **networking** between CSO's

Sphere of indirect influence

Capacity development will focus on strengthening Lao civil society ability to build good relationship and be able to **engage with the government** at different level.

Focus will also be on the ability of organizations to lobby, advocacy and dialogue to **empower communities** (approaches, tools) and to work with the local government.

Civil Society Space in Lao PDR

Civil society space in Laos has seen many changes and fluctuations in the past decades. The official NPA Decree in 2009 legislated the recognition and regulation of NPAs as legal entities, however further iterations of the decree limited NPAs in their access to funding opportunities and networks. CSOs operate in a challenging environment in which other stakeholders have very limited understanding of the role of civil society in contributing to sustainable development, and as such have not contributed to high level engagement or dialogue but rather community based service delivery. Recently however, engagement between CSOs and Government has become more reciprocal, with local NPAs contributing to high level policy engagement in a transparent and collaborative effort.

Capacity Development Strategies

- Provide technical and management training to local NPAs
- Small grants to NPAs to attend conferences, engage consultative services, travel grants, etc
- Foster capacity through networks, platforms, alliances and peer learning
- On the job training, coaching, etc



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P.O Box 4328, Vientiane, Lao PDR

Nongsangthor Rd, Ban Nongsangthor, Vientiane, Lao PDR

TEL: (+856-21) 217 727 Lao.info@careint.org | www.care.org.au/country/Laos

