

## CASE STUDY

### Facts and Figures

- The District Nutrition Committee meets once a quarter to plan, coordinate and evaluate nutrition activities in Nong. The activities this Committee has helped coordinate has benefited many people in Nong District.
- 9,004 people, including 4,346 women, benefited from the project funded through village development committee (VDC) small grants; installation of 6 water pumps in 6 villages, 18 boreholes in 9 villages and 4 water supply systems in 4 villages.
- 1,021 women have benefited from training in exclusive breastfeeding and healthy diets for themselves and their children.
- 32 health workers have been trained to undertake screenings, using the WHO Anthro-plus software, within communities to identify children with acute malnutrition so they can be promptly treated.
- 803 households have been supported to develop gardens and ponds to provide diverse sources of food and building resilience against the impacts of climate change
- 5 primary schools have been supported to establish school gardens where over 926 children can learn valuable skills about agriculture and nutrition and help to grow food that can supplement school meals

## Collaboration And Networking to Enhance Education and Nutrition (CANTEEN)

Building community partnerships to improve food security and nutrition in Nong District, Savannakhet Province

The Collaboration and Networking to Enhance Education and Nutrition (CANTEEN) project brings together the education, health and agricultural sectors to tackle the complex issue of malnutrition.

### *Working together for growth and health!*

“The CANTEEN project has brought different stakeholders together to



Mr. Sivone Mouanaotou, CANTEEN Program Manager © MCVN

bring various perspectives to help improve food security and nutrition in Nong. Community-based initiatives that directly address the villagers' priorities have brought sustainable improvements to the well-being of over 7000 villagers and helped to ensure that children are properly nourished so they can be healthy and flourish.”  
**Sivone Mouanaotou**

### Context

Childhood malnutrition in Lao PDR remains a significant issue. It is particularly prevalent among ethnic minority communities living in remote mountainous areas, such as Nong District, where up to 72% of children are stunted (low height for age). The CANTEEN project brings together multiple partners to implement various activities, including treating acute malnutrition, promoting breastfeeding, implementing household and school gardens, providing water supplies, and strengthening nutrition governance to address both the immediate and underlying causes of malnutrition.

### Objectives

- Strengthen the capacity of civil society organisations and local authorities to work in partnership to achieve development goals, particularly those related to food security and nutrition.
- Build the capabilities of at least six local authorities, one not for profit association and twenty Village Development Committees to deliver nutrition-sensitive services that improve food security, nutrition and

## Total costs

EUR 1,310,980

## Partners

- MCNV ([www.mcnv.org](http://www.mcnv.org))
- Community Development Association (CoDA)
- Savannakhet Provincial Health Department
- Nong District Health Office
- Nong District Agriculture and Forestry Office
- Nong District Education and Sports Office
- Nong District Lao Women's Union Office

## Duration

January 2017 – December 2021



## Testimony

“CANTEEN trained health workers in the Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition methodology using the Anthro+ software. Using this approach, we can now monitor the growth and health of children much more quickly and efficiently. We have also learnt the importance of case management and can tailor care for individual children and their families depending on need. The approach has been so successful that we have not only used it in the original 20 CANTEEN villages, but we have also applied it in all 70 villages throughout Nong District. We would certainly recommend this approach to others.”

overall well-being of over 7,000 poor ethnic minority people living in twenty remote upland villages in Nong District.

- Strengthen the capacity in policy dialogue and promote participation, transparency and accountability in multi-sector partnerships to encourage the uptake of successful models and increase the involvement of CSOs in development processes within the context of the related policy environment and priorities in Lao PDR.

## Result

- Facilitated a multi-sectoral District Nutrition Committee that includes representatives from the Health Office, Education and Sports Office, Agriculture and Forestry Office, Lao Women's Union Office, Village Development Committees, local organisations and INGOs.
- Improved capacity of District Health Office to ensure they can effectively undertake community-based screening for childhood malnutrition using readily available and practical tools.
- Diversified village and household agriculture and aquaculture to improve access to a variety of foods and increase resilience to climate change.
- Improved nutrition and hygiene for children through practical action learning, e.g., growing vegetables in school gardens that supplement school meals.
- Increased empowerment of villagers, particularly women, through small grants that enable local communities to own and implement projects, e.g., improvements to water systems.

Improved research, information and evidence to provincial and national stakeholders about the effectiveness and need for multi-sectoral approaches to nutrition.



*Dr Phetlamphan KIETTAVONG,  
Vice Director of Health Promotion Unit, Nong District Health Office  
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*Mr. Akho, Village Development Committee Member of Xuong Yai Village  
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“Hello, I am Mr Akho, from Xouang Yai Village.” Mr Akho praised CANTEEN for its support.

“Our village now has an accessible clean water supply. Our children are healthier, our home gardens are flourishing, and women have more time to relax and enjoy time with their families, as they do not have to walk long distances to the river to collect water. Thank you so much”

“Hello, I am Ver, and I am a 20-year-old mum! I have attended many enjoyable and exciting activities run by the CANTEEN project.

I have particularly enjoyed learning about what vegetables to grow and the cooking classes. I have also learnt a lot about how to care for my little boy. Everyone has worked together. I now know that he needs regular health checks and vaccinations, a balanced nutritious diet, and clean water to be healthy. With this knowledge and new skills, I can take care of my son better than in the past, and he will grow up to be healthy, strong and happy.”



*Mrs. Ver and her young son in their home garden in Xouang Yai village.  
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CANTEEN also improved hygiene and nutrition education in schools by installing taps and developing school gardens. As Mai, a ten-year-old girl at Pata-oiy Yai Primary School, exclaimed, “The school garden was great! Our teacher taught us how to grow the garden. I particularly liked the pond with the little frogs and fish. CANTEEN helped us build our wonderful garden and pond! I have learnt so much, and when I return from school, I can share with my parents everything we have learnt and help them in our home garden.”



*Ms Mai, 10-years old, Grade 5, a student in Pata-oiy Yai Primary School, proudly showing the crops grown in the school garden.*  
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