



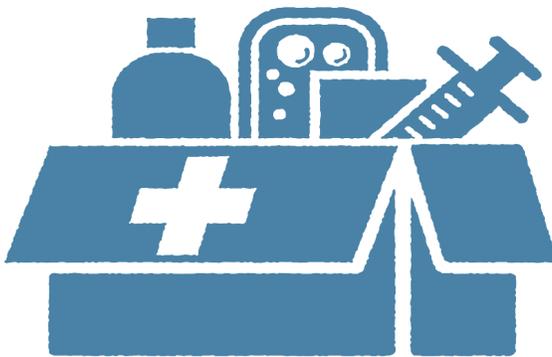
# PROJECT OVERVIEW

## ***Improvements in Health Service Delivery in Remote & Marginalised Communities***

### OVERVIEW

Cambodia's 2010 Demographic Health Survey reflects remarkable decreases in maternal mortality from 472 to 206 per 100,000 live births. This is due to improvements at the health facility level with activities such as increased access to skilled birth attendants and facility based deliveries, which nationally are at 71% and 53.8%, respectively. Such improvements, though commendable, do require strong systems of preventative care in order to be sustained. According to national statistics, postpartum care coverage is 40%, falling to less than 20% in populations representing the rural poor. Uptake of modern family planning methods at 22% further speaks to the need for improvements with postpartum care for women.

Barriers to health service access in Koh Kong province include the inability of households to secure funds for treatment and distance between health facilities and communities. In addition to these issues, gaps exist in health service delivery and demand creation. CARE is working to strengthen components of the health system to improve health service delivery as a means to improve utilisation of services. The project works with midwives and nurses from selected health centres in the province to receive in service training, mentoring and coaching through a process of supportive supervision. These activities serve as a means to increase capacity and understanding of pertinent health issues to ensure accountability and motivation. Improving outreach activities following the Ministry of Health protocols and best practices to increase immunisation coverage and family planning services as a means to improve access and utilisation of health services.



**Objective:**

To increase community access to health services in remote and marginalised villages of Cambodia through:

- Improving the effectiveness and quality of health services by enhancing the capacity and motivation of health workers to facilitate more comprehensive and integrated services
- Enhancing health centre outreach mechanisms to improve access and utilization of health services, including prevention services such as vaccination
- Advocating with key Ministry of Health partners and stakeholders through leveraging the visibility and successes of project activities to inform future MoH protocols, guidelines and policies

**Timeframe:**

October 2012– November 2014

**Location:**

Sre Ambel operational district in Koh Kong province

**Project Partners:**

- Ministry of Health, Provincial Health Department (PHD)
- Operational district, health centres
- Local authorities and health-related NGOs

**Beneficiaries**

- Government representatives and local authorities
- Health service providers across five health centres
- Over 14,000 women and children
- 133 Village Health Support Group (VHSG) members

**Activities**

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Facilitating Midwifery Coordination Alliance Team (MCAT) meetings for technical health staff to share knowledge and experiences.

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Providing clinical skills on conditions such as eclampsia training for MCAT meeting attendees and conducting supervisory visits to mentor health staff.

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Conducting refresher training for village health support group (VHSG) members to ensure they have the necessary skills, knowledge, confidence and motivation to deliver health messages to the community.

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Supporting health centres to develop clear monthly outreach service plans so that communities receive regular services such as vaccinations, monitoring of pregnant women and new mothers, vitamin supplements, or care for minor injuries or ailments, as well as referrals to health centres or hospitals when necessary.

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Supporting health centres to conduct outreach visits to some of the most remote villages in the operation district.

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Working with VHSGs to develop monthly work-plans for community health education and supporting the facilitation of VHSG bi-monthly meetings in three health centre catchment areas.

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## CASE STUDY

*In sparsely populated rural areas where communities have to travel long distances to the nearest clinic, accessing basic health services can be difficult. As a result, outreach services, where medical staff provide basic medical care directly in the communities, are vital for helping community members stay healthy.*

For the Boeng Preav Health Centre in Koh Kong province, outreach is a big challenge. Some of the most remote areas that they cover can only be reached via a 6-8 hour boat journey, meaning the occasional visits of health workers are the communities' only access to healthcare. Without support to cover their transportation, staff found it difficult to visit these isolated villagers regularly, meaning children did not receive vaccinations and illnesses were left untreated. Two villages had not accessed any health services for over a year.

Involvement with CARE's project has made a huge difference to the centre's outreach work. With the food and transportation of staff covered, they are able to guarantee regular visits to all communities so they have the opportunity to see a health worker at least once every two months. In addition to food and transportation, the project supports health education materials such as key messages flipcharts to help improve community members' knowledge of topics such as nutrition and treatments for common ailments.

The chief of the Boeng Preav Health Centre says that since the project started, the number of children receiving standard immunisations such as tetanus has increased, and he hopes that this will continue to rise. Improving the quality and frequency of the health services available within communities has not only increased the number of people that medical staff are able to reach, but also helped to improve community members' engagement with health workers so that they have better trust and are more inclined to access medical services in the future.

