



# PROJECT PROFILE

## Safe Motherhood Project

The **Safe Motherhood Project** is part of CARE International in Timor-Leste's Long-Term Program, with the impact group of 'women and girls in disadvantaged rural communities'. Safe Motherhood is a community based health project implemented in rural communities of Timor-Leste. The overall goal of the project is to decrease maternal mortality and morbidity by focusing on improving Sexual Reproductive and Maternal Health (SRMH) behaviours and improving access, utilisation and provision of quality SRMH services.

### Beneficiaries:

Mothers, infants, and young children in target communities. Secondary target group includes men and young people in the communities, community leaders, community mobilisers, Municipality Health Service / Community Health Centre staff, local NGOs, and the Ministry of Health (MoH).

### Objectives:

The three main objectives of the program are:

1. Empowered women, youth and communities – women, youth and their communities are empowered to identify and overcome barriers to access, utilisation and provision of quality SRMH services, and are enabled to practice positive SRMH behaviours.
2. Expanded, inclusive, and effective spaces for negotiation and dialogue – spaces for dialogue and negotiation between communities, health providers, and government are expanded, inclusive and effective; creating equitable and sustainable systems to jointly identify and remove barriers to SRMH service access, utilisation and provision.
3. Empowered, effective, responsive and accountable health system – health providers and government are empowered, effective, responsive and accountable to women and their communities, ensuring access, utilisation, and provision of high quality SRMH services.

### Strategies and Approach:

The project aims to achieve its objectives through the following strategies:

- Mothers' Caring Groups and Kitchen Gardens
- Birth Preparedness Plans
- Mutual Accountability Process
- Family Health Days
- Capacity building of nurses, midwives and doctors

### Project Location:

Ermera and Covalima Municipality, Timor-Leste

### Project Duration:

July 2014 – June 2017

**Note:** Safe Motherhood builds on the success of multiple health projects at CARE International in Timor-Leste. CARE's Health Program in Timor-Leste started with a Water and Sanitation project in 2003. Other projects have focused on malaria, nutrition, health education, and capacity building of health staff.

**Donor:** DFAT through the Australia NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP)

### Implementing Agency:

CARE International in Timor-Leste, Municipality Health Service, Ministry of Health

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## Safe Motherhood Project

### Project Highlights since July 2015

#### Key Updates

- 43 Mothers' Caring Groups were developed and Kitchen Gardens were established by all of these MCGs.
- Pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers were screened for malnutrition and referred to health facilities for further information and treatment.
- Birth Preparedness Plans were created with 99 MCG members, of which more than half were created together with husbands, parents and/ or in-laws.
- Eleven health personnel (2 male, 9 female) in Covalima and 15 health personnel in Ermera (8 male, 7 female) received Safe and Clean Delivery training provided by the Institute of National Science (INS) under the MoH.
- Five Mutual Accountability processes took place in 3 aldeias in Covalima and two aldeias in Ermera. In all of the aldeias action plans were developed to strengthen access, use and provision of SRMH services.
- Family Health Days were held in nine aldeias (4 in Atsabe and 5 in Covalima). A total of 1,168 community members attended, including 414 women, 243 men, 268 girls and 243 boys.

#### Future Plans

- Develop facilitation skills and further knowledge of MCG members and Community Mobilisers so they are able to continue and run the health education sessions themselves.
- Provide GoTL approved key El Nino messages to the Mother Caring Group members and their families so as to minimise the impact on their livelihoods and nutrition status.
- Work with INS to provide follow up training on Safe and Clean Delivery and provide new trainings on family planning and Infant and Young Child Feeding practices to service providers.
- Conduct the Mutual Accountability action plan monitoring process with CITL's local partner which includes strengthening the suco councils to be able to better implement the actions.
- Continue to conduct discussion at the communities using CARE's Social Analysis and Action tool whereby communities explore and challenge social norms and practices surrounding gender.
- Complete the Mid Term Review for the project and disseminate findings to relevant stakeholders.