

IMPACT

Cuso
International

YOUR GIFTS IN ACTION
SPRING 2020

Ripples of Change in Laos:

How you are helping create climate-resilient crops in Laos. P2

Thanks to you, the Midwives Save Lives program helps a mother safely deliver twins. P2

How a Canadian Grandmother helped 100 farm families transform their crop yields, with Your Support! P3

ASIA:

You Create Ripples of Change in Laos



A changing climate can mean the difference between food on the table or going hungry.

In Laos, subsistence farmers face growing water scarcity and seasonal changes in temperature that have impacted their community's food security, nutrition and health. And with no supermarkets or shopping centres in this part of the world, food must

be foraged or farmed for a family to eat.

The loss of even one crop in a season can be devastating, but thanks to you, Canadian volunteers are working with Laotian farmers to build Climate Smart Villages where resistant crops and consistent water supplies are being implemented. At the same time, the farmers are gaining knowledge about small scale rain harvesting and the benefits of community ponds.

Rice is one of the main crops in rural Laos, but the type of rice that's been grown in the past cannot survive drought or flooding. That's why drought and flood-resistant types of rice have been introduced.

The growing period for the new types of rice is more than a month shorter than the traditional type, meaning that two crops can be harvested each year instead of one. Not only that, but the resistant seeds produce 50% more tons. This means that families will have a more reliable and sustainable food source regardless of the weather.



Moakmanee Phon-Aloun, a livestock assistant from the Lao Ngam district in southern Laos.

Thanks to you, fewer families in Laos will go hungry this year.

AFRICA:

You Are Saving Lives in Benin



Rachidat spends her days caring for her family and selling corn and peanuts in the local market where she lives in the African country of Benin. At 33, she recently gave birth to twins, Julien and Julienne.

More than 80 percent of women in this part of Africa don't have access to health professionals. Midwives play an essential role in delivering quality maternal and newborn health services and can serve as advocates for mothers.

Fortunately, Rachidat's babies are happy and healthy thanks to your support of the Midwives Save Lives (MSL) program. That's because Rachidat's midwives had been trained by volunteer

LATIN AMERICA:

You are Helping Change Lives, One Banana at a Time



Christia in Ibagué, Colombia.

Bananas are a grass and they multiply just like the grass on our lawns here in Canada. But what can happen is that farmers end up with dozens of plants competing for water and this affects the quality of their harvest and their livelihoods.

That's where Christia Roberts comes into the story. When she retired after 20 years of teaching at the University of British Columbia, Christia was determined to continue sharing her knowledge. As an expert in agribusiness, she knew that her skills were transferable and that by sharing them, she could change lives.

The farmers she worked with learned that if they thinned out their crop so that just one new banana plant was growing from each existing banana plant, their water and fertilizer supply would go further and bigger and healthier bananas would grow. In just one year, the volume and quality of their banana crops have grown dramatically. That has led to a higher income and more efficient work.

When you change one person's life, you change the lives of their families and their communities.



Canadian midwives and could use their new knowledge and equipment to ensure a happy outcome and be better advocates for the care Rachidat needed.

But MSL training extends from midwives to health educators, giving them the tools to provide quality training to midwifery students and midwives in the future. In all, more than 3 million lives have been directly impacted by the MSL program.

These days, Rachidat is adjusting to life as the mother of two happy and healthy newborns. She's supported by health workers who check in and do follow-ups to ensure the babies are thriving. But it's really thanks to the generosity of donors like you that mothers and babies will continue to survive and thrive in Africa.



Rachidat and her healthy newborns.

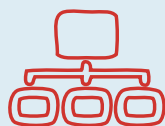
Your Impact by the Numbers

Thanks to your support, Cuso International has worked with over **15,000 volunteers** in more than **100 countries**, for nearly 60 years, to create opportunity, security and dignity for people in need—especially women and girls.

In the last year alone, you have helped:



17,086 staff, partners, volunteers and donors work together to make a difference.



72% of our beneficiaries, who are women and children. Thanks to you, we are able to help the most vulnerable members of society.



21 countries benefit from Cuso International programs.

Programs in action:



Managing climate change through a gender lens

Many Laotians live in rural areas and **70%** rely on the crops they can collect during the day. Using a women's empowerment lens to bridge traditional harvesting practices with sustainable initiatives, the project benefitted **4,500** women, their families and fellow community members.

SCOPE: Innovative and inclusive

The Sustainable Colombian Opportunities for Peacebuilding and Employment (SCOPE) program aims to help Colombian citizens in seven cities who are living in poverty—especially youth, women, and victims of conflict—find meaningful and sustainable employment. **11,074** beneficiaries have been reached through SCOPE—**66%** of them women.

The Midwives Save Lives (MSL) Project

The MSL project continues to prevent maternal and child deaths by increasing the accessibility and quality of midwifery services. Cuso and partners led MSL-specific training for men and boys in Southern Benin, and sensitized males in Adja-Ouéré Commune about gender issues and harmful traditional practices.

We'd love to hear from you



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