

Service Fraternel d'Entraide ~ Laos

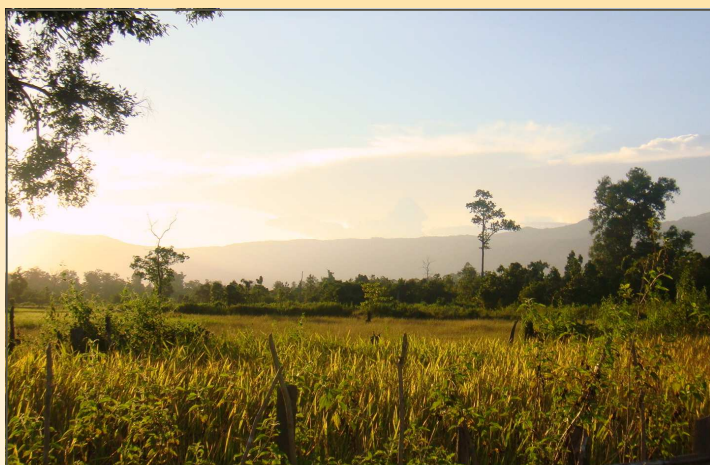
Newsletter ~ nov 2014



Women and men working alongside the people of Laos

We are back again from our journey to Laos. There, it was the time of the rice harvest and we could see the combine-harvester side by side with the harvest with the hand. This picture is typical of a two tier Laos where cities are developing very fast trying to resemble to modern megacities and villages of remote areas that are sorely lacking of the necessary to subsist.

It is of course with this aim in mind of supporting the left behind that the action of SFE takes place.



Huge is the task...

The regional parliamentary seminar on child nutrition held from the 4th to 6th of November declared that malnutrition and infant and maternal mortality affect the chances of Laos to fulfill its commitment within the framework of the Millennium Development Goals in 2015. The government launched a project to fight malnutrition and makes it a priority. In 2011, 44% of Lao children suffered from malnutrition. The Ministry of Health hopes to reduce the rate to 34% until 2015.

The surveys conducted at the end of 2013 by our teams merely confirm what can be seen and show the various domains that need help: access to water, to health and to education, economical and rural development to fight malnutrition as well as the improvement of the village infrastructures.

The challenge of the coming years will be to find appropriate solutions to the needs and the functioning of these communities.

Water for life...

A few more figures of 2012: 50% of open defecation in Laos, 70% of the population is living in a rural area. A report of the United Nations confirms that the lack of latrines and the absence of access to safe drinking water are related to malnutrition and diarrhea leading too often to the death of children under five. The lack of latrines and hygiene – which may also pollute the water springs – leads to more than 3 millions of disease cases associated with a poor hygiene and 6000 premature deaths. The Millennium Development Goal for 2015 fixed at 60% for the improvement of the water quality and at 80% for the access to latrines seems very difficult to reach. **The water quality is of critical importance.**



Progress is already visible...

In light of this information, we will integrate a water component into our priority objective of food security in the 14 targeted villages of Thathèng in Sekong Province in the South-Eastern area of the country. Thus, our water engineer will have to draw his imagination to find the best mean to bring water to the village either by well-drilling, or by extraction of spring water or a water supply system. Every time, the community gets involved and participates with workforce and providing local materials (wood, bamboo, tools, financial provision).





This set of actions is completed by health education/training (personal hygiene, hygiene of household and environment, nutrition training, sorting and removal of waste) with videos shown at night in a playful spirit with questions-answers.

To complete the hygiene component, we want to install **a water point outside of the toilet** so that the users can wash their hands. The global cost of the purchase of these 965 little tanks with a tap each to equip all the latrines amounts 3500 € If you wish to contribute to this project, please send your donations to SFE.



The distribution of water filters by gravity manufactured by our care or ceramic filters makes it possible for the villagers to have drinkable water without the costs of the boiling of water (women went very far to get wood for making fire).

Tath ng : during the first year we trained model families. This year, the objective is to reach the whole population of the village through the model families who in turn will teach others and share their acquired knowledge and know-how.



News about the other projects:

Attapeu : the community health program still continues at the same time with a good participation of the people in some 20 villages of the province. The working conditions of our teams are demanding due to the remote location of the villages and the poor road conditions.

Sekong : the medical project started a month ago as it was planned. Training for manager nurses has begun in order to train them in team and service management. Two French couples - doctor and dentists- are planning to come over again for a short term mission at the end of the month; they will complete the training of the dentists, radiologists and ophthalmologist of the hospital.

Our approach is a participatory one and comprises several actions for each family:

- to have toilets and use them properly
- to start a small vegetable garden in order to have vegetables throughout the year
- to breed animals in enclosed conditions. We provide a family with locusts, pigs or poultry and this family in turn commit itself to give locust eggs, a piglet or chicks to another family.
- to implement household waste baskets and dig a hole to burn them in it

We would like to thank you for your faithful support.
Best regards and greetings,

Philippe Klopfenstein for the SFE team

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