

Service Fraternel d'Entraide ~ Laos

Newsletter ~ March 2017



Women and men working alongside the people of Laos

932 miles to visit all of SFE's projects over 10 days in February

My annual trip to Laos made me realize that the SFE projects are welcomed as much by the people as they are by the local and national authorities. I met motivated teams with a desire to serve those who have little resources - lack of food security, no access to clean water - and who have little access or encouragement to partake in education, which is essential for creating autonomy.

Vocational training center at Savannakhet



This center is in place since 8 months now, in order to provide real tools for empowering persons to take control of their future by the means of a good training. The 15 students of the first class are very motivated and happy to be able to study. When listening to their stories, one can realize to which point this opportunity is a gift and a springboard for their future activities. « Here, we are so fortunate! » said one of them. « There are toilets, music instruments, bicycles, books and even computers are available! » ; a way of life so different from life in their villages ! After a period of formal train-



ing (work ethics, health and safety, theoretical courses in the different skills), the young people find an internship in a café, in a carpentry workshop, or with a hair-dresser.

The training will be completed at the end of May and the young people that return to their village will have the opportunity to start a micro-enterprise. They know what they will need, due to their business plans that they elaborated on throughout the year. Tools are made available: microcredit, project management, mentoring.

Community healthcare project, community agricultural development project : Attapeu and Sekong (district of Kapeu)



The new phases of the Community Health Development Projects finally started in the two provinces in January after months of delay due to the waiting for the necessary authorizations. Our teams completed a round of visits of all the targeted villages of the project. Village development committees have been established and will act as an interface between our teams and the villagers. They will ensure the smooth running of the activities between the visits and the regular trainings done by our teams.

A new concept in Attapeu for the launching of this 3rd phase: 4 banners that remind us of our main commitments, 4 messages around which our action revolves, which include food security, water access, mother-child healthcare:

- we see value in each person
- we permit people to develop themselves
- we enable the communities to work together
- we respect the government's programs



Medical support to Sekong and the district hospitals



Our new collaborators have settled in as midwife and doctor and share the work with our nurse who then will have more time for the district hospitals and health-care centers. This technical and medical support project will be completed in September just before the start of another 3-year phase requested by the hospital management and the health authorities of the province.

Salavan : the birthing of a new project

As mentioned in the SFE's November newsletter, our activities here will be focused on two main axes: medical implication in the Salavan Province Hospital and 5 health centers, as well as a participatory/community action focused on primary healthcare, water, latrines and nutrition.

One couple is presently completing their Lao language training, and a second couple will arrive in 2 months to join the team that should then start this project mid-2017.

Logistical support : Vientiane



We do not mention it often but a whole team in the capital manages the administrative and financial side of this work that enables these projects to continue and progress. Two expatriated couples are committed to this service, working in collaboration with an efficient Lao team.

We would like to thank all the generous donors who supported financially the 2016 Christmas Action dedicated to the technical support of Attapeu's 3rd phase. The 3325€ collected thanks to your contributions will be spent for the purchase of 2 new motorbikes and office materials (computers, printers).

«Small streams make big rivers», and so it is with all the different kinds of support which little by little make it possible for this work to be an ongoing process over the long term, which permits the sharing of resources, even if within humble dimensions.



We would like to thank you for your support. Best regards from SFE

SFE : <http://www.sfe-laos.org>

Correspondance : 3 route de Grand-Charmont, 25200 Montbéliard , Tel 07.81.64.16.49 Mail : france@sfe-laos.org

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