



Final Report for

Classroom of Hope

Project concerned

Phon Toum Primary School Building

We supported the local community of Phon Toum Village in Savannakhet Province, Lao PDR by constructing one new school building with five fully-furnished classrooms and four new toilets.

Implemented by

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Executive Summary

Phon Toum Primary School was established in 1974 in the village of Phon Toum in southern Lao PRD. The school grounds had two buildings, one of which in very good condition. The second building, however, had become an unsafe learning environment. This building was in a state beyond repair with only one classroom considered safe to use. Furthermore, with an increase in student enrolment year after year, overcrowding in the classrooms prompted concerns for student studies and well-being.

Therefore, we supported Phon Toum Primary School with a standardised school building of five fully-furnished classrooms, one teachers room and four new toilets. The additional resources will create a safe and motivating learning environment while accommodating the annual increase of students.

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1. Overview

Lao PDR is considered one of the poorest and least developed countries in South-East Asia. Even though the social and economic conditions in Lao PDR have improved since its independence in 1975, there is still significant wealth disparity amongst Laotians.

Many people live in extremely remote and isolated areas with rudimentary infrastructure. They are often neglected by the government and unable to benefit from economic growth. Although quality education is one of the key factors in poverty reduction and the creation of sustainable development, most people in Lao PDR do not receive a basic education. The country's education system is ineffective due to poorly equipped classrooms and a lack of textbooks, educational supplies, teachers' books, and libraries.

Phon Toum Village was founded in 1707 after three siblings from Nakhon Phanom, Thailand (just across the Mekong River) moved into the region and settled. The name of the village was inspired by the many Toum trees situated on small hills (local language, 'Phon'). The village began to grow as families followed the siblings, crossing the Mekong River to settle, work and build families. The village relies mostly on subsistence farming, plantation work, and animal husbandry for their livelihoods. The village has mobile phone coverage, water, and electricity, but no local access to health care. The village is now home to 3,528 residents among 450 households.

Phon Toum Primary School was established in 1974 and has a current enrolment of 322 students (168 boys, 154 girls) and employs 6 teachers (2 men and 4 women). All of the students who attend the school come from Phon Toum village and either walk or bike to school.

The school grounds contained two buildings; one with five classrooms and a teachers' room which was built in 2011 and still in good condition. The other building, built back in 1974 when the school was first established, was in critical condition. Due to termites and intense weathering from years of rain and hot weather, the structural integrity of this building was weak and vulnerable to collapse. Only one classroom was being used as the safety risk was too great in the other classrooms, creating an additional issue of overcrowding.

In an effort to alleviate these problems, we constructed one new school building with five furnished classrooms and a teachers' room to replace the deteriorating building in critical condition. The new classrooms offer a safe and more motivating learning environment for the students and teachers. The construction of the new building emphasises the importance of education to the whole community and provides an incentive for the children to continue and complete their education.

We also built four new toilets to help improve the sanitation standards at the school and prevent hygiene-related illnesses, especially as student enrolment continues its upward trend.

2. Operational Implementation

It is our belief that establishing a close partnership with community leaders and the school management team leads to a more successful outcome. As with all of our projects, we encouraged the village to actively contribute to the construction process to instil a strong sense of pride and ownership in the project. The community contributed by providing sand, gravel and soil to fill in each classroom, as well as providing water and electricity for the construction process.

A local contractor was chosen to manage labour and transportation of materials, oversee construction and provide the furniture. The contractor was paid in instalments after the completion of each step of the building process, according to a written agreement. As our team could not travel to assess the final phase of the school building due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, 10% (as opposed to the usual 5%) of the total labour cost will be held for twelve months after completion of construction as a guarantee for the quality of the work

Construction began in mid-February of 2021. Due to travel restrictions brought about by COVID-19, our team stayed in touch with the construction manager and school management online receiving regular updates. The progress was monitored to ensure our high quality standards were met and we were pleased with the cooperation of the community. The overall construction process went well and we are satisfied with the result. The official completion date was 10 September 2021 which put us right on schedule. The opening ceremony is not yet scheduled due to travel restrictions but we will be in touch with you as soon as travelling is possible again. We then hope that you will be able to attend the ceremony together with us.

3. Project Performance

Effectiveness: The following initial objectives were achieved:

- One new school building with five fully-furnished classrooms. A quality learning environment for these students will incentivise them to continue their education.
- We expect the community to benefit tremendously from the new school. Students will be more engaged, literacy rates will increase, primary school attendance will rise, and school dropout rates will decrease. We further expect that more children will continue to secondary school.
- We also built four new toilets to help improve the sanitation standards at the school and prevent hygiene-related illnesses.

Efficiency: We successfully completed this project slightly below the original budget of USD 45,340.

Please note that the financial reconciliation on page 6 does not yet include the 10% guarantee payment on the total labour cost, which will only be released after the successful checking of the building in 12 months' time. The remaining funds will be used for monitoring and evaluation in the years to come.

Sustainability: Sustainability of the school is guaranteed through close cooperation and collaboration with the government. Phon Toum Primary School is a government school; the government will provide teacher salaries, staff training, etc. The school management and the community have agreed to maintain and manage the facility after completion.

4. Project Chronology

The following link provides more information and photos about the various phases of construction:

<https://childsdream.org/projects/phon-toum-primary-school/>

We would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude for your support and trust. Together, we were once again able to make a significant impact in the lives of many children. Thank you so much!

We would love to embark on a similar project again together in the future.

Chiang Mai, 26th September 2021

Child's Dream Foundation



Marc T. Jenni
Founder & Managing Director Operations



Daniel M. Siegfried
Founder & Managing Director Programmes

5. Photographs



Built in 1974 and deteriorated beyond repair, the old building was in dire need of replacing.



Overcrowded classrooms were becoming a problem as rooms became unsafe to use and more students were enrolling each year.



A dark, hot and exposed classroom provides little motivation, incentive or inspiration to focus on learning or teaching.



One building with five classrooms and a teachers' room was in good condition.



Construction started in February 2021



Construction continued to progress smoothly.



New construction of the toilet building



Construction was officially completed on 10 September 2021 and the children, teachers and community are excited for the opening.



Thank you very much for your great support! What a wonderful school!





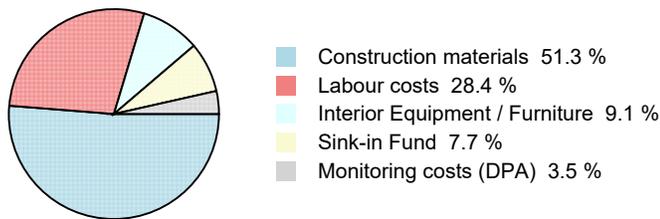
Financial Report

Phon Toun Primary School Building - Construction of 1 school building with 5 classrooms

Budget Fx 9,275.00 Expenses Fx 9,275.00

Financial overview		In budget currency (LAK)			In reporting currency (USD)		
Account item	Account sub-item	Budget	Actual cost	Deviation	Budget	Actual cost	Deviation
Infrastructure	Construction materials	216,945,000.00	195,250,500.00	21,694,500.00	23,390.30	21,051.27	2,339.03
Infrastructure	Interior Equipment / Furniture	38,500,000.00	34,650,000.00	3,850,000.00	4,150.94	3,735.85	415.09
Infrastructure	Labour costs	120,000,000.00	108,000,000.00	12,000,000.00	12,938.01	11,644.20	1,293.80
	Project subtotal	375,445,000.00	337,900,500.00	37,544,500.00	40,479.25	36,431.32	4,047.92
	Monitoring costs (DPA)	15,643,541.67	13,516,020.00	2,127,521.67	1,686.64	1,457.25	229.38
	Sink-in Fund	29,436,771.95	29,436,771.95	0.00	3,173.78	3,173.78	0.00
	TOTAL	420,525,313.62	380,853,291.95	39,672,021.67	45,339.66	41,062.35	4,277.31

Actual Cost Breakdown



Budget vs Actual Cost

