

UNITED STATES AID MISSION TO LAOS

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

October 13, 1972

TO : Mr. Charles A. Mann, Director 

FROM : Norman W. Green, Chief, Education Division

SUBJECT: Education Division Monthly Report for September, 1972

Preparations were made during the month of September for the opening on October 2nd of all secondary, teacher training, and higher education schools in Laos. Total enrollment in teacher training schools will be approximately the same as last year -- 3,800 -- while an enrollment of about 8,300 students is expected in secondary schools (academic and Fa Ngum), an increase of ten percent over the last school year. We will have more complete statistics in our next monthly report. For general interest, the grade levels at the various Fa Ngum Schools are as follows:

Vientiane	7th through 12th grade
Phone Hong	7th through 10th grade
Savannakhet	7th through 9th grade
Luang Prabang	7th and 8th grades

At the ESP, thirteen students are now beginning the "senior" year of studies at the College of Education. Also of interest at the ESP is the group of ten "freshman" students who are entering the two-year program of the new Department of Lao Language and Literature. These students, who are this year all from the Buddhist Institute, will become secondary school Lao Language teachers.

Two in-service seminars were held prior to the opening of school -- one in Science and the other in Home Economics. Dr. Allen's workshop in science, with assistance from IVSers Bunck and Inversin and the senior Fa Ngum Vientiane instructors, worked on implementation of an inquiry-based, laboratory-oriented science curriculum. Miss Heieie and Mrs. Theothorg, assisted by Public Health officials, concentrated on areas of home economics in which teachers have little preparation: Maternal and

Child Health and Family Planning. Teachers from the ENIs joined the Fa Ngum participants at both of these highly worthwhile seminars.

The final phase of the construction at the Fa Ngum School in Phone Hong has been completed and all of the buildings are now in use by the students, though the contractor has still a few minor corrections to make. Total construction of the Savannakhet school was reported 95 per cent complete at the end of the month. At Luang Prabang, Phase I construction has been completed and accepted and Phase II work is progressing rapidly with the work reported 72 per cent complete. (This does not include Phase IIA construction of the auditorium and second classroom building; these projects are now being negotiated.)

The PIO's for Fa Ngum School No. 5, at Pakse, were signed by Director General Khamkhing and forwarded to the Program Office at the end of the month. OICC has made a preliminary site plan but some additional surveying is required to check elevations and to spot large trees to be retained in the site development. We would hope to begin construction in January, in order to be ready for the opening of school in October, 1973.

Four new Lao textbooks were received from the printers this month in time for the opening of school:

1. A 9th grade social studies text for a unit on Australia
2. A 9th grade home economics text on food and clothing
3. A 10th grade industrial arts book for introduction to metal work
4. A 9th grade manual in business education explaining the use of the abacus

Except for a few minor gaps, the Hawaii Team and the Lao teachers-writers have now produced Lao textbooks for all subjects through Grade 9. This year, for the first time, the 7th and 8th grade Fa Ngum books will also be in full use in the ENIs in the two-year training programs.

The opening week of the secondary and teacher training schools was better planned and less crisis-ridden than ever before, though the Ministry has still not been able to get all new teachers assigned and in place prior to opening day. Two new appointments at the ESP which did get implemented are of special interest:

1. Mrs. Pinkham Simmalavong, recently returned from the University of Michigan with her M. A., has been appointed Acting Assistant Director of the ESP. This is probably a one-year assignment since she has been given assurance that she will be appointed to a new "Inspector" position for English language instruction in all secondary level schools.
2. Mr. Phone Khoxayo has been appointed Director of Studies for the English Section, replacing Mr. Bounlieng Phoummasavanh. Mr. Phone was formerly Director of Fa Ngum Phone Hong and has been replaced in that position by Mr. Noupit Sengsourigna.

Some extremely useful comments and recommendations were provided in a recently received report on "English Language Proficiency Testing at the English Section, ESP". The report was made by Mr. Lyle Bachman, an advisor in testing at the English Language Center in Bangkok. Credit for arranging to have Mr. Bachman's advisory services goes to Dr. Levy.

Some 60 of the male students at the English Section are expected to benefit this year from a student hostel which the Lao Baptist Mission plans to open soon. The mission has rented the old Sunset Village quarters for this purpose.

Students at all teacher training schools have benefited from the summer maintenance work programs. Improvements to the campuses at Dong Dok and Luang Prabang and to the kitchens at Luang Prabang and Savannakhet are particularly notable, but many other useful projects were also accomplished at other locations.

Other summer work programs were also productive and though the SSWE program will no doubt be reported on elsewhere some of the accomplishments in educational work are worth noting:

- 83 students held summer school for 4000 children, many of them refugees
- 10 students built a teacher's cottage at Fa Ngum Phone Hong
- 4 students tabulated over 300,000 test item responses to help evaluate the new 6th grade objective tests
- 6 students produced 60 stories (852 pages) for new literates
- 4 students drew 868 illustrations for these stories

As reported last month, the elementary schools in the country opened on September 1. Over 600 new teachers were added to the service. Refugee school coordination was furthered by a meeting of representatives from CE, ORA, and the Ministries of Education and Social Welfare to review and clarify the supply and distribution of refugee school commodities. Special attention has been given to supplying needed school furniture for refugee students in Muong Kassy and at the Khong Sedone College, temporarily located in Pakse.

Textbooks and other materials for teaching health in elementary schools were reviewed with Dr. Allen Mumm, for possible use in a program to train village health workers and to gain technical assistance in revising and improving these materials. In addition, a course outline for safety education has been drafted and is being reviewed by PSD with municipal police authorities. The purpose of this is to add more learning experiences and activities in safety education in the elementary schools of Vientiane.

Recent visits by the following persons provided useful assistance for educational development:

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| 1. Dr. David Steinberg | RED - East Asian Research Projects |
| 2. Mr. Robert Johnson | AID/W, SA/TCD |
| 3. Mr. Bert Porter | AID/W, Laos Desk |
| 4. Mr. Sandy Eddington | British consultant with the Centre for Educational Development Overseas |

EDU staff have given time to completing the Education Sector audit, preparing proposals and compiling information for the Dry Season Review, formulating an outline of the functions of the Education Division, and developing with EPM and in cooperation with the Director of Primary Education a "Project Design" for the CE project.

The Ministry of Education's exhibit at the That Luang Fair this year will be devoted to International Book Year. All privately published Lao books available will be offered for sale and there will be a large display of the elementary and secondary school textbooks. Mr. Sang Seunsom is in charge of the exhibit and has contacted numerous agencies, including USAID/EDU and USIS, for assistance.

Mr. Tom Liston arrived at post during the month and assumed his position of School Maintenance and Supply Advisor at the national level.

Reporting units:

Teacher Training
Secondary Education
Community Education

EDU:NWgreen:ei

Distribution

OD/DD-2	HRDD	SMB-2
AD/M	EPM-2	IVS
AD/FIN	AGR	EDU-16
AD/FO	PHD	Laos Desk
AD/P	PSD	SA/TCD/LD/ED
AD/RA	PWD	C&R-2
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