

UNITED STATES AID MISSION TO LAOS

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

February 14, 1972

TO : Mr. Charles A. Mann, Director *NW Green*

FROM : Norman W. Green, Chief, Education Division

SUBJECT: Education Division Monthly Report for January, 1972

The principal event of the month was the meeting of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Council in Vientiane, January 24 - 28. The Lao received many well deserved compliments for the arrangements made for the conference which was attended by about 70 delegates and observers from the region. The Prime Minister opened the first session with remarks about the importance of regionalism and of education for the majority. Minister Leuam was elected President of the Council for this year and served as chairman of the conference. Agenda topics included fund raising problems, the addition of Associate Members to the organization, the transfer of the INNOTECH center from Singapore to Saigon, and preliminary discussion regarding the establishment of a new center for social and cultural studies in Indonesia and a new center for art and archeology in Cambodia. A proposal made by the Lao delegation last year for the establishment in Laos of a regional center for Oriental Studies was tabled by the Lao delegation at this meeting in order to give time for further study of the proposal. The next meeting of SEAMEC will be held in Phnom Penh in 1973.

Earlier in the month we were pleased to have as visitors Dr. Everly, Dean of the College of Education of the University of Hawaii, and Dr. Ihara, campus coordinator for the Hawaii contract. Trips were made to all of the Fa Ngum schools during their busy schedule.

The Resident Auditor has started an audit of all three projects in the Education sector.

Refugee Schools

Military activity has forced the closing of elementary schools in Muong Kassy, Muong Met, and parts of Vang Vieng. The teacher training

school at Vang Vieng (a two-year program with 147 students) has also been closed. The male students there have been put on guard duty and the female students have been sent home.

Xieng Khouang-Houa Phan school programs have also been disrupted. Of the 114 elementary schools in Xieng Khouang, 56 schools with an enrollment of about 7,000 pupils, have been closed. 3,000 children in the Houa Phan schools located around Site 272 were also out of class at least temporarily during the month. At LS-318 two temporary classrooms were constructed and 71 students formerly in Grades 5 and 6 at Long Tieng are now back in school and studying for their final examinations.

Good progress has been made in getting additional refugee schools organized in Borikhane. Nine teachers have been transferred from Xieng Khouang, school supplies have been delivered, and nine temporary rooms are now being constructed.

#### Community Education

A ten-day training course for the instructors of next summer's CREC teacher training programs was held in Luang Prabang this month. The course emphasized improved instruction in science, arithmetic, and Lao language. Similar courses for instructors are planned in coming months for Vientiane, Savannakhet and Pakse. The summer training which will be held at 16 locations for 600 CREC teachers is a continuation of a sequence of courses by which these teachers can qualify to become regular civil service employees.

Ten elementary education officials returned from six months' training in Thailand, seven in classroom supervision and three in testing. Plans are being made to train an additional fifteen in supervision and five in testing.

Self-help construction of a large Auto Repair Shop at the Savannakhet Technical School and of the Sayaphoune Urban Groupe Scolaire in Savannakhet City has been completed. It is expected that dedication ceremonies will be held in early March.

### Teacher Training

The back-up water supply system at Dong Dok was in use for most of the month because of a mechanical failure of the main pump. Parts were ordered from Bangkok and the pump has been repaired. Because of the back-up system and water rationing it was not necessary to close the school and another crisis was avoided, but once again it was demonstrated that the only real long-range solution to Dong Dok's water problems is to pipe the water out from the city.

Road grading, sidewalk construction and other grounds work at Dong Dok is nearing completion, bringing a great deal of improvement to the appearance of the campus. In spite of the water problems, Myron Thomas' report this month on improved maintenance activities is very encouraging.

More farm machinery at Dong Dok not needed for the teacher training project has been transferred to Refugee Affairs. All other farm equipment now at Dong Dok is required by the school. During the past three months other items valued at over \$8,000 have been turned back to SMB.

### Secondary Education

Mr. Somsak Saythongphet, principal of the Fa Ngum Vientiane School, and Mr. Hongthong Niravanh, principal of the Fa Ngum Savannakhet School, departed for Hawaii in early January. We expect they will complete their work for a Masters Degree in Educational Administration and be back in Laos by September.

There was student demonstration at the Fa Ngum Vientiane School in early January in which the students requested information about scholarship funds, examination and promotion procedures, and other matters. Some of the questions were readily answered; others, particularly those related to student funds, are being studied by a joint Student-Ministry committee. A report from this committee has not yet been received.

A proposal is being reviewed to extend the "orientation" program in the Fa Ngum system from one to two years in order to provide a wider range of experiences for all students as well as provide each student, many of whom are fresh from village life, with more time and experience upon which

to base his choice of a practical arts major. The proposal appears to have much merit but requires further study by the Ministry and the Hawaii team.

Phase II of the Fa Ngum Luang Prabang construction has gone out for bids. Because of higher costs in Luang Prabang it was necessary to delay construction of one classroom building and the auditorium until additional funds are available.

### Educational Materials

Educational materials completed this month:

SE	Mechanical Drawing, Grade 8	3,000 copies
CE	Hygiene, Grade 3	5,000 copies
CE	Notebooks	200,000 copies

Educational materials being printed:

SE	Science, Grade 8 (4 parts)	6,000 copies
CE	Science, Grade 1	10,000 copies
CE	Science, Grade 2	8,000 copies
CE	Science, Grade 3	5,000 copies
CE	Science, Grade 5	2,000 copies
CE	Science, Grade 6	2,000 copies
CE	Hygiene, Grade 2	8,000 copies
CE	Hygiene, Grade 4	3,000 copies
CE	Hygiene, Grade 5	2,000 copies
CE	Hygiene, Grade 6	2,000 copies
CE (AWC)	Lao Fables, Grades 4, 5, 6	10,000 copies

### Other Donors

The French government recently turned over to the Ministry the newly completed amphitheater, classrooms and administrative unit at the Royal School of Law and Administration (IRDA).

Asia Foundation has printed 20,000 copies each of two beginning reading books in the Meo language using the Lao script. The books were prepared by Protestant Mission groups and approved by the Ministry for use in schools or literacy classes.

Personnel

Mr. Ah Chong Zane returned from home leave and resumed his duties as University of Hawaii contract advisor at the Fa Ngum School in Phone Hong.

Reporting Units

Teacher Training  
Community Education  
Secondary Education

EDU:NWGreen:ei

DIST: OD/DD-2, AD/M, AD/FIN, AD/FO, AD/PE, AD/RA, Each AC,  
EPM-2, HRDD, AGR, PHD, PSD, PWD, OICC, SMB-2, IVS,  
EDU-19, Laos Desk, EA/TECH/EDU, C&R-3