

UNITED STATES AID MISSION TO LAOS

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

September 8, 1970

TO : Mr. Charles A. Mann, Director

FROM : Norman W. Green, Chief, Education Division *NW Green*

SUBJECT: Education Division Monthly Report for August 1970

Elementary schools opened for the 1970-71 school year on September 1. Further assessment of the school situation will be made next month, but the following are some preliminary observations:

1. The timely arrival of Colombo Plan school supplies combined with USAID notebooks and common use supplies has assured an adequate amount of slates, notebooks, and other basic materials for all areas. Flooding in some places (Ban Keun, Borkhane, Pakse) has delayed distribution somewhat.
2. Reading books will be in fairly adequate supply, but the Ministry has depleted its reserves of books for other subjects. Some PSIs have a reasonable supply of at least some of the books in their own warehouses, but places where there have been large dislocations of schools (Xieng Khouang, Houa Phan) will be short of most texts.
3. A lot of work remains to be done to re-establish Xieng Khouang and Houa Phan schools. However, the basic ingredients (administration, teachers, building materials for new schools, and school supplies) are either in place or ready to move.

Larry Woodson began his contract services on September 7 as special education advisor for refugee schools in the Vientiane and Xieng Khouang areas. We are glad to have his assistance.

Summer training for teachers and summer student work programs neared completion this month. These productive activities occupy much of the division's time during June, July, and August. One type of student project has caught the interest of the Ministry and will probably be expanded in the future. This is volunteer teaching by high school students in rural and refugee communities, which amounts to a Lao version of an Upward Bound program plus a considerable amount of community development activity.

Curriculum work at all levels continues to gain momentum. A senior position in the Ministry's Elementary Education Department for a deputy director for technical services has at last been filled by a returnee from France, Chao Vanita. A second position, for the head of the office of Etudes et Programmes, has been filled by a former AID participant, Lang Souphida. Plans are being made to undertake a revision of the Lao history curriculum in elementary schools and to do a serious study of the elementary testing program.

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A successful seminar concerning the content of the program of studies of Lao geography in secondary schools has recently been completed. Minister Leuam praised the effort and requested more curriculum projects of this type for other areas of the educational program.

As reported by Dr. Collins, a good beginning has also been made on planning the revision of the curriculum in the colleges towards a more comprehensive type program taught in Lao.

University of Hawaii technician Stanley Yoshimoto moved to Savannakhet this month to assume his duties as advisor at the new Fa Ngum school. Construction of the school is being planned as a total package, including the layout for agricultural activities. This has caused some delay in contracting for the construction of the school but will be of great benefit in the long run. Classes will begin October 1, as scheduled, using borrowed facilities of the Savannakhet Technical School.

The attached report by Myron Thomas relates the good progress that is being made towards establishing a system for maintenance of the buildings and grounds at ESP. We are grateful for the boost given by BPR in removing the fallen trees from the campus.

Mike Fields took over from Larry Woodson as Assistant Chief of Party for the IVS Education team this month. A competent group of 22 IVS teachers is now on board to begin the school year October 1.

Kao Outsama, Director of Educational Planning and Statistics, departed for the United States on September 1 on a six-week USIS leadership study program.

EDJ:NWGreen:mv

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