



# CIED Project Newsletter



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Community Initiatives for Education Development (CIED) Project

CIED Pakse Office

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CIED Project is the shorten name of “Supporting Community Initiatives for Primary Education Development in the Southern Provinces”, which is the Project of Ministry of Education, Lao P.D.R. supported by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

## WHAT IS THE “CIED PROJECT”?

The aim of the “CIED Project” is to improve the education environment of primary schools that faces the lack of education infrastructure, education materials and quality of teachers by planning and implementation by community initiatives.

and a lack of qualified teachers. In addition, some students give up going to school because they lose interest in studying in schools.. This causes them to fail their exams and finally forces them to repeat the same grade, or even worse – drop out of school.

It is reported that the national average of net enrollment ratio of primary education in Lao remains at 86.4% in 2006-2007, even though primary education is compulsory education. In particular, net enrollment ratios are quite low in rural areas. In response to this situation, the government of Lao P.D.R promotes a national policy in education which consists of 3 main components: improvement of access to education; improvement of quality and relevance education; improvement of education management in order to achieve the goals of “Education for All (EFA)” by 2015. However, the education gap between urban and rural areas is still wide. Especially, ethnic groups living in mountainous areas face exceptional hardships for their schooling.

These problems cannot be solved by one all-purpose cure, but solutions are different for each community. CIED Project supports each school and community to think about their own solutions based on their real situation and support school improvement activities that are proposed by the community members themselves.

The low attendance rate in rural areas is caused by various factors such as family poverty, labor needs in family especially during the farming season, a parent’s lack of education and understanding of its importance, a lack of schools, class rooms and education materials,



School Building and villagers of Arling Village, Thateng District, Sekong Province, one of the target school of CIED Project

## CIED PROJECT TARGET AREA

CIED Project supports 90 schools in 3 southern provinces (30 schools each in Saravane, Sekong, and Attapeu). These schools are located in the following districts:

- Saravane Province (Saravane District, Laongam District)
- Sekong Province (Lamam District, Thateng District)
- Attapeu Province (Samakhixay District, Sanamxay District)

## TARGET SCHOOLS WERE SELECTED

CIED project selected 30 target schools in each province with the staff members of the Ministry of Education (hereinafter MOE), Provincial Education Service (hereinafter PES) and District Education Bureaus (hereinafter DEB). We tried to select the target schools in accordance to 6 criteria. The criteria as follows:

- 1) School with limited donor funding
- 2) Accessible schools
- 3) Schools with an enrollment rate less than 90 %
- 4) Semi-permanent or tentative schools, not with iron structure
- 5) A stable village, which will not relocate
- 6) Villages where villagers are willing to participate

These criteria were carefully selected to maximize the project's outcomes. In order to accomplish the outcomes, it was needed to avoid some negative factors, such as those affecting to the 6 criteria above. In these southern areas, many other donors have already conducted aid projects to this area, and therefore were avoided from the view point of equity and efficiency. In relation to the access, we had to exclude some schools from our target which are inaccessible in rainy season even though they're still facing education infrastructure problems, a lack of education materials and qualified teachers. Besides, the government has been promoted for integration of small villages. The Project needs to avoid villages which may move or relocate in the future. Thus, these cri-

teria were necessary in the selection of target schools. Our targets were decided with MOE, PES, DEB and JICA.



Target Schools were approved in the First Joint Coordination Committee

## TRAINING OF TRAINERS (TOT) WAS ORGANIZED FOR THE STAFF OF PES AND DEB

CIED Project encourages set-up and supports "Village Education Development Committee (hereinafter VEDC)" for their planning through community initiatives. In particular, we held workshops for VEDC to increase their capacity to make School Improvement Plan by analyzing the current condition, for example, "how many children not attending school are in each village?", "how many students repeat the same year or drop out of school?" At the beginning of the

CIED Project, we organized "Training of Trainer (TOT)" for 6 staff members of PES and DEB from each province in association with the MOE. From this point forward, staff members of PES and DEB are expected to be trainers in the workshops at school level. In addition, the MOE has started to discuss that that VEDC should be set-up in all the villages in Laos as a future village-level organization.



Changing Problem Tree to Objective Tree in the process of Objective Analysis

## VILLAGE-RUN SOLUTIONS

In the next step, the PES and DEB staff members trained by TOT will hold workshops at each target school. The aim of CIED project is to enhance the capacity of villagers to recognize their problems and to approach problem solutions by themselves. At the same time, it is expected that VEDC will be able to request support from their own government and other countries through PES or DEB if they face difficulties that they cannot overcome by themselves.

The persons who proposed how to improve their school are villagers themselves, and the Project support them in accordance with their requests. When villagers make School Improvement Plan, not only the staff members of PES and DEB but also NGOs that are familiar with the community development will assist villagers.

**"We look forward to your questions and comments on our project."**

"Supporting Community Initiatives for Primary Education Development in the Southern Provinces (hereinafter called "CIED Project")."

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