

Lao People's Democratic Republic
Peace Independence Democratic Unity Prosperity

Report on
Keo Kou Community Learning Centre

By: Mr. *Bounkhong* THOUMMAVONG
Mr. *Chaleun* SOUVONG

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Report on Pilot Keo Kou Community Learning Centre

I. Conception.

The Lao government Policy on NFE is to eradicate illiteracy and to improve the quality of life for ethnic minorities and disadvantaged groups, especially for girls and women. Due to the reality of literacy situation that the rate of literacy is not high enough, the implementation of various measures were required. In addition, the establishment of Community Learning Centre is the most suitable for literacy programme and basic vocational / skill training at the grass root level.

The urgent need for Ministry of Education on Non-Formal Education sector is to motivate all people to understand its importance, then to promote the NFE staff qualification as the first priority and to provide the equitable educational opportunity for all Lao citizens. The NFE should be equal to the Formal Education and to be applied in various modalities by GOs and NGOs in the line of family, community and nation love.

After the completion of the national liberation, Lao government has emphasized on the importance of the eradicating illiteracy, so that the national literacy campaign has been anticipated and launched in 1976. Therefore, all needed measures have been prepared by all government sectors from the central to local authorities, to promote the National Literacy Campaign. During 9 years, each province has respectively declared the general completion of the provincial illiteracy eradication. Then at the end 1984, the government has officially declared, that the fundamental completion of national illiteracy eradication, and the result of the national literacy rate increased up to 98.75 %.

After that by the end of 1985, the Ministry of Education has organized the National workshop on evaluation of the implementation of the education programme in the past 10 years. From the reporting of the participants in the workshop resulted that the national literacy rate realised approximately 60 %. The steady decrease from 98.75% to 60% in the short period indicated that it has had a big number of neo-literates were relapsing in to illiteracy, and the feature of social economic condition of the Lao citizen was unchangeable. Ultimately, the new concept was found that the literacy courses should be combined by the basic vocational and skills training.

On applying this concept, the NFED, MOE in co-operation with UNESCO-PARIS to start in implementing of the “ Pilot Literacy and basic skill training for ethnic minority, girls and women Project “ at Luang NamTha province. By setting up 2 vocational centres.

Beside of that, under APPEAL programme, UNESCO-PROAP has supported the NFED to implement the concept on development of Community Learning Centre in Lao PDR. Therefore, Keo Kou village has been established as the pilot CLC project.

II. Background.

Ban Keo Kou or Keo Kou village located along Nam Lick river, is far from Vientiane Municipality 92 km to the north, it is one among the 30 villages belonged to the KeoOuDom district, Vientiane province, and composes two main ethnic groups: LaoLum 868 persons with 430 females, LaoKang 28 persons with 11 females, and has 160 households separated in 3 religion respects: Buddhism 117 families, Parent god 38 families and Catholic 5 families. The village has a permanent rice field only 26,7 ha. So far the forest has been slashed and burnt about 235 ha per year only for growing rice, and the handicraft activities have been done in the broad of the family daily use. Therefore the environment became degraded, the soil became unfertilised, the villagers were very poor, they lived as a big family and were always ill and one of fifth are illiterates, and no body has a secondary education level. The family income per year surrounded approximately 18,000 kips or 26 US Dollar. In the community has 12 drug addicted persons and existed in each year, the death of the children under 5 years.

By this reason, after discussion on Community Learning Centre Development (CLCD) between the Department of Non-Formal Education personnel, and technical staff from the Province Educational Service (PES) and staff of District Educational Office with Keo koku's village leading Committee, including the

mass organization: Lao Youth Union and Lao Women Union in the area.

Likewise, on 8 September 1993, for celebrating the International Literacy Day, the Keo Kou Community Learning Centre has been established and officially launched to the public under the aegis of UNESCO-PROAP.

III. Implementation

1. Aims:

To build the capacity of community to solve problems by themselves, based mainly on the existing resources in the locality.

2.Objectives

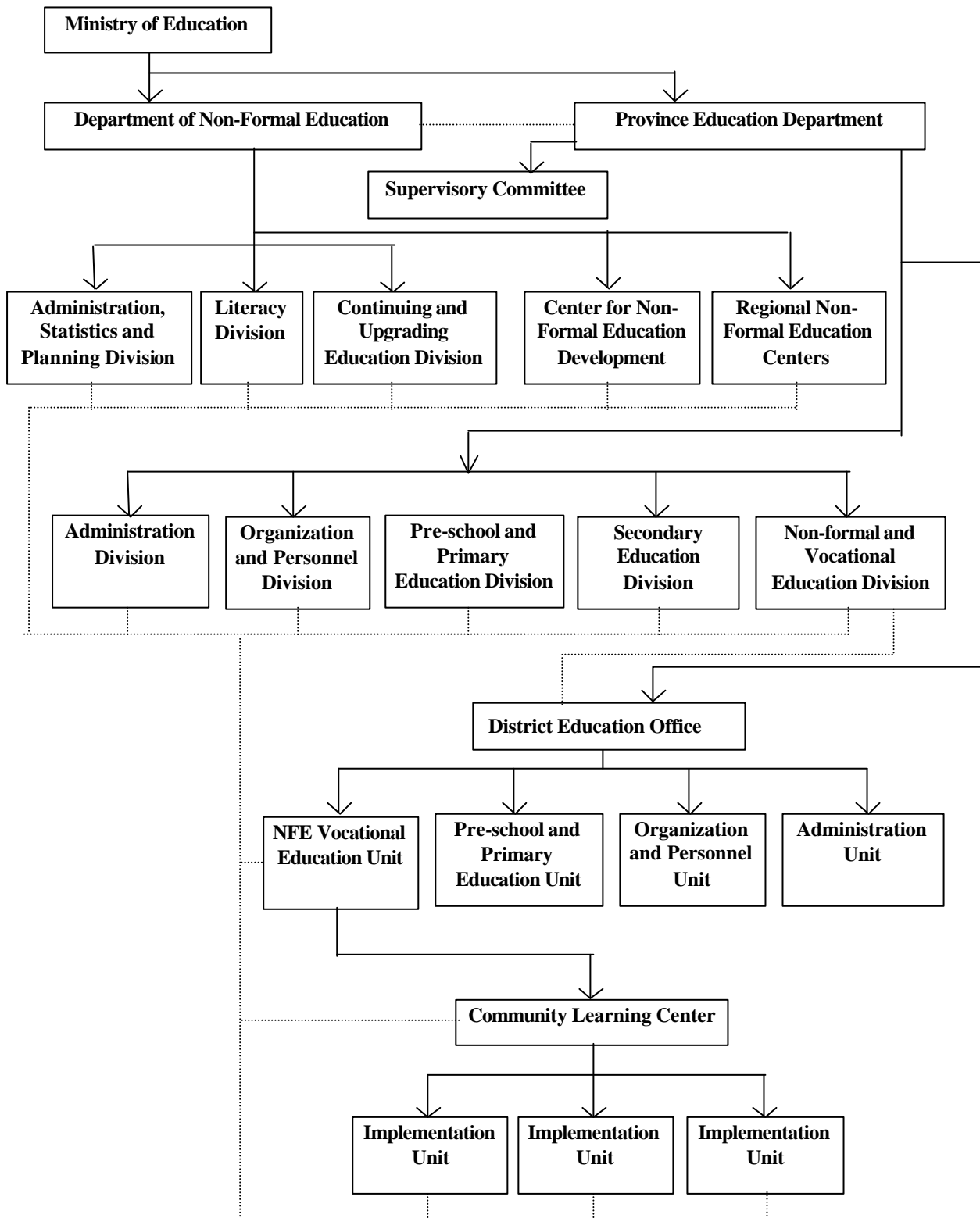
- To provide functional literacy, post literacy and basic vocational/skills training.
- To promote income generation for people in the community.
- To empower women and other disadvantaged people in the grass-root
- To provide the reading room, meeting / training room and office for village leading committee.
- To provide class- room for the children in the village where they are dropped out of the primary school.

3.Target groups;

- Illiterate girls and women
- Children from 6 to 14 years old who are never in or dropped out of primary school
- The villagers who are the landless for production
- All villagers in the community

4. Planning and Management structure.

4.1. The structural administration of the CLC is unique in Lao PDR.



4.2. **NFED:**

- Co-ordinates with International agencies/NGOs, which are partners on the concept and modality, exchange on technical assistance, and on funding support to implement of the CLC activities.
- Co-ordinates with other Government organisations eg. public health, agriculture and rural development sectors, resource persons and facilitators in the specific field for improving the knowledge and the practice of our trainers and trainees in the CLC.
- Contribute fund as the part that cannot be found in the community.
- Provide media and materials for teaching-learning.
- Monitoring and supervise are generally twice a year and some informal visit to check the CLC activities
- Evaluation and report on the mid-term and at the end of the project to different donors.

4.3. **PES and DOE :**

Each PES and DOE has NFE and Vocational Division, they are the liaison organ with the MOE, grassroots level organization and other related institution so that:

- Co-ordinate with NFED /MOE,
- Co-ordinate with other Public Services and private sectors in the province,
- Provide local media and material for teaching- learning,
- Help the leading committee to arrange the literacy and basic vocational programme.
- Monitor and supervise quarterly.
- Evaluate and report quarterly.

And after 6 months of a completion of the project, the tracer study will have been organised to know how the impacts of the previous basic vocational and skills training courses to the living situation of the learners are.

4.4. **Village:**

The village is at the operating level, chief of leading committee is the head of the project board. The member of this board is same as the member of the village leading committee. And volunteer teacher is a board secretary. The roles and functions of this board are as following:

- Planning with the new participatory method.
- Carrying out the CLC activities.
- Reporting monthly to the PES and DOE about the achievements and difficulties in the CLC.

5. **Activities of the CLC:**

5.1. **Community Learning Centre building construction:**

Usually construction of the CLC building should be done out of feature of the local tradition and culture, realised to expertise the local wisdom and also demonstrated the local potential and resources. At the first stage, the community was using a small bamboo house, which has one meeting room as the CLC, but new building has been gradually built and it was completed in 1996. In the process of the CLC building construction, the community provided labour, wood, sand, gravel and land.

The NFED, PES and DEO contributed facilities and transportation.

The donors from international organisation, local government institutions and private persons (see the annex 1) provided the fund for Iron, cement, naif and roof.

5.2. Literacy and Basic Education:

During the past, the literacy and basic education courses have been run in groups. The learner of each group was attending in each course based on the discussion by the target learners themselves. The learning time should be based on rest time, not of the work in the field then usually they use religious holidays in every month to attend the literacy class.

Table No.1: The number of completed learners in each level:

No	Educational level	School year	Number of the completion		
			Total	Female	Male
1	Literacy class	1993 - 94	28	25	3
2	Literacy class	1994 - 95	17	15	2
3	Literacy class	1995 - 96	8	8	0
4	Primary level	1996 - 97	16	16	0
5	Primary level	1997 - 98	13	12	1
6	Primary level	1998 - 99	18	14	4

5.3. Basic vocational and skills training:

5.3.1. Weaving:

There is a unique skill of the women and girls in Keo Kou community. So far this qualified skilled labor were limited.

Due to lack of the knowledge on the new technology introduced in the traditional weaving approaches and the information on “offer and demand“ of town market, nobody understand the importance of weaving production, therefore in 1992 the community has only 5 looms.

According to the training process in the CLC, the Village Leading Committee (VLC) has initiated to organize a weaving training course using the trainer in the community who has knowledge to 47 participants. Besides the VLC has organized production group, small selling group consists of middle women, to link between the production group and shop buyer in the town. The selling group tries to find the need criteria of its clients in the town, to encourage each other and to extend the production activities in the community.

Until now, the weaving production groups have 224 looms. Each month, the groups can produce 2,240 Lao style skirts and bring an additional income of 13,500,000 kip or about 1,700 USD to the community.

5.3.2. Animal raising

The main part of the villager’s work is growing rice and animal raising e.g. chicken, fish, cow and buffalo raising. But they want knowledge of the new technology, which introduced into the rice growing and animal raising. The VLC had to co-ordinate with agricultural technical staff from the district and province, to assist and organize the training on new technical approaches of rice, vegetable productions and the animal raising.

Table No 2. The number of families who work on animal raising.

No	Animal	No. of families
1	Local chicken	32
2	Fish	18
3	Cow and buffalo	15

5.3.3. Vegetable gardening and fruit tree planting

- *Vegetable gardening*: The most of the family in the community has vegetable garden. They plant lettuce, green onion, cucumber, pepper, pearl onion, corn, ginger, cabbage etc.. They have some income from extra vegetable production.
- *Fruit planting*: The villagers plant a lot of fruit tree like banana, mango, coconut, lemon, orange, pineapple, papayas etc..
- *Forest planting*: Adding to the policy of Lao government on promoting to introduce all kind of vegetables out of rice growing, the villagers plant also eucalyptus and teak tree.

5.3.4. Health care and hygiene

Besides on using the functional literacy curriculum in the class, it offers the basic knowledge on sanitation. The centre often organizes many seminars/workshops on the reproductive health, birth control, family planning, sexual education, mother and child health care of nutrition and HIV/AIDS prevention, under the support of the National Population Education programme.

IV. Impact of the Pilot CLC project:

During seven years of implementing this pilot project, Keo Kou village really has been changed on the right way such as:

- The education level of the villager has been upgraded to the primary level.
- By the income generation activities, it increased from 26 USD in 1993 to 150 USD per person monthly in 1999.
- The sanitation of the people in the community was realized as important for better living condition, the village became clean and they have eliminated drug addiction in 1997.
- The management system of the village has been developed and become a good example to the other.
- Keo Kou village had been approved by the governor of Vientiane province as cultural village with the criteria.
- The completion of illiteracy eradication.
- The fine traditions have been strongly preserved (no drug addict, no prostitute...)
- Basic sanitation knowledge was applied in the daily life (cleaned water/food, cleaned house and cleaned body)

V. Out put of the project:

1. Literacy and basic education:

Since 1993, Keo Kou CLC has been continuously serving to the target learners by providing literacy level to 53 persons with 48 women, primary level to 47 persons with 42 women.

And more, the centre is supporting 18 adults within 13 women to complete primary level. The curriculum has been used in the class, as functional literacy promotion, developed in Non-Formal Education Development Center Km 8 in the combination with the local curriculum developed by PES, DOE and the volunteer teachers in the CLC themselves.

2. Weaving training

After the VLC has found a concrete way to promote those local wisdom on expanding this activities, weaving is getting a first rank of the additional income to compare with other villager's activities and they receives more than 60, 000 kip (or 8 US D) monthly.

In addition, Keo Kou local women who have the knowledge have been used as "trainers" providing this kind of training courses to the learners from neighboring districts in the province.

Table No 3. The local trainers of Keo Kou village provide training courses to the neighboring districts learners.

No	District	No. of trainers	Duration	Subject	Remark
1	Saysomboune	6	10 days	Weaving	Trainer can receive a premium as the additional income
2	VangVieng	30	3 days	Weaving	
3	Phonehong	30	4 days	Natural dying	

3. Permanent Agricultural practicing

Due to an urgent need to reduce the destruction of forest by slashing/burning for unique rice production, the CLC has organized seminars/workshops many times by inviting resource persons from the province agricultural service.

Table No 4: The province agricultural service provide on the seminar / workshop.

No	Subjects	Duration	No. of participants	Remark
1	Poultry raising	2 days	32	The CLC paid a minimized premium to resource persons
2	Fish raising	2 days	18	
3	Banana growing	1 day	20	
4	Cattle / Buffalo	2 days	15	

4. Basic Health care training

In order to provide basic knowledge on reproductive health, birth control, basic health care and AIDS prevention, the centre has organized a seminar on providing the necessary information in one day.

Table No 5: The seminar on basic health care, AIDS prevention and necessary information.

No	Subject	Duration	Participants	
			Total	Women
1	Basic health care	1 day	187	103
2	Birth control	1 day	97	72
3	AIDS	1 day	108	89

From the all activities as 1-4, destruction of the forest reduces to 10 % of 1992

V. Weaknesses and problems faced up to now:

Problems which the CLC has encountered since the beginning of the project were as following:

- The centre does not have adequate materials for vocational training.
- Lack of proper monitoring and reporting as well as unclear in some focus point of the course.
- Some students do not want to study subject of general education but only vocational training.
- The number of students enrolled at the centre did not attend the course regularly.

Summary

Lao PDR is the one of the least developed countries. Living conditions of the rural people are very poor. Literacy rate seems steady increase in the last few years that from 64% in 1995 to 83% in 1999 in the age group of 15 to 40 years old, but the real socio-economic condition remains unchangeable, in particular those who are living in the rural and the remote area Children under five years mortality rate is still high comparing with the neighboring countries, food security is insufficient. Water supply in the most rural villages depends on nature rainfall. Resulting on the above situation, it demonstrates that the Lao rural population needs to fulfill the four basic living needs such as: house, cloth, food and medicine.

Therefore, the Keo Kou Community Learning Center has provided the most of four basic living needs to the adult learners within the education and basic vocational/skills training courses.

Due to the CLC responses to the needs of target people in the community, it really helped those poor people to solve their daily problems, so that in July the high ranking peritoneal conference on education ultimately approved on promoting the expansion of the CLC as the first priority model of the NFE and the basic education.

Annex 1

Contribution from the international organizations, Government organizations, Non-Governmental organizations, religion organisation and private persons is the following:

1. UNESCO-PROAP	1,712,000 kip
2. Government of the Vientiane province	1,912,000 kip
3. NFED	1,500,000 kip
4. UNICEF residence in Vientiane	2,000,000 kip
5. JVC	493,050 kip
6. Province Educational Service (PES)	32,000 kip
7. Provincial Rural Development office	100,000 kip
8. Distinct grass-root Management Promotion Office	40,000 kip
9. Chief of the Keo Kou Dom Distinct	215,000 kip
10. Lum-kham Co Ltd	216,000 kip
11. Petthavone Co-Ltd	200,000 kip
12. Kham deng Head of monk at Simueng Temple	875,000 kip
13. Governor of Bokeo Province	100,000 kip
14. Oun heane Co-Ltd	100,000 kip
15. Dr. Sunthone	477,000 kip
16. Dr. Suthanh Chanh Hom	100,000 kip
17. Mr. Suthep Lattanakone	600,000 kip

Total: 12,025,500 kip
(1US Dollar = 7,500 kip)

Annex 2.

Photos of the Keo Kou village and the activities in the CLC.

Photo No 1	The old Centre at Keo Kou village in 1993.
Photo No 2	Preparation the land for Building construction of new CLC in 1994
Photo No 3	The CLC of Keo Kou village in 1999.
Photo No 4-5	The Weaving production group in the village.
Photo No 6	Chicken raising (one among the activities at the first two years of the centre.
Photo No 7	Lao style house in the Keo Kou community.
Photo No 8	Plaque marks the “ Keo Kou village “ Cultural village of the Vientiane province.
Photo No 9	Toilet (From 1997, each family has a proper toilet)
Photo No 10	Part of the Keo Kou village.

Annexe



The old Center at KeoKou village in 1993.



*Preparation the land for Building costruction
of new CLC in 1994*



The Weaving production group in the village.



The Weaving production group in the village.



The CLC of Keo Kou village in 1999.



Chicken raising (one among the activities at the first two years of the center.)



Lao style house in the KeoKou community.



Plaque marks the " KeoKou village " Cultural village of the Vientiane province.



Part of the KeoKou village.



Toilet (From 1997, each family has a propre toilet)