

World Education in the Lao PDR



**2019
Impact Report**

Disability Inclusion

USAID Okard supports government and non-government actors to take tangible actions toward disability inclusion and empowers persons with disabilities to optimize and sustain their independent living and functional ability. USAID Okard contributes to strengthening the health, rehabilitation and social service systems and promotes equal participation in society. The project began full implementation in May 2019.

USAID Okard contracted the Nossal Institute for Global Health to complete the Community Based Inclusive Development (CBID) baseline study. The findings provided stakeholders with evidence to better understand the disparities experienced by people with disabilities regarding access to healthcare, rehabilitation, education, and economic engagement compared to others and the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of community members towards persons with disabilities.



Quantitative Approach

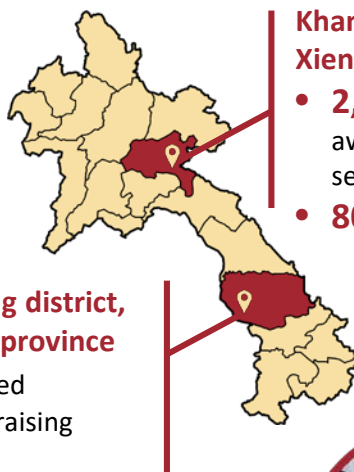
- **5,173** people screened
- **647** people completed the long survey (**321** with disability + **326** without disability)



Qualitative Approach

- **92** people participated in in-depth interviews and focus group discussions

USAID Okard's CBID Demonstration Model in Savannakhet and Xiengkhuang provinces conducted **57** Disability Inclusion Awareness Raising sessions for **3,633** people in **51** villages and identified **1,266** persons with difficulty in functioning who might benefit from economic empowerment and rehabilitation services through the CBID case management approach.



Kham district, Xiengkhuang province

- **2,341** joined awareness-raising sessions
- **804** screened

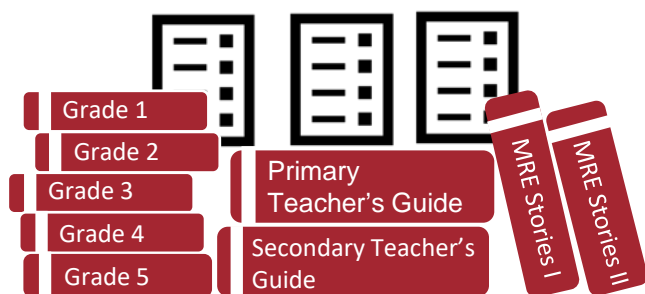
Xayphouthong district, Savannakhet province

- **1,292** joined awareness-raising sessions
- **462** screened

Together with the Ministry of Health, USAID Okard provided the WHO Mental Health Gap Action Programme (mhGAP) training to **44** doctors and nurses in Xiengkhuang and Savannakhet provinces.



Mine Risk Education & Victims Assistance



The Comprehensive MRE project and Ministry of Education and Sport developed and piloted MRE lessons to become part of the national primary school science and environment curriculum. MRE lessons for secondary schools were also developed.

- **63,533** people learned UXO safety practices at MRE puppetry troupe performances
- **54** new puppetry troupes established, for a total of **142** troupes in **10** provinces
- **2,983** student teachers, teachers, teacher trainers learned MRE teaching methods

The War Victims Medical Fund (WVMF) supports unexploded ordnance (UXO) survivors and victims' families. It covers immediate and ongoing medical treatment, transportation and accommodation during treatment, and funeral costs in case of death.

- **15** new UXO survivors and families supported
- **1,080** posters and flyers distributed to inform local hospitals and community members about how to access the WVMF



Women's Economic Empowerment

The Women's Entrepreneurial Center (WEC) promoted the development of sustainable, women- owned businesses through business training, vocational training scholarships, and networking and mentorship opportunities.

At the conclusion of the project in 2019, WEC achievements included:

- **523** women accessed the WEC for business skills training and networking, including **142** from rural Laos
- **96** women received vocational training scholarships in weaving, natural dyes, tailoring, and hairdressing
- **79%** of scholarship recipients started new businesses (who did not have a business before the training)



Ms. Viengphet, Organic Sauna Owner

I attended four WEC trainings to help me start my business in 2019, and they were really useful. Business Ideas helped me get started, Financial Management helped me manage my business more efficiently, and after Online Marketing training, I started a Facebook page to reach a broader audience. I appreciated the chance to network during the trainings, share experiences, and learn from others. I even invited other WEC alumni to sell their products at my sauna.



Cross-Cutting Expertise

Technology

- USAID Okard used Kobo Toolbox on tablets to conduct Community Based Inclusive Development (CBID) screening to quickly identify people in need of support.
- USAID Okard also developed an in-depth needs assessment tool using tablets and an online case management platform that tracks progress for each CBID participant.
- CBID Facilitators' tablets also include a variety of resources such as a hearing test and the "Lao Autism Talks" communication app.



Traditional Arts

- The Comprehensive Mine Risk Education (MRE) project used puppetry, a traditional art in Laos, to educate out-of-school youth and adults.
- Teachers can also use troupes to teach other topics like nutrition.
- The MRE project held a contest for students to write a new puppetry script about disability inclusion and UXO.
- The Women's Entrepreneurial Center funded scholarships in weaving and natural dyes, supporting young women to continue these traditional arts.

Gender Inclusion

- The Women's Entrepreneurial Center (WEC) was the first center in Laos to focus specifically on women's business skills development.
- The USAID Okard project conducted focus groups on Women-Centered Care to ensure women's needs are addressed in all health activities.
- USAID Okard staff attended training on LGBTQ and gender inclusion from a local civil society organization.

Capacity Building

- WEI worked with a local organization to develop its monitoring and evaluation systems so that it can partner with the World Food Programme on literacy promotion.
- WEC vocational training partners gained experience using pre- and post-tests for evaluation and including persons with disabilities.
- USAID Okard works closely with two civil society organizations to ensure community-level support continues once the project ends.



Many thanks to our donors for their support in 2019.



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