



## Clean water reaches rural people in Oudomxay

Residents of Mokkhokang village in Pakbaeng district, Oudomxay province, now have clean water for their daily use after a new gravity fed water system was installed in the area.

The construction of the new system was supported by the USA's Lao Rehabilitation Foundation at a cost of over 169.7 million kip (USD 22,000.00).

A handover ceremony for the new water system was held in the village last week after construction of the facility began in February and took two months to complete. Attending the ceremony was the President of the Lao Rehabilitation Foundation Dr. Luc Janssens, the district authority's officer Mr Kethsana Sabanhuck, local villagers and other guests.

The village is located in a rural part of the district and is home to more than 650 people in 117 families. Most of them are farmers and gardeners. In the past these villagers lacked latrines and clean water and have had to use unsafe water, which often led to disease.

To address the issue, officials from the provincial Health Department led by Dr. Bounlian Vongpasith teamed up with the district authority's officers and local people to build the new water system.

Speaking at the ceremony, Dr. Bounlian said the new water supply meant women and children would no longer have to carry water over long distances. "This new water system also means the basic health of people in the village will improve step by step, especially among mothers with young babies," he said. "Clean water is a very important part of human life, especially for the people here who have not had access to clean water before. People are able to avoid common illnesses such as coughs, colds and diarrhoea if they can use clean water."

Dr. Bounlian said the water supply would also help local people with crop farming and animal rearing. "Despite the district authorities receiving financial support to build the plant, they plan to seek funding from NGOs and other donors to build additional water systems in other villages nearby," Mr Kethsana said.

The National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy, under which all development programmes are implemented, has identified clean water and improved sanitation as one of four priorities.

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