

# SIMMANO SCHOOL FLOOD RECOVERY PROJECT

SIMMANO, Lao PDR

February 2010



## Background

In August 2008, a devastating flood hit the country of Laos when the Mekong River reached its highest level in at least 100 years after several months of unusually heavy rain. It was the worst flood affecting the region since the floods of 1966. As can be imagined, much devastation occurred as a result. The floods inundated about 185,329 acres of agricultural land, destroying approximately 107,888 acres. Part of the damage inflicted was to farmland, irrigation systems, roads, schools, and houses.

About 140 schools were destroyed in 22 districts in Laos. The cost to repair the damage was estimated at near 3.2 billion kip (US \$376,913). Simmano village was one of the most affected areas. Much of the classrooms and library at Simmano School were severely damaged, including computers donated to the school and installed in the building Lao Rehabilitation Foundation (LRF) had recently constructed.





### **Lao Rehabilitation Foundation Prior Involvement in Simmano**

LRF primary mission is to provide medical services to Laotians, focusing on children. Recognizing the importance of good nutrition, hygiene, and education in children's health, LRF started its involvement in Simmano village in 2002 by improving its school and developing plans for a health care center. While LRF first replaced the high school's roof and brought electricity to the school, the foundation additionally provided fans for the 16 classrooms. The new health care facility was completed in 2003 and handed over to the village later that year. In 2004, LRF built additional classrooms for the elementary school, installed a well, water storage, and toilets with a septic system. The partnership between Simmano Village and LRF continued in 2006 when the foundation built a new library building for the high school. LRF teamed up with Standard Charter Bank in Bangkok to provide computers and books for the new library.

### **LRF's Help after the Flood**

It took the flood waters 30 days to recede. LRF immediately provided medical supplies to every single household of the Village to address the problem of waterborne diseases. Plans to fix the school were created and soon after implemented.

In February 2010, a team from LRF went to Simmano Village to commence the Flood Recovery Project. The team began the project by sorting through the existing furniture to determine which were salvageable and which were beyond repair. The furniture that was repairable was fixed and repainted. Unusable furniture was replaced by new desks and chairs built by local artisans. The team additionally repainted the walls and chalkboards of the school. Every single student and teacher volunteered to help with the project. The tools used for this project were generously donated by S and S Supplies & Solutions of Benicia, California, who had them shipped by DHL to Laos in time for LRF's team arrival.

With this wonderful teamwork effort, the school has now returned to relatively good working order. Together, the LRF team, Simmano teachers and students recreated an enjoyable learning environment for its community after the devastation of the 2008 floods.







