

**REPORT OF  
MOBILE HEALTH CARE  
RAPID ASSESSMENT MISSION**

**For Dental, E.N.T and Eye Diseases  
In the Remote Areas of Oudomxay Province, Lao PDR**

**Beng District - May 2008**

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**Oudomxay Hospital  
In Cooperation with  
Lao Rehabilitation Foundation, Inc.**



## I. Background Information

### 1. Background of Oudomxay Province

Oudomxay province is centrally located in the North of Laos and borderlines with LuangPrabang, Phongsaly, LuangNamtha, Borkeo and Xayabury provinces. The area is 15,370 Km<sup>2</sup> and high mountains cover 85%. Oudomxay is divided into 7 districts and 520 villages. The population of 272,297 (in 2007) includes 60% LaoTheung, 25% LaoLoum and 15 % LaoSoong ethnics. 85% of the population lives in remote areas and the economy is mainly agricultural and farming. For 74.1% of the population, the income is lower than 2 USD per day.

The public health system includes 1 provincial hospital, 7 district hospitals and 39 health care centres.



Oudomxay map



### 2. Background of Oudomxay Provincial Hospital

As a Regional Hospital, the Oudomxay Provincial Hospital extends its service coverage to 3 Northern provinces of Laos. There are 85 bed in the ward, 129 officers include 6 postgraduates, 32 graduates, 1 high level, 43 medium level, 42 primary level and presently 5 contract officers.

The provincial hospital has dental, an E.N.T. and an eye departments within the main hospital building, inpatients of these departments stay at the general medical ward.

#### Ophthalmology, dental and ENT physicians in Oudomxay Provincial Hospital

Officers	Ophthalmology	Dental	ENT
Doctor	1	3	2
Nurse	4	2	0
Total	5	5	2

Although the medical team of provincial hospitals generally provides assistance and evaluation to district hospitals, lack of physicians and poor government funding has made this very limited, particularly for ENT and dental services in remote areas.

### **3. Statement of plan for health care in remote area for dental, ENT and eye care**

Cavitas dentitis, deafness, visual disability or blindness are major public health problems. These diseases create pain, permanent damages and innumerable hardships for the concerned people themselves physically as well as mentally but also for the development of the economic and social affairs of the country, especially in Oudomxay province.

The primary purpose of the dental, ENT and eye departments at Oudomxay Hospital is to examine and treat patients at the hospital. However, the number of patients visiting the hospital represents only a small percentage of the province's population (*see table 1*). In fact great number of patients in remote area have not been treated and are waiting for health care service. The major barriers are:

- Limitation of properly trained specialists, lack of equipment for eye, ENT and dental care and limitation of government funds allocated to eye, ENT and dental health care (*see table 2*).
- People's low awareness of primary eye, ENT and dental care.
- People's reliance on traditional medicine.
- Distance from hospital.
- Many poor people have no means to arrive at the provincial hospital.

In the past, eye mobile service in remote area received funds from international organizations, but dental and ENT never had such support.

A rapid assessment of needs was proposed to Lao Rehabilitation Foundation which agreed to cooperate with Oudomxay Hospital to provide dental, ENT and eye care in Beng district (Oudomxay province) on May 14-15, 2008. During that short time, many patients came to Beng district hospital to seek treatment. The team examined and treated 741 patients (*see table 3*). This mission clearly documented the huge need to provide health care in remote areas to reduce the number of treatable and preventable diseases.

**Table 1: Health care for eye, dental and ENT in Oudomxay Provincial Hospital**

Division	Year 2005		Year 2006		Year 2007	
	OPD	Ward	OPD	Ward	OPD	Ward
Eye	978	14	1,312	39	1,200	46
Dental	1,197	35	1,405	50	1,630	55

ENT	1,214	66	1,179	84	1,300	93
Total	3,389	115	3,896	173	4,130	194

The main cause of blindness is cataract, the main cause of deaf is otitis media, and the main cause of dental diseases is cavitas dentis.

**Table 2: Eye, Dental and ENT medical personel in district hospitals of Oudomxay Province**

Hospital	Eye		Dental		ENT	
	Doctor	Nurse	Doctor	Nurse	Doctor	Nurse
Xay district	0	0	0	0	0	0
La district	0	1	0	0	0	0
Namor district	0	1	0	0	0	0
Gna district	0	0	0	0	0	0
Beng district	0	0	1	1	0	0
Hun district	0	0	1	1	0	0
Pakbeng district	0	1	0	0	0	0
Total	0	3	2	2	0	0

**Table 3: Outcome of the health care in remote area mission in Beng district on May 14-15, 2008.**

Health Care	Quantity
Eye	273 cases
Visual impairment	57
Cataract Surgery	11
Pterygium excision	5
Repair eyelid	1
Others	199
Dental	156 cases
Extraction teeth	151
Extraction teeth with cavity treatment	1
Extraction teeth with clean calciferous	4
E.N.T	313 cases
Deafness	154
Otitis medium	130

Rhinitis	9
Others	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>741 cases</b>

**II. Responsible Unit**

The ophthalmology, dental and ENT doctors of Oudomxay Provincial Hospital.

**III. Objective**

**1. General Objective**

- Decrease the prevalence of blindness, deafness and cavitas dentis.
- To broaden coverage of health services for people in remote area, ethnic minority groups and the urban poor.
- To perform a rapid assessment of need in remote area.

**2. Specific Objective**

- Treatment the main cause of blindness by cataract surgery.
- Treatment and prevention otitis media, the main cause of deafness.
- Treatment and prevention of cavitas dentis by cleaning
- Health care education for eye, dental and ENT.

**IV. Target of Patients to Service**

- All patients of Beng district with eye, dental or ENT diseases
- The target was 500 patients in Beng district, population of 33,384

**V. Location of Health Care Activity**

In Beng district hospital, Oudomxay province.

**VI. Duration of Activity**

2 days, May 14 and 15, 2008

**VII. Technical Activity**

**1. Preparation**

- Provincial hospital informed district hospital which in turn informed health centers and villages to let people know the time and location of health care.
- Contacted medical personel of Beng district hospital to prepare local service and to join the mobile team.
- Met the head of district to inform of the purpose and get cooperation to inform people.

**2. Planned Activity**

- The team used up to date equipment to examine and treat the patients which was divided into 3 teams:
  - Eye team (1 ophthalmologist, 3 nurses): examined visual acuity, external and anterior segment of the eye, and operated cataract and other eye diseases.
  - Dental team (3 dentists, 2 nurses): examined dental, extraction teeth, provided cavity treatment and cleaning
  - ENT team (1 doctor, 2 nurses): examined ENT for otitis medium, removed discharge or foreign body from ear and provided treatment.

**3. Conclusion and Report**



- It is positive that we have helped poor patients in the remote areas of Oudomxay province who had been waiting long for ENT, eye or dental treatment.
- The number of patients examined and treated significantly exceeded the target.
- We have impacted health care development for vision, ENT and dental care in remote areas and clearly established the need for further missions in remote area.
- Very good cooperation between Lao Rehabilitation Foundation and Oudomxay Hospital.

**VIII. Budget**

The total budget of US\$ 30,000 was entirely funded by Lao Rehabilitation Foundation and included preparation expenses, transportation of team and equipment, accommodations, per diem, purchase of medical equipment, medicine and supplies.

Equipment, medicine and supplies remaining at the end of the mission were donated to Oudomxay Hospital to be used for further missions in remote area of the Northern provinces of Laos.

Date: July 28, 2008  
Planner

<p><u>Head of Administration office</u> <u>Provincial hospital</u></p>  <p>ໂຮງໝໍແຂວງອຸດົມໄຊ ຫ້ອງການບໍລິຫານ ຫອກໄຫຼ ຄຳເຮືອງສີ</p>	<p><u>Head of physician office</u> <u>Provincial hospital</u></p>  <p>ໂຮງໝໍແຂວງອຸດົມໄຊ ຫ້ອງການວິຊາການ</p>	 Phetsamone Indara, M.D.
<p><u>Chief of public health</u> <u>department</u></p>  <p>ດຣ. ຄຳພັນ ໄຊຍະວົງ Dr. Khamphan XAYAVONG</p>	<p><u>Director of provincial</u> <u>hospital</u></p>  <p>ດຣ. ດ້ວງ ເກດເຮືອງສີ Dr. Douang KETHUANGSY</p>	



# Oudomxay villagers receive health care

KHONESAVANH LATSAPHAO

The people of Baeng district in Oudomxay province are in great need of health care services, according to a report from the provincial health department yesterday.

For two days last week, the ear, nose and throat, eye and dental departments of Oudomxay Provincial Hospital provided health care to residents of Baeng district in collaboration with a team from the Lao Rehabilitation Foundation (LRF).

The provincial hospital and LRF teams provided free health checks for more than 740 people in two days,

looking for ear, nose and throat, eye and dental problems.

"People who missed the event told doctors they were unhappy to have done so," a representative from the provincial hospital, Dr Phetsamone Indara, said on Monday.

The objective of the project was to improve people's health and help reduce poverty in the province, he said.

The teams said they would provide more health checks in the district and would advertise them one month in advance, using provincial radio broadcasts.

Baeng district has 65 villages and a population of

3,300; most residents are upland rice farmers.

The LRF provided equipment, medicines and funds for the health checks and eye care was provided by the province's Ophthalmology Centre, LRF President Dr Luc Janssens said.

The hospital team reported the ear, nose and throat department gave checks to 313 people, eye department staff examined 272 people and the dental department checked 165 people.

On the same occasion the LRF donated a mobile dental unit to Oudomxay Provincial Hospital, valued at more than US\$8,000 (about 70 million kip).



Residents of Baeng district in Oudomxay province queue up to receive health checks.