

Newsletter – 05.02.2018

Greetings from Laos,

With the support from the authorities in Muang Ngoi, the Bamboo School has recently supported the Muang Ngoi health clinic by requesting that Doctor Anna He worked with the local nurses in the clinic to consult with patients. The Muang Ngoi clinic opens only on market days which is once every 10 days. Only at these times villagers are able to access the free health clinics.



On the same theme, Anna has been working in the Nong Khiaw Hospital for a number of days. On one occasion treating someone who had suffered injuries from unexploded ordnance, left buried from the Vietnam War bombing campaigns. During the war an estimated 270 million bombs were dropped on Laos, making the country the most heavily bombed per capita worldwide. Current estimates put the number of unexploded ordnance at 80 million, most of which are still buried in farmland. Injuries and fatalities are common place in Laos.





On a lighter note, on a recent trip to Vientiane I was lucky enough to meet Mac Maness (Executive Director) and Viengphila "La" Vaiyakone (Founder) of Soap4Life (www.soap4life.org). Soap4Life is a small hands-on humanitarian organization dedicated to improving hygiene, developing and supporting economic opportunities for critically impoverished families and developing a path for women to attain empowerment among their peers. The Bamboo School and Soap4Life are aiming to create a project to support the villages in Muang Ngoi district which can provide sustainable hygiene and women's empowerment over the next few months.



Our work in Laos would not be possible if it were not for the continual support of the Lao-German Friendship Association (LGFA). Laos and Germany have recently celebrated 60 years of political co-operation, to mark this occasion the LGFA helped to organise a friendly football match with representative teams for both Germany and Laos. Yours truly pulled on some boots to support the German team, who eventually gained the upper hand in the match with a final score of 4 - 2.

As with all our volunteers, the hardest part is saying goodbye. As I write this Anna is boarding a plane to leave Laos. During her time here she has worked tirelessly in hospitals, clinics, remote villages across Muang Ngoi district with the aim to understand and help the local communities. In addition to her work she has donated medical supplies and her friend Shweta donated a stethoscope, syringes as well. Anna's down to earth Aussie charm will be missed, wishing her the best of luck where ever she may land!

Good luck to all,
Signing out from Vientiane