

Dear Bamboo Schoolers,

In the previous week I was invited by Ms. Wehrle (wife of the German ambassador) to attend the Women's International Group Bazaar WIG in Vientiane and represent Bamboo School there. The WIG Bazaar is an annual event in the Lao capital where all NGOs present their work to the public – last year's bazaar drew about 17.000 visitors!

I was able to meet a lot of interesting people and do some crucial networking and got to be introduced to Michael Stephens.

Michael has been volunteering since May 2017 as a WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) Technical Officer for the NGO „Abundant Water“ in Vientiane. There, among other tasks, he was in charge of coordinating field trips to remote provinces in Laos for WASH, monitoring and evaluating procedures.

As of his background Michael has a Bachelor's degree in Sustainable Environments, a Masters degree in Water Resource Management and was working also as an environmental scientist and hydrologist.

Since my contract would end by January 9th next year and as I will fly home on December 21st due to family reasons, I was keen on finding a new capable General Manager to take over my position. Not such an easy job as expected...but then I met Michael, who will be joining us in early December and officially start his job January 1st. 2018.

Michael is a promising asset for our organization: he is no newcomer to the Laotian culture, speaks the language a little and is aware of the tough working and living conditions in the villages.

Furthermore he is an expert in hydrology and might give our long standing effort with the filter distribution a boost...

I really look forward welcoming him to our organization and to introduce him to our Lao partners in the villages and authorities!

We also welcome Katja Welker and her husband Harald Mehl.

Katja is a midwife and will be training the staff of our hospital in Muang Ngoi on how to deliver babies in a safe and hygienic manner.

Apart from that we will re-paint our clinic in Muang Ngoi, that has developed some sort of „used look“ on the outside due to the heavy rainy season.

Midwife Katja will also join us on our Days For Girls project in all our villages and give professional counsel.

The countdown for my last four weeks is starting and there is a lot to do !

We wish you all a good and happy start into the new week!!

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Isabel Montano