

## Phon Ngam Primary School Savannakhet Province, Laos



<b>Grant Category:</b>	Education
<b>Implementing Agency:</b>	Child's Dream Foundation
<b>Project Status:</b>	Completed
<b>Start Date:</b>	August 2012
<b>Completion Date:</b>	April 2013

### Project Description

The project constructed a new school building with six fully furnished classrooms to replace the dilapidated and dangerous building. The new school accommodates 200 students aged 6-12 years.

### Objective

The school is vital to the Atsaphone district as it is the only primary school offering the complete curriculum from Grade 1-5, so children travel from a number of local villages to attend. Most students are from the Brou and Mungkong ethnic minority groups.

### Impact

The community's appreciation of the importance of education has ensured they have worked hard to maintain the school, however the original wood is infested by termites and at risk of collapse. The school becomes muddy in the rainy season as there is no flooring, placing students at risk of disease.

The Laos Government has committed to continue funding teaching staff and learning materials for the school.

The development of the new school building will create a positive learning environment that will encourage students to complete their education, thereby providing the foundation for them to secure their future.

### Background

Poor education remains one of the key constraints for the reduction of poverty in many parts of Laos. The education policy of the government provides free education for all up to secondary school, however a lack of safe buildings, trained teachers and teaching materials limits the effectiveness of the policy.

Savannakhet province has the highest number of poor in Laos with more than 250,000 people living below the poverty line, according to the IMF.

Phon Ngam School is located in the Atsaphone district of Savannakhet province. The district is included on the list of poorest nationwide, due to its volatile climate of hot dry summers and wet monsoons leading to regular flooding. As a result, farmers produce only one rice crop a year for household consumption.

Savannakhet province's ability to access land is also severely impacted by the presence of unexploded bombs. The IMF rates the province as one of the 15 most severely affected by UXO contamination, with many people still killed and injured, access to much needed land greatly reduced and movement between villages slowed thereby undermining social and development activities.