



Dr Urs Lauper (*third left, back row*), Mr Somphou Keopanya (*fourth left, back row*) and Dr Khamseth Chittanavanh (*fifth left, back row*) pose with students and teachers of Kuasomphae primary school.

Timely Swiss assistance to help Sangthong students

Xayxana Leukai

The Swiss-Lao Hospital Project has agreed to build new facilities at Kuasoumphae primary school in Sangthong district, Vientiane aimed at improving education and health standards.

The works consist of installing new water and electrical systems, building road access, enhancing ceiling structure, erecting fences and supplying furniture and a flagpole.

An agreement was signed on Monday by the President of the project Dr Urs Lauper and Head of the Education and Sports Office of Sangthong district, Mr Bounnam Sisouthammavong, witnessed by Deputy Director General of Mother and Newborn Hospital, Dr Khamseth Chittanavanh and Vientiane Education and Sports Department Director Mr Somphou Keopanya.

Dr Lauper said after receiving the proposal letter from the school seeking

assistance from the project, it was initially difficult for him to help them.

This was because the main policy of the project is to target improving health standards, rather than raising standards of education.

“This is the first time for the project to become involved in improving educational standards since it started in Laos 14 years ago. Of course, I didn’t decide to help the school immediately,” he said, adding that when he visited the school for himself he realised the lack of clean water, latrines and hygiene standards at the school should be the main factors of the project to help students.

Dr Lauper said it was possible the Lao population might receive medical treatment from qualified doctors and nurses who once studied at Kuasoumphae primary school.

“Good environmental conditions and sanitation are key factors in providing

high-quality health standards for 36 young students at the school. If they are healthy, they will have better concentration to focus on their lessons,” he stressed.

Mr Somphou said the assistance from the Swiss project would be one of many ways to improve education standards in Sangthong district.

At the end of the ceremony, the Education and Sports Office provided certificates of congratulation to Dr Urs Lauper, Director General of Mother and Newborn Hospital, Associate Professor Dr Bouavanh Saensathit and involved authorities who helped upgrade teaching and learning methods in Kuasoumphae Primary School.

The Swiss-Lao Hospital Project is an initiative of Swiss doctors, midwives and nurses association members who have lobbied for an improvement in the medical care available to mothers and children in Laos since 2000.