Lotus Educational Fund Ltd

Annual Report July 2013 – June 2014

LOTUS
Educational Fund Ltd

Australians enabling access to education for Lao ethnic girls.

ABN 76 130 576 199

Established 2008

VISION

The Lotus fund aims to provide educational opportunities in rural Laos for ethnic girls living in poverty in isolated villages by assisting them to improve their life opportunities through regular attendance at school.

MISSION STATEMENT

To empower the lives of girls and young women who are vulnerable to domestic trafficking through educational opportunities. Through literacy it is hoped that the economic well being of the girls will be improved and their individual lives will be changed in ways that will allow them to contribute to the advancement of their local communities in powerful ways.

ADVOCATE

The Lotus Educational Fund Ltd acts as a voice to raise awareness publicly. The Fund operates to ensure the commitment of the wider community to the education of girls living in poverty in Lao PDR.

The Lotus Educational Fund committee members traveled to Savannakhet, Lao PDR in May to distribute uniforms, shoes, text books, stationary and back packs to the 84 girls currently in the program. Each girl received their individualized pack with a uniform that had been made by the seamstress to their specific measurements.

The committee members meet with the Principal of the various schools. Using a translator discussions were held about the registration fees and the cost of building maintenance. The Lotus Educational Fund paid the full registration fee for the 84 girls attending school.

Currently there are 44 girls in Grade 6 and 40 Girls in Grade 1. These girls have been selected due to their low socio-economic background. One girl per family, from the Champhone district, 35km out of Savannakhet. The consent form had been prepared in Lao, read to the parents and explained prior to them giving consent for their daughter to participate in the program. These girls would otherwise be supporting their families in the rice paddies and by performing household chores.

A MILESTONE YEAR:

The 44 girls that joined the Lotus program 5 years ago completed their Primary school education. The girls proudly commenced the first year of Lower Secondary School.

Another 40 girls from the Champhone district were selected to commence in Grade 1. These girls are attending 6 different primary schools in the district.

The newest Lotus Educational Fund girls – Grade 1

FUND RAISING Summary

Event	Amount Raised
Charity Dinner, Newcastle, Australia	$3000
Charity bike ride –Laos to Phuket, Thailand 3200km, 40 days	$3380
Charity Golf Day MBMG, Thailand	$600
TOTAL	AUD $6980

Measuring each girl for their new uniform and completing registration forms.

FUNDING EXPENSES Summary

1tem	USD $	AUD $
Educational Supplies Primary Gr 1	$820	$884
Educational Supplies Lower Secondary Gr 6	$956	$1030
Registration 40 girls Primary Gr 1	2,800,000 kip	$354
Registration 44 girls Lower Secondary Gr 6	4,620,000 kip	$643
School supervisor contract Savannakhet (Lao National)		$180
Logistal officer contract (Lao National)		$207
Book shelf with glass and lock		$250
In country expenses paid to Dr Phoudalay -fuel, meals, accommodation, translating, airport transfers etc		$150
DHL- letters to MMG (Sponsors)		$30
Business Cards		$40
Certificates/posters		$30
Water/Petrol School		$43
MMG transport goods from Vientiane to Savannakhet		Donation
Website – word press		Donation
Travel – flights/bus and expenses for committee members		Donation
Visa for committee members		Donation
Big Brother Mouse books		Donation
		$3841

**Note that expenses change each year due to currency fluctuations between Lao kip, Thai baht, USD and AUD.
Figures are converted to AUD since fundraising is in AUD.
In Laos most expenses are paid using USD

Programs for July 2014- August 2015

- School supervisor sign contract (Sept – July)
- AGM January 2015 via Skype
- Strengthen relationship with Lao companies e.g. MMG, seamstress in Vientiane, government book store.
- Charity Bike ride – Perth to Sydney – 4800km
- Lotus Directory
- Contact list for phone and email contacts in both Australia and Lao.
- Print in black and white cards with Lotus girls to use as thank you cards to sponsors.
- Logistical officer sign contract (Jan – June)
- Prepare and print the Lotus Book – initially a few copies for committee members to use and share the Lotus story.
- February 22nd 2015 Two committee members travel to the Lotus Educational Girls in Savannakhet, Laos and collect video footage to create a 3-5 min promotional video.
- Prepare all educational packs in a timely manner:
  September 2014 : Grade 2 40 girls and Grade 7 44 girls
- May 2015 measure each girl for their new uniform
- May 2015 distribute educational packs for next academic year.
- Newsletter

More than 50% of ethnic minority girls in Lao PDR never attend school.

Educate a girl and you educate a community.

Working in partnership with over 80 families.

FUTURE Programs:

- Literacy box with solar powered light per girl
- Deworming
- Mosquito nets
- Menstrual cup
- Toilets
- Drinking Water
- Celebrate Children's Day – Lao PDR 1st June
- VGIF application completed for a grant of $7500 to start a women's weaving project in the village of Kms 35. http://www.weave-women.org/
- Develop the relationship with Village Focus International (VFI) to acquire NGO status and operate under their MoU (Memorandum of Understanding in Savannakhet.)
- Transport to Upper Secondary School located 30km from the Lower Secondary School.
- More bicycles
- 2 University Scholarships

THANK YOU

The Lotus Educational Fund wish to thank all our sponsors for continued support, ongoing generosity and belief in our vision and mission. Without this support the programs being implemented to help educate girls would not be possible.

Educating a girl provides benefits for her, her family and for the life of her children. An educated girl will:

- *Tend to get married later and have fewer children.*
- *Raise healthier, better fed and better educated children.*
- *Be more productive at home and better paid in the workplace.*
- *Be better able to protect herself against HIV/AIDS.*