



VOPS
Office

ໂຄງການສົ່ງເສີມໄຟຟ້ານອກລະບົບ
Village Off-Grid Promotion & Support
“ ທຸກໆຄືນມື້ແສງສະຫວ່າງ “
“ Every night, light “

Newsletter 4

November 2007

Dear Colleagues and Stakeholders of the Village Off-Grid Project,

We are pleased to send you this fourth Newsletter to inform you about the progress of the Village Off-Grid Project. This will include news updates about the program, specific activities that may affect you and useful information. Please contact the VOPS Office in Vientiane with any questions or suggestions on 021 453 361.

1. Project Schedule

The Off-grid component of the Rural Electrification Program funded through an agreement between Government of Lao PDR and the World Bank is now in full phase of implementation. The execution has well progressed with the installation of 3,750 new solar home systems, the completion of feasibility studies for 250 additional connections using hydro resources in Xiengkhouang and the survey for 500 other connections in Houaphan and Phongsaly, the continuation of our troubleshooting program and an important pico hydro safety awareness campaign in Northern provinces.

2. Improvement Program

VOPS is continuing the Improvement Program in 6 provinces of Laos where 6,000 solar units were installed between 1999 and 2004. Better services, replacement of faulty and broken equipment, housekeeping are some of the support that VOPS and the PESCOs are providing to the customers. VOPS also offers some favorable financial modalities to PESCOs enabling the customers to replace their old equipment in better conditions.

3. Procurement of 3,750 SHS

All the 3,750 solar home systems procured by the MEM PMU in December 2006 and delivered to the provinces in May 2007 have been successfully installed.

4. New procurement of 5,250 SHS

VOPS and PMU/MEM, with the cooperation of the PESCOs for cluster planning, have prepared all the bidding documents. The Australian Aid Agency has agreed to participate in the funding of the 5,250 new systems. The International Competitive Bidding documents are ready and bidding should be launched in November 2007.

5. The PESCOs network

The PESCOs network covers now all provinces of Laos with the new agreements signed in Savanakheth, Bolikhamxay, Sekong, Attapeu, Khammouane and Luangprabang.

6. Collaboration with Nam Theun 2 Project

The collaboration with Nam Theun 2 Watershed Management and Protection Authority (NT2 WMPA) initiated in May 2006 with the delivery of 100 solar home systems is continuing with 200 additional 50 Wp units to be supplied to the local communities. Unlike the first hundred units, the PMU asked VOPS to consider the recruitment of a specific PESCO to ensure the technical and administrative management of these systems.

7. Village hydro and genset systems

The detailed feasibility studies of 4 VHGS installations are completed and the bidding documents in phase of preparation. Through these 4 systems, 250 new customers should be connected and an innovative business model put in place with the involvement of a Village Operator and the local Authorities. Some systems will also be equipped with diesel back-up and a special maintenance and diesel fund is to be created. VOPS is currently expanding the program in Houaphan and Phongsaly.

8. Safety and awareness raising

The safety awareness campaign in 350 villages in Northern provinces is progressing well. More than 6,000 people attended the sessions in 150 villages representing more than 2,000 pico hydro systems. The PMU has requested VOPS to prepare a plan for spreading the program in other provinces of Laos.

9. World Bank review

A World Bank mission visited Lao first week of November to make a review on progress of the off-grid program and VOPS implementation. The mission considered as positive the performance of VOPS and is confident that all objectives should be reached.