

Remote Village Education Support Project
Pathoumphone District, Champasak Province, Lao PDR

Village Survey Report

May 10 - 20, 2001

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Introduction

This report was prepared after completion of a survey of ten remote villages in Pathoumphone district, Champasak province, Lao PDR, between May 10th and 20th, 2001.

During consultations between representatives of the Canadian non-government organization the Global Association for People and the Environment (GAPE) and Champasak provincial education officials, Pathoumphone district was identified as one of the two districts of Champasak province with the most pressing education problems.

These include a low percentage of students in school, irregular attendance, teachers who are too often absent, lack of education materials, and poor condition of schools.

Villages located in other districts of Champasak province, such as those along the Mekong river, including Khong district, Pakse district and Phonthong district are not as cut-off and isolated as many of the villages in Pathoumphone district, and thus have higher numbers of students in school, better access to educational materials, and more regular teachers.

We expressed our interest in providing educational support, especially to remote villages which do not have year round road access, and thus likely have more than their share of education problems.

Ten remote villages in Pathoumphone district were selected to be surveyed in May 2001.

Field Survey

The survey team was comprised of;

Done Phoummachan	Chief of Champasak province non-formal education
Sivixay Bainami	Pathoumphone district non-formal education officer
Ian Baird	President of GAPE
Monsiri Baird	Ian's wife
Monty Sly	Vice-President of GAPE and Project Supervisor

The ten villages surveyed were:

Village Name	Ethnic Group	Population	Area
1) Ban Nam Ome	Lowland Lao	626 (336 female)	Northwest
2) Ban Lao Nya	Lowland Lao	424 (229)	Northwest
3) Ban Som Souk	Lowland Lao	335 (153)	Northwest
4) Ban Houay Tone	J'rou (Laven)	127 (56)	Northeast
5) Ban Nong Ayk	J'rou (Laven)	251 (126)	Northeast
6) Ban Kala	Lowland Lao	499 (239)	Central East
7) Ban Nong Ping	Lowland Lao	173 (85)	Southern Xepian
8) Ban Taong	Brao (Lave)	207 (?)	Southern Xepian

9) Ban Tavang	Lowland Lao	150 (73)	Southern Xepian
10) Ban Houay Ko	Brao (Lave)	130 (68)	W. Northwest

On May 10, 2001 we traveled by bus from Pakse to Houay To Mo near the southern road Km.40. From there we ventured east by samlor (a pick-up truck with three benches) to Ban (village) Son Yot.

In Son Yot Village there is a high school where local youngsters and a few from surrounding villages have the opportunity to study grades 6 to 8. Most of the remote villages we will be surveying have only grades 1 to 3. A couple of the villages have grades 1 to 5.

We hiked the four kilometers along the rough muddy trail from Ban Son Yot to Ban Thong Pa, where we spent the night on mats, under mosquito nets on the porch of the village headman.

The next day May 11, we walked on another five kilometres from Ban Thong Pa to Ban Nam Ome, the first of the ten remote villages to be surveyed.

Village #1 Ban Nam Ome

General Village Overview

Population: 626 (336 female)
 Families: 123
 Households: 102
 Village Headman: Khambou
 1st Deputy: Son
 Elder: Pho Khamphan
 Secretary of Party: Loung Souan
 Students Association: Phao
 20 years in present location, before 1 km. away
 90 Hectares of rice fields
 25 families have enough to eat
 50 families have enough to eat half of the year
 27 families have no fields, no animals, and not enough to eat
 200+ water buffalo, some pigs and chickens
 Some gathering of malva nuts , wild cardamom, and honey from the surrounding forest

Education

Students

107 Students (47 girls)
 Grade 1 34 (15)
 Grade 2 25 (11)
 Grade 3 17 (7)
 Grade 4 15 (7)
 Grade 5 16 (7)

Teachers

Three teachers:

Somphong has taught since 1987
 Somphone Sai has taught since 1989
 Hetsami Phomisone has taught since 2001

School

Three classrooms include Grade 1, Grades 2 +3, and Grades 4 + 5.
 Last year there were 11 grade 5 students; one failed.
 Hetsami is from Ban Kala. She stays at the house of a local family.
 33 students are not in school; most of them came to school before but dropped out.

Problems

Parents don't see the value of education. Children often help parents in the fields. Students are in school for the first three months. At harvest time in November they live in the fields far from the village and the school.
 Lack of materials, books
 They have a toshaban(a silk screen manual copier), but ran out of ink and paper.
 Head teacher Somphong must sometimes go to meetings,
 No library
 Half of school roofing metal sheets need replacing
 Lack of cement for school floor
 Termites come up from the dirt floor and eat the desks and walls
 Drinking and washing water is far from the school
 Too difficult to grow vegetables, fruit trees and flowers in schoolyard

Strengths

Villagers are willing to provide labour to repair the school
 Villagers make blackboards with tree resin and broken glass

The following day we walked the rocky and muddy trail another six kms. from Ban Nam Ome to Ban Lao Nya

Village #2 Ban Lao Nya

General Village Overview

Population: 424 (229 female)
 Families: 81
 Households:75
 3 rich families, 17 middle, and 55 poor families
 180+ Water Buffalo
 No cows
 No motorcycles, 3 generators for batteries, 2 rice mills
 Some pigs, chickens and ducks
 Other sources of income
 Malva Nuts, Cardamom, honey, wood, bamboo, small amount of kisi resin
 Not enough fish to sell; only for local consumption
 Some villagers travel up to the Boulaven Plateau to pick coffee in Paksong,
 no villagers go to work in Thailand
 Village is too far from the road to sell produce or food gathered from the forest
 Rice fields are scattered in many places
 Headman: Moun
 Deputy Headman: Mone
 2nd Deputy: Phaivan

Elder: Pho Feau
 Elder: Pho Say
 Secretary of Party: Kham
 Womens Union: Jeek
 36.54 Hectares of lowland ricefields

Lao Nya Village has been in its present location for 100 years. Previously it was located 800 meters away. A century ago, someone fell from a tree and the village was moved due to concern about the ghost.

Irrigation Weir for wet and dry season rice was built this year with help from the Dong Houa Sao National Biodiversity Conservation Area project. Cement and iron bars were provided. The village is located 2 kms. from the Dong Hua Sao NBCA. Ban Thong Pa has had a similar system for the last six years.

Villagers would like to drain the five hectares of swamp and use it for lowland rice cultivation

Education

Students

Students: 51 (26 girls)
 There were 57 students at the start of the school year including those under age
 Grade 1: 18 (10)
 Grade 2: 16 (6)
 Grade 3: 17 (10)
 Children not regularly in school: 17 (10) only 7 and 8 years old
 Children who don't study at all: 24 (10)
 Half of village children finish grade 3

Teachers

Thongsone Phasouk has taught for 2 years.
 His education: grade 11, middle level, teachers college
 Married with one child
 He taught for 1 year in Ban Houay Ton, and 2 years in Ban Nong Ayk
 He would like to be transferred to Ban Thong Pa.

School

7 meters X 12 meters
 208 roofing sheets needed, also iron bars, sand and rocks
 5 'tons' of cement needed (20 bags per ton)
 Villagers would like to have a well near the school

Problems

School not big enough, not enough desks and tables
 Some kids don't go to school when parents send them.
 They should have 2 teachers, but there are not enough teachers in the district
 No students are going this year to grade 4 in Ban Nam Ome.
 Although they have relatives in Ban Nam Ome who could look out for their children, it is too far and difficult to reach.
 Some parents threaten children with 'bogeyman' teacher
 Some single parent families, kids need extra support

Teacher not in school for a month or more
 Stream is too far from school and its water is not always clean
 Leaky roof
 Very little rice; 'green rice' 55 families buy rice from other villages or from the few families who have more than enough. Later when they harvest their own rice they must pay back the loan with a hefty amount of rice as interest.

Strengths

Nang Lek, a local woman, would like to be a teacher.
 Villagers have established rules forbidding the cutting down of malva nut trees. If there is a 'ladder' on a malva nut tree, then nobody else will take fruit from that tree. At the beginning of the malva nut season, people can't go up the trees. After the rains have set in, people are allowed up. Every three to four years there are a lot of malva nuts to collect.
 Two people in Ban Thong Pa were put in jail for cutting down malva nut trees. There seems to be good enforcement of village rules in the area. Only one tree was cut down this year in the area.
 The Dong Hua Sao NBCA protected area officers distributed two wildlife conservation posters to the school.

We awoke early the next morning and set off for the next village another four kms. away. The trail was strewn with many rocks. We had to be careful of where we stepped as we hiked along.

Village#3 Ban Som Souk

General Village Overview

Population: 334 (158 female)
 Families: 57
 Households: 56
 20+ families moved to the village over the last ten years from villages near the Mekong River; many poor families came a few at a time.
 It is a very old village.
 Headman:
 1st Deputy: Phaivan
 2nd Deputy: Somphone
 Elder: Pho Phoua
 Lao Womens Union: Nang Na
 Lao Womens Union: Me Loun
 Police: Bounsouan
 Army: Khamon

40.20 hectares of ricefields
 Not enough rice
 Other sources of income: malva nuts, kisi resin, cardamom, honey, fish, snails, peanuts and mung beans.
 No wood sold, too far to bring papaya, pineapples, and bananas to sell.
 No selling labour in Thailand
 No motorcycles, 6 tractors, 2 rice mills, no generators
 8 families have enough to eat, 10 middle, and 30 poor
 Villagers often pick and eat wild cassava and wild potatoes
 They received roofing material in 98/99
 Teacher went to pick up a bicycle (one of three provided to the district) 7 kms. to Ban Nabone, 10kms. more to Kilometer 36 on the Pakse highway.
 Some Nyang tree oil is used in the village to make torches for sale (1000 kip each for long ones) (9,400 kip = US\$1) Villagers use them themselves and

sell some. Villagers sometimes sell the nyang tree resin as well. Some trees near the edge of rice fields and even in the forest are 'owned' by individuals, if they are reserved for a long time. These include Sat, Koung, and Ta Beng trees, but are usually Nyang trees.

Education

Students

Students: 60 (33 girls)

Grade 1: 12 (8)

Grade 2: 17 (7)

Grade 3: 13 (4)

Grade 4: 13 (9)

Grade 5: 5 (5)

Grades 1,2 +3 together Grade 4 + 5 together

17 children (7 girls) are not in school

Grade 5 just started this year

Three students study at the high school in Pathoumphone district centre.

Teachers

1st teacher: Khamla, from Khong district is married to a local woman, stays in village, and has won an award for teaching.

2nd teacher: Phoutpha, has grade 6 education, stays with 1st teacher.

School

Villagers built a new school 4 years ago with roofing sheets provided by the province.

The school has a dirt floor.

Problems

Some parents are ashamed to send their kids to school because they don't have any clothes for their kids.

Some kids are lazy to go to school

Three kids dropped out already this year

Lack of books, pencils, other education materials

Strengths

Villagers contributed wood and labour to build the school, and would provide labour to put in a cement floor.

The next day, May the 14th we hiked thirteen kilometres to the east to the base of a mountain. We left the bamboo forest behind as we entered the thick leech-infested jungle on our approach to the first of the ethnic minority villages we would be surveying. For these villagers the Lao language is their second language. J'rou is the name of their language and also what they call themselves. They are known as Laven to the lowland Lao, but prefer their own name J'rou.

Village #4 Ban Houay Tone

General Village Overview

Ethnicity: J'rou
 Population: 127 (56 female)
 Families: 24
 Households: 22
 No rich families, 10 middle families, 12 poor families
 Houay (Stream)Tone Village is located at the base of Phou Ta Beng mountain, home to two species of bear, and the primate species; douc langurs, silvered langurs, and concolor gibbons.
 13 km. all-day hike through the forest to reach Paksong; many hills
 12 km. to Xekampho district, Attapeu province
 Headman: Sat
 1st Deputy: Yai
 Army: Vieng
 Youth Union: Sai
 No lowland rice cultivation
 Five hectares of land beside village is suitable for lowland rice cultivation , but villagers don't have experience
 No logging as village is within the boundaries of the Dong Houa Sao NBCA (National Biodiversity Conservation Area)
 Swidden agriculture practiced; many crops grown, mostly for subsistence
 12 Hectares of coffee plantations
 33 Water Buffalo
 8 Cows
 1 Motorcycle
 No generators, no tractors
 Sometimes villagers have enough rice, sometimes they don't have enough rice; more often the former
 Some planting of cardamom in the forest near village
 Almost 20 families from other villages have gardens nearby

Education

Students

Students: 20 (10 girls)
 Grade 1: 6 (3)
 Grade 2: 9 (4)
 Grade 3: 5 (3)
 Children not in school: 8 girls
 7 or 8 students come to school on a regular day

Teachers

Khamkone
 Graduated grade 5 and studied 3 years to become teacher
 He has taught here for over 2 years
 He taught for 4 years in Ban Nong Ayk, and 2 years in Ban Nam Ome
 Teacher stays at village headman's house
 Teacher is from south road km. 16 and is married to a woman from BanThong Pa. They have one child.
 He has been teaching here for two years.
 He can understand some words, but cannot speak the J'rou language.

School

Shack-like school with gaping holes in its walls and roof, and a dirt floor.

Problems

Teacher missed 45 days this past school year due to family illness, and the distance he must walk to reach this village.

Some students miss a lot of school due to their family fields and plantations being located far away from the village.

Irregular attendance

No grades 4 and 5

Children help parents in fields, and in taking care of younger siblings.

Parents have no money for books, paper or pencils.

School is in poor condition: full of holes in the walls and roof

Present school location is on a rocky spot with no place for the students to play and exercise.

Lack of roofing sheets and nails.

Strengths

The teacher is well liked by villagers. He pitches in to help with various chores.

Villagers willing to provide wood and labour to build a new school

Teacher is willing to move to village with wife and child if a small house was built.

Village #5a Ban Nong Pheu

General Village Overview

9 families all ethnic J'rou

Used to be a separate village

They were made to move to Nong Ayk in 1978 for 1 year, but missed Nong Pheu and moved back

Swidden agriculture practiced. Coffee and other crops are grown.

3 rice mills, 1 motorcycle, 1 tractor, 1 private rice mill generator

A lot of old coffee plantations

Some gathering of wild cardamom

Education

Students

6 school age children. No students presently go to study in Ban Nong Ayk.(4 kms. away

Normally no kids studying. 6 school age kids. For 2 or 3 years, no kids have gone to school.

Teachers

If there was a regular teacher in Nong Ayk, parents would send their children to study there

School

No school

After eating a couple of locally grown pineapples we hiked along further. Our backpacks were getting lighter as the days went by and we ate up the food we were carrying. It took about an hour to hike the four kilometres from Ban Nong Peu to Ban Nong Ayk. There were a lot of huge old trees and volcanic rocks along the path.

Village #5b Ban Nong Ayk

General Village Overview

Ethnicity: J'rou (Laven)
 Population: 251 (126) plus 8 extra new people
 Families: 56
 Households: 43
 5 Lao people married into village; others ethnic J'rou
 Village called Nong Pheu before the war; very old village (100+ years)
 Middle families: 29
 Poor families: 27
 7 people from Ban Saming, 2 from Ban Nam Ome and 1 from Ban Thong Pa
 have moved to the village
 Headman: Bounhom Keovongsa
 1st Deputy: Siho Keobuapha
 2nd Deputy: Nang Kongchai (now very ill)
 Elder: Mr. Bounlouang (retired army officer)

12.76 Hectares of rice fields
 14.23 Hectares of land used for swidden agriculture
 Village has been in present location for a long time; fruit trees have grown old.
 Everything villagers grow, except coffee, they eat themselves
 36 buffalo
 No cows
 1 motorcycle
 6 rice mills
 2 generators
 2 tractors
 In August, September and October there is enough water in the stream to
 operate a water generator
 Other sources of income:
 Wild cardamom, coffee, no honey, small amount of wood cutting
 This year 5 to 6 kilos of malva nuts per family, were collected
 Many others come from other villages to make coffee plantations
 No hiring out of labour. Very little wood cutting; not good at it.

Education

Students

Students: 46 (22 girls)
 Grade 1: 19 (6)
 Grade 2: 17 (8)
 Grade 3: 10 (7)
 Students not in school: 32 (13)
 20+ students come to school on a regular day
 Today's attendance: No grade 3 students, 4 grade 2 students, and 17 grade 1
 students

Teachers

Teacher; Bounphone Patnouvilay from Pathoumphone would like to teach
 closer to his home. He is not married. He stays with his older brother in
 Pathoumphone. He has grade 10 education from school for monks, plus 3
 years in teachers school in Pakse.

School

School too small, many holes in roof and walls
44 roofing sheets were provided 5 years ago by the province; still in decent condition.

Villagers need cement and more roofing sheets

Problems

Teacher in school only one month during this last school year. He doesn't like to teach.

He didn't teach for 2 months before returning to village yesterday.

Need to build a new school as there could be over 70 students in the future.

No schoolyard for children to play and exercise in.

Lack of materials

Teacher must take a bus 19 kms. from Pathoumphone to Ban Sanot, then walk 19 kms. to Nong Ayk; a long way to walk he is often afraid to go by himself. He must spend the night in Ban Sonyot on the way to or from the village.

Teacher speaks no J'rou language

Irregular attendance due to poverty, children helping parents in fields, taking care of younger siblings, or other usual reasons.

Water is 200 meters away from the school

There are not enough desks and tables

Lack of education materials; books, games, sports equipment

No students studying grades 4 or 5 in other villages.

Children are passed arbitrarily and without tests, even though they know very little

Strengths

A local young man named Souban Keosomphone would like to take over as teacher

He is a grade 8 graduate, can speak J'rou, as well as Lao, and a little English. He is popular amongst villagers, and is related to many of the students so has a personal interest in their education. He displayed his enthusiasm and interest in teaching during my conversations with him.

District agrees for him to be the new teacher.

If they have a good school, regular teacher and materials, village leaders say they can get most children to go to school.

Village #6 Ban Ka La

It was a long, muddy and wet 12 km. hike from Ban Nong Ayk to Ban Ka La.

General Village Overview

Population: 499 (239 female)

Lowland Lao ethnicity, except for a few ethnic minority people married into the village

Families: 94

Households: 84

Village Headman: Vieng

1st Deputy: Bounthong

2nd Deputy: Boula

Elder: Pa Sien

Local Militia: Sim
 Forest Protection: Phongsavat
 Lao Women's Union: Me Phoy
 Village has been in present location for 150 years
 Village used to be under the authority of the headman of Ban Saming
 Sivixay's wife is from Ban Saming
 99.96 Hectares of rice fields, a little swidden agriculture
 No coffee plantations
 166 Water buffalo, 198 cows, 8 horses, 8 elephants, 1 tractor
 No motorcycles, 4 rice mills, 2 generators, 1 black and white television
 14 private (7 to 10 meters deep) water pumps in village (800,000 each)
 6 families have enough rice to eat
 13 families are middle level
 65 poor families do not have enough to eat (20 families are very poor)
 Fish selling is an important source of income
 Small amount of kisi resin gathering,, and nyang resin collection
 Small amount of wood selling, no hiring out labour to Thailand
 No honey, no cardamom, some malva nut collection

Education

Students

63 students (36 girls)
 Grade 1 30 (18 girls)
 Grade 2 21 (10 girls)
 Grade 3 12 (8 girls)
 7 or 8 children are not in school for the usual reasons
 10 students study in grade 4 and 5 in Ban Saming (1 hour walk away); others don't go.
 15 students (7 girls) have dropped out of school before finishing grade 5.
 There is a high school in Ban Pha Pho

Teachers

Two teachers; Sengthong (local, but born in Ban Nong Ping) teaches grade 1
 Sithot, from Ban Saming, teaches grades 2 + 3 in the second classroom. He travels back and forth.
 Teacher teaches about 70% of the time; he is a party member and has to go to many meetings.
 Sengthong has been teaching in Ban Ka La for 24 years. He's 50 years old. He has grade 7 education, studied at teachers college, and at Xe Khampha. He studied the new teaching method for 35 days in 1997 in Paksong
 He said he teaches 60% of the time (group said 70%)
 Villagers want local woman Hetsami to teach here (She teaches in Ban Nam Ome)
 They can't think of any other local villager who could teach

School

Present location is good.
 No cement floors; some walls are in poor condition
 Good desks
 100 meters from school to water.
 In 1995 the province gave them 110 roofing sheets
 2 classrooms; grade 1, and grades 2 + 3
 Ban Thong Sai, Ban Saming and Ban Kala are in one school group.

Bounsouay in Ban Saming is responsible for this school group

Problems

6 or 7 students are not in school, due to poverty. Not enough to eat, helping parents in the fields, taking care of younger siblings,
Saengthong said they are "Country kids who don't like to study"
Some kids come to school, but the teacher is often absent, so the next day they don't bother coming.
School has no cement floor, but has good desks.
Province gave them some roofing sheets
No library, no sports materials, games, etc.

Water pump at Sengthong's house cost 800,000 kip
IUCN worked in Ban Saming
10 kids go to grades 4 and 5 in Ban Saming
Both teachers teach irregularly
School stops for one month in March for malva nut collection (not every year)
3 to 5 kms to ricefields from village
Sithot hasn't been paid since September. He comes to teach 50% of the time
Teachers' salaries are too low; they must find other sources of income

4 students at the wood cutting clearing
Villagers would like 2nd teacher to be local
Hetsami Phomisone, who teaches in Ban Nam-Ome, is from Ban Ka La

15 kids dropped out (7 girls) some due to poverty
Parents don't see the value of education, keep their kids in the fields

Strengths

Teacher received one portable library from UNICEF last year (one was also provided to Ban Saming)

We hiked the four kilometers from Ban Kala to Ban Saming. From there we caught a tractor to the area further south where three more remote villages are located inside the Xepien NBCA, one of the most important conservation areas in the country. We got off the tractor near Palai Bok Village. We spent the night at the home of the fellow who is in charge of the school area which comprises the next three villages we were to survey.

The next morning we hiked the five kilometres from Ban Palai Bok to Ban Nong Ping.

Village #7 Ban Nong Ping

General Village Overview

Population: 173 (95 female)
Families: 37 plus one new family of 6 people
Households: 31
In present location for 30+ years; before that villagers lived in the forest
Headman: Noulay Latsaphon
2nd Deputy: Oudom
Elder: Pho Kan Ha (retired)
Elder: Pho Phiang
Ceremony Advisor: Pho Lote
Army: Khampong

24.4 hectares of rice fields, 2 hectares of 'gardens'
 5 middle level families, 26 poor families with not enough to eat
 Water Buffalo: 27
 Cows: 10
 Some pigs, chickens, and goats
 Villagers don't have enough to eat. They often must sell a pig or other animal to buy rice
 Other sources of income: kisi (a tree resin used to seal boats), cardamom, small amount of malva nuts
 A small amount of wildlife sold, mostly eaten
 Villagers gather three kinds of rattan; 'vai khi kai', vai kam lao' and 'vai leng'.
 They sell the rattan in Champasak and Pakse; they don't make any furniture with it.
 Villagers catch fish and crabs for consumption. They sell some frogs
 No hiring out of labour, even to Pakse
 No motorcycles, no rice mills, no motorboats, no generators,
 1 black and white television run by battery

Education

Khammoke from Ban Phalay Bok is head of the school group which includes Ban Nong Ping, Ban Ta Ong, and Ban Tavang, and Ban Phalay Bok. The deputy is Kasi.

5 teachers for Ban Phalay; other villages 1 teacher each
 For 3 months one teacher didn't go to outlying schools because he was substituting for a teacher in Ban Phalay, who was having a baby.
 Of the villagers, only the teacher's wife finished grade 7

Students

Students: 34 (24 girls)
 Grade 1: 11 (8 girls)
 Grade 2: 11 (10 girls)
 Grade 3: 6 (3 girls)
 Grade 4: 6 (girls)
 All students go to school but not regularly
 About 25 students on a regular day
 10 students "nak hian fak"
 3 girls dropped out before finishing grade 4

Teachers

1 teacher: Khoukeo Mingmeuang from KM.30 has taught here for 2 years. He has grade 11 education and studied at Salavan Teacher College for 1 year.
 He is 24 years old. He married a local woman four months ago.
 His late father was a member of the ethnic minority Nya Heun.
 His mother is Lao.
 He previously stayed in the forest area in Tha Teng district.
 He wants to learn to make things with rattan.

School

Villagers have wood, but no roofing sheets or nails to build new school. School has no cement floors. Villagers don't have gravel.

Problems

Teacher was ill with malaria and missed a half month of school.
 He last received his salary in February.
 Some students are busy taking care of younger siblings or helping parents in fields.
 Parents often have no money for notebooks, pencil, or paper.
 Lack of education materials and sports equipment.
 Villagers have friends in Ban Phalay who could look after some children if they were to go to grade 5 there, but they don't have rice.
 Education officials are not sure how many roofing sheets are needed.
 The water is not good in the dry season. Some fish poisoning upstream in Ban Boun. Villagers would like wells.
 Next year there will be more students. A second teacher will be needed.

Strengths

Teacher is enthusiastic and well liked by villagers. We were surprised at his ability to speak English after studying on his own for only three months.
 He is married to a local woman, and plans to keep teaching for years to come.
 Water source is the stream Houay Ta-euang near the school.
 There is a good field in front of school for students to exercise.

After conducting our survey in Ban Nong Ping in the late afternoon, we hiked a further five kilometers up and over a rocky hill to Ban Ta Ong

Village # 8 Ban Ta Ong

General Village Overview

Ethnicity: Brao (Lave)
 Population: 207 (? female)
 One third have Lao wives

34.77 Hectares of rice fields in production
 12.15 Hectares of rice fields unused
 3 to 4 Hectares of 'gardens'

Families: 44
 Households: 39
 Village headman: Khamsouk Keobuapha
 1st deputy: Khamkhen
 Elder: Khamven
 Head of Forest Protection: Song
 Loggers came and said they would build a school if allowed to log and take away cut trees
 Other sources of income: malva nuts, rattan, khisi resin, small numbers of monitor lizards, turtles (less than before)
 Some villagers go to pick coffee in Paksong district
 Some torches made locally are sold in the village, not outside
 No cows, 83 Water Buffalo, no televisions, 1 generator, 2 tractors, 2 motorcycles, 1 rice mill

Education

Villagers would like to expand the school to grades 4 and 5
 In December 2001, villagers plan to get a local man to do a little logging to get

wood to build a school. The provincial administration hasn't approved this yet.
 They have a different system for testing than in Ban Nam Ome school area.
 Another teacher lives in the village, Bounlouat from Sam Neua province in northern Laos.

Nobody from the village has gone on to grade 4
 The teacher is involved in business, selling goods
 Villagers would like local woman Nang Thou to be a teacher
 She has grade 8 education

Students

Grade 1: 23 (13 girls) plus 3 toddlers

Grade 2: 8 (2)

Grade 3: 9 (4)

There are 20 six-year-olds who will be ready to start grade 1 in September; 9 kids (5) graduated grade 3 last year but didn't go on
 2+ weeks school was out for malva nut collection
 9 grade 3 students passed last year, but are not continuing their education as the nearest village with grade 4 and 5 is a nine kilometers difficult hike away.
 20 village children (12 girls) are 6 years old and will start school in September.

Teachers

Teacher: Bounma Keomany 42 years old, born in Palai Bok
 He studied first in Saycumpho Revolutionary School in Attapeu and studied next in Khong district
 He graduated from grade 5
 He studied for 3 years at the teachers college. He hasn't studied the new teaching method
 In 1977 until 1980 he taught school in Bachiang
 Then he went to Vientiane and studied how to drive a vehicle
 He was a driver there for 20 years
 and then came back to the south in 2000.
 He misses 2 days per month due to meetings he must attend.

School

80 sheets of roofing material was supplied by Fomocop
 16 metal roofing sheets came from the district welfare office
 Villagers don't know how to cut wood. They don't have saws.
 They want to trade trees for cut boards to build a new school.
 Villagers want to make a new school in a new location, but haven't yet decided where.

Problems

No teacher's instruction book
 No other education materials
 No reading materials, no sports equipment
 Wind knocks over trees.
 Due to the increase in the number of school-age children a second teacher is needed
 If there were grade 5 in Ta Ong village, it could serve 3 villages
 No sand or rocks

Strengths

Teacher has carpentry experience and equipment to build a new school. Villagers are willing to contribute their time and labour.

After a good night's sleep, we awoke to the sounds of numerous bird species greeting the morning sun. We spoke with one villager who showed us photographs taken by a camera trap which he had placed in the forest at the edge of a salt lick. This had been provided to him by a Danish conservationist working in cooperation with the Xepien National Biodiversity Conservation Area officers. Ban Nong Ping, Ban Ta Ong and Ban Ta Vang are located within the Xepien NBCA. The photographs were of many different wildlife species which had come for some salt. These included pigtailed macaques, forest pigs, porcupines, Siamese fireback pheasants, various deer species, and a serow (a goat-like mammal). We spoke of future excursions to that salt lick and other places he knows in the forest where wildlife can be found.

We hiked on another five muddy kilometers from ban Ta Ong to Ban Ta Vang with much lighter backpacks than we'd started out with. Mon kept us well fed with her delicious cooking. A couple more of the group took spills along the slippery trail. Only our senior companion Mr. Done finished the journey without falling down even once.

Village # 9 Ban Ta Vang

Population: 150 (73 female)
 Families: 35
 Households: 28
 73.19 Hectares of ricefields (more out of use)
 25 Hectares of ricefields used by other villagers
 4 to 5 hectares of 'gardens'
 Headman: Visian (not at meeting)
 Deputy Headman: Samlan
 2nd Deputy (former teacher): Savath
 Elder: Pho Peu
 Parent Committee: Khammang
 Villager: Pho Ken

This year there has been flooding and many rodents (the bamboo flowered and died),
 This year there has not been enough rice to eat. Most years there is almost enough.

From the IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature) NTFP (Non-Timber Forest Products) project the villagers gained; a rice bank, one well, family planning training, fish and frog conservation, rules for wildlife conservation, no guns, land allocation
 Other sources of income: small amount of malva nut collection, kisi resin, rattan, edible forest leaves.
 If someone puts in an order, villagers will make rattan tables
 Cultivating cardamom did not work out.
 Some growing of mushrooms takes place.
 Villagers have stopped engaging in wildlife hunting and trapping.
 3 families have more than enough; 10 middle families, 20 poor families
 93 water buffalo, 3 cows, no televisions, 2 rice mills, 2 tractors,
 No motorcycles,
 Sometimes villagers go to Paksong district to pick coffee

Education

Students

22 Students (7 girls)

Grade 1: 12 (3)

Grade 2: 3 (1)

Grade 3: 7 (3)

About 4 (2) children dropped out before finishing grade 3

Children must cross the deep Houay (stream) Ta-Euang to go to grade 4 and 5 in Ban Phalay Bok

Kids could walk to Ban Ta Ong if there were grades 4 and 5 there.

Not enough materials for teachers and students

Some irregular attendance due to usual reasons

School hours: 8:00 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. + 2:00 until 4:30

Teachers

Teacher: Boualay Selephouthone, 37 years old, born in Ban Ba Ow, on the banks of the Mekong in Pathoumphone district.

He graduated grade 8 (3rd year of high school)

He studied for 4 years in Paksong, doing education department teacher upgrading during term breaks.

Teacher teaches regularly. He missed 10+ days last year.

School

96 roofing sheets, 7 left over, teacher used extra roofing sheets for teachers house. Villagers would like a school with 3 classrooms.

Problems

In some families children help parents by taking care of younger siblings

No one has gone to grade 4

Not enough education materials, no books, no portable libraries

No water at school, Villagers would like to move school to location where students will have a place to play

Nobody goes to grade 4 or 5 in Ban Phalay Bok because it is too difficult to cross the Ta-Euang stream.

Strengths

Teacher is married to a local woman and has taught for 12 years. He plans to stay in the village teaching for many more years.

Villagers are willing to provide labour and wood to build a new school.

Students could commute to Ban Ta Ong if there were grades 4 and 5 established there.

We arose early the next day, May 19, and hiked back to Ban Palai Bok taking a short cut. From there we took a small truck to about 25 kilometers and got off at neighbouring village from where we hiked to the last of the ten villages we surveyed. We had to cross a few logs over some streams as we hiked the four kms. to Ban Houay Ko.

Village #10 Ban Houay Ko

Ethnicity: Brao (Lave)
 Population: 130 (68 Female)
 Families: 24
 Households: 23
 3 families middle, 20 families poor
 Headman: Khampheun
 1st Deputy: Bounleung
 2nd Deputy: Bounsoum
 1st Elder: Pho Bounyoung
 2nd Elder: Pho Po
 3rd Elder: Pa Mee
 Lao Women's Union: Bounma
 Army: Thongbai
 Police: Baolay
 Youth: Te
 Head of Village Unit (10 Households): Keo
 Secretary of Party: Khampheng
 Deputy: Nuphan

The village has been located for 27 years at its present site. Before that it was situated 1 km. away, for a very long time.

Long ago (100+ years) the villagers came from Ban Hun Dao in Phouvong district in Attapeu province. They have distant cousins back there.

40 Water buffalo, 2 cows, no tractors, no generators, no rice mills,
3 b+w televisions

21 Hectares of rice fields. In some places they plant rice using a stick
There is a lot of flooding.

Half the villagers do wet rice cultivation; half do swidden agriculture;
There have never been any development projects here

Other sources of income;

malva nuts, cardamom, small amounts of kisi resin

Other villagers came and overharvested the rattan from the surrounding forest.
They sell a lot of fish. Near the village there is a swamp which has water year-round.

Sometimes villagers sell their labour to other villages.

Some villagers go to work in Paksong district. Small amount of income from turtles and monitor lizards, and pangolins (scaly anteaters).

Villagers sell some bananas, tubers, bamboo shoots.

Land is good for growing casava

Education

Khamsen of Ban Kiat Nyong is head of school area

Students

20+ students

Grades 1 to 3; Grade 4 in Ban Gian Nyong, 4 kms. away

Teachers

Teacher lives in Ban Na Lan 3.5 kms. away. He travels back and forth.
Phouthon from Houay Ko was the teacher for 1 year, then went away. He came back in September 2000 at the beginning of the present school year.
Teacher hasn't come to school since the Lao New Year in mid-April. Teacher teaches about 40% of the time. He grows both wet and dry rice. Teacher doesn't consult enough with villagers.

School

Villagers built the school themselves. Government provided nails only.

Problems

.Present location of school is too muddy.
No students studying grade 4 at the present time.
Teacher can stay in villagers' houses. Last year there was no teacher, so there were no classes. No text books for students. The school is broken down. The wooden roof has many holes. Villagers paid the teacher themselves in 1978. There is no water source at or near the school. In the village there are only two open wells.

Strengths

Villagers are willing to provide labour to build a school at a new location. Village headman claimed that some villagers were able to collect 30 to 50 kilos of malva nuts this year. Villagers did not allow logging in their protected forest area.
(Villagers in nearby Ban Thong Pha allowed a lot of logging of old trees in their village forest area.)

Field Survey Summary Meeting

A meeting was held at the Champasak Province Education Office on May 25, 2001.

Attending the meeting were the following;

Mr. Kikeo:	Head of Administration
Nang Ketsana:	Head of normal education for primary schools in Champasak province-pedagogical training
Mr. Thong Feuang:	Deputy Director of Education Department
Siphong Lathsimma:	Deputy Chief of non-formal education
Done Phoummachan	Chief of Champasak province non-formal education
Sivixay Bainami	Pathoumphone district non-formal education officer
Ian Baird	President of GAPE
Monty Sly	Vice-president of GAPE and Project Supervisor

Problems at the schools in each of the ten villages surveyed were summarized. We emphasized our willingness to provide educational support, provided the teacher problem in each village was corrected first.

Nang Ketsana will make a plan for teacher training for teachers from all districts in the province. Training may take place including teachers from other villagers not involved with our project, in order to train enough people at the same time.

Two officials from the Pathoumphone district education office will be assigned to the project; Sivixay and another from Elementary Education.

In July, Ian will contact Don and let him know if the funding came through. They will make a plan for teacher training and have it ready by July. Sivixay will make a construction plan for schools in Ban Lao Nya and in Ban Nong Ping, and for a teacher's house in Ban Houay Ton

Don will prepare a trip report and will get information about courses at the Km. 15 Non Formal Education Training Centre.

Sivixay will talk with district officials about teacher problems, and may make transfers of some teachers.

UNICEF and ESCAP are the only other organizations which have worked previously in the education field in Pathoumphone district.

Ethnic populations of Pathoumphone District, Champasak province

Lao:	42,386
Brao:	1,081
J'rou:	740
Nyeh:	553
Souay:	102
Oy:	69
Nyaheun:	55
Katang:	23
Yeh:	21
Alak:	20
Kaseng:	9
Katou:	8
In:	6
Khmu:	6
Pako:	5
Taliang:	3

The Global Association for People and the Environment has elected to provide educational support in the ten villages surveyed. Further reports will be prepared quarterly on progress and results achieved.