



Nam Theun 2 Public Health Support Program handover to the Government of Laos

Thakhek, December 11, 2013 – The Nam Theun 2 Public Health Support Program has been handed over to Government of Laos after 9 years of successful implementation and extensive capacity building in project affected areas. The ceremony was held in Thakhek District, Khammouane Province, attended by Associate Professor Bounkong Sihavong, Deputy Minister of Health, the Khammouane Provincial Governor, related government units and representatives from the Nam Theun 2 Power Company, World Bank, Lao-Luxembourg, World Vision, International Support and Partnership for Health (ISAPH), and other project stakeholders.

NTPC's Public Health Support Program started in mid 2005 with the aim of strengthening the capacity of local health services and to improve health infrastructure regionally.

NTPC's Public Health Support Program focused on 93 villages in four districts around the project area (Nakai, Khamkeuth, Gnommalath, and Mahaxai Districts). The program consists of five main intervention areas such as infrastructure development, capacity building, health education and awareness, health service delivery development, monitoring and surveillance.

The NTPC Public Health Support Program made significant improvements towards the well-being and health of project affected people and their families as evidenced by several measures such as: reduction of child mortality rates from 120 per 1000 to 50 per 1000 live births and nutritional status of children under 5 years improved significantly with a reduction of stunting from 43% to 34% and underweight children from 28% to 18%. More than 90% of children in the resettlement areas are now vaccinated for common disease and the general population's parasitic infestation in the resettlement areas was reduced from 60% to 21%. The use of family planning methods has also increased steadily. Significantly improved and much closer access to health care facilities resulted in a rapid increase in the utilization health services.

More than a thousand health officials received training and study tours and the accumulative number of people involved in health education and awareness events has reached more than 200,000 people. In addition, the special program on the prevention of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) including HIV/AIDS for high risk groups and public at large has been carried out successfully.

According to Associate Professor Bounkong Sihavong, the program is one of the best examples of capacity building and health delivery service improvement in Laos. The ministry of health can learn a lot from this program and will continue to provide support to

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provincial health division in implementing the program in sustainable manner as well as applying this lesson to other provinces in the country. “The Nam Theun 2 Public Health Support Program has successfully implemented in the project area and made remarkable change in the health of villagers; especially, the reduction of child mortality rates, nutritional status of children under 5 years improved, primary healthcare. These match to ministry’s policy in achieving millennium goals.” Ass. Prof. Dr Bounkong said.

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