

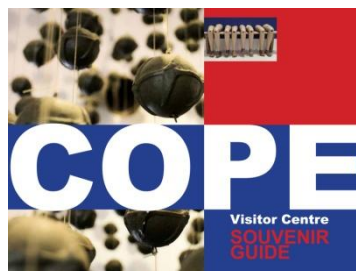


COPE Newsletter November 2014

Latest news

New COPE Visitor Center souvenir book

COPE is proud to present its new *COPE Visitor Center Souvenir Guide* which has been developed by the Visitor Center founder Jo Pereira with financial support from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The book accompanies the permanent exhibition and contains extra information and photographs to help visitors get the most out of the exhibition, including answers to the questions most frequently asked by the many visitors who have seen the exhibition over the past few years. The book will be sold at the Visitor Center. Thanks Jo for all your great work!



COPE is...

The Cooperative Orthotic and Prosthetic Enterprise. We are a

local not for profit organisation that provides support to the Government of Laos' orthotic, prosthetic, and rehabilitation services throughout the country. COPE also supports patients who come to the rehabilitation centers. COPE advocates for survivors of bomb accidents and people with disabilities in Laos.

FAST FACTS

35%

Of COPE-supported patients who fitted with the prosthetic are from bomb accidents.

4361

Visitors to the Visitor Center during the third quarter of 2014!

In this edition

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- ✓ COPE services
- ✓ Evaluation of US support
- ✓ Meet our patient Lung Ka
- ✓ Visitor Center Update
- ✓ COPE Fundraiser
- ✓ COPE staff

COPE Services

Reducing barriers to access

What are the obstacles to access for patients who are eligible for services at the COPE-supported rehabilitation centers? This was a key question for the follow-up visits conducted by the COPE Connect outreach team in Huapan, Khammouan, and Champasack during the last months. Three visits have now taken place in districts where initial assessment visits have been organized in the past to better understand why assessed and invited patients did not show up to their appointment at the rehabilitation centers. A total of 49 people were interviewed. A significant number of people (38) said they preferred to receive the service closer to their homes, at the district hospital. More than half worried about the treatment and were unsure about the policies related to this. Other reasons mentioned were difficulties related to leaving the home or fields unattended, or to transport concerns. As many as 29 people said they preferred to travel to the provincial

rehabilitation center in a larger group. Some patient categories, such as patients with cerebral palsy or others who might need orthotic devices but currently manage during their current day to day activities did not see the benefit of receiving a device and feared that the device would cause more difficulties when used in terms of getting wet or dirty. COPE is now taking this information into account for its current planning to ensure that obstacles to access are further reduced in the future.



Patient story

Lung Ka is a 60 year old farmer. He is married with seven children and lives in Thatdak village, Paklai district in Xaiyabury province in the northern part of Laos. He was fitted with his fourth new prosthesis from COPE in August after his previous one was worn out.

The differences experienced after being fitted with the prosthetic.

In 1965, Lung Ka was injured by unexploded ordnance while he was on duty as a soldier in Kewkajum village in Xiengnguen district in Louang

Prabang province, and had to have his leg amputated. He told us that before he received the prosthesis he faced many difficulties both in terms of physical and mental health. However, since he received the artificial leg, his life is much better. "I am able to move around in more comfort and can take care of myself, so I don't need my wife and children to look after me all the time." Now Lung Ka spends his time doing the housework and growing vegetables.



Lung Ka was fitted with his 4th prosthetic at the rehabilitation center in Vientiane

Thank you!

On behalf of the rehabilitation team and Lungka, we would like to thank you for your kind support. It is vital for our project to help more people with disabilities like Lung Ka to participate in a normal and active life.

Evaluation of 3 years of US support

An external evaluation was conducted in July to assess the results of the support received from USAID between 2011 and 2014. COPE received USD1.4 million from USAID over a three and a half year project period, focusing on developing the national capacity of the Lao rehabilitation program and in particular provide improved orthotic services for people with disabilities.

The evaluation showed that a significant majority of the planned outputs were delivered and that many of the project activities can be viewed as successful. During the grant period, USAID support enabled COPE and its government partner Center for Medical Rehabilitation (CMR) to provide 3515 patients with orthotic or prosthetic (P&O) devices. Of these patients, 993 were women or girls, and 2519 men or boys. In addition to providing P&O devices free of charge, the USAID support enabled COPE to cover the costs related to patients' transport to and from the five rehabilitation centers, and their food and accommodation during the treatment period, to ensure that costs would not be an obstacle for any patient with physical rehabilitation needs. In addition, COPE organized a number of trainings for CMR staff at the five

CMR rehabilitation centers to ensure that the government's clinical and technical staff have the relevant skills and can ensure the necessary quality of the patient services.

The evaluation also highlighted areas that can be improved to ensure that the necessary long term capacity is built in CMR and that systems for quality management and impact monitoring are developed. USAID has committed to continuing these efforts through additional support over a new three year period.

COPE FUNRAISERS

William & Mary International Relations Club

Many people kindly give us donations to support our work through the website or when they come to the Visitor Center in Vientiane. Some people go a step further and support our work by organizing an activity to raise needed funds. Below is the account from one of our important fundraisers, explaining what they did and what inspired them:



My name is Taylor Renard, I was the Service Chair of the College of William & Mary's International Relations Club for the 2013-2014 school year.

To support COPE at our university, we worked on both educating our fellow students and raising money to donate. We primarily educated people by hosting "We Use Humor to COPE" movie nights, where we would screen a documentary about COPE and its work or unexploded ordnance and its effects, then play a comedic film. Our fundraising efforts were spread throughout the year, primarily at the Model United Nations (MUN) conferences that we host for middle school, high school, and college students.

Overall, William and Mary's International Relations Club managed to raise \$5,000 USD for COPE. We plan to donate it in the fall, when we return to school, and we are looking forward to helping make a difference, or at least helping support a wonderful cause. Thank you for your hard work with an organization we were so happy to support!

What's going on
at the Visitor Center?

Special guests galore!

During the third quarter of 2014 we have been pleased to welcome a number of special guests and visitors to the centre including:

The Australian Foreign Minister, Julia Bishop

In July Ms Julia Bishop, Australian Foreign Minister, visited COPE. She was accompanied by the Vice Minister of Health, Dr SomOrk Kingsada.



They toured the visitor center to learn about the physical rehabilitation services available to people with disabilities in Laos as well as the challenges presented by UXO.



Two Members of Parliament from Australia, Dr Dennis Jensen and Mr Graham Perrett

In September, we had the honor to host the visit of Dr Dennis Jensen and Mr Graham Perrett, both Members of Parliament from Australia. Below are some messages they left after the visit:

This centre is doing outstanding in ensuring that people affected by UXO are allowed to gain a far better life experience. This is very important work, and all associated are to be highly recommended. Outstanding!

1 August celebration

COPE and the Center of Medical Rehabilitation (CMR) organized a major sporting activity in line with the worldwide theme to promote universal ratification and accession to the Convention on Cluster Munitions as part of the anniversary of the convention's entry into force on 1st of August 2014.



A Petanque Friendship tournament took place as a half day advocacy event between teams representing a range of different departments from CMR and Ministries of the Lao Government. We left it open for everyone to join since the purpose was to raise awareness within a wide audience. More than 50 people participated in the event.

COPE STAFF

P&O Rehabilitation Adviser

Mr Venkatakannan Packirisamy started working in July as COPE's P&O Rehabilitation Adviser. Venkat has extensive experience from physical rehabilitation programs in various countries, including six years with the ICRC. He will play an important role in ensuring technical and other input to COPE's efforts to strengthen the long-term



national capacities in the rehabilitation sector in Laos. Welcome Venkat!

Goodbye to Somchay and Ning and Noy



Somchay joined COPE in 2009 as P&O Assistant. From 2011 she worked as OT Assistant until she became COPE's CMR Coordinator in 2013.



Ning joined COPE in September 2013 as a National Project Officer.

Noy worked with COPE since 2009 as an Admin & Procurement Officer.



Thank you all for your dedication to support the work of COPE. Although we are sad to see you leave us we wish you all the best in your future work. We will miss you!

Many thanks to our supporters...



Australian Government
AusAID



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

And special thanks to all the individuals, visitors and local businesses who generously support us throughout the year!

Connect with us:



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