



GVI Laos 2018 Annual Report



Objectives:

- To develop relationships with educational institutions and temples with the aim of increasing their ability to provide educational opportunities
- To improve quality of education in Laos for students taught by GVI: Improve students' English language ability
- To provide educational opportunities to all students in the local community, regardless of socio-economic status, ethnicity and gender: To provide equal educational opportunities for both females and males
- To provide health, life-skills and vocational classes to the local community
- Improving employment opportunities and socioeconomic status of community members.
- To increase access to sexual and reproductive health education for women.
- To increase the supply of qualified teachers by providing training and practical experience to locals interested in the field of education.

2018 was a big year for GVI Laos in Luangprabang. We had a lot of changes to our programs, we started several new partnerships with the aim of increasing access to quality education and decent work and economic growth. 140 volunteers from 20 different countries joined us on project working towards UN sustainable development goal number 4, which refers to equal access to quality education. Although education is our cornerstone, we also use education to work towards some of the other goals such as Goals 5- gender equality, 8-decent work and economic growth, and 10- reduced inequalities; and as an effect we hope to work towards some of the targets relating to Goals 1- No poverty, 2- zero hunger, and 3- good health and well-being.

At the Bright Center, our Novice and Young Adults programs were re-aligned and expanded to better cater for the growing demand in different levels of English. We have consequently split the groups into Beginner, Elementary and Pre-intermediate groups, an exciting prospect as we are now able to reach a wider audience, as well as allowing our on-going students to advance and consolidate their knowledge. This enables us to work towards UN SDG 4 by increasing the quality of the education we provide through our classes to the students, and increasing the number of students who have access to these classes.

Meanwhile in our WEP classes we've been able to re-align the classes to suit a wider range of levels. The lower level class has merged with some of the students from the Kids program who we deemed ready to move on with their curriculum in the 'C' class, whilst a new set 'B class' was created for those students who were ready to complete the beginner course they had been working on.

In addition to continuing on their English language curriculum, students in our highest level English class (WEP A) have also been using the "Goodnight stories for Rebel Girls" books to simultaneously learn and practice their English while reading about inspirational women from all over the world throughout history and discussing the common themes within this and thinking about their own future plans.

Throughout the year we've also run many workshops with the female students in our evening classes including: computing workshops, menstrual health workshops, nutrition workshops, and workshops around topics of empowerment and other relevant subjects. Working to empower women in their choices and helping to provide them with skills they can use for future employment and to increase their independence. Not only working towards gender equality but also decent work and economic growth for all peoples regardless of gender and ethnic background.

Moving into the new year, we hope to increase the consistency of our students' attendance by enacting attendance guidelines for all students to follow, and maintain a consistent program following the Face to Face curriculum in 3 levels: Beginner, Elementary and Pre- Intermediate for our WEP and Young Adults program.

Over the summer GVI Laos returned to teach at the Luang Prabang Library; this year we focused largely on reading. Using the Jolly Phonics curriculum we have slowly worked our way through each of the sounds, which we hope





will benefit the students as they start their new term at school! Most of the students in this program are primary school age, which enables us to work towards target 4.6. We also focused on teaching using English learning songs along with specific actions and dances to engage the students. We hope to continue and strengthen this partnership in the coming months by creating another similar summer program this year for young students in the community to join.



In 2018 we reimagined our long-standing partnership with Wat Pha O going back to Pha O in much more of an assisting capacity. There were many struggles with this new style of partnership- as many people wondered why we were teaching from poorly written government textbooks and working alongside teachers whose own English was in some cases lower than the students'. However, we've chosen to continue this partnership because of the long-term sustainability of teaching alongside Lao teachers, and exposing 500 students, who otherwise would rarely have an opportunity to practice with a native speaker, to native or fluent English speech. We

have seen small advances in the skills of the teachers, and have seen how eager the students are to practice their speech and grammar with our volunteers.

However, during the summer we were able to take advantage of high novice volunteer numbers to start a pre-term summer program at Wat Pha O, one of our local temple school partners. During the regular term WPO school has over 500 students, but in the summer only a small fraction of those students, about 65 students, decided to come for extra English





practice. We started with a beginner and an elementary class, giving these students as much practice speaking and learning grammar as we could, at their request. Then, after many new novices were ordained in the temple, they asked to join our classes as well, so we set up a pre-beginner class for these students to learn phonics, numbers, and other very simple English phrases. We have seen how these students who learned their phonics and basic vocabulary over the summer were able to excel in the regular term so we hope the students in our summer classes will spread the word for other students next summer!

This year GVI Laos partnered with Saffron Coffee and Cafe to provide vocational English workshops to their cafe staff. Saffron is a wonderful social enterprise in Luang Prabang working directly with local communities to provide economic opportunities and new skills through coffee farming! Saffron is committed to the development of their staff, including those who work in their cafe and they have an emphasis on empowering local females. They wished to provide these staff with extra English language training to allow them to improve their vocational English for their work, diversify their skill sets and get salary increases! Each day, 13 saffron employees (10 females and 3 males) joined GVI to study vocational English on topics directly related to their work including, the saffron food menu and each dishes corresponding ingredients, the saffron drinks and dessert menu, kitchen vocabulary, commonly asked cafe questions and complaints, as well as common sentences and roles plays that are needed for cashiers and waiters/waitresses. The students have made fantastic progress and their confidence has grown both in the classroom and back in the cafe where they are starting to increase the English they use with their customers! In addition, 2 of the students have now become the first ever female cashiers at Saffron!

After the success of the program with the women from Saffron, GVI decided to offer our classes to other hotels and service providers in the local community. The aim of these project is to improve the individuals' confidence in English communication, which will help with their employability. We hope that students interested in joining our classes and the companies that send them, will see a marked improvement in their English skills which will enable these employees to seek



advancement opportunities in their work and take this very marketable skill with them in their future endeavours.

Our Laos Buffalo Dairy partnership has continued to provide many different programs to groups of men, women and children from the villages surrounding the farm. Our workshops have included vocational vocabulary and conversational English training for a group of women who sell their weaving products in Ban Thinkeo (next to the farm), vocational English for a group of nurses from the local clinic, and a summer program for kids.



As well as this we have reached more students who come from the nearby high-school, and continued to support the staff who come through the buffalo farm. In total, we have taught over 50 students, and continue to get growing numbers in our regular classes.

We've also been happy to continue our work with Wat Mano Primary School, a local government school on the grounds of Mano temple. This year we also worked on a project through the GVI Trust to help improve the quality of the school infrastructure, by supporting local contractors to build new walls, floors, desks and chairs and to improve the electricity so that the students can actually use the fans during the hot summer months! Our partnership with Wat Mano is really focusing on UN SDG targets 4.2: Early childhood development and universal primary education, and 4.6: Universal youth literacy. Out at Wat Mano we have been asked to teach the Novice students English from Monday to Friday for about an hour a day. It's important to note that generally students will only study a class for 2-3 hours per week, so these students will have all the advantage in their early years being able to learn the practical skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking. All of the students passed their exams with excellent marks before the end of the spring term, which demonstrates their increased literacy skills in English.



In addition to our classes, we had 4 National Scholars this year. These young locals, applied, interviewed and were accepted into our National Scholar program. They participated in our TEFL trainings, taught classes alongside our volunteers, helped to translate in our classes and developed and delivered different presentations for volunteers about different aspects of Lao culture. One NSP in particular, Miss Nin, not only worked with GVI as an NSP, but helped to develop a microenterprise with her family and applied and was accepted to the National University and Teacher Training College in Luangprabang, where she chose to attend to continue her English teaching Education.

Two of our NSPs, Nin and Tarn, and our Community Liaison, LyLy, all worked with Program Manager Leyla Isin to help organize and deliver Days for Girls menstrual health workshops in rural villages in Luang Prabang province, reaching hundreds of women who would otherwise not have access to a clean, healthy means of managing their menstrual blood. This project directly works towards target 5.6: to ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights. In Laos women living in the city may have access to menstrual pads or even tampons, if they wish to use them, but in the more rural villages women either have no access or otherwise don't have the means to afford disposable pads. This means women will often use an old piece of ripped clothing to soak up the blood, which can be dangerous if it's not cleaned properly and often isn't comfortable for the women. In 2018 the Laos Days for Girls Team successfully managed to build up the capacity of the local leaders of this team to become a freestanding team through Days for Girls, though GVI Laos will always be here to support them! Also this year 3 males had the opportunity to join the 3 women ambassadors as the first 3 males in Lao to be awarded the Days for Girls Ambassador of Women's Health certification. We hope these men will have a role in educating other men about the topic of Women's reproductive health. In November, after an incredible kit packing challenge where students and volunteers teamed up to pack over 200 kits, and raise over 5,000 USD towards the Days for Girls project, our Community Liaison and one of the male Ambassadors of Women's Health delivered a workshop to many of the males in our evening classes while Nin, Tarn and LyLy delivered workshops for the females.