



COPE Newsletter MARCH 2014

Latest news

COPE Management Trip to two Northern Provinces with the Vice Minister of Health and CMR Director

On March 2014, COPE's Management team had the pleasure of hosting the Vice Minister of Health, Dr Sihavong Bounkong, and CMR Director Dr



Khamphet Manivong on a visit to the northern Provincial Rehabilitation Centres in Xieng Khuang and Luang Prabang. They met with the relevant health authorities and PRC staff regarding current and future work and visited the centres. It was a great opportunity to showcase the CMR and COPE partnership and what we can do working together.



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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 centres. 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.

6000

Visitors to the Visitor Centre across the first quarter of 2014! It's a highest number ever of the season.

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COPE Services

PT/OT Peer to Peer Training Workshop 4-6 March 2014
Xieng Khuang Province

This year, the staff at the Provincial Rehabilitation Centres will conduct nation-wide peer to peer training workshops facilitated by COPE and CMR.

These workshops are led by the host PRC, foster exchange between the physiotherapy (PT) and occupational therapy (OT) departments across the country and give them an opportunity to share information, discuss difficult cases, identify future training needs and have refresher courses on topics that they identify as important.

In addition, it is helping them build up good administrative and accounting practices as they go through COPE's planning, implementation, and reporting processes.

Each quarter a Peer to Peer training workshop will take place in a different PRC. This month it was in Xieng Khuang and was attended by 24 staff from

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Vientiane, Luang Prabang, Oudomxai, Savannakhet, Pakse and Xieng Khuang provinces.

Mirror Therapy

Stephen Sumner is on a mission to spread the benefits of mirror therapy to amputees across South East Asia. As an amputee who has experienced phantom limb pain himself, he knows the devastation that can come with this type of pain which can range from tingling, burning sensation to sharp unexpected pains. Then



he came across Mirror Therapy.

With the aid of a mirror he went on to completely cure himself of Phantom Limb Pain. And now he is riding his bike across Laos and Cambodia to seek out amputees that could benefit from this therapy. When they see him coming on a bicycle and wearing a prosthesis the ice is immediately broken and he has his chance to help.

As COPE is already well established within the Lao P&O sector he made contact with us and asked if it was possible to deliver his message to amputees, therapists and P&O clinicians. CMR agreed to this plan, and a training session in Vientiane was organized.

This was a great chance to learn something new for all the participants who included around 60 physiotherapists, occupational therapists, and P&O staff. All participants involved left with a mirror and hopefully they will continue to teach and use this mirror whenever they come across an amputee with phantom limb pain. Approximately 90% of all amputees experience this type of pain.

Patient story: Sitha



Sitha was fitted with his 3rd prosthesis at the rehabilitation centre in Vientiane

Sitha is 50 years old. He lives in Oudomphon village, Xaithany district in Vientiane Capital. On average, there are around 1,000 people who receive orthotic and prosthetic devices from the CMR every year. In circumstances that the patients can't afford the care fee, they will be provided treatment, food and accommodation free of charge.

The differences experienced after being fitted with the prosthetic.

Sitha was severely injured in a road accident in 2009 where his leg was crushed by a car. This caused him to have an amputation and he found this a great barrier to having a normal life. "I tried to commit suicide because I felt hopeless," said Sitha. Luckily, he was told by his neighbour about COPE and the Centre for Medical Rehabilitation. He now has just has been fitted with his third prosthesis in February 2014. Due to wear and tear, prostheses generally need to be replaced every couple of years. He told us that the prosthesis has enabled him a lot in terms of mobility and self-confidence. "I now can walk and have a normal life, so I'm more optimistic and satisfied with what I have," said Sitha.

Thank you!

On behalf of the rehabilitation team and Sitha, we would like to thank you for your kind support. Your support is vital so that our project can help more people with disabilities like Sitha to participate in a normal and active life.

COPE FUNRAISERS

95th Birthday celebration of
Madame Marguerite Garnier



Madame Marguerite Garnier from France celebrated her 95th birthday last year and instead of presents asked her children, grand children, great grand children, nieces and nephews to donate money to COPE. 2,035 EUR (2,700 USD) was collected and transferred to COPE in January.

The photo from the celebration shows Madame Garnier surrounded by her 8 children, 27 grand children and 37 great grand children. 34 nieces and nephews are missing from the photo.

Thank you so much to Madame Garnier and your generous family, people like you are vital for ensuring the necessary support for people with disabilities in Laos.



What's going on
at the Visitor Centre?

Special guests galore!

The year 2013 was busy and also the first quarter of 2014. We have been pleased to welcome a number of special guests and visitors to the centre including:



Zambia's Foreign Minister

On Wednesday 19th, March 2014, COPE Visitor Centre was honoured to welcome M. Wylbur C. Simuusa, MP, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Zambia. M. Simuusa is also the President of the Fourth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which took place in Zambia in September last year.

Many thanks
to our
supporters...

ICRC Special Fund for the Disabled



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COPE STAFF



CMR COORDINATOR

Somchay Ounsamone joined COPE in 2001 as the P&O mentor Assistant. She went on to work in a number of roles and is currently the CMR coordinator. Her role at COPE now is to assist in cooperation and expanding the PT/OT and ToT practice through training Lao local staff and also following up the staff that have been trained.

“By working with the COPE team and government colleagues, I have gained extensive knowledge about the many aspects of our work. I trust that my skills and personality - to work well in a team environment, as well as independently - are relevant to the work of our organization” said Somchay.



NORWEGIAN MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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