



FINAL STUDY
EQUIVALENCY PROGRAM CLASSES IN LAO PDR



DVV International Laos
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List of Abbreviations

CLC	Community Learning Centre
DNFE	Department for Non-Formal Education
DNFEC	District Non-Formal Education Centre
DVV International	German Adult Education Association
EP	Equivalency Program
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NFEC	Non-Formal Education Centre
PNFEC	Province Non-Formal Education Centre
PESS	Provincial Education and Sports Service

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Executive Summary

The key activity of all Non-Formal Education Centres (NFEC) in Lao PDR are the Equivalency Program (EP) classes. The (EP) provides knowledge and skills with an alternative opportunity to finish primary or secondary education. The target group includes people, who lack the opportunity to receive formal education, people that have dropped out of school as well as people interested in gaining knowledge. Besides fundamental subjects that are similar to formal education, it also includes Basic Vocation, Quality of Life Improvement and Social and Community Development. At the end of the completion of the program, the participants receive a certificate equivalent to the formal education. Nevertheless, its equal recognition to formal education is not yet widely known among the population and the transition between the formal and Non-Formal Education (NFE) system remains weak or non-existent.

The study will examine findings on the experiences of learners and alumni participating in the EP classes as well as from teachers in the provinces of Xiengkhoung, Savannakhet, and Vientiane capital. The study will give an insight into the participants motivation, the impact of the courses on their living conditions/ well-beings after completion the program and will provide information about their experiences after the end of the course. Additionally, teachers will give an impression into their experiences of teaching in the EP classes. The aim of the study will contribute to the NFE system to better understand about the needs and intentions of participants and will also provide a better overview for the need to increase the permeability between formal and NFE.

It has found that many of the participants study in NFE for their personal benefit to gain and improve knowledge as well as to obtain the certificate and with this to enter the next step, the wish for further studies. Besides these reasons, finding a job and to receive vocational training that can be used for their income generating activities are additional factors why participants want to attend the program. It is remarkable to note that most of the participants report how much the EP has helped providing them with significantly more knowledge. According to them, the program did not only help in knowledge development, such as reading, writing and calculation. Rather, it provides social skills, such as the improvement of their communication with others, that led to the fact that many of them gained self-confidence, felt better integrated into the society and were able to make friends. The new gained knowledge along with the practical skills have been found as very useful for their life after the course ended. These helped in their daily businesses, while many of the graduates reported of having gained a higher income after completing the program with some of them having found a job.

However, not all people who could benefit from the program are reached. Distance between the participants homes and the location of the NFEC as well as the integration of work and education in their daily life represent, besides other challenges, major deficits for the (regular) participation in the program. Raising awareness of the EP and its equivalence with formal education, as well as integrating the potential of online learning in its program, including training local staff to build on their skills and more needs assessment will be required.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background Information

The NFE System is an integral part of the Lao education system addressing the needs of all target groups that have dropped out of the formal education system or were never part of it. The major responsibilities of the NFE system are to support Formal Education by providing a new choice for educational service for these persons that has equivalence to Formal Education and provide a way to study vocation for the improvement of life quality. The NFE system supports Informal Education in order to open opportunities to gain knowledge and continuing education through their life.

DVV International has been working with the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), and especially the Department of Non-Formal Education (DNFE) on improving vulnerable groups' access to NFE. NFE is offered at 18 Province Non-Formal Education Centers (PNFECs), 37 District Non-Formal Education Centres (DNFECs) and 342 Community Learning Centers (CLCs; figures according to DNFE, as per 2019). NFE in Laos focuses on EP as well as vocational training, with the overall objective to improve livelihoods. The key activity of all NFEs in Lao PDR are the EP classes. EPs provide knowledge and skills with an alternative opportunity to finish primary or secondary education. In the period from 2021 to 2022, a total of 38.752 learners joined the EP in Lao PDR (see Annex 1). The course can take place in formal lower secondary education schools, at NFEs (provincial NFE, District NFE centers), at CLCs or other facilities, such as Line Ministries institutions.¹ The target group includes people, who lack the opportunity to receive formal education, people that have dropped out of school as well as people interested in gaining knowledge. The program includes fundamental subjects that are similar to formal education as well as subjects on Basic Vocation, Quality of Life Improvement and Social and Community Development.

With the participation in these programmes the participants receive a certificate at the end of the completion of the course that is equivalent to the formal education. However, the equal recognition to formal education is not yet widely known among the population and the transition between the formal and non-formal education system remains weak or non-existent.

The study will examine findings on the experiences of learners and alumni participating in the equivalency program classes as well as from teachers in the provinces of Xiengkhoung, Vientiane capital and Savannakhet.

¹ Head of Monitoring and Evaluation Division, Department of Non-Formal Education, Lao PDR 2022. The Lao Equivalency Programme (EP) for Lower Secondary. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BX2mrut9Mcl>

1.2 Objectives of the study

Based on statistical data by NFE outlining the number of learners who participated in the EP classes in 2022, (see Annex 2), this study will provide information about their experiences after the end of the course. It will give an insight into their motivation and the impact of the courses on their living conditions/ well-beings after completion the program. Additionally, teachers will give an insight into their experiences of teaching in the Equivalency Program classes. The aim of the study will contribute to the NFE system to better understand about the needs and intentions of participants and will also provide a better overview for the need to increase the permeability between formal and non-formal education.

This report was prepared to summarize the study's methodology and findings, and to give practical recommendations for DVV International's program design. The study's findings are derived from an intensive 5-day field research phase in Xiengkhouang, Vientiane capital and Savannakhet.

The research questions guiding this assessment were provided by DVV International in cooperation with NFEDC and are as follows:

1. Do participants study in non-formal education for their personal benefit or for getting a new job, or would they like to continue in formal education.
2. Do the participants use the new gained knowledge/skills from the EP classes in their daily life and after completing the program?
3. What are the benefits and challenges of equivalency program classes?
4. What changes occurred in the student's lives after their completion of the courses?

2. Methodology and Implementation of the Study

2.1 Participants interviews

DVV International and NFEDC conducted in the period from 24 to 28 April 2023, 54 semi-structured interviews in Xiengkhouang and Savannakhet province as well as from 3 to 4 May 2023 in Vientiane capital. A flexible format of semi-structured interviews was chosen in order to prompt the interviewees to share their opinions on relevant subjects while ensuring they were able to freely express their views. The interviewees consisted of 29 students, 16 alumni

Figure 1: Locations of the selected NFEC



as well as 9 teachers from primary, lower and upper secondary school levels. They all were chosen due to their participation and experience in the EP classes.

Table 1: Target group by province

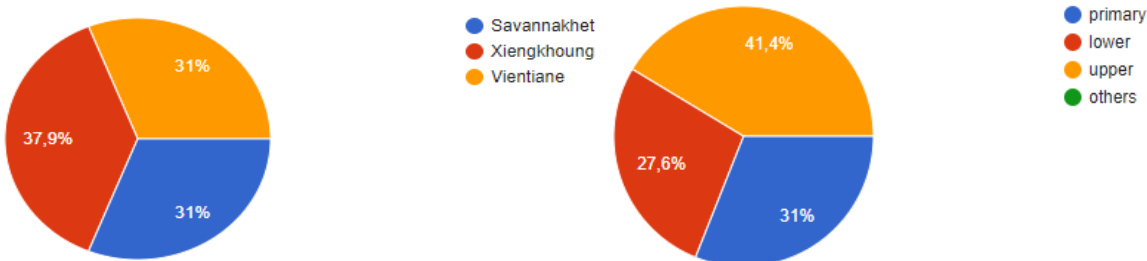
Province	Village	Participants interviewed
Savannakhet	Kaysone	3 upper secondary students 5 Alumni 1 upper secondary teacher
	Nake	3 primary students 1 primary teacher
	Nungmisay	3 students (1 upper secondary, 2 lower secondary students) 1 lower secondary teacher
Vientiane Capital	Sangthong	3 primary students 1 primary teacher
	Vientiane Capital	6 students (3 lower, 3 upper secondary students) 5 Alumni 2 teacher (1 lower, 1 upper secondary teacher)
Xiengkhoung	Phaxay	6 students (3 primary, 3 lower secondary students) 2 teacher (1 primary, 1 lower secondary teacher)
	Phonsavan	5 upper secondary students 6 Alumni 1 upper secondary teacher
TOTAL		54

Background Information about the participants

Students

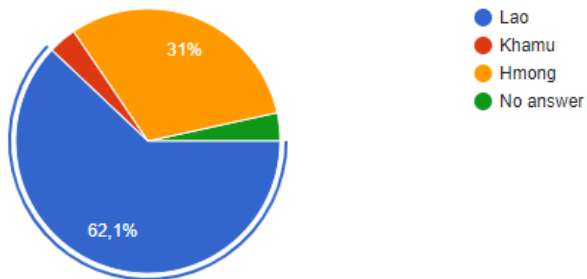
More than 40% of the interviewed students were in secondary education at the time of the survey. The mean age was 20.9 years, with the youngest at 12 and the oldest at 40.

Figure 2. Students in each province with their highest level of education



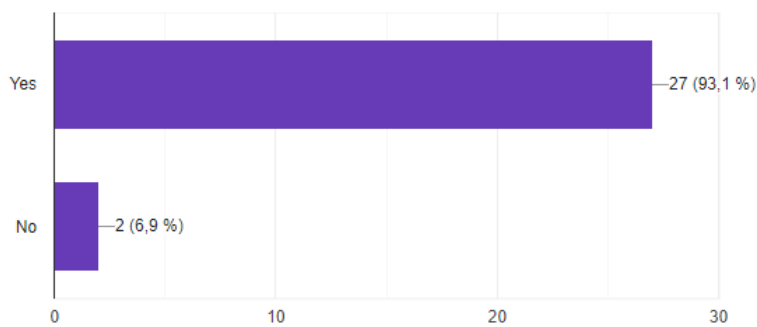
The ethnic background of the students is composed as follows:

Figure 3: Ethnic composition of students



More than 90% of the students have been in Formal Education before joining the Equivalency Program. Often, they had to drop out of school in order to gain income for their families.

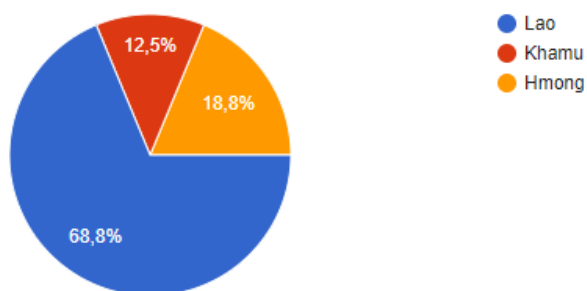
Figure 4: Proportion of students in the Formal Education System before participation in EP



Alumni

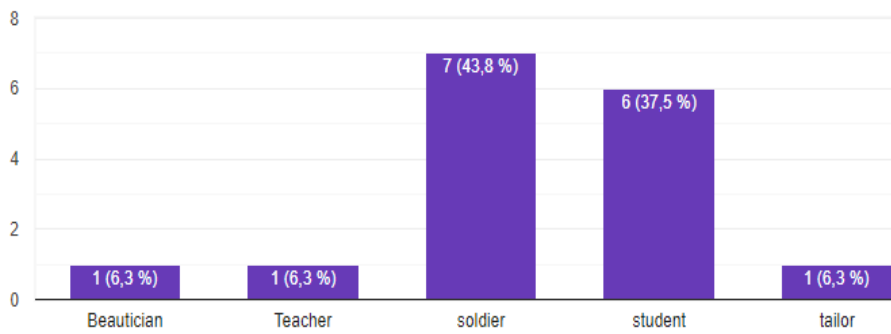
The alumni came from a wide range of age groups with the youngest participant being at age 18 and the oldest 43. The mean age is 27.5 years. The ethnic background of the alumni is composed as follows:

Figure 5: Ethnic composition of alumni



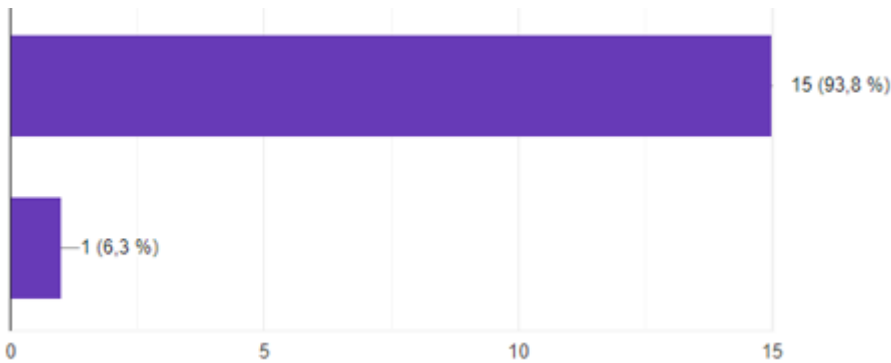
43.8 % of the interviewed alumni have been working as soldiers and participated in the EP in the district of Xiengkhoung at the Provincial NFE Center in Pek district or were students (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: Current occupation of alumni



Except for one person, all the alumni interviewed had attended Formal Education prior to their participation in the Equivalency Program (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: Proportion of alumni in the Formal Education System before participation in EP



Before joining NFE, 40% of the participants were in Grade 9 when they joined the EP classes, which represents the biggest group.

Teachers

The teacher's age is between 22 and 54 with a majority of the ethnic group of Lao.

Figure 8: Age of the teachers

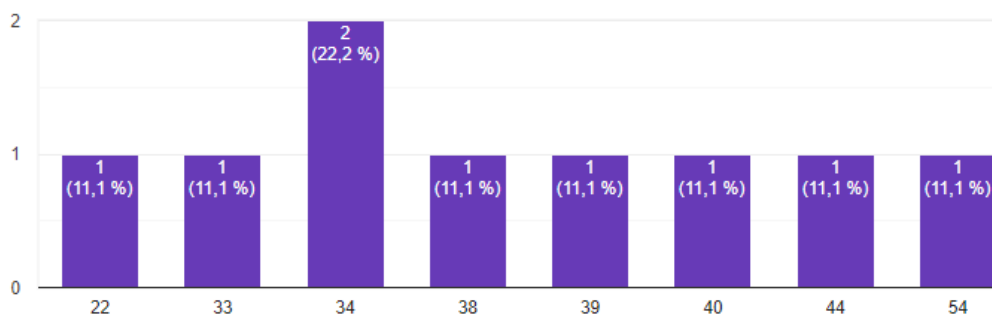
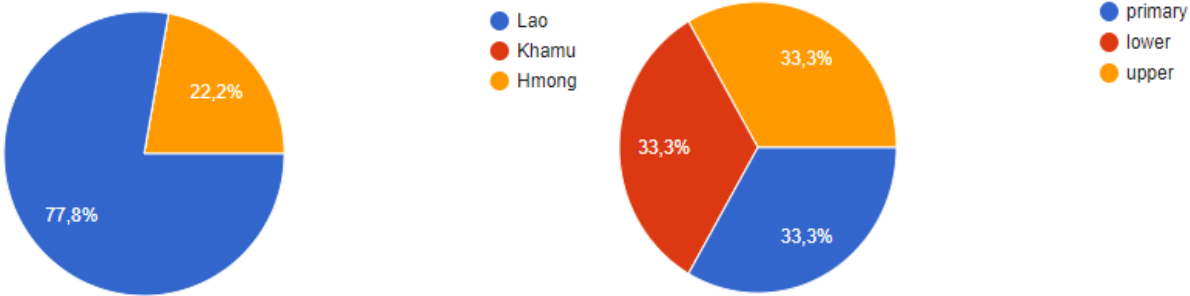


Figure 9: Ethnic composition of teachers and teaching level



The teacher’s work experiences range from 1 year to 34 years with most of them having a Higher Education degree. Some of them teach only one subject, while others teach every subject.

2.2 Selection of target regions for field research

Xiengkhoung, Vientiane capital, and Savannakhet were chosen as suitable target provinces due to a number of factors. Based on statistical data by NFE outlining the number of learners in the EP classes in 2022 (see Annex 2), it was noticeable that all three provinces had compared to other provinces, particularly at upper grade level, one of the highest numbers of participants in the EP classes. Additionally, table 2 shows the number of participants in some of the selected districts but cannot provide the number for all due to insufficient data.

Table 2: Numbers of Participants in the Equivalency Program in the selected provinces 2022-2023

Province	Participants Lower Secondary Education	Teacher	Participants Upper Secondary Education		
			Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Xiengkhoung	524	231	13	15	40
Pek (Phonsavan)	91		n.a.		
Phaxay	8	3	EP Program only in lower and primary school (primary n.a.) Total: 77		
Vientiane Capital	1487	576	55	54	174
Saysetha			n.a.	n.a.	70
Sangthong			EQ Program only in primary school		
Savannakhet	1404	550	47	47	115
Kaysone (PNF)			Total upper: 70		35
Atsaphon (rural)			EP Program only in lower and primary school (numbers for primary n.a.)		

All three provinces are differently located and border other countries. They differ in their ethnic composition, socioeconomic characteristics and geographic conditions which ensured sampling from diverse communities. Within the provinces, the study team visited the six districts Pek, Phaxay, Sangthong, Saysetha, Atsaphon, Kaysone.

The chosen provinces have been selected in accordance with NFEDC and the provincial NFE center. In Xiengkhouang province, around 400 km located north-east from Vientiane capital, bordering in the east Vietnam, data was collected in the districts of Pek and Phaxay, home to a number of different ethnic groups, among mostly Hmong. Xiengkhouang has a population of 272.000 inhabitant (2022)² and belongs to the most bombarded regions in the world.

The district of Pek has been chosen due to the District NFE Provincial Center located there, that works under the Division of PESS. It provides teaching lessons for the target group of the NFE system at lower and upper secondary school level, combined with basic vocational training. The district of Pek itself has a population of 48,643 inhabitants.³ In the province of Xiengkhouang it was originally planned to visit the district Nonghad for the conduction of interviews. However, due to bad road conditions, the team would have not been able to reach the students from primary school, which is why the team was suggested the district of Phaxay. The Phaxay district has been chosen in accordance with the NFE Provincial Center, as primary and lower secondary education is provided there.

Vientiane capital is the economic and administrative center of Lao PDR with schools, hospitals and factories. Although poverty mostly affects rural regions, the geography of poverty has shifted towards urban areas, such as in Vientiane capital from 2.5 % to 5 % and the central region, which is one of the reasons why people have to drop out of school.⁴ Within Vientiane capital, two districts have been chosen according to their geographical location. While Saysetha is urban, the district of Santhong in the north-west of Vientiane capital, bordering the Mekong river is rural located with an estimated population of 37,071 people by 2025.⁵ Even though Sangthong district is part of Vientiane capital, the characteristics of the district are similar to more remote areas. Most of the people living there are farmers, earning their income with the production of rice. With the only primary school in NFE providing EP classes, it has been another reason why this district was chosen for the study.

Saysetha district as an urban location in the south of Vientiane capital has been chosen due to the National Art School of Vientiane, which provides the equivalency program classes for secondary level I and II (lower and upper secondary school level). Additionally, the chosen school is characterized for two curricula that lead to two degrees. On the one hand, students can earn an Art degree, which at the same time offers the achievement of secondary level I and II within the EP. This gives the school a unique selling point compared to other NFE centers.

² Laos MPI LSB Yearbook 2022

³ DBCity.com 2023. <https://en.db-city.com/Lao--Xiangkhouang--Pek>

⁴ The World Bank 2020. Poverty Profile in Lao PDR. Poverty Report for the Lao Expenditure and Consumption Survey 2018-2019. <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/923031603135932002-0070022020/original/LaoPDRPovertyProfileReportENG.pdf>, p.19

⁵ Ministry of Planning and Investment Lao Statistics Bureau. District Population Projections 2015-2035. https://lao.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/population_projection_at_district_level_2015-2035_english_0.pdf

Savannakhet province belongs to one of the five poorest provinces in Laos with a poverty rate of 20.6 %⁶. Located in the middle of Laos it is the largest province, bordering Vietnam to the east and Thailand to the west. The province is with 60% covered by forest with a variety of ethnic groups living there. About 63% of the population is of working age (16-60 years old). A large portion of the population has a relatively low level of education and are engaged mainly in subsistence agricultural activities. While in the district of Kaysone data collection has been taken place at the provincial NFE centre, the district of Atsaphon was selected as it is a rural district.

The fundamental human right “access to education” is not available for all children in Laos. Ensuring quality education also means to include children from low-income families in rural areas, is a must to achieving the sustainable development goals. Even though education until grade 5 is free and obliging in Lao PDR, does not mean that everyone has access to it. Quality education is limited and difficult for many people living there. The Shortages of teachers and distance to schools remains a remarkable challenge for students in remote areas. Often teachers are paid irregularly and forced to find other jobs. As a consequence, in many locations classes taking place only a few hours a day, are overcrowded and lack learning equipment.⁷

In regard to secondary education, the net enrollment rate is 73 % whereas for the upper secondary level (grade 10 to 12) it is only 45 %. The reason of the non-completion of the secondary school cycle is found in the low demand from the communities or in grade repetition, which causes loss of interest and drop outs.⁸

In general, in secondary education more girls (10.3 %) than boys (9.7 %) drop out due to financial costs, poverty, early marriages, adolescent pregnancy and deviant behavior.⁹

There are notable gaps in enrollment rates and literacy skills across income groups, rural and urban areas, ethnic groups, and age groups.

Nearly 35% children living in households headed by someone with no formal education are poor. Poverty remains high among the poorly educated and forces children to drop out of school. In 2018, 8.51% at primary school age and 25.02% of lower secondary school age did not attend school in Laos.¹⁰ For our target provinces the completion rate in primary school in 2022 showed the following data: Xiengkhoung (89.5%), Vientiane capital (82.3%), Savannakhet (73.3%).¹¹ Reasons for high dropout rates are for example unfinished school buildings, lack of school readiness, limited teachers’ capacity, and tuition fees that families cannot afford to pay.¹² To respond to the increase of out of school children and youth, EP classes can provide an opportunity to catch up on missed knowledge and school-leaving qualifications in order to get further opportunities in life.

⁶ Ministry of Planning and Investment Lao Statistics Bureau. Poverty in Lao PDR Key findings from the Lao Expenditure and Consumption Survey, 2018-2019. https://data.laos.opendevlopmentmekong.net/en/dataset/182169a3-6f97-4ade-81fb-755267a9c54e/resource/ffcc354f-a036-46f2-af9b-710ff47b5213/download/poverty-profile_eng-editing-23.7.2020-1.pdf

⁷ Facts and Details 2019. Education in Laos: https://factsanddetails.com/southeast-asia/Laos/sub5_3d/entry-2981.html

⁸ Ivi.

⁹ United Nations (UN) Lao PDR 2021, Country Analysis Report: Lao PDR. <https://laopdr.un.org/en/171737-un-common-country-analysis>.

¹⁰ UNESCO Bangkok Office 2020. Lao PDR Unesco Country Strategy 2020–2021

¹¹ Laos MPI LSB Yearbook 2022

¹² UNESCO Bangkok Office 2020. Lao PDR Unesco Country Strategy 2020–2021

2.3 Field research

Before the field research took place, one of the main work steps included the development of the questionnaires. Therefore, from 10 to 12 April 2023, DVV International together with NFEDC jointly developed 3 questionnaires, one for students, one for alumni and one for teachers in Lao and English. Subsequently these have been tested in Vientiane Capital on 21 April 2023 with a total of 3 teachers, 3 alumni and 3 upper and 3 lower students at Naxaythong Center in Naxaythong district. After running the test phase feedback from the participants was used for further upgrading and clarifying the questions.

For the field work the NFEDC together with DVV staff split into two teams. From 24 to 28 April 2023 one team visited Xiengkhouang and the other team Savannakhet. From 3 to 4 May 2023 a part of the team collected then the data in Vientiane capital. In order to understand the conditions of the NFE school centers and to introduce our study objectives, consultation meetings with the PESS in Xiengkhouang and Savannakhet as well as a meeting with the school director and staff from PESS in Vientiane capital have been arranged. After that, the data collection could start.

The study has been implemented in the form of semi-structured personal interviews with participants of Equivalency Program classes. The questionnaires for our target groups were filled out in paper form in Lao language. The questionnaires had been created in Google Forms and printed for the field visit. For the purpose of data analysis, the study team translated Lao text to English and entered the gathered information in Google Forms.

2.4 Challenges

Thanks to a good preparation of the study team and the good pre-planning and cooperation between DVV, NFEDC, DNFE, and PESS, the original schedule for the conduction of the study could be kept. The study team was warmly welcomed and supported in its work in each province and district. Several minor challenges were encountered.

The main limit in the study is about communication with the participants in Lao language, particularly in the districts with ethnic communities who use their own mother tongue in their daily life. Therefore, in-depth interviews were more difficult or took longer but were not impossible as someone from the team was able to communicate in Hmong language, such as in the province of Xiengkhouang. This also helped to make the very shy Hmong participants, to open up and feel more confident to freely speak. Although most participants were able to understand the questions and the study team in its preparation strove to formulate questions as clear as possible, some participants had difficulties to understand the meaning of some of the questions, which sometimes resulted in guiding the participants through each question and explaining the content in more detail.

For the study team in Savannakhet, it was not only a linguistic barrier but also a time challenge. The team was confronted with time delays as some participants did not show up on time for the interviews and therefore minor changes had to be made to the schedule. Regarding the target group of alumni, it was difficult to get in touch with these ones, who continued further

studies after leaving the EP program. Therefore, except for one person, all respondents had employment status.

3. Brief Overview of the Non-Formal Education Centre

3.1 Xiengkhoung

District PNFE in Pek (lower and upper secondary education):

- Work under the PESS. Their role is to collect data of the students (enrollment, drop out) and conduct teaching lessons for the non-formal target group (professionals, e.g. soldiers) and villager (normal students)
- Offer classes for the target group in Equivalency program together with basic vocational training (2 hours a week, with 8 subjects)
- Lower and upper secondary school: Lessons from Monday to Friday, 11 subjects (e.g. practical ones, e.g. massage, planting, make furniture etc.)
- Students age: 20 – 35 years old

Namxia NFEC in Phaxay (primary and lower secondary education):

- Population: 837 people, 372 female, (151 households)
- Ethnic groups: Hmung 90%, Khamu, Lao
- Main income: agriculture
- School: Formal education school with teachers from the formal education system; provides primary and lower secondary school teaching (grade 1 to 5),
- Equivalency program classes: take place during the weekend 1.5 hours in the morning and 1.5 hours in the evening
- Total students: 77, 34 female
- Teachers: 3 Teachers, 1 female

3.2 Vientiane Capital

Sangthong (primary school education):

- Many Khamu participants
- Language difficulties
- Target group: Students who dropped out from formal school
- Challenges: Recruitment of students for the equivalency program, often absent, difficult to manage that all participants join together

Saysetha, National Art School Vientiane:

- Lower and upper secondary education
- 2 systems: Formal system (Art) and NFE (Equivalency program)
- 2 curriculums: 3 days Art lessons, 2 days Equivalency program lessons
- Difficulty: Transfer from NF Equivalency program to Formal Education

3.3 Savannakhet

PNFEC Kayson district (upper secondary education)

- Target group: Persons who did not complete upper secondary school or dropped out from formal education (e.g. government staff without Highschool degree, villagers)
- Recruitment approach: Center collect data on former target group who did not complete school (professionals, such as soldiers, police men, factory staff)
- Provides vocational training (e.g. tailoring, beauty salon) and sells own products
- School provides 3 classrooms all for upper secondary (Grade 10: 14 students, Grade 11: 15 students, Grade 12: 30 students)
- Grade 11: 2020/21: 7 students, 2022/2023: 15 students
- Grade 12: 2020/21: 17 students, 2022/2023: 30 students
- No dropouts from Grade 10, 11, 12 in the period from 2021 to 2023
- Total students: 70 students, 23 female
- Positive issues: school policy, finance team, building and teaching equipment, location of center (at main road), teamwork among the staff
- Challenges: Importance of NFE is not seen by students, no regular attendance, lack of motivation, teachers lack experience of basic vocational training
- One teacher teaches several subjects of the curriculum

Atsaphone, Nungmisay and Nake village (primary and upper secondary):

- Target group: have interest in further studies
- Shortage of teachers: Lessons take place in Nake village with teachers from somewhere else for primary and lower secondary level
- Teaching only during the weekend (Saturday and Sunday) as teachers work throughout the week at formal education school
- Challenges: some villagers do not understand the meaning of EP program class (NFE), some students have financial problems and rather do work at home and cannot join regularly

4. Main Findings and Analysis

This chapter summarizes findings drawn from data collection from our target group perspectives of students, alumni and teachers at district level. The findings are categorized into the following sections below.

4.1. Motivation for attending the program

Source of information

The participants have been asked from where they got the information about the upcoming equivalency program classes. In the group of the students, 12 out of 29 participants as well as 6 out of 16 Alumni stated that they had been informed by their family. Family plays a major role in the awareness of the program. It has not been uncommon for interviewees to state that

they knew from the program because siblings had already participated in it. Additionally, 9 students received the information from the head of the village, while in the target group of the Alumni 5 participants heard from the program through friends and 5 through other informants, such as through employer or colleagues. One participant stated to know from the program because the home was right next to the school. A participant of the EP of the National Art School Vientiane mentioned he had learned about the possibility of this educational program rather by chance:

"I wanted to learn Art, which made me interested in getting in the touch with the school and then while contacting them, I was told that the school also offers the EP classes." (Alumni, National Art School Vientiane capital)

The statement of having learned about the EP only by chance also coincides with the statements of several other participants:

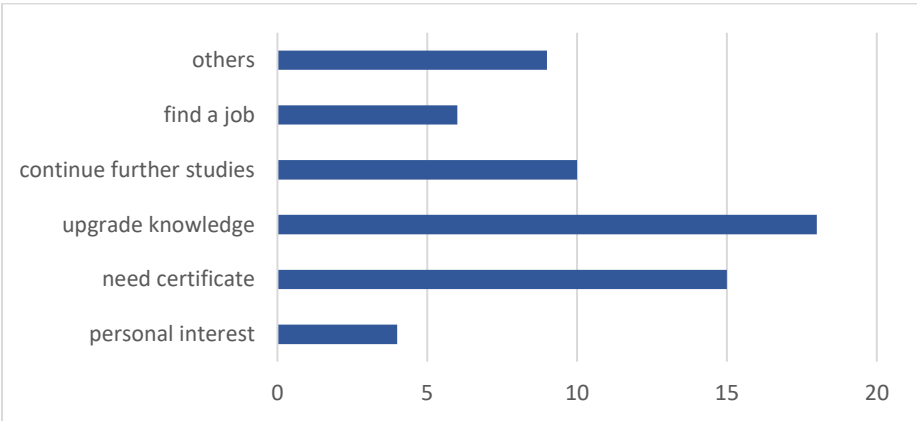
"The EP classes should be better promoted in the rural areas, so that more people are aware of it and can join." (Alumni, Phonsavan, Xiengkhoung)

These findings emphasize the importance of effective communication towards the families in these communities as well as with village authorities and their own peer groups, such as friends during the process of preparation and selection of participants to reach the right target group.

Motivation

The study tried to find out why students want to participate in the EP classes. Therefore, they have been asked about the reasons for joining. The answers to this question also provide insight into the expectations of the students. The question was formulated as a multiple-choice question, since it was assumed that not only one reason, but multiple reasons might contribute for participation. The most frequent response among the students included to "upgrade knowledge" (18 responses), followed by "to receive the certificate" (15 responses) and "to continue further studies" (10 responses).

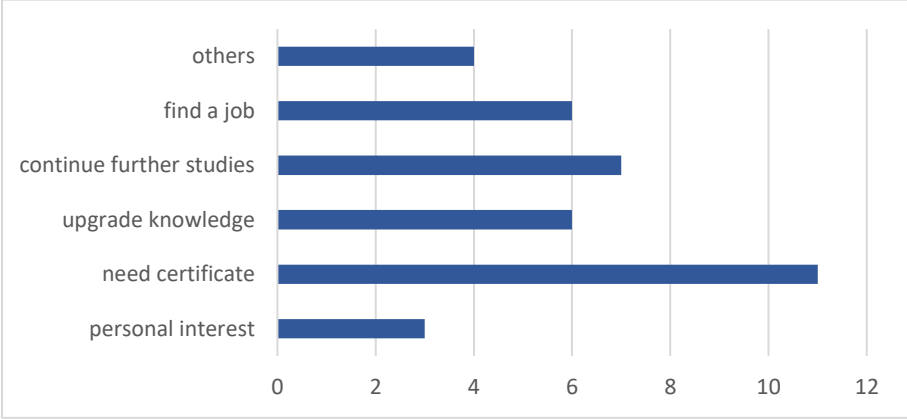
Figure 10: Reasons for Students to join the program



Other reasons for joining the program included e.g. the close distance from home to school, a convenient school schedule or the motivation from parents or village head to attend class.

In the target group of the alumni, the certificate was the main reason (11 responses), followed by the wish to continue further studies (7 responses) and to upgrade knowledge and find a job (6 responses).

Figure 11: Reasons for Alumni to join the program



Some teachers stated that besides wanting to upgrade knowledge and receiving the certificate, parents itself or village policies serve as external factors why participants attend the program.

At the National Art school of Vientiane, it was mentioned by 3 alumni wanting to join the program, because the Art subjects are combined with the equivalency program classes and students will receive two certificates in the end.

"By attending this program, I receive my high school certificate while at the same time I am able to follow my passion for dancing."
 (Alumni, National Art School Vientiane capital)

Additionally, 1 alumni from the National Art school also stated to have joined the program, because the school policy contains the participation in performance events, in which students show their skills in dancing or instrumental playing and at the same time have the opportunity to earn some money as a result:

"I want to earn money while I study."
 (Alumni, National Art School Vientiane capital)

Besides the most enumerated responses to upgrade knowledge, to receive the certificate and to continue with further studies and find a job, some students attended the EP classes because of the school’s close distance to their homes and convenient school schedules, who would allow participants to attend classes only 3 times per week. This gives the participants still enough time and flexibility to pursue their actual work and generate income for their families while receiving education.

The interest in receiving basic vocational training but also learning or developing reading, writing and calculation skills was particularly noticeable in the province of Xiengkhoung in

Phaxay village, with participants from the Hmong ethnic group. As stated by a teacher, acquiring these skills would also contribute to their own acquisition:

“They want to extend their knowledge, which they can use for their business and get better income for their families.” (Teacher, Phaxay, Xiengkhoung)

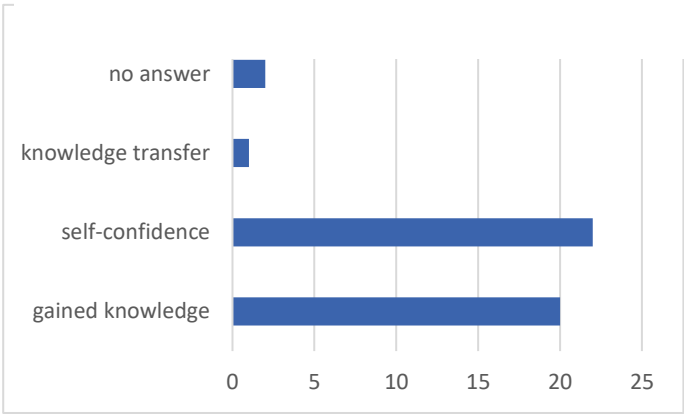
One Hmong student shared that participation in the EP was based on the fact that he faced great difficulties in the Formal Education System:

“I was in the formal education system before and had difficulties in learning because I am very slow. I heard from my siblings I can go to NFE where they teach slower according to my needs.” (Student, Phonsavan, Xiengkhoung)

4.2 Use of knowledge in daily life

When looking into the use of knowledge situation, it is remarkable that 20 out of 29 students, felt better equipped with knowledge and 22 of them stated their participation in the equivalency program classes contributed to become more self-confident and able to communicate with others. This led to better networking skills with people, gaining more friendships and feeling better integrated into the society. The new gained knowledge helped in their daily business, such as calculation skills that were effective in selling and buying products. Some participants mentioned that they would use the gained knowledge, such as sewing or planting to teach their siblings or spouses at home.

Figure 12: Students use of knowledge in daily life



“The knowledge I gained helped me a lot in my daily life, I learned skills to use in the beauty salon and I learned to dress better than before joining the program. I also know now how to make furniture for my family.” (Student, Phonsavan, Xiengkhoung)

The teachers had been asked what in their opinion is the most useful to learn for the students and 7 out of 9 said that basic knowledge, such as writing, reading, communication and calculation skills is the most important and essential knowledge for the participants. Additionally, 3 of them found by attending the program, the students would receive the certificate and with this being able to find a job in which they would be able to use the knowledge or to do further studies as the most useful.

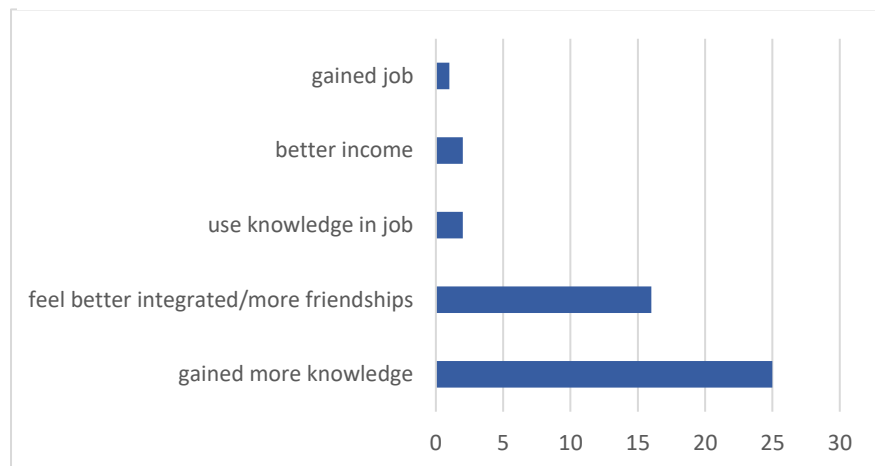
“Before attending the classes I was not able to read, but now I can. I can read the signs now when I go to the city and the calculation skills have also been improved.”
(Student, Phaxay, Xiengkhoung)

4.3 Impact of the courses on the life/future career

Concerning the impact of the participation in the equivalency program classes and its impact on the life/well-being of the participants, it can be clearly stated that most participants agreed on having received knowledge and feel better integrated in the society. The majority (25 out of 29 students) stated that they gained significantly more knowledge through participation in the programme and 16 students explained that the knowledge helped for a better integration into the society and to

have gained more friendships after completing the course. Only 2 reported to be able to use the gained knowledge in the job and 2 participants stated that their income has increased, while 1 student told us about having gained a job.

Figure 13: Impact of the Equivalency Program on the student's life



Each of the 16 alumni that have been interviewed shared that they gained knowledge and 12 of them stated to have made friendships and feel better integrated into the society. Additionally, the participation in the program had another positive impact on their income. 12 graduates reported that their income had increased after completing the programme. Regarding this answer, this study cannot show how much more income was generated but relies on the fact that more money was earned than before attending the equivalency program classes as stated by the participants.

“My income has also increased by working in a higher job level. I am proud to have completed secondary school education.” (Alumni, Kaysone, Savannakhet)

The practical skills and knowledge gained throughout the program have been found by 9 alumni as very useful for their life after the course.

“My reading and writing skills are much better now. I also received the vocational training skills, that I can use in my daily life with my family. For example, I learned about bio-fertilizer and pesticides and the usage of it.” (Alumni, Phonsavan, Xiengkhoung)

6 alumni told us that they found a job after graduating and 3 of them said they can use the knowledge learned in their job, while 4 have continued to study.

Regarding life after the end of the programme, it became clear, that 5 out of 9 teachers reported that they kept in touch with former students, mainly through social media or occasionally through face-to-face meetings. They stated that most of them continue further studies and work, and are able to better read, write, communicate, and calculate, and often have their own businesses.

4.4 Benefits and Challenges of the Equivalency program

Regarding the question what our target groups found as beneficial and challenging about the Equivalency Program classes, some main findings can be categorised.

4.4.1 Students

Students benefit from close distance, teaching quality and family support

In rural areas secondary school students usually must travel a considerable distance from their home villages to a school, which has a direct impact on their attendance. From the interviewed students 16 out of 29 benefited from their close distance between home and school, which presented a significant and positive consideration that facilitates their participation in the programme. For 5 of them the far distance to travel every day to school was an obstacle, which also meant that regular attendance at classes could not be guaranteed.

The teaching methods have been found as positive by 11 students and support from parents or family while undertaking the studies was important for 6 students. However, the study did not examine in which way the parental support did take place. Overall, findings suggest that engaged parents have a positive impact on the children's motivation to learn. They adopt their parents' positive attitude towards education and school and can thus improve educational outcomes.¹³

Additionally, for 6 students the facilitation, such as the school building and classrooms, no or low school fee (3 participants), practical subjects (3 participants), and the curriculum were also seen as a benefit of the program. Again, for the National School of Art in Vientiane, several students pointed out that they liked the EP because the certificate also allows them to pursue their passion for dancing while receiving two certificates at the end.

Students struggle to integrate school and work in their daily lives

A challenging part towards the participation in the Equivalency program has meant that 7 students had been struggling to integrate school and work into their daily lives. In order to generate income, the villagers have to pursue their agricultural activities and are often unable to combine both.

Additionally, 5 students reported that distance seemed a problem to attend class on a regular basis, particularly when no vehicle is available. Other challenges mentioned were no support from parents (2), difficult curriculum (2), limited internet connection (1), difficulties in Lao language. At the Art school of Vientiane, it was stated that an overload of 13 subjects in one curriculum is simply too much for learning.

¹³ Unesco's International Institute for Educational Planning 2021. Parental support to learning. <https://learningportal.iiep.unesco.org/en/issue-briefs/improve-learning/parental-support-to-learning>

4.4.2 Alumni

Alumni appreciate a flexible curriculum

6 out of 16 alumni stated to find the curriculum of the equivalency program classes as positive. According to them the curriculum has been considered as flexible that considers the students who have to do work on the side.

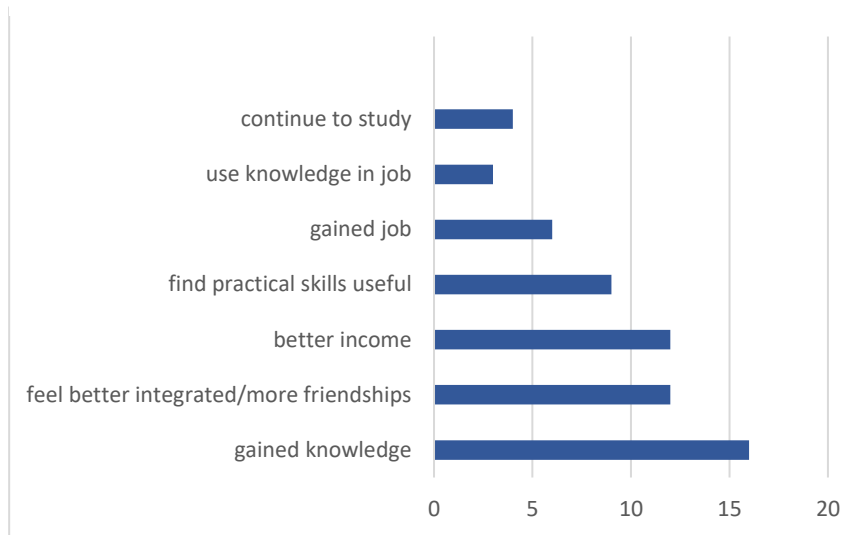
"I could come only a few days a week to join the program and had enough time for other things."

(Alumni, Kaysone, Savannakhet)

"Both programs (Art and the equivalency classes) are timely well managed within a week. One day there is Art and the other day is the EP class."

(Alumni, National Art School, Vientiane capital)

Figure 14: Impact of the Equivalency Program on the alumni's life



Additionally, 3 alumni stated they had close distance from their homes to school, were supported by their families, liked the buildings and classrooms and employer support and 2 stated they liked that their school provided a dormitory, so that students would not need to travel back and forward.

Alumni experienced several challenges

Regarding the question what the alumni found challenging about the program, we have received multiple, diverse responses, while 5 alumni did not find anything challenging about their participation in the program.

Because of long distances between their homes and schools, it was stated that travel costs presented a problem. Furthermore, not enough school equipment has been provided during their attendance for some of the alumni, which made learning more difficult. Again, difficulties combining school and work, no support and weak conditions of the facilities itself as well as too many subjects in one curriculum were additional challenges throughout the participation in the program.

4.4.3 Teachers

Teachers appreciate the school facilities but face difficulties teaching students with diverse backgrounds and with irregular attendance at lessons

In addition to targeting the participants themselves, the teachers had been asked about their experiences of teaching the EP classes with some significant feedback.

To provide the possibility of weekend teaching, will increase the regular attendance of students as otherwise they are busy with undertaking work to earn income for their families. Additionally, it was reported by 5 teachers who appreciated having a teaching space available, with Phonsavan and Vientiane Art School mentioning the good facilities in the school building. The strong and effective communication and relationship with the head of the village has been emphasized in Savannakhet (Nungmisay village) as well as in Xiengkhoung (Phaxay district), which led to the fact that more participants would become aware of the program and eventually joining the classes. It has further been mentioned that classes with only a few students would contribute to a better and effective teaching and learning process:

“Because there is only a limited number of students in one class, it makes it easier to teach because there are less noises and the students can focus better.”

(Teacher, Kaysone, Savannakhet)

Having rules for the participation in the program, stated as positive, does not mean that students attend classes regularly. Out of 9 teachers, 4 stated that irregular attendance presents one of the major problems. As already mentioned, participants find it difficult to attend classes regularly. This is due to the personal life situation, including often far distances from homes to school in rural and remote areas, as well as shaped by the family and income situation, weather conditions and therefore also poses a challenge for the teachers, such as in Xiengkhoung (Phaxay district), where participants are forced to bring their children to class, which leads to the classes being disrupted.

Furthermore, to teach students with all having different educational backgrounds at the same time is seen as difficult for 3 teachers. This has also been stated according to the question, what the teachers think are difficulties affecting the participants success in the completion of the program. Differences in age and level of knowledge can affect individual performance in each student’s learning and, if necessary, lead to a lack of motivation in further learning for these participants.

In addition, other challenges, such as the teachers' limited capacity (e.g. in Vientiane Art School and Xiengkhoung, Phaxay district), insufficient equipment of teaching materials and lack of financial resources of the students (Phaxay, Kaysone), present a considerable burden for the students as well as the teachers. Considering the Vientiane Art school with two curricula for Art and EP classes, it was reiterated that a reduction of the curricula would be beneficial.

“The students spend a lot of time studying for both programs and do not have enough time for themselves to relax.” (Teacher, National Art school Vientiane)

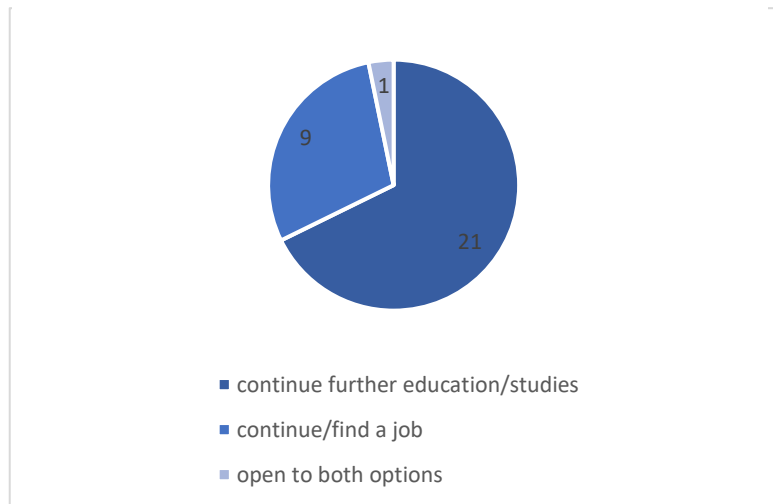
5. Future Plan and Feedback

5.1 Students

Students have a strong interest in vocational training and further education

In an open-ended question, the participants have been asked about their future plan. In the target group of the 29 interviewed students, the majority (21 of them) replied that they had a strong interest in continuing further studies, while 9 students would like to continue either the current job or find a new job. 1 of the students mentioned to be open for any of the two options (further studies or finding a job).

Figure 15: Students Future Plan



The participants have also been asked about their opinion towards the EP classes. While 10 of these participants did not give any feedback, the responses received can provide insight into participants' perceptions and satisfaction.

The curriculum in the equivalency program classes demonstrates an important factor for the satisfaction of 10 participants.

"I want the EP to be combined with the vocational training. Agriculture is important, because I am a farmer and I can use the skills I will learn there in my daily life."

(Student, Sangthong, Vientiane)

This statement has been also raised by several other participants, who reported that first of all more vocational training subjects should be integrated in the equivalency program classes, and secondly these should meet the needs of the target group.

"More vocational training subjects should be included in the curriculum based on the needs of the students." (Student, Phonsavan, Xiengkhoung)

"I prefer to not have the same curriculum being used in the formal education system. It should rather be a curriculum for the needs of students attending non-formal education."

(Student, Phonsavan, Xiengkhoung)

According to 4 students, the lack of teaching and learning materials are also some of the key constraints in the EP classes, along with the improvement of teaching methods, mentioned by 4 students.

“The teacher should teach slowly so that I can follow because every student has a different knowledge and background.” (Student Phaxay, Xiengkhoung)

Additionally, 3 students reported that more awareness for the EP classes is needed. This was also underlined by one of our initial questions, where the participants have been asked from which source they got the information about the EP classes. In terms of interest in the program, more than 50% stated that their family members or friends would be interested in joining the EP classes.

“The program should be better promoted for the rural areas, so that these people can also join.” (Student Phonsavan, Xiengkhoung)

It has further been stated by 2 persons from Savannakhet, that because of long distances from homes to schools and not having the possibility to travel back and forth, the availability of a dormitory provided by the school would be effective, while also the wish for home schooling was mentioned. One student clearly stated that morning lessons would be preferred as for the rest of the day more time would be available to do actual work.

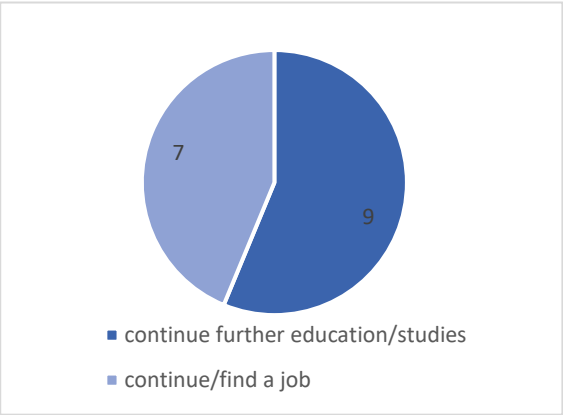
5.2 Alumni

Alumni prefer teaching hours according to their needs, a better awareness of the program in general and its recognition for Formal Education

Throughout the interviews with the alumni, 9 of them stated to plan or continued with further studies, while 7 of them plan or have after completing the program continued with the current job or found a new job.

In our target group of the interviewed alumni, the two categories “curriculum” and the “awareness of the equivalency program classes” have been named as the most frequently in need of improvement. The need for a greater awareness of the EP classes was also highlighted by 66.7% of alumni who mentioned that their family members or friends would be also interested in the participating in the EP program. In terms of curriculum, it has been stated that it would be effective to rather held classes during the weekends with classes during the week only a few hours but not full-time as there is a need, as stated by some of the current students, to do work outside the program in order to earn income. This has also been underlined by the wish to study online or at home and additionally attend exams in person.

Figure 16: Alumni Future Plan



During the interviews at Art school, it has been reported that there is a need for equal recognition of formal education and non-formal education.

“I want the formal education to be equal with the non-formal education.”

(Student, National Art School Vientiane)

Additionally, the teaching style should be adapted to the adult students needs and be more practical. The lack of teachers as well as not having enough teaching and learning equipment were also points for improvement.

5.3 Teachers

Teachers agree with flexible teaching hours according to the students’ needs

The received feedback from 3 teachers clearly stated that regular attendance of the students maintains a problem. For example, in Savannakhet (Kaysone district) the need for a dormitory was mentioned, which could contribute that students can attend classes regularly. In Vientiane (Sangthong district) it has been stated the need for online-teaching or the possibility that teachers teach at the students’ homes. More time for learning and teaching has been reported at Vientiane Art school as well as in Xiengkhoung (Phaxay district). Although, it is noticeable that there is a need for a timely flexible schedule according to the working situation of the students, it was also pointed out that participating in the Equivalency Program with only a few hours a day is not sufficient for knowledge acquisition.

“The students need more time to study and learn and I as a teacher need more time to teach. One and a half hour in the morning is not enough for the learning process.”

(Teacher, Phaxay, Xiengkhoung)

In addition, the feedback included the need for practical activities regarding vocational training. In Xiengkhoung (Phaxay), it would be helpful to integrate more activities in the lessons itself that should be based on the needs of the students in their daily life, helpful for generating income. This was also confirmed by a teacher at Vientiane Art School to integrate the EP together with the vocational training in the NFE system.

In Xiengkhoung (Phaxay and Phonsavan district), the lack of teaching materials, such as pens, notebooks or sports equipment, was expressed, as well as the improvement of teaching and learning methods with regard to the needs of the students.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on these findings a number of conclusions combined with respective recommendations can be drawn.

1. First of all, family plays a major role when it comes to the awareness of the program. It has been stated that many participants knew about the EP courses through their family members who had already participated in the program. Additionally, a strong connection with the head of the village in the remote areas is an advantage to promote the EP itself and to inform parents about the importance of education in general. If the students receive family support, they are more motivated to learn and to keep going with their studies. Not all people who need education know about the existence of EP classes.

Why do participants attend the EP? The answers to this question provide also insight into the expectations of the students. Many of the participants study in NFE for their personal benefit to gain and improve knowledge as well as to obtain the certificate and with this to enter the next step of often the wish for further studies. Besides these reasons, finding a job and to receive vocational training that can be used for their income generating activities are additional factors why participants want to attend the program.

The importance of effective communication towards the families in the communities as well as a strong cooperation with the village authorities are essential for advertising the program and for the selection of participants to reach the right target group. This should also include to raise awareness about the EP and its equal recognition to the formal education as this seems is not yet widely known among the population and what might also prevent people from participating. The transition from NFE to formal education seems weak or non-existent and should be further developed. That means, if there are regulations on equivalent recognition between the non-formal and formal education systems, they should also be applied in practice and be transparent.

2. When looking into the use of knowledge situation, it is remarkable that most participants stated to have felt better equipped with knowledge. According to them, the program did not only help in knowledge acquisition such as reading, writing and calculation. Rather, it provides social skills, such as the improvement of their communication with others, that led to the fact that many of them gained self-confidence, felt better integrated into the society and were able to make friends. The new gained knowledge along with the practical skills have been found as very useful for their life after the course ended and were used in the participants daily businesses. However, more practical skills are needed and shortage of teachers as well as the lack of experience in vocational training to teach students, seems a problem. In terms of income many of the alumni reported of having gained a higher income after completing the program and some of them stated to have found a job- both positive effects for their daily life after completing the program.

It is important to reflect on the target group of the participants in the EP classes. This group usually has different needs than students in Formal Education. That means, they rely on

vocational training skills they can use in their daily life to generate income. Therefore, besides the fundamental subjects, a modern vocational education system with good standards, equipment and highly skilled teachers as well as needs-oriented non-formal skills activities are needed. The revision of the NFE curriculum with more needs oriented content for the NFE target group is therefore strongly recommended.

3. Distance between the participants homes and the location of the NFE centers represent an important basis for the (regular) participation in the program. From the interviewed students, more than half of them benefited from close distance and for others long distances, particularly without having a vehicle and not enough money to pay for petrol, made it impossible to attend class regularly. Even though, some alumni appreciated the curriculum as flexible, taking into account the needs of the students who rely on income and work, the combination of work and the participation in the EP remains challenging. In order to generate income, the villagers have to pursue their agricultural activities, which demand a lot of their time. Unregular attendance in the program and teaching students with diverse backgrounds have been also stated by the teachers, who, in addition to the participants, have expressed a desire for weekend classes and online learning.

Various factors make it difficult for participants to attend the program regularly. A previous DVV study drew attention to the availability of online teaching and learning tools for non-formal education in Lao PDR¹⁴. At least for equivalency classes, rather than for vocational subjects, online learning tools in combination and as a complementary tool could be an option to impart knowledge. They would be recommended based on consideration of the target group and the often limited conditions and the teachers' knowledge. According to this, teachers in NFE will also need to be trained in online teaching and learning methodology, as well as the tools themselves.

4. As mentioned earlier, participation in the programme has a great impact on the participants knowledge. Not only do the participants feel better equipped with knowledge but also with social skills that generally make their daily lives easier. Communication skills help to build relationships by allowing the participants to share certain needs and experiences and contribute to connect with others. These skills are essential for their daily life to pass on information and share thoughts. Additionally, many of them reported to have gained a higher income after completing the program and have a strong interest in continuing further education. Besides this, not all participants in the EP classes benefit from well-equipped school buildings, sufficient learning materials, good teaching quality and practical subjects. For example, in the rural district of Phaxay in Xiengkhoung province, there is a lack of basic school equipment, sportswear and the provision of practical subjects.

Therefore, it is recommended to conduct regular needs assessments and in particular in rural districts, as they are already disadvantaged due to their geographical situation. Needs Assessments can encourage districts and their NFE centers to systematically examine gaps and

¹⁴ Katalyst Partners 2022. DVV: Analysis of the Availability of Online Teaching and Learning Tools for Non-Formal Education (NFE) in Lao PDR based on the needs of the NFE system. Final Report

identify, understand, and prioritize the needs that must be addressed to improve the teaching as well as the learning environment for both, the teachers and the learners. Additionally, a nice learning environment increases students' attention and concentration, and promotes meaningful learning experiences.

5. In order to comprehensively assess the situation of EP classes, the Lao education sector needs to fill and address several data gaps.

Data on completion rates between the different levels of education in the NFE as well as dropout rates in EP classes would help to get a better overview of the effectiveness of the program and identify deficits more quickly. In addition, it would be advisable to interview more teachers regarding their perceptions and working conditions in the NFE system, as they can provide first-hand information that would be helpful in improving weaknesses of the EP.

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Annex 1: Targets and achievements in NFE in the school year 2021-2022

Targets and achievements in Non-Formal Education for the school year 2021-2022

o/c	Activities	Expected in 2021-2022	Achievements in 2021-2022		percentage
		Total	total	F	
1	Literacy (age15-40years) levels I+II	2.600	2.774	1.599	106,69
2	Equivalency Program in Primary (age15-40Years) in levels I+II+III	2.940	7.725	2.802	262,76
3	Equivalency Program in Primary (6-14years)	3.250	3.017	1.468	92,83
4	Equivalency Program in Lower secondary (15-35years)	16.800	18.721	8.760	111,43
5	Equivalency Program in Upper secondary grade 10-12	5.600	3.775	1.348	67,41
6	Basic vocational training	4.000	2.740	1.649	68,50
Total :		35.190	38.752	17.626	

Ministry of Education and Sports 2022

Annex 2: Participants in EP at lower and upper secondary level 2022-2023

Number of Participants in Equivalency Program Classes in lower and upper secondary education in 2022-2023

ລ/ດ	ເຂື່ອນ	Number of Participants in Equivalency Program Classes in lower and upper secondary education in 2022-2023																		ໜ້າ ເຫດ
		Total Grade 9 (lower)			Teachers			Grade 10 (upper)			Grade 11 (upper)			Grade 12 (upper)			Teachers			
		Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	ລວມ	F	M	
1	Vientiane Capital	1487	835	652	576	277	299	55	33	22	54	35	19	174	95	79	0	0	0	
2	ຜົ້ງສາລີ	2390	1173	1217	800	360	440	30	0	30	22	0	22	55	9	46	0	0	0	
3	ຫຼວງນ້ຳທາ	1261	638	623	430	55	375	25	8	17	22	3	19	18	2	16	20	12	8	
4	ບໍ່ແກ້ວ	754	396	358	400	68	332	23	0	23	34	1	33	28	0	28	24	14	10	
5	ອຸດົມໄຊ	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	38	0	38	65	2	63	0	0	0	
6	ຫຼວງພະບາງ	1117	480	637	400	105	295	0	0	0	66	0	66	32	0	32	0	0	0	
7	ໄຊຍະບູລີ	715	313	402	205	76	129	7	0	7	11	0	11	8	0	8	20	8	12	
8	Xiengkhoung	524	277	247	231	82	149	13	1	12	15	0	15	40	1	39	12	10	2	
9	ຫົວພັນ	1299	687	612	661	175	486	38	2	36	57	15	42	31	8	23	0	0	0	
10	ວຽງຈັນ	491	209	282	224	41	183	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	17	7	9	0	9	
11	ໄຊສົມບູນ	481	265	216	270	67	203	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
12	ບໍລິຄຳໄຊ	606	311	295	234	108	126	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	12	13	6	2	4	
13	ຄຳມ່ວນ	1404	690	714	396	192	204	1	1	0	4	2	2	22	6	16	0	0	0	
14	Savannakhet	1404	696	708	550	200	350	47	25	22	47	24	23	115	57	58	66	35	31	
15	ສາລະວັນ	1001	427	574	228	74	154	0	0	0	3	1	2	26	2	24	0	0	0	
16	ເຊກອງ	372	167	205	201	62	139	37	2	35	242	103	139	51	7	44	51	7	44	
17	ຈຳປາສັກ	1518	744	774	414	204	210	0	0	0	0	0	0	32	24	8	16	14	2	
18	ອັດຕະປື	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	0	12	18	7	11	
	ລວມ	16824	8308	8516	6220	2146	4074	276	72	204	615	184	431	758	242	516	242	109	133	

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Annex 3: Agenda Field Visit

Agenda of all processed

1. Developed the tools on 10th -12th April 2023 at NFEDC, Vientiane capital
2. Present tools to DNFE on 20th April 2023 at NFEDC, Vientiane capital
3. Testing questionnaire on 21st April 2023 at NFEDC, Vientiane capital
4. **Field visited in the provinces**
 - **Collecting data for the study in Xiengkhouang province on 24th -28th April 2023**
 - 24th April travelling from Vientiane capital to Xiengkhouang province
 - 25th April had a short meeting with PESS Xiengkhouang province for objectives of the study. After that went to collected data from the teacher (Upper secondary school), Students from Upper secondary school and Alumnee students in province NFE center.
 - 26th -27th April went to collected data from lower secondary school students and primary school students, in Phasay district.
 - 28th April the team travelled back to Vientiane capital.
 - **Collecting data for the study in Savahnakhet province on 24th -28th April 2023**
 - 24th April travelling from Vientiane capital to Savahnakhet province
 - 25th April had a short meeting with PESS Savahnakhet province for objectives of the study. After that went to collected data from the teacher (Upper secondary school), Students from Upper secondary school and Alumnee students in province NFE center.
 - 26th -27th April went to collected data from lower secondary school students and primary school students, in Adsaphone district.
 - 28th April the team travelled back to Vientiane capital.
 - **Collecting data for the study in Vientiane capital on 3-4 may 2023**
 - 3rd May, we had a short meeting with school director, and after that collected data from the students Lower & upper secondary school, and also Alumnee students at art school.
 - 4th April went to collected data from primary school students in Sangthong district.
5. Translated the data from Lao to English on the 5th – 12th may 2023 at DVV International, Vientiane Laos.
6. Presented the Main finding to the study team and group disused on 9th June 2023 at NFEDC.

Annex 4: Questionnaire Students

ແບບຟອມສຳພາດ I/ Interview I

**ແບບຟອມສຳພາດຜູ້ກຳລັງຮຽນຊັ້ນປະຖົມ, ມ ຕົ້ນ ແລະ ມ ບາຍ
ລະບົບບຳລຸງຍົກລະດັບການສຶກສາ / Students in primary, lower and
upper education**

ຈຸດປະສົງທີ່ລົງມາເກັບກຳຂໍ້ມູນໃນຄັ້ງນີ້ແມ່ນເພື່ອປະກອບເຂົ້າໃນບົດວິໄຈ “ສຶກສາແຮງຈູງໃຈ ແລະ ຄວາມຕ້ອງການຂອງຜູ້ຮຽນຊັ້ນປະຖົມ, ມັດທະຍົມຕອນຕົ້ນ , ມັດທະຍົມຕອນປາຍໃນລະບົບບຳລຸງ ຂະແໜງການສຶກສານອກໂຮງຮຽນ” ເຊິ່ງກຸ່ມເປົ້າໝາຍແມ່ນຜູ້ທີ່ກຳລັງຮຽນຊັ້ນປະຖົມ, ມັດທະຍົມຕອນຕົ້ນ ແລະ ມັດທະຍົມຕອນປາຍ, ຢູ່ໃນນະຄອນຫຼວງວຽງຈັນ, ແຂວງສະຫວັນນະເຂດ ແລະ ແຂວງຊຽງຂວາງ. ຂໍ້ມູນທີ່ໄດ້ມານັ້ນຈະເປັນຄວາມລັບ ແລະ ບໍ່ມີຜົນກະທົບຕໍ່ຜູ້ຕອບແບບສອບຖາມແນ່ນອນ, ຫວັງວ່າທຸກທ່ານຈະໃຫ້ການຮ່ວມມືກັບພວກເຮົາ.

ວິທີສຳພາດ/ Interview Method:

ສຳພາດຕົວຕໍ່ຕົວ/ Face-to-face

ຂໍ້ມູນສ່ວນຕົວ/ Personal Information

ເພດ/ Sex:

ອາຍຸ/ Age:

ຊົນເຜົ່າ/ Ethnic group:

ລະດັບວັດທະນາທຳ/ Educational background:

ອາຊີບປັດຈຸບັນ/ Current occupation:

ນ້ອໃນຂອງການສຳພາດ/ Content

1. ທ່ານເຄີຍຮຽນ ສາຍສາມັນມາກ່ອນບໍ່?/ Have you been in Formal Education?

.....

ຖ້າເຄີຍ ຮຽນຮອດຫ້ອງໃດ ?/ What grade were you in?.....

1. ທ່ານຮູ້ຈັກ ກສນ ໄດ້ແນວໃດ/ How do you know about the equivalency program classes?

.....
.....
.....

2. ເປັນຫຍັງທ່ານຈຶ່ງມາຮຽນຢູ່ສູນ ການສຶກສານອກໂຮງຮຽນ ? (ຢາກຮຽນເອງ, ຢາກໄດ້ໃບປະກາດ, ຍົກລະດັບຄວາມຮູ້, ເພື່ອຮຽນຕໍ່, ເພື່ອຊອກວຽກງານ ແລະ ອື່ນໆ)/ Why do you join the classes? (personal interest, need certificate, upgrade knowledge, continue future studies, find a job, others)

.....
.....

3. ທ່ານຮຽນຢູ່ ກສນ ມາດົນປານໃດ/ How long have you been joining the program?

.....
.....

4. ຄວາມຮູ້ ແລະ ທັກສະທີ່ໄດ້ຮຽນມາຊ່ວຍຕໍ່ການດໍາລົງຊີວິດປະຈຳວັນຂອງທ່ານບໍ່/ How does the gained knowledge from the equivalency program classes helps you in your daily life and job?

.....
.....

- ຍ້ອນຫຍັງ/ Give examples

.....
.....

5. ພາຍຫຼັງການເຂົ້າຮຽນ ກສນ ເຮັດໃຫ້ຕົນເອງມີການປ່ຽນແປງແນວໃດແດ່/ Since joining the program what has changed in your life?

- ທາງດ້ານຄວາມຮູ້/ knowledge

.....
.....

- ທາງດ້ານອາຊີບ(ໜ້າວຽກ)/ work/job

.....
.....

- ທາງດ້ານລາຍຮັບ/ income

.....
.....

- ທາງດ້ານສັງຄົມ/ society

.....
.....
- ແລະ ອື່ນໆ/ nothing or others
.....
.....

6. ທ່ານມີຂໍ້ສະດວກ ແລະ ຂໍ້ຫຍຸ້ງຍາກໃນການຮຽນຢູ່ ກສນ ແນວໃດ/ What do you find good and challenging about the equivalency program classes?

ຂໍ້ສະດວກ/ good:

.....
.....

ຂໍ້ຫຍຸ້ງຍາກ/ challenging:

.....
.....

7. ພາຍຫຼັງຮຽນຈົບໄປແລ້ວ ທ່ານມີແຜນແນວໃດ/ What is your plan after completing the equivalency program?

.....
.....

8. ມີຄົນໃນຄອບຄົວຂອງທ່ານ ຫຼື ໝູ່ຄູ່ຂອງທ່ານທີ່ຢາກມາຮຽນຢູ່ ກສນ ບໍ່? ຍ້ອງຫຍ່ງ? / Would your family members or friends be also interested in joining the equivalency program classes? Why?

.....
.....

9. ເພື່ອເປັນການປັບປຸງການຈັດການຮຽນການສອນ ກສນໃຫ້ມີຄຸນນະພາບທີ່ດີຂຶ້ນ ແລະ ແທດເໝາະກັບສະພາບຄວາມຕ້ອງການຂອງສັງຄົມໃນປັດຈຸບັນ, ທ່ານມີແນວຄວາມຄິດແນວໃດ? (ເວລາ, ສະຖານທີ່, ວິທີການສອນ, ຫຼັກສູດ ແລະ ອື່ນໆ)/ What in your opinion could be improved in the equivalency program? (e.g duration, content, process of learning etc.)

.....
.....

ຂອບໃຈ / Thank you!

Annex 5: Questionnaire Alumni

ແບບຟອມສຳພາດ II / Interview II

**ແບບຟອມສຳພາດຜູ້ຮຽນຈົບ ມ ບາຍ ລະບົບບຳລຸງຍົກລະດັບການສຶກສາ /
Alumni**

ຈຸດປະສົງທີ່ລົງມາເກັບກຳຂໍ້ມູນໃນຄັ້ງນີ້ແມ່ນເພື່ອປະກອບເຂົ້າໃນບົດວິໄຈ “ສຶກສາແຮງຈູງໃຈ ແລະ ຄວາມຕ້ອງການຂອງຜູ້ຮຽນຊັ້ນປະຖົມ, ມັດທະຍົມຕອນຕົ້ນ , ມັດທະຍົມຕອນປາຍໃນລະບົບບຳລຸງ ຂະແໜງການສຶກສານອກໂຮງຮຽນ” ເຊິ່ງກຸ່ມເປົ້າໝາຍແມ່ນຜູ້ທີ່ຮຽນຈົບ ມັດທະຍົມຕອນປາຍ ຢູ່ໃນນະຄອນຫຼວງວຽງຈັນ, ແຂວງສະຫວັນນະເຂດ ແລະ ແຂວງຊຽງຂວາງ. ຂໍ້ມູນທີ່ໄດ້ມານັ້ນຈະເປັນຄວາມລັບ ແລະ ບໍ່ມີຜົນກະທົບຕໍ່ຜູ້ຕອບແບບສອບຖາມແນ່ນອນ, ຫວັງວ່າທຸກທ່ານຈະໃຫ້ການຮ່ວມມືກັບພວກເຮົາ.

ວິທີສຳພາດ/ Interview Method:

ສຳພາດຕົວຕໍ່ຕົວ/ Face-to-face

ຂໍ້ມູນສ່ວນຕົວ/ Personal Information

ເພດ/ Sex:

ອາຍຸ/ Age:

ຊົນເຜົ່າ/ Ethnic group:

ລະດັບການສຶກສາ/ Educational background:

ອາຊີບປັດຈຸບັນ/ Current occupation:

ນ້ອໃນຂອງການສຳພາດ/ Content

1. ທ່ານເຄີຍຮຽນ ສາຍສາມັນມາກ່ອນບໍ່?/ Have you been in Formal Education?

.....

ຖ້າເຄີຍ ຮຽນຮອດຫ້ອງໃດ ?/ What grade were you in?.....

2. ທ່ານຮູ້ຈັກ ກສນ ໄດ້ແນວໃດ/ How did you know about the equivalency program classes?

.....
.....

1. ທ່ານຮຽນຈົບຢູ່ ກສນ ມາດົນປານໃດ/ When did you complete the program?
.....
.....

2. ເປັນຫຍັງທ່ານຈຶ່ງມາຮຽນຢູ່ ສູນການສຶກສານອກໂຮງຮຽນ? (ຢາກຮຽນເອງ, ຢາກໄດ້ໃບປະກາດ, ຍົກລະດັບຄວາມຮູ້, ເພື່ອຮຽນຕໍ່, ເພື່ອຊອກວຽກງານ ແລະ ອື່ນໆ)/ Why did you join the equivalency program classes? (personal interest, need certificate, upgrade knowledge, continue future studies, find a job, others)
.....
.....

3. ທ່ານມີຂໍ້ສະດວກ ແລະ ຂໍ້ຫຍຸ້ງຍາກໃນໄລຍະການຮຽນຢູ່ ກສນ ແນວໃດ?/ What did you find good and challenging about the program?
ຂໍ້ສະດວກ/ good:
.....
.....
ຂໍ້ຫຍຸ້ງຍາກ/ challenging:
.....
.....

4. ພາຍຫຼັງຮຽນ ກສນ ເຮັດໃຫ້ຕົນເອງມີການປ່ຽນແປງແນວໃດແດ່/ After completing the program what has changed in your life?
- ທາງດ້ານຄວາມຮູ້/ knowledge:
.....
...
.....
- ທາງດ້ານອາຊີບ ຫຼື ວຽກງານ/ job or work:
.....
...
.....
- ທາງດ້ານລາຍຮັບ/ income:
.....
...
.....
- ທາງດ້ານສັງຄົມ/ society
.....
...

.....
- ແລະ ອື່ນໆ/ nothing or others:

.....
.....

5. ພາຍຫຼັງຮຽນຈົບໄປແລ້ວ ທ່ານມີແຜນແນວໃດ/ What is your future plan?

.....

6. ມີຄົນໃນຄອບຄົວຂອງທ່ານ ຫຼື ໜູ່ຄູ່ຂອງທ່ານທີ່ຢາກມາຮຽນຢູ່ ກສນ ບໍ? ຍ້ອງຫຍັງ? / Would your family members or friends be also interested in joining the equivalency program classes? Why?

.....
.....

7. ເພື່ອເປັນການປັບປຸງ ການຈັດການຮຽນ-ການສອນຂອງ ກສນ ໃຫ້ມີຄຸນນະພາບດີຂຶ້ນ ແລະ ແທດໝາະກັບຄວາມຕ້ອງການຂອງສັງຄົມໃນປັດຈຸບັນ ທ່ານຄິດວ່າຄວນເຮັດແນວໃດ? (ເວລາ, ສະຖານທີ່, ວິທີການສອນ, ຫຼັກສູດ ແລະ ອື່ນໆ)/ What in your opinion could be improved in order to meet the students' needs? (e.g. time, content, learning process)

.....
.....

ຂໍຂອບໃຈ / Thank you!

Annex 6: Questionnaire Teachers

ແບບຟອມສຳພາດ III/ Interview III

ແບບຟອມສຳພາດຄູສອນລະບົບບຳລຸງຍົກລະດັບການສຶກສາ/ Teachers

ຈຸດປະສົງທີ່ລົງມາເກັບກຳຂໍ້ມູນໃນຄັ້ງນີ້ແມ່ນເພື່ອປະກອບເຂົ້າໃນບົດວິໄຈ “ສຶກສາແຮງຈູງໃຈ ແລະ ຄວາມຕ້ອງການຂອງຜູ້ຮຽນຊັ້ນປະຖົມ, ມັດທະຍົມຕອນຕົ້ນ, ມັດທະຍົມຕອນປາຍໃນລະບົບບຳລຸງ ຂະແໜງການສຶກສານອກໂຮງຮຽນ” ເຊິ່ງກຸ່ມເປົ້າໝາຍແມ່ນ ຄູສອນການສຶກສານອກໂຮງຮຽນ ໃນນະຄອນຫຼວງວຽງຈັນ, ແຂວງສະຫວັນນະເຂດ ແລະ ແຂວງຊຽງຂວາງ. ຂໍ້ມູນທີ່ໄດ້ມານັ້ນຈະເປັນຄວາມລັບ ແລະ ບໍ່ມີຜົນກະທົບຕໍ່ຜູ້ຕອບແບບສອບຖາມແນ່ນອນ, ຫວັງວ່າທຸກທ່ານຈະໃຫ້ການຮ່ວມມືກັບພວກເຮົາ.

ວິທີສຳພາດ/ Interview Method

ສຳພາດຕົວຕໍ່ຕົວ/ Face-to-face

I. ຂໍ້ມູນສ່ວນຕົວ/ Personal Information

ເພດ/ Sex:

ອາຍຸ/ Age:

ຊົນເຜົ່າ/ Ethnic group:

ລະດັບວັດທະນະທຳ /Level of high school

ລະດັບການສຶກສາ/ Educational background:

ອາຊີບປັດຈຸບັນ/ Current occupation:

II. ເນື້ອໃນການສຳພາດ/ Content

1. ທ່ານມີປະສົບການໃນການສອນ ກສນ ມາດົນປານໃດແລ້ວ?/ How long have you been working as a teacher in the equivalency program?
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2. ທ່ານສອນຫ້ອງໃດ/ຊັ້ນໃດ? What level do you teach?
ກ. ປະຖົມ-ບຳລຸງ(Primary)
ຂ. ມ ຕົ້ນ(Lower)
ຄ. ມ ປາຍ(Upper)

3. ທ່ານສອນວິຊາຫຍັງແດ່?/ Which subjects do you currently teach?
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4. ທ່ານຄິດວ່າເປັນຫຍັງນັກຮຽນຈຶ່ງມາຮຽນຢູ່ໃນການສຶກສານອກໂຮງຮຽນ?/ What are in your opinion the reasons why students attend the equivalency program classes?

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5. ທ່ານຄິດວ່ານັກຮຽນທີ່ມາຮຽນ ກສນ ແລ້ວເຂົາເຈົ້າຈະໄດ້ຮັບຜົນປະໂຫຍດຫຍັງແດ່?/ What do you think is the most useful for the participants to learn in the program?

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6. ທ່ານຄິດວ່າແມ່ນຫຍັງທີ່ເປັນສິ່ງອ່ານວຍຄວາມສະດວກ ແລະ ຂໍ້ຫຍຸ້ງຍາກໃນການຈັດການຮຽນການສອນໃນວຽກງານ ການສຶກສານອກໂຮງຮຽນ?/ What do you find good and difficult for yourself about teaching in the equivalency program classes?

ສິ່ງອ່ານວຍຄວາມສະດວກ/ good:
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ຂໍ້ຫຍຸ້ງຍາກ/ difficult:
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7. ພາຍຫຼັງທີ່ນັກຮຽນໄດ້ຮຽນຈົບຈາກ ສູນການສຶກສານອກໂຮງຮຽນ ແລ້ວທ່ານໄດ້ຕິດຕາມເຂົາເຈົ້າແນວໃດ?/ How do you follow up with the students after completing the program?

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- ຖ້າໄດ້ຕິດຕາມ, ເຂົາເຈົ້າໄດ້ນຳໃຊ້ຄວາມຮູ້ຈາກການຮຽນໄປໃນຮູບແບບໃດ?/ If you follow up with them, how do they use the gained knowledge after completing the program?

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8. ທ່ານເຫັນວ່ານັກຮຽນມີອຸປະສັກໃນການມາຮຽນນຳ ກສນ ຄືແນວໃດ?/ Where do you see difficulties that can affect the participants success?

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9. ເພື່ອເປັນການປັບປຸງ ການຈັດການຮຽນການສອນຂອງ ກສນ ໃຫ້ມີຄຸນນະພາບດີຂຶ້ນ ແລະ ແທດເໝາະກັບຄວາມຕ້ອງການຂອງສັງຄົມໃນປັດຈຸບັນ ທ່ານຄິດວ່າຄວນເຮັດແນວໃດ? (ເວລາ, ສະຖານທີ່, ວິທີການສອນ, ຫຼັກສູດ ແລະ ອື່ນໆ)/ Is there anything you would like to improve or do differently regarding the equivalency program classes? (e.g. time, content, learning process etc.)

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ຂອບໃຈ/ Thank you!