



SKILLS FOR TOURISM PROJECT • LAO/029

IMPACT STORIES

NEW ENTRANTS

“I had an interview and a few conversations with hotel owners. I felt confident and I knew that I had the knowledge and skills to get the job”



Image: Dao Boulavong at his workplace. Credit: Swisscontact

When Dao Boulavong was asked about his motivation to join the Enhanced PTHAS Training Programme, he responded that, “It sounded too good to be true”. The young man from Salavan Province heard about the training at the provincial Integrated Vocational Education and Training (IVET) School – but didn’t think that he would ever get the chance to participate.

“It sounded too good to be true”

The Salavan IVET School organised a ‘road show’ to encourage potential students from disadvantaged backgrounds to enroll in the PTHAS Training Programme. Part of the selection process included an interview with a representative of the local hotel and restaurant association.

Now, as a Chef’s Assistant in a popular restaurant in Salavan Province, he laughs as he reminisces, “I was very excited and a little bit nervous because there were around 35 other individuals waiting to be interviewed”.

Dao’s Journey

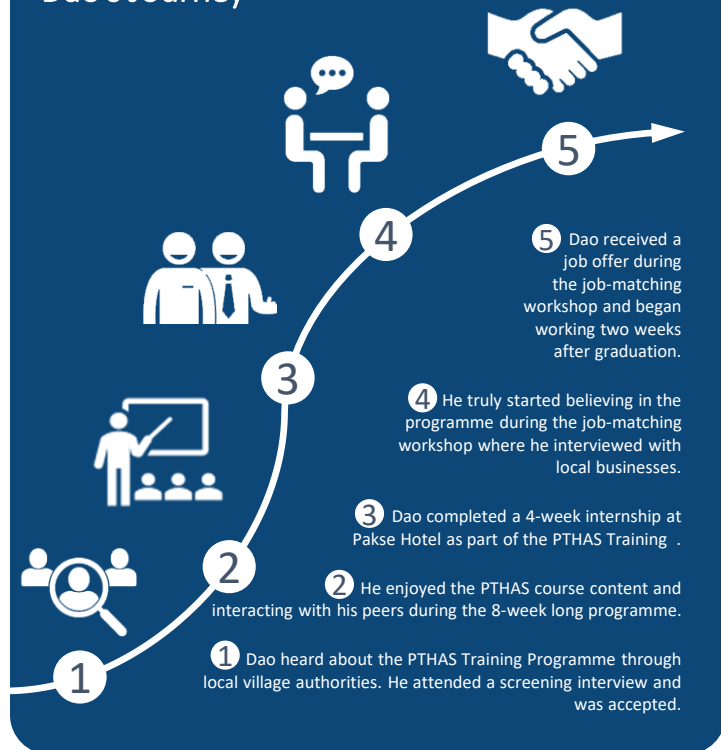




Image: Peer collaboration at a TVET school. Credit: Swisscontact

Dao was selected and started an intensive 12-week training and internship experience at Salavanh IVET School. “I was excited to go back to school. Interacting with my peers in the school was very interesting. We learned things we would be using in the workplace, so we were very attentive”.

When asked about his favourite modules, he responded, “Life skills for sure! We learned things like how to work together and how to negotiate. Where else could I have learned that?”

“We learned things we would be using in the workplace, so we were very attentive”

After 8 weeks of vocational training, Dao started a 4-week internship at the Pakse Hotel. At his new workplace, he learned about good kitchen practices, housekeeping, food and beverage service, and serving at the front office.

Steadily, Dao began to build his confidence and strengthen his belief that he could work in tourism and hospitality.

A key moment came after graduation when he participated in a job-matching workshop where businesses conduct mini-interviews with the students as potential employees.

He proudly says, “I had interviews with a few hotel owners. During the conversations, I felt confident, and I knew that I had the knowledge and skills to get the job.”

Dao established a connection with a restaurant back in Salavanh Province through the workshop and began working within two weeks of graduation. “I’ve been working here for a few months and I’m definitely a believer now.”



Image: PTHAS graduate interview with prospective employers at a Job-matching workshop. Credit: Swisscontact

Pheun Than Heng A Sip (PTHAS) Training Programme



RESULTS TO DATE: LABOUR MARKET INSERTION*

-  **536** graduates, out of which **83%** female
-  **76%** participants have a job or had one since graduation
-  **79%** work in the Tourism and Hospitality sector
-  **85%** receive monthly salaries above minimum wage**

In collaboration with the Skills for Tourism Project (LAO/029), Swisscontact implements the Pheun Than Heng A Sip (PTHAS) Training Programme.

PTHAS seeks to upgrade hospitality skills amongst 500 MSME staff (upskilling) and support 500 more people from disadvantaged backgrounds to enter the tourism and hospitality sector (labour market insertion) in selected southern and central provinces.

The Skills for Tourism Project (LAO/029) is co-financed by the Governments of Lao PDR, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and Switzerland, and is implemented by the Ministry of Education and Sports of Lao PDR and LuxDev, the Luxembourg Development Cooperation Agency.

* Tracer studies conducted with 485 respondents by Lao Social Research from 2018 - 2021
 ** Including benefits such as accommodation and meals