For Phiala, a young woman from a farming family in the rural village of Somsavath, thirty kilometers outside of Vangvieng, the idea of being employed by a hotel seemed far-fetched. “I didn’t have any idea about the hospitality industry before,” she says. In fact, she didn’t even know anyone who had worked in hospitality before.

The opportunity came to her from the local Women’s Union in her village, who had been requested to identify eligible candidates. “They asked if we were interested to have training in hospitality, it was the first time I heard about something like that. Of course, I signed up together with some of my friends,” she said.

“I didn’t have any idea about the hospitality industry before”

“I wasn’t sure if I would get selected because I didn’t know anything about the hospitality industry, and I was the first to be interviewed.” Phiala was interviewed by an industry representative from the Hotel and Guesthouse Group in Vangvieng to assess her suitability to enter the hospitality industry.

“Phiala is hired upon completion of her internship.”

LAK

Phiala has the opportunity to have an internship at a local hotel.

Phiala is able to contribute to her family’s expenses by having a job at a hotel.

Her village’s Women’s Union invites Phiala to have hospitality training.
Phiala’s nervous feelings were misplaced because she was selected and enrolled in the 12-week *Pheun Than Heng A Sip* (PTHAS) Training Programme, provided by the hospitality department of the Technical College of Vientiane Province in Vangvieng.

The 4-week industry placement was Phiala’s favourite part. It was during that time that she impressed the owner of the hotel with her attitude and work ethic. “The teachers during the training coached us well. I learned a lot from them, and I was able to apply it in my internship.”

“I got to see how working in the industry looks like and to practice what I learned in the classroom.”

This eventually led to a job offer from the host business owner. For Phiala this was transformational, as now she could contribute to her family’s finances including her sister’s education. “I am very happy. I’m the second of my six siblings to get a job. It has helped my family a lot”, she elaborates.

When asked about her future plans, Phiala says, “I want to save up to open my own clothing store - I never dreamt that I could do that.” For now she is working hard, serving customers, staffing the front desk, as well as many other duties in the hotel in which she works.

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**Pheun Than Heng A Sip (PTHAS) Training Programme**

*RESULTS TO DATE: LABOUR MARKET INSERTION*¹

- **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**²
- **81%** of employers are satisfied with the hired graduates

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.

*¹Tracer studies conducted with 485 respondents by Lao Social Research from 2018 - 2021
**²Including benefits such as accommodation and meals*