



IMPACT STORY

DEPUTY HEAD OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

“Internships are a good strategy to give trainees a chance to find a decent job that they enjoy from the start.”

- Bounthavy Souliphan



Image: Bounthavy Souliphan Credit: Swisscontact

Mr. Bounthavy Souliphan is the Deputy Head of Academic Affairs at Saravane Province's Integrated Vocational Education and Training (IVET) School. He is also its Project Coordinator for the Vocational Training and Employment Support Services (VTESS) project. Souliphan is an enthusiastic supporter of the project and was involved throughout its planning stage where he provided valuable contributions.

Souliphan said that both the VTESS project and his school have the same goal of providing opportunities for new graduates. He added that the working relationship between the school and the businesses, as well as the Provincial Labour Department and the Provincial Chamber of Commerce, have improved once the project began.

“The IVET School has always formed connections with business owners in order to organize student internships and future employment.”

Souliphan's priorities at the IVET School are to improve the career assistance to students and to sustain the working connection between the school, students, and the private sectors.

He also ensures that students understand the importance of internships for their future job choices, and he hopes that they will like them.

Before sending students to their internships, a survey is conducted among Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). The information from the survey is used to match the students' skills and interests with a suitable MSME. After all relevant information has been gathered, Souliphan and his colleagues arrange for students to be placed in their respective enterprises.

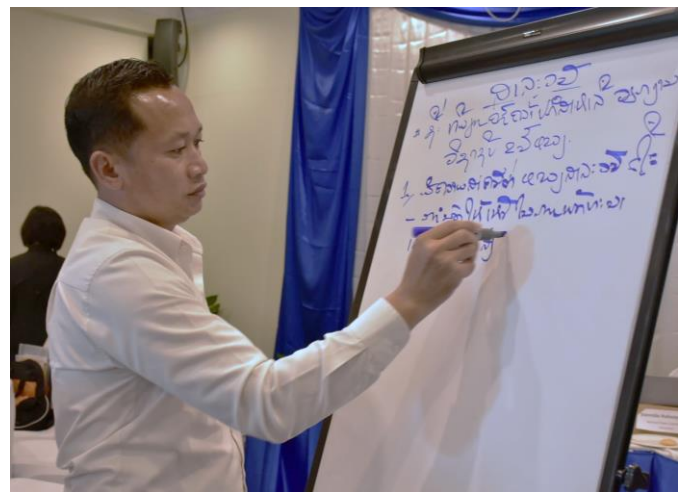


Image: Bounthavy sharing ideas during a workshop

Credit: Swisscontact

To ensure seamless and successful internships, the school visits relevant MSMEs to mobilize them. *"We want every student in every profession to have an internship opportunity, but it is challenging because the enterprises can't accommodate all of the students. Nevertheless, we make every effort to get students to participate in an internship so that they can obtain real work experience,"* he explained.

Furthermore, if students do well during their internships, MSMEs are likely to hire them when they require new staff. *"The internship is also a good way to give trainees a chance to get a decent job they can enjoy from the start,"* said Souliphan.

Image: Bounthavy is discussing with team during the workshop
Credit: Swisscontact

Souliphan sees internships as more than just a job preparation for students. *"When selecting students for internships, we must consider not just their theoretical skills but also their practical skills, their interests, and motivation so that they are able to contribute to the work process. When this is the case, we consider this as a good fit for both students and businesses,"* he said.

Souliphan added, *"Right now, I need to properly manage the added obligations with the internships and VTESS. In order to set an example for the students, I also aim to improve my own working skills as coordinator for the VTESS project and see this as my internship as well!"*



Inception phase: August 2019 - March 2020

Project duration: (4 years) August 2019 - July 2023

Funded by: Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

Implementer: Consortium Swisscontact / Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts

Key implementing governmental partners:

- Ministry of Education and Sports - MoES (Lead)
- Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare – MoLSW

Target Groups:

- Early school-leavers: young people (15-35 years of age) who have completed primary, but not lower secondary education, and are subjected to income poverty.
- Wider: Teachers from IVET schools, staff from job centres or similar institutions (career counsellors, job coaches, community or youth workers, village facilitators, social workers)



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