



SKILLS FOR TOURISM PROJECT • LAO/029

IMPACT STORIES

TRAINEE



“I am very happy to have had the opportunity to participate in such a good programme”

Images: Mr. Latsamee Kingrattana, above, and Kingrattana with classmates, next page.
Credit: Swisscontact

Although Latsamee Kingrattana holds a Bachelor's Degree in Architecture, his passion is the hotel and food industry.

Kingrattana was working as an Assistant Manager at the Rattanawadee Hotel (Pakse City, Champasak Province) when he learned about the PTHAS Training Programme through an ad at the Champasak Hotel and Restaurant Association (CHRA). Kingrattana eagerly signed up for the training as he wanted to learn new skills and improve in his job.

Since 2018, Kingrattana has been trained by industry trainers from CHRA in housekeeping through the PTHAS Training Programme.

“I love cooking and baking so I was thrilled that the programmed also offered courses in international cookery, baking, cocktail mixing, and barista services,” he explained.





Starting a career in the tourism and hospitality sector was challenging at the beginning because he had no prior experience. Kingrattana learned that standards for hotel work are extremely high—everything must be properly maintained and very clean at all times.

"I still consider myself as a newbie to the hotel business, and every topic I learn in this programme is very exciting"

"It's challenging, but also rewarding because every customer is different and they have diverse needs," he said. As a practitioner, you must quickly find solutions to everyday problems, so you don't lose the trust of your clients."

"Personally, the training programme has taught me to be more detail-oriented. All the additional skills that I have learned can be easily applied to other aspects of my life," he added.

Kingrattana was able to apply his newly learned techniques to make improvements at the Rattanawadee Hotel, and they also have plans to open a small café, where Kingrattana can apply his barista skills. He has also managed to share the knowledge he gained from the programme to other hotel and restaurant staff.

"If there are more training opportunities offered in the future, I will definitely participate. Especially, if the topic is relevant to my work in the tourism and hospitality industry," said Kingrattana.

Kingrattana believes that all current staff from his industry should regularly undergo training to improve the service they deliver. It would help to standardize the system and the service quality.

"I hope the programme can continue because it will help the industry to grow and contribute to strengthening local businesses," Kingrattana said.



Pheun Than Heng A Sip (PTHAS) Training Programme


swisscontact

RESULTS TO DATE: UPSKILLING OF MSME STAFF



896 staff from **312** tourism and hospitality enterprises have received up-skilling training*



147 Mio LAK (EUR 13,000) private sector investment**



'Good' impact on staff performance confirmed by employers (average of 4.0/5)***



98% of employers are micro or small enterprises*

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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.

* 47% are micro (5 or less employees) and 51% are small (50 or less employees) enterprises.

** Includes both fees paid by enterprises for upskilling training (LAK 80,680,000) and in-kind contributions (LAK 66,805,000) leveraged from business associations and their members (2018-2021 data)

***MSME satisfaction survey conducted by Swisscontact from 2018 - 2021 using a five-point Likert scale: 1=Very Poor, 2=Poor, 3=Fair, 4=Good;5=Very Good



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CHRA



“Training builds the confidence and strength of the members of the association”

Mr. Thouy Phetsavan is the Director of Champasak Palace Hotel and President of Champasak Hotel and Restaurant Association (CHRA). Phetsavan has been as an industry trainer for the PTHAS Training Programme for almost 6 years. Prior to his tourism and hospitality career, he taught mathematics at the National University of Laos in Vientiane Capital for two years.

Images: Mr. Thouy Phetsavan, above, and Phetsavan with students on following page.
Credit: Swisscontact

When the PTHAS Training Programme was piloted in Champasak in 2014, CHRA members, under the leadership of Phetsavan, were the first ones to be trained. The initial idea of the programme was to improve the capacity of local staff and to improve service delivery.

"The training has to be industry standards, an affordable cost, accessible to SMEs, and the trainers should be selected from among experienced business owners or hotel managers," Phetsavan said. **"It's a mixture of these different factors that make this programme viable and sustainable."**





“We have to always think on our toes,” he said. Being an industry trainer for 6 years has trained Thouy to become an expert problem solver.

Becoming an industry trainer is also a source of pride for Thouy, “I am extremely happy and proud to be part of the personnel development of the hotel and restaurant business. Training is an important part of boosting the labor market and raising the standard of the hotel and restaurant business. It builds the confidence and strength of the members of CHRA,” he said.

The Pilot PTHAS Training Programme contributed to the development of series of modules that are still considered relevant today. The programme also consulted with the CHRA to adjust the module curriculum to make the content significant to the tourism and hospitality industry. In addition, the PTHAS builds the capacity of the local business associations by teaching them to become industry trainers to retain the knowledge learned.

Phetsavan emphasized that the training is also part of the annual plan of the CHRA.

“We will continue to provide training even after the PTHAS training programme has ended and feel confident that we have the capacity to update the topics, curriculum and information ourselves to reflect the current needs of the locality.”

Phetsavan said that here have been numerous challenges in organizing the training. The most common of which is the participants.

“Because the level of capacity of each participant is different you cannot deliver a one-size-fits-all training”



He explained that industry trainers must continuously adjust their teaching approach. Also, the equipment and materials in the handbook are not always followed, that sometimes trainers have to adapt to local solutions.

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MSME

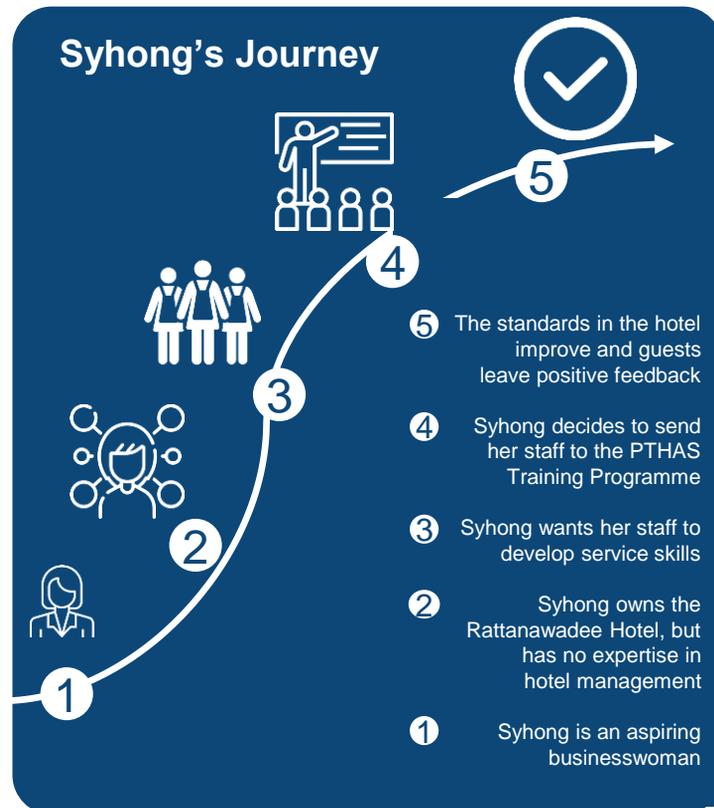


“The standards of the hotel improved, and guests left good feedback after the training”

Ms. Syhong Kingrattana is an aspiring businesswoman and the proud owner of the Rattanawadee Hotel located in Pakse City, Champasak Province. She is an aspiring businesswoman new to the hospitality sector and appreciates the opportunity to send her staff to the PTHAS training programme to improve their practical skills. When she learned about the PTHAS training programme in starting in Champasak, instead of attending the training herself she sent two of her staff, Latsamee Kingrattana and Lattanakone Keokhamphui, to take the service-training course. Kingrattana said that Keokhamphui works in housekeeping and Kingrattana is the assistant manager of the hotel, and she wanted them to develop their skills and adapt them to their work.

Images: Ms. Syhong Kingrattana, above. Hotel housekeeping staff, next page.
Credit: Swisscontact

“It’s not only a good opportunity for them, but it will also improve the service quality of the hotel. My business will benefit because of this training”



Kingrattana emphasised that the service-training course of the PTHAS Training Programme is highly relevant and vital to local businesses because it supports the enhancement of the quality and delivery of services in the tourism and hospitality industry. And of utmost importance, it demonstrates and instills the vital industry standards for service work.

Kingrattana said that after her two staff members completed the PTHAS Training Programme, “The standards of the hotel improved, and guests left a good feedback after the training. We started to get more visitors,” Kingrattana said excitedly. Kingrattana noticed right away that Latsamee and Latanakone were adjusting their working methods

based on what they learned in the training programme. “I believe that loving what you do is the heart of good service delivery. If you are not passionate about your work, the guests can clearly see it.”

Kingrattana explained that even though there is a registration fee for the training, I decided to send both Latsamee and Latanakone.

“This programme is very good value for my money. I believe in the training so much, that I would be more than happy to send other staff to future trainings.”



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