



WORKING TOGETHER TO PROMOTE ONE HEALTH IN LAO PDR

Lao One Health University Network (LAOHUN) partners with higher education institutions across the country to promote One Health awareness, knowledge, and practice to prevent, detect, and respond to infectious disease threats.

Infectious disease threats, such as COVID-19, have underlined the need for trained professionals to respond to threats and manage the risk of diseases that cross human, animal, and environmental sectors and unite them in a **One Health** approach. LAOHUN is committed to developing a diverse workforce whose technical skills span across many disciplines and sectors and has the competency to coordinate and collaborate across those stakeholders to manage infectious disease outbreaks.

DEVELOPING LAOS' ONE HEALTH WORKFORCE

LAOHUN was established in 2018 with the support of the U.S. Department of State's Lower Mekong Initiative (LMI) and officially joined Southeast Asia One Health University Network (SEAOHUN) in 2019. LAOHUN is among the eight country networks that SEAOHUN supports as part of the USAID One Health Workforce – Next Generation (OHW-NG) project. The OHW-NG project aims to empower One Health University Networks to sustainably develop and deliver world-class, model programs for equipping professionals with transdisciplinary skills to address complex global health issues.

SEAOHUN and LAOHUN work to strengthen One Health capacities by promoting access to regional programs including student engagement, fellowships, scholarships, and small grants for academic and research staff. LAOHUN organizes the conduct and development of academic and professional training courses that incorporate the One Health approach and equip trainees with core and technical competencies. The Network raises awareness of One Health as a critical topic for universities to integrate into curricula, research, community services, and student-led activities.

IMPACTS AND RESULTS

Under the OHW-NG project, LAOHUN expanded its Network from two to all five universities and now covers the northern, central, and southern regions in Lao PDR. Member universities are National University of Laos, University of Health Sciences, Souphanouvong University, Champasak University, and Savannakhet University.

LAOHUN is a growing network that reflects multiple health disciplines, including medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, nursing sciences, medical technology, public health, research and educational development, agriculture, environmental sciences, social sciences, and natural sciences.

LAOHUN, in partnership with the government of Lao PDR, organized two key events in 2021: One Health awareness-raising at its member universities and a virtual COVID-19 vaccination campaign to promote public health benefits of vaccinations and reduce vaccine hesitancy. In addition, LAOHUN works to institutionalize the One Health approach into its university offerings and produce a sustainable pool of competent health professionals to mitigate the impact of zoonotic diseases. Furthermore, LAOHUN students applied their creativity and technical knowledge to educate non-scientific communities on One Health through short videos.

Additional information may be found at the LAOHUN website (www.laohun.org) and through their social media channel (www.facebook.com/laohun.lao)