

Andy Schroeder
Sunlabob Renewable Energy Ltd
Vientiane
Lao PDR

26 May 2008

Dear Andy and the Sunlabob Team,

We are writing to thank you for giving us the opportunity to help the people in the area around Phakbeuak village in Bolikhamxay with a solar refrigerator and lights for the local medical centre. As you know, the funds came from friends and family helping us to celebrate our wedding in January. It is great to have found such a simple and tangible way to share their generosity.

Having been to Phakbeuak with Simon, Souliya and Daophet we are certain that the unit is appreciated, and will really make a difference for people. Knowing that Sunlabob will ensure that the equipment is maintained and used properly for the next 10 years is very reassuring.

The trip was really interesting. At the village we met the doctor, a woman with a baby the same age as our 1-year-old son Samuel, who lives next door to the health centre so that it is never really closed and she is never really off duty. We also saw first-hand the difficulties the staff at the centre faced keeping medicine cold before they received the cooling unit and lights.

On the way to Phakbeuak, before leaving the paved road for the 2-hour trip along the mud road to the village, we stopped at the District Health Centre to pick up medical supplies using the old system for keeping medicine cold, for the last time. The boot of the 4wd was almost filled by an industrial-sized esky containing some packets of vaccines, which took two people to unload.

The health centre staff at Phakbeuak said that this non-electrical refrigerator would keep medicine cold for 10 days – less if the weather was hotter. It was better than nothing, but it still would be easy for drugs to spoil. As far as we could see it also meant a cumbersome process of travelling back and forward to the district centre to pick up refills of ice and/ or drugs, requiring a car. For that the village appeared to be reliant on the kindness of visiting donors or others from wealthier parts of the country, as there were few if any cars in the village.

So after all that, we are very glad to think that the refrigerator unit will solve at least one problem for the area, and we hope that it means that more children are vaccinated, and others receive the health care they need without the long, arduous trek to the district centre.

We also would like to say how fantastic it was that Sunlabob responded so quickly when we approached you looking for a way to support an environmentally sustainable activity and help a needy community. In no time we had an agreement, the unit was on its way to the village and we were on our way with a Sunlabob crew to see it for

ourselves. The company is obviously serious about helping communities as well as running a successful business.

Finally, it was good to see the Sunlabob franchise model in action. People we met at Phakbeuak were very happy to have access to solar electricity, and, for the franchisee, working with Sunlabob clearly offered a rare chance to learn and use business skills locally. Mr Sithon was certainly enthusiastic about welcoming us with a large pot of *lao hai*.

We wish you and all at Sunlabob the best and look forward to hearing many more success stories about getting power to the people!

Yours sincerely,

Handwritten signatures of Tom Greenwood and Grace Nicholas in blue ink. The signature on the left is 'Tom Greenwood' and the one on the right is 'Grace Nicholas'.

Tom Greenwood and Grace Nicholas