

MEDIA RELEASE

AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY VIENTIANE



14 September 2014

Australia supports construction of Visitor Showroom at the Lao Disabled Women's Development Center

Australian Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Hon Bronwyn Bishop MP, today officially opened a new Visitor Showroom at the Lao Disabled Women's Development Center (LDWDC). Funded under the Australian Embassy's Direct Aid Program (DAP), the Visitor Showroom will display handicrafts produced by LDWDC graduates in Vientiane.

Through the Australian Embassy's Direct Aid Program (DAP), Australia has provided nearly A\$100,000 (about LAK714 million) funding support to the LDWDC over the last five years.

Ms Bishop said that Australia was very proud to support the Center's work in providing vocational and life skills training and subsequent employment to women with disabilities.

"We hope that this visitor centre showroom will provide the opportunity to showcase products and generate a reliable source of income to sustain the Centre's good work," said Bishop.

Through the Australian Embassy's DAP program, the Centre has been able to build a new kitchen (2006), built storage facilities (2009) and construct sanitation facilities (2011). Australia, through its volunteer program, is also proud to have placed volunteers in support roles at the Center for many years.

LDWDC was established in 1990. It has been working to assist women living with disabilities to become self-sufficient, independent and equal members of the community.

It provides support and advocacy for disabled women in Laos, including vocational training and employment opportunities in computer literacy, sewing, weaving and handmade paper products.

The Australian Embassy is currently accepting applications for their Direct Aid Program (DAP)- a small-scale grants program which targets humanitarian and community development needs. Go to <http://www.laos.embassy.gov.au/vtan/home.html> to find out more information.



Speaker of the House of Representatives Bishop (Centre right), Vice Chair of Planning, Economic and Finance committee, Dr Bouakham Thipphavong together with Director of LDWDC, Ms Chanhpheng Sivila officially opened a new Visitor Showroom at the LDWDC funding under the Australian Embassy's Direct Aid Program (DAP) in Vientiane.

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