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ITE COLLABORATES WITH NORTHLIGHT AND METTA SCHOOLS IN SOCIAL ENTERPRISE AND COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT IN LAOS

In a first tripartite collaboration, students from the Institute of Technical Education (ITE), NorthLight and Metta Schools will come together to carry out social enterprise and community service project in Nong Vieng Kham School, in Dong Dok, Laos.

2 The team, which comprises 48 students and five staff from the three institutions, will work hand-in-hand in the project known as ***Connect.Laos: Social Enterprise in Action***, where they will help raise funds to build and improve the primary school in Laos.

3 “We are pleased to collaborate with NorthLight and Metta Schools in this overseas project. ITE’s experience from the previous social entrepreneurship project in Laos will be shared with the school participants. It will be a learning journey for student participants as they reach out to the world, to give to those who are less fortunate. I hope that the exposure and interaction in Laos will nurture them to be even more caring individuals who will bring greater good to humanity,” said Dr Ricky Tam, Principal of ITE College East.

4 Singing the same tune, Mr Yong Soo Cheng, Principal of Metta School added: “The exposure to a different culture and lifestyle will go a long way towards the personal development of Metta’s students. I hope the trip will allow them to appreciate the material things they have and not take them for granted.”

5 Students from the three institutions have been busy preparing for the trip by running small business stalls at their campuses during weekdays and at Innovation Park, Vivo City, during weekends, to raise funds for the project. Aaron Liew Yao Jie, a third-year ITE Skills Certificate (ISC) student in Food & Beverage from NorthLight School, said: “The preparation for the trip itself has been a great learning experience

for me as I interact and work together with friends from ITE and Metta. I look forward to this trip, as I am sure that there is much that I can learn.”

6 Nodding in agreement is Ms Tan Si Ni, a *Nitec* in Beauty Therapy student from ITE College East: “We have developed great rapport with our friends from NorthLight and Metta Schools. The preparations have been tedious and the trip itself will be equally so, if not more, but knowing that our help will go a long way towards helping the villagers, make these efforts so worthwhile and meaningful. We are raring to hone our skills to good use for the less fortunate pupils and villagers of Dong Dok.”

Sending-Off Ceremony: Invitation to Media

7 A Sending-Off Ceremony for participants of ***Connect.Laos: Social Enterprise In Action Project*** will be held on **Sat 31 May 2008 at 1000 hours** at **The Event Hall, ITE College East, 10 Simei Avenue, Singapore 486047**. His Excellency **Mr Thouane Vorasam**, Laos Ambassador to Singapore and **Mr Hawazi Daipi**, Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Manpower & Ministry of Health, will officiate at the Ceremony. The Fact Sheet, Programme and Location Map are attached at **Annexes A, B and C** respectively.

8 Members of the media are invited to attend and cover the Sending-Off Ceremony on 31 May 08.

9 For confirmation on attendance and arrangements for interviews and photography, please contact: Ms Hajjiah Koming, Head/Communications (Colleges), Tel: 6772 0804, Email: hajjiah_koming@ite.edu.sg.

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Institute of Technical Education

The **Institute of Technical Education (ITE)**, Singapore, was established as a post-secondary education institution in 1992 under the Ministry of Education. ITE is a principal provider of career and technical education and principal authority in developing national occupational skills certification and standards to enhance Singapore's workforce competitiveness. Under its **"One ITE System, Three Colleges"** Model of Education, ITE governs three Colleges, comprising **ITE College Central, ITE College East and ITE College West**.

Annex A**Factsheet****Connect Laos: Social Enterprise In Action Project****Introduction on Connect Laos: Social Enterprise in Action**

This is a joint project initiated by ITE College East, NorthLight and Metta Schools. A first time for the three institutions to work in collaboration, this project involves organising and running a social enterprise and carrying out a community service in Laos.

2 The present three-institution team which comprises 48 students and 5 staff volunteers will visit the Nong Vieng Kham Primary School on **11 June to 21 June 2008**. The student composition will be:

- a) 3 students from Metta School
- b) 5 students from NorthLight School
- c) 40 students from ITE College East from all the four different schools, namely: School of Business, School of Engineering, School of Info Com Technology and School of Applied Health Science.

3 The main beneficiary of this project are the pupils of Nong Vieng Kham Primary School, a school situated in Dong Dok – a small village about 35 minutes' drive from Vientiane, the capital of Laos. The village at Dong Dok houses 300 families and has a population of about 1450. The primary school was built with limited funds from the villagers in 1994. It provides education for some 120 students. The school which has five teaching staff has five classrooms of zinc roofs, unfinished flooring, woven-mat partitions and half-built external walls without proper ventilation.

Past Projects by ITE Students at Nong Vieng Kham Primary School, Dong Dok

4 ITE College East students made two previous trips to contribute and help to improve the facilities to create a better learning environment for the pupils of Dong Dok, aged from eight to twelve. Our students used skills learnt at ITE to construct

cement partitions, plaster and paint the exterior and interior walls of the classrooms and installed windows, fans and lights. To ensure that Dong Dok's children can play during the muddy rainy seasons, ITE students built a hard court within the school premises.

5 Besides putting their hands-on skills to good use, ITE students also shared their soft-skills knowledge with the young people of Laos. These included healthcare, first-aid lessons, making of crafts, as well as lessons in basic English and Mathematics.

Raising Funds for a Social Cause

6 The present three-institution team will continue their noble objectives of helping out the pupils and villagers of Dong Dok, Laos. The team will manage and operate enterprise-related activities by collaborating with students from National University of Laos and members of Youth Union of Laos to generate funds for this social cause. Proceeds will be used to purchase materials for the building of the school's sixth classroom.

Community Service Activities

7 The team will conduct workshops on basic skills in health care, English language, marketing skills and building services (electrical/mechanical and solar power). It will also present contributions from sponsors, staff and Singapore students to the villagers.

8 Staff volunteers will also conduct a 20-hour enrichment programme to over 50 students from the Faculty of Education, Laos University.

Preparations for the Laos Trip

9 Prior to the trip, students from all the three institutions had attended a series of workshops on managing and running a social enterprise. The students have been running small business stalls at the campuses and at Innovation Park, Vivo City to raise funds for their Laos project. They have also been trained in grooming, social etiquettes and presentation skills. Students have also been assigned various roles to allow them discover, develop and improve strengths in different areas.

Strong Support from Individuals and Organisations

10 The following individuals and organisations contribute greatly to the Connect Laos: Social Enterprise in Action project:

- a) Laotian students in Singapore, in particular, Sanva Saephan and Ep for conducting the Conversational Laos Language Course
- b) Laotian Community in Singapore
- c) National Youth Achievement Award Council (NYAAC)
All students in the project are participants of NYAA.
- d) Ms Elim Chew of 77th Street for her continuous support & the use of PaTH Market at Vivo City
- e) Hock Hua Tonic Pte Ltd for the generous donation of bottled drinks
- f) Nestle (Singapore) Pte Ltd for the generous offer of Nestle Milk Powder

**CONNECT LAOS: SOCIAL ENTERPRISE IN ACTION PROJECT
SENDING-OFF CEREMONY**

**1000 hours, Saturday 31 May 2008
The Event Hall, ITE College East**

<i>Time</i>	<i>Programme</i>
0945 hrs	<p>Arrival of Officials</p> <p>Dr Ricky Tam, Principal ITE College East and Mr James Soh, Executive Director of NYAA</p>
1000 hrs	<p>Arrival of</p> <p>His Excellency Mr Thouane Vorasam Laos Ambassador to Singapore</p> <p>Mr Hawazi Daipi Senior Parliamentary Secretary Ministry of Manpower</p>
	<p>Welcome Address By Dr Ricky Tam</p>
	<p>Speech by Guest-of-Honour By Mr Hawazi Daipi</p>
	<p>Project Presentation By Student Team Leaders</p>
	<p>Symbolic Handover of Items to Beneficiary</p>
1050 hrs	<p>Reception & Interaction with Participants</p>
1130 hrs	<p>End of Programme</p>

