



EARTHCHECK

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INSIGHT

Alila Luang Prabang is nestled in a quiet residential area of Luang Prabang, an ancient royal town that was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1995. Its private and peaceful location is just five minutes from the town centre and 10 minutes from the airport.

Laos remains one of the most unspoilt countries in Southeast Asia, and Luang Prabang in the north is renowned as the cultural and spiritual heart of the kingdom, nestled between the Mekong and Nam Khan Rivers. Its well-preserved townscape is a fascinating fusion of traditional Lao architecture and European influences.

Alila Luang Prabang has chosen to fund this project in the hope of benefiting more children in remote villages through this programme. For every booking of the three-night Gift-to-Share package, Alila Luang Prabang will donate US\$30 to this project; a good way to give back to the community that will make a long-lasting difference.

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ALILA LUANG PRABANG, LAOS

Needy pre-schools in Luang Prabang have been benefiting from a local community project that provides them with teacher training and new school materials; a project which has greatly improved the school experience for students and teachers alike.

Alila Luang Prabang has pledged its support to this project through its *Gift to Share* programme.

This project started in 2007 with the Boupaphan Pre-school in Luang Prabang, and has since been expanded to seven pre-schools in different villages, reaching out to 169 children from Laos' three main ethnic groups.

Teachers at the program undergo training on the Montessori pedagogy and materials, covering the four Montessori fields; practical life, sensorial life, math and Lao language. Teachers also learn how to make some of the Montessori materials themselves.

Montessori is the chosen teaching method as it involves a lot of hand manipulation that resonates well with the children as it

reflects their communication with their parents.

Upon successful training, the teachers return to their schools, implementing what they learnt into practice with their students.

Every child at the schools is taught the Lao alphabet through a hands-on approach, engaging children in learning through writing, colouring, cutting and gluing. The project organizers also interact with the teacher to find out more about the village, the specific needs of each school, monitor their teaching skills and motivate them to improve.

This project has integrated the many ethnic minorities as one single community as the villages become more involved in pre-schooling. Its success has prompted the Ministry of Education of Luang Prabang Province to allocate more trainees to adopt the Montessori methodology.

The number of children in the programme attending regular school has tripled, which has in turn given teachers newfound confidence in the teaching skills.