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Media Release:

MMG LXML Sepon bridges the gap

Residents of 15 villages in Vilabouly and Xaybouathong districts in Savannakhet province are now enjoying easier access to other surrounding villages, thanks to a newly built bridge. The bridge, which spans the Senoi River, was paid for by the Sepon Development Trust Fund. The fund is supported by MMG LXML Sepon, the gold and copper mine.

The bridge, which is 36 metres long and took three months to construct, cost US\$ 109,656 (including an in-kind contribution of timber worth US\$ 9,656 from local community members). The new structure replaces an existing bridge which was too narrow.

The official hand over ceremony took place at Natuer village this May 2011, and was attended by Vilabouly District Chief Bouasone Mahavong, representatives from MMG LXML Sepon and local community members.

The bridge was funded under the Sepon Development Trust Fund, which provides US\$500,000 every year for Vilabouly District. The Trust Fund is administered by representatives from both the company and the local administration, and is used to support the work of government departments and mass organisations. The majority of the expenditure is on infrastructure.

Since mining operations started in 2003, more than US\$ 3.4 million has been disbursed through the Trust Fund. The funding supplements the District's existing medium-term development plans.

"The Trust Fund is one way in which the company demonstrates its commitment to Vilabouly District," said MMG LXML Sepon Director, Mr Saman Aneka. "We also fund community development programs related to livelihoods, water and sanitation, health, village banking and savings, and small enterprise development. Last year, we spent US\$5.2 million on community relations and community development, including the expenditure on the Trust Fund," he said.

In 2010, 44 Trust Fund projects were completed across a wide range of sectors.

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At the hand over ceremony taken place on May 15, 2011, Mr. Bouasone Mahavong Vilabouly District Chief cutting ribbon to open the usage of the new bridge.



First walk on the MMG LXML Sepon supported bridge by Mr. Bouasone Mahavong Vilabouly District Chief, first from right.