



Dr Sing Menorath (seated fourth left) with participants of the training course on research methodology in reproductive health.

# Course aims to improve mother, child health

Times Reporters

Health officials are hopeful that a training course on research methodology in reproductive health will help medical staff to reduce the death rates of mothers and children and achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015.

The second training course on the subject opened yesterday at the University of Health Sciences, aimed at strengthening the knowledge, skills and experience of Lao health workers in reproductive health research in the fields of gynaecology-obstetrics and mother and child health.

It is anticipated that course participants will be able to effectively apply their newly gained knowledge in their research.

"Importantly, we will be able to reduce the morbidity and mortality rates of Lao mothers and children," said university Vice President Assoc. Prof. Dr Sing

Menorath.

He explained that research is vital to overall development. "All data from research stemming from this training course will help medical staff to reach the MDGs."

Laos has a significantly high mortality rate in the under-five age group at 98 per 1,000 live births and a high maternal mortality rate of 405 per 100,000 live births.

Vice Dean of the university's Faculty of Postgraduate Studies Dr Mayfong Mayxay said "Many factors contribute to such high rates, a number of which we are aware of but do not fully understand."

For this reason, research on reproductive health and mother and child health is vital to discovering appropriate and practical solutions.

During the 10-week training course, 11 participants from the University of Health Sciences, as well as Mahosot, Setthathirath, and Mother and Child Health hospitals will

learn about national policies regarding reproductive health, mother and child health, and maternal and child morbidity and mortality.

Participants will also study topics such as family planning and contraception, interpersonal communication and narrative methods in reproductive health, epidemiology, and research methodology.

Both training courses have been supported by the Geneva Foundation for Medical Education and Research of Switzerland.

A member of the Geneva Foundation's Faculty of Medical Education and Research, Dr Robert Thomson, Project Manager of the foundation's Lao Collaboration Programme Dr Yanick M. Ebinger, Vice President of the University of Health Sciences and Deputy Director General of the Organisation and Personnel Department Dr Phouthone Vangkonevilay attended the course's opening.