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# Newsletter

## Lifelong Learning and Non-formal Education in Lao PDR and Southeast Asia



No4.2015

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## Editorial

Dear reader,

This issue offers you a wide range of articles, covering some grassroots experience, training reports and an overview about the new global education agenda. It illustrates well the concept of DVV International's work in South East Asia: To implement some project on the local level and to link this with some trainings (capacity building) and advocacy for non-formal education.

On the local level, Community Learning Centers (CLCs) are well recognized instruments to bring education to the people, especially in rural, marginalized communities. They can serve as multifunctional spaces: a CLC can be used for adult literacy, for skills trainings, village meetings, information meetings, schooling and much more. The example from Cambodia provides a few interesting insights from neighboring country.

We are living in times of changes. ASEAN integration and economic change are affecting the lives of many people. New job opportunities, migration and the growing importance of money are just some effects of these changes. Education has the duty to prepare people for this change. Non-formal education has to offer not only equivalency programs and literacy courses to the youth and adults. There is a growing demand to gain competencies important for these new times: financial literacy, communication and leadership skills, and the ability to reflect on your own strength and weaknesses and be able to take a prepared decision about the future – just to name a few. One concept to address these needs is called “Soft Skills”. It means that side by side with the “Hard Skills” of reading, writing or numeracy, other competencies like those mentioned should be developed. DVV International together with the Department of Non-Formal Education invited our colleagues from PRIA India for a workshop on this concept.

Last, but not least it is the time to present to you the new education agenda Education 2030. In this issue, you will find a small article on that. Issue 1/2016 will be fully dedicated to this topic.

This is the moment to thank all of our partners and our team for a successful year of cooperation and partnership. For me, it was the first year in Lao PDR and the region, and I am very grateful for the understanding and passion in working together for Non-formal Education.

*Uwe Gartenschlaeger*  
Regional Director  
DVV International, Southeast Asia

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## LITERACY DAY 2015 IN CAMBODIA

*Vanna Poeu, NGO Education Partnership, Cambodia*

*The Education Law, Chapter 4, Article 15 provisions for a comprehensive and unique education system by stating that “the government should arrange complete and uniform education system, including Formal, Non-Formal and Informal Education”.*

Non-Formal Education (NFE) is referred to structured educational activities that is outside the formal educational system in order to provide some sort of selected education. NFE covers many educational programmes such as literacy, life skills, work skills, basic education for those who do not study in formal educational institutions. It is a continuous education and equivalency programme to be included in the formal education programme for lifelong education. NFE learners have the right to request and receive an equivalency evaluation test of their education from the education authority as stated in the Education Law.

September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015, marked the International Literacy Day; its celebration helps join communities around the globe to act as a united voice in raising awareness for those who cannot read or write. Literacy Day gives children and communities a chance to rediscover the joy of reading while raising awareness for those without access to education.

This year the theme of International Literacy Day is “Literacy and Sustainable Societies” and the theme of Cambodia National Literacy Day is “Literacy Contributes to Reducing Risky Migration.” Literacy is a key driver for sustainable development especially to reduce risky migration of

Cambodian people.

Moreover, literacy skills are essential for learning a broader set of



knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, which is needed to create sustainable societies. This theme has particular relevance for the 4th goal of Education for All, which is “Achieving a 50 percent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults” in Cambodia to create long-term change in communities across the country where low levels of literacy is entrenched, intergenerational and adversely impacting people’s lives. Therefore, to celebrate National Literacy Day, we worked with local NGO members to showcase our current initiatives to boost literacy levels in each local area by encouraging parents to support their children’s literacy development, NEP also joined the national event in the Prey Veng province, under the national theme The Minister of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS), MoEYS leaders, a UNESCO representative from Phnom Penh, the Prey Veng Governor, ministries, NGOs, local authorities, students, literacy learners, and teachers attended the event where 30 learners who have excelled in literacy were awarded prizes. In addition, all TV stations extended their support by broadcasting this event throughout 25 different provinces and holding their own events. NEP, through DVV International supported T-Shirts, banners and books during this important event.



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To raise public awareness of the extraordinary value of the literacy day and of the necessity to promote a literate society, NEP supported 3 NGOs member such as International Cooperation Cambodia (ICC), Rural Aid Organization (RAO) and Community Counseling for Development (CCD) each NGOs received \$150 from NEP to conducted Literacy Awareness in Ratanak Kiri, Svay Rieng and Takeo province. More than 100 people included local authority participated in each event of each NGO.

The participants of the event organized for the sub national literacy day 2015 recalling that the rights to education is a fundamental human right, being aware that literacy is the first step to education, development and contribution of each individual to society and that it contributes to the economic and social development of a country; acknowledging the various definitions of literacy and the fact that literacy does not prevent the number of illiterate people from rising women and girls women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.

## Supporting Non-formal Education

### *Strategy of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development*

*For the first time, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) recognize the importance of Non-formal Education in his new education strategy. We quote the respective part from the strategy.*

Non-formal education is of overarching importance for the different fields of education as well as for cross-cutting issues like gender equality. It is particular qualified to react flexible to the needs of important target groups. On the one hand, non-formal education compensates the deficits of the formal education system, for example in the context of literacy, the acquisition of skills in the informal sector of economy or by building bridges between fields of education. On the other hand, it helps people to recognize their needs and positions and to acquire techniques to represent them. Thereby, especially discriminated groups are enabled to have a say and participate in social life. Eventually, non-formal training measures are applied in crisis situations, for example in refugee camps. Next to vocational trainings, especially measures of conflict management and facilities of reflection are needed here. In Mali, the BMZ supported the DVV International to conduct classes for (internally) refugees/returnees. The classes aimed to link income-producing activities with the debriefing of traumatic events. Thereby, local markets should be reestablished.

Mainly non-state agencies from private business and civil society engage in the non-formal education sector. Besides them, communal institutions play an important role. BMZ cooperates particularly with DVV International. Examples are the more than twenty education centers for adults of the Afghan National Association for Adult Education (ANAFAE): They are supported by DVV International and financed by the initiative "Combating the causes for migration and flight, reintegrate refugees". Here, nearly 200.000 women and men per year visit classes to prepare for the labor market, practical trainings supplementing school and literacy courses.

Additionally, non-formal education is also used to reach children and youth who do not attend school.



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## Regional Workshop on the Concept of Soft-Skill - October 12<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup>, Non-Formal Education Center, Vientiane Capital

*Carolin Korner, Intern, DVV International, Vientiane*

In a joint collaboration, DVV International, the Department of Non-Formal Education (DNFE), the Non-Formal Education Development Center (NFEDC) and Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) conducted a regional workshop on the concept of soft-skills from October 12<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup>. Opened and chaired by Mr Ounpheng Khammong, deputy director of DNFE, Mr Somsy Southivong, director of NFEDC, Mr Uwe Gartenschlaeger, Regional Director of DVV International and Mr Kaustuv Bandyopadhyay (PRIA), the three days aimed to 1) develop an understanding on soft skills' concepts and their importance in NFE 2) build skills on decision making, strengthening teams and negotiation and conflict resolution styles and 3) agree on the way forward. The workshop was held at the Non-Formal Education Development Center with the participation of over 30 representatives of provincial Lao NFE centers and services as well as representatives from Lao Youth Union and Lao Women Union. Additionally, representatives from our partners NEP in Cambodia and SEAMEO CELLL in Vietnam also attended the workshop.

A general introduction into the concept of soft-skills stressed the fact that soft-skills are not new, in contrary, every person possess them and use them regularly. The aim of the workshop was thus not to learn something completely new but to get aware of these skills and enable the participants to use them as effective as possible.

Moreover, presentations about the current "status quo" in Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam brought important insights about how soft-skills can be used on and influence the global, regional, national and local level. The contributors showed the current usage of soft-skills in their country and pointed out challenges related to soft-skills. Facilitated by two experts of our partner PRIA, important soft-skills were introduced during the workshop: A self-test on leadership-styles introduced the concept of leadership among the participants. The activity pointed out how leadership is a process and should not be equated with a "leader"; how it is less about the position and more about influence, willingness and accountability. Additionally, concepts and techniques of decision making, developing negotiation skills, effective communication and teamwork were discussed.

The whole workshop was shaped by active participation: the participants asked many questions and discussed a lot about their new insights. PRIA used different interactive learning methods, ranking from self-tests to group games. This balance between theoretical input and interactive parts made the concepts understandable for everyone. The participants were then encouraged to develop ideas for projects to incorporate soft-skills in NFE, which ranged from a regional project in the north to a three year regional cooperation.

Overall, the workshop was a great success. The participants gained a lot of new insights to take home, which shall now be further shared and implemented in ongoing activities. Four days of intense work in an atmosphere conducive to learning made strangers become friends.



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## Education 2030: The world agreed on a new education agenda!

Uwe Gartenschlaeger, DVV International, Vientiane

In the last months, leaders agreed on new goals for the further development of the world. "Sustainability" being the main key word in this agenda, these goals are formally named "Sustainable Development Goals" (SDGs), recognizing that our planet has limited resources and mankind should be very careful in using them. In a nutshell, these goal recognize that our planet is small, that all human beings are interconnected, and that it is important to live in peace, justice and prosperity together.

One of the 17 SDGs is dedicated to education: "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all". In this goal, three things were identified as most important for education:

- Access: Education should be inclusive and equitable, meaning all groups of the population should have the possibility to receive education, including poor people, ethnic groups, women, older people and out-of school children.
- Quality: World leaders recognize that too often children of grade three or four cannot read or write and graduates of VET schools

cannot find a job, because their skills are not needed. While it is important to bring children to school or offer vocational training for the youth and adults, well trained educators, well equipped schools and community learning centers are necessary to guarantee quality.

- Lifelong Learning: For too long education was offered for children only. The idea that you have to learn only in your first 20 years is not adequate anymore in a fast changing world. The world of work, but as well other challenges like natural disasters or migration requires permanent learning opportunities. And still too many people leave school without proper knowledge. Thus, they should have the possibility to learn in later years.

These are very nice goals in a nicely formulated declaration. But how do we ensure that they will be implemented in the countries, in the regions and villages? The Framework for Action of the Education 2030 tries to answer this question. Adopted in the beginning of November by all governments in Paris, France, it defines what should be done in the next 15 years. Seven targets were agreed:

Target 1: By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.

Target 2: By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.

Target 3: By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.

Target 4: By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship.

Target 5: By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.



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scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small- island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programs, in developed countries and other developing countries.

3. By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small-island developing States.

To measure the progress, indicators will be agreed on at the global, regional and national level.

In our region, UNESCO regional office in Bangkok is dedicated to support the countries in implementing the goal and targets. A first high level meeting to place end of November in Bangkok to inform government representatives about the framework and offer support in the implementation process: The Asia-Pacific meeting on Education 2030 (APMED). Here, special attention was given on how to measure the progress and on how to bring together all relevant stakeholders, including governments, academia, and civil society.

Target 6: By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy.

Target 7: By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development

For each target the document defines a strategy on how to reach it. Besides, three so called "means of implementations" were agreed. They highlight three crosscutting issues, which are essential, if the world wants to reach to goals:

1. Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all
2. By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of



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## Education for Sustainable Development and Lifelong Learning for All

The year 2016 is the first year of the new global development agenda. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be the main roadmap for shaping our future in the upcoming 15 years. For the first time, the idea of lifelong learning is a part of this agenda. This is a tremendous progress towards recognising the power of all forms of learning. World leaders accepted that every education system needs diverse and nationwide NFE institutions to compensate shortages and failures of the formal system (like drop-outs, illiteracy). They offer learning opportunities for young and old, as a respond to our ever faster changing world, where new skills, new knowledge and competencies are required at every age.

2016 is as well the first year of the implementation of the new Education Sector Development Plan for Lao PDR. The plan pays a remarkable attention to non-formal education: equivalency programs should be strengthened, the quality of teaching and learning should be further improved and Community Learning Centers are identified as important institution to build a lifelong learning society.

In all these effort, education for sustainable development (ESD) is of growing importance. All of us should learn to respect our environment, nature and our neighbors. All of us should begin to understand our shared responsibility for our small, fragile planet. All of us should have the opportunity to learn for a better future.

Lifelong Learning for everyone is the key to ensure a peaceful and prosperous tomorrow. It's worth to work for this common objective!

## Community Learning Center Workshop in Savannakhet Province

On October 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015, a CLC workshop to exchange experience and to discuss guidelines for CLC took place in Savannakhet Province, organized by PESS and DVV International. 26 representatives, from village level to MoES participated at the workshop. Among the participants, which were mainly from the Non-formal Education sector, 12 were women.

The workshop started with a review of the activities done after the workshops in District Sepon and Nong, continued by a questionnaire, answers and comments. Dokkham Xomsihapanya shared her experiences from her CLC visit in Cambodia. 4 groups, mixed from CLC leaders and government officials, discussed and developed strategies and prescribed responsibilities for the following topics:

1. Purpose of CLCs
2. Management structure of CLCs
3. Ownership of the village
4. Possible Sources of financing

All groups discussed every topic; the representatives participated actively by asking and answering questions and making comments. They were very interested in the workshop and many lessons were learned, for example in the area of CLC management, CLC education programs as well as in life skill and vocational training. At the end of the workshop, the participants said that they include their new insights into their further work. Before closing Ms. Philany Phissamay from DNFE made some comments about the sustainability of CLC.



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## Kick-off Event-Opening Trainers in Non-Formal Education in Lao DPR at the Non-formal Education Development Center(Km 8)

*“Create opportunity for all Lao population to have equitable access to education with a focus on education quality development to develop Lao citizens to become disciplined, brave, qualified and professional in self and as nation and to reduce disparities between urban and rural areas.”* This new vision clearly underpins the importance for the development of all education sub-sectors, including the NFE and puts a clear focus on quality and access of education. On this background, the Department of Non-formal Education and DVV International co-operate to organize the Mastertraining of Trainer project to support these valuable efforts in the most effective way and to offer our experience from more than 40 years’ work in international cooperation.

The project was chaired by the HE Lytou Bouapao, the Vice Minister of Education and Sports. “Developing Education means not only quantity but should have quality and use what you have learnt from expert to teach others in it, for Quality and Equal Education” he mentioned in the opening ceremony.

Co-chairs were Mr. Ounpheng Khammang the Deputy Director of Non-formal Education Department, Mr. Uwe Gartenschlaeger the Regional Director of DVV International and the Expert from RMIT University in Australia Mr. Jose Roberto Guevara, Ms. Anita Borkar from ASPBAE (Asia South Pacific for Basic and Adult Education) in India and Ms. Ushio Miura from UNESCO Bangkok, Thailand.

The objective of the project was to train within a mixed Lao/international team a group of 25-30 Master trainers of Adult Education, who will be able to provide ToT in all relevant sectors of the Lao NFE system. The project started in December 2015 end goes until December 2017.



The Committee team and the Participants of Master of ToT

At the end of 2015, Lao PDR will be integrated into the AEC. One of the key challenges in this context is to keep its population compatible on the new, common labor market and enable Lao people to find their way in this bigger community. An effective NFE system is one of the key success factors for this. This requires several components:

- Professional planning system, including needs analysis, budgeting and controlling.
- Adequate structures for curricula and textbook development.
- Capacity Building for the teachers and trainers, who should not only know their subject, but be able to use the most effective methods in teaching youth and adults.

To tackle the third challenge, many countries in Europe and Asia built up capacities for training and up skilling NFE staff. This project intends to establish an adequate system for Lao PDR: In 2017, the 25-30 master trainers will be available to up skill NFE teachers at the provincial, district and village level, using a simple pyramid model, in which the NFE resource centers established on the national and provincial level can multiply the skills of the master trainers, who are in their majority staff of these structures.

The participants are coming from the Non-formal Education sector in provinces, Vientiane Capital, Non-formal Education Development Center in Region, Provincial, Department of Non-formal Education, Vocational Education Development Institute, Lao Women’s Union, Lao Youth Union, Non-profit Association and DVV International.

## Interesting

### Important Website in region

[www.aspbae.org](http://www.aspbae.org)  
[www.pria.org](http://www.pria.org)

### Interesting publications

Adult Education and Development  
AED 79: Networking - Rio + 20 - Lifelong Learning  
AED 80: Post 2015  
AED 81: Communities  
AED 82: Global Citizenship Education

### International Perspectives in Adult Education

IPE 69: Youth and Adult Education in Prisons  
IPE 70: Research and Development in Adult Learning and Education in Hungary  
IPE 71: Adult education in an interconnected world  
IPE 72: 1914-2014 - Remembering the past to live the present and shape the future.

## Newsletters

The ASPBAE Bulletin access via [www.aspbae.org](http://www.aspbae.org)  
NEXUS - access via [www.uil.unesco.org](http://www.uil.unesco.org)  
Voice Rising - access via [www.icae2.org](http://www.icae2.org)  
Education Policy Matters - access via [www.unescobkk.org](http://www.unescobkk.org)

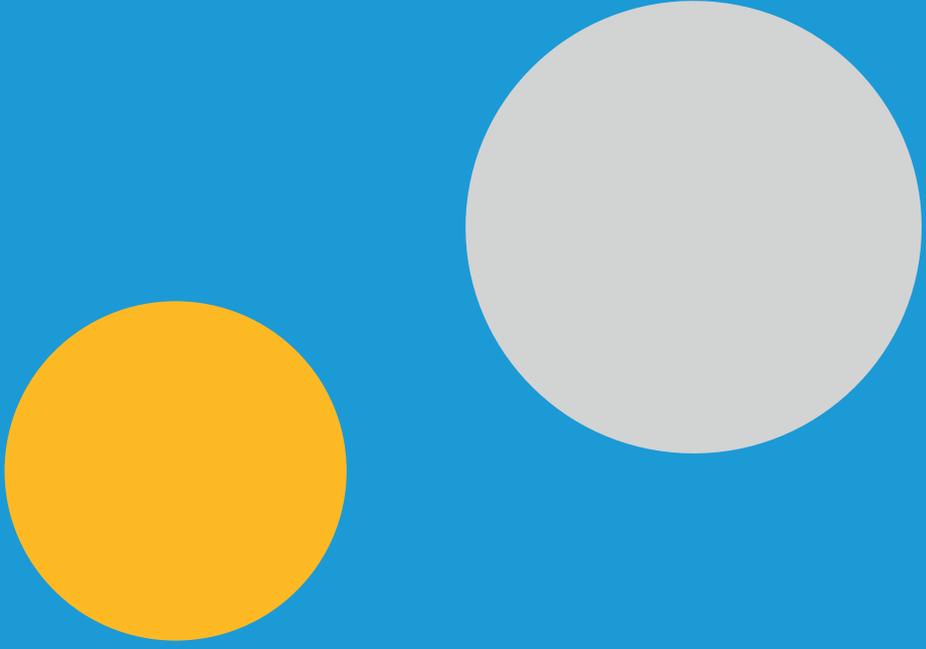
## New Publication

Newsletter: Lifelong Learning and Non-formal Education in Lao PDR and Southeast Asia  
At the Sunset of MDG and EFA: Lifelong Learning National Development and the Future  
Sharing for Learning in Lao PDR: DVV International Engaged in Lifelong Learning for Sustainable Development in Asia Pacific  
Education and life long learning for Sustainable Development: Asia Pacific Consultation

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