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Newsletter

Lifelong Learning & Non-Formal Education in Lao PDR and Southeast Asia



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Dear reader,

Recently, a statement given by an official from the Department of Non-Formal Education sparked my interest. He said: "Especially managers make the CLCs empty". The statement was given in the context of a little research project DVV International conducted on the sustainability of Community Learning Centers (CLCs) in Lao PDR. For me, the sentence is wise and challenging at the same time and inspired me to think of the following ideas:

- First of all, some directors of CLCs do not see themselves as managers, but as state officials and as part of a top-down command chain. They describe their duties as mainly centred around implementing orders and fulfilling duties within the NFE system only. By doing so, they neglect the possibilities of working together and using NFE Centers and CLCs as multifunctional spaces, which should be open to all partners, including entities of other Ministries or mass organizations, the private sector and international partners.
- Are we sure that the individuals appointed as directors/managers have received the adequate training to fulfil their role? What do they know, let's say, about financial management, fundraising and proposal writing or needs assessments? Do they have a basic understanding of adult learning and non-formal education? Are they informed about the relevant legal framework for CLCs and NFE Centers?
- What kind of support is available for them in terms of a reliable annual budget, consultation and coaching, equipment and staff?

DNFE and DVV International agreed to start a series of trainings for directors/managers of NFE institutions on the provincial, district and village level in 2018. To find out more about the situation the directors/managers are facing, and to understand their needs for training, a joint team from NFE Development Center KM8 and DVV International currently is conducting a study in the central provinces of Lao PDR. The results will be available in May, and we will be happy to share them with you. They will inform the design of our training cycle.

Another thought that came to mind while reading the quote above, is how challenging it is to lead an NFE center. Nobody would blame a school director if his/her school was empty! In this case, the director is simply not the key person for motivating the kids to go to school. He/she does not have to think about the kids' needs and which kind of trainings to offer. He/she does not have to look for trainers, the school teachers are simply there. And although the school budget is very limited in many cases as well, it is nothing compared to the situation of directors/managers of NFE Centers and CLCs, who work in a situation of great budget insecurity. Looking at the situation from this angle, we have to pay our respects to those who engage in NFE, and who help to offer training possibilities in basic education and skills as well as equivalency programs to the Lao people!

Yours,
Uwe Gartenschlaeger
Regional Director

The Power of Non-Formal Skills Trainings

Uwe Gartenschlaeger, DVV International, Regional Office Southeast Asia

The Government and international partners invest a lot in vocational education: Many vocational schools are very well equipped, teachers are trained and modern curricula have been developed. All these efforts focus on formal vocational education: The objective is to prepare youth with two or three years of training for qualified jobs at companies. This is an important task.

However, vocational training can have another purpose as well. Ms Amor from Lapid village in Nong District reflects on that: "After the training on food processing in the Community Learning Center, my family and I have sufficient and healthier nutrition". What she is talking about are non-formal skills trainings. These very short trainings do not primarily prepare learners for the labor market, but they do improve the lives and incomes of the participants. These trainings are based on the immediate needs of the people. Certificates are not as important here as the benefits for daily life.

To develop Lao PDR, both is important: a modern formal Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) system with good standards, equipment and highly skilled teachers as well as needs-oriented non-formal skills activities. DVV International and our Lao partners are proposing some approaches to improve the delivery of non-formal trainings:

- Integrated Vocational Education Schools (IVET) can offer trainings of one or two weeks in remote villages on husbandry, crop raising, carpentry or other skills. For that, the experienced teachers and some equipment of the schools can be used. An impact study of this approach piloted by German Development Partners DVV International and GIZ showed that villagers are able to use their new skills, and that they have improved their nutrition and in some cases even their income. All in all, it proved to be a very efficient and cost-

effective way to use the infrastructure of TVET and IVET schools to implement non-formal skills as well.

- Non-formal education in Lao PDR has its own structures: Nearly in all provinces, we can find Provincial NFE Centers, several districts have established District NFE Centers and more than 300 Community Learning Centers are working on the village level. Many of them offer skills trainings. They adopt and can use the curricula, teaching materials and teachers of the formal vocational education system, especially the lowest certificate trainings like C1 and C2.
- Many other actors offer non-formal skills trainings as well, like the Training Centers of the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, the Lao Women's Union and the Lao Youth Union. Some of them use the same materials like curricula and textbooks, whereas some of them have developed their own. It is suggested to improve cooperation and exchange between these actors to save funds and avoid double ups.

All in all, we need to work together better to offer highly demanded non-formal skills trainings to the people. Better coordination and more funding are the key for that.

Vocational
Training for
villagers





Raphaella Hess
our intern
at DVV International
Regional Office

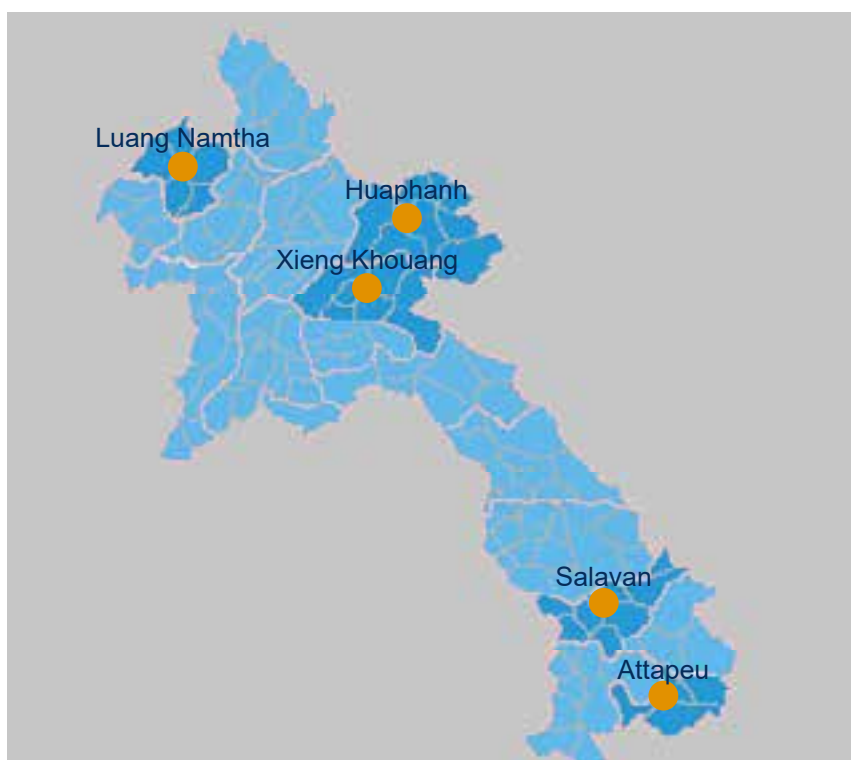
Tracer Study on Mobile Skills Trainings – Improving livelihoods by inspiring adults to learn new vocational skills

Raphaella Hess, DVV International Regional Office Southeast Asia

Over the course of the past year, the impact of the Mobile Skills Training program implemented by the Department for Technical and Vocational Education of the Ministry for Education and Sports, DVV International and the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ) was evaluated through a tracer study. A tracer study is a survey of graduates from education institutions which takes place after graduation to evaluate the training's success. DVV International commissioned the Lao-German Development Consultancy to execute the tracer study targeting participants of trainings run in 2015 in five provinces: Salavan, Xieng Khouang, Attapeu, Huaphanh and Luang Namtha. The results affirm the importance and high impact of adult vocational education, particularly for trainees from a very low socioeconomic background: Across all courses surveyed, the share of participants with an income below 300,000

kip per month before the training dropped from 43 per cent to 5 per cent after graduation. Over a third of all respondents earned more than the official minimum wage of 900,000 kip per month two years after participating in the Mobile Skills Training. This significant rise in income constitutes a clear improvement of the trainees' livelihoods.

The Mobile Skills Training program, run since 2010, aims at bringing highly demanded vocational skills to remote regions. To achieve this objective, teachers from Integrated Vocational Education and Training (IVET) schools are sent to rural villages, offering five to 10 days non-formal vocational training courses. The subject of the trainings is chosen according to the needs of the villagers and the profile of the IVET schools. In the five provinces surveyed in the tracer study, the courses offered ranged from construction and

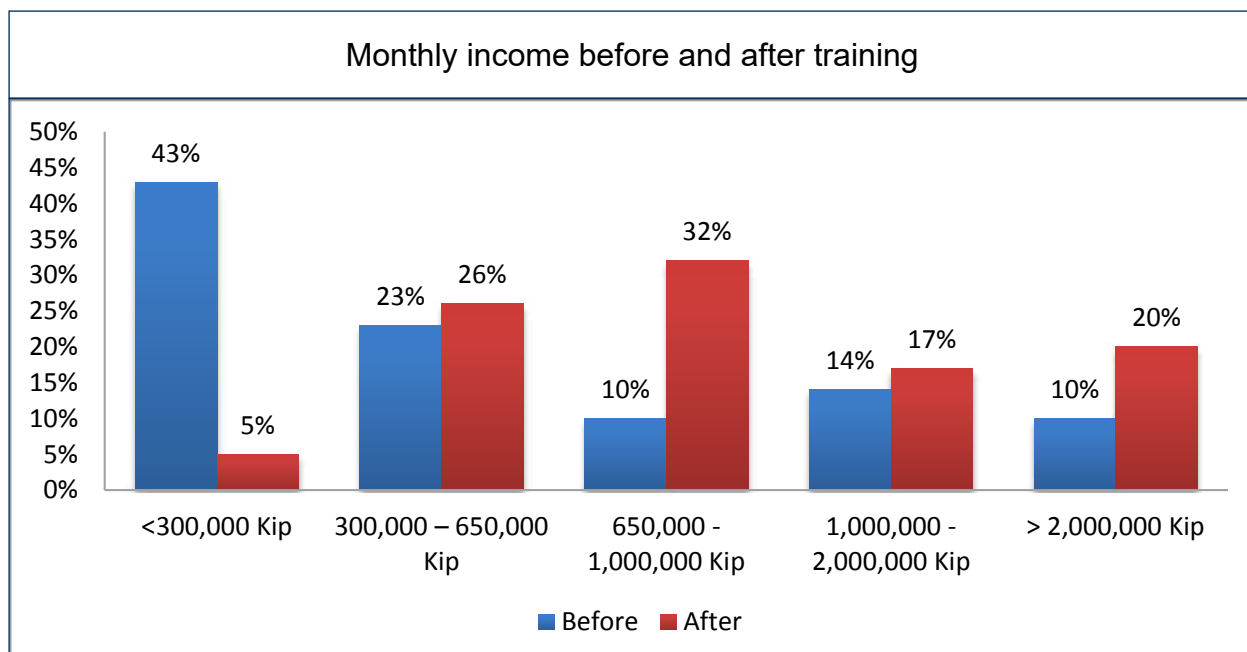
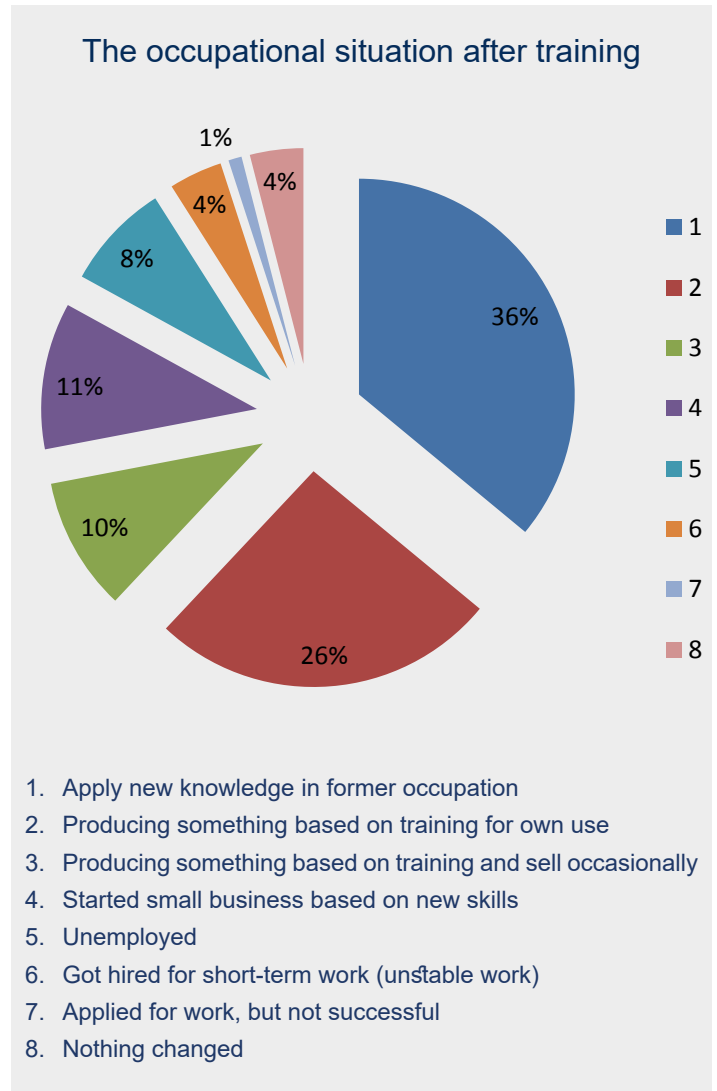


DVV International commissioned the Lao-German Development Consultancy to execute the tracer study targeting participants of trainings run in 2015 in five provinces

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furniture making to tailoring, food processing, electrical installation, organic fertiliser making, and frog and fish raising. In total, 175 people were interviewed, including former trainees from various ethnic backgrounds and age groups, and with an even share of women and men, as well as village heads and the IVET schools' directors and staff. A resounding 92 per cent of all participants were satisfied with their respective course, and would recommend it to their friends and family. The ways in which people used the skills gained varied from course to course: Graduates of the tailoring training, for example, mostly applied their new skills in their former occupation, whereas trainees of the fertiliser production or furniture making courses could use their new knowledge for their own use, and thereby improve subsistence activities. One in 10 participants started their own business after the training, with the biggest share of new entrepreneurs found among people who trained in food processing – a women-dominated area which makes this finding particularly delightful.

Looking ahead to potential improvements of the program, many participants as well as IVET school staff commented that direct financial and technical support, i.e. loans and equipment, would be very useful to help graduates establish their own businesses. The study also recommends to increase the potential of formal employment for trainees by cooperating with local employers. This measure could also ensure the relevance of courses offered in a local context, and provide an additional incentive and motivation for new learners to participate in the program.



A learning environment with our peers not only makes it possible to stay abreast of change, it also makes it fun.



Lifelong Learning Policy in Cambodia

Vanna Peou, DVV International, Cambodia



Vanna Peou
our Country
Director in
Cambodia

People need to live!
To survive, people need food!
To get food, people need knowledge and skills!
To gain absolute knowledge and skills, people must learn!

The whole life of learning is the responsibility of everyone to fulfill!

Why we need a Lifelong Learning Policy in Cambodia?

The objectives of this article are to share why we have to have a Lifelong Learning Policy promising policies and practice promoting lifelong learning in Cambodia, and to stimulate public policy implementation on lifelong learning at all levels. Whether you have just been born or you are older, everyone can benefit from learning. Therefore, we shall expand our knowledge and maintain participation as active contributors to society. To take full advantage of lifelong learning, we should create new social relationships, find more new friends, and create precious relationships to lead and make life well-adaptable to change.

Lifelong learning is the endless educational experience that utilizes all form of learning including non-credit academic courses, distance learning, and community service and volunteerism to fully engage the brain, heighten physical activity, and maintain healthy social relationships.

Lifelong learning helps fully develop natural abilities. Lifelong learning opens the mind; an integral part of lifelong learning is the free exchange of ideas and viewpoints among learners.

Lifelong learning creates a curious desire, the older learners discover history, current events, political movements, or the culture of other countries, the more they want to learn. Lifelong learning can increase our wisdom. Lifelong learning leads us to put our lives in perspective, lifelong learning makes the world a better place.

Through the community service aspect of lifelong learning, older learners can give back to their communities and to the world. We've spent 50, 60 or more years interacting with the world, and what we have learned during that time can be translated into real value for the betterment of society. Our wisdom, insight – it's all of tangible benefit to the world around us.

Lifelong learning helps us to adapt to change, lifelong learning enables us to keep up with society's changes - especially the technological ones. A learning environment with our peers not only makes it possible to stay abreast of change, it also makes it fun.

Lifelong learning helps us find meaning in our lives. Sometimes it's difficult looking back on our

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lives, but lifelong learning gives us the benefit of real perspective and enables us to find true meaning in the hills and valleys of our past.

Lifelong learning keeps us involved as active contributors to society. Lifelong learning helps us make new friends and establish valuable relationships. Lifelong learning leads to an enriching life of self-fulfillment.

Lifelong Learning and Sustainable Development

Learning throughout life is the driving force for transforming our world to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Many countries and communities regard lifelong learning for all as essential to their education goals and development frameworks to develop public policies and strategies on lifelong learning through policy reviews and policy sharing.

To make it all happen in the community, we have to have a strong policy from the national level! In line with the Sustainable Development Goal 4, "to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities", DVV International and UNESCO support the Cambodian Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MoEYS) in efforts towards a national Lifelong Learning Policy. In late 2017, a national workshop titled "Towards A Lifelong Learning Society in Cambodia" was conducted, and it was chaired by H.E Dr. Hang Chuon Naron, the Minister for Education, Youth and Sport who has implemented major educational reforms in Cambodia. Since the start of 2018, multiple stakeholders have been actively participating in the regular, weekly discussion and consultation on lifelong learning policy development. This group consists of representatives from 14 ministries and development partners working in the education sector. Identifying, analyzing and summarizing the successful policies and practices in lifelong learning on the national level, the group also recognizes government responses that improve equality and quality of lifelong learning from the experiences of each institution.

It is planned to adopt the LLL Policy in 2018.

The first step Towards a Lifelong Learning Policy in Cambodia

Anna Capasso, DVV International, Cambodia

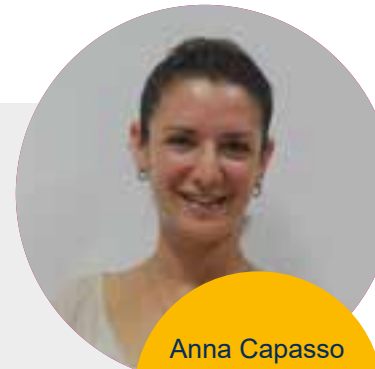
On Friday, 17th November 2017 at Sofitel Hotel in Phnom Penh, a joint High-Level Meeting was called in by the Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, HE Dr. Hang Chuon Naron. The meeting brought together representatives of different ministries, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, SEAMEO CELLL and DVV International in a first step towards a Lifelong Learning Policy for Cambodia.

The goal of the workshop was to find a shared understanding of Lifelong Learning (LLL) and its meaning internationally and in the Cambodian setting, in order to prepare for its translation into the national legal framework.

From the international guests' side, Ms Margarete Sachs-Israel, Chief Programme Coordinator of UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, shared important insights on LLL from the Global Education Agenda of the Sustainable Development Goal No. 4. Dr. Le Huy Lam, Director of SEAMEO CELLL, contextualised LLL within the Asian context and shared some good practices from the policy framework of neighbouring countries. Lastly, Mr. Uwe Gartenschlaeger, Regional Director of DVV International, talked about the Lao example in the drafting of its own LLL policy.

In the subsequent discussion with representatives of the relevant ministries, the importance of having a clear understanding of the real situation was underlined, as well as the need to identify priorities and challenges for an equitable education in Cambodia and the need of participation and cooperation of all relevant ministries involved in Lifelong Learning because of its cross-sectorial character.

The meeting signified the promise of a LLL Policy in Cambodia's framework, which will incorporate the concept of equitable education and Lifelong Learning opportunities for all in its core.



Anna Capasso
our Intern in
Country Office in
Cambodia



Vanmany Vannasy
Professor at the
Faculty of Education

Integrating Lifelong Learning into the Curriculum

Vanmany Vannasy, Faculty of Education, National University of Lao

The Faculty of Education, National University of Lao integrated the Lifelong Learning Module into the curriculum for the first time in semester 2017-2018.

Lifelong learning is the combination of both formal and non-formal education encouraging adults to integrate learning into their lives and to create a knowledge-based, always developing society. The Faculty of Education (FoE) at the National University of Lao (NUoL) is located in the higher education system to bring forth undergraduate and postgraduate students who promote lifelong learning and will become technical and academic teachers at public schools nationwide.

FoE and DVV International have collaborated to create this lifelong learning module for education students in the academic year of 2017-2018. The partners have gathered to discuss and share ideas as well as human and financial resources from October 2017 to February 2018. The module will be taught within 20 hours per semester and will include students from 13 departments in their first year of university, i.e. a total of 471 students including 251 women.

Regarding the module's content, it includes:

1. The concept of lifelong learning
2. Adult learning theory
3. Communication and team dynamics
4. Adult learning methodology
5. Planning, implementing and evaluation

By using participatory activities in the classroom, the students are more active and attentive. They learn that they can raise their thoughts in class, and at the same time they need to think more to create their own ideas. Students also learn how to make their own adult teaching plans, presentations, and teaching materials as well as how to work in teams.

From the activities in the classroom we can see that the lifelong learning module will develop students to be enthusiastic to learn by themselves and to improve their skills out of their own initiative. This is a reflection of their real lives to improve themselves to be a good teacher in the future.



Lifelong Learning in Southeast Asia: An Awakening of Vigorous Debate and Cooperation

Que Anh Dang, The German Institute of Global and Area Studies

As part of their region-building project, 11 Southeast Asian countries established a regional Centre for Lifelong Learning (CELLL) in 2013 under the auspice of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO). While Southeast Asia attempts to adopt a model resembling European regional integration and institution building, the member countries are, in practice, more comfortable with cooperation in non-binding and informal settings. Therefore, despite of having a formal governance structure, SEAMEO CELLL has been functioning as a facilitator of a loose regional forum for exchanging ideas and practices of Lifelong Learning rather than as a decision-making body. Its knowledge production capacity barely begins to emerge in the form of mobilising external intellectual collaborators instead of housing expertise. Nonetheless, the centre has created a regional platform for vigorous debate and cooperation for Lifelong Learning amongst the member countries and beyond.

An ambiguous concept

The regional debate indicates that Lifelong Learning is not a new concept in Southeast Asia – instead, it becomes clear that different meanings exist:

- it is both individual and institutional processes (Community Learning Centres in Vietnam and Thailand);
- it is a policy and a practice (Woman Empowering Program in Indonesia; eLearning for Teachers' Development, Open High School Program in the Philippines); and
- it can be considered as a social movement or as a commodity (SkillsFuture movement in Singapore).

often confuse two types of learning and such confusion has affected the values attached to Lifelong Learning. On the one hand, learning is primarily a natural and personal process that cannot be institutionalised but which acts as the driving force for a person's development throughout life. On the other hand, learning has also been equated with social and institutionalised processes, and the objectives change.

In many ASEAN countries, poverty reduction was (and still is) a major concern for Lifelong Learning. 'Learning to earn' has become the motto of individuals and public policies in Asia. But the shift from 'education' to 'learning' also increasingly makes individuals take the risks and responsibilities for their own learning to sustain their own employability, and the governments limit their roles largely to advocacy and 'steering'. The consequences of such a Lifelong Learning model entail a number of emerging contradictions, paradoxes and tensions, and increasing inequality.

Roles of governments

Three significant factors in the development of Lifelong Learning are: the development of information technology, the discourses of globalisation and knowledge economy, and a re-assessment of what people want out of their lives. These factors, especially globalisation and knowledge economies, demand knowledgeable, highly-skilled workers, and require constant retraining and upgrading of skill repertoires. Thus, Lifelong Learning has taken on discursive power and increasingly becomes a principle to organise the education system and develop each of its components.



Dr. Que Anh Dang

As Professor Peter Jarvis pointed out at the ASEM LLL Conference in Nha Trang in 2009, people

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In this context, the challenges which ASEAN governments face are extremely complex. Some questions confronting every government are:

- What type of Lifelong Learning constitutes the country's priorities?
- To which extent can the state afford to make provisions, and to which extent can people afford to meet the costs of Lifelong Learning?
- What is the most beneficial to the majority of the population?
- Which part of government will take responsibility for the different forms of Lifelong Learning?
- What policies can be devised that will further these aims?

The notion of education as a public enterprise has been well enshrined in Southeast Asia. Lessons could be drawn from the successful Asian developmental state model which invests substantially in education to achieve economic growth. Wealth generated by economic growth

justifies further investment in education. Some success stories of member countries can also be found in the latest PISA and PIAAC results. This kind of strong state has rescued Southeast Asian countries from underdevelopment and reduced adverse effects of the market. However, in most ASEAN countries, especially the newer members, state investment is mainly focussed on formal education. Other forms of Lifelong Learning, such as competence development in adulthood, and learning for and in the workplace, do not receive adequate public resources.

The very SEAMEO CELL is operating on a shoestring budget and is struggling with the sustainability of its activities. Unlike other SEAMEO centres where the host countries, in most cases, have adequate public investment, vast experience and intellectual capacity in the selected field, Vietnam has volunteered to take on the regional role in Lifelong Learning with limited financial



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SEAMEO CELL's Third Governing Board Meeting and the Expert Meeting on Phase 2 of the Project Toward a Lifelong Learning Agenda in Southeast Asian Countries

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About the author: Dr. Que Anh Dang is an educational sociologist. She graduated from the University of Bristol, UK. Her research interests include education and regionalism, the role of international organisations in policy making, higher education in the knowledge economy, and education diplomacy in Asia and Europe. She is a co-editor and an author of the book ‘Global Regionalisms and Higher Education’ (2016).

resources and expertise, but with high-level political will and enthusiasm, and the ability to mobilise support from international partners, such as the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, DVV International, and the ASEM LLL Hub. What are the long-term visions and roles of ASEAN governments in this joint endeavour? The question seems to remain unanswered at this point.

Models of regional cooperation

One of the objectives of SEAMEO regional cooperation is to facilitate policy learning among the member countries and generate benefits from spillover effects of successful practices. The second phase of the project ‘Towards an ASEAN Lifelong Learning Agenda’ is well underway. SEAMEO CELLL and its member countries are in the process of clarifying concepts and developing a shared understanding of Lifelong Learning in national and regional contexts. At this stage, regional cooperation in devising a regional agenda manifests in the form of advocacy to trigger policy debates in national contexts.

Regional policy making in the European Union (EU) is often about setting common objectives, concrete criteria and benchmarks. For example, one of the common objectives of the EU strategic framework ‘Education and Training 2020’ set out in 2009 is to ‘make Lifelong Learning and mobility a reality’; and a series of indicators have been set to measure this regional objective:

- An average of at least 15% of adults should participate in Lifelong Learning
- The share of low-achieving 15-year-olds in reading, mathematics and science should be less than 15%
- At least 40% of people aged 30-34 should have completed some form of higher education

- The rate of early leavers from education and training aged 18-24 should be below 10%
- At least 95% of children (from 4 years to compulsory school age) should participate in early childhood education
- An EU average of at least 20% of higher education graduates and 6% of 18-34-year-olds with an initial vocational qualification should have spent some time studying or training abroad.

Due to the diversity in stages of socio-economic development, size of population, awareness and political will, and financial commitment of leaders and policy makers, and non-interference principles, the regional cooperation in Southeast Asia is not about setting standards or benchmarks across member countries. But what form will it take in the future? Perhaps it requires more than advocacy and rhetoric. Regional cooperation may be more effective if the current top-down approach is combined with more of a bottom-up approach. That would mean greater involvement of Lifelong Learning establishments, learners, research institutes, and civil society across the region in constructing a regional agenda. SEAMEO CELLL has its mandate delegated by the member countries, but its role is much more than a secretariat. Thus, closer cooperation with research institutes in the member countries is crucial to the development of its expertise and influence in the long term.

Note: This article is derived from the author’s involvement in the establishment and development processes of SEAMEO CELLL since 2009.



Some Examples of Applying Lifelong Learning Concept in Practice: Learning Cities and ASPBAE Learning Exchange

Critical Reflections from *Dr. Lamphoune Luangxay*
Department of Non-formal Education, Ministry of Education and Sports

Dr. Lamphoune Luangxay
Head of Skills Promotion Division

Sharing good practices of Lifelong Learning has been a focus of developing innovative education in recent years and a number of events have been organized by international and regional communities. In 2017, I had the opportunity to participate in two important sharing and learning events on Lifelong Learning. The first one was about “learning cities” under the title of “Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop on Learning Cities: Learning for a Sustainable Future”. The event took place in Gwangmyeong, Republic of Korea between 30 to 31 October 2017, during which about 2,020 educators, policymakers and practitioners from different countries shared their good practices of creating ‘learning cities’.

What are, and why study ‘learning cities’? A city is a place where there generally is heavy density, fast social and economic development and the influence of technology advancement. In this situation, there is a concern about the quality of life of urban inhabitants, for instance, concerning their security, the natural and social environment and social justice, etc. The idea of developing learning cities is to develop cities to become the most harmonious places for inhabitants. Learning cities is a concept of developing urban communities in the era of globalization, which are created by government policies to promote individuals and social organizations, in both the private and public sectors. Such policies should be relevant promoting urban inhabitants to access information, learning and to apply that in their everyday lives and in creating a natural and social environment for their happiness.

The idea of creating learning cities has been applied all over the world and according to available information, today there are about 200

learning cities in more than 40 countries. As I have learned from the workshop, the concept of learning cities is useful for developing urban quality of life, and is likely possible to be applied in our Lao PDR context too because it will bring various benefits to urban inhabitants.

One month later, I also had the opportunity to participate in the so called “Asia-Pacific Study Exchange on Realising Lifelong Learning in Public Education Systems”, organized by the Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE) in collaboration with the Office of Non-Formal and Informal Education (ONIE), Ministry of Education of Thailand, held from 27 to 30 November 2017 in Bangkok, Thailand. There were 30 delegates from different Asia-Pacific countries, working for different adult learning and education organizations, who joined this study exchange.

The participants had opportunities to deepen and broaden their understandings of the Lifelong Learning concept through experts from SEAMEO CELLL and UNESCO Bangkok before exploring the innovative Lifelong Learning policies, programmes and good practices of Thai cases. We had the chance to visit some learning programmes organized at Community Learning Centres (CLC) which are organized under the concept of non-formal and informal education of Thailand.

What I learned from this study exchange is that, in Thailand they aim to increase learning opportunities and promoting social contributions to provide learning to different groups of people in their particular conditions and contexts. To do so, the government (ONIE) develops relevant non-formal and informal education acts, policies, detailed and

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clear principles and rules as guidelines for designing programmes and activities, and for establishing cooperation and networks with both private and public sectors. In addition, the Lifelong Learning concept in Thailand is integrated with the Thai Sufficient Economic Philosophy, the idea, given by the King of Thailand, of having enough to meet people's needs, without being extravagant, which is used as a direction for developing harmonious societies for the people. In this light, the government (ONIE) designs its policy to promote individuals implementing the sufficient economic philosophy, or those who have been successful in their careers. Particularly people working in fields using local wisdom, for instance, agricultural businesses or small household-based, income-generating businesses are invited to share their knowledge and experiences as resource persons with their fellows as well as others who are interested. Such a policy, among other benefits, helps government reduce financial burdens, particularly for infrastructure and maintenance and human resources. In addition to this, the policy is also a good strategy to involve individuals in

Lifelong Learning activities as well as to promote local wisdom.

In summary, both workshops prove that Lifelong Learning is actually embedded in social practices in everyday life. However, there is a need for relevant policies to recognize and promote its values and benefits for all and for sustainable development in order to help each other to catch up with social change and technology advancements influenced by globalization. My critical reflection from both workshops is that Lifelong Learning is a way of learning embedded in human society but we were trained to overlook it so that we feel it is a primitive way of life - which, of course, it is not. Thus, we now need a non-traditional lens to clearly see education, then rethink and redesign our education laws, policies, principles and education programmes, including all learning consequences acquired through everyday life in our non-traditional education system.





Isabelle Mischke
the intern at the UIL

Supporting free and global access to information on adult learning: Resource Centre at NFEDC is now an ALADIN member

Isabelle Mischke, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL)

The global Adult Learning Documentation and Information Network (ALADIN) supports networking, information sharing and capacity building between libraries, documentation centres and information services in the area of adult learning. In pursuit of its vision of a global learning society, where information and knowledge on adult learning is created, well-documented and made accessible to all, ALADIN is engaged in the improvement of global access to information on adult learning, including areas such as adult literacy and non-formal education.

During a workshop on adult learning documentation and information at CONFINTEA V in July 1997, it became evident that the development of an interactive knowledge management network in this area was an urgent priority. A year later, the Adult Learning Documentation and Information Network (ALADIN) was founded, at an expert seminar in Hamburg. It remains based in the city, coordinated by Lisa Krolak, Head of the UIL Library at the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning.

The network now comprises more than 100 information services in around 50 countries in all regions of the world. Some are complex university libraries or research units, some small non-governmental organization resource centres and others virtual

collections. In January 2017, the Resource Centre at the Non-Formal Education Development Centre (NFEDC) in Vientiane, Lao PDR, became the third registered member in South-East Asia.

In pursuit of its objectives, ALADIN works to facilitate informed policy-making, research and programme development by improving global access to information and documentation on adult learning. It also serves as an information broker between researchers, practitioners and policy-makers. By sharing relevant information on adult learning, and providing training in adult learning knowledge management, it aims to correct the uneven distribution of adult learning documentation and information resources.

The ALADIN website aims to be the most comprehensive access point for documentation and information services on adult learning and other related topics. Among other things, it provides access to information about all members, a list of more than 150 Adult Learning Links, and a toolkit that assists adult learning organizations and community-based groups in organizing their information resources or in improving the efficiency of existing resource centres. Furthermore, both members and non-members receive the latest open access publications in the areas of adult learning, adult literacy, lifelong learning and technical and vocational education and training on a bi-monthly basis through the ALADIN Online Alert.

For further information about ALADIN and subscription to the ALADIN Online Alert: www.uil.unesco.org/library/aladin



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Another two successful trainings for our Master Trainers

Freyja Dixon, Australian Volunteer

Becoming a strong adult trainer does not simply rely on your teaching technique and understanding of the content. It also depends on how much time you are willing to put into preparation of trainings, your communication skills with co-trainers, and most importantly your ability to self-reflect and take on board feedback afterwards.

During August and September this year, Northern Master Trainers from Luang Prabang and Xiangkhouang exhibited all of these qualities. Ms Khongmany and Mr Sor from Luang Prabang and Ms Vanh and Mr Bounthan from Xiangkhouang formed a team to deliver two adult education Train The Trainer programs. Here was a chance for them to put into practice the skills and apply the knowledge they had been taught during the Training of Master Trainers program.

The first training, held at the Luang Prabang Non-Formal Education Centre, was attended by 13 provincial and district NFE staff. With the Xiangkhouang trainers only arriving the Sunday afternoon before, there was little time to prepare together. Nevertheless, over the course of the next five days, the trainers successfully introduced theories of adult education and psychology, used participatory training skills such as assessing learning needs, brainstorming and role play to demonstrate the importance of using a variety of techniques when training.

Whilst there were some moments of confusion when the trainers did not properly communicate changes they had decided to make to the schedule with each other, the trainers showed great ability to reflect on this during debrief and adapt themselves for the next day. Their own trainer, Mr Souphap, was there to observe and provide some mentoring. However, at the end of each day, the trainers often picked up on the areas they needed to improve in

without having to be told. Indeed Mr Bounthan commented that now he understood why the Master Trainer trainers often stayed so long after the training had finished!

A few weeks later in the Xiangkhouang Non-Formal Education Centre, the team ran their second training with Ms Beykham as their mentor. This time, they had shared with each other the training schedule a few days before the training began and felt more prepared. The trainers were visibly more confident when delivering the training and were open with each other when discussing ways of improvement. Noticeably, the team of trainers had developed a sense of mutual trust, an essential element to an effective training. During the final debrief, Ms Khongmany commented on how she realised the importance of recognising that each trainer had their own strengths and training techniques, and being able to identify them and find the best way to work as a team made for a much smoother training.

Well done to the Northern Master Trainers, and we look forward to seeing you run more trainings in the future!



Freyja Dixon
Australian Volunteer
at NFEDC



Establishing pilot CLCs in Khammouane Province – DVV International cooperating with Luxembourg Development

Dokkham Xomsihapanya & Raphaela Hess
DVV International Regional Office Southeast Asia



What does it take to establish two CLCs in Khammouane Province? – A baseline survey, two target villages, a good working relationship with local government authorities, some capacity building workshops, wood and other construction equipment, and a lot of helping hands. And someone pulling all the strings together. Between April 2016 and December 2017, DVV International did just that and implemented a pilot project for Luxembourg Development (LuxDev) in Mahaxay and Boualapha Districts.

The two target villages, Phonxay and Doo, were chosen through a baseline survey at the beginning. The survey's results also highlighted the need for information sharing with local authorities and villagers on the concept and management of CLCs which was therefore made a key objective of this project. Throughout, DVV International thus worked closely with Khammouane Provincial Education and Sports Services (PESS) and the respective District Education and Sports Bureaus (DESB). The villagers were also actively included in the construction of the CLCs and received trainings on construction skills from teachers of TVET schools. The villagers' involvement from the very start has been important for fostering their sense of ownership of the facilities. Further, CLC leaders and DESB staff participated in management trainings for ensuring their understanding of the CLC concept and the

centres' sustainability beyond the duration of the project. After construction was completed, the villagers selected the topics for 10 pilot trainings in their CLCs themselves. There was a strong focus on agricultural trades, but weaving, playing of traditional instruments, and mechanical skills were also desired. Activities started in July and August 2017 and made sure to include youth as well as women in both CLCs. The project then concluded with a final sharing and learning workshop in Thakek in November which representatives from DVV, LuxDev, PESS and DESB, the Department of Planning and Investment (DPI), and the Department of Non-Formal Education (DNFE) attended. The CLCs sent their management teams as well as Youth Committees to report back on their experiences.

So – what to take away from this project? Once again, it became clear that a careful baseline survey at the very beginning is instrumental to identifying the most suitable location for CLCs. Both CLCs in this project can be accessed by inhabitants from a number of villages surrounding Phonxay and Doo. Further, it proved very effective to include the villagers from the start, and to ask for contributions from them to construct the centres. In terms of challenges, however, transport of people and goods between the District Centre and the villages turned out to be difficult, particularly during the rainy season. The involvement of several parties in the management of the project also caused some issues concerning communication and time-consuming coordination efforts. Lastly, going forward, it will be very important to establish the CLCs as multifunctional spaces which are also used for purposes other than education by the villagers, such as community meetings and celebrations. And even though an impact assessment was not part of this pilot project, it became clear at the sharing and learning workshop that this should be included in similar future projects to receive clear data on how villagers' lives have changed.

Community Learning Centres belong in the Centre of the Community – An example from rural Germany

Ortwin Rosenke, VHS Hennstedt, Germany

A Community Learning Centre (CLC), as the name tells us, is supposed to belong to the community itself – and it is most sustainable as a multifunctional space at the heart of the community. In the small, rural village of Hennstedt in Northern Germany, CLC Manager Ortwin Rosenke has achieved just that. The approximately 2,000 inhabitants of Hennstedt do not have to look nor go far to find the most important facilities of public life compiled under one roof, namely their community centre. This centre functions as a CLC offering a range of courses, even a café and an inn with restaurants where visitors can stay and enjoy food and drink side by side with locals. It also contains a meeting space for hosting large and small gatherings and exhibitions. Conveniently, the CLC is located in the very heart of Hennstedt, right next to the church. This means that not only is it easy to get to, but there is also a lot of parking spaces available.

Accordingly, the centre is called *Inne Merrn*, meaning “in the middle” in the local dialect, which captures its actual and metaphorical locations. In terms of space, *Inne Merrn* has a hall with a stage fit for theatre performances. For smaller gatherings, the big hall can be divided into several

rooms which are used by local sports clubs and other groups for regular meetings. Together with income from the restaurant, café and the guest house, hiring out the centre’s event spaces generates substantial income. Furthermore, *Inne Merrn* also accommodates a branch of the Red Cross, a tourist information office, as well as social and other types of services offered by the local council. On certain days a week or a month, community members can go to *Inne Merrn* and run administrative errands for which they otherwise would have to make a longer trip to the city.

This kind of multifunctional community centre is based on the so called “three columns model”, meaning the centre’s three foundations consisting of income generating activities, public services, and being a meeting point for locals and visitors alike. *Inne Merrn* demonstrates how a CLC in a rural context and with a small community can still be a thriving and sustainable centre for all to enjoy. And even though *Inne Merrn*’s parameters are very different from CLCs in Lao PDR, its success might hold inspiration for rural centres looking for ideas on how to improve.



International Seminar on Education for Rural Transformation, Kunming, China 18 to 22 December 2017

Raphaela Hess, DVV International Regional Office Southeast Asia

DVV International was invited to attend an “International Seminar on Education for Rural Transformation” in Kunming, China, in December last year. Representing DVV, Ms Dokkham Xomsihapanya, Project Manager for Literacy and Non-Formal Education, and specialist for field work, travelled to Kunming, together with three other country representatives from Lao PDR: Dr Athithouthay Chatouphonexay, Dean of the Faculty of Education at the National University of Laos, Dr Silinthone Sacklokham, the Interim Director of SEAMEO CED, and Mr Sengaloun Boutsady, Head of Literacy Division at DNFE. The seminar was organised by UNESCO Beijing, Yunnan Normal University and Yunnan Agricultural University. More than 50 people from nine countries participated, including China, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Thailand and Vietnam as well as representatives from UNESCO Beijing, the UNESCO Institute for LLL, China INRULED, SEAMEO CELLL, Beijing Open University, the Asian Institute of Technology, and DVV International.

The seminar’s participants presented their country’s and projects’ situations, best practices and challenges. Ms Dokkham informed the delegates about DVV International’s work in Savannakhet Province, and in particular shared the experience with Community Learning Centres (CLCs) as a strategy for adult education in rural settings. Other presentations covered topics such as rural education policies and practices in each of the represented countries, teacher learning experiences, and working with ethnic minority groups in different geographical contexts.

On the second to last day of the seminar, the participants undertook a field visit to an organic farm growing fruit and vegetables, and raising animals such as goats, chickens, and peacocks. They learned about the farm’s agricultural and marketing concepts, and visited the onsite shop where produce and seeds are sold. Ms Dokkham enjoyed this study visit particularly: “I want to apply lessons learnt from this visit to the projects I am managing in Nong and Xepon District. The organic farm was very good at marketing and packaging their products, and I took a lot of ideas home with me. I would like to thank UNESCO Beijing and all other organisers for the opportunity to learn from them”, she says. On the same day, the seminar participants also visited a farming museum where they studied the beginnings of farming in China and culture.

All in all, the seminar was a very valuable opportunity for all representatives to exchange ideas and best practices. Ms Dokkham returned home to Lao PDR with a suitcase full of ideas and organic products, and is looking forward to starting into the new year with much inspiration for the CLCs in Savannakhet.



The overall objective of the seminar was to gain an overview of the regional happenings in education for rural transformation and poverty alleviation.

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Designing an instructional resource package: Using Soft Skills for Non-formal Education

Phanmaha Phangthavong

Department of Non-formal Education, Ministry of Education and Sports
Dalouny Sisoulath, DVV International Regional Office Southeast Asia

On 8 to 9 November 2017, a consultation workshop on “Designing Instructional Resource Package: Using Soft Skills for Non-Formal Education” was organised at SEAMEO CELLL’s office in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. The 15 participants were facilitators from adult education organisations from Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam.

SEAMEO CELLL is implementing a project to design an Instructional Resource Package: Using Soft-skills in Non-Formal Education for facilitators, with support from DVV International. The project aims to introduce the methodology of teaching Soft Skills, to provide a demonstration of a lesson, and to review the Instructional Resource Package through practice sessions.

The workshop was facilitated by Dr. Walter Baeten, the Project Consultant who prepared the draft of the instructional package and collected feedback to improve the instructional package after finishing the workshop. The session on micro teaching was delivered by three groups with three topics, using instructions from the package: Understanding Collaboration and Conflict in Teams, Understanding Leadership, and Understanding Interpersonal Communication. In this session, the standardised lesson plans and teaching materials compiled by the Consultant were applied for trial and evaluation purposes.

Feedback and comments on the draft package were collected at the end of the workshop. Participants commented that there should be different kinds of methodologies and techniques for activities like case studies, videos, and a division of activities for different target groups.

After the workshop, the project team at SEAMEO CELLL will revise and finalize the draft package.

The background of this project comes from the training “Using the Concept of Soft skills in Non-Formal Education” that was co-organised by DVV International and Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) from India in October 2015, in Vientiane, Lao PDR. Later on, in February 2016, DVV International, PRIA and NGO Education Partnership (NEP, Cambodia) jointly held the workshop “Regional Level Training of Trainers (ToT) on Soft Skills in Non-Formal Education” in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. After a series of other workshops, PRIA compiled the Training Manual for Facilitators: Using Soft skills in Non-Formal Education (Available in English and Lao) as a reference source for trainers of soft skills in non-formal education.



Interesting

Important Website in region

www.aspbae.org

www.pria.org

www.seameocelll.org

Interesting publications

Adult Education and Development

AED 84: Inclusion and Diversity

AED 83: Skills and Competencies

AED 82: Global Citizenship Education

AED 81: Communities

International Perspectives in Adult Education

IPE 78: Adult education as a key to development - challenges and success factors

IPE 76: Refugees: A challenge for adult education

IPE 75: Agenda - 2030 - Education and Lifelong Learning in the Sustainable Development Goals

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