Indigenous Community Ownership in Education Long and Viengxay Districts Lao PDR

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Outline

• Partnerships
• Introduction to the project areas
• Problems
• Working approach to addressing the problem
• Results of the interventions
• Challenges
• Way forward
Partnerships

• Life Skills Development Association (LSDA)

• Namjai Community Association (NCA)

• Pestalozzi Children Foundation (PCF)
Introduction

Laos
Population(1,000): 6.49
- Female: 3.24

Ethnic groups: 49
Languages: 82

Project areas
Long District: 8,255 (in Boakbor and Soploi sub-districts)
- Female: 3,990
- Students: 1,945 (F: 903)

Viengxay District: 2,380 (6 ethnic communities)
- Female: 1,092
- Students: 359 (F: 177)
Problems

- Most development aids create dependency culture.
- Community lacks a sense of ownership on their own development.
- Schools far away from home
- School facilities in poor conditions
- Lack of materials and qualified teachers
- Dropout: Children help in farming, domestic work and caring for siblings.
Working approach to addressing the problem

Empowerment and engagement with community members through continued Intercultural Education-Participatory Learning and Action (ICE-PLA) processes
Planning

• Rapport building/community mobilization for situation analyses
• Community participation in project proposal development process
• Establishment of community mechanism—Village Development Team (VDT)
• MoU signing at the community level
• Problem analysis
Implementation

- Capacity building & empowerment of VDT members
- VDT + villagers develop, implement and adapt detailed action plan:
  - Indigenous Knowledge (IK) teaching
  - Child protection
  - IK and Cultural Exchange Camp
  - Product teaching aids
  - Visit and encourage parents to send their children to school
  - Construct and maintain pre-schools and toilets
  - Improve school playgrounds/playing equipment
  - Waste management (in school and community)
  - Boil drinking water for children at school
  - Improve school environment: fencing, shades, information boards and planting
  - Take part in exchange meetings
Monitoring by VDT

• Six monthly meeting to review activity plan implementation
• Ensure that schools are well maintained during school holiday
• Teacher teaching performance
• School attendance
• Child protection issues
• School environment
• Quarterly community newsletter
Evaluation

• Internal evaluation (Participatory Learning Review)

• External evaluation
Results of the interventions

- Children enjoy their schools—learning, conducting activities and playing.
- Parents are happy with IK teaching.
- More participation of women, e.g. in IK teaching
- Women and girls are more confident and active in community development (never before).
- Community and school are as one (not separate ever before)
- Conflict between two different ethnic groups resolved.
- Dropout: 7 – 0 (2014 – 2016) in 6 communities
Challenges

VDT still needs support from the project at least a few years in order for them to be able to stand on their own.
Way forward

• Advance ICE PLA: Participatory Action Research (PAR) training for VDT
• Support VDT to undertake PAR initiatives in the communities
• Expand this approach using the exiting community resources for other communities
• Strengthen monitoring and support systems
Thank you