Indigenous Knowledge Integration into Rural Primary Schools and State Teacher Training College
(in Viengxay District, Houaphan Province, Long District, Luang Namtha Province, and Vientiane Capital in the Lao PDR)

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Partnerships

Dongkhamxang Teacher Training College (DTTC)

Life Skills Development Association (LSDA)

Namjai Community Association (NCA)

Pestalozzi Children’s Foundation (PCF)
• Problems
• Interventions
• Results
• Challenges
• Way forward
Laos
• Population: 6.89 M
• Ethnic groups: 49
• Languages: 82

Project Target Areas
DTTC
- Pre-service teachers: 1,685 (F: 1,444)

Long District
- Students: 1,945 (F: 903) in 18 communities (Akha and Lahu)

Viengxay District
- Students: 359 (F: 177) in 6 ethnic communities (Lao, Hmong, Iu Mien, Akhmu and Tai Deng)

Problems

• Indigenous knowledge is devaluated and turned down by the current of modernization and new technology.

• Mainstream education is insufficient to empower indigenous children to realize their ancestral wisdom and root as well as to grow a sense of self-esteem.

• Mainstream education lacks relevance due to “one-size-fits-all” curricula.
Interventions

Through Intercultural Education-Participatory Learning and Action (ICE-PLA) processes

• IK Integration into Primary Education Curricula

• IK Integration into National Teacher Training Curricula
Interventions

IK Integration into Primary Education Curricula

• Integrated IK teaching and learning in primary schools
  - The community chose IK topics.
  - The community IK experts are chosen.
  - Community members plan together and share responsibilities.
- IK teaching is organized either in school or community.

- IK teaching process is documented, checked (by community IK experts) and finally approved by Provincial Education and Sports Service: 15 IK topics approved.
IK Integration into National Teacher Training Curricula

• “IK-teaching-development” process is integrated into pre-service teacher training programs
  - Dongkhamxang Teacher Training College (DTTC) Director and technical staff learned ICE-PLA in the field with the partners (LSDA, NCA and PCF).

- “IK-teaching-development” textbooks and training manuals are developed through a series of consultations.
- “IK-teaching-development” textbooks and training manuals are approved (by Ministry of Education and Sports) as a part of the national teacher training curricula now.

- Training of Core Trainers and follow-ups at the teacher training college.
- Now “IK-teaching-development” process is taught at DTTC.

- UNESCO is financially supporting DTTC to expand this model: Provide training to core trainers from 7 other teacher training colleges throughout the country (scheduled in November 2016).
Objective of the pre-service teacher training in “IK-Teaching-Development” Process
Results

At the community level

• More than 90 IK topics are taught in 30 communities by different IK community experts. (15 topics are officially approved and the rest are in process).

• Children very much enjoy learning IK.

• The communities are happy and proud that their IK is recognized as part of education that their children receive.
• The IK teaching-learning process bridges the community and the school: More coordination, dialogue and participation in education development for children.

• The IK teaching-learning process, the official recognition (e.g. certificate for community IK experts) and the IK and cultural exchange events convey very important messages to the communities to grow more a sense of self-esteem and cultural conservation.
At the teacher training college

• “IK-Teaching-Development” Textbooks and Training Manuals are developed jointly among DTTC, LSDA, NCA and PCF.

• “IK-Teaching-Development” Textbooks and Training Manuals are approved as a part of national teacher training curricula.

• “IK-Teaching-Development” process is taught in Dongkhamxang Teacher Training College (both theory and practice)
Challenges

At the community level

• IK vs. materialism/consumerism (powerfully promoted through different types of media)
At the teacher training college

• “IK-Teaching-Development” training at teacher training college is new. TTC core trainers need to gain more skills and experience, especially how to get community participation.

• Ensure quality of “IK-Teaching-Development” training at all teacher training colleges when replicated.
• Ensure that graduated teachers apply acquired knowledge of “IK-teaching development”.
Way forward

• Make IK not only for cultural and environmental conservation but for earning a living

• Core trainers of the teacher training colleges need to work with in-service teachers, community members and other partners active in the field of education in order to gain more experience, thus strengthen their training skills.

• Regular follow-up and support by DTTC in conjunction with LSDA to 7 other teacher training colleges and to in-service teachers will be made regularly.
Thank you