

National Linking & Learning



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Happy Tree designed by L&L team for participants to share their happy moments

Early in the morning in Siem Reap province, a city known for its rich history and the tranquil atmosphere, 15 grantee partners gathered together on 21st to 23rd March 2023 for the annual linking & learning event organized under Linking & Learning project by Live & Learn Cambodia. This event created a space for:

- Encouraging knowledge exchange based on grantee's respective areas of expertise and celebrate project achievements through innovative knowledge products showcase
- Enhancing collaboration and engagement in discussion among all grantee partners in order to boost the initiative proposal within CoPs for the grant of EUR 50K
- Promoting experiential learning through exchange visits and building network connections with key stakeholders in accordance with the CoP issue prioritization of skill and employment

“A lot can happen in a year. Take some times to reflect the lessons & celebrate the achievements.”

Diverse of engaging and interactive activities took place over and graced the entire course of the three-day event. The first day was on Community of Practice discussion to speed up the process and encourage grantees to quickly initiate ideas for the EUR 50K grant. The second day was for experience sharing from VOICE multi-grantee team and case study sharing of the rights-holders. On the same day, we held a meditation and mindfulness session and team building exercise for Voice grantees team in order to strengthen their bonds because Linking & Learning is where grantees connect not only for professional, but also social purposes. Despite working in diverse fields of intervention, one goal they share as a team is to serve right-holder groups and ensure that no one is left behind. After spending two days indoor, the third day was conducted outside, going for the exposure field visit to stakeholder organizations and institutions.



Theory of Change – Empowerment; Influence; and Amplify



Community of Practice, a simple term with powerful meaning, unites diverse organizations to strive toward joint actions addressing common issues of their rights-holder groups. All five CoP groups – Indigenous People; Women facing exploitation, abuse and violence; People with disabilities, Youth and elderly people; and LGBTIQ+ – were actively participating in team discussions to exchange individual project implementation on their best achievement practices within the scope of pathway of change, and common issues of the rights-holders, then try going beyond the box to initiate innovative, creative, and inclusive solutions.

At the same time, L&L wanted all the grantees to reflect on how active their existing groups are, and how it could be improved in terms of their way of working and group structure, and whether they should be grouped again base on common themes so they can work faster and better or whether it should remain as it is. L&L and Voice team truly believed this platform served its purpose well and help activate and promote the dialogue of the 5 CoP groups to initiate ideas or develop a joint proposal per group to use the grant of EUR 50K.



Day 1: CoP Discussion



Mr. NOUN Saron, Representative Self-Help Disabilities Organization Batheay District



All of the discussions around the topic of CoP and site visits are truly necessary in order for us, project implementers, to gain a better understanding of the requirements and difficulties faced by each partner organization and the right holders. It paves the way for us to design joint projects in a manner that is responsive to the actual need and makes use of the grant of EUR 50K.



Day 2: Sharing Day



Voice multi-grantee sharing – human body drawing

Right after that, we had life sharing experience from three rights-holders representing three different CoPs including women facing abuse and violence, Indigenous People, and LGBTIQ⁺. The speakers shared their story case study of the journey fighting against obstacles in life and false stereotypes that had been holding them back for years. They described how they overcame these obstacles by transforming it into their strength to not only help themselves, but to inspire and motivate lives of many others. Linking & learning always seeks to encourage the case study sharing of stakeholders and rights-holders to amplify their voice and ensure that no one is left behind because nothing about us can exist without us.

On the second day of the event focused on knowledge sharing and exchange. It started off with the sharing from the Voice multi-grantee on his experience participating in Voice global event. He presented many interesting parts and lesson learned. The sharing mostly emphasized on the difference between various groups. We should not judge others based on ability, knowledge, experiences or way of life, and we should not apply the pattern from one CoP to practice in another. Therefore, we should respect and embrace the diversity within the community instead.



Life sharing session – Panel Discussion



Grantees were enjoying playing team building exercise

The morning of this second day was filled with eye-opening experience, heartfelt moments, sympathy, and teary eyes brought by the life sharing experience. We therefore gathered everyone for mindfulness and meditation session as well as team building exercise. The entire room was then peacefully silent. Everyone closed their eyes to meditate and some even took a quick nap. The silence didn't last long as we brought out laughter throughout the room with the team building activities.

Despite the stress from work and life, everyone truly enjoyed and had a wonderful time together. They learnt how to let go of some heavy feelings and begin to live in the moment more for themselves than for other people. That is also the key to have healthy mentality for the strength to keep going no matter how hard the challenge is.

Day 3: Field Visit



TVET practicing facilities tour of grantees

We went for field visit to connect all grantees with stakeholders known as TVET and Job Centre and Spoon Café & Restaurant, and one of the target school of Rabbit School.

Teachers from TVET and Job Centre-NEA shared the information related to the curriculum as well as other related information on how TVET and NEA support the marginalized group to get access to vocational skill training and being able to find good job with decent salary and benefits. Not only the sharing, TVET showed all grantees partners a tour around to see the reality of the practical way of the students who are studying there, school facilities as well as accessibilities accommodating students with disability.

The next journey we went for was Spoon Café and Restaurant for lunch break and to also learn more about the concept of social enterprise which provides and serves to marginalized groups especially youths at SPOON as it has been providing vocational skills in hospitality, cooking, and restaurants. More importantly, SPOON owns the restaurant and café that provide the space for students for learning by doing, internship as well as apprenticeship.

We then travel to a target school of one of the Voice grantees, Khnat Primary School of the Rabbit School Organization (RSO), for the last exposure field visit. Throughout the visit, the grantees as well as the Linking and Learning team were exposed to several eye-opening experience. We stood nearby school windows, silently watching five students studying with two teachers learning how to speak words and number. We heard “Cow has four legs” repeatedly from the class. That heartfelt moment melted everyone’s heart seeing how skillful, empathetic, and patient the teachers are towards all the innocent and lovely students. We had a meeting sharing from school director and teachers on their long journey they have served this school.



Running a school for students with disabilities is never easy, but we work with heart and passion. Students require a great deal of specialized support and resources. School often struggles to look for teachers who are patient and skilled enough to teach and manage a class of five students with disabilities. Due to the fact that the current teachers are only contract teachers outside the state framework, it will be difficult to recruit replacements once their contracts expire. As a response to this problem, I suggest registering all qualified teachers for students with disabilities as certified teachers within the state framework.



Mr. Yu Phally, a School Director of Khnat Primary school was presenting school challenges to all grantees partners



Project Achievements Exhibition

Amplify our achievements

Louder-Prouder



In the space of National Annual Linking and Learning Workshop, we spare a space for our grantees to display their records of project achievements as a way to amplify their successful case study. All of the grantees arrived bright and early on the first day of the event to set up and design their exhibition booths, where they will be showcasing the results of their projects to everyone including their donor (Voice's Cambodia team) with the help of Linking & Learning team for guidance and initiatives.

Some grantees brought IEC materials such as designed tote bags and t-shirts, hand-woven karma made by people with disabilities, traditional bag of indigenous people, printed books of case study, information leaflets, props, and stand boards to have them displayed at the venue national annual linking & learning event.

In addition to the aforementioned, some grantees also displayed their own well-designed banners, and posters with project activity images, beautiful captures and drawings of their project achievements, creating a glittering and sparkling area throughout the entire event.



**Product Display Booth of
SADOI**

This project achievement exhibition showcase served as a platform for all the grantees to present the activities, outcomes, and accomplishments of their projects as well as any other IEC materials related to the initiative produced as the result of their project implementation achievements. Additionally, this also provided a forum for grantees to exchange their best practice and learn from one another. Attached below are pictures from the exhibition which highlighted the work of all Voice grantees under Voice project.

