

Asia Brief: Building Capacity for Stakeholder Collaboration

From August 10 – 13 in Siem Reap, Cambodia, CLI facilitators offered the Art of Stakeholder Collaboration 1, our foundational open course on building collaboration capacities and guiding stakeholder dialogues towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The 38 diverse participants included several teams from Cambodia and Indonesia, as well as individuals from Vietnam, Laos, and Bangladesh. During the four-day course, participants received intensive training on the Dialogic Change Model (DCM) and had the opportunity to apply the Model to their respective initiatives, which covered topics including nutrition, renewable energy, gender, water sharing, and social inclusion.



Check-in to the course The Art of Stakeholder Collaboration

The majority of the projects that received attention during the course fell within the first phase of the Dialogic Change Model, “Exploring and Engaging”. It is a great advantage to have exposure to the DCM at an early stage in a project, as the beginning stages of a multi-stakeholder collaboration are the most vital in establishing a solid foundation for long-term success. The first phase of the DCM covers a comprehensive analysis of the emerging collaboration ecosystem, provides strategic guidance towards forming key relationships, offers tools for the formation of a core stakeholder group for driving the initiative, and guides practitioners towards deeper understanding of the broader project context.

In Siem Reap, the largest group of participants came from the MUSEFO (Multi-sectoral Food and Nutrition Security) project. This group represented two separate provinces in Cambodia (Kampong Thom and Kampot) that were at the beginning phases of their implementation of nutrition and food security projects to benefit infants and women of child-bearing age. This group consisted of a mix of different

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public sector employees, including a couple at the ministerial level, as well as a civil society representative and development partners. Several in the group had a limited level of English, so the MUSEFO team engaged two simultaneous English-Khmer translators. While this added a bit more complexity to the course, it also enriched the atmosphere by allowing for sharing across languages and cultures.

The second largest group was from Indonesia and was focused on work on rural electrification in outlying islands, as well as an ASEAN-wide (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) renewable energy initiative. This group essentially came as a core group of public sector and development partner stakeholders for driving the project forwards. The group made the realization that they were in fact the core group of stakeholders, or “container”, and also advanced on identifying further key stakeholders and developing strategy steps for engaging these key actors.

Other groups and individuals at the course focused on topics including assistance mechanisms for female victims of gender-based violence, reducing the number of children in foster care and orphanages, transboundary water policies, and identification of poverty. While the topics were diverse, many participants faced common challenges in stakeholder engagement and multi-stakeholder collaboration.



Intensive group work during the four days of training

The course was a great success and, as always, combined intense and deep learning with the friendly and fun atmosphere of cross-cultural exchange and the excitement of rapid advancement towards project goals and sustainable development.

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