

Environment-We care today for tomorrow



ProCEED

Promotion of Climate-related Environmental Education



Environmental Education and Communication in Laos

People and the Environment - A Learning Journey

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Explanation of icons and signs



Purpose



Participants



Materials



Time



Process



**Conclusion &
remarks**



Link



**Additional
information**

Preface

The Promotion of Climate-related Environmental Education (ProCEED) project is a German cooperation initiative implemented by the Lao Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. The project aims at improving knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding the protection of biodiversity and the environment, and the adaptation to climate change in Laos. To this effect, a wide range of national mass media, community communication channels and non-formal education activities have been combined in a multi-year Environmental Education and Communication Strategy (EECS).

To ProCEED, environmental education and communication (EEC) means the planned and strategic use of learning and communication processes to support policy making, public participation and the implementation of activities geared towards sustainable development. This involves two-way social interaction that enables people to understand key environmental factors and their interdependencies, and to respond to environmental challenges in a competent way. EEC does not aim at information dissemination alone but at a shared vision of a sustainable future and community-based action and learning of skills to solve or prevent environmental problems.

This approach is based on several interrelated elements:

- learning by doing in an interactive, practice-oriented way,
- communicating through a combination of information and entertainment,
- visualizing information because “a picture is worth a thousand words”,
- learning and communicating based on real problems as perceived by the people concerned,
- formulating messages and learning aids in a way that is attractive to the learners and communities who are to gain knowledge or change attitudes and practices.



Preface

Why this manual?

The three volumes of this manual will enable the Lao Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE) to continue managing and implementing environmental education and communication activities, and to provide related training and coaching. In a joint effort since 2013, MoNRE and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH have gained vast experience and developed standard operational procedures for environmental tours, using a bus and a truck outfitted for educational purposes. In the context of ProCEED, the two organizations have also organized numerous environmental education and communication activities with civil society organizations (CSOs) and journalists in print and broadcasting media. This documentation of experiences and recommendations will safeguard these results and the impacts achieved.

The recommendations, methods and tools presented in this manual will also serve as orientation for MoNRE partners, such as the Participatory Development and Training Center (PADETC/Mind Media), the Mobile Conservation Unit (MCU) of the National University of Laos (NUoL), and other government and civil society organizations in Laos that are engaged in environmental education. We are convinced that these and similar organizations can use the proven methods and tools described here to create and implement their own environmental education activities.



Environmental Education and Communication in Laos



Some of the methods and tools in this manual are very specific to Laos and the MoNRE project context in which they were used, e.g., the environmental bus tours as one possible format for environmental education. Other methods and tools are rather general and can be used for different types of environmental education, such as in-class trainings, World Environment Days, information evenings or other learning events, which organizations in Laos and other countries may want to conduct.

Who is this manual for?

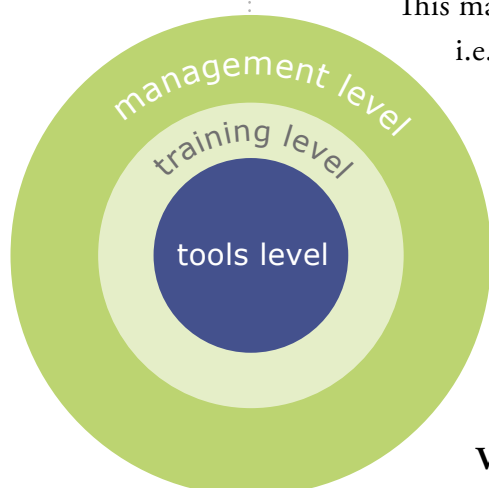
A variety of people will find useful information in this manual: managers, trainers, facilitators, field workers, and journalists. **Vol. 1 and Vol. 2** have been developed primarily with MoNRE and its partners – PADETC/Mind Media and MCU – in mind, which have operated environmental bus tours together with MoNRE and GIZ. However, all volumes are structured and written in a way that makes their content relevant and useful for all organizations that are interested in non-formal environmental education, whether in Laos or in other countries. This is particularly true for **Vol. 3**, the toolbox, which contains a variety of specific, interactive learning activities.

Vol. 1 and Vol. 2 mainly address managers of organizations that are interested in the big picture of approaches and concepts for environmental education. They may look for ideas and ways of how to organize environmental education processes (**Vol. 1**) and how to train the staff involved (**Vol. 2**).

Preface

Vol. 3, the toolbox, is for the actual moderators of environmental education trainings and events, in the classroom or with communities in the field. Experienced moderators may want to pick interesting tools from the toolbox, without necessarily checking the organizational and training aspects described in Vol. 1 and Vol. 2. Less experienced moderators, in turn, will find detailed step-by-step descriptions for each tool, for guidance or as a reminder.

What does this manual contain and how is it structured?



This manual is structured like an onion. The outer layer relates to **management**, i.e., the conceptual and preparation processes that organizations need to go through when planning and implementing environmental education. The middle layer is about the **skills and competencies** that an organization's staff needs to develop to be able to facilitate environmental education activities. And finally, the inner layer contains the actual **methods and tools** that staff members should apply to the problems and needs of the participants they work with, be it in environmental education classroom events or with communities in the field.

Vol. 1 People and the Environment is about the learning journey people undertake in their efforts to protect the environment. The volume begins with a process summary of ProCEED's environmental bus tours as one possible format for environmental education. Subsequently, more general steps and processes are described that help organize other educational formats such as in-class trainings, workshops, information evenings, or learning events at a conference or festival.

Vol. 2 Getting Ready for Departure describes the process of basic training and coaching regarding the philosophy, methods and tools used in environmental education. These human-resource investments in skills of the participating staff and volunteers are necessary to prepare the teams for taking other people on an environmental education journey.

Environmental Education and Communication in Laos

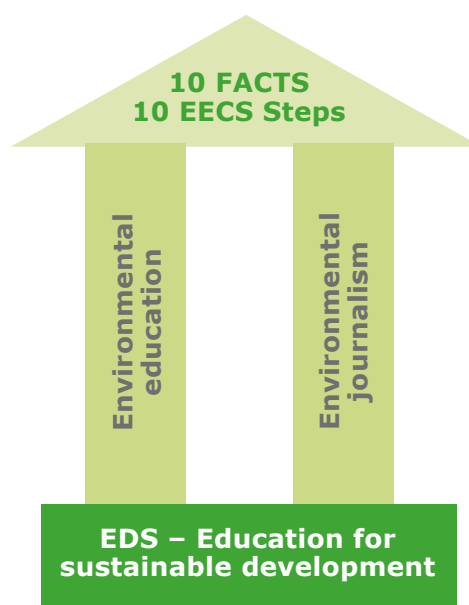
Vol. 3 Discoveries Along the Way is about proven methods and tools related to non-formal environmental education. The descriptions of these methods and tools are based on a standard step-by-step profile, which makes them easy to use in a variety of situations.

What all volumes have in common is their foundation in education for sustainable development, their pillars regarding non-formal environmental education and environmental journalism through mass media, and their overall orientation to the 10 key FACTs for five environmental topics, as well as the 10 steps of an integrated Environmental Education and Communication Strategy (EECS).

How can this manual be used?

On the one hand, this manual provides a process-oriented case study from Laos on a variety of environmental education activities that have been organized and implemented over a longer period of time.

On the other hand, it can be used as a collection of inter related environmental education and communication methods and tools, which interested parties can combine and integrate into a new case of taking people on a learning journey to protect the environment.



The different volumes of the manual may well be taken up by different user groups. For example, managers may only read Vol. 1 and 2 because they are more interested in the management and human resources development aspects. Facilitators, field workers or volunteers may only read Vol. 3 because they are looking for guidance and new tools to use in their work.

Introduction

Why care about the environment in Laos?

The economy of Laos is highly dependent on natural resources and the environment. Many of the country's main sources of income and subsistence, such as rain-fed rice cultivation or non-timber forest products, rely on healthy, balanced ecosystems. Threats to this natural balance will most severely affect rural and poor people, because their livelihoods depend on forest ecosystems and smallholder agriculture.



However, neglecting the environment will also harm the big players of the Lao national economy: Hydropower, mining, forestry and industrial farming depend on nature. Unsustainable hunting and timber exploitation, and the granting of large concessions for the development of hydropower, mining and industrial farming, are causing large-scale deforestation and a loss of biodiversity and wildlife. In addition, the effects of climate change, such as floods, droughts or extreme weather events, affect the Lao population as a whole.

Why educate and communicate about the environment?

Most people in rural Laos have a low level of understanding and awareness of the relation between sustainable development and environmental protection.

Even political and economic decision-makers often lack this understanding, and little attention is being paid to these issues in public. Mass media, schools, teacher training institutes, agricultural and forestry extension services, and mass organizations rarely address environmental and climate-related issues. Moreover, mass media outreach in Laos is limited by geographical and language barriers. The capacity of communication and education systems in Laos makes it difficult to position environmental and climate-related issues in public.

Environmental Education and Communication in Laos

This limited environmental awareness is partly due to a lack of **knowledge**, as people often do not know how things in nature are connected or how to solve environmental problems. Other people do not care because of **attitudes** that justify exploitation of the environment as long as it brings about economic benefits. Some people engage in the wrong **practices** as they believe that losing a species is all right to satisfy human needs. These three elements, **Knowledge – Attitudes – Practices (KAP)**, constitute one of the pillars of ProCEED's approach to environmental communication and education and we will discuss them in more detail further below.

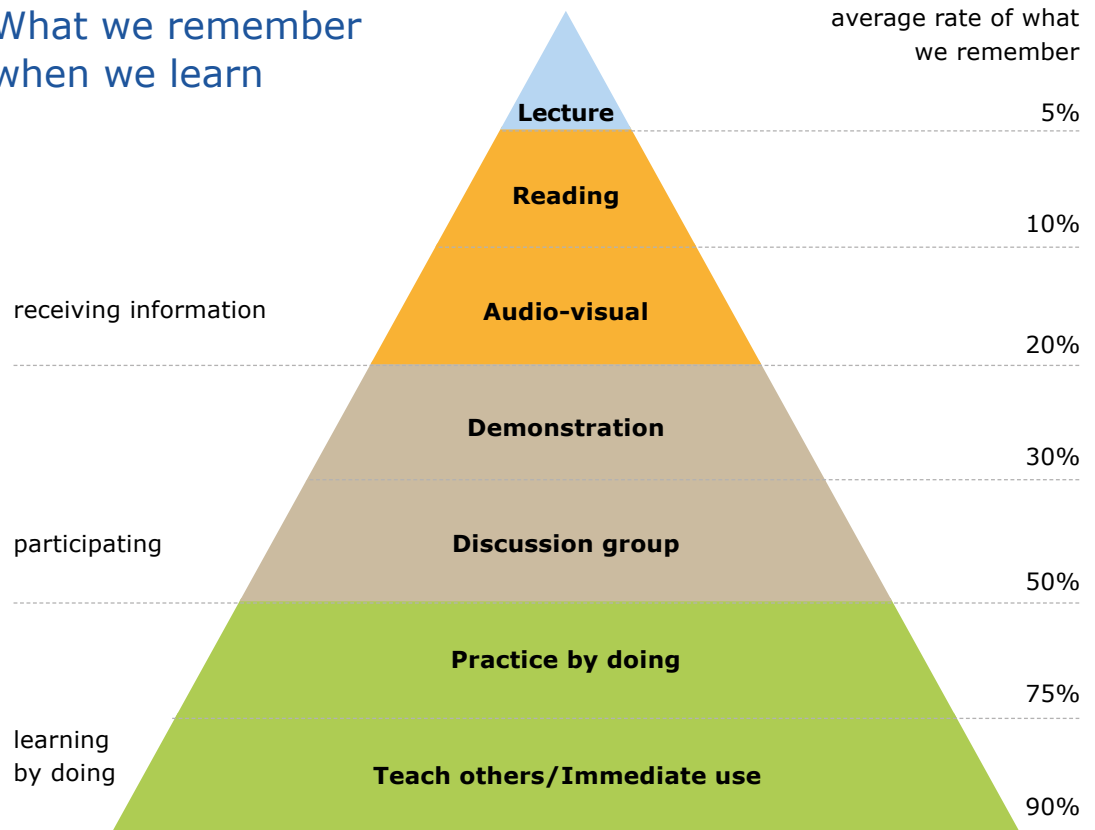


What is our approach to environmental communication and education?

Communication and education have two key dimensions: What and How. The What refers to the subject matter, that is, the topic we talk about, for example wildlife conservation. The How refers to the methods used to present the subject matter with words or pictures, for example giving a lecture or presenting a poster. We all know that often “a picture is worth a thousand words”. This means that **how** you present something is at least as important as **what** you present – especially if you work in education or communication. For example, giving a lecture leaves a completely different impression on people than discussing a poster with them. Also, you may need to reach out to illiterate people or communities who speak and read a different language from yourself. Here, a well-done poster may get the message across, while words alone will most probably not. The How also integrates a socio-cultural adaptation of methods and tools. ProCEED has strived to do this by involving project partners in the development of tools and scripts.

Introduction

What we remember when we learn



Generally, people learn and remember things better if they not only hear about but also see them, be it in writing or in the form of a picture. Visualization is, therefore, another key element of ProCEED's approach to environmental communication and education.

This is why this manual advocates using a variety of media and communication channels and materials as visual aids: posters, banners, comics, drawings, photos, maps, Power-

Point presentations, 3-D models, interactive games, theater, radio and TV, websites, etc. Vol. 2 and Vol. 3 will provide more information on the role of these different learning aids in preparing and implementing environmental communication and education processes.

Environmental Education and Communication in Laos

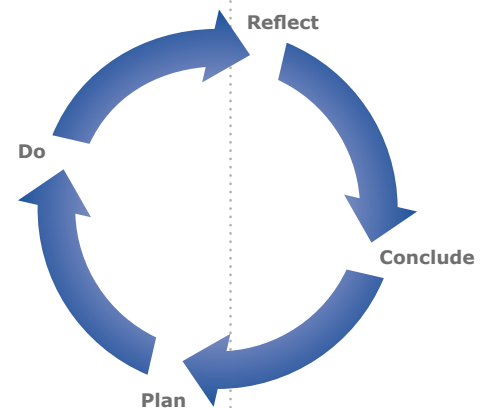
The basic assumption is that people learn by:

- doing something,
- reflecting situations,
- looking for information on how to solve observed problems,
- exchanging views and ideas with others regarding possible solutions,
- arriving at joint conclusions regarding solutions,
- planning and applying what is known about the situation,
- doing something new, or doing the same thing in a more sophisticated way, based on lessons learned.

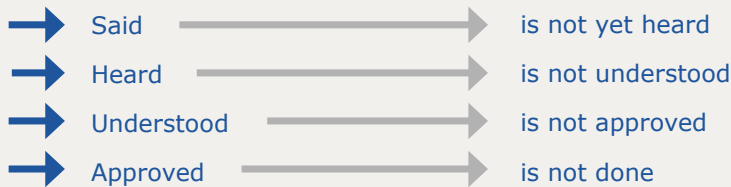


But information alone is not enough. Information is not yet knowledge, and knowledge is not yet wisdom, let alone action. Moreover, the dissemination of information is not yet communication. Instead, learning requires a complex communication process to overcome a number of obstacles that often stand between an information and a solution to a problem.

No piece of knowledge can just be transferred from one person's head to that of another person. Instead, learning is an interactive process, in which new information is combined with what people already know. Communication and education thus become a learn-



Introduction



ing journey, in which a group of people jointly explores new issues. The more learners are empowered and motivated to express themselves in this process, and to exchange information with others, the more effective and successful will be the learning processes.

This leads to another important point: people learn in different ways. Some people learn best by being exposed to concrete experiences and emotions such as feeling, touching, seeing, and hearing, all of which touch the **heart**. Others learn best by receiving information in a more abstract way, for example through verbal or visual presentations. They may process information best by thinking about it, using their **head**. Yet others may need to process information by actively doing something, using their **hands**. Looking at all these 3H – head, heart and hands – and carefully choosing the right approach for a given learning objective, is key to successful communication and education.

KAP

■ Knowledge	to know	cognitive
■ Attitude	to feel	emotional
■ Practices	to do	practical

3H

■ Head
■ Heart
■ Hand

Finally, the learning process involves more than just processing information: people need motivation to learn. That helps them choose what they want to pay attention to. Adults, teenagers and children alike learn most when they actively do things and have fun.



Environmental Education and Communication in Laos



These general considerations have led the ProCEED project and its partners to a special approach of environmental communication and education. The approach is based on several interrelated elements:

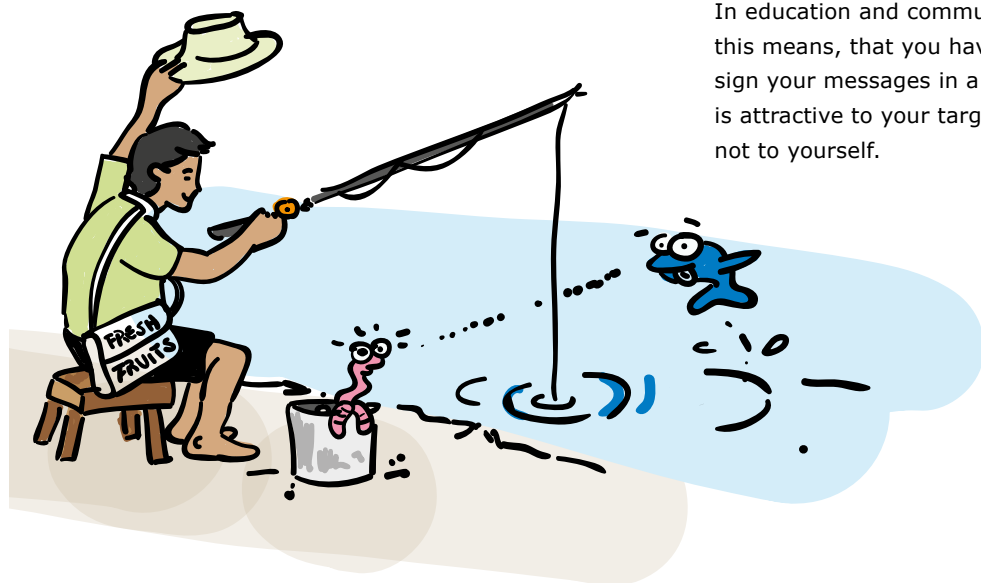
- learning by doing in an interactive, practice-oriented way,
- communicating through a combination of information and entertainment, known as infotainment or edutainment, or “joyful learning” in Lao language,
- visualizing information because “a picture is worth a thousand words”,
- learning and communicating based on real problems as perceived by the people concerned,
- formulating messages and learning aids in a way that is attractive to the learners and communities who are to gain knowledge or change attitudes and practices,
- combining the KAP approach, which originates in social marketing, with the 3H approach, which has its base in adult education, because both determine successful communication and learning.

Introduction

In the context of the ProCEED project, these different elements were integrated in a strategy and two methods:

- The **Environmental Education and Communication Strategy** (EECS) combines educational and communication activities in an entertaining and interactive way, and is described below in the chapter about ProCEED.
- **MOVE – Moderation and Visualization for Group Events** is a combination of interactive methods and tools to trigger learning and facilitate planning processes in a group of people. It helps brainstorm and understand ideas, and reach group consensus on action to be taken in learning or communication processes. MOVE can be applied to any type of content or participants, indoor or outdoor event. It is the backbone of ProCEED's training and coaching activities, and is described in Vol. 2.
- The **Wisdom Box** could be called a compass of life for a rural community. It helps villagers express their views about environmental and conservation themes, and explores the What-How-Why of their livelihoods as related to nature in an interactive and entertaining way. The Wisdom Box approach is described in Vol. 2, and an exemplary application is provided in the form of a tool in Vol. 3.

The worm has to be tasty to the fish,
not the fisherman...



In education and communication this means, that you have to design your messages in a way that is attractive to your target group, not to yourself.

The ProCEED project

Project background

ProCEED is a German cooperation project implemented by the Lao Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. The project aims at improving knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding the protection of biodiversity and the environment, and the adaptation to climate change in Laos. To this effect, a wide range of national mass media, community communication channels and non-formal education activities have been combined in a multi-year Environmental Education and Communication Strategy (EECS) supervised by MoNRE¹.



¹ see
<http://www.laos-proceed.com/Manual/proceed-flyer>

ProCEED's focus during 2011 to 2014 was on specific areas in Sayaboury, Houaphanh and Khammouane, where other German cooperation projects on climate change, forest and biodiversity protection are implemented. For ProCEED II, from 2014 to 2017, the project has extended its activities to Bolikhamxay Province, starting with awareness raising on waste management. In addition, the project has assisted MoNRE in reviewing and updating the National Strategy on Environmental Education and Awareness (NSEEA).



The Environmental Education and Communication Strategy (EECS)

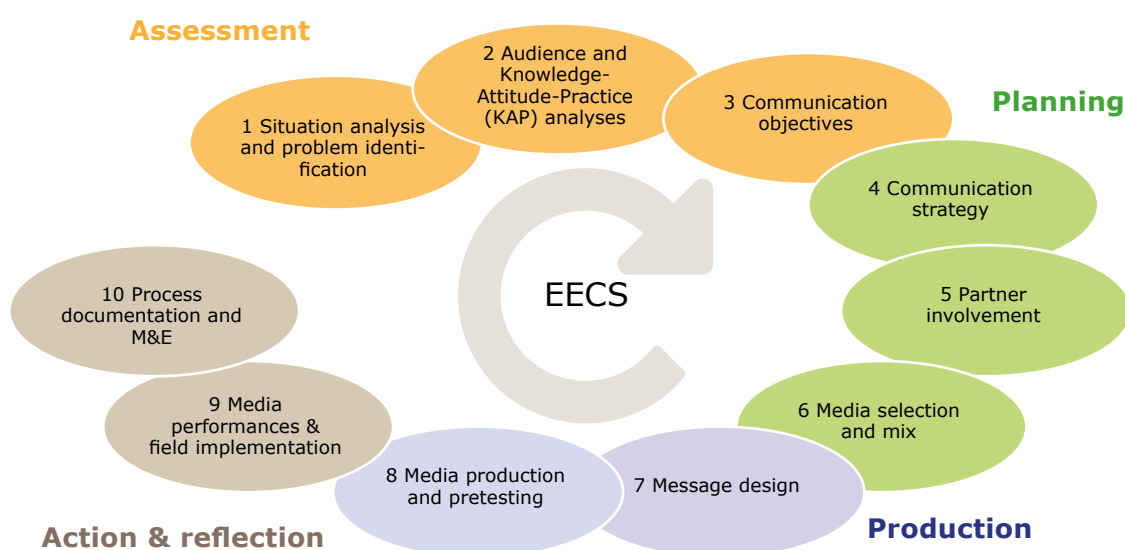


2 see <http://www.laos-proceed.com/Manual/comstrat-guide>

ProCEED's Environmental Education and Communication Strategy (EECS)² has been developed in a 10-step process. It aims at increasing environmental awareness in Laos and has been employed by ProCEED since 2013.

One of the first steps towards the EECS was an environmental awareness survey in 2012, to assess what people know, feel and do about the environment. This Knowledge-Attitude-Practice (KAP) survey revealed that large segments of the rural population, as well as many decision-makers, lack knowledge about the relation between sustainable development, environmental protection, and climate change. Alarming, half of the respondents agreed to exploit the environment for satisfying human needs. Many respondents turned out to be engaged in practices such as unsustainable hunting and timber exploitation that are harmful to the environment.

Based on these and other survey results, such as the respondents' media preferences and topics, ProCEED developed a communication strategy to mass media, non-formal education and training. The main media used by the project include a website, a newsletter, various series of posters, information boards, illustrations, FACTs sheets, and a comic book. The project also conducted various photo competitions, which have resulted in a large pool of pictures that can be used for environmental communication and education purposes.



Environmental Education and Communication in Laos

The ProCEED team and its partners have also produced regular environmental TV and radio programs at the national and provincial level, and have contributed to newspapers with nationwide coverage. These mass media activities support ProCEED's objective to improve knowledge, attitudes and behavior related to the environment, biodiversity and climate change in Laos by providing better access to relevant information. The aim is to help rural communities to adapt to climate change and natural disaster risks, and to protect the environment in general.



All media and non-formal environmental educational activities are multi-purpose in nature, i.e., interrelated and mutually supportive. For example, the photos gained from photo competitions have fed into the website, posters, travelling exhibitions, or the environmental tours. Video clips or films produced for TV programs are used for trainings, workshops, the website, non-formal education events, or the environmental tours.

ProCEED has supported this broad scope of measures by institutional capacity development, training and coaching, to promote relevant journalistic, communication, and educational skills (see Vol. 2). All activities were implemented in close cooperation with MoNRE and other strategic partners from the mass media, government and civil society organizations. For example, Lao print and broadcasting journalists participated in a one-week advanced training on environmental journalism in 2014. Staff from provincial and district radio stations in Khammouane, Houaphan, Sayaboury and Bolikhamxay have joined training workshops on environmental radio since late 2015. As a result, LNR Khammouane and LNR Houaphan have been broadcasting environmental radio programs since April 2016.

At the district level, community communication and non-formal environmental education activities have complemented the mass-media mix. For example, the Provincial Department of Natural Resources and Environment and the District Office of Natural Resources and Environment (PONRE and DONRE), assisted by German development advisors, have helped facilitate village learning initiatives that engage in radio listening groups, extra-curricular school activities, etc. Also, two environmental vehicles have regularly been touring villages and towns in Khammouane, Huaphane and Sayaboury Province, and Vientiane Capital since late 2013. Further environmental tours were started in Bolikhamxay Province in 2015. The bus and the truck allow showing environmental films on a big cinema screen, and displaying other non-formal environmental education tools such as theater, travelling exhibitions, posters, games and exercises.

Organizing the environmental tours

Learning is a journey. Along the way, you meet other people and discuss problems and solutions with them. You discover new ways of thinking and experience them in practice. You prepare a team to train and implement activities, and go public with the media, communication and educational tools that you produced.

Such a journey can be long and pass by many stations. Therefore, organizing a learning process for and with others needs to be taken in steps. In the next two chapters, we would like to take you on two different ways of organizing learning journeys: ProCEED's environmental tours, and other types of environmental education events.

ProCEED's environmental tours are real journeys. Since the end of 2013, a bus and a truck have been regularly touring some 80 remote villages plus the provincial and some district capitals of Khammouane, Houaphan, Sayaboury and Bolikhamxay Province. As soon as the environmental vehicles enter a place, they immediately attract people's attention. The painted bus and truck are a spectacle in themselves. Loudspeakers announce their arrival and the program of the day. The vehicles go to each place at least twice per year, so people know that in the evening, an entertaining community meeting takes place in front of the bus. The bus is equipped with a huge screen, light and sound system for showing films. Villagers perform games, songs and dances, and the tour volunteers stage the highlight of the evening, a theater play.

In other words: The environmental tours with the bus and the truck are a media platform for a variety of non-formal environmental education activities. They are suitable for children, teenagers and adults in remote villages, as well as for government officials in provincial and district capitals cities and towns. The vehicles carry the message "*Environment – We care today for tomorrow*", which is written next to the project name ProCEED – Promotion of Climate-related Environmental Education. Colorful environmental illustrations painted on both sides of the vehicles portray a village scene promoting wildlife conservation, and an urban scene showing proper waste management and recycling.

The following provides a closer look at the different elements that most people observe as the environmental tour: the hardware, the facilitators, and the tools.

Environmental Education and Communication in Laos



First of all, there are the vehicles themselves and their hardware. The German government donated a 14-seater bus and an eight-meter truck to MoNRE. Inside the vehicles, a 32" flat screen, respectively a media projector with audio systems allow participants to watch environmental movies. The truck also offers facilities for traveling exhibitions, playing interactive games and engaging in other non-formal environmental education activities. A large 5 x 3 meter white screen can be fixed to the outside of both vehicles, to screen movies with a mobile projector and a computer-assisted multimedia system that includes speakers and microphones. Most activities take place outside the bus, e.g., meetings, games, theater performances, movie shows, learning and radio listening groups, exhibitions etc. The vehicles are equipped with a photovoltaic system that uses solar energy to provide approximately 4-5 hours of energy for the various electronic devices.

Even more important are the young volunteers and staff members, who run the show as facilitators. The environmental tours are implemented by two teams: One team addresses government agencies and mass organizations in the provincial and district capital cities of the provinces concerned. The other team tours 15-20 villages in one district at a time. While the government team typically conducts two 3-hour programs per day, the village team works with school children, village authorities and the adult population of a community for a whole day (see typical scripts for village and government tours in Vol. 2).

Organizing Learning Processes



Both teams use an infotainment approach, combining information with entertainment, particularly a theater play that focuses on the respective environmental tour topic (see a typical script in Vol. 2). Other than that, the methods used by the two teams are somewhat different.

The government team uses more factual information, e.g., a series of 10 FACTs information boards, which combine text with visual information. The village team uses more games, songs, drawing contests and exercises with the children,

and tools for working with communities, like transect walks, historical trends or focus group discussions, supported by information boards and illustration posters with the adults. In the evening, the results from the contests and discussions are presented in an entertaining community meeting full of games, film shows, video screening and theater performances. Many of these tools are described in Vol. 3.

The ProCEED volunteers and staff members come from three organizations: the Department of Environmental Quality Promotion (DEQP) of MoNRE as a government agency, PADETC/Mind Media as a civil society organization (CSO), and MCU as a student organization. From the very beginning, DEQP and PADETC/Mind Media worked on the village and government tours together, partly as mixed teams, partly with PADETC/Mind Media running the village tours, and DEQP running the tours for government. MCU was involved in waste management tours in Bholikamxay Province and a school tour in Vientiane Capital on climate change.

Almost all volunteers and staff members are in their mid-twenties. Most have recently finished university or college and do not yet have a paying job. They look for meaningful work and interesting experiences in government and civil society organizations. Only DEQP and PADETC/Mind Media use permanent staff members in their organizations. This means that volunteers come and go, as they are in transition between study and work. They need training and coaching to learn what it means to provide environmental education and to work in rural communities. The training efforts need to be repeated for each new generation

Environmental Education and Communication in Laos

of volunteers, and whenever a new theme or new tools are to be tackled. Vol. 2, Getting Ready for Departure - Preparing the Team, describes all about this process.

Finally, there are the communication media and educational tools that facilitators and their audiences use around the bus and the truck when they engage in environmental education. These include learning aids, games and exercises, songs, dances and drawings, using posters, information boards and illustrations, playing films and theater, and many other media and tools. The necessary materials are stored in the vehicles and have gone to many different places between 2013 and 2017. Vol. 3 of this manual provides a rich source of these all-important communication media and educational tools.

Yet, the hardware, the facilitators, and the tools are just what you can see on the environmental tours. Much more happens behind the scenes to get a tour on its way: content development, and the logistical and organizational preparation.



Organizing Learning Processes

Major themes

As a result of the KAP survey, ProCEED decided to focus on five major environmental themes: forest protection, wildlife conservation, biodiversity conservation, co-management of national protected areas, and climate change. A sixth one, on forest protection and natural disasters, was developed later, as a combination of the existing flyers on forest protection and climate change. MoNRE and GIZ experts collected the most relevant information and summarized it in ten key facts for each theme. These were structured to fit small folded pocket flyers and layouted with ProCEED's corporate design. The flyers "10 FACTs on ... in Lao PDR" for the five themes were then distributed to audiences of the government tours and all training workshops, among them relevant government agencies, CSOs and mass organizations, such as the Lao Youth Union or the Lao Women's Union, and published on the ProCEED website³.

Based on the key messages of the 10 FACTs flyers, the ProCEED team also published a series of articles, which were published in the two most important daily newspapers in Laos, Vientiane Times and Paxason⁴.

Major information and learning aids

The 10 FACTs flyers contain the main messages that the various target groups need to know in order to develop more positive environmental attitudes and practices. However, the language used in the flyers is rather technical, so that many people find it difficult to immediately understand these message. The information provided in the flyers was therefore used as a starting point to develop a series of learning aids that are easier to understand: posters, information boards, illustrations, theater plays, games and exercises, etc. Several of these learning aids are presented in Vol. 3 of this manual, the toolbox.

3 see
<http://www.laos-proceed.com/materials> under
Flyers

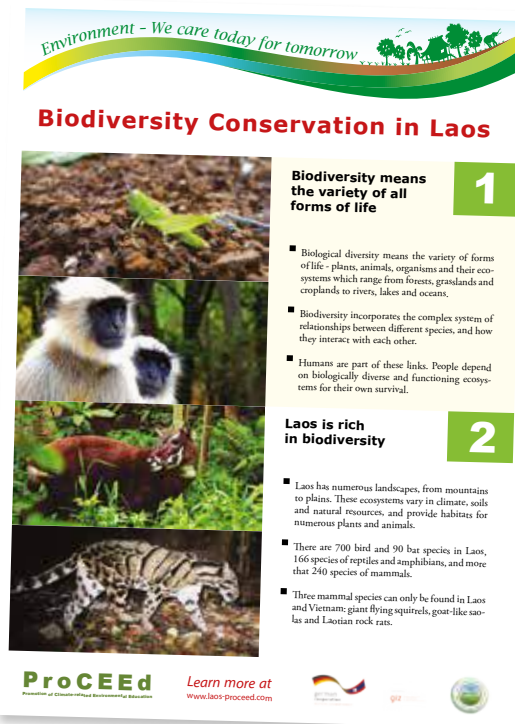
4 see
<http://www.laos-proceed.com/materials> under
Newspaper Clippings



Environmental Education and Communication in Laos

In the beginning, ProCEED developed 10 FACTs information boards with summarized information on each of the five themes. Each poster of size A0 contains two FACTs, so that each theme comes in a five-poster series. Each FACT is briefly described with 2-4 bullet points and illustrated with two photos related to these FACTs⁵. However, monitoring and evaluation revealed that people in rural communities often did not fully understand the text-based information, because they speak other ethnic languages and/or cannot read. Also, the visual information in the photos was often not precise enough to represent the different FACTs.

As a consequence, the ProCEED team came to the conclusion that the 10 FACTs information boards are more suitable for government authorities, while illustrations can reach villagers better. Therefore, an additional poster series on wildlife conservation, with illustrations that present the 10 FACTs exclusively by visual information was produced in 2016. At the same time, a comic book on wildlife conservation with very little text was produced.



5 see <http://www.laos-proceed.com/materials> under Information Boards



Organizing Learning Processes

These new tools have proven to be very effective learning aids with rural audiences. People understand the information more easily and can establish their own views on

the problems and solutions presented in the illustrations. Children and teenagers particularly enjoy the comic book about the girl Mai and her deer friend Fan Noy. The storytelling approach used in the book motivates young and old to discuss and work on protecting wildlife from overhunting and illegal trade.

Every time a new tour is planned, the ProCEED team decides on a new focus theme to be addressed. This means that, for each tour, new learning aids, games and exercises, songs and dances, posters and drawings, films and theater plays, and other media and tools need to be developed and produced.

Theater plays, for example, have been developed based on the 10 FACTs for specific themes, using a

similar adaptation process as described above for the production of posters. Together with three Lao groups of theater specialists and trainers – CamKid, Lao National Theater, and Khao Niew –, volunteers from DEQP and PADETC/Mind Media developed outlines and scripts for several 30-minute theater plays⁶. They bought or created the related props, and rehearsed various funny, straight-forward plays.

Tour cycle

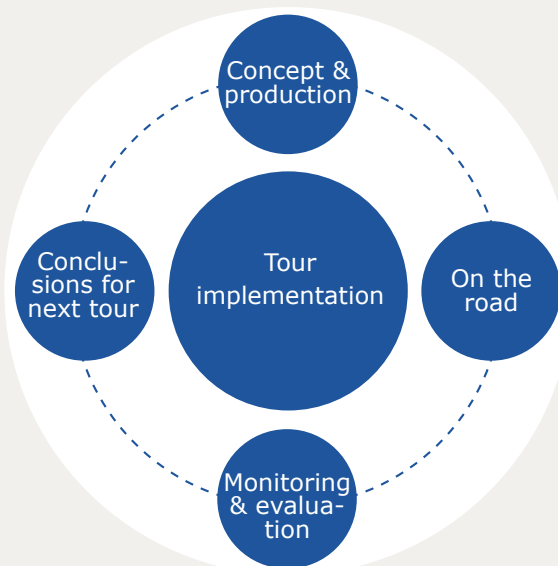
ProCEED plans the environmental tours in annual cycles, each time with a specific thematic focus. In 2016, for example, the theme was forest protection and natural disasters. Based on the annual plan, detailed tour plans are developed for the four provinces, and broken down further into specific itineraries at district level. Government tour visits typically cover the district and provincial capitals, while village tours cover a total of 51 villages in three districts of three provinces.

The village and government teams are set up by DEQP and PADETC/Mind Media. Due to distances, climatic and road conditions, they usually first visit Houaphan, then Sayaboury and finally Khammouane, with the Khammouane village tour further split



Environmental Education and Communication in Laos

Tour cycle



into two sub-tours in the Boualapha District. In 2015 and 2016, MCU also ran waste management tours in Bholikhamxay Province. As Bholikhamxay can be reached from Vientiane during the rainy season, these tours can be implemented in June, July or December when remote districts in Houaphan, Sayaboury and Khammouane cannot be accessed.

A typical annual tour plan is shown in the table overleaf⁷. Scripts for a typical three-hour program for a government tour, and for a one-day program of a village tour, will be outlined in the subsequent chapter and, in more detail, in Vol. 2.

The management cycle for implementing the environmental tours includes planning and preparation, the actual tour on the road, monitoring and evaluation, and conclusions and lessons learned for the next cycle.

A tour cycle actually starts at least 16 weeks **before** the bus and the truck finally go on the road. The last activities for evaluation and deriving conclusions take place 6-8 weeks **after** the tour has been completed.



⁷ see <http://www.laos-proceed.com/materials> under Annual Plans

Sample annual tour plan

Timeline	Locations	Target Groups	Topics
9-17 Jan	Houaphanh	Government tour to Sam Neua and Houameang District	Biodiversity Conservation
23 Jan - 1 Feb	Khammouane	Village tour to Boaulapha District	Biodiversity Conservation
31 Jan - 6 Feb	Khammouane	Government tour to Thakek and Baoulapha	Biodiversity Conservation
27 Feb - 11 March	Houaphan	Village tour to Houameang District	Forest Protection & Natural Disasters
14-18 March	Houaphan	Government tour to Sam Neua and Houameang District	Forest Protection & Natural Disasters
28 March - 10 April	Sayaboury	Village tour to Phiang District	Forest Protection & Natural Disasters
24-30 April	Sayaboury	Government tour to Sayaboury and Phiang District	Forest Protection & Natural Disasters
8-22 May	Khammouane	Village tour to Boaulapha District	Forest Protection & Natural Disasters
23-28 May	Khammouane	Government tour to Thakek and Baoulapha	Forest Protection & Natural Disasters
5-18 June	Bolikhamxay	Village tour to Thapabath, Paksan, Pakkading District	Waste Management
24 Sept - 9 Oct	Houaphan	Village tour to Houameang District	Wildlife Conservation
8-16 Oct (tentative)	Houaphan	Government tour to Sam Neua and Houameang District	Wildlife Conservation
23 Oct - 5 Nov	Sayaboury	Village tour to Phieng District	Wildlife Conservation
19-30 Nov	Khammouane	Village tour to Boualapha District	Wildlife Conservation
4-10 Dec	Khammouane	Government tour to Thakek and Boualapha	Wildlife Conservation
11-24 Dec	Bolikhamxay	Village tour to Thapabath, Paksan, Pakkading District	Waste Management

Tour preparation

Tour concept & design

The annual tour plan is coordinated between GIZ and DEQP. A context analysis of the tour's thematic focus is a first step before the actual activities can be designed, and a work plan and budget be set up. PADETC/Mind Media and MCU are informed about these planning parameters, so they can start calls for CSO and student volunteers to join the tour and participate in the related training activities. Once all partners have agreed on the annual tour plan, PADETC/Mind Media can also research information about the respective districts and villages: situation analysis, traveling and weather conditions, ethnicity and education of villagers, etc.



**16
WEEKS
BEFORE**

Curriculum and tool development

Together with PADETC/Mind Media and MCU, GIZ and DEQP determine in more detail the topics to be covered during the tour, and start developing the related content, curriculum, tools, and script for a theater play. The related content is based on the main messages or learning objectives as agreed in the concept. Often, consultations with external partners and/or experts take place.



**12
WEEKS
BEFORE**

Tour preparation trainings

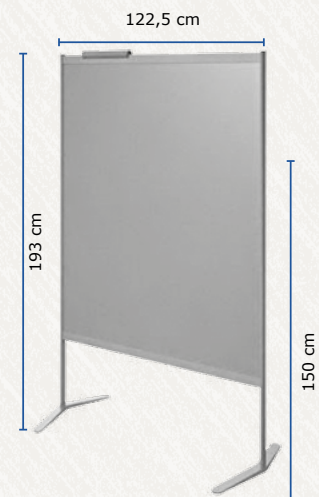
There are at least four different types of trainings, which all volunteers that conduct the tours must follow to get ready for departure. Details about these trainings are described in Vol. 2. The basic training and coaching activities allow the volunteers to understand and share the philosophy, methods and tools used throughout the upcoming environmental tour. They get familiar with the key environmental information, learn about facilitation and moderation, monitoring and reporting, as well as various types of theater presentation, and practice interactive, informative and entertaining games and exercises. These human-resource investments in the skills of the participating staff and volunteers are necessary to prepare the teams for taking government and village people on an environmental education journey.

As moderation and visualization is one of the crucial elements in all workshops, you need to have the necessary equipment and materials ready before the trainings. The most crucial materials are listed on the next page. The specifications are typical for a one-week training event. You can either order these materials from an office supply shop or produce them on your own.

Moderation and visualization materials for a one-week training

PinBoards

- 6-10 mobile pinboards, if self-produced: 122,5 x 150 cm board size, 193 cm height; legs and frame made of aluminum or light wood; board made from 3 layers: 1 – rubber or pressurized Styrofoam (front side), 2 – cardboard (inside), 3 – rubber or pressurized styrofoam (backside); feet should be tipped inwards; legs should be removable for easy transport



Equipment

- 2 flipchart stands with 50 sheets of flipchart paper each
- 1 multi-media projector (beamer) and a stand-up screen for PowerPoint presentations
- 1 digital camera for photo documentation

Moderation suitcase

- fully equipped (if self-produced: from wood or cardboard):
 - rectangular, normal (20 x 10 cm): 500 white, 150 yellow, 150 green, 21,5 x 10,5 cm, which is 1/3 of an A4 size sheet of paper, i.e., you can make 3 standard cards out of one A4 paper, preferably 165 gram
 - rectangular, long (60 x 10 cm): 50 / 30 / 20, preferably 165 gram
 - circle, small (9,5 cm): 50 / 30 / 20, preferably 165 gram
 - circle, big (19 cm): 20 / 30 / 20, preferably 165 gram
- moderation suitcase holds all the cards, markers, pins, etc. you need;



Material

- 50-60 sheets of thick, brown packing paper to cover the boards (or double the amount if the brown paper size is only half the pinboard size): 90 gram, 122,5 x 150 cm
- black markers (with an edged, not a round tip): at least 2 x number of participants
- 30 red markers (with an edged, not a round tip): half the number of participants,
- 5 – 10 markers, different colors, big size, with an edged (not a round) tip
- 300 needles,
- 10 glue sticks, 21 gram or more
- 5 rolls of masking tape (1cm x 10m)
- 1 scissor
- 1 ruler
- 100 pieces of white A4-Paper
- 3 plastic bowls (20-30 cm in diameter)

Environmental Education and Communication in Laos

ProCEED tour preparation workshops

The 5-day workshop is organized by the ProCEED team. It includes approximately one day for evaluating the last tour, two days for going through the details of the 10 FACTs relevant to the tour's theme, one day for coaching the volunteers' in presentation skills, and one day for developing and rehearsing the moderation plans for the village and the government tours (see Vol. 2, Chapter 2).

This is also the time to determine what data to collect and what aspects to monitor during the tour, to allow proper reporting after the tour has been completed (see Vol. 2, Chapter 2 on quality management, data collection and monitoring).

Team building workshop

This 3-4-day workshops is also organized by the ProCEED team if new volunteers need to be taken on board, or if mixed teams that involve members from other organizations need to be integrated.

Theater development and production workshops

The entire theater development and production process takes a total of about 30 days. It is organized by ProCEED, in cooperation with a group of theater specialists. Different forms of theater have been used for specific tours: working with human actors, puppet or shadow theater. Up to ten days are needed to develop the script, and about one week to produce the props or puppets. The volunteers then need another 5-10 days of training to adjust, learn and rehearse the play.

Communication with local authorities

This is also the time for DEQP and PADETC/Mind Media to write authorization letters to provincial and district authorities, explaining the exact topics, locations, time-lines and programs of the government and village tours. Regarding the activities at schools, DEQP has to coordinate and inform DONRE and the District Education and Sports Office (DESO).

Based on these formal authorization letters, district coordinators of PADETC/Mind Media follow up more informally with district authorities for more detailed preparation, and to inform them about the specific activities that will happen in the field. They can call the village authority in villages that are difficult to access. All communication by the district coordinators has to be done at least 1-2 days in advance of the tour team



**10
WEEKS
BEFORE**



**8
WEEKS
BEFORE**



**6
WEEKS
BEFORE**

Organizing Learning Processes

arriving in a particular area, and it should be confirmed by PONRE or DONRE government staff because they have the power to negotiate with local authorities.

The arrangements include information about which villages are to be visited when and in which sequence (see map and itinerary for Boualapha District on page 40), and which houses or families will provide lodging for the village teams. The daily program with the village schools, local authorities and adult villagers needs to be coordinated to ensure that the community members are not busy with field work, hunting or trading activities, and that there are no vacations or school exams during the time of the tour. In the case of government tours to the provincial and district capitals, ProCEED, in cooperation with PONRE and DONRE, have to set up a schedule indicating, which government organizations should come to a specific venue at a specific time. Usually, there are two three-hour programs per day in two different locations for staff members of 2-4 different government and mass organizations.

To this end, ProCEED has developed quality follow up plans, which define tasks and responsibilities for particular areas of responsibility for the government and the village tour teams of DEQP and PADETC/Mind Media, and which are displayed on the page overleaf. As you can see in this example, the teams later transfer these considerations to become the preparatory steps when the next tour is to be planned.

**4
WEEKS
BEFORE**



PADETC/Mind Media village tour workshops

This 5-day workshop, organized by PADETC/Mind Media, is for the village tour volunteers to discuss the process of each activity they will use in the field. Technical information about environmental topics is provided in combination with insights into interactive community learning processes, and the volunteers practice the educational tools they are going to use on the tour.

**3
WEEKS
BEFORE**



Logistics & equipment check and material production & purchase

Many important logistical aspects, tasks and responsibilities come together at this point. If these are not checked and followed through properly, the quality management of the entire environmental tour may be at risk. Hardware production, purchase and check comprise, first of all, regular maintenance of the bus and truck, particularly the engine, the brakes, the photovoltaic and other systems. The bus and truck drivers ask PONRE/DONRE, other GIZ projects or contact persons at the district level how the actual road conditions will be at the time of departure.

Environmental Education and Communication in Laos

At this time, all equipment and materials required on an environmental tour are checked and prepared. A packing list of all the materials includes not only the didactic tools that have been produced so far, but also things the tour teams need in the village: blankets, sleeping bags, food, cooking stove, medicine, emergency kit, tents, tarpaulins against sun and rain, etc. Also, electrical tools like beamer, microphones, loudspeakers etc. need to be tested beforehand. If necessary, stocks are replenished and spare parts are purchased.

To this end, ProCEED has developed checklists which define tasks and responsibilities for particular areas of responsibility:

No	Area of responsibility	Tasks	Responsible person
1	Equipment	Organize, keep in stock, check stock, purchase	Jack, King, Dee
2	Handouts	Distribute, keep in stock, instruct and check	Lar, Noy, Keth
3	Sound system	Install, keep in stock, check and control	Jack, King, Dee
4	Costumes	Organize, keep in stock, check stock, purchase	Nang, Bay, Sun
5	Observers	Observe participants & team, record and advise	Take turns among tour members

These individuals keep and check stock, organize, purchase, and install new material and keep monitoring records of all tour equipment. Often, these tasks are broken down further into sub-activities for specific areas of responsibility.

Refresher workshop

This 1-day event is sometimes organized by ProCEED if the period between the last training and the start of the tour has been rather long.

"Remember that there is no shop in the village. Bring everything you need!"



**2-3
DAYS
BEFORE**

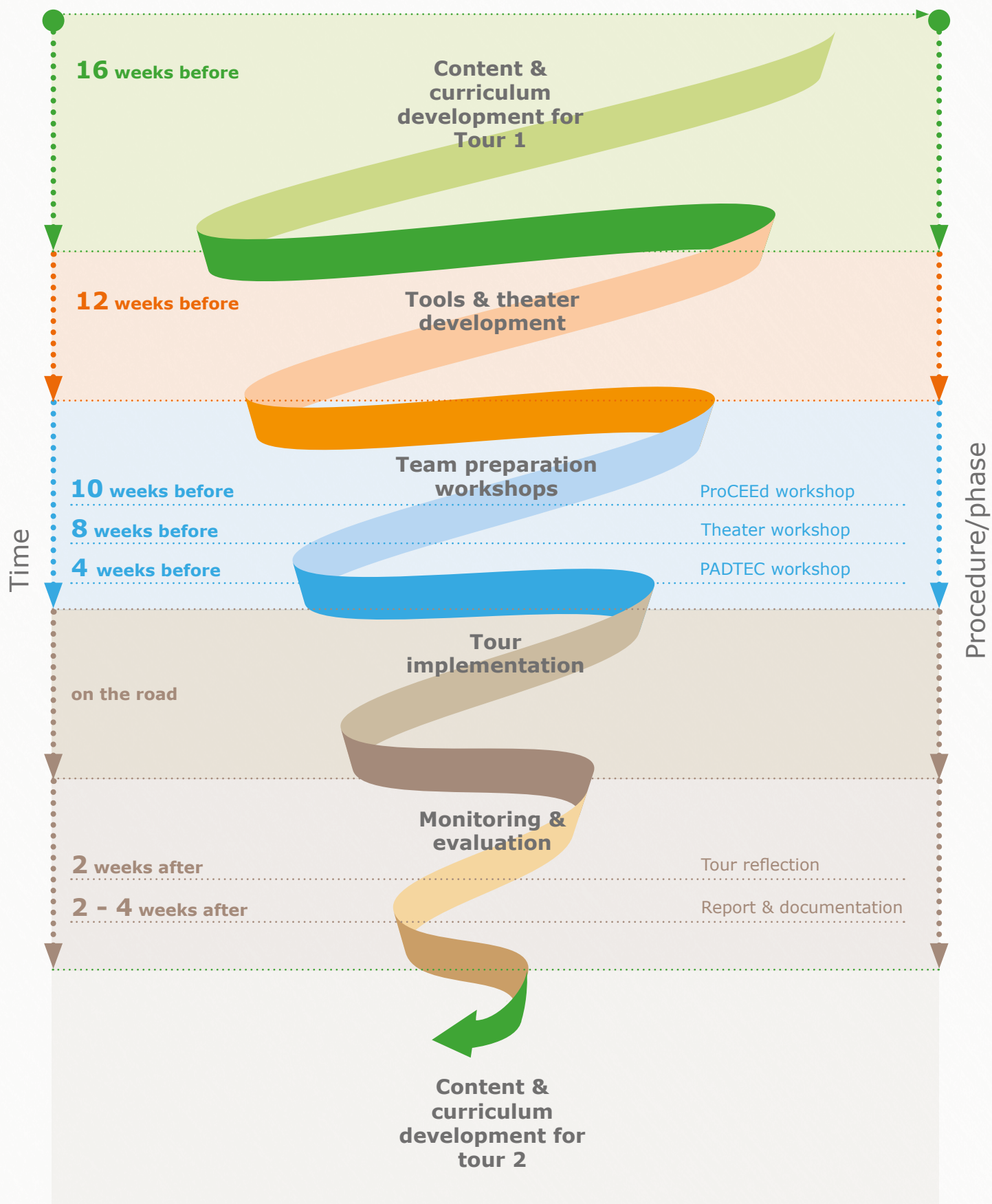
Quality management plan

What?	Who? DEQP, Government Tour	PADETC, Village Tour
Coordinate with local authority	DEQP, provincial & district staff	Team planner
Inspect and prepare venues	provincial and district staff	Coordinator at district level
Inform villagers, protocol	DEQP team	Local authorities
Prepare equipment and facilitate activities	DEQP team & provincial staff	PADETC Team
Install, check and maintain equipment	DEQP team	PADETC team
Compile and distribute handouts & materials	DEQP team	Team planner
Collect feedback from local authorities and communities	Master of Ceremony	Monitoring specialist

Next steps before an environmental tour - an example

- dresses, props, sound effects, stage background etc. for theater on board,
- new uniforms for bus team,
- bus & truck repairs (PA system, windows, air condition), incl. curtains inside the bus,
- print and MOVE materials checked and ready-to-use: flyers, agenda, posters, pinboards, markers, cards etc.,
- official letters to relevant authorities in Sayaboury sent on time,
- sufficient tables, chairs, floor mats etc. as a reminder to host organizations, and possibly as emergency equipment on board (e.g. folding table, floor mats),
- first-aid kit on board of truck & bus (standard flu, stomach, headache medicine, insect repellent, antiseptic ointment, sticking plasters, bandages etc.),
- drinking water supply on board for bus team and participants,
- tarpaulins on board for rain and sun protection in case there is no tree shade, tent, assembly hall etc.,
- 2 days of dress rehearsals of the complete team 2-3 days before departure for Sayaboury.

Timeline



ON THE ROAD



On the road

Logistical feedback

Just before and during the tour, the volunteers need to continuously check the status of logistical and administrative preparations for each village and town to be visited, to make sure local authorities and residents are informed. This is usually done by PADETC staff, in cooperation with DONRE and PONRE. They also check again, together with the bus and truck driver, whether roads are accessible and how many people will join the village activities. Particularly the logistics of the village evening programs need to be carefully prepared with local authorities, because often, several hundred people come to the event and need to be hosted. Therefore, the tour team leader discusses with the local authority to identify an appropriate venue for the evening and other activities in the village. Both have to agree on the time and agenda for each part of the program. If not, the villagers will not be informed appropriately. At times, a proper seating arrangement has to be found, which accommodates village authorities, men and women, old and young. Usually, villagers attend such a community gathering in separate groups: men, women, and children. This sometimes makes it difficult for the tour team to re-organize mixed groups for certain interactive and participatory environmental education games and activities.



Environmental Education and Communication in Laos



At least 1-2 days before departure, the team leader needs to check the above mentioned packing list again to make sure that everything is on board, including the technical equipment, moderation and visualization materials, environmental education tools, games and media, food, overnight, medical and sanitation materials, etc. All bus and truck systems and equipment are the drivers' responsibility, but they are usually assisted by experienced team members. A day-to-day checkup form for tour equipment is presented on the next page.

Another important logistical precaution is: always have a Plan B. A lot of things may go wrong on an environmental tour in remote areas. Therefore, you should be prepared to deal with unforeseen circumstances. For example, you may have to rent three-wheelers, motorbikes or other off-road means of transportation when roads are inaccessible for the bus and truck. Or you may have to exchange one village for another because there was a case of death in the originally foreseen village and local traditions do not allow to have songs, games or theater. And there are other contingencies: What if it rains? What if there is a problem with the photovoltaic system so that you are without electricity? What if the media projector, microphone, or sound system do not work?

Daily checkup form for tour equipment

Name of the tour: _____

Province/district: _____

[illegible]

😊 = OK; 😐 = problem; 🛑 = defect; MP=microphone; HS=headset; SPK=speaker set; AMP=

Summary:

Problems (what? why?)	Activities
-----------------------	------------

Place, date _____

Re

to: _____

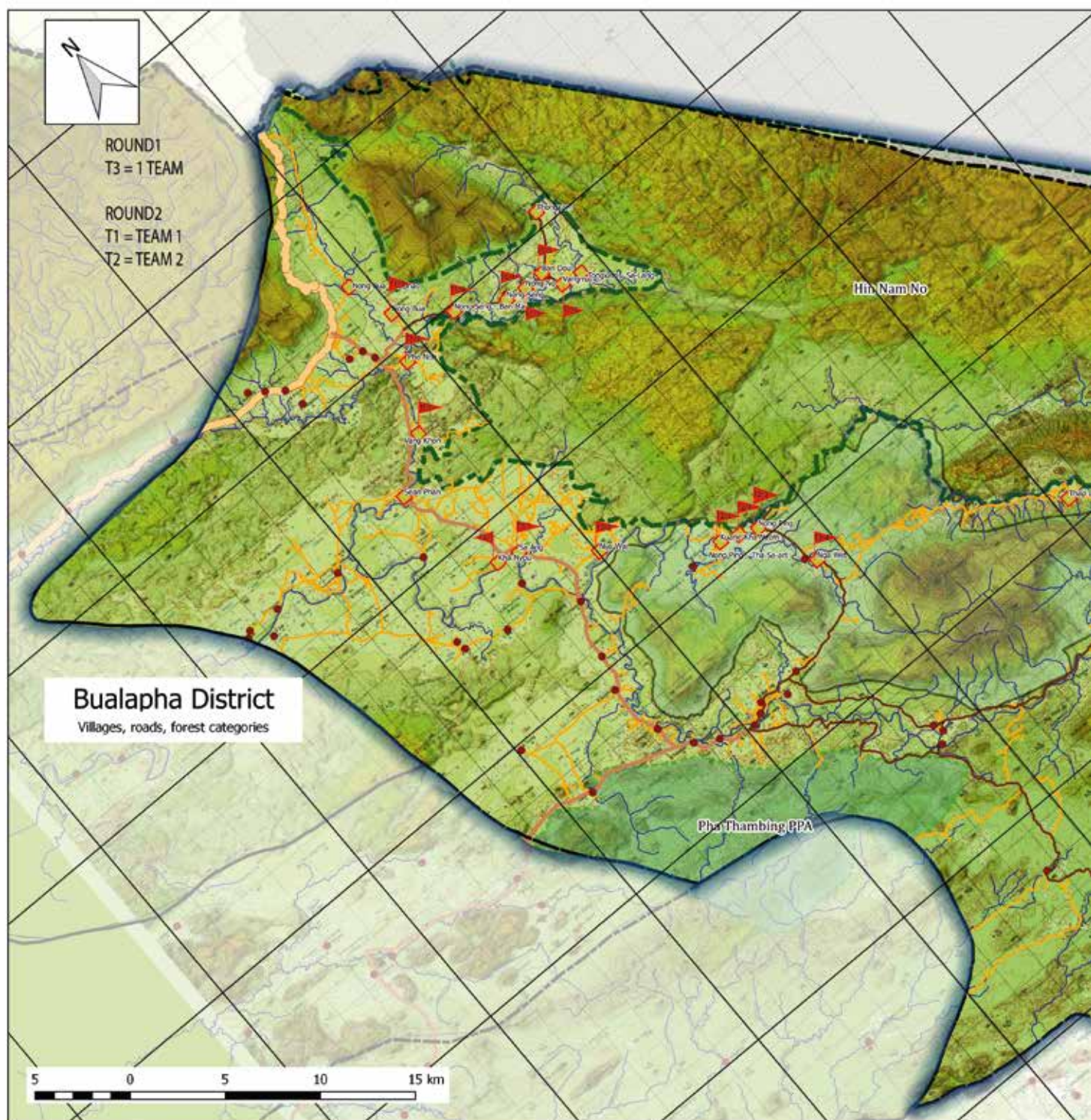
from: _____

[illegible]

on needed (who? how?)

responsible person _____

Tour map



Organizing Learning Processes



A day in the village

Village tours comprise three phases: In the morning, the volunteers work with adult community members. In the afternoon, they engage with primary and secondary school students. The evening is reserved for media performances and discussions with the community as a whole. The team works with the communities on the tour's major theme, e.g., biodiversity, wildlife or forest protection, from three interrelated perspectives:

1. The benefits of ecosystem services, related to animals and plants, overall biodiversity and forest.
2. The threats to biodiversity and wildlife conservation due to excessive hunting, fishing and logging.
3. The measures that the community and the government can take to protect biodiversity, wildlife and forests, for example, by co-management between government authorities and local people.

The infotainment approach used by the team includes theatre plays, songs, drawings, posters, film or video, and a wide variety of environmental education activities such as the 3D cube puzzle, floor game or nuts game, etc. mentioned in Vol. 3.

Here is an account of a typical day in a village, in this case in the Boualapha District in 2016. This tour theme was all about "What is biodiversity?" In the morning, after opening remarks by village authorities, the adult villagers held discussions in three focus groups, divided according to gender and age. The groups discussed hunting wildlife, catching fish and collecting forest products. In a chart, each group visualized what species they use how much, and how the species' population has changed over time. Villagers collected and discussed ideas why certain species decreased in particular locations. All groups presented their results to the plenary. The Hin Nam Nor National

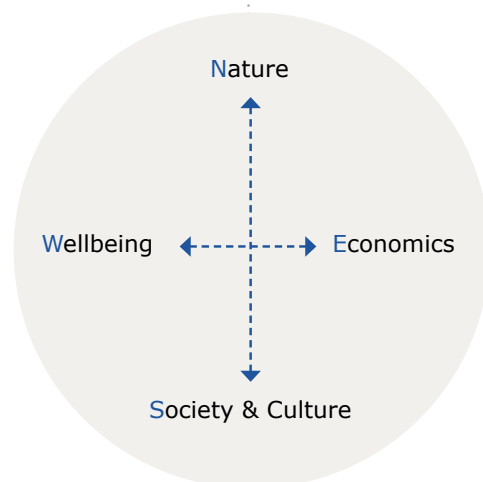
"Don't forget to announce your visit once again a day or two in advance, when you are already on the road!"



Environmental Education and Communication in Laos

Protected Area (NPA) in Boualapha District is home to many plant and animal species and has a very special biodiversity. The villages in and around the NPA rely on natural resources for their daily livelihood. This includes hunting animals and collecting non-timber forest products such as bamboo shoots, mushrooms or greens from the forest. So, one of the questions that villagers often asked was “Why do we need diversity of animal or plant species? Why isn’t it enough to protect a few animals and plants?” Hence, the closing of the afternoon adult session was marked by the presentation of five posters with 10 FACTs on biodiversity conservation in Laos.

In the afternoon, after the school director had welcomed the tour team and the students, the team formed small age-specific groups of children. The activities with the youngest were focused on singing environmental songs, drawing pictures and getting to know different animals through simple games and exercises. A learning cycle is organized around four information stations. Each station features a different thematic element and a variety of methods, e.g., film presentations, role plays or drawing contests. The children rotate in groups from station to station, in rounds of 30 minutes, so that after two hours, all have participated in the full cycle. The memory, jigsaw puzzle or hunting game (see Vol. 3) are a major part of the activities. Puppet plays specifically for school children are definitely a highlight that enforces the idea of combining information with entertainment. For the older children, the team offered more information about biodiversity during interactive lessons about wildlife and ecosystems. Again, games



Organizing Learning Processes

that combined newly learned information with a lot of fun where played outside the classroom.



The evening was reserved for entertainment and fun. ProCEED volunteers moderated a two-hour show, which the villagers always regard as the highlight of the day. Village children were involved in humorous games, quizzes and songs that made the audience laugh. After showing a movie about environmental conservation, a 30-minute theater play about biodiversity, in which an elephant and a squirrel play significant roles, concluded the evening program.

Due to the creatively designed costumes and scenes taken from the daily life of a village, the people enjoyed the theater play a lot. It made them understand that natural resources should be used more sustainably and that biological diversity should be protected. Ultimately, the audience learned that humans, too, are just another part of ecosystems and the interdependent elements of biological diversity which build and rely on each other for a sustained cycle of life.

A half-day on a government tour

During a government tour in Thakhek and Boualapha in 2016, the DEQP team informed officials from different departments, including police, army, education, environment, health and others, on biodiversity. A mix of discussions, presentation of factual posters, entertaining games and the mentioned theater play made the program interesting and attractive.

After a round of introduction, which facilitated a relaxed atmosphere, the team started each event by asking the audience three questions: “What is biodiversity?”, “What do we need biodiversity for?” and “What are the main threats for biodiversity?” The audience’s answers were collected on cards, visualized on pin boards and discussed in plenary.

Environmental Education and Communication in Laos

Next, the audience was divided into two working groups. Their task was to think about potential solutions to biodiversity threats in the region. Each group summarized its discussion results in plenary. The group work showed that people were already aware about certain threats and solutions. Main answers given were “Stop hunting protected animals”, “Stop deforestation as a result of illegal logging activities”, “Stop polluting the environment by burning or improper disposal of waste” and “Stop slash and burn

practices for extra fields but use assigned zones as new agricultural areas only”.



A learning board presentation explaining 10 facts on biodiversity gave a precise overview about the topic. The facts picked up points such as “Biodiversity means the variety of all forms of life” or “Human beings depend

on ecosystem products.” The boards also outlined the cultural value of and the threats to biodiversity in Laos. A round of questions and answers gave the audience an opportunity to clarify issues they had not immediately grasped.

The last point on the agenda of the government tour was the theatre play about natural resources featuring the elephant and the squirrel. This was the highlight of the program for the government officials too, because it was a welcome alternation from their daily work routines. The audience appreciated the informative and entertaining event and actively contributed their experiences and knowledge.

Feedback

At the end of each day, the volunteers and organizers gather to evaluate their performance, reflecting the processes, activities and tools used. This immediate round of feedback is a first step in monitoring and evaluating the tour.

Organizing Learning Processes

Monitoring & evaluation

LAST
DAY IN
A PROV-
INCE



Intermediate reflection

After completing the village and government tours in one province, the tour teams of DEQP and PADETC/MindMedia usually meet for one day, before moving on to the next province. Together, they assess which activities went well and which were more difficult to implement, so that adjustment may be required.

2 WEEKS
AFTER



Tour reflection workshops

ProCEED organizes a one-day internal workshop plus a one-day workshop involving all partners, to evaluate all logistical, technical and didactical aspects of the tour. Team dynamics as well as the quality of interaction with the village communities and government officials are important aspects of this evaluation.

This is when positive and negative experiences come up first, and they are later analyzed more carefully in the ProCEED and PADETC/Mind Media workshops for the preparation of the next tour (see Vol. 2, Chapter 2 and 3). These considerations are then transferred to become the preparatory steps for the next tour.

Lessons learned

4 WEEKS
AFTER



Reporting

The results from the reflection workshops are incorporated in a tour report, which covers at least four key aspects:

- **Demographics** include the number of participants and their characteristics in terms of gender, age, social status, functional group membership etc.
- **Impacts** of activities describe whether participant understood all the environmental information and messages correctly, and how they reacted to specific tools, media and activities that the volunteers used during the tour.
- **Next steps** and an action plan list the activities proposed by villagers, local authorities and government officials, as a result of learning processes during the tour. This includes activities by schools and children, as well as by women and youth.

Environmental Education and Communication in Laos

- **Team evaluation and tools assessment** takes into consideration to what extent the tools, media and activities used were appreciated by the target groups. Aspects considered include ease of understanding, clarity of concept, relevance for the target groups, etc. The team's own learning achievements are also evaluated, in terms of their understanding of concepts, remembering all the information and facts, and ability to use the tools as planned (see Vol. 2, Chapter 2 and 3).

Documentation

In addition to the main tour report, further documentation include the scripts and proceedings of all the workshops that were conducted before the tour (see Vol. 2), as well as of all photos and films made during the workshops and the tour itself. This facilitates learning transfers to the future, other locations, and different themes. It also makes it easier to reproduce and adapt existing tools and media (see Vol. 3).



**4 WEEKS
AFTER**

3.2 Organizing other types of environmental education events

As the previous section has shown, the learning journey for the environmental tours takes many steps. This section will provide greater detail on how to systematically organize other, shorter types of environmental education events. In recent years, ProCEED, DEQP/MoNRE, PONRE in Khammouane and PADETC/Mind Media have organized a variety of environmental education events:

- half-day events on the World Environment Day or the International Day of Biological Diversity,
- half-day award ceremony for an environmental photo competition,
- 10-month summer academy on environmental documentary film making,
- 2-day environmental booth, and activities at the yearly Sikottabong Festival in Thakhek, Khammouane,



Organizing Learning Processes

- 2-day awareness raising activities on biodiversity & wildlife conservation in villages of Boualapha District, Khammouane Province,
- 90-min evening event at a village in Boualapha District, Khammouane Province,
- 5-day waste management and recycling awareness booth, and activities at Vientiane boat racing and That Luang Festival.

Similar to the environmental tours, the organization of any environmental learning event should go through four phases, or management steps:

- context assessment,
- planning and production,
- implementation, and
- evaluation.



These four phases can be applied to any kind of group event, such as workshops, trainings, seminars or conferences, as well as staff meetings, office planning sessions or presentations.

Obviously, the steps taken within the organizational process need to be adapted to the specific group event. This chapter is based on a one-week workshop with about 20 participants, but some examples of other environmental education events will also be given. The institution organizing the event will be called organizer, and it will invite a team of external moderators and trainers or resource persons.

This chapter focuses on the **organizational** aspects of events. For more information about the didactical aspects of trainings, i.e. the application of teaching methods, and of learning as a mix of information and entertainment, please refer to Vol. 2.

Context assessment of an event

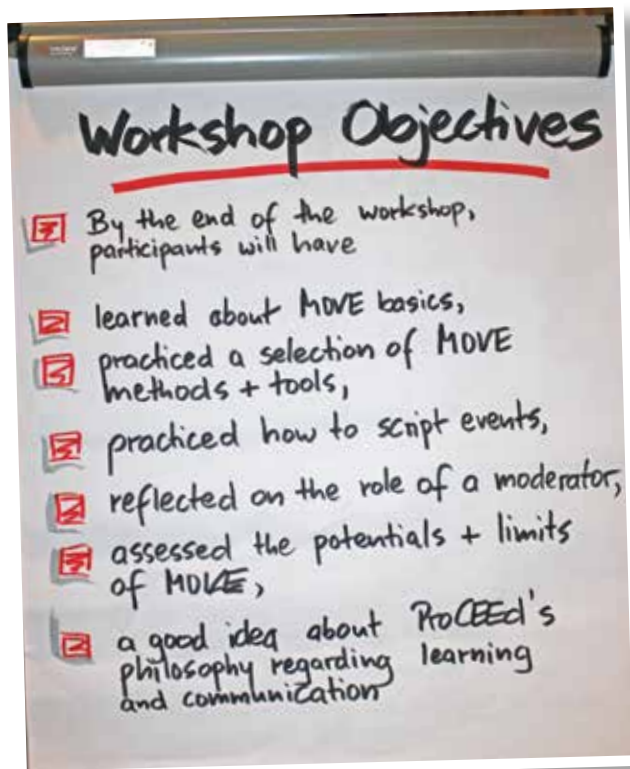
The organizer of an event can be an individual person, an organization, a task force within an organization, a CSO, or a foreign training institution. The organizer will work with internal or external moderators, who should be familiar with the background of the institution, its experience in organizing events, its financial and staff capacity, and other aspects required to understand the context of the event.

Context assessment is the first important step before you start the planning and preparation process. The aim is to arrive at a clear understanding of the background for the event. Who wants to organize it, and why? What is the objective: identifying problems, defining objectives, planning, or training? Has there been any systematic needs assessment that can be used as baseline? What have been its conclusions? Is the overall topic precisely defined, or does the organizer need assistance in clarifying the topic? Can the topic be tackled within a week? Has there been any prior event of a similar nature? If so, have the results been documented and discussed? Will it be necessary or useful to relate to the results and the structure of previous events?

The answers to these questions will lead you to the expected output of the event, and to a definition of objectives. The learning objectives will directly affect the structure of the program and the methods to be used, the task and required qualification of the moderators, and the selection of participants. The objectives should, therefore, be defined as clearly as possible.



Organizing Learning Processes



After having elaborated precise objectives, as much information as possible should be gathered about the participants to be invited. What is their professional and institutional background? Do they come from the same organization, the same region? How old are they? What is the gender ratio? Do they have experience with group events or with the topic to be dealt with? What may be their expectations regarding the event? The more you find out about

these questions, the easier it will become for you to plan an event that meets the needs of the participants.

Checklist for formulating objectives

- The objectives should be related to the envisaged outcome or result of the event, not to the content or process.
- Use only a small number of objectives for one event.
- Formulate the objectives in simple, straightforward language. Objectives that are too long or too complex will only confuse the participants.
- Use wording that makes the participants the subject, not the object of the sentence.
- The objectives should incorporate an action word (verb). Avoid weak verbs such as know, understand, have, feel, aware, or believe. Strong verbs are better: do, tell, write, describe, list, explain, demonstrate, show, answer, choose, organize, conduct, or draw.
- Make the objectives observable and measurable.

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Here is a good and a bad example for the formulation of objectives:

Good example

By the end of this workshop, DEQP and PADETC participants will have

- full information on the environmental tour plan after August 2015,
- reflected on past and future tour objectives: How to change knowledge, attitudes and practices of villagers and government officials,
- deepened their understanding of co-management and wildlife conservation, based on the related 10 FACTs as topics for tour events,
- prepared, practiced and improved the presentation of a series of 5 posters with 10 FACTs on co-management and wildlife conservation,
- prepared, practiced and improved scripts for government and village target groups,
- prepared, practiced and improved key sessions for government and village target groups,
- learn to know new ProCEED staff members.

Bad example

Objective:

- To improve environmental protection and raise environmental awareness for young and adult people in the area.
- To raise environmental awareness of tourists who visit the area.
- To raise awareness on correct hunting practices for young and adult people in the area.



Planning an event

Composing the team

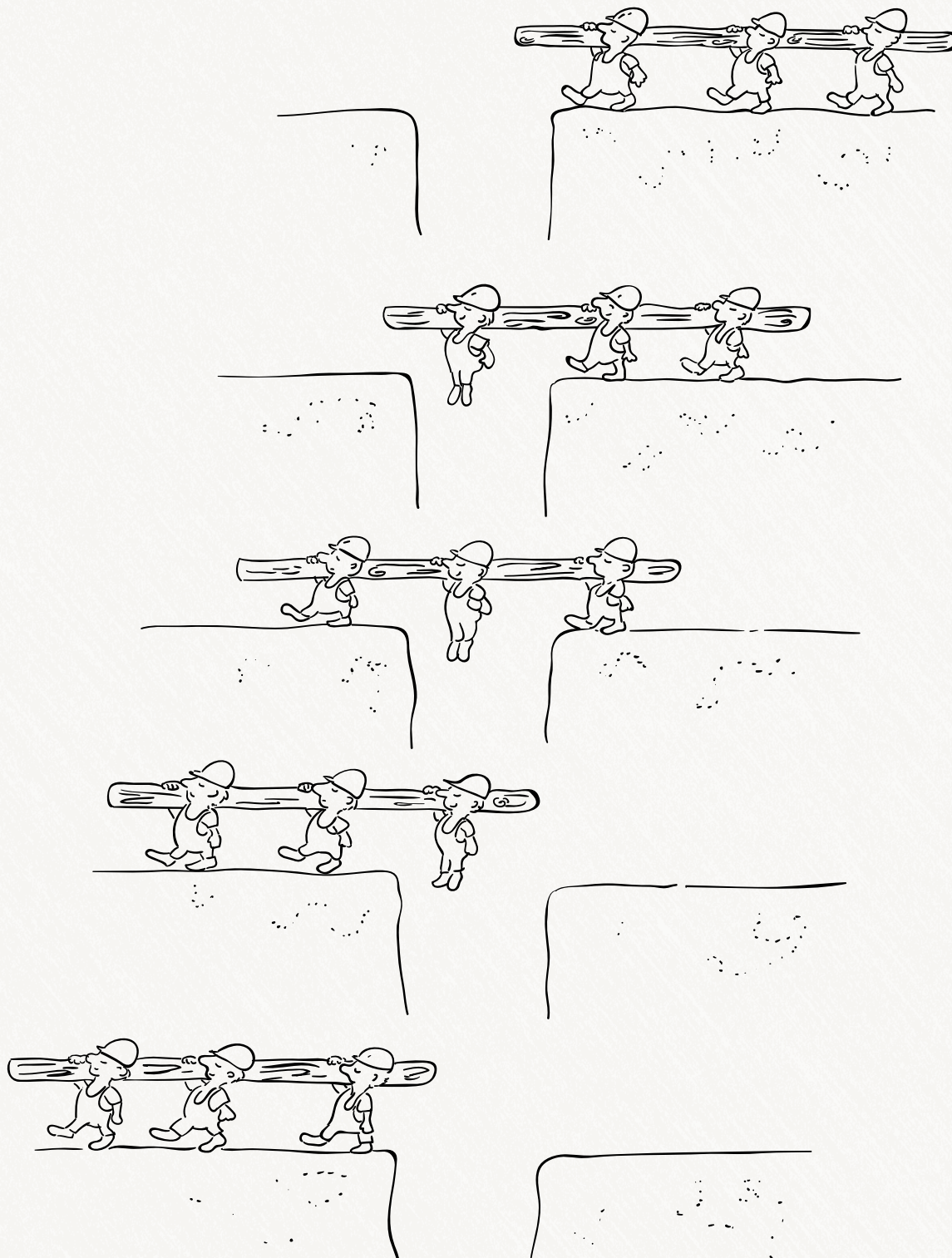
Planning an event requires selecting and composing a team with different functions and skills: organizers, moderators, and resource persons. The organizing institution will usually assign one or more staff members to be responsible for organization and logistics.

The composition of the team is the task of the organizers, sometimes in cooperation with the moderators. The different tasks can be summarized as follows:

- **Organizers** are responsible for the overall organization and logistics of the event, for training needs assessment, selection of participants, sending out invitations, booking venue and rooms, arranging meals, organizing transport, providing equipment such as MOVE hardware and material, multi-media projector, flipcharts, TV set or VCR, etc.
- **Moderators**, sometimes also called facilitators, should have experience in moderating workshops, basic knowledge on the subject matter, good communication skills, experience in using visualization, emotional stability, and teamwork experience. They are responsible for methods and group dynamics, for preparing the moderation plan, using a consistent thematic and didactical approach, elaborating training materials, moderating the workshop in a participatory and problem-oriented way, documenting the process and results of the event, and elaborating recommendations for follow-up events. In all this, they need to closely cooperate with the other team members and the organizers.
- **Resource Persons**, sometimes also called trainers or experts, should have practical and theoretical knowledge and experience in the subject matter, an ability to communicate effectively with participants, flexibility, openness and willingness to tackle all questions of participants, and experience with teamwork, visualization and interactive learning. It is their task to provide specific content and state-of-the-art technical information, which the moderators do not have, develop suitable exercises, group work tasks, and support material. All of this needs to be done in close cooperation with the moderators.

It is possible for the same person to act as moderator and resource person. However, the two functions should not be performed at the same time. This is because the mod-

Team work is good – not only for moderators



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erator's attention needs to be on the group process, while the resource person focuses on the content. It is very difficult, if not impossible, to focus on content and process simultaneously.

If possible, team members should be allowed to perform different functions, taking turns. This way, no individual becomes overburdened or, as a result, too dominant. The following example shows how two moderators, or a moderator and a resource person, could interact with each other. This method is often applied in ProCEED and PADETC/Mind Media or theater training workshops (see Vol. 2, Chapters 2-4), but also by PONRE in Khammouane during awareness raising events::

- The resource person provides a 15-20 minute input on a specific subject or problem, according to the program or on request from the participants. The presentation is visualized and followed by a discussion among the participants and with the resource person. The moderator facilitates this discussion.
- The moderator might then ask the participants to form working groups, to apply key points of the presentation to their own working environment. For this, the moderator should formulate precise questions or tasks. The resource person is available for the working groups, to help clarify questions and take comments.
- The working group results are presented, discussed and evaluated in plenary. This process is again facilitated by the moderator. The resource person comments on the results and puts them into perspective.



Ideally, team members take turns in performing different roles during the event. For example, every day, a different team member acts as moderator of the day, assuming responsibility for the overall preparation and organization of the work for that day. In case of methodological controversies among the team members, for example regarding the sequence or timing of steps in the learning process, the moderator of the day takes the final decision.

This is why, for example, the MCU team, which organized the boat racing and That Luang Festivals in Vientiane needed a rather big team of four permanent NUoL staff and 14 volunteers: the team members were able to

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take turns accomplishing the tasks ahead. This is different with shorter, non-public but closed events like the environmental awareness activities of PONRE in Kkammouane. In that case, the ProCEED development advisor and 1-2 of his PONRE colleagues ran basically the show.

Events that last a full week, and groups of 20 participants or more, require at least two moderators. A good combination is to have an experienced moderator work together with a younger or less experienced co-moderator, who learns on-the-job and is supervised by the team. Also, a gender-balanced team of moderators contributes to the success of an event, and helps solve possible conflicts with and among the participants.

Advantages of working in a team of moderators

- Individual moderators have different personal characteristics, which are perceived, accepted and appreciated differently by participants.
- The flow of an event can be arranged more attractively and creatively in team work.
- Moderation is very demanding and intensive. It therefore requires phases of rest and reflection throughout the process.
- Each part of the program is prepared the day before it is carried out. While one moderator guides the group process, the other may reflect on the program details for the next day.
- Moderators need feedback, on their own performance and on the reactions of the participants. While one team member moderates, the other can observe, document and evaluate the process for immediate or later analysis, supervision and team coaching.
- Often, new materials are needed, cards have to be distributed or collected, a dialogue needs to be visualized, or several working groups to be supervised. In those cases, team members can assist each other.

Developing a concept, curriculum and tools

A first planning session should take place at least one month before the event. If possible, the moderators should join and support the organizers in defining the objectives and drawing up a draft program. The success of the meeting will depend largely on the quality of the context analysis. It should answer the following questions:

- Last things first: What should be the final product or output of the event in terms of learning, recommendations, or action plans?
- What are the primary learning or planning objectives of the event?
- How many participants are expected to attend?
- What prior experience do the participants have?
- Which positive factors could contribute to the success of the workshop: training as an incentive for participants, nice location, season of the year, certificate, etc.?
- Which negative factors could endanger the success of the event: participants forced to attend, boring environment, wrong timing, etc.?
- Should resource persons be invited and, if so, who and how many? How and when can they be involved and briefed on the methods you intend to use?
- Which technical means are required: working group rooms, media, pin boards, visualization material etc.?

The answer to these questions will shape the structure of the program as much as the ultimate success of the event. It does not matter whether you plan a half-day event

on the World Environment Day, a 10-month summer academy on environmental documentary film making or 5-days of waste management awareness activities at a festival. Just apply the above set of questions when you start developing a concept, curriculum and tools for your event together with your team. Therefore, be sure to take enough time for this initial planning session. Unclear objectives will require time for clarification. If those who participate in the session are not familiar with interactive moderation and visualization methods, you will need to explain these. The objective and nature of the event will determine the balance



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between input from the moderators, external resource persons and group work. You should neither overload the curriculum nor the time schedule: remember that less is more. Also, leave sufficient time in a multi-day program for leisure and cultural activities, because head, heart and hand all need time to relax. In case the training needs translation, you will have to allow ample time for that. As a rule of thumb, a curriculum for one single language needs to be shortened by at least 30% if the input will be translated sequentially.



Obviously, when planning an event, organizers and moderators will never know exactly what will be the participants' initial level of knowledge, experience and expectations. Therefore, any plan should be flexible and leave enough room for adaptations based on recurrent feedback from the participants. Not everything may be changed, but there are many ways to adapt the program, the methods or the learning environment to the needs expressed by participants.

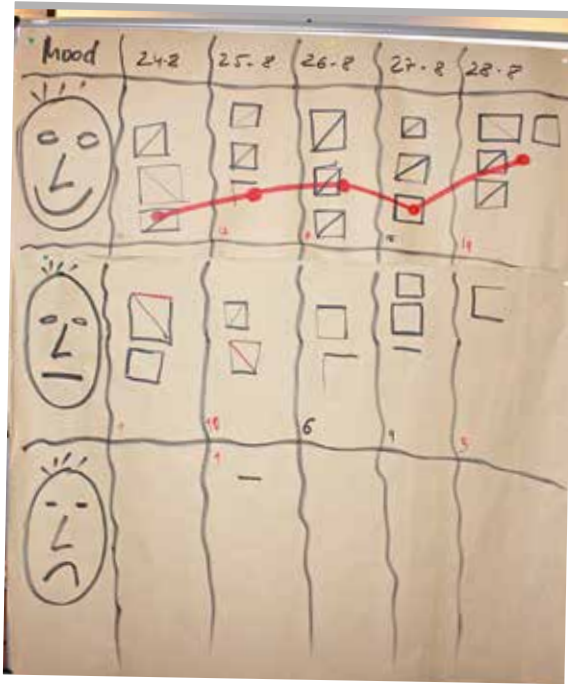
Even if your event is a public one, like the booths and awareness raising environmental education activities at a festival, you can adapt to your audience's preferences. For example, you may observe which booth design works best, what time of the day most visitors attend, or which games one social groups prefers in comparison to another group.

Logistical arrangements

The organizers are responsible for identifying a suitable location for the event. For a one-week workshop with 20 participants, you will typically need one big plenary room and one or two smaller rooms for working group. The plenary room should be large enough to allow 2-3 groups of 5-7 participants work simultaneously. In addition, it may be useful to have one room for keeping the visualization material and for team meetings.

The venue should be easy to reach by local transport, to avoid difficult travel arrangements, and allow participants to change scenery and see different faces during leisure periods. The building should offer a pleasant working atmosphere. In any case, ple-

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nary and working group rooms should have windows and provide as much natural light as possible, to preserve a fresh, healthy and stimulating room climate. Also, the acoustics of the rooms should be checked to make sure that there are no disturbing noises, e.g., loud air condition, music from the hotel lounge, birds in the roof, a noisy road, or similar. The rooms should be near one of the exits of the building, so that participants can step outside during breaks. The chairs in the rooms should be comfortable for long sessions. University-type chairs with extended writing pads are ideal, as they can be moved around easily and allow card-writing on the pads. Even if

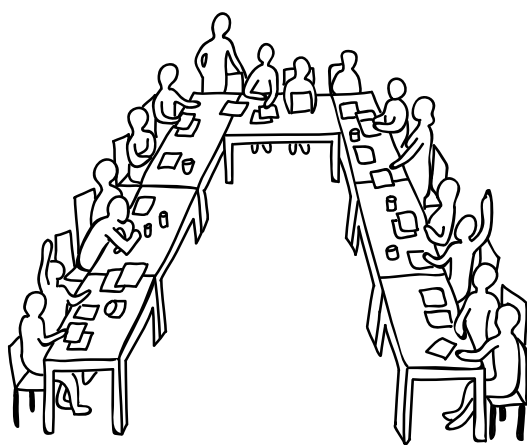
no tables are used during most plenary or working group sessions, some tables should always be arranged along the walls of the rooms, for depositing reference and working materials, handouts, personal items, etc.

The accommodation for the participants, i.e., the individual rooms should be checked for cleanliness and functionality. The kitchen or catering department should be flexible and allow for changing times of meals. Experiences from many training events show that problems with logistical arrangements can affect the working spirit and mood of a group directly, negatively, and long-term. Therefore, you should take these preparations just as seriously as the content or methods used in the event.

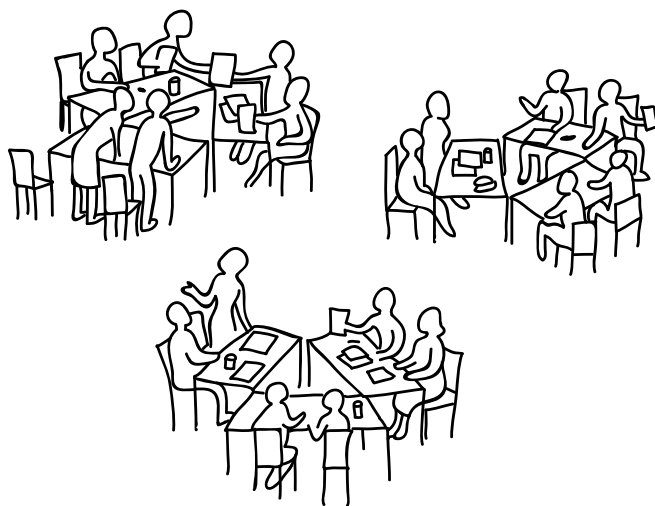
The same applies for public and/or outdoor events, like festivals or village evenings: Create a comfortable, safe space. Make sure that it is well-lighted and has a stage where you can perform activities, if this is what you intend to do. Be aware of road and weather conditions at the location, particularly of wind and rain, as these can affect your program. Also, electricity can be an issue if you need illumination, a sound system or a media projector.

Seating arrangement

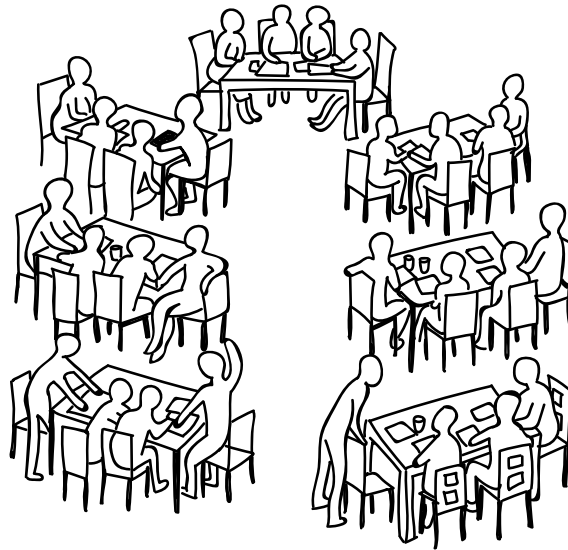
For an indoor event, the chairs should be arranged in a U-shape or half-circle, with the pin boards positioned at the open end in the front, the so-called stage. This provides all participants with a straight view at the stage in front and allows them to establish eye contact with one another.



If the size and shape of the room do not allow forming a half-circle, the chairs should be put in as few rows as possible. In this case, it is better to remove the tables to the sides of the room, so that participants can move freely and have an unobstructed view of the stage. If several rows have to be set up, it is best to arrange the chairs like a zip,



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so that each participant in a back row has a clear view between the heads of the two participants sitting in front of him or her. As a rule of thumb, no participant should be sitting more than eight meters away from the pin boards. Preferably, the stage should be positioned at the long front of a room and opposite the windows. This way, you can fit many participants in one row, and their view will not be disturbed by light reflecting on the boards or from the windows. Several options for seating arrangements are illustrated above.

Invitations

Participants like to receive as much information as possible before they attend an event. The invitations should, therefore, include all relevant information regarding

- objectives (why?),
- contents (what?),
- participants (who?),
- resource persons (who?),
- methods used (how?),
- location (where? how to get there?),
- schedule (when? how long?),
- financial arrangements (who will pay for what?).

This information should reach the participants at least a month in advance. Later on, you may send out a reminder that includes materials related to the event.

Planning meeting of the team

The planning session of the entire team should focus on content-related and didactical aspects as well as logistics. The main objective of this meeting is to clarify:

- What are the recommendations from the needs assessment?
- What are the learning objectives and expected results of the event?
- Who are the participants, and which institutions do they come from?
- What is the size of the group?
- What are the characteristics and skills of the participants, and what may be the structure of the group?

Another task for this meeting is to elaborate a detailed moderation script for the event (see, for example, Vol. 2, Chapter 2-3). Each day of the program should be planned considering, for each session, the content, guiding questions, division of responsibilities within the team, and time line. More detail on scripting an event is provided in Vol. 2 of this manual. Dividing a workshop day into four sessions of 90 minutes each has proven to be an ideal time frame. During each morning and afternoon session, there should be a half-hour coffee or tea break. The lunch break should be least one hour. Try to keep the same rhythm of beginning, end and break times for all days of the event, and do not extend or vary the duration of sessions unless absolutely necessary. The logical structure of the topics covered, the balance of theoretical inputs with application and group discussions, and the interactive nature of the didactical approach should always be clearly recognizable.

Finally, the team needs to check the logistics, based on the size of the group, the types and functions of the participants, and the time lines for sessions and breaks. If possible, inspect the physical layout of the venue, and carefully set up the accommodation and food, photocopier, media projector or visualization material. If neglected, these factors can interfere negatively with the learning process.



Team evaluation

In addition to the participants' evaluation (see Vol. 2, Chapter 1-3), the team members should assess their work in more detail among themselves, both during and after the workshop. Towards the end of every day, the team should meet to evaluate the day's process and results. They should also plan the following day, using the moderation plan to check activities, responsibilities and materials needed. Many games and exercises require special materials to be procured or prepared in advance. Other games, e.g. the Nuts game (see Vol. 3, page 116), require tutoring all co-moderators on the instructions and do a test-run.

Learning transfer

After the workshop, the team of moderators and organizers should jointly reflect on the results of all final evaluations. Implications for future events may be discussed along the question "Which parts of the curriculum or program should be improved, maintained or changed, should this event be implemented again?" The reflection should cover questions regarding the curriculum, as well as logistical and organizational matters such as venue selection, team composition, procurement and preparation of material etc. Based on the results of this discussion, the team can plan follow-up activities.

At least 4-6 months after a training event, a follow-up evaluation labeled "Is there life after training?" should be conducted, focusing on the transfer of learning from the event to the participants' working reality. Based on a standard form, ProCEED does this six months after each training or planning workshop. As a result of the evaluation's conclusions, specific follow-up activities such as advanced training courses, e-learning, peer reviews or coaching measures can be implemented later.

Last but not least, logistical and organizational conclusions should also be drawn from a team evaluation 4-6 months after the event. Follow-up activities such as advanced training or coaching should be developed based on the results.

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ProCEED

Promotion of Climate-related Environmental Education

ProCEED is a German Development Cooperation project implemented by the Lao Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

The project aims at improving knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding environmental and biodiversity protection as well as climate change adaption in Laos.

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