

LA / FLD Online learning and Social Enterprise Training Project

Final Report

Notes: this example has been made shorter than the original, as indicated by “etc”.
Some headings has been made in colours only for the module, usually a report is using black and white colours.

A. General Information

1. Implementing Partner Organization
FLD - Foundation for Local Development) address, telephone number etc

Contact person: (Name, email address, telephone number)
2. Project Title Online-Learning and Social Enterprise Training
3. Project Location Yangon , Myanmar
4. Project Period 1st June 2010 – 31st May 2011
5. Overall Objective of the Project
Young people of Myanmar have opportunities for meaningful education and training, have critical thinking skills and social responsibility and are capable of establishing community-level social enterprises (meaning financially sustainable community service and development oriented enterprises).
6. Date of Report Submission 13th June 2011

B. Background and results

1. Project Overview

This project seeks to support efforts by Loka Ahlinn (LA), an emergent youth-oriented education and community development oriented organisation based in Yangon which has been offering ‘Management English courses and has expressed the desire to join CLD in exploring how to utilise available civil society space and the internet to provide new opportunities for effective education /training opportunities to empower an influential and social entrepreneurially inclined group of young people. The goal is to encourage young people to learn to think and learn critically, to learn to use the internet for learning purposes and to develop their sense of social responsibility and learn also how to turn that into practical activities of value to their communities.

The project proposes to

- a) train 10 LA staff/volunteers/ activists to be able to provide online support to LA students and act as multipliers in spreading internet learning skills.
- b) develop multi-media materials to augment selected existing distance learning community management/Management-English materials so that selected participants can effectively and enjoyably gain skills needed for the management of community projects and social enterprises, in this case

focusing on 2 existing distance learning modules, Communication Skills and Basic Report-Writing, plus one new one, “What is Social Enterprise?”;

- c) Explore the best online ‘tools’ to allow external resource persons to provide useful support to the ‘social enterprise trainees’
- d) Train a small group of external expert resource persons to provide counselling and support to ‘social enterprise trainees’
- e) train a carefully selected group of 20 ‘potential social entrepreneurs’ (identified by LA and CLD) using the new materials, using the mixed mode approach including online support and local tutors to complete these modules plus two modules (financial management and financial planning) which SET trainees will complete through independent self-study with existing materials.
- f) train a smaller group of 10 selected from step e) above who have already a somewhat developed ‘social enterprise concept’ in social enterprise planning skills (business skills and project planning skills) through a series of participatory, experiential face to face workshops based on and supported by existing community management modules.

2. Context etc

3. Objectives and Achievements

Objectives	Achievement
<p>Primary Objective 1: LA and their students utilising internet and multi-media and mixed mode (*) approaches to social enterprise training. (10 young people trained to ‘multiply’ utilisation of the internet for learning purposes; three multi-media SET modules developed, small group of expert external resource persons trained to provide effective support to SET trainees online.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 online tutors were trained for supporting SET and ME online students. • 4 UITL trainers were trained, • 4 resource persons were trained to support SEP students. • The number of applicants for the courses showed a real potential for LA to reach many more students in the future, and make good use of Internet as educational tool.
<p>Primary Objective 2: Preliminary SET completed with 20 young potential social entrepreneurs with 10 proceeding through face to face workshops for planning successful social enterprises with access to expert external online counselling and support.</p>	<p>20 SET students started SET course, 14 completed 9 who completed SET continued on to the SEP course 7 submitted their draft social enterprise plans at course completion..</p>
<p>Secondary objective: Loka Ahlinn delivering meaningful education/training programmes utilising internet and multi-media and mixed mode delivery (*) :</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LA recognized in the final evaluation meeting that they have successfully learnt the skills for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training online tutors, - Providing online tutoring/support/assessment for students, - Managing course organization for specific target groups (advertising, select training techniques and tools, recruit tutors etc). • Regarding M-E/SET online training, LA recognises the success of the method with carefully selected students who need access via internet. • Regarding SEP training, LA has developed a network of resource persons, approached potential donors for students.

4. Results Achieved According to Plans

<p>Primary Objective 1: LA and their students utilising internet and multi-media and mixed mode (*) approaches to social enterprise training. (10 young people trained to ‘multiply’ utilisation of the internet for learning purposes; three multi-media SET modules developed, small group of expert external resource persons trained to provide effective support to SET trainees online.</p>		
Expected Results	Indicators	Results achieved
<p>Result 1.1 (Obj 1): 10 staff/volunteers/ activists with LA trained by FLD to be able to provide online support to LA students (e.g. 3 to provide ME course support online) and act as multipliers in spreading internet learning skills (7 for “Use Internet to Learn”).</p>	<p>1: LA staff and students using online ‘tutorial support’</p> <p>2: LA staff, volunteers, activists report increased capacity of student, internet users to complete successful internet searches.</p>	<p>a) 4 UITL trainers trained b) ADSL and computers installed in 3 centers c) 345 UITL students trained (objective 560) d) 3 Online M-E tutors trained e) 66 ME Online students enrolled (39 completed the modules)</p>
<p>Result 1.2 (Obj.1) : Multi-media materials (chosen by FLD and LA, developed by FLD and tested by LA) to augment 2 existing community management modules, Communication Skills Reports, and to augment a new module Introduction to Social Enterprise prepared by FLD;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-media materials sets available for the three modules involved to achieve result 2.1. 	<p>a) Multimedia materials developed for Recruiting and Orienting Staff (replace Fin. Man. Module), Communication Skills and Introduction to Social Enterprise.</p>
<p>Result 1.3 (Obj. 1): A range of available on-line tools will be developed and tested for teaching online and organize online meetings/discussions (e.g. elaborate Virtual Classroom, Video-Conference)</p>	<p>Tests conducted and conclusions drawn regarding best ‘tools’ to be used by 3 local tutors.</p>	<p>a) 3 online tutors trained to use some VC tools and teaching methods. b) Use of VC tested in YGN</p>
<p>Result 1.4 (Obj.1): A small group of external expert resource persons will be trained to provide counselling and support to ‘social enterprise trainees’. They will be supported by newly trained online local tutors.</p>	<p>SET trainees involved in social enterprise planning activities (to achieve result 2.2) report receiving effective on-line support from external resource persons</p>	<p>Modification: counselling and support made by Resource Persons (RP) contracted for SEP. WS facilitation) RPs trained for online tutoring and support.</p>
<p>Primary Objective 2: Preliminary SET completed with 20 young potential social entrepreneurs with 10 proceeding through face to face workshops for planning successful social enterprises with access to expert external online counselling and support.</p>		
<p>Result 2.1 (Obj.2): etc</p>	<p>etc</p>	<p>etc</p>
<p>Result 2.2 (Obj.2): etc</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> etc 	<p>etc</p>

5. Target Groups

Target groups reached

UITL: The students entering the course had actually a different profile than what was expected: etc

Advertising: The effective advertising methods recommended in the future are:
etc

Gender balance:

UITL: 147 Male, 198 Female (Female 57%)

SET: etc

6. Implementation

Quarter 1 – main problems arising

- Installation of ADSL in Dawei took time, and could be completed only during Quarter 2. It affected the number of beneficiaries for UITL in Dawei.
- Identification of selection criteria for trainers/resources persons and students was delayed because of the replacement of the LA Coordinator. This led to some delay but was solved in Quarter 2.

Quarter 2 – main deviations arising

- FLD coordinator couldn't travel to YGN to train tutors or local coordinator (because of visa restrictions in pre-election period). Instead, LA I coordinator came to Chiang-Mai to be trained. This worked well since he was already experienced in training and in online learning, and was motivated and committed to pass on the skills.
- SET applicants didn't have the profiles expected for applicants, however, 19 were accepted for SET training and 14 succeeded to submit all assessments.

Quarter 3 – etc

Quarter 4 – etc

C. Challenges

Expected possible challenges and risks:

Internet access:

In Dawei, authorization from local authorities to install ADSL was a lengthy and complicated process. In addition, Internet connexion hasn't there been reliable (only 3 or 4 days a week usually, and sometimes Internet interrupted a few hours during the day). In other locations, ADSL installation has been easier, and Internet much more reliable.

Despite sometimes Internet slow connection for students accessing from Internet Café, it didn't really lead to drop-out: It is assumed that students entering the programme have already 'adapted to this "problem"'.

Completion rate

Distance learning courses notoriously face significant drop-out rates (up to 80% in KDN and Loka Ahlin programmes in Myanmar). For this project, the completion rates were much better:

ME Online (3 modules online: Communication, Recruiting and Orientating Staff, Reports)

39 students (out of 66) completed successfully the modules, i.e. 60%. This was achieved through:

a) an appropriate advertising and selection methodology, b) a relatively short duration for the course

(3 months), c) modules matching with a real interest and need, d) modules not requiring specific work experience, e) few training opportunities in student location.

SET (4 modules online)

14 students (out of 19, i.e. 75%) completed successfully the modules assessments during the intensive 3 months training. This achievement is thought to be due to: a) an appropriate advertising and selection methodology, b) Social Enterprise course matching with a real interest.

SEP (3 modules online/face-to-face)

7 students (out of 9, i.e. 78%) submitted their written plan on course completion.

Unexpected challenges and risks:

Posting learning materials

Many ME online students were located in areas not easily accessible and had no easily identified means to receive printed materials and CDs (because the usual systems are not reliable (public post, local “bus mailing system” or complicated (e.g. bus trip + boat trip). As a result, students had to rely entirely on accessing course materials online (with the possibility to download and print themselves or (most of the time) learned directly from onscreen materials..

Trainers/tutors recruitment

LA met some difficulties to recruit UITL trainers, because most of the suitable candidates were not very interested in working for only a few hours per week, and the salary proposed was insufficient to interest experienced trainers. However, the trainers finally recruited satisfied LA/students expectations: As they were mostly young IT graduated students, they had enough skills and had motivation and commitment.

ME online/SET tutors needed to have skills/experience related to the content. This made the recruitment process difficult for LA, and the result was that they could only find tutors within their organisation.

D. Beneficiary Involvement and Accountability

One of the objectives was to build LA capacity to deliver online training and SET training.

LA recognized in the final evaluation meeting that they have successfully learnt the skills for:

- Training online tutors,
- Providing online tutoring/support/assessment for students,
- Managing course organization for specific target groups (advertising, select training techniques and tools, recruit tutors etc).

From the beginning, LA was involved in planning, implementing, monitoring and decision-making in collaboration and coordination with FLD. etc

E. Limiting factors and undesirable effects

Reimbursing students their Internet cafe charges was difficult because students couldn't easily get vouchers from the shops, or even get the signature of the internet cafe on a specific voucher designed by LA. In the future, a solution would be a cash advance for covering student's Internet Cafes expenses. As already described, the slow procedure for ADSL authorization was a limiting factor in Dawei. There were no apparent undesirable effects.

F. Sustainability

Learning materials were developed, or upgraded, for each course, and these have been transferred to LA for their own continued use.

A positive aspect regarding sustainability is LA's expressed intention to repeat ME online courses or integrate online learning into their regular M-E courses. They also plan in future to deliver Social Business training. As mentioned above (section D), LA has acquired the skills and network to manage such a programme on their own. In addition, their involvement in this project resulted in them meeting several people/organizations which may collaborate in the future for Social Enterprise trainings (Resource person for training, access to SE grant, local Social Businesses etc).

LA also expressed interest in continuing the relationship with those SEP students with regarding proposed small project plans developed through the SET/SEP course. etc

G. Lessons Learned

a. SEP training

Learning materials

According to students,

- modules did not include enough practical case-studies and , detailed examples, (e.g. Market Analysis, financial planning). They suggested more illustrations, diagrams, charts to facilitate comprehension and engage learners more. According to students,
- some examples or case-studies provided were too simple to be really useful.
- Some technical terms should have been explained in a glossary because their definition can't be found in a usual dictionary.

SEP tutors recommended

- review of the modules presentation to make it more attractive and engaging,
- especially the need for check-list after each topic for students' comprehension self-checking.

Course organisation & information

- Written instructions regarding course organisation need to be very clear and to be explained clearly during the first workshop (orientation session) (timeline, etc).
- The sequence of SET and SEP stages, and relationship between workshops and modules needs to be reconsidered with more emphasis on some key topics, (e.g.: Orientation session to present SE concept followed by interviews or workshop for selection;
- additional module(or workshop) to help students identify an SE idea;
- possibly the SE planning stage should be implemented before the specific SET modules (when they are already aware of the skills they lack); use workshops to help students to work on their own project; provide opportunity for personal face-to-face coaching)

b. UITL training etc

c. ME Online training

etc