

**Successful Models on achieving the Millennium
Development Goals in South East Asia**

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INTRODUCTION

This paper provides information about a number of successful best practices from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in South East Asia regarding the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

- **NGOs with Consultative Status in South East Asia**

Among the ten countries with NGO accreditation in South East Asia (SE Asia), there are no NGOs with consultative status from Cambodia, Myanmar, Brunei, Timor-Leste or Singapore. The other countries have NGOs with consultative status, Vietnam (2), Thailand (14), Indonesia (6), Malaysia (16), and The Philippines (23). There are total 61 NGOs have consultative status within the area. These 61 NGOs are working in different fields such as human rights, environment, gender equality, children, health (HIV/AIDS/other disease) and drug abuse.

- **NGO practices of MDG Achievement in South East Asia**

This paper will introduce 8 projects which are best practices towards the achievement of the MDGs in SE Asia. Half of these projects are done by SE Asia NGOs with consultative status, and the other half are done by SE Asia NGOs without consultative status. The first purpose of this paper was to research 8 example projects of SE Asia

NGOs with consultative status, but I had to find some projects of SE Asia NGOs without consultative status due to difficulties in obtaining information.

This research was conducted on the internet. The contact information, especially email and website addresses, in applications were outdated, 15 % of email addresses were outdated and only one third of them have online websites. Some of their websites do not provide sufficient information about their projects and work. I tried to contact 22 NGOs with consultative status via updated personal and organization emails and CSO messaging system in English, but I got a response from only one NGO.

- The use of multiple models

This paper will focus on projects and their models rather than the organizations themselves. It is expected that good models in successful projects can be benchmarked and applicable in different context with some tailoring and modification. Different models, namely Partnering; Collaboration with Government; Women's Participation; Using Media; Making Profit for Project Sustainability; Using a Holistic Approach; and Proper Targeting can be found in the 8 MDG achievement best practices I found.

These models tend to be more specific and specialized for the purpose of fitting the NGOs' mission. In addition, it is notable that at least two or more models can be found in the most of projects in this paper. Therefore, the use of well-tailored and mixed models would be one of the keys to successful best practices.

- Women's Participation and Partnering

Women's Participation and Partnering is the most popular model in this research. Besides MDG 3 (Promote gender equality and empower women), increasing women's participation and engaging women are considered to play pivotal roles in the success of projects regarding MDG 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6. For instance, past experiences have shown that girls are highly vulnerable to withdrawal from school to deal with declining income of households. In countries with high child mortality rates, the decrease in household incomes could increase infant and child deaths (Sabarwal, Sinha and Buvinic, 2009).

Furthermore, the recent impact of the economic crisis on poverty will be distributed amongst the most vulnerable groups within the poor. Women are among those most likely to be affected. Women are considered the majority of low-skilled, low-salaried and temporary labours in South East Asia, which means that they can easily left behind during the economic crisis (UNESCAP 2009:33). Women also come under pressure when other family member lose their jobs and households rely even more on women's unpaid work – in food production and preparation, fuel and water collection, and home-based children care.

- Partnering – the more, the better?

Partnering is also important in South East Asian NGOs achievement of the MDGs. Partnership has been emphasized in the development field, and having partnership with more and larger organizations or institutions was considered to bring financial benefits. Many local NGOs in South East Asia, however, lack the capacity to build partnership

with those large entities. Therefore, those NGOs used strategic partnering models which seem to be more feasible, for example, sharing information with other NGOs in similar work fields, by attending local and regional conferences, and by using partnership networking as a catalyst to promote their values and fulfil advocacy activities.

BEST PRACTICES

Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

-Project: Ambulant Food Vendors: Energy-Efficient Stove and Hygienic, Healthy Food: A Pilot Project for the Urban Entrepreneurial Poor in the Philippines

- Name of NGO: Asian Alliance of Appropriate Technology Practitioners, Inc (with Special Consultative Status)

- Location: Philippines

- Method/ Basic concept: Proliferation of cook stoves for food vendors

- Models: Women's participation; Partnering; Making profit for project sustainability, Energy-saving focused; micro-finance



This project is to provide energy-efficient cook stoves to street food vendors who are mostly women and urban poor in the Philippines.

Over 20,000 unregistered food vendors have their capital as low as 150 Philippine pesos (2.5-3 US dollars) which is very hard to take care of entire family and maintain their

business. They borrow their capital with high interest (20 percent per day) as they are not eligible to use legal credit or micro finance since they have no business permit. This usury makes more difficult to get people out of from the vicious poverty circle.

They use LPG which price of LPG is continuously increasing, and most food vendors need to spend their income on fuel expense. The cook stoves, called Mabaga, may save 50% energy and 30-70% in cooking energy expenses so that it brings larger net income to the vendors. A food vendor of sell snack foods saved their expenses of fuel from 32 to 10 Philippine pesos per day, and another vendor of hot cakes and Ipomoea juice also reduced fuel cost from 104.5 to 20 Philippine pesos per day.

Magava can be used in ordinary kitchens in houses. Magava takes less time than traditional charcoal stove to cook so that the stoves reduce half of the cooking time in cooking. Saved expenses and time may use to meet financial and other needs of the family. The stoves are conducive to environment and people's health as they emit less heat and smoke. Many food vendors said that they felt no numbness of arms after cooking by Magava stove.

The organization of the project has partnership with more than 18 international and national organizations and local governments. The project includes micro finance assistance and training courses for the food vendors. Also, the organization tried to provision of Magava to food vendors in installment to make it affordable to them. This makes the project more sustainable rather than just distributing stoves in free of charge.

Considering the fact that most of the food vendors are women and women have more burden on cooking and home-based children care in most Philippine households, increasing women's participation in the project is worthy of notice. Furthermore, commercialization of the stove rather than just free-distribution made this project more sustainable.

Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education

-Project: HOLD project (House of Learning and Development)

-Name of NGO: Yayasan Cinta Anak Bangsa (YCAB) Foundation (with Special Consultative Status)

- Location: Indonesia

- Method/Basic concept: Education for street children

- Models: Holistic approach to the programme management; Proper Targeting;



This project is to provide certified basic education, skills advancement and vocational training and job placement for street children. They targeted street children; drop-outs (children who have dropped out of school for over 6 months) and under-privileged children (who have just dropped out of school). The long term objective of this project is to give opportunities and hope to underprivileged youths towards independence, by

reducing their risk of engagement in drug trafficking and drug abuse through education, empowerment and entrepreneurship programmes.

The project offers a government-endorsed Elementary – Junior High school level programmes with the same education quality and course qualifications as the normal education. Apart from the normal education programme, the project provides 1) bridging courses which is designed to socialize and introduce street children to the discipline and values of mainstream society, 2) Skills Advancement Courses such as English, basic computing skills and 3) Vocational courses including hair and beauty; bag sewing; paper recycling; printing and food and beverage work study courses. It also helps street children to restore their self esteem, moral and basic ethical sensibilities and integrate into society by providing a counseling programme to the children and their family.

More than 90% of students in the project have passed national examination for normal education degrees in 2009. 80% of graduates in December 2008 were employed with wages above the mandatory minimum and 100% are working.

The holistic approach of this project is remarkable. Conventional education programmes - Building schools and offering courses – often were not sustainable. It is closely related to cultural and economical situation of the society and family. Girls tend to be more marginalized in getting education opportunities in the society, children education can be dropped out of family's priorities due to financial difficulties or family trouble. Even after they overcome these difficulties and finish their degrees with the help of different

education programmes, many of them are frustrated after they graduated because they became unemployment. HOLD provides not just formal education programmes but other supplementary courses for enhancing empowerment of the children such as pre-school course before moving to the basic education courses and counseling & internship programmes.

Their targeting strategy is also one of the important parts. Even if children once got enrolled in education, when they experienced to be withdrawn or dropped-off in the process, they tended to feel more unprotected and frustrated. Girls are usually highly vulnerable to withdrawal from school to cope with declining income.

Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

- Project: Community and Independent Media (CIM) Programme

- Name of NGO: Isis - International Women's Information and Communication Service (Special Status)

- Location: The Philippines

- Method/ Basic concept: Increasing women's participation in media

- Models: Women's participation; Using media; Partnering



This project is to increase access and participation of women in media and ICT (information, communication and technology). It includes seminars, workshops and training programmes. The programme provides ground-breaking news and salient trends that inform social movement on the work of the women's movements. It is working on community radio contents that focus on issues such as women's participation in peace building and disaster management, reproductive and sexual health and rights, combating violence against women, poverty alleviation, and women's leadership.

The project conducts seminars, workshops and training courses to community radio production staff and NGOs working for women in different countries in South East and East Asia. In seminars and workshops, participants share their experiences and information, produce radio dramas and hold round table discussions. They can also develop their own media strategies for effective use of media. The training programme is designed to bridge the gap between NGOs and media. It consists of understanding media, developing effective media strategies and working plans for NGOs. These programmes are conducive to community radio management and advanced radio production.

The key success of this programme is using media which would have multiplier effect. Issues and information from the radio can reach remote areas, and community radio productions can provide more useful information tailored for community members and the information would ripple through the community.

Goal 4: Reduce child mortality rate

- **Project: Tackling child malnutrition in rural Vietnam**

- Name of NGO: Plan Vietnam

- Location: Vietnam

- Method/Basic concept: Health, Child Care education for mothers

- Models: Communication activities, Women's participation



This project is to reduce the number of young children with malnutrition in a poor and rural province. In 2007, two third children under 5 years old were malnourished in Van Kiue of Quang Binh province. Van Kiue is a very poor rural area where there are few toilets or safe water. Newborn babies were not getting proper care as their parents had to go to work or travel long distances to find arable land. Poor sanitation, little nutritional knowledge, pervasive gender inequalities culture also made situation more urgent.

The project focused on malnutrition and parenting skills. Training courses are held to educate teachers, health volunteers and health service staff who can then pass this information on through the local language, to the villagers. The project provided de-worming tablets and nutritional meals to children from 2 to 5 and iron tablets and education about childcare, nutrition, safe water and sanitation and injury prevention to pregnant mothers. Gender inequalities are also being addressed through the communication activities. This would be a key success point for this project. By raising awareness of gender inequality among family and community, women can share burdens

with their family members and have time to provide proper and safer care for their children. The malnutrition rate of the Van Kieu province has been decreased by 10% in a year.

Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health (Target 5B: Achieve, by 2015, universal access to reproductive health)

- Project: Management of FRHAM Training Centre

- Name of NGO: Federation of Reproductive Health Association Malaysia

- Location: Malaysia

- Method/ Basic Concept: Reproductive Health Programme education for adolescent;

- Models: Partnering



This project is to provide reproductive health education for adolescent, training courses in the areas of family planning to enhance maternal health. The Federation of Reproductive Health Association Malaysia (FRHAM) Training Centre is working in sexual and reproductive health both locally and regionally. The centre aims to improve status of sexual and reproductive health in Malaysia by organizing training courses and providing consultancy services with specific technical expertise in various fields of sexual and reproductive health.

The FRHAM centre continues to build partnerships and strategic alliances with various government departments, NGOs and private sector, to promote and raise awareness of the importance of sexual and reproductive health issues for more support.

Caltex Body Works is one of its programme. The project engaged more 250 students aged 15 to 18 years of old in 5 provinces. This project consists of sensitization workshops for school counsellors and teachers as well as three days activity filled workshops for students. This project aims to empower young people with reproductive health information and knowledge through peer to peer approach by using the Reproductive Health of Adolescent Module (RHAM).

Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases (Target 6B: Achieve, by 2010, universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for all those who need it - Proportion of population with advanced HIV infection with access to antiretroviral drugs)

-Project: Care, Support and Treatment

- Name of NGO: Spirita

- Location: Indonesia

- Method/Basic Concept: HIV/AIDS Care and treatment, support for PLHIV

- Models: Government Commitment

This programme is designed to scale up care and treatment for people living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV). One of the noteworthy aspects here is regarding providing access to affordable drugs to PLHIV.

Antiretroviral therapy (ART) had been available on a very limited basis, many people were only able to afford therapy with two antiretroviral (ARV) drugs, initially d4T plus ddI, but later with AZT plus 3TC. Government commitment gave big contribution to this programme. The government established a pharmaceutical company for local production of generic ARVs called Kimia Farma (KF). It is to be provided on a subsidized basis to PLHIV, KF started to produce a fixed-dose combination (FDC) of AZT + 3TC, which they named Duviral, with nevirapine offered separately, with the name Neviral.

After the project, Nevirapine became available in the early 2000's, and triple therapy with AZT, 3TC and nevirapine became more widely available, although at a considerable cost – around US\$125 per month, clearly out of reach for most.

The government officially designated KF as the producer of ARVs, and the drugs had to be sold to and delivered by government. It was determined that ART would be provided by a number of referral hospitals. No other ARVs are available through the government system.

Dealing with pharmaceutical companies and medicines cannot be achieved without support of or collaboration with local government. Utmost support and strong will of government were in essential part of the programme. The rate of patients who was ever on ART reached 71.9% in 2010.

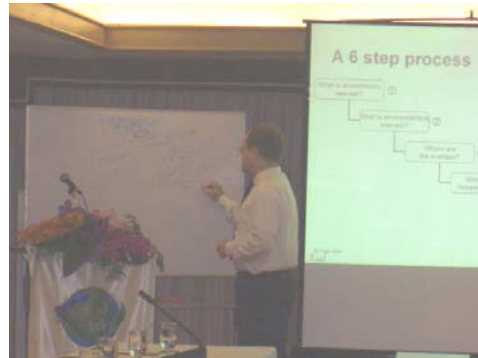
Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability

- Project: Environmental Governance Standards for Development Financing

Institutions

- Name of NGO: Association of Development Financing Institutions in Asia and the Pacific (ADFIAP) – with Special Status

- Location: The Philippines and other Asian countries



- Method/Basic Concept: Providing a tool for Greening Bank which are concerned about environmental issues

- Model: Partnering

This project is to provide a tool for development financing institutions to be more ‘greening’ their industry. This is a set of tools to guide banks and financial institutions in evaluating internal practices and loans proposals that affect environment. Through this, the programme promotes and institutes environmental due diligence in lending process of Financing Institutions.

Banks did not pay enough attention on environmental issues as they used to be considered in non-polluting service sectors. From the early 90’s, however, with a growing awareness such as lender liability and leverage effect of investments, banking industry needed to consider environmental issues. Consequently, the need of new principles and evaluation and management tools for their environmental performances

has become emerged. Though the project is for development banks, other banks and financial institutions, including commercial banks, can use the experiences of the project to track the path of sustainable finance.

These environmental issues can also present opportunities to develop new banking products, learn how to build environmentally based efficiencies into the bank's own operations, and enhance reputation.

As the importance of good governance became emphasized, many organizations have been tried to launch governance programmes but its effects and methods were somewhat ambiguous. It helps to institute governance process by providing a standard. This project approached to environmental issues in governance view point rather than conventional, technological thoughts such as reducing actual degree of pollution. This innovative method beyond conventional thoughts would be an important point of the project. It keeps trying to provision of their programmes and tools through attending conferences with other governmental and intergovernmental organizations such as OECD and EU.

Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development (Target 8A: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system - Includes a commitment to good governance, development, and poverty reduction – both nationally and internationally)

-Project: Democratic Governance and Public Sector Reform Programme

- NGO: Cambodia Development Resource Institute (CDRI)
- Location: Cambodia
- Method/ Basic Concept: Research on good governance and public sector reform
- Models: Partnering/ Government Commitment

This programme is to support the process of decentralization in Cambodia by researching activities. It was funded through a grant by SIDA and DFID under the auspices of the Policy-Oriented Research Programme on Decentralisation (PORDEC) with a four-year initial scope. In mid-2006 the Policy-Oriented Research Programme on Decentralisation was renamed the Democratic Governance and Public Sector Reform Programme.

Overall the topics to be addressed in this programme are 1) governance and local democratic processes related to roles, responsibilities and relations (central-local and local-local relations), participation and local government responsiveness to local needs; 2) Fiscal decentralisation: predictability, accountability and transparency in flow of funds between levels of government, local revenue potential, and resource mobilisation ability; 3) Service delivery at the commune level; and 4) Accountability of the Provincial Governance of the Decentralization and De-concentration Reform.

This research was conducted in collaboration with the World Bank and UNCDF.

They published the findings of their research and provided information by holding seminars and workshops with government ministries. The partnership with large

international organization and collaboration with government enabled this programme to move from academic research world to real world.

CONCLUSION

- Stagnant goals and NGOs with consultative status

Most reports including national, regional and world MDG reports show that MDG 4, 5 and 6 (including under age 5 mortality, infant mortality, antenatal care, births by skilled professionals and HIV prevalence) are slow and off-track (UNESCAP 2009; UNESCAP 2010; UN 2010).

This trend can be found among South East Asian NGOs with ECOSOC consultative status. Only five to seven of 61 NGOs seem to be related to the MDG 4 -6 fields (reproductive health programme, medical relief service, HIV prevalence), according to the name of organization or organization's website.

MDGs 4 to 6 are often grouped together because they need similar intervention such as affordable and quality healthcare services to be achieved. Providing proper medical service often relies on government commitment such as hospital referral system, birth registration, subsidy for essential medicines, and a health care system. These are too big to be dealt with by a local NGO without government support and sufficient funding. Difficulties in making an accurate assessment of these goals are also big challenges.

- NGO branch and NGOs in South East Asia

For those NGOs with consultative status, online communication is essential to continue a reciprocal relationship between them and the NGO branch, of the United Nations. A NGO not responding or updating information online, questions of existence of the NGO, or may be considered as reluctance to communicate with the United Nations. It seems to me that there would be more than the issue of a language barrier when not getting a response from NGOs in Philippines, as English is used as the official languages there. Considering the fact that visitors from outside usually get their information from websites and emails, more active management of online resources and communication are required from NGOs. The NGO branch also needs to consider updating contact information of NGOs with consultative status when they receive quadrennial reports from the NGOs.

In the process of expanding my research area from NGOs with consultative status to NGOs without consultative status, I found differences between INGOs (including regional office of INGO) and local NGOs. Besides having well-managed and recently updated websites, INGOs are working on more tailored projects to fit the trend of recent development issues such as the MDGs. Surprisingly, only 22 of the 61 NGOs with consultative status look like they are doing work directly and indirectly related to the MDGs. The other 39 NGOs tend to be very specialized in specific work fields such as human rights and drug abuse, or too generalized, for example, as policy advocacy association NGOs. Following the 'trendy' development issues without considering NGOs identities may lead to a problem, but recognizing and updating recent issues in the

development field would be necessary for NGO management. Furthermore, the NGO branch needs to keep doing its outreach projects to promote consultative status in South East Asia since there are many NGOs with no consultative status which are doing good practices, not only related to MDGs but relevant to the work of ECOSOC.

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