



Telling Stories to Save the Planet

Communication Capacity Building Workshop for Asian Civil Society Organisations

2 - 6 July 2007

Ramada Resort Khao Lak, Thailand

Organised by TVE Asia Pacific (TVEAP, www.tveap.org)



Final Report
Prepared by TVE Asia Pacific

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Organisers and sponsors:

Television for Education – Asia Pacific, trading as TVE Asia Pacific (TVEAP), is a regional not-for-profit organisation that uses audio-visual and new media to communicate sustainable development and social justice issues in the Asia Pacific - the world's largest and most diverse region.



Established in 1996 and governed by an International Board, TVEAP operates as an editorially independent, journalistic organisation that produces and distributes media content; trains media professionals in development sensitive coverage; consults on communications

strategies; and networks with governments, civil society and educational institutions.

www.tveap.org, www.savingtheplanet.tv

Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU)



The Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) is a non-profit organisation for Asia and the Pacific regional activities in line with the principles of UNESCO, working for the promotion of

mutual understanding and cultural cooperation among peoples in the region. ACCU was established in April 1971 in Tokyo through joint efforts of both public and private sectors in Japan. ACCU has since been implementing various regional cooperative programmes in the fields of culture, education and personnel exchange in close collaboration with UNESCO and its Member States in Asia and the Pacific. ACCU places special emphasis on programmes planned and implemented jointly by Asian and Pacific Member States of UNESCO. This joint programme scheme has been applied to its cooperative projects such as production of various materials of good quality for common use in encouraging better understanding of cultures of other countries in the region. ACCU promotes ESD programmes in close cooperation with UNESCO, governmental bodies and NGOs in Asia and the Pacific, with a view to contributing to the promotion of UNDESD. The programmes plan and implement ESD-related strategies and activities together with UNESCO and its Member States in the region.

www.accu.or.jp

***Saving the Planet* is implemented by TVE Asia Pacific in collaboration with the Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU), Tokyo, Japan, within the framework of ACCU-UNESCO Asia-Pacific Programme under the UNESCO/Japan Funds-in-Trust for the Promotion of Education for Sustainable Development. <http://www.accu.or.jp/esd/index.shtml>**

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Executive Summary

- Communication is an on-going engagement, not a one-off burst of material production and dissemination.
- It is also a two-way street, where participation and feedback enrich and sustain the process.
- Knowing what to say, and which audience to address are both equally important to success in communication and outreach efforts.
- The new media have enhanced the 'tool kit' available for social activists and civil society groups to engage in communication. But they are no substitute for strategic thinking and implementation.
- Mass media can help flag issues quickly, but it is sustained engagement at small group levels that help change attitudes and behaviour of individuals.

These were some of the key points agreed at the five-day regional workshop that sought to strengthen the communications capacity of selected Asian civil society organisations.

The workshop brought together a total of 18 comprising 11 participants, one observer, four resource persons and two members of the secretariat. It was held in Khao Lak, Thailand, from 2 to 6 July 2007, as part of *Saving the Planet* -- an Asian multi-media project to showcase innovative projects in education for sustainable development (ESD) in developing Asia.

In May 2007, TVEAP announced the selection of six national or local level projects from South and Southeast Asia that were outstanding and innovative in their approach to ESD. The workshop involved two representatives from each selected project or organisation, and was meant to build their capacity in strategic communication planning and implementation, especially using the audio-visual and new media.

Content focused on communicating development – taken in its broadest sense -- for awareness raising, advocacy, activist, non-formal education and training purposes. Prior to arriving in Khao Lak for the workshop, participants were asked about communication methods, tools and processes they used. The content was designed to add value to their existing communication experience and resources.

The workshop was conducted by a four-member regional resource team drawn from South Asia and Southeast Asia, who brought different perspectives and experiences from broadcasting, media research, advocacy and education backgrounds. They introduced participants to different media formats, options, choices and alternatives, and explored the potential of using digital video production and distribution methods.

The workshop was highly interactive and participatory, with a mix of presentations, film screenings, fun games, discussions, experience sharing and group exercises. Through seven sessions and several group activities, the five-day workshop module looked at both content production, as well as their effective distribution and outreach which form part of a wider, participatory communication process.

The field visit provided a real life case study for participants. Dividing themselves into three groups, they devised communication strategies to engage different audience groups in that community. Participants also spent an afternoon discussing the practical aspects of how to film their ESD initiative for the regional TV series called *Saving the Planet* to be produced by TVEAP in 2007-2008.

Background

Saving the Planet is an Asian multi-media project to identify, highlight and showcase innovative projects and efforts in education for sustainable development (ESD) in developing Asia.

Based on worldwide nominations, TVE Asia Pacific (TVEAP) – a regional leader in communicating sustainable development – has selected six outstanding projects to be featured in a regional TV series called *Saving the Planet* to be produced in 2007-2008. It will be offered to TV channels across Asia, and also distributed to schools, universities, NGOs, training centres and research institutes.

Two representatives from each selected project were invited and sponsored to a capacity building workshop on communication planning, and communicating through audio-visual and new media. The workshop focused on the strategic use of moving images – principally video, but where relevant and feasible, also broadcast television – for awareness raising, advocacy, activist, non-formal education and training purposes by civil society organisations in Asia. The participants were introduced to different media formats, options, choices and alternatives and explore the potential of using digital video production and distribution methods.

Workshop Objectives

The workshop had the following objectives:

- Encourage wide-ranging discussion on what audio-visual communication methods, products and processes work for different audiences, with a view to discerning some generic approaches
- Provide a forum for participants to share their current or recent outreach and public engagement experiences in their communities, using any kind of media tools
- Present the various communications strategies that seem to work for different audiences, some of them effective across cultural, language and educational barriers
- Experience first hand the public outreach and engagement work by the Thai Educational Foundation, one of the participating organisations
- Share TVE Asia Pacific's regional experience in producing audio-visual content by Asians for Asian audiences
- Discuss the practical aspects of TVE Asia Pacific visiting each project for filming the stories for *Saving the Planet* TV series

Workshop Content and Structure

The workshop was conducted in an interactive manner. Content was developed and presented by TVE Asia Pacific through a small team of resource persons drawn from South Asia and Southeast Asia, who brought different perspectives and experiences from broadcasting, media research, advocacy and technology backgrounds.

Sessions were a good mix of power point presentations, video screenings where relevant, fun and games with some learning embedded in it, plenty of discussions and experience sharing and group work. Participants were encouraged to share their own impressions and experiences throughout the week in discussion sessions and group work. The final version of the agenda is given as Annex 1.

Workshop Participants

A total of 18 persons were associated with this workshop. Among them were two (2) representatives each from the project implementing organisations (except one selected organisation where only a single participant took part), resource persons and TVEAP team and one observer.

The participants were mid-career professionals or activists with at least five years of field-based development experience. They came from these organisations, whose projects have been chosen under the Saving the Planet project:

Project/Activity	Country	Implementing Organisation
Environmental Education for children and adults in 3 floating villages on Tonle Sap lake	Cambodia	OSMOSE
School & Community Farmland Bio-Diversity Conservation	Thailand	Thai Education Foundation
Biyaheng Ayta - a theater cum workshop educational initiative of indigenous youth	Philippines	Paaralang Bayan ng Ayta sa Zambales (PBAZ)
Young People Transforming Education	Laos	Participatory Development Training Centre - PADETC
"Kude Se Dhan" – Growing food on waste	India	Development Alternatives (CLEAN-India Programme)
Radio Sagarmatha	Nepal	Radio Sagarmatha

The list of participants is given as Annex 2.

Resource Team

The resource team combined different cultural, educational and professional backgrounds and brought in a range of experiences and skills. They are all associated with communicating development in various ways.

- **Robert Steele**, Independent associate and senior trainer, Atkisson Group, Thailand
<http://www.atkisson.com/who/index.html>
- **Dr Buddhi Weerasinghe**, Board member of TVE Asia Pacific; UNDP Consultant on Disaster Management; and former Head of Educational Technology, Open University of Sri Lanka
http://www.savingtheplanet.tv/selection_panel.html
- **Manori Wijesekera**, Regional Programme Manager, TVE Asia Pacific
<http://www.childrenoftsunami.info/crews/exec.php#3>
- **Nalaka Gunawardene**, Director/CEO, TVE Asia Pacific
http://www.lightmillennium.org/biographies/nalaka_gunawardene.html

Additionally, the field visit inputs were provided by the Thai Education Foundation, one of the participating organisations in the workshop.

Workshop Proceedings

Context setting

The workshop started with the resource team setting the overall context for communication, media and ESD. A summary is presented here.

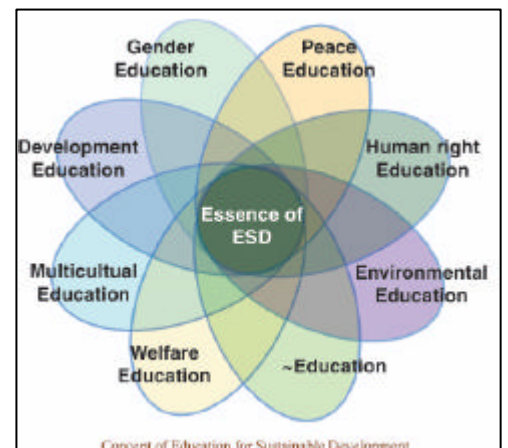
“Education for Sustainable Development is an evolving concept that encompasses a new vision of education seeking to empower people to assume responsibility for creating and enjoying a sustainable future.” - United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2014, Draft International Implementation Scheme, October 2004, UNESCO.

What is the difference between education **about** sustainable development and education **for** sustainable development?

- “**about**” is an awareness lesson or theoretical discussion.
- “**for**” is the use of education as a tool to achieve sustainability.

Key attributes of ESD are:

- Education that is interdisciplinary and holistic
- Education that is values-driven
- Education that promotes critical thinking and problem solving skills
- Education that centered on a systems thinking approach
- Education that uses multi-method approaches
- Education that encourages and stresses participatory decision-making responsibility
- Education that is locally relevant and culturally appropriate



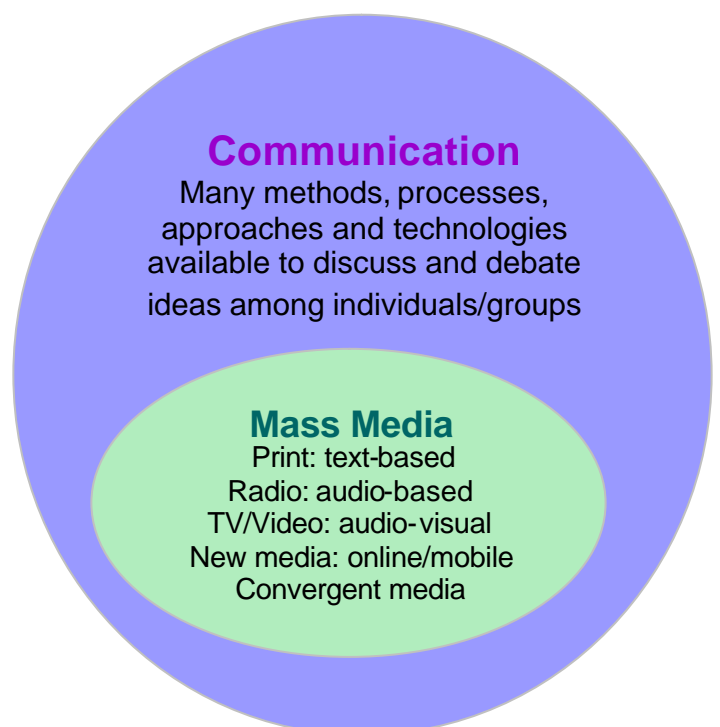
TVEAP's tag-line is: 'Moving images, moving people'. As TVEAP sees it, 'Being moved' involves several progressive steps:

- Finding out about something
- Seeing its causes/effects/impacts
- Relating it to our own lives/lifestyles
- Knowing how we can help
- Being motivated to take action
- Then doing it!

Like ESD, this is a gradual and incremental process.

Communication is a multi-faceted, nuanced process. As shown in this diagram, using the mass media is only one part of a broader communications process. Communicating through media alone may not always lead to positive actions in sustainable development.

For the use of mass media to be fully effective in ESD, the following factors are also required:



- Accountable and responsive governments
- Effective public regulators for utilities, markets and public goods
- Socially responsible corporations (and active consumer watchdogs)
- Freedom of information and freedom of expression in law and in practice
- Socially conscious, committed and active scientists, professionals/groups
- Well organised and motivated civil society groups

Content overview

The communication capacity building workshop, conducted over five days, comprised the following:

Seven thematic sessions, each with a clear thematic focus:

- Session 1: This is the way we communicate (participants' presentations)
- Session 2: Communication for social change
- Session 3: Who is Afraid of Moving Images? Audio-visuals to communicate development
- Session 4: Engaging new media
- Session 5: Innovation diffusion
- Session 6: Are we getting across: Evaluating communication
- Session 7: *Saving the Planet*: The way forward

Three group work sessions, each with clear goals and tasks:

- Session A: Prepare conceptual framework for a communication strategy
- Session B: Produce an actual communication strategy using real data from field visit case study
- Session C: Present strategy to plenary, discuss and critique it with resource team

Additionally, each day had elements of:

- Warm up games at the beginning of each day and at other times
- Highlights of the day's content line-up at the start of the day
- Review of the day's content at the end of the day

Some ESD related films were screened as part of the workshop agenda.

The following social events were also organised:

- Welcome dinner (on the evening of Day 1)
- Farewell dinner (on the evening of Day 5), which was also joined by members of TVEAP's International Board of Directors who had just arrived for their annual meeting.

This report does not attempt to summarise the presentations, discussions and group activities. The post-workshop evaluation feedback from participants (Annex 3) and impressions shared by a self-funding academic observer (Annex 4) give an indication of the quality, diversity and intensity of the workshop.

The thematic sessions were supported by PowerPoint presentations. Some sessions also had printed hand-outs given with further information. In addition, the working groups also generated their own notes. All this material was collected on a CD that was given to each participating organisation on the final day as a record of the workshop content.

This content is available on request from TVEAP.

Photographic highlights

Day One: 2 July 2007



Day Two: 3 July 2007



Day Three: 4 July 2007



Day Four: 5 July 2007



Day Five: 6 July 2007



Annex 1

Communications capacity building workshop for Asian organisations

2 – 6 July 2007

Ramada Resort Khao Lak
59 Moo 5, Tumbon Kukkak, Takuapa District, Phang Nga, Thailand 82190

AGENDA

Workshop content line-up at a glance:

	Sunday July 1	Monday July 2	Tuesday July 3	Wednesday July 4	Thursday July 5	Friday July 6
09:00 – 13:00	Participants and resource persons arrive	Registration Welcome Introductions Session 1: This is how we communicate!	Session 3: Who is Afraid of Moving Images? Audio-visuals to communicate development	Half-day field visit to Chao Thai Mai School and village Accompanied by Thai Education Foundation colleagues	Session 4 Engaging new media	Session 6 Evaluating communication SWOT Analysis
	Lunch break					
14:00 – 17:15	Participants to share their own experiences in communication and engagement Session 2: Communicating for Social Change	Group work session A Group photo!	Return to the hotel Group Work Session B Debriefing	Session 5: Innovation diffusion Group work session C	Session 7 Saving the Planet: The way forward Closing remarks Certificates	
Evening	Welcome dinner reception hosted by TVEAP	Free	Free	Free	Free	Farewell dinner reception hosted by TVEAP

Day 1: Monday, 2 July 2007

08:30 – 09:00	Registration of participants
09:00 – 09:15	Workshop opening by Robert Steele, facilitator Welcome and introductory remarks by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nalaka Gunawardene, Director and CEO, TVE Asia Pacific • Manori Wijesekera, Regional Programme Manager, TVE Asia Pacific
09:15 – 10:00	Introductions by participants and resource team ‘Sustainability River’ exercise that will bring out information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>who you are;</i> • <i>your organisation/group;</i> • <i>what you do there; and</i> • <i>your first experience with sustainability issues.</i> Then, using flash cards, we ask everyone to summarise and post <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your expectations of this week • What you can contribute to enrich this week
10:00 – 10:30	Introductory presentations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A quick guide to Education for Sustainable Development by Robert Steele • What has media got to do with ESD? by Nalaka Gunawardene
10:30 – 11:00	Tea/coffee break
11:00 – 13:00	Session 1: This is the way we communicate! Facilitated by Robert Steele Participants to share their own experiences in communication and audience engagement in their organisations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main audiences you try to engage • Key communication challenges • Innovative ideas that proved successful • Most effective communication mechanisms and channels Each organisation to make a 10-15 minute presentation which can combine speaking, showing photos, short video playback and PowerPoint slides. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thai Education Foundation • OSMOSE, Cambodia • PADETC, Laos • Paaralang Bayan ng Ayta sa Zambales (PBAZ), Philippines
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 – 15:00	Session 1 - continued., Presentations by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Alternatives (CLEAN-India Programme) • Radio Sagarmatha, Nepal
15:00 – 15:30	‘The Missing Piece’ game

	Participants break into groups and race against time to assemble a flash light. No single group will have all the components in hand, and will need to negotiate from other groups – without uttering a word!
15:30 – 15:45	Tea/coffee break
15:45 – 17:00	Session 1: Why communicate development? Session led by Buddhi Weerasinghe An overview of communication for social change: this will provide the conceptual framework for the week’s work, but in a non-technical manner.
17:00 – 17:15	Taking stock of Day 1 and feedback for the next day
17:15	End of Day 1
18:30	Drinks and welcome dinner hosted by TVE Asia Pacific Venue: Ramada Khao Lak resort

Day 2: Tuesday, 3 July 2007

09:00 – 09:15	Warming up for the day by Robert Steele <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm-up game • Quick introduction to the day’s activities
09:15 – 10:30	Session 3: Who is afraid of moving images? Audio-visual communication for ESD Session led by Nalaka Gunawardene <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audio-visual media: strengths and weaknesses • Broadcast and narrowcast options and comparisons • Range of available formats, approaches and methods • Technical aspects vs. good story telling • Ethics and norms of producing a/v for public distribution • Different outreach methods using a/v resources • High budget, low budget and no budget a/v productions • Combining a/v with other interventions
10:30 – 11:00	Tea/coffee break
11:00 – 13:00	Session 3 continued. During this segment, participants get to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critique examples of different a/v products screened • Share their own experiences of producing or using video • Discuss the relevance of a/v media for ESD
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 – 15:30	Group work session A Participants to divide into three groups and begin working on a communication strategy for a real-life case study: Thai Education Foundation’s project on farmland biodiversity in the Phang Nga Province: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and engage priority audience groups • define key messages for each audience group • recommend which communication methods and tools to be used • identify resource needs

	Resource team will provide guidance.
15:30 – 15:45	Tea/coffee break
15:45 – 16:30	<p>Preparations for the field visit</p> <p>Robert to introduce the idea of “<i>Piece, Patterns and Processes</i>” for the project field trip day investigation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants are to find and collect “pieces” (i.e. information and observations) during the field visit • They are to challenge to put the pieces together by looking for “patterns” that seem to develop (both on site and later when we come back to the hotel to analyze their field visit experience) • And to create meaning of the “processes” that have occurred, are occurring and may occur in the future based on what they have observed, heard and interpreted.
16:30 – 17:00	<p>Briefing on the field visit</p> <p>by participants from Thai Education Foundation</p>
17:00 – 17:15	Taking stock of Day 2
17:15	End of day 2 Evening free

Day 3: Wednesday, 4 July 2007

Field visit to a school project by Thai Educational Foundation

08:30	Leave hotel by group transport
Morning	Visit Chao Thai Mai School and village Colleagues from Thai Education Foundation and the Resource Team will guide participants during the field visit.
12:30	Lunch in the village
13:30	Leave village
14:30	Estimated time of return to the hotel Participants have a short break to freshen up
15:00	Tea/coffee served
15:15 – 17:00	<p>Group work session B</p> <p>Participants engage in group work (3 groups) where the specific tasks will be defined by the resource team, drawing on impressions of the field visit.</p>
17:00 – 17:15	Taking stock of Day 3
17:15	End of Day 3 Evening free

Day 4: Thursday, 5 July 2007

09:00 – 09:15	Warming up for the day by Robert Steele <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short game • Quick introduction to the day's activities
09:15 – 10:30	Session 4: Engaging new media for ESD Session led by Manori Wijesekera <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do we mean by new media? • Assessing merits of different new media platforms and technologies • New media for ESD: engaging the 'digital natives' • Content is king; communication is queen! • Bridging the local and global in the digital media: our challenges
10:30 – 11:00	Tea/coffee break
11:00 – 12:30	Session 4 continued During this segment, participants get to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share their own experiences of using various new media options • Discuss the relevance of new media for ESD
12:30 – 13:00	Film screening <i>Digits4Change</i> : TVE Asia Pacific's regional series on how some new ICTs are changing lives in Asia
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 – 15:30	Session 5: Innovation Diffusion How do we introduce new ideas/concepts to an existing culture? Session led by Robert Steele Presentation + role model game
15:30 – 15:45	Tea/coffee break
15:45 – 17:00	Group work session C Three groups present their communication strategies The resource team critiques
17:00	Taking stock of Day 4
17:15	End of Day 4 Evening free

Day 5: Friday, 6 July 2007

09:00 – 09:15	Warming up for the day by Robert Steele <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short game • Quick introduction to the day's activities
09:15 – 10:30	Session 6: Are we getting across? Evaluating communication for ESD Session led by Dr Buddhi Weerasinghe
10:30 – 11:00	Tea/coffee break

11:00 – 12:30	SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis for communication strategies Group activity led by Buddhi Weerasinghe and Robert Steele
12:30 – 13:00	Film screening <i>Mina's Village says 'yes' to waste management</i> 17 min cartoon animation produced by Japanese and Malaysian animators for ACCU's Package Learning Materials on Environment (PLANET) project
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 – 15:30	Session 7: Saving the Planet project – what happens next? TVE Asia Pacific to present and discuss production plans to cover each participant organisation's story in the coming weeks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content aspects: getting to the core of each winning story • Logistical aspects: accessing locations, schedules, etc. • Potential local and national uses of the resulting regional TV series
15:30 – 15:45	Tea/coffee break
15:45 – 16:30	Concluding the workshop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing remarks by resource team • Closing remarks by TVEAP • Presentation of certificates to participants
16:30	Workshop ends
18:30	Depart the hotel for outside restaurant (venue to be announced and transport will be arranged)
19:00 onwards	Farewell dinner hosted by TVE Asia Pacific

Annex 2

List of Workshop Participants, Facilitators and Organisers

Participants

1. Polyvine Nareth, Environmental Education Project Coordinator, OSMOSE, Cambodia
2. Dara Heng, Environmental Education Coordinator, OSMOSE, Cambodia
3. Mongkon Tianponkrang, Program Coordinator, Thai Education Foundation, Thailand
4. Worapong Aphichatsirimas (Fii), Technical Trainer, Thai Education Foundation, Thailand
5. Maria Criselda R Peñaverde (Dada), Project Contact Person, PBAZ, Philippines
6. Avelino S Cielo (Bobby), Education Director, PBAZ, Philippines
7. Soma Biswas, Communication Manager, Development Alternatives, India
8. Khamphoui Saythalat, Head of Action Research Department, PADETC, Laos
9. Houmnylat Rattanavong (Lat), Head of Media and IT, Media Unit/SME Department, PADETC, Laos
10. Mohan Bista, Station Manager, Radio Sagarmatha, Nepal
11. Saroj Kafle, Senior Producer, Radio Sagarmatha, Nepal

Resource Persons and Workshop Secretariat

1. Buddhi Weerasinghe, Communication Specialist
2. Robert Steele, Independent Associate and Senior Trainer, Sustainability Asia/ AtKisson Group International, Thailand
3. Nalaka Gunawardene, Director and CEO, TVE Asia Pacific
4. Manori Wijesekera, Regional Programme Manager, TVE Asia Pacific
5. Indika Wanniarachchi, IT Specialist, TVE Asia Pacific
6. Jeevani Fernando, Office Manager, TVE Asia Pacific

Observer (joined on self-funding basis)

1. Estelle Gaillard, researcher, Australian Environmental School in Griffith University, Australia

Annex 3

Participants' Feedback

At the end of the workshop, each participant was asked to give their individual feedback (positive and negative) in written form. They were given a workshop evaluation form which covered all the contents and sessions of the workshop. They had the option of filling it anonymously (but a majority opted to disclose their name).

Participants were asked to rank the accomplishments of workshop objectives, flow, environment, structure of the workshop and about facilitators using an upward scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 = poor and 5 = excellent). All participants marked their choices either as excellent or very good.

Some individually commented about their satisfaction on each component of the workshop. Highlights:

“What did you gain from the workshop?”

“Learnt a lot about development communications, strategy and new media...”

“Help me to deal with ESD issues from various angles.”

“Shaping my vision on the process of communication for development”

“Reality checks on challenges projects face in their communities, highly valuable information on the 6 STP projects and better understanding of role of media in ESD.”

“Improving the ESD skill with whom I work and what I really need form the target audience”

All participants said they had been engaged intellectually, physically and emotionally during the workshop more than 70% of the time. When asked to rate the activities that were conducted each day for their effectiveness, they said all activities had been 'effective' or 'somewhat effective'. There was no negative feedback on their level of engagement and enthusiasm.

Participants have made suggestions constructively to improve future workshops.

- One common remark is the “time management”. Four have made comments on time management and need to have more time for practical exercises.
- Suggestions were also made on applications and enough time to demonstrate their skills and levels of understanding on each discussed themes/topics.
- Some have recommended the importance of involving participants in the documentation process for the workshop.

The field trip to Thai Mai School and surrounding community provided an important experience to brainstorm and design a communication strategy for a specific target audience. Majority of the participants commented that exercise helped put into practice the concepts learnt during the workshop. It also provided the platform to ask questions, to think what information to collect and what challenges to focus on when designing strategies.

Yet some of them believed that the time was not sufficient and planning should have done a bit more carefully.

“Field visit to Chao Thai Mai School and community can still be improved, especially the interview process and community dialogue.” - one participant

Most participants pointed out that an important part of the workshop was learning how to develop a strong and effective communication strategy and engaging new media on ESD. This indicates that most projects did not have a clear understanding of these two aspects before their workshop participation.

Describing their overall impressions of the workshop, participants said:

“Exhausted sometimes, but happy to be part of the workshop. The learned products from the workshop are positive to us”

“Happy and be more confident to take future action in film making”

“Entertaining, heavy yet inspiring”

“Workshop was productive and interactive; I can replicate this knowledge in my work”

“Now I have more power to improve things at my own country”

The workshop highlighted how the use of media could help promote these stories to other communities, projects and organisations across the Asia Pacific region. Participants realised the need of individual and collective action towards a more sustainable world. On the last day, all participants left with positive hopes with a newly created ESD network to bring about the changes expected.

Annex 4

The Khao Lak workshop: An observer's comments

Estelle Gaillard, a PhD candidate researching ESD at the Australian Environmental School in Griffith University, Australia, joined the Khao Lak workshop as a self-funding observer. She later shared her impressions of the workshop, as follows:

The capacity building workshop held in Thailand from July 2 to July 6 was highly informative given the expertise of TVEAP in communicating sustainable development through the media but also the range of selected projects and educators and the very different stories they had to share.

The projects and organisations to be showcased in Saving the Planet (STP) demonstrate the existence of a broad and diverse community of practice in the field of education for sustainable development (ESD) in the Asia Pacific region. A closer look at the six projects during the workshop highlighted a range of backgrounds, aspirations, designs, objectives, approaches and methodologies. The projects go beyond the 'green' side of ESD and traditional awareness raising activities. They instead encompass a broad range of activities addressing various aspects of sustainable development and working with different communities across the region. They show ESD as being an experiential, participatory and action oriented process working with and for communities in bringing about social change for sustainability.

The workshop gave valuable insights into what the concepts of 'sustainability', 'sustainable development' and 'education for sustainable development' meant to the educators involved in the six projects, how these concepts were related to and included in their communication and education activities and how these concepts resonated with the daily lives of the communities they worked with. This remains one of the main challenges of ESD practitioners and communicators - how to help people identify links between their lives and bigger social and environmental issues in order to bring about significant changes towards a more sustainable world?

The workshop allowed participants to tell their stories of practice and promote their work outside their organisations and their communities. They were able to share their experiences, their lessons learnt on what worked/works, what did not/does not and what can/could be done similarly or differently. The aim of STP is now to share these experiences beyond the capacity building workshop through broadcast and narrowcast media.

The workshop served as a space for debates and discussions on how media could act as catalysis for ESD and sustainable development. The members of TVE Asia Pacific shared their regional knowledge, skills and experiences in using audio-visual and new media across Asia Pacific. Participants were also encouraged to share their own experiences. At the end of the workshop, all participants were given the full set of power point presentations from the other projects, TVEAP members and the facilitation team, the hand outs of all activities as well as copies of DVD series, materials from ACCU, UNESCO and other organisations. I was really impressed by this since often materials and information are not made available to participants

after workshops or presentations (based on my own experience as a researcher and educator). TVEAP however does practice what it preaches. It advocates for a greater access to and sharing of information on sustainable development issues. It promotes development content and distribution as a 'copyright free zone' in order for materials to be use freely for educational and non-commercial purposes as broadly as possible. Therefore the content of the capacity building workshop is now for participants to use as they wish within their organisations and communities.

The workshop was organised to build the communication capacity of the selected ESD projects by strategically using media and communication technologies to engage with their audiences. On the first day, it became apparent that the education and communication methods, including audio visual and new media, used in the six projects varied greatly depending on donors, funding available, staff expertise, access to technology, main issues being addressed and target audiences. The access to media in the communities where the projects worked with also varied. It seemed that most had access to print materials (although literacy level varies), terrestrial TV and radio. However few had access to other media such as the internet for example.

Participants were introduced to different media formats, approaches, options, choices and alternatives. They were then encouraged to reflect on their specific projects and to identify media tools that could suit their target audiences, messages, communication needs and human resources and budget available. An important part of the workshop was communication strategy, or in other words, how to develop a strong and effective communication strategy. Based on the feedback from participants, I was surprised to find out that most projects did not seem to have articulated communication strategies with clearly identified audiences, messages, purposes and build-in evaluation activities to gage their effectiveness in bringing about the changes desired.

During the session "Are we getting across?" led by Dr. Buddhi Weerasinghe, it also became apparent that relatively few projects were equipped to reliably monitor the processes and evaluate the outcomes and impacts of their education and communication activities. The field trip on Wednesday July 4, 2007 to Thai Mai School and surrounding community provided a fantastic 'hands on' experience to brain storm in group, reflect and design a communication strategy for a specific target audience. This exercise I believe helped put into practice the lessons learnt during the workshop and deepen our understanding of what questions to ask, what elements to think about, what information to gather and what challenges and obstacles may be encountered. The insights gained that day were highly valuable and a great window in the world of ESD.

Thai Mai is one of many stories told during the workshop; one of many stories of practice from the emerging field of ESD it seems. The workshop highlighted how the use of media could help promote these stories to other individuals, communities, projects and organisations locally and across the Asia Pacific region. I believe that the need for effective communication, education and public outreach in order to increase support for individual and collective action towards a more sustainable world is tremendous. The STP workshop showed that ESD ideas, practices and possibilities in Asia Pacific could benefit from new and strengthened links between different fields of practice- ESD educators, media practitioners and researchers. On the last day, all participants left with everyone's contact details. A yahoo group account was created in the hope that people will stay in touch and keep on sharing insights, ideas and stories. A new ESD network has been created!