

## Opening Remarks by Anne Lemaistre, UNESCO Representative in Cambodia

### Inauguration of *Lvea Krang* Community Learning Center, Siem Reap

12 June 2014

*H.E. Pit Chamnan, Secretary of State, Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport,  
H.E. Khim Bunsong, Siem Reap Provincial Governor,  
Mr. Kouch Kou Lom-A, Director of the Department of Non-Formal Education,  
Chiraru KAWAKAMI, Representative of the NFUAJ Headquarter,  
Mr. Nong Vutha, Director of NFUAJ-Cambodia Office,  
Representatives of NGOs,  
Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,*

We are celebrating the inauguration of the *Lvea Krang* Community Learning Center (CLC). This is the 12th CLC supported by the National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan (NFUAJ). On behalf of UNESCO, I wish to convey my sincere congratulations to the NFUAJ family on your continued CLC success in Cambodia.

To support Member States' education needs, especially in achieving Education For All and Life-Long Learning goals, UNESCO launched Capacity Development for Education For All (CapEFA) program in selected priority countries around the world. In many Asia-Pacific countries, Community Learning Center is an area of focus that UNESCO collaborates with local governments, technical partners, private sector and civil society agents.

For this occasion, Mr. Nong Vutha invited UNESCO to specifically speak about CLC long-term development. Therefore, I am going to highlight some ideas about sustainability of CLCs, as stated in the *Manual for Management of Community Learning Center*, developed by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport in collaboration and with UNESCO's support.

*Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,*

Established CLCs shall play role as local venues for community members such as adults, youths and children of all ages to engage in all forms of learning, through literacy and continuing education programmes. However, as you may have witnessed, many CLC programs become inactive right after initial funding from a donor ends. Funding agencies and development partners get more concerned with long term impact of their allocated resources. Sustainability of CLC programs refers to a continuation of services by depending on communities' financial and human resources and the Government's strong commitment. When this happens, it creates community ownership for a long term value for the community.

International experience for sustaining CLCs also indicates a strong emphasis on the level of community participation and ownership. In Bangladesh, for instance, CLC efforts focus on "participative ownership" by engaging individual and community in funding processes. This efficiency allows the CLC to be less donor-dependent. Currently, 90 percent of CLC expenses are supported by local community. Similarly, Indonesia focuses on CLC independency by delivering

education services to meet the community needs. Indonesia believes that income generating education and vocational trainings are fundamental for maximizing the level of CLC sustainability.

*Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,*

To sustain CLCs in Cambodia, I am going to share with you 15 strategies:

1. NFE officials within the Siem Reap and other provinces should learn and adapt **good practices of NFUAJ-supported CLCs** to apply to the Government's CLCs, specifically studying their CLC development plan.
2. CLC programs should respond to **needs, values, and culture of the community**. These integrative programs will enable more community participation.
3. Only availability of reading materials does not make a CLC sustainable. Among other **multiple purposes**, social, health-related, and economic activities must be simultaneously integrated into the CLC programs.
4. **Monitoring and evaluation** of CLC programs also offer feedback for addressing sustainability issues.
5. There should be flexibility and adaptability in programme design and implementation to accommodate **unforeseen changes**.
6. CLCs shall develop **multiple fund-raising strategies**.
7. Program budget and action plan need to be **realistic**.
8. **Regular communication** with the Government, private entities, NGOs, and other stakeholders shall be cultivated.
9. CLC should **create a forum** for brainstorming ideas, collaboration, and resource sharing among related stakeholders. For example, the NFUAJ's Annual Congress on CLCs is an excellent idea that should be maintained.
10. CLC should establish an **exit strategy** for minimizing dependency on external support.
11. CLC should **reach out** to local private sector and potential NGOs for possible support.
12. CLC needs to find committed volunteers and recruit local staff members. The NFUAJ's approach of electing the CLC-MC members is a good way to find **proactive members**.
13. **Capacity development of CLC-MC members** is important for empowering them.
14. **Capacity development of external stakeholders** to realize local contexts and local implementation mechanisms. This will help minimize the understanding gap.
15. CLC-MC members need to be aware of local problems, and they must be willing to recommend **local solutions**.

*Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,*

Allow me to conclude my remarks by taking this opportunity to thank NFUAJ for all the good work in continuing to strengthen existing CLCs and establish new CLCs to benefit many community people in Siem Reap. With this tremendous effort, UNESCO Office in Phnom Penh has found NFUAJ as a key collaborator. Besides, I would also like to thank the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport for responding to community needs through CLCs. For sustainability purposes, effective and efficient use of financial and human resources to CLC can be enhanced. In this spirit, UNESCO reaffirms its continued commitment to providing technical support to the Ministry.

Thank you!