

Small Grants: Closing Gaps in Climate Education and Urban Systems - Lao Red Cross Youth

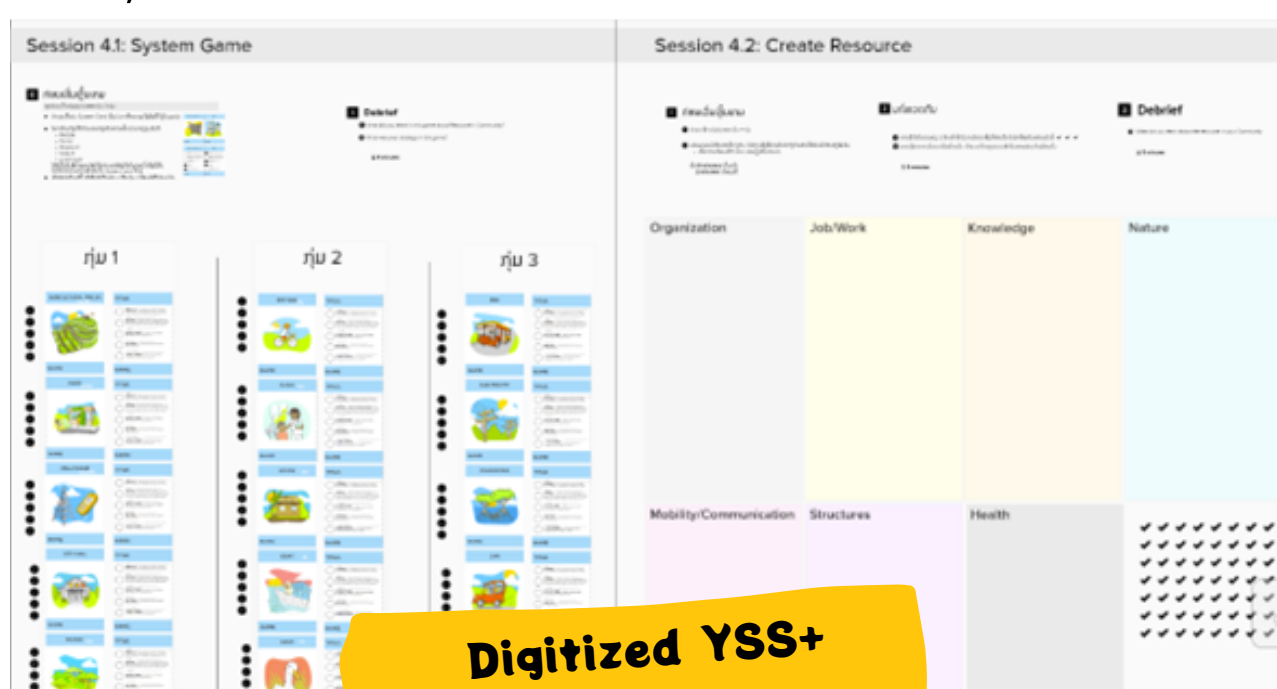
CONTEXT

Although Laos PDR is a primarily rural country, it has one of the highest urbanization rates in Asia (4.9%, twice the global average). This uncontrolled and rapid rural to urban migration continues to place strain on the capital of Vientiane, (with population of over 900,000), and generate various urban risks. Lao PDR is amongst the most vulnerable countries to climate change. Those most at risk in Vientiane are the poor and marginalized communities, who often settle in highly exposed, poorly planned areas of the city. (World Bank, 2021). Climate change is also increasing incidents of dengue, which speaks to the importance of awareness and prevention to mitigating morbidity and mortality (CDCD, 2019). Even among the Lao Red Cross (LRC) Youth, knowledge of climate change and urban disaster risk reduction remains low, due to the lack of climate education in prevailing methodologies and tools utilized by LRC.



PROJECT SUMMARY

Recognizing the gap between existing *Youth in School Safety* (YSS) curriculum, Lao Red Cross Youth, took matters into their own hands to augment YSS with Y-ADAPT urban climate action components **to improve understanding, mainstream and embed climate education, and to increase behavioral change and the uptake of urban climate and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) action with tailored school/community-driven solutions.** The new curriculum was trained to core trainers, disseminated to four schools.



Digitized YSS+ curriculum



Key Achievements

Lao Red Cross Youth formed a core group with 12 members to work on the YSS + Climate Education (YSS+) curriculum development and to train YSS+ trainers.

- Development of YSS+ curriculum (virtual and in-person methodologies)
- Peer Educator training of trainers for YSS+ in 4 schools, 8 teachers, 60 students certified as peer educators and with 8 parents' participation
- Engagement of 150 people 4 schools in YSS+, generation of climate/DRR projects: 1. Dengue prevention promotion campaigns, 2. Waste Management: 3R (Recycle, Reduce and Reused) schemes in two schools, 3. Paper donations and upcycling for braille hospital use, 4. Drain clearing.

Lessons Learned

Don't be afraid to integrate new ideas: the improvements of the youth in school safety with climate components are a major success for the scale up of future climate education.

Ensure sustainability and scale up: Given that many LRC youth volunteers are from the communities the YSS+ project serves, there is a higher likelihood of sustained longer-term awareness for climate education, health and DRR, which will continue to multiply following the conclusion of the interventions.



YSS+ training in schools



Taking action after the YSS+ training