

Mekong ICT Camp 2013

*A Mekong Sub-region Network for
Information-Communication-Technology
Capacity Development*

Prepared by:

Thai Fund Foundation

In partnerships with Open-dream Company, Thai Netizen Network
and Frontier Foundation



A. Rationale

We live in a time where almost everyone can have a say about almost anything. This flattened world and information era, however, are not met without increased constraints and new challenges. Despite that the availability of information and networks are only few clicks away, the easiness seems to have posed both new opportunities and threats to various players in different parts in a country and the world. Judging from the perspective of social development, the increased flow of information on the Internet have been hyper-active in empowering, which fact has made the stratification in societies more vivid and complicated at the same time. The dynamics which is the outcome of the interplay between economic, political and social factors has never before put information and communication technologies in such a central role to shape the change in societies.

60% of the world's population used mobile phone with 12% of them being smart phones that still grows in a two-digit speed every year. And to many's surprises, the countries whose population hold the most number of phones were not in the most developed ones but in the emerging economies like Thailand. The fast penetration of smart phones and the transforming social media have eroded the influence that used to come from the conventional institutions like governments, print and electric media, just to name a few. More and more researches reveal that the conventional media are losing their influence to the emerging social media which consist and integrate the preceding forums, blogs, web-pages and steaming files to a much seamless arena of communication and cognition. For the past few years, in almost every national social unrest, natural disaster and community protest, it's easy for anyone to find those involved activists and campaigners on the most convergent social media, I.e. Facebook, Twitter, Weibo, just name a few.

These communication tools and the instant crowd-feeding of information to public domains have been a norm in many people's life. The reality of digital divide, the contents of the haves and have-not, has been less on the ownership of hardware and software or on the computer literacy and skills but more on the struggle over the control and management of data. An additional divide which is still apparent in Mekong sub-regional countries is the restriction of the freedom to speech. More and more announced policies and extrajudicial practices are closing in to limit people's voice.

Mekong ICT Camp is a biannual training workshop on the topics of information, communication, and technology for citizen media, NGOs and other influential stakeholders in the Southeast Asia with a special focus on the Mekong sub-region countries where people's rights to development have still been relatively scarce. The 2013 Mekong ICT Camp will be the third of its kind with the preceding camp in 2008 and 2010 respectively. During the preparation for the 2013 Camp, the various governments in this region have announced to step up the regional integration from the conceptual "one community" to a more economically integrated AEC, a short-name for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Economic Community, a goal set to be completed by 2015. The regional economic integration is expected to shake up many existed local, national and cross-border issues in the Mekong sub-region. This compounds the challenges that have taken place in the front of international relations, society and environment, among others. From the standpoint of a civil society, regional collaboration of social groups, activists and nongovernmental organizations is crucial so that civil society can share the information and experience in respective countries and conduct joint consultation for the problems at stake.



To confront the increased tension between governments, globalized businesses and societies and to maximize the benefits that can be provided by the advanced of communication technologies and media, the organizers for the Mekong ICT Camp have committed to the ICT capacity development for the talents and organizations in the sub-region to make sure the sub-region's abilities are kept abreast with other parts of the world and can serve for the collective objectives for social development from the nongovernmental and nonprofit sector as a whole. Since the first camp in 2008 and the second in 2010, this regional ICT specialist network has provided trainings and workshops for new generation of actors who, in turn, have exchanged and disseminated new technologies and techniques. In the forth-coming 2013 camp, particular attention will be those issues directly concerned with and of practical use to the region's current situations.

In the following pages of the proposal, we will describe how the 2013 Mekong ICT Camp will be organized, its expected outcomes from the carefully design curriculum and the networking among participants, all the human resources that have been recruited and worked behind the scene, the course repository that have guided through all camps, the comparative historical view of preceding camps, and how all above are going to help everyone on the board to reach these objectives:

Objectives

1. To create a common peer-coaching and learning space whereby participants can exchange their ICT knowledge and skills;
2. To create collaborative networks whereby ICT experts, media organizations, NGOs and social activists make use of ICT for social development;
3. To build networks of ICT trainers and educators that can disseminate the knowledge in the region;
4. To press for a variety of learning activities at regional and national levels;
5. To enable those working with the media and NGOs at grassroot level to enhance their practical skills in the area of information and knowledge management, e-advocacy, and the understanding and promotion of open source software; and
6. To expand the network of open source software users to include regional media organizations and NGOs;

B. Camp-Organizing

1. Approach

The camp will be a five-day boarding style of activity consisting of lectures, workshops, spontaneously organized activities. It will focus on the process that will enable the exchange of experiences between technical experts and those working with disaster management, media, IEC (Information, Education and Communication) for rural communities, and civil society organizations so that they can understand each other and can collaborate in putting ICT technologies and contents into effective use in their work.

The process and interaction methods:

- (1) Group discussion on various topics;
- (2) Sharing of information on case studies of each organization;
- (3) Presentation of technological tools and their applications;
- (4) Study trips to organizations using ICT for social development work;
- (5) Usage of ICT as a tool for knowledge exchange and post-workshop consultation.

2. Target participants

Participants' background will be Journalists, programmers, public policy advocates, disaster rescue and relief program staff, civil society, and mid-rank civil servants. They are expected to have a defined area of expertise. All of them should be already familiar with computer and Internet, and should have mid to high level of English proficiency.

3. Target Capacities

The camp emphasizes the same capacities and skills as last two camps' and will organize workshops, courses, hand-on trainings, as well as practical case studies for participants to put what they learn in their practical work-related context. The four sets of capacities are:

- (1) *E-management*: management of organizations and information;
- (2) *E-advocacy*: electronic advocacy and social media strategies;
- (3) *E-infrastructure*: informatics infrastructure for social development; and
- (4) *Open participation paradigm*: Free Software, Creative Commons and read/write culture.

4. Time

5 days, May 6 through 10, 2013.

5. Place

The Sirindhorn Environmental Park, Cha-am, Phetchaburi, Thailand.



C. Curriculum

The 2013 Mekong ICT Camp will focus on the theme “data data”, which substance includes opening existing public data, building new data sets, and communicating the data for social change.

To link the targeted capacities with the most relevant and current field situations, the organizers narrow down them to three topics from field work: disaster management, digital journalism and ICT for community development. Under every field-work topic, the facilitators will see into the suitable targeted capacities and organize appropriate workshops and courses for participants. The courses are organized with clear objectives, focusing on tactics, skills and tools. Facilitators and participants are required to produce tangible outputs from the sessions of learning and collaborative work.

Four Capacities* :

1. E-management:
Management of organizations and information;
2. E-advocacy:
Electronic advocacy and social media strategies;
3. E-infrastructure:
Informatics infrastructure for social development;
4. Open participation paradigm:
Free Software, Creative Commons and read/write culture.

* Full details can be found in the subsequent section of Course Repository under Curriculum.

C1. Field-work: Disaster Management

In 2013, most Mekong sub-region countries suffered disasters following the seasonal torrential rain, and Thailand, the host country of the 2013 Mekong ICT Camp, had gone through the biggest flood in the metropolitan area in 50 years. At the time of writing, people around of the world were remembering the devastating compound natural and nuclear disasters taking place in Japan around this period of time last year. The magnitude and frequency of natural disasters around the world are expected to be greater.

To better protect local communities for the emergency situations in the region, this topic team will undertake peer-learning from other countries and learn useful tools for effective disaster management through ICT.

Objective

1. Better in protecting communities;
2. Know the available and useful tools for the time of disasters;
3. Effective communication during disasters.

Course Titles

1. Peer-learning: sharing experience in different countries, case studies and situation simulation
2. Relief program: government data, supply management
3. Information collection: community mapping, social media and crowd sourcing.
4. Communication tools during crisis: amateur radio, mobile, wireless, satellite
5. Volunteer management

Participant Qualifications

Participants selecting this track should have worked for disasters rescue teams at either government or community level.

C2. Field-work: Digital Journalism

Mekong ICT Camp has worked very closely with independent journalists and together we have advocated citizen journalism throughout the years. In order to enable individual citizen to use ICT tools to manage and disseminate news-worthy information effectively, this relies on the capacities of knowing the software and tools for production and dissemination, knowing how to manage, including collecting, analyzing and presenting to target groups, knowing how to provide wider access to communications networks at reasonable expenses, and at last, having the freedom to get access to and disseminate information and news. Participants, after attending the following courses and workshop, are expected to show that they know the life cycle of data, information and knowledge and the tactics for reporting, hence they can manage soundly.

Objective

1. Enhance the quality of reporting from journalists, especially independent journalists, with the use of easier and updated tools.
2. Familiarize participants with useful data analyzing and managing tools and tactics.
3. Empower participants and their role as journalists by understanding the connection between journalism, democracy and development.

Course Titles

1. Digital democracy: Social media tactics, online campaign, censorship bypass
2. Open data scraping: exposing publicly concerned data, hackathon, Pentaho
3. Community media: story-telling tactics, Internet Radio, Podcast, live streaming video, and journalism and ethics
4. Analogue data visualisation: info-graphic, Hans Rosling

Participant Qualifications

Participants selecting this track should be journalist in practice in formally or informally, or students studying journalism.

C3. Field-Work: ICT for Community Development

Aside from citizen journalism that aims at allowing individual citizens to pay attention to and report what happens around their surrounding environments, the communities in rural areas is also our main target group of people who need to have access to information and knowledge and to know how to use the technologies to improve the quality of their community life. Through this topic, we will promote community knowledge management so that those are directly involved can share their knowledge, problems and proposals among themselves within the communities as well as forwarding them to the media for wider public dissemination and discussion.

We will introduce numerous alternative media, including alternative web-sites, radio, mobile technology and the multi-function tele-centers can play. This is instrumental in widening the communication within and between communities, thus is hoped to facilitate internal and external exchange of community information and knowledge. The ICT capacity building for nongovernmental organizations is also included in this track.

Objective

1. Facilitate rural communities to use more ICT and increase their influence on the matters about their environment and community.
2. NGOs and tele-center operators can use software tools to collect community data and feedback to better IEC program design.

Course Titles

1. Rural information accessibility: rural information accessibility, mobile technology for social development, public wifi.
2. Tele center management: community data collecting, community mapping, online community commerce, community commons.
3. ICT Capacities for NGOs: crowd sourcing, online fund-raising and campaigns, accountability, cloud computing and applications, volunteers.

Participant Qualifications

Participants selecting this track should be practitioners of information, education and communication in communities, executives and programmers working for NGOs.

D. Participants and Application

Participants

We will select approximately 60 persons, from independent media, community practitioners, natural disaster program staff and civil society organizations in the Mekong sub-region countries (Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam) will be selected from all applicants, taking into account their diverse type of development work and the balanced number of women and men. The participants and their organizations should have worked or are involved in the field of media or their programs have adopted ICT as part of their implementation. The technological skills of the participants will be re-contributed to the design of curriculums. As English will be used in this workshop, all participants must be able to communicate in English.

Application Process

The application forms will be distributed to networks of Participant Selection Committee, group mail, websites, and online communities. Applicants are required to write their application letters, giving details about their personal data, work experiences and reasons why they want to attend the workshop, particularly those well-versed with ICT skills and intend to use their capacity to support other participants. The selection will be based on the applicants' experiences in using diverse technologies; capacity to give support to groups, solve problems, and exchange knowledge with others upon returning to their own countries; and interest in alternative technologies. These determining factors together with the combinations of expertise, interest, diversity of participating countries, and number of participating women and men will be weighed in a balanced manner.

Provision for Participants

Participants, once selected, will be entitled to subsidy and/or reimbursement for a round-trip ticket from your residence, visa application, food and accommodation. All documents and materials for courses will be provided.

E. Facilitators and Committee

Facilitators

Principal facilitators are chosen from Southeast Asian and international networks of ICT experts. Additional contributing facilitators will be selected from those applicants with the qualifications equal to the need for becoming speakers.

Participant Selection Committee

A small group of accomplished persons from international organizations, ICT technical agencies, media promotion organizations, NGOs, and regional experts, will be invited to act as the advisory committee and give advice about the workshop's activities and content, as well as selecting the applicants.

- Michel Bauwens, P2P Foundation and Asian Foresight Institute
- Sunit Shrestha, ChangeFusion(Thailand)
- Open Society Institute representative (Burma)
- Tharum Bun, BarCamp Phnom Penh (Cambodia)
- Thomas Wanhoff BarCamp Vientiane (Laos)
- Arthit Suriyawongkul, Thai Netizen Network (Thailand)
- Vietnam Representative

F. Organizing Team

Thai Fund Foundation

Thai Fund Foundation (TFF) (*Development Support Consortium DSC*) is a non-profit organization founded in 1997 by a network of seven Non Profit Organisations in Thailand. TFF build long-termed sustainability of CSOs in Thailand through resource mobilization and capacity building. Since 1998, TFF creating and running www.thaingo.org a hub of ThaiNGOs recognized for its alternative news. TFF also works directly with community-based to develop capacity and strengthen the combined voices of grassroots organizations to promote positive, tangible changes.

Contact: Puangchomphu Rammuang, Program Manager,
E-mail: chomputff@gmail.com c.c to chomphu@tff.or.th

Opendream

Opendream is a social enterprise with expertise in Internet applications and information design. A pack of digital natives with combined experiences in open collaborative projects and open source communities strive to provide efficient solutions to their long-term networks of friends - NGOs, new media bands, hi-tech arms, research institutes, and software developer communities. Their sole goal is to deliver the information and to change the world.

Contact: Patipa Susumpao, CEO,
E-mail: kengggg@gmail.com or info@opendream.co.th

Thai Netizen Network

Thai Netizen Network is a non-partisan group advocates for Internet freedom, human rights, and civil liberty. Founded in late 2008, it grew out of a group of netizens who had concern on limited Internet freedom during post-coup governments. We run activities based on 5 themes: 1) Access to Information 2) Freedom of Opinion and Expression 3) Privacy 4) Participatory Internet Governance and 5) Commons. The Network runs by a small working group, with consultation from Internet users in the Network (mailing list-based) and an advisory board from civil society, industries, and academics.

Contact: Arthit Suriyawongkul, Coordinator,
E-mail: arthit@gmail.com

Frontier Foundation

Frontier Foundation, for almost two decades, has carried on its mission to bring information and communication to the disadvantaged by ways of democratic participation, collaboration and innovation. It realized the potential of information and knowledge in shaping a new society and has bred the first indigenous search engine company Yam.com in Taiwan and several forums for minority groups. Its strategic partnership is extended to IT private sector. Together, they deliver trainings and resources to NGOs, and run IT product donation programs.

Contact: Ann T.C. Kao, Southeast Asia Program Director,
E-mail: annkao@frontier.org.tw or frontier.sea@google.com



Individual Contributors

The 2013 Camp also garners committed contribution from the following individuals who once were camp organizers or had worked closely with us in previous camps.

Klaikong Vaidhyakarn was one of the initiator of the first Mekong ICT Camp in 2008 when he was ICT Team Leader at the Thai Fund Foundation. At present, he is the Deputy Director at ChangeFusion, where he leads the technology specialist team for innovation projects on learning and health, and manages projects of Mobile Technology for Social Development. He assists OpenDream in designing the curriculum for the 2012 Camp. E-mail: klaikong@gmail.com

Sompoph Krittayaworagul was a volunteer at the 1st Mekong ICT Camp in 2008. He became a head of volunteer team at the 2nd Mekong ICT Camp in 2010. He and his team manage and support the camp by assist all participants and facilitators. He worked at an International NGO as a Regional IT specialist, covered 5 countries in Asia. He can be reach at sk@tpug.org

Aphiluck Puangkaew (Joe) was one of the major resource persons in the 2010 Mekong ICT Camp, guiding the course of Communication Strategy for NGO and led the workshop of Photo Exhibition. He specializes in social entrepreneurship and has worked with international NGOs in the areas of communication, public awareness and humanitarian aid. He works in the Communication Marketing team in an international organization currently and is also a freelancer documentary photographer and communication consultant. E-mail: joetist@hotmail.com

Sakchai Leemeetham (Chai) was one of the volunteer of the 2nd Mekong ICT Camp in 2010, which was responsible for preparing IT infrastructure to participants and facilitators. His background is in system integrator(SI) business, solution provider and open source. He is an IT specialist at Digital Number One Co., Ltd. Contact him at sakchai@digitalone.asia



G. History and Achievements

The *Thai Fund Foundation* realized the vital role of capacity development in information and communication technology for media and non-governmental organizations working in the Mekong sub-region. The social development in the region has always been a focal point in international development efforts. The Foundation also finds the use of “Free and Open Source Software” an appropriate alternative as it is free of copyright royalty payments, allows for modifications suitable for particular uses of each locality, and is fundamental to the information and communication work.

In late 2007, the Thai Fund Foundation decided to organize a workshop on the development of capacity for information and communication technologies of the media and non-governmental organizations working in the Mekong sub-region, during 25-29 February 2008 in Thailand’s eastern province of Chon Buri. That workshop led to effective use of information and communication technology and the expansion of ICT knowledge networks in the Mekong sub-region countries, such as the People’s Democratic Republic of Laos, Cambodia, Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and Burma.

Realizing the growing importances and influences of the Internet and mobile technologies, Thai Fund Foundation teamed up with *Opendream*. It is a regional ICT consulting social enterprise with expertise in social media technologies and mobile applications, particularly in the areas of health care, knowledge management, digital library, and online activism. It was the co-organizer and curriculum designer for the 2010 camp. In the upcoming 2013 camp, the Foundation and Opendream team up again to bring the success of last two camps to another level.

Apply for the 2013 Camp.

For the ease of processing, we only accept [Online Application](#)

