



Lao IATSS Forum Alumni Association

Report on

Lao Cultural Festival “Understanding Diversity”

January 6, 2017 Faculty of Education, Souphanouvong University,

Luang Prabang Province, Laos

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1. Event background

After two month training supported by IATSS Forum in Japan, Mr. Vangvichit Kittikhoun, the 56th batch participant from Laos came back from Japan in November 2016 with the idea of cultural and diversity awareness. So he was interested in holding the festival at Faculty of Education Souphanouvong University (SU).

As a teacher training center, Faculty of Education provides teaching-learning process which many cultural subjects are included. Beside academic excellence, we train our students to become teachers who understand cultural terms so that they will be able to adapt into the situation. Hence, the specific capacity/expertise of our organization in the cultural field is to provide theoretical knowledge, which our students will be to contribute to their community in the future. It is also to raise the understanding and awareness among students, teachers, and others about different ethnic minority groups.

This event is organized by Lao IATSS alumni association and associated with International Association on Traffic and Safety Sciences (IATSS) Forum-Japan. This project is initiated to educate the students and villagers and young generation how important their culture and how to live peacefully and diversity together.

A Funding proposal was developed by LIFA Committee to seek funding from IATSS Forum Japan's Small Grant Scheme to organize the event (Appendix 1). The Proposal was approved and strongly encouraged by Japan IATSS Forum Committee.

2. Event preparations

Lao alumni firstly had idea to hold the cultural festival in Luangprabang because there are many ethnic groups live there. Another reason is to continue the success of the similar festival from last year event which held on 12th December 2016. The majority of organizers from Lao IATSS alumni association and Faculty of Education staff considered about the appropriate time. Finally, it was concluded that their preference to organize the activity during 6th January 2017.

After that the proposal was sent to IATSS Forum in Japan as a main sponsor. And one alumni could find some sponsors from Luangprabang such as LEOT (Lao Educational Opportunity Trust), Faculty of Education as well as Luangprabang Hotel managers.

Next preparation was a meeting. At least three meetings were held at Faculty of Education, Souphanouvong University to discuss about event preparation. After the meeting at least one staff was selected to be a group leader for each ethnic group. This person was responsible for training cultural performance, local food preparation and supervisor.

To make sure that the cultural performance will go smoothly and successfully every evening each group had to practice regularly at least one hour for three weeks under the control of group leader staff. During the practice the some meals and drinking water was handed to performers by an organizer.

Then the organizer had nicely prepared flyers (Appendix 2) and schedule for the event and spread out to the faculty announced board, three villages, tour agents, and libraries in Luangprabang.

3. Program Agenda

Activity

Friday, 6 January 2017

8:30-9:00	Register
9:00-9:30	Opening Ceremony
9:30-11:30	Ethnic food, costume , daily equipment booth show and taste their food
11:30-13:00	Lunch
13:00-16:30	Ethnic group culture ceremonies - Hmong Traditional Ceremony - Khmu Traditional Ceremony - Lao Traditional Ceremony
16:30-17:30	1 hour break
18:30 -18:40	President of Souphanouvong University opened the evening session (Cultural performance)
18:40-22:50	Performed 32 shows from 25 ethnic groups
22:50-23:00	Closing Speech by Dean Faculty of Education

4. Registration and attendants

The total number of participants was more numbers than we expected. There were more than 1,000 participants joint the event including students and teachers from Souphanouvong University, Luanprabang Teacher Training College, villagers, tourists from Laos and overseas. However, the invitations were sent to LIFA staff and other alumni, but no one joint due to work and family commitments.

5. Activities

The activities were divided into 2 sessions: day event and night sessions. The day event started from 9:00 AM to 16:30 PM. The event began by opening remarks by dean, Faculty of Education, Souphanouvong University following by Hmong history presentation to the audience. This presented about their food, clothes, tradition as well as the original homeland where their ancestors from. Then

they had a lot of outdoor activities including, Khean Dancing, Mark Khone throwing, Mark Khang competition, cow fighting and singing songs. During these activities, their own local food and how to cook it were demonstrated at their ethnic group booth. And their local food was provided for participants to taste. More than 300 Hmong people wore their own costume and all of them enjoyed presenting their culture to visitors. They also threw the ball (Mark Khon) in pair.



Khean Dacing, Hmong ethnic group



Egg decoration, Hmong ethnic group



Khao Papa making, Hmong ethnic group



Mark Khang competition, Hmong ethnic



Fashion show, Hmong ethnic group

Follow the Hmong ethnic group was Khmu ethnic group. Khmu group is the third largest population in Laos. More than 250 people from this group joint this event. They began by presenting their history. Then they had a traditional ceremony. Their ceremony began by holding Pha Khuan and walking around the yard one round. Then they had Baci Ceremony followed by singing traditional songs and dancing performance such as Bamboo Dance, Khab Hai Dance and many more.



Khmu ethnic group

Then it followed by Lao group (Lao Loum). Lao is the biggest number of population in Laos. Lao group began by Baci Ceremony. They gave best wishes to each other. Nearly 400 Lao Loum participants joint this event.

The next program is booth visiting. The dean, Faculty of Education led the participants walked to the booths. Each booth is representative for each ethnic group. Inside the booth, there were clothes, house ware, local food for each group and it was served for free for participants.



Khmu ethnic group



Oversea visitors



Lao Lom food shown in a booth

In the evening session, the event started from 18:30. It began by opening remark from the prudent of Souphanouvong University. He had emphasized on the importance of the cultural festival and how to preserve its value for next generation, how to understand the diversity of Lao people and how to live together happily and peacefully. He also gave big thanks to IATSS Forum and LEOT to support this event.

After opening remark from the president, 32 performances were performed by 25 ethnic groups including dancing, singing, fashion show and many traditional performances until 22:50 PM. The event ended by the closing speech by the dean, Faculty of Education.



The Evening Session Opening Ceremony Speech by the President of SU

After this event, many students, teachers and participants knew more about IATSS Forum in Japan. This festival was the chance to promote the IATSS Forum to the broader community in Luanprabang. The president of Souphanouvong University and the dean of Faculty of Education were proud of its support. It would be a network for Lao IATSS Forum Alumni Association in Luanprabang.

6. Evaluation results

A questionnaire paper survey was carried out during the event to evaluate the level of participant’s satisfaction and to gain lessons-learnt. 40 participants responded to the survey. The organizers handed the paper questionnaires to participants during the day and night event. 40 questionnaires were collected back. Answers fell into 4 categories: great extent, medium extent, small extent and not at all. The evaluation results can be found as below:

Q1: Date and time were convenient for participant to attend

To a great extent	36	90 %
To a medium extent	4	10 %
To a small extent	0	0 %
Not at all	0	0 %

Q2: The event place was convenient for participant to attend.

To a great extent	38	95 %
To a medium extent	2	5 %
To a small extent	0	0 %

Not at all 0 0 %

Q3: The overall appreciated level of the participant to attend this event.

To a great extent 37 92.50 %

To a medium extent 3 7.50 %

To a small extent 0 0 %

Not at all 0 0 %

In responding to the open question: What did you like most about the event?, participants mostly mentioned that they liked the characteristic and colorful costumes of each ethnic group and their food. Regarding the question “What did you like least about the event?”, almost all comments refer to the area that used to hold the event was quite small compared to the numbers of participants. Nearly most participants suggested that this event should be organized annually to preserve Lao culture and shall be prepared in advance.

7. Expenditures

Expenditures	Spending item	Price	Quantity	Calculating unit	Subtotal
Seq.					
1. Booths rental, stage decorations, costumes					4,000,000
	Booths rental	50,000	40	item	2,000,000
	stage decorations	1,000,000	1	stage	1,000,000
	costumes	50,000	20	set	1,000,000
2. Participant refreshments during rehearsal					3,200,000
	Meal on 2 nd Jan 2017	10,000	100	box	1,000,000
	Meal on 4 th Jan 2017	10,000	100	box	1,000,000
	Meal on 5 th Jan 2017	10,000	120	box	1,200,000
3. Food for 25 ethnic groups for the festival					4,000,000
	Meal at noon for performers on 6 th Jan	10,000	200	Box	2,000,000
	Meal at night for performers on 6 th Jan	10,000	200	box	2,000,000
4. Posters, flyers, communication					1,600,000
	Posters	200,000	4	item	800,000

flyers	5,000	120	set	600,000
communication	50,000	4	phone card	200,000
5. Video editing, leaflets				1,600,000
Video editing	800,000	1	video	800,000
leaflets	4,000	200	set	800,000
6. Equipment for the activities				2,400,000
bamboo	10,000	20	item	200,000
Wood for stage	50,000	8	item	400,000
Sport light	300,000	6	item	1,800,000
7. Drinking water for festival				1,600,000
Drinking water	45,000	40	pack	1,800,000
	Expense Total			18,600,000
				LAK
	Total Fund			\$2,300
	Total Spending			\$2,325
	Remaining			-\$25

8. Lessons-learnt

This festival made villagers, students, teachers at FOE and tourists understood much about the diversity in Laos especially in Luangprabang, the world heritage city. Although the event was prepared in a short time, the event was satisfied by all participants. They really enjoyed and gained a lot experience in a one day event. It brought a great opportunity to people in Luangprabang to join the multiple ethnic group festival like this. If it is possible, we would like to organize it a two year festival and I will prepare two or three months in advance and involve more Lao alumni, community, activity and people than this event. Event preparations should be ready early and invitation should be sent out at least 3 – 4 weeks before the event date. By doing so, alumni have more time to arrange their own plans to attend alumni activities.

8. Proposal

Lao IATSS Forum Alumni Association would like to seek IATSS Forum Japan Committee's approval for spending for Lao cultural Festival for alumni activities in 2017. Without their support, this festival would not happen.

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Activity and Financial Proposal

Title	Lao Cultural Festival “<i>Understanding Diversity</i>”
Origin	Lao IATSS Forum Alumni (LIFA)
Beneficiaries	60 villagers (2 villages), 800 students and 100 teachers (including 25 ethnic groups) from Faculty of Education (FOE), Souphanouvong University
Partners	Lao IATSS Forum Alumni (LIFA), FOE, LEOT (Lao Educational Opportunities Trust) and Luangprabang hotel managers.
Duration	Whole day period (from 8:30 AM – 23:00 PM), 6 th January 2017
Budget	<p>Funding Source for festival implement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Booths rental, stage decorations, costumes, etc: US\$ 500 - Participant refreshments during rehearsal and festival: US\$ 400 - Food for 25 ethnic groups for the festival: US\$ 500 - Posters, flyers, communication, etc: US\$ 200 - Video editing, leaflets: US\$ 200 - Equipment for the activities: US\$ 300 - Drinking water for festival: US\$ 200 <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed black;"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total US\$ 2,300 - FOE US\$ 100 - LEOT US\$ 100 - Luangprabang Hotel Managers US\$ 100 <p><u>Total budget request US\$ 2,000</u></p>
Theme	<p>Theme project: Public event “<i>Understanding Diversity</i>”</p> <p>As a teacher training center, Faculty of Education provides teaching-learning process which many cultural subjects are included. Beside academic excellence, we train our students to become teachers who understand cultural terms so that they will be able to adapt into the situation. Hence, the specific capacity/expertise of our organization in the cultural field is to provide theoretical knowledge, which our students will be to contribute to their community in the future. It is also to raise the understanding and awareness among students, teachers, and others about different ethnic minority groups.</p>
Priority Issue	Plan of operation of LIFA towards 2025 focuses on organizing the workshop, seminar, campaign at public event such as country’s festival

	for interest individual/ alumni/ organization and educational institutes about IATSS Funding.
Goal	<p>-To contribute the public event under the philosophy of “learning and living together under the culture diversity”.</p> <p>- To preserve Lao culture from different ethnic minority groups among villagers, students, teachers, and public.</p>
Objective(s)	<p>Lao Cultural Festival “Understanding the Diversity” aims to explore the different culture from those ethnic minorities (25 minority groups), which will be held at the FOE on 6th January 2017. The objectives of this project are:</p> <p>- To promote, exchange and preserve Lao culture from different ethnic minority groups to villagers, students, teachers, and public.</p> <p>- To raise the awareness among villagers, students, teachers, and others about different ethnic minority groups.</p>
Location	Faculty of Education, Souphanouvong University
Activities	<p>The implementation steps will be as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seminar Lao Cultural under the topic <i>“Understanding Diversity”</i> - Rehearsal (each traditional dance, cooking) - Advertisement (Social media, leaflets, videos) - Festival (each ethnic group’s food, costume, performance and traditional ceremony).
Action Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Propose fund from sponsors for the festival. - Prepare for the festival. - Seminar understanding about the diversity. - Rehearsal (each traditional dance, cooking). - Advertisement (Social media, flyers,). - Festival (food booths, costume booths, traditional sports, ceremony, traditional performance). - Finalize activities (report, leaflets and videos).
M & E Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The completion of the festival activities. - Surveys the participants’ opinions about the festival by filling questionnaires.

Project Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Mr. Chanthanom Theangthong, President of LIFA- Mr. Vangvichit Kittikhoun, IATSS participant, batch 56- Mr. Somphet San, FOE's staff
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Appendix 2: Event Flyer

Lao Cultural Festival “Diversity of Laos” ງານວັດທະນະທຳລາວບັນດາເຜົ່າ

Culture of More Than 24 Ethnic Minorities Presented by Students from Faculty of Education, Souphanouvong University
ວັດທະນະທຳຂອງບັນດາເຜົ່າຫຼາຍກວ່າ 24 ຊົນເຜົ່າຈະໄດ້ນຳສະເໜີໂດຍນັກສຶກສາຈາກຄະນະສຶກສາສາດມະຫາວິທະຍາໄລ ສຸພານຸວົງ



More than 24 Ethnic Minorities
ຫຼາຍກວ່າ 24 ເຜົ່າ:
Lao: ລາວ
Hmong: ມົ້ງ
Khmu: ກຶມຸ
Taidam: ໄຕດຳ
Taideng: ໄຕແດງ
Lue: ລື້
Hayee: ຮາຍີ
Phounoy: ພູນ້ອຍ
Akha: ອາຄຳ
And many more:
ແລະ ອີກຫຼາກຫຼາຍ

Traditional Food/ ຊີມອາຫານຂອງບັນດາເຜົ່າ



Day Festival / ງານກາງເວັນ



Night Festival / ງານກາງຄືນ

On 6 January 2017
at Faculty of Education
Souphanouvong University

ທີ່ຄະນະສຶກສາສາດ
ມະຫາວິທະຍາໄລ ສຸພານຸວົງ
ວິທະຍາເຂດບ້ານນາສ້າງເຫວີຍ
ວັນທີ 6 ມັງກອນ 2017

You're invited

Free
ຊີມຟີ

Ethnic Minorities' Food and Stands:
ງານວາງສະແດງອາຫານ ແລະ ວັດທະນະທຳຊົນເຜົ່າ

Starting at: 9:00 AM
ເລີ່ມແຕ່: 9:00 ໂມງເຊົ້າ

Sponsored by:
ສະໜັບສະໜູນໂດຍ:  LATSS FORUM

Ethnic Minorities' Performance
ສະແດງສິລະປະບັນດາເຜົ່າ

Starting at: 5:30 PM
ເລີ່ມແຕ່: 5:30 ໂມງແລງ

