

LOCALLY LED DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH



GERRY ROXAS FOUNDATION. A screenshot of members from around the world during the first virtual COPE gathering.

ACTIVITY: Communities of Practice for Effective Partnerships (COPE)

COPE supports the development of an organic South-South community of practice for local organizations to strengthen their capacities in systems thinking approaches to solve their communities' development challenges.

Sustainable communities of practice take time to develop organically. Through COPE, local organizations from eight countries across Asia and Latin America come together to learn from and support each other. Together, these diverse organizations are innovating, sharing, and learning about systems, tools, and approaches to address local priorities and needs.

SYSTEMS THINKING IN LOCALLY LED DEVELOPMENT

Why systems thinking? Nothing occurs in a vacuum. Systems thinking refers to a set of analytic approaches that seek to understand how systems behave, interact with their environment, and influence each other.

COPE believes that when local organizations are equipped with [systems thinking approaches](#), they will be better able to co-create solutions with local actors to even the most entrenched development challenges, potentially leading to more sustainable outcomes. Through COPE, members find a space to exchange learning and experiences with the systems thinking approaches they pilot with their own communities.

THE APPROACH

Can communities of practice of local organizations be an effective, efficient platform for USAID to engage directly with local actors?

The potential is there. To explore this question, COPE is:

- ✦ **Building a community of practice:** local organizations are growing from and learning with each other.
- ✦ **Building digital infrastructures for collaboration:** technology facilitates collaboration while allowing on-demand access to resources for partners.
- ✦ **Building a robust monitoring and evaluation system:** collaboration, learning, and adapting is at the center.
- ✦ **Strengthening local capacity:** COPE supports individual and collective capacity to address complex, trans-boundary, and cross-cutting issues.
- ✦ **Promoting systems thinking:** demonstration projects exemplify how and why to take a systems approach.

BUILDING ON PAST LEARNING

To facilitate continued learning after a [three-week long systems thinking course](#), participating local organizations from Asia and Latin America came together to form COPE. This course, developed and delivered by LINC LLC under the [Local Systems Practice award](#) funded by USAID's Locally Led Development Initiatives from 2017-2020, aimed to share systems thinking methods and tools for participating local development practitioners to apply directly to their work. These local organizations represent different technical areas and sectors, including human rights, natural resource management, gender, education, and economic growth, among others. Across sectors and contexts, these organizations are supporting each other in developing and leading local development solutions.

THREE PARTNERS

Prime Partner: Gerry Roxas Foundation, one of the oldest foundations in the Philippines, provides overall project supervision, and serves as the lead for Asia-based consortium members.

Latin America Coordinator: Corporación ECOSS leads coordination with the Latin America Consortium, providing regular technical and advisory support.

Resource Partner: LINC LLC serves as the main capacity development provider.

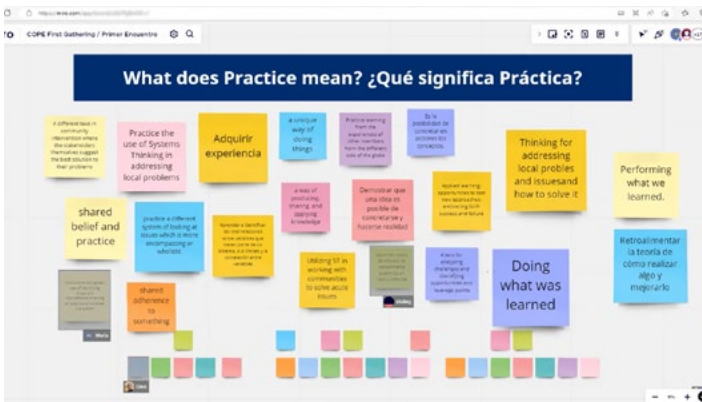
16 MEMBERS

Latin America:

1. Grupo Argos S.A. (Colombia)
2. Corporación Conciudadania (Colombia)
3. Fundación Hijos de la Sierra Flor (Colombia)
4. Fedecovera, R.L (Guatemala)
5. Cecropia (Mexico)
6. Institucion Renace A.B.P. (Mexico)

Asia:

1. Conrado & Ladislawa Alcantara Foundation (Philippines)
2. Curiosity (Philippines)
3. MINCODE (Philippines)
4. NGOs for Fisheries Reform (Philippines)
5. Tropical Disease Foundation Inc. (Philippines)
6. Tuason Development Foundation (Philippines)
7. Affiliated Network for Social Accountability (ANSA) (Cambodia)
8. Public Association "Bereke" (Kazakhstan)
9. Greenhub (Vietnam)
10. Nature Conservation Management (NACOM) (Bangladesh)



During COPE's first virtual gathering, members shared what "practice" means to them.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Some planned key innovations include:

- ✨ **Enhancing digital inclusion** across the globe to learn and share
- ✨ **Building a dynamic knowledge hub** to share resources on locally led development and systems thinking
- ✨ **Learning while doing** so member organizations can pilot systems thinking approaches and share experiences

CONTACT THE LOCALLY LED DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

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