

# REGIONAL CROSS LEARNING MEETING SUMMARY REPORT



YouthLEAD

9/12/2020

UNDP Being LGBTI in Asia Small Grants Program

## BACKGROUND

The meeting began with some introductory words from the UNDP team who were managing the Being LGBTI in Asia Pacific Small Grants Program. They wanted to thank everyone for their efforts especially due to the turbulent duration of the project in accordance to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Youth LEAD team jumped in touching on the thematic component of the program, which was “Enhancing LGBTI youth leadership in the Asia Pacific” and how the program aimed to achieve this through Youth LEAD’s “Organizational Change and Development Manual” for youth led organizations.

### Youth LEAD’s Organizational Change and Development Manual

Since 2013, Youth LEAD has been providing small grants for youth led organizations in the Asia Pacific region as well as enhancing the capacity and leadership components as well. Although, they had come across several ODC manuals, there was a recurring issue of the bulkiness or irrelevance to youth organization structures and departments. Thus, a series of consultations with like-minded youth organizations took place in 2019. With the support of a youth and lead consultant, the ODC manual was developed. The completion of the manual was timely as Youth LEAD was granted the UNDP Asia Pacific Small Grants Program where they piloted the manual with three LGBTI youth organizations: Youth LEAD Mongolia, Ya All (India) and Myanmar Youth Stars. Following the completion of the ODC project with UNDP, the ODC manual will now be integrated into Youth LEAD’s core business.

“ENHANCING LGBTI YOUTH LEADERSHIP IN THE ASIA PACIFIC”

#### Meeting Objectives

1. Reflections on the implementation of the Youth LEAD developed regional ODC manual and how it has led to strengthened LGBTI Youth Leadership at the national level
2. Candid discussions on the promising ODC practices from youth LGBTI-led organizations and how it leveraged sustainable advocacy efforts at the national level
3. Highlight the relationship between strengthened organizations and the advocacy results
4. Foster cross learning about best practices on ODC and opportunities for the future

#### Youth LEAD Mongolia

**ODC Assessment Journey** – Based on their assessment of current and past programs there is a need for Human Resources (TOR’s for volunteers), Programme Management (need for a strategy plan, governance policy), Networking and Partnership (extend beyond NGO’s to governmental and international stakeholders).

**Key Activities** – Capacity building of the team (successfully recruited new LGBTI members and a two day training, virtual trainings to understand diversity, project proposal development program, coordinator leadership coaching program) and Organizational Development (TOR for members and board, two year strategy plan, ODC policy development).

**Strengthened LGBTI Youth Leadership** – Youth LEAD Mongolia has become part of the board for The Mongolian Youth Council, one of their LGBTI youth members presented at the Youth Civil Society 6<sup>th</sup> National Forum about how the pandemic has effected youths through a five minute video, the improvement of soft and team skills, project conception and implementation processes, and the increase of confidence in youth leadership.

### Ya All (India)

**ODC Assessment Journey** – Scored 126/215 from the ODC assessment. Although, they scored on the lower side of all six components, they chose to focus on Programme Management, Finance Management, Networking and Partnership.

**Key Activities** – Under Programme Management (two day interactive workshops on framing policies to ensure quality decision making, equity and fairness; weekly soft skills mentorship, grant writing workshop with consultant). For Finance Management (financial manual completed, hired an accountant for auditing purposes, finance training for three staff members). Networking and Partnership programs are still on going.

**Strengthened LGBTI Youth Leadership** – A number of LGBTI youth leaders from Ya All made it into different decision-making platforms in health, human rights and socio-economic issues. One youth LGBT member joined as a Youth Panel Advisor for the Global Mental Health Databank Project by The Wellcome Trust UK, another joined as a board member of Young People in Action Team for YuWaah: Generation Unlimited by UNICEF. In addition, the coordinator was selected as an emerging youth fellow for TCI Asia Fellowship 2020-2022. They were also recognized by the UN youth envoy for their work as one of the 10 inspiring leaders during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Myanmar Youth Stars

**ODC Assessment Journey** – From the ODC assessment, MYS chose to work on Network Strategy (long and short term), Network Structure, Management System and Practices.

**Key Activities** – Strategy Review (current programs and work plan 2021-2023, advocacy and networking strategy, AOA, developing the resource mobilization and fundraising strategy). The management systems and practice review is still ongoing and should be completed by early January 2021. During the annual MYS meeting (end of Dec 2020) with their 18 township partners they will conduct the network structure review.

**Strengthened LGBTI Youth Leadership** – They would like to note that the COVID-19 pandemic was a roadblock in completing some of the activities on time. However, the program gave an opportunity for three YKP leaders in the organization to step up and take a leadership role by implementing the ODC manual. The feedback on the program was that it increased awareness on multiple organizational levels. They realized the assessment should be employed on a regular basis in order to strengthen their youth leadership capacity.

## PLENARY SESSION

### What are the Lessons Learned through Organizational Change for a Youth Led Organization, what has worked well and what hasn't?

**Inti Muda Indonesia (Guest Speaker)** – Having governance documents and policies have been very useful in the successful running of Inti Muda including the clear establishment of roles and responsibilities. However, areas they still need to improve on are having a fair representation of YKP at the leadership level. In addition, when it comes to recruiting for leadership positions, it is a timely process that causes a gap in between transition phases. Recruiting for leadership takes more than a couple of training sessions. Lastly an important issue is funding sources as they face challenges with proposal making due to their limited English.

**Youth LEAD Mongolia** – The OD process was empowering and gave old and new members an opportunity to strengthen their leadership skills. However, they have the same issue as Inti Muda in terms of sustainable funding sources. They noted that donors would only consider long term-experienced donors and overlook young organizations such as themselves.

**Ya All** – Due to the fact that Ya All still relies on a fiscal host because of government regulations, sometimes their funding gets stuck or arrives quite late, which caused a delay in their auditing process. However, the ODC manual proved a reliable document that encouraged volunteers for strengthened programming. Ya All also agreed on donor issues, contributing that donors might not see them as an accountable organization. They hope to continue the ODC assessments in order for donor organizations to take them more seriously.

### Reflections on how a stronger organization can lead to sustained and better advocacy results

**Youth LEAD Mongolia** – Since YKP are considered a member of marginalized populations, Youth LEAD Mongolia are invited to lots of meetings such as the UN 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary as representation of marginalized young people. They believe that advocacy can be sustained when an organization remains consistent with their advocacy messages to stakeholders.

**Ya All** – Partnerships with regional established networks such as Youth LEAD, have been beneficial to government and donor agencies in recognizing Ya All and giving them a platform for their advocacy.

**Myanmar Youth Stars** – MYS believes that a recurrent review of organizational practices is important in having sustained advocacy.

### What are the future plans stemming from the ODC project, or if there was funding available, what would your organization's plan be for OD in strengthening youth leadership in 2021?

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**Youth LEAD Mongolia** – Through the ODC project they have launched a mental health program for the LGBT youth community. There have been 50 applications, however, only 25 will be selected this year to receive mental health support from a professional. Next year they hope to have the capacity to implement this program without a consultant.

**Ya All** – Through reviewing their programme management aspects from the ODC assessment they realized that they are left out of most of the programmes because they were based on data. Ya All and the north eastern region of India lack data and so for next year the organization would like to focus on evidence gathering and more outreach programs on CSE, SRHR and mental health to the youth LGBT community.

**Myanmar Youth Stars** – If there was funding available, Myanmar Youth Stars would like to continue reviewing certain policies such as HR and the programme management guideline to be more realistic. In addition, they would like the opportunity to train a second line of LGBT youth leaders in order for a new generation to take over the organization.

## CLOSING STATEMENT FROM YOUTH LEAD

There are three tangible plans for Youth LEAD in 2021 regarding the ODC:

1. We will conduct a case study amongst the 2020 ODC countries and compile the planning processes, results and lessons learnt.
2. With the information from the case study we would like to modify the approach and roll out in more countries.
3. We hope to support the ongoing ODC agendas from 2020 previously mentioned by YL MNG, Ya All and MYS either through the small grants program or the continued ODC program.



ODC PARTICIPANTS, UNDP AND YOUTH LEAD DURING THE ZOOM MEETING