

DISCUSSION PAPER III

Key Perspectives on Professional Development

Christopher Dearing & Savina Srik

The focus of this workshop is the need to expand the capacity of national/provincial trainers to a level in which they may be able to act as master trainers in subsequent training sessions. In order to fulfill this need, two significant issues must be addressed: 1) Trainers appear limited in their capacity to convey teaching methodologies to the commune-level teachers; and 2) Trainers' interpretations of the methods and activities used in the Teacher's Guidebook vary and conflict.

One method for addressing these issues could be to review the full content of the Teacher's Guidebook, discussing in detail the concepts for each method. Not surprisingly, given the amount of time that such an approach would require, this option is not feasible. And even if it were feasible in the allotted time, it would be an inefficient use of our time. Despite the illusion of thoroughness, the traditional method of lecture and review would actually be ineffective in addressing the overall issue at stake (the issue that we will address today), which is your professional development.

Rather than tediously walking you through the philosophy of the Guidebook, I will explain some tools that will empower you with the ability to (re)create and develop the profession of teaching in Cambodia. Professional development is an important term that is often misunderstood, yet so critical to any career field which prides itself on self-regulation. Today, we will explore different models of professional development, focusing particularly on the concept of professional learning communities.

Because the concept of professional development is often misunderstood, it is probably best to first describe what it is not.

Professional development is not a label. If I were to tell all of you today that you were no longer “teachers,” but “professional educators,” would you feel any more developed or improved? The mere change in one’s title or job description will hold little promise in making you a better professional or a “master trainer.”¹ A trainer who has trouble with explaining a Jigsaw activity to a room full of commune teachers will still have trouble with this task, regardless of whether his/her title is “trainer” or “master trainer.”

Professional development is not based on one’s resources. Teachers can easily get discouraged by the lack of resources, and Cambodia is not alone in facing this issue. In the United States, teachers often complain of having limited access to tools and resources, and it is not uncommon for teachers to feel isolated from other adults with limited time to fulfill their duties.² But no matter what resources you are working with, the professional nature of your job should not change. A doctor can practice medicine anywhere in the world, with little equipment, assistance, or compensation, yet his work is still regarded as highly professional. Why should teachers be any different? Professionalism is a mark of one’s knowledge and ability to perform, not the amount of money he or she makes, the resources he has at his disposal, or even the circumstances in which his tasks must be performed.

Finally, professional development, surprisingly, is not generated by one’s exposure to the newest fad in training, but the mastery of skill that can only be attained through deliberate practice. Often there is an expectation that the next workshop will bring the latest and greatest techniques and knowledge, conferring some awesome power to make one immediately successful in the classroom and a “master trainer” amongst his peers who were not so fortunate to attend. While it is essential that teachers learn and grow in their profession by an assimilation of new ideas, techniques, and knowledge, mastery is not a function of this exposure; rather, it is the outcome of a concerted effort to practice and be the best at one knows. The Cambridge Handbook of Expertise and Expert Performance came to the conclusion that no matter what the subject of study, medicine or math, piano or soccer, children and adults need “deliberate practice in order to achieve their objectives.”³

¹ Nancy Flanagan, *Teacher Professionalism: Diamonds on the Souls of Her Shoes*, in UNCOVERING TEACHER LEADERSHIP: ESSAYS AND VOICES FROM THE FIELD 89-90 (Richard H. Ackerman et al. eds., 2007).

² Roland S. Smith, *The Teacher Leader*, UNCOVERING TEACHER LEADERSHIP: ESSAYS AND VOICES FROM THE FIELD 15-20 (Richard H. Ackerman et al. eds., 2007).

³ DOUGLAS B. REEVES, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INTO STUDENT RESULTS 50 (2010).

But as you well know, practicing only the older, traditional methods of teaching will only make you a master of older, traditional methods. If one is to grow as a teacher and a professional, he or she must be committed to building his or her repertoire of educational approaches to include more modern, non-traditional methods. Putting this into another light, would you want to be operated on by one who has mastered only traditional medicine, or one who knows both traditional and non-traditional medicine? For many, the task of learning a new method is an uncomfortable one because it means that he or she must recognize that, for at least some period, they will not be “masters” but “trainees.”

Inevitably, when you ask a person to stop viewing themselves as a “master” and to be open-minded to learning a new method or approach, you invite skepticism and even frustration. All of you have probably undergone this process, and to some degree now, you are probably still struggling with the difficulties of mastering some of the Guidebook’s methods or approaches to learning. In addition, many of you have voiced your concern with the difficulty in addressing the skepticism of the commune level teachers who you train, particularly as it concerns the new techniques and ideas. Undoubtedly, some of you are probably asking, “How can we demand our trainees to practice techniques, which they do not like or appreciate?” The difficulty of dealing with this skepticism and how to overcome it can be summarized in the following phrase: Commitment follows competence.

“Commitment follows competence”⁴ is a simple concept that reflects an extensive study conducted by two educators on how new practices and ideas can improve schools. It is human nature to love what one does well, and not surprisingly, teachers who are exposed to new ideas and methods will be hesitant in committing to these ideas, particularly when the learning curve is steep and the activities require an entirely new perspective on doing things. The reaction of supervisors and trainers may be to fall into a role of advocacy or even defensiveness and resignation.

Rather than attempting to persuade the trainees to *like* the techniques and ideas you are introducing, your primary focus must be to facilitate their *competence*. Two researchers, Huberman and Miles, concluded that teachers will typically adopt an initial position of skepticism and only after practice and reflection will they begin to acknowledge the potential rewards. The implied task then for you, as trainers, is to put less energy into trying to “persuade teachers that they will like a new practice and more energy into helping those practitioners master the new strategies.”⁵ Make them competent, and the commitment will come.

⁴ BRUCE JOYCE & EMILY CALHOUN, MODELS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A CELEBRATION OF EDUCATORS 79 (2010) *citing* A.M. HUBERMAN & MATTHEW B. MILES, M. B., INNOVATION UP CLOSE: HOW SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT WORKS (1984)

⁵ *Id.*

But all of this is easier said than done when we acknowledge our own areas for improvement. This is where professional development comes in.

There are a variety of methods for professional development. The brief list below highlights some of the major ones.

1. Individual efforts: Individuals are supported with time and money to learn and grow professionally.

2. Peers: Teachers share knowledge and practices amongst each other, either as mentors (an experienced or knowledgeable teacher shares advice with another teacher with less experience or knowledge) or as a coach (in which a teacher with a particular focus area [e.g., literacy] gives advice to an entire school or department staff on ways to improve student performance in an area).

3. Action research: This activity involves a disciplined inquiry by teachers into their own school's curriculum, instruction, or social climate.

4. Professional learning communities: While this is similar to action research in the sense that teachers are engaged in disciplined inquiry, the activity is more open-ended in the sense that the group is not organized around a singular problem or issue but simply the process of improving themselves, their students, and their school.

5. Workshops: This model is embodied in today's forum, which is structured around certain problems and issues that everyone works towards resolving through discussion and planning. Workshops are not lectures in the sense that you come to merely listen and absorb; rather, they are intended to be forums for addressing issues and coming to proposed solutions and plans.⁶

While it is valuable to review all of these potential avenues of professional development, we must be efficient with our time and energy and focus on only one or two models at most. Indeed, it is far better to have a deep understanding of only one or two areas, then only a superficial knowledge of many. First, we will look at professional learning communities as a tool for not only making you better trainers but also creating a collegial atmosphere in which ideas can be shared and acted upon. Second, we will briefly discuss the role of peer coaches and ways that you can use peer coaching to make you better trainers. Finally, we will briefly touch upon the concept of teacher leadership and its relationship with your professional

⁶ BRUCE JOYCE & EMILY CALHOUN, *MODELS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A CELEBRATION OF EDUCATORS* 10 (2010).

development. This discussion will be supplemented with some examples and ideas for making these models your own and we will, time permitting, practice the model of a professional learning community in groups.

Action Research & Professional Learning Communities

It is best to introduce professional learning communities through the concept of action research as the latter will inform us on the former's inquiry process. The process of questioning one's practice, school, and community are essential to a healthy professional learning community.

Action research is defined as systematic, intentional study by teachers of their own classroom practice.⁷ There are five phases of inquiry in an action research cycle:

1. Select an area or problem of collective interest.
2. Collect data related to this area.
3. Organize the data.
4. Interpret the data and add to it by examining related literature.
5. Take action based on this information.⁸

Action research involves a disciplined inquiry into problems or questions that affect the students' learning, and while action research is defined by the notion of a disciplined collection/analysis of data, the overall model is not much different from professional learning communities.

Professional learning communities (PLC) are essentially groups of individuals who commit to a common goal of learning from their practice. Professional learning communities are distinguished from action research teams in the sense that PLCs are defined by more open-ended processes and less formal approaches to data collection and analysis. In the interest of time, we will focus on the concept of a professional learning community, not because action research is not important to our work, but because the idea of inquiry that is embodied in action research can be collapsed into our discussion of how to organize and manage a PLC.

There are five attributes of a PLC:⁹

⁷ NANCY FICHTMAN DANA & DIANE YENDOL-HOPPEY, *THE REFLECTIVE EDUCATOR'S GUIDE TO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: COACHING INQUIRY-ORIENTED LEARNING COMMUNITIES* 4 (2008) *citing* MARILYN COCHRAN-SMITH & SUSAN LANDY LYTLE, *INSIDE/OUTSIDE: TEACHER RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE* (1993).

⁸ Joyce & Calhoun, *supra* note 6 at 67 *citing* Emily Calhoun & C. Glickman, *Issues and dilemmas of action research in the League of Professional Schools*. (April 1993) Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Atlanta, GA. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED360327).

1. Supportive and shared leadership
2. Collective creativity
3. Shared values and vision
4. Supportive conditions
5. Shared personal practice

The dominant focus of the group is to discuss, reflect, and take actions that support the ultimate goal of improving student learning. Open dialogue and an eagerness to question are essential to the group's success. Indeed, the five attributes above embody a culture of open inquiry, in which all members of the PLC share their ideas and opinions on a particular issue or question.

Leadership must be shared in the sense that everyone's voice counts in the group's decisions and decisions are made collectively. Leadership, which will be discussed later, does not need to be embodied in an individual, but can be shared amongst all group members who vote on any decisions of the group. At times, discussions may need a moderator or someone who can encourage group members to speak when they are shy or in some cases regulate the group's discussions so they stay on task. This position too, if it is created by the group, can be filled by a person who is elected by the group for a temporary period.

Creativity is essential to the group's dynamic, and collective creativity can be sustained by making sure to regularly include members from different social groups and backgrounds, including members of the community who may not even be part of the school. Creativity can also be supported by group members taking the initiative of seeking out literature or resources that might bring a new perspective to the group's understanding of a problem or question.

The group can create conditions that support shared values and vision by the establishment of a "charter." A charter is a kind of constitution in the sense that it establishes in writing how the group will govern itself and how the group proposes to improve the school and its community. The greatest value in a charter is in its ability to free group members from unspoken norms that may limit collective action. The charter, rather than binding the group to some set of rules, should be a document that brings all of the group members together to a shared purpose. A charter can also help establish conditions that will support the group's activities by dealing with the logistics of time and resources.

⁹ Public Schools of North Carolina State Board of Education: Dept. of Public Instruction, *Professional Learning Communities*, <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/profdev/resources/proflearn/> (last visited Oct. 27, 2010).

Finally, the attribute of a shared personal practice is best explained in the concept of openness. Group members must be willing to open up their classrooms, lesson plans, and ultimately their minds to the group so ideas can be shared on how to best improve the group and ultimately student learning. In many respects, this may be one of the most difficult tasks because it not only requires one to be willing to share his or her best ideas on improving the practice, but also his or her practice for being improved by other group members' ideas. The sharing must be two-way in the sense that one cannot propose ideas for improvement while outright rejecting the advice for improving one's own practice. Open discussions and open-mindedness are the cornerstones of an effective professional learning community.

But knowing the attributes of a professional learning community is only the beginning of our discussion. In order for you to truly understand the concept of a PLC, it would be best to look at three examples on how a PLC could work.

Example 1 of a Professional Learning Community:¹⁰

Situation: You and a group of teachers have formed a PLC to discuss ways to improve the teaching of the history of DK.

Meeting 1: You and your group of teachers meet for about an hour to discuss the organization of the PLC, values, vision, and norms. You all agree to share responsibilities for making decisions by vote. By majority vote, you are elected as a "recorder" for the group. Your responsibility is to record what was discussed. A colleague is elected to be a "facilitator" for the group. He facilitates the discussion by organizing agendas or plans that match the group's discussions and decisions. Another colleague is elected to be a "timekeeper" who keeps everyone's opinion to a set time limit. He also keeps the group informed on how much time is remaining and schedules for meetings. Another person is a "motivator." She assists with keeping the group on task and in alignment with its values, vision, and norms. In essence, she makes sure the group does not lose focus. Finally, there is a "reporter." She is responsible for reporting to the group on what was discussed at the last meeting. You go around the group to discuss good times for the PLC to meet, as well as important values like punctuality, open communication, and allowing all members an opportunity to speak. You leave the meeting with an outline of these roles and responsibilities, a draft list of values and vision, and ideas or questions for the next meeting.

¹⁰ NANCY FICHTMAN DANA & DIANE YENDOL-HOPPEY, THE REFLECTIVE EDUCATOR'S GUIDE TO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: COACHING INQUIRY-ORIENTED LEARNING COMMUNITIES 8 (2008).

Meeting 2: This meeting continues with the task of organizing the PLC, but a greater focus is placed on the group's understanding and views of problems or questions that surround the teaching of the history of DK. It is essential that the PLC votes upon a list of goals. PLCs who lack a list of goals will inevitably become stale and inactive. In this example, the group decides to proceed without a charter for the time being, but the group's overall organization and goals are put in writing for record-keeping purposes. The reporter reports on the minutes for the last meeting. The facilitator discusses the documents, plans, or outlines that he/she created based on the group's decisions from the last meeting. One group member disagrees with one point in the facilitator's outline. The group compares the facilitator's outline with the recorder's version of what was decided upon at the previous meeting and the group decides by vote that the outline should not be changed. The timekeeper alerts the group to the fact that next week will make meeting impossible so a new time is discussed for the meeting. The motivator encourages group members who may be too talkative to be a bit more concise so as to allow sufficient time for less vocal members to speak. The group concludes the meeting by deciding that each group member should come to the next meeting with a priority list of problems or questions that the group should focus on for improving the teaching of the history of DK.

Meeting 3: The group follows the previous meetings with a report of the last meeting's discussions. The facilitator encourages the group members to read their lists of problems aloud. The group discusses the lists of problems and all members agree that one member's problem would be very interesting to study and it would hold great potential for improving their teaching. Moreover, it fits within one of the group's goals, which is to "build relationships with the local community." The member is a woman who has lived in the community since before the DK regime. She is concerned that while many students are interested in learning about the history of DK, and particularly how their parents suffered, there are no resources for studying the history of the local area. Another group member who lived during the DK period agrees. While he did not live in this community, he too was surprised by the students' ignorance of their community history, particularly DK history. The group agrees to focus on studying this problem. They discuss the scope of the problem and possible plans of action. The group also agrees that to learn more about the community, they would do some research on the area. They agree to start with looking at any DC-Cam articles that deal with people who lived in the local community during the DK period.

Meeting 4: The facilitator for the group begins the meeting by stating, "At our last meeting, we decided to look more closely at the lack of understanding students have on how their community suffered under the DK regime." To accomplish the goal of this meeting, the group read a short article by a teacher who lived in the community. The article was published in DC-Cam's Searching for the Truth Magazine.

After the discussion, the group members agree to come to the next meeting with a list of proposed plans of action for dealing with the problem.

Meetings 5+: The group discusses the proposed plans, and by majority vote, they agree to a plan of interviewing local leaders and members of the community for what life was like during the DK regime. They agree that each member of the group will produce a record of their research. To assist in their plan of action, they also discuss the possibility of obtaining support from the school administration. The group also enlists the support of students who are interested in helping; and, in the interest of building community relations as well, they invite community members who lived during the DK period to come to their class to tell their story. They circulate the stories and their studies to school and community members for their awareness. They also circulate their studies to DC-Cam for publication in the Searching for the Truth Magazine.

Example 2 of a Professional Learning Community:¹¹

Situation: You and a group of teachers have formed a PLC to discuss ways to improve the teaching of the history of DK.

Meetings 1-2: You organize the PLC, establishing shared values, vision, and norms.

Meeting 3: Your group agrees to look at the problem of teaching methodology. Some teachers are having trouble with certain Guidebook activities. Other teachers understand the activities, but they have trouble with motivating the students. The group discusses the scope of the problems, questions, and possible plans of action.

Meeting 4: The group agrees that the best way to study the problem is to conduct peer observations. The group discusses the two methods of conducting peer observations.

Method 1: The observer as a video camera. The purpose of this observation is to inform the teacher as to her habits and behavior as well as her students. It is important to mention that neither teacher nor observer should make a value judgment or attempt to interpret the observations: i.e., "the student was bored" is an interpretation; "the student yawned and looked at the window" is an observation;

¹¹ CES Nationalweb, *Sidebar: Three ways of looking at a colleague: Protocols for peer observation*, http://old.essentialschools.org/cs/resources/view/ces_res/37 (last visited Oct. 27, 2010) citing Simon Hole, 15 Horace 4 (April 1999).

and, "The class was wonderful" is a value judgment. All of these should be avoided when possible.

Step 1: Pre-observation conference: The observer and observee (teacher who is being observed) sit down and discuss the lesson that will be observed. The teacher informs the observer of what he will do and what he expects students to accomplish. The observer records this information.

Step 2: Observation: The observer writes down as much of what she sees as possible. The idea is to record all activities, circumstances, and observations as if one were a video camera.

Step 3: Debriefing: The observer and teacher discuss what happened. The teacher speaks first by telling the observer what she observed and what happened. The observer listens and takes notes on anything that escaped her notice. After the teacher finishes, the observer then speaks, discussing the details of which she had not noticed and what she observed.

Method 2: Focus point observations. The purpose of this observation is to inform the teacher on a particular area of her class. The observation should be framed in specific questions such as, "How am I responding to student questions?" The idea is that all observations are designed to inform the teacher on this specific focus point.

Step 1: Pre-observation conference: The teacher and observer discuss the lesson plan and the particular focus point for the observation.

Step 2: Observation: The observer takes notes on details surrounding the focus point as well as questions that may be related to the focus point.

Step 3: Debriefing: The observer tells the teacher what the focus point was, and invites the teacher to share her thoughts on the lesson and the focus point. The observer takes notes of these thoughts and after the teacher is finished, the observer explains any information that she noted with respect to the focus point as well as additional questions.

Example 3 of a Professional Learning Community:

Situation: You and a group of teachers have formed a PLC to discuss ways to improve the teaching of the history of DK.

Meetings 1-2: You organize the PLC, establishing shared values, vision, and norms.

Meeting 3: Your group agrees to look at the problem of teaching methodology. Some teachers are having trouble with posing open-ended questions and leading discussions. There is a disagreement within the group on how to lead discussions and pose open-ended questions. The group discusses the scope of the issue,

questions, and possible plans of action for dealing with this confusion and disagreement.

Meeting 4: The group agrees that the best way to study the issue is to research the philosophy behind open-ended questions and class discussions. The group agrees to inquire with other teachers in the school and even in other schools on the topic for the purpose of gather information and different viewpoints.

Meeting 5: The group members meet and, unfortunately, there are not many teachers who use this method or approach in class. Most classes are lecture-based and teacher-centered with little time for open-ended questions. They agree to research local sources for any articles or books on open-ended questions and leading classes through discussions.

Meeting 6+: One member has obtained an article on this topic. The article explains a method for leading a class through a discussion with open-ended questions. The article is circulated, and after reading the article, the group members use a tool called "The 4As" (designed by the National School Reform Faculty). As group members read the article, they highlight and write notes in the margin to answer the following four questions:

1. What *assumptions* does the author of the text hold?
2. What do you *agree* with in the text?
3. What do you want to *argue* with in the text?
4. To what parts of the text do you want to *aspire*?¹²

At the end of the meeting, the members agree to discuss this topic more for the purpose of addressing confusion on this type of activity and setting up observation sessions between group members in an effort to improve their practice with this teaching method.

Looking over examples one through three of PLC activities, one should be able to see that the driving force is not individual, but community leadership. Teacher leadership is closely aligned with the task of building a professional community, and professional communities for teachers not only strengthen the community but the development of its individual members.

In a five-year study of secondary schools in California, two researchers found that teachers within such professional communities:

¹² DANA & YENDOL-HOPPEY, *supra* note 10 at 8.

1. Talked openly about their students and the problems they were having...
2. Discussed curricular and pedagogical approaches to making changes together...
3. Taught one another different strategies and practices...and
4. Committed themselves to collective discussion and action with their peers as colleagues.¹³

In essence, professional development is more than working independently to improve one's own teaching; it involves working interdependently for the development of the profession. A professional learning community is one approach to this task, but it is not the only one. An important aspect of any professional development program is the concept of peer review and coaching.

Peer Review and Coaching

In order to understand the role of peer review and coaching in professional development, it is important to first understand training effectiveness in terms of its implementation. If the ultimate goal is to improve student learning, then to improve student learning by training teachers in new methods requires us to assume that the new methods will actually be implemented. Indeed, what is the point of training teachers in new methods if the new methods are never implemented? Thus, implementation is an implied task of the Genocide Education Project; and our success should be gauged, not only on how much new training is mastered (even though commitment follows competence), but how much is *actually* implemented. So how many of the new methods can we expect to be implemented? The question of post-training implementation of new teaching methods was the focus of one meta-analysis conducted in the United States, illustrated in Figure 1 below.

While the analysis describes the difficulty of implementation, it also offers some important guidance on what matters in training teachers. When one looks over the effects of training on mastery and implementation, one finds that while all of the different types of training have a very positive effect on knowledge, only the participant's active engagement in the material through lesson planning and practice achieve a short-term effect on the majority of participants' use of the new training. Even more important to our discussion today, it is evident that follow-up in the form of peer coaching is one way to ensure that most trainees will use new methods in the long-term. Peer review (and the coaching that follows), then, is essential to the Genocide Education Project and your professional development.

¹³ Anne Lieberman & Lynne Miller, *What Research Says About Teacher Leadership*, in UNCOVERING TEACHER LEADERSHIP: ESSAYS AND VOICES FROM THE FIELD 44-45 (Richard H. Ackerman et al. eds., 2007).

Figure 1¹⁴

Training Element	Effects on Knowledge	Effects on Short-Term Use (% of Participants)	Effects on Long-Term Use (% of Participants)
Study of Rationale (Readings, Discussions, Lectures)	Very Positive	5-10%	5-10%
Rationale Plus Demonstrations (10 or more)	Very Positive	5-20%	5-10%
Rationale Plus Demonstrations Plus Planning of Units and Lessons	Very Positive	80-90%	5-10%
All the Above, Plus Peer Coaching	Very Positive	90%+	90%+

Peer coaching is not supervision, and peer coaches hold no position of authority or power over the teacher being reviewed and coached. In essence, peer coaching is a relationship of improving one another as colleagues, who share a common interest in the development of the profession. It is intertwined with the concept of professional learning communities in the sense that both concepts require trust, collaboration, and an appreciation for critical inquiry in one's practice.

Peer coaching can be utilized in the context of creating a professional learning community, or it can be simply a stand-alone method during a teacher workshop. During each workshop, one member of the training team can be elected as a peer coach. Her task as a peer coach is to focus on a specific aspect of the training that requires improvement. The peer coach will observe the training, taking notes in a similar format as that mentioned in the Focus Point Observation Method *supra*. After an observation of their respective lesson, the coach conducts a debriefing with each member of the team (as well as overall as a team for the respective workshop), by first hearing the trainer(s)'s thoughts on the aspect of training being observed. Then the peer coach provides her observations. The peer coach may also choose to share his/her observations/recommendations with the overall team. Overall, the team (and individual trainers) could now make plans and design protocols for improving their performance in light of what was observed.

¹⁴ Joyce & Calhoun, *supra* note 8 at 79.

However, a question arises regarding the competence of the peer coach (and team as a whole) to not only understand what they are observing, but respond to it. Indeed, what is the value of having a peer coach if he is not sure of what to observe? What is the value in having a peer coach if the team does not know what to do to respond to her observations? Again, this is where the pool of collective knowledge and commitment to professional standards can be harnessed in the form of a professional learning community.

The PLC may need to first focus on the fundamentals of observation: What types of questions should observers ask? What do we ultimately want out of an observation and how can we learn from observations? Most importantly, once an observation has occurred, what can we do with this information? These are important questions that cannot be answered in a single workshop, but they can be answered amongst yourselves, provided that there is a commitment on your part to seek out information and learn from your practice and each other.

A professional learning community is not a panacea for all the problems and questions you face as teachers, but it is a vehicle for learning more about yourself and the profession. Ultimately, the strength of a professional learning community lies in its ability to harness the collective intellect, energy, and creativity of its members for the purpose of addressing problems and questions. A professional learning community works when its members are willing to forego the isolation and independence that comes with the teaching profession, and assume interdependence with one's colleagues. In many respects, the PLC parallels contemporary views on teacher leadership.

Teacher Leadership

Teacher leadership can be described in six domains of leadership work:¹⁵

1. Knowledge of teaching and learning
2. Knowledge of collegiality
3. Knowledge of educational context
4. Opportunities for continual learning
5. Management of the change process
6. Sense of moral purpose

¹⁵ Lieberman & Miller, *supra* note 13 at 44 citing Michael Fullan, *Teacher leadership: A failure to conceptualize*, in *TEACHERS AS LEADERS: PERSPECTIVES ON THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS* 246 (Donovan R. Walling ed., 1994).

Contemporary views of teacher leadership are moving away from leadership as an individual enterprise, and more towards leadership in groups who are bound by a shared vision and commitment to transformation.

Transformation, in this respect, is not an *outcome* that occurs overnight, but a *process* that continues without end. Professional development does not end with the mastery of a specific concept, activity, or skill; it is a process and a duty that defines and shapes your own identity as a professional as well as your profession's reputation with its clients (i.e., your students and society).

No one can make you a "professional"; it is a title that must be earned by rigorous attention to improving one's self and his or her colleagues' practice, assuming a sense of moral purpose, and creating a collegial atmosphere that is defined by a shared vision of what constitutes good practice. And your practice can only improve through your commitment to evaluation and peer-regulation.

As we stated from the outset, the focus of this workshop is the need to expand the capacity of national/provincial trainers to a level in which they may be able to act as master trainers in subsequent training sessions. While one can bestow on you the title "master trainers," ultimately, the task of becoming master trainers is one of assuming a process and not reaching an outcome. We are depending on your commitment to this process: not only for the sake of yourself, your profession, and ultimately this project, but also, indeed, for the sake of Cambodia's future.

For more information, please contact:

Kok-Thay Eng: truthkokthay@dccam.org