



The Connections between Language and Development

Practical experience from ICC-iBCDE staff in Mondulkiri and
Ratanakiri provinces, Cambodia



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Ensure Sustainable Development

Sustainable development needs the participation of all groups, especially ethnolinguistic minorities who depend on healthy ecosystems for their survival and future.⁴¹ Yet minorities' distance from the world's centers and languages of decision-making and power makes the vulnerable to exclusion and marginalization (form MDG)



Language has an important part to play in minorities' participation in the development process.

They are a resource for:

- ✓ understanding and analyzing local actors, their analyses and viewpoints,
- ✓ and the “human factor” in determining action and inaction, and
- ✓ for influencing social cohesion and social inclusion or exclusion. (MDG)



And they are a resource as:

- ✓ the default site for negotiating, implementing and monitoring local development,
- ✓ a clearing place for relating and integrating expert and local knowledge and reshaping the roles of and relationships between experts and actors,
- ✓ a source of strengthening a sense of ownership conducive to ecological responsibility and conservation, and
- ✓ as an object of development in their own right, including their creative potential in oral and written mode. (MDG)



4- The necessities of language use for development in Mondulkiri and Ratanakiri provinces (MDK and RTK)

- ✓ As the identity (language preservation)
- ✓ People understand each other well when they use their local languages and hard to understand Khmer.
- ✓ Indigenous people do not understand Khmer terminologies resulting the decrease of community participation.
- ✓ It is very important for them to negotiate with price and real cash payment.



- ✓ iBCDE dialogue teams using the local languages for good relationship with communities and people are able to express their opinions widely.
- ✓ **There was a real case that community people provided thumbprints and at the end they lost their lands.**
- ✓ Most of documents are in Khmer that make people difficult to understand the meaning.
- ✓ Many cases that people fall into the cheatings



- ✓ Now some people are able to read and write their own languages and they are composing the songs and sing and record them to preserve culture and to remind young people.



5- Cultures

- ✓ Language is the most important tool in ip's culture and some local languages being in danger of loosing.
- ✓ Songs and spiritual ceremonies are very important to them, especially for the relationship and conflict resolution.
- ✓ Indigenous group in RTK sing songs to make love.
- ✓ People feel free to speak when they use local language





6- Literacy classes and local language used

- ✓ iBCDE project is support indigenous people development through many ways and
- ✓ Supporting literacy classes is our priority
- ✓ Both young and old people are attending the classes
- ✓ Every village has literacy committee to encourage people to the class and to mobilize resources.



- ✓ iBCDE is advocating to put the literacy classes into the government system from grade 1 to 3, and now some schools have the classes.
- ✓ Most of our staff are from indigenous communities, so they are supporting people with the local languages.





