

Learning Centers for Environmental & Social Sustainability



The Learning Centers for Environmental and Social Sustainability (LCs) are a collaboration between the World Bank (WB), the Australian Aid and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the United States Agency for International Development and the Environmental Protection Agency (USAID / EPA). These development partners play a key role supporting and working together with academic institutions and government agencies.

The World Bank Australia Safeguards Partnership (WBASP) has helped establish LCs in the Philippines and Vietnam and is supporting establishing LCs in Myanmar, Indonesia and the Pacific Island countries. The LCs help promote sustainable infrastructure development in the East Asia Pacific region (EAP) by providing training and other capacity development activities to government counterparts, academia, consultants and other stakeholders involved in implementing environmental and social standards and policies.

The Vietnam Learning Center for Environmental and Social Sustainability

The Vietnam LC was established in 2015 in collaboration with the Asian Institute of Technology in Vietnam (AITCV) to train managers, government officials, staff of Project Management Units (PMU), university faculties, researchers, consultants, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on environmental and social sustainability in line with country and donor requirements. The Vietnam LC is now partnering with the Institute of Natural Resources and Environment Training of Vietnam (InNET), under the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MONRE), to enhance its sustainability.

From March 2015 until July 2018, 645 participants received training in the “train-the-trainer” programs and capacity enhancement (TOTCE) and courses on the following topics: involuntary resettlement; environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA); principles of

Testimonials from Participants

“Contents and time frames were appropriately designed, which provided sufficient techniques, concepts and lessons learnt for me to practice on my jobs. The training was delivered by qualified lecturers, professional organizations and with appropriate skills.”

“TOTCE courses have brought me excellent opportunities to learn not only knowledge and understanding on ESIA, but also equip me with skills on how to prepare a lecture, exercises, keep communication with participants and organize field trips.”

ESIA review; ethnic minorities; effective environmental management in construction; training design; biodiversity impact assessment; consultation and participation; health impact assessment; ESIA in energy projects; environmental and social assessment for irrigation projects and study tour; public participation in environmental and social assessment; and environmental benefits mapping and analysis. In addition, study tours were organized on the implementation of the law on public investment; environmental and social safeguards for social scientists; and ESIA for irrigation projects. Participant surveys indicate that the trainings have increased their knowledge about environmental and social safeguards and that they are applying what they have learned.

The Philippine Learning Center for Environment and Social Sustainability (PHILCESS)

PHILCESS was launched during the 2014 Safeguards Forum at the University of the Philippines National Engineering Center (UP-NEC). In conjunction with UP-NEC and in collaboration with ADB, the Philippine LC has been training managers, project management units, government

officials at district and provincial levels, consultants, and other stakeholders on good international practices for achieving environmental and social sustainability of infrastructure.

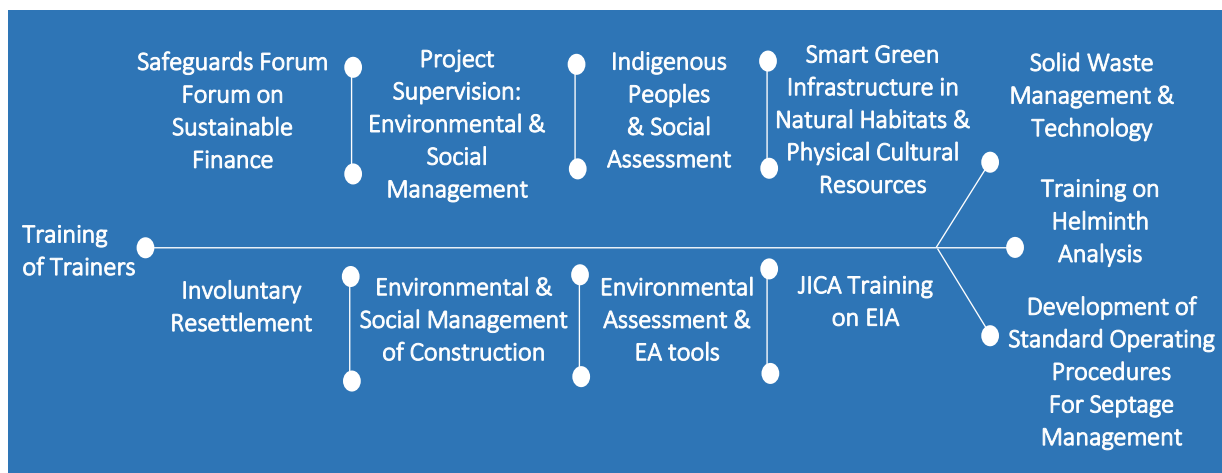
From June 2014 until July 2018, 1,357 participants have received training in the train-the-trainer programs (TOT), courses and forums. PHILCESS has also attracted participants from South Korea, Laos, Myanmar, Australia, and Vanuatu.

Testimonials from Participants

“This training is highly recommended for personnel handling environmental and social safeguards of private and government firms implementing programs financed by the World Bank and ADB. Lessons learned/technical skills on monitoring tools and evaluation process would be very useful in the supervision and management of projects with environmental and social concerns.”

“The actual examples from the speakers' experiences were helpful for us to understand the concepts.”

Courses Offered



The Indonesia Network of Learning Centers for Environmental and Social Sustainability

The Indonesia Network of Learning Centers for Environmental and Social Sustainability (NLCs-ESS) is comprised of existing learning centers across the country that are accredited in delivering training on environmental impact assessment. The network includes four Centers for Environmental Studies, two Training Centers, and the National Land College. Gadjah Mada University (UGM) currently serves as the network coordinator.

The network recently conducted a pilot training course on Land Acquisition and Resettlement. This was open to participants involved in projects supported by the multilateral development banks.

In the future, trainings will be extended to government counterparts, project sponsors, academia, NGOs and consultants who are involved in managing government and private sector-funded projects.

In 2019, trainings are planned on preparing ESIA's integrating good international industrial practices in generic and sector specific (energy and infrastructure) projects, terrestrial and marine biodiversity impact assessment and management, Indigenous Peoples, construction management, and reviewing ESIA's for energy and infrastructure projects.

The Myanmar Learning Center for Environmental and Social Assessment and Management

The work to establish a Learning Center for Environmental and Social Assessment and Management in Myanmar is ongoing. The objective is to strengthen the technical and institutional capacity for environmental and social risk management in Myanmar by delivering essential learning support to government, civil society and private sector actors involved in operationalizing Myanmar's legal and regulatory system for environmental and social sustainability.

In response to the catastrophic failure of the Swa Dam in 2018, the LC delivered a one-day general dam safety training and two Potential Failure Mode Analysis (PFMA) expert workshops, including a site visit to the Swa Dam failure site. A total of 166 participants from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, the Ministry of Electricity and Energy, Yangon City Development Committee, and ESIA practitioners and consultants participated.

In addition, courses on how to incorporate gender issues into ESIA, consultations and grievances, compliance monitoring, and supervision of contractors to ensure contractor attention to gender-based issues, and how to respond appropriately to incidences of gender-based violence are planned in the near future.

The Pacific Island Countries Learning Centers

The Pacific Island Countries (PIC) LC will work with the established LCs (e.g. Vietnam and the Philippines LCs), and opportunities for collaboration, knowledge sharing, and the involvement of key personnel are being explored. The feasibility and design of the PIC LC is based on consultations with the University of the South Pacific (USP), the Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the Pacific Community (SPC), the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), as well as and other regional and international agencies and development partners.

Preparation of the Pacific LC included training and knowledge sharing opportunities with practitioners throughout the region, including government staff from environment and land, infrastructure, and finance ministries, as well as other related departments. National and regional consultants, young professionals and students were also targeted. Pilot activities delivered include workshops, face-to-face training, a virtual regional forum and training needs analysis. A total of 96 participants have been trained to date.

Lessons Learned

- Build upon existing institutions in the country
- Ensure that sustainability is considered from an institutional perspective early on during the LC planning process
- Invest in training consultants and staff that support PMUs to build understanding of environmental and social issues during project development and implementation
- Select candidates for the TOT courses with the adequate expertise and appropriate level of experience
- Use participatory training techniques such as role playing, field trips, and interactive group discussions to enhance the training experience
- Adapt and improve the courses and delivery based on participant feedback
- Maintain the quality of trainings by using up-to-date training materials and ensure that courses are delivered by topic experts
- Pay attention to the logistics and other details such as catering to ensure the smooth functioning of the courses
- Adequately price the courses including cost of logistics, trainers, equipment, course materials, transport, and venue to avoid losses
- Make pricing flexible to accommodate requests from governments, particularly during the early stages of the LC, to build a community of learners who can serve as LC champions
- Market the course to ensure reach to target audiences
- Conduct trainings in different regions/cities

Moving Forward

In collaboration with development partners, WBASP will continue to ensure the technical and institutional sustainability of the LCs and will establish new learning centers in other countries in the region. However, the WBASP acknowledges the challenges faced in expanding geographically and accordingly the partnership welcomes interest from other development agencies with expertise and experience that complements or adds to the current program.

World Bank Australia Safeguards Partnership

