Faces of The Commons - Asia Pacific

Executive Summary

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1. Subject Matter

This report provides an analysis of the potential of CC in the Asia Pacific region and ways to help realise such potential. Its findings will feed into the discussion on strategy and governance Creative Commons is carrying out now across the network.

2. Methods of Analysis

Methods of analysis include semi-structured interview and participant observation. A total of eight representatives from three affiliate teams were selected as interviewees to reflect diversity in terms of geographic location, culture, ethnicity, languages spoken, field of expertise, duration of involvement, team structure, and gender.

3. Limitations of Report

Although this research was carefully prepared, there were some unavoidable limitations.

First, due to time and financial constraints, most interviews were conducted online and each interview was given 2 hours at maximum. Sometimes bad internet connection might affect the flow of conversation. It would have been better if more time could be spent on each interviewee to get better results.

Second, the language barrier might affect the interviewees' ability to deliver their thoughts effectively and also the interviewer's ability to conduct more in-depth interviews. While most of the interviews were conducted in English, it is not a mother tongue for many of the interviewees as well as for the interviewer.

Lastly, since one of the interviewed teams is the affiliate the researcher is a member of, the affiliate had some advantages over others in communicating their messages more clearly and effectively; the researcher had a better understanding of their situation and they might feel more comfortable during their interviews than other affiliates. But it was made clear before and during the interviews that the relationship should not affect their interviews and they should not be biased by the relationship. Also the report is solely based on the results of the interviews, not by the researcher's personal views or assumptions as a member of the affiliate team.

4. Results

CC affiliates in the region are connected with each other with similar values such as sharing and collaboration. They share the same view that CC's key strength as a global movement comes from its people and the network itself. But they feel the huge potential of the global network has not been fully achieved due to limited human and financial resources as well as inefficient communication. They hope to bring more activists in the younger generation into the network and feel they can do more and better in collaboration with other affiliates especially if they work together around certain areas of expertise and/or topics of interest such as open education, copyright reform, creative projects etc. Affiliates work in different social and cultural context but face similar challenges in terms of financial sustainability and efficient and transparent communication and collaboration within their team. They point out such local challenges also affect their international involvement while language and cultural differences are other major factors that make it harder for them to interact and engage more with other affiliates.

5. Conclusions

The report finds that CC affiliates in the region highly recognise CC's achievements as a global movement and there is strong commitment and willingness among them to contribute to CC's global network and the future of the movement. CC has faced challenges in the region but still has a huge potential as a global movement that can be realised if improvements are made in some areas presented below.

6. Recommendations

Recommendations discussed include:

- Identifying key areas or specific agendas affiliates have expertise and/or they would like to work on in collaboration with others
- Making collective efforts to find funding opportunities for CC in the region
- Ensuring more effective, transparent, and careful communication and enabling more efficient collaboration among affiliates as well as between affiliates and HQ by providing technical infrastructure e.g. online collaboration tools and translation tools
- Providing mentoring and basic training materials to new/restructuring affiliates
- Broadening CC's global network to embrace more communities, advocates, and organisations