

## Individual project report



### Experiencing Tanzania in Hong Kong

#### Introduction

In 2022 summertime, I participated in an overseas volunteering service held by AIESEC in Mwanza, a city in Tanzania. In the service trip, it provided me an inspiration that not everyone in Tanzania had a chance to explore new places outside their home due to financial situation. After returning Hong Kong, it brought me to think about if the same situation also happened in Hong Kong. Therefore, I collected a story and propose an event for secondary students in Hong Kong.

#### Story collection and experience

The interviewee was a secondary student from a low-income family. She had only been to Shenzhen to visit her relatives when she was small. In addition, she had no passport and travelling was unnecessary according to her parents. When her classmates were sharing about their holiday vacation, she remained silent because she stayed at home during the holiday and had no experience for further discussion. Watching YouTube clips and TV shows was her way to explore the world outside Hong Kong.

Despite no travelling experience, it did not imply that she did not want to travel outside Hong Kong. She mentioned that she wanted to visit Japan or Taiwan with her parents in the future because of her favorite Japanese animation and favorite bubble milk tea respectively. Throughout the interview, although she verbalized that she was fine, she looked slightly depressed in my observation.

#### Pain point and Problem definition

From her sharing, it was highlighted that the pain point was some students from low-income family in Hong Kong lacking personal experience in travelling overseas. The problem statement was lacking a chance in travelling overseas for personal exploration among those students. Consequently, their perspective of the world could not be broadened. Therefore, the following activity's objective would be to provide secondary students opportunities to experience the world outside Hong Kong for personal exploration.

#### Existing available services/ activities

There were various types of activities in Hong Kong including school, society, museum, community, and others.

In the school, study tours were organized for students to explore the world by directly reaching the destination. Examples included Greater Bay Area Career Exploration Tour Program (2024) and Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youth Program (JENESYS). Although joining study tour was ideal and the most effective way for students to

explore the world, the common limitation was inadequate participation quota. Taking JENESYSA (2023) as an example, only 1 student could be nominated by school and considered as participant. Therefore, school tours could not be beneficial for all secondary students for self-exploration.

In the society, there were art festivals held annually and collaborated with international organization. French May Art Festival (2024) was one of the examples. Collaborating with Association Culturelle France – Hong Kong Limited, there was a series of activities to promote French Art in the community such as exhibition, art performance, DIY workshop and carnival in shopping center. The art festival was promoted to the public instead of specifically targeting the students.

Moreover, the museum took an active role to explore the world. In last year, the Hong Kong Heritage Museum (2023) worked with the Palace of Versailles and French May Art Festival team to organize Virtually Versailles. Providing an immersive experience for visitors to feel like stepping in the Palace of Versailles, multiple innovative components in the design of immersive experience were selected such as VR devices to discover the art design inside the palace, smart cycling visiting the garden and designated odor to impress the visitors.

In addition, different cultures and experience could also be explored in the community. For example, SongKran HK was the Thai New Year with water games on the street for celebration. Also, special event like Watoto's choir tour (2023) in Hong Kong station was a way to know about African kids (orphans) and art culture.

### My innovative idea

Taking some of the existing activities as reference, an event named "A Day in Tanzania" was proposed specifically for secondary students. Repeating the activity objective, it aimed at providing secondary students opportunities to experience the world outside Hong Kong for personal exploration.

The reason of choosing Tanzania was firstly related to my pervious oversea learning experience, followed by that Tanzania was relatively less known among secondary students due to its distant location.

There were 3 parts in the event: VR and cycling device to experience safari, cooking and tasting Tanzanian food, and DIY painting workshop.

In "VR and cycling device to experience safari", it aimed at providing an experience feeling like safari to students. This activity combine the innovative technology of smart cycling and VR together. Participants were expected to sit on the smart bicycle saddle, wear the VR devices, start riding to smart bicycle and determine the direction and speed in the safari setting. During the experience, participants could see various types of wild animals like visiting the national park and those animals were looking real and standing in the roadside. To strengthen the reality, it would be held in outdoor venue such as playground or basketball court, and the safari videos were collected from YouTube or pervious travelers.

In the part of cooking and tasting Tanzanian food, it was expected to explore the local Tanzanian food culture. Two common Tanzanian food choices were selected: Tanzanian chapati and chips and eggs, because it was relatively easy to make, and fried food was popular among teenagers. Apart from cooking the food, there was also an introduction about the association of Tanzanian food culture with weather, living style of local Tanzanian and history like Tanzania was the colonized by Germans and British before. Therefore, participants would be expected to understand more about the place of Tanzania.

In DIY workshop, participants would be expected to experience Tanzanian art culture. In Tanzania, street art paintings were popular in the city easily. Artists made use of wood waste and designed a lot of wood art with inspiring quote hanging on tree in an art village. In the activity, participants would paint on wood and write supporting quotes on wood pieces, followed by hanging on their drawings on tree or board. Also, there would be a display of traditional Tanzanian art products named Tingatinga such as homemade baskets, bracelets and paintings. Therefore, it provided an opportunity for students to know more about Tanzanian art culture.

### Prototyping (testing)

In VR and cycling device experiencing safari, it would be a low-fidelity prototyping. It tested for the acceptance of the use of technology before the design of safari map because it was new to combine VR device and smart bicycle together. Some students would be invited to experience the VR devices with riding on the smart bicycle. Safety was the priority in the testing, to observe if the students would feel dizziness or losing balance. Moreover, the smoothness during the coordination of using VR device and riding the smart bicycle at the same time would also be considered. If it was too risky or difficult for students to handle both VR device and smart bicycle at the same time, separation of two devices would be considered: participants would only ride a smart bicycle with projector screen or sit-down using VR device at one time.

In cooking and tasting Tanzanian food, it would be a high-fidelity prototyping. A demonstration of cooking session would be held for both the students and activity. For the students, their cooking skill would be considered for adjusting the cooking method and cooking utensils as students' level of cooking skill was different. For example, if the cooking skill was low in overall, reheating the food instead of cooking would be considered. For the activity, safety, use of food and cooking utensil and duration of the activity would be the elements in the consideration like using electrical cooking utensils due to no flame for safety. The goal of the testing was to provide a safe and achievable environment for the participant to enjoy discovering Tanzanian food culture.

In the DIY painting workshop, it would be a low-fidelity prototyping and relatively simpler testing. Students were invited to paint on wood pieces in art lesson to test for the quality of wood pieces and select the suitable materials such as painting brushes and watercolors. Moreover, places of hanging the wood drawings would be discussed. Despite handing those wood drawings on tree in Tanzanian art village, it could cause harm to tree and possible safety issue. In this situation, hanging on board could be an alternative solution.

Lastly, evaluation session was provided after the event. Questionnaires would be provided to the participants to assess the experience such as level of enjoyment and degree of exploration about Tanzania. Moreover, extra suggestion could be given by participants such as the next place and other creative activities. With the feedback, it would help provide direction of adjustment and ideas in the future event.

### Insight

#### Promises, challenges, and future goal

In the proposed event, it was expected to provide an experience for secondary students to explore another side of the world. Before students having own ability to travel the world, the event wished to provide an alternative way for them to meet a new place with different culture and hand-on experience. As a result, it would broaden the students' horizons and inspired them to realize how another side of the world looked like and how people in another side lived differently.

There were multiple challenges in the designated event. For example, manpower such as helpers instructing the use of VR device, cooking session and painting workshop, and resources like the technological devices and materials preparation. Also, the degree of fidelity was another concern as it aimed at providing an experience highly similar to local environment. Therefore, more efforts in and sessions of prototyping testing were needed to overcome the difficulties in the event.

In the future, more countries with new cultures would be introduced as different themes to organize more activities to the secondary students. More university students with impressive exchange experience could be recruited for creating new ideas and activities, which would provide opportunities for the secondary students to discover more new places and cultures with unforgettable experience.

### Conclusion

Due to the lack of opportunities in travelling overseas for personal exploration among students from low-income family in Hong Kong, an event named "A day in Tanzania" was proposed after collection of existing exhibition and art festival in Hong Kong. By various activities such as safari experience, cooking and DIY painting, participants were expected to understand more about Tanzania and its culture, which received a feeling like travelling to Tanzania and a chance for exploration.

### Reflection

It was my first time to hear of and use design thinking. With the elements of SCAMPER, it provided me directions and reference to create new ideas from existing activities instead of starting from none. With more focusing on user experience, putting myself into those students' shoes, I was able to think of some new and innovate activates that would be attractive to secondary students. However, the part of prototyping was relatively abstract for me during the consideration of testing and adjustment. I thought multiple sessions of prototyping might be required as the progressive adjustment of the event was expected to

be step by step instead of one testing only. Also, told by the tutor in the beginning, more discussion would be better for modifying the ideation and prototyping, but it was unfortunately limited by the course design.

Meanwhile, it was inspiring to hear creative ideas from other classmates in the lesson. There was unexpected innovative suggestion to provide help and contribute to the community such as ethnic minorities, elderly and patients. I enjoyed the discussion after presentation to brainstorm and collect more ideas or solutions, as there was no right or wrong and everyone was welcome to express their opinions. Moreover, the project recalled me the beautiful memory in my Tanzania service trip. If the proposed idea could be carried out one day, it would definitively make my service learning even more meaningful.

(1999words)

Reference:

Association Culturelle France - Hong Kong Limited. (2024). French may programmes. French May. [https://www.frenchmay.com/en-us/articles/all\\_programmes](https://www.frenchmay.com/en-us/articles/all_programmes)

Education Bureau. (2023). Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths (JENESYS) Programme. <https://www.edb.gov.hk/tc/student-parents/events-services/programs/jenesys/index.html>

Education Bureau. (2024). “*Greater Bay Area Career Exploration Tours*” Programme. Education Bureau Circular Memorandum No. 44/2024. <https://applications.edb.gov.hk/circular/upload/EDBCM/EDBCM23137E.pdf>

Hong Kong Heritage Museum . (2023, July). Virtually versailles. Hong Kong Heritage Museum - Virtually Versailles. <https://hk.heritage.museum/en/web/hm/exhibitions/data/exid277.html>

Watoto. (2023). Watoto asia. Watoto Asia - Raise the next generation of African leaders. <https://www.watoto.asia/en/>