

Report of
The Seventh Review Meeting of the ASEAN International Mobility for Students Programme
8-9 May 2014
Manila, Philippines

Introduction

1. The 7th Review Meeting of the ASEAN International Mobility for Students (AIMS) Programme was held at the University of the Philippines-Diliman, Manila, Philippines, on 8 May 2014 with university visits on 9 May 2014.
2. The Meeting was attended by 154 participants, including delegates from the Ministry of Education, Malaysia; the Ministry of Education and Culture, Indonesia; the Office of the Higher Education Commission, Thailand; the Ministry of Education and Training, Vietnam; the Ministry of Education, Brunei Darussalam; the Commission on Higher Education, the Philippines; the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan; representatives from participating universities in Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, Brunei Darussalam, the Philippines and Japan; and the Acting Interim Director, Special Advisor, Education Specialist and staff of SEAMEO RIHED.
3. The list of participants is included in *Annex I*.

Opening Ceremony

4. Dr. Alfredo Pascual, President, University of the Philippines-Diliman, greeted heads of delegations and welcomed all delegates to the 7th Review Meeting and to the University of the Philippines-Diliman. With the spirits of strengthening ASEAN Community, the University of the Philippines continuously supports regional and international collaboration including the promotion of student exchanges within ASEAN and beyond. He expressed his delight to see the progress and expansion of the AIMS Programme. He addressed that the Meeting is a forum to exchange experiences and good practices, expand university collaboration, and establish mechanism for student mobility in the region. He emphasized on internationalization as a key strategy of the University to become truly regional and global university and produce globalized human resources. Lastly, he wished the participants a fruitful meeting and pleasant stay in Manila, the Philippines.
5. In her Opening Remarks, Professor Dr. Patricia B. Licuanan, Chairperson of the Commission on Higher Education, the Philippines explained that harmonization of higher education becomes a priority as students start to venture outside the country. She mentioned that SEAMEO RIHED as a lead in the harmonization processes. With fast approaching goal of ASEAN Community by 2015, higher education plays an important role through human resources development producing competent global citizen. She discussed the benefits of AIMS Programme and student exchange in terms of 1) education leading to the improvement of teaching and learning, international knowledge, cultural perspectives, international awareness, and interests of global issues, 2) personnel promotion regarding leadership, self-confidence, life-long friendships, and independent decision making skills, and 3) long term gains on environment adaptation skills, language improvement, communication skills, and awareness of group dynamic. She expressed her gratitude

to the President of the University of the Philippines and his team for hosting and making the Meeting possible. She ended by thanking representatives at the Meeting for ongoing effort and contribution to the AIMS Programme and regional integration, and wishing all participants a productive and enjoyable stay in the Philippines.

6. The hosts (the Commission on Higher Education and the University of the Philippines) of the Meeting presented tokens of appreciation to country representatives, and welcomed all the delegates to the Meeting.
7. On behalf of the delegation, SEAMEO RIHED presented token of appreciation to the hosts for their hospitality and efforts in organizing the 7th AIMS Review Meeting.

Overall Programme Update: Promoting programme advantages & tackling existing challenges

8. Dr. Chantavit Sujatanond, Special Advisor, SEAMEO RIHED, expressed her appreciation to the hosts, Professor Dr. Patricia B. Licuanan and Dr. Alfredo Pascual and welcomed all participants to the Meeting. An overview of the Programme was presented, detailing the chronological development of the AIMS Programme and Programme strengths. To achieve the Programme goal of 10 participating countries by 2015, the Meeting should find ways to support CLM (Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar) that may not be able to match up a number of scholarships by participating countries. Dr. Chantavit further briefed the meeting about the initial ideas of Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand (M-I-T) Student Mobility Programme with emphasis on the scholarship allocation, reciprocity of exchange, as well as study fields distribution and assignment principle. She explained that the vision of regional student mobility programme is a mean to achieve Southeast Asian open space in higher education through harmonization process embracing other complimentary aspects such as regional credit transfer framework, academic qualification framework, and quality assurance framework. Serving as the Programme secretariat and coordinator, SEAMEO RIHED will facilitate the development of open space in higher education. She also presented issues for consultation on Programme management. Topics included modality of the AIMS Programme, mechanism to manage the Programme at both national and regional levels, and criteria and eligibility in the selection of higher education institutions (HEIs) to join the Programme.
9. The complete details of the Overall Programme Update appear in *Annex II*.

Plenary Session: Country Progress and Development Plans

10. Plenary Session was organized to provide an opportunity for member countries to share the latest policy development regarding student mobility and enhance the sustainability of the Programme. The session included experts and policy makers from each member country to discuss the topic of "Student Mobility in the Era of Internationalization and Regional Integration: National Policy and Strategy from the AIMS Member Countries".
11. Professor Dr. Patricia B. Licuanan, Chairperson of the Commission on Higher Education, the Philippines chaired the Plenary Session.

Malaysia

12. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Jaafar Jantan, Director of Academic Development Management Division, Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Malaysia, presented the national policy for student mobility regarding its goals, core aspects and expected outcomes. He updated the Meeting on selected Malaysian universities participating in the Programme and provided an overview of inbound and outbound statistics from 2010 through 2013. Budget allocation for AIMS Programme in 2014 was also presented to the Meeting. He then raised issues to be considered for taking collaborative action: a) refusal to accept students; b) imbalanced student exchange, c) certificate for AIMS students, d) quality assurance in academic/curriculum design, and e) AIMS website and Facebook.

Indonesia

13. Dr. Eko Hari Purnomo, Head of the International Collaboration Office, Bogor Agricultural University, presented on behalf of Directorate General of Higher Education, the Ministry of Education and Culture, Indonesia. He provided an overview of national policy and strategies for international and regional student mobility, and the implementation of Indonesian Qualification Framework (IQF). He further elaborated on student mobility programmes carrying out in Indonesia, such as *Darmasiswa* Programme and *Beasiswa Unggulan* Programme. The profile of student mobility in Indonesia and its arrangements were then briefed to the Meeting. Past statistics showed that there were more outbound than inbound students. Indonesia will strive to have more inbound students. He mentioned about the establishment of taskforce to manage AIMS Programme including coordinator for each field to engage in distribution of scholarships, update AIMS (bilingual) Guidebook annually. He discussed issues of course equivalency and cultural adaptation for the development of AIMS Programme.

Thailand

14. Ms. Chadarat Singhadachakul, Director of Bureau of International Cooperation Strategy, Office of the Higher Education Commission (OHEC), Thailand, presented Thai policy on internationalization of higher education, which covers several aspects: a) research capability development, b) educational quality improvement and enhancement, and c) internationalization of Thai HEIs. She explained that student mobility is considered as one of the crucial components of internationalization, as it helps develop human resources, nurture future graduates to be global citizens. She also introduced four student mobility programmes implemented by OHEC, namely UMAP, ASEM-DUO Fellowship Programme, AIMS Programme and Thai-ASEAN Student Exchange Program. She provided a brief overview of AIMS Programme management in Thailand and reiterated the commitment of Thai government to fully support the AIMS Programme. Mutual exchange among Southeast Asian member countries will be given a priority. She also outlined suggestions and proposals from OHEC, including certificate (participation letter), Programme evaluation, and iAward project development and implementation.

Brunei Darussalam

15. Mrs. Hajah Anis Faudzulani Binti Haji Dzulkiflee, Head of Higher Education Division, Ministry of Education, Brunei Darussalam, briefed the history of higher education development in Brunei Darussalam and explained that currently, in Brunei Darusslam, there are four main higher education institutions, and Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) is the only one being selected to join the AIMS Programme. She presented their national policy and strategy which target for sustainable economy, innovation and new knowledge. She elaborated on the GenNEXT project implemented by UBD. The project designed to ensure inter-disciplinary study and research. Moreover, she described the internationalization strategy of the UBD that students are going out on their third year or discovery year, a goal of 100% going out for exchange, internships, community services or incubation. Challenges encountered thus far for Brunei Darussalam included imbalanced mobility, incompatible credit transfer, mapping of courses, incompatible academic calendar, language barrier and the high cost of living in Brunei Darussalam for prospective students. She lastly encouraged AIMS member countries to send more students to study language and culture, economic and engineering at UBD.

Philippines

16. Atty. Lily Freida M. Milla, Director III of International Affairs Staff, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the Philippines, detailed CHED's strategies in higher education development, with the emphasis of competencies, high-level skills, ethical and good governance. In this regards, strategies on internationalization of higher education were also briefed, including the establishment of a quality assurance framework, enhancement of the country-wide and regional mobility and the establishment of sustainable international collaboration. She also provided the Meeting with profile and statistics of student mobility programs in the Philippines. Lastly, Atty. Lily presented CHED's action plan on AIMS Programme management and development.

Japan

17. Mr. Kuniaki Sato, Deputy Director of the Higher Education Policy and Planning Division, Higher Education Bureau, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan, introduced national policy and strategy for student mobility. The emphases were on the goal of increasing inbound and outbound students and internationalization of higher education institutions. He explained budget allocation to different student mobility programmes, including the AIMS Programme, and conveyed the commitment of the Ministry to support these programmes. He presented that Japan would provide 25 scholarships for each of the 7 selected projects (university consortiums) and further encourage collaboration between Japan and SEA higher education institutions.
18. Dr. Fernando Palacio, researcher of the University of Tsukuba briefed the Meeting about the an annual international symposium being held by the University. The first International Symposium: New Directions in Higher Education for the Development of Global Human Resources, was held on 21 February 2014. He extended the invitation to all the delegates, welcoming them to join the next symposium in 2015 aiming for enhancing partnership and collaboration.

19. Complete papers and presentations in the plenary session are included in *Annex III*.

Concurrent Sessions: Ministry and University Groups

20. The parallel sessions provided an opportunity for close consultation among participants to discuss operational issues and programme development.

Ministry Representatives Group

21. Participants from respective Ministries and SEAMEO RIHED discussed Programme management and development issues raised during the Programme update and plenary session.

22. The Ministry representatives group took note of the Programme goal to expand study fields to 10 from 7 study fields. Suggested study fields to be added are Biodiversity (marine science, forestry, bio-medicine), Accounting, Waste Management, Disaster Management, Alternative Energy, Medical Technology, Logistics, and Environmental Science and Management.

23. Regarding Programme management, suggestions were made relating to 1) university selection, the selection should be based on common criteria with respects on the selection process in each member country. SEAMEO RIHED was tasked to develop an initial draft of the common selection criteria, 2) surveys, the group requested SEAMEO RIHED to conduct a survey to help identify management difficulties and propose possible Programme management structure and development plan. 3) Study on credit hours in each AIMS member universities is also suggested to be carried out and lead by SEAMEO RIHED, to facilitate student mobility in ASEAN and beyond, 4) scholarship allocation, it was recommended that each Ministry should work closely with their selected HEIs to appropriately allocate scholarships and balance numbers of inbound and outbound students, 5) bilateral MoU, the group recommended that MoU should be optional for member universities to establish collaboration under the AIMS Programme because all member countries have agreed on the terms stated in the Letter of Intent.

24. The website, logo and certificate of AIMS Programme were mentioned in previous Meetings. The Ministry representatives requested SEAMEO RIHED to take lead and proceed with the development.

25. The group agreed to reduce frequency of organizing the AIMS Review Meeting to only once a year, but lengthen the Meeting to 3 days with concurrent sessions of government representatives, academic and IROs staff. The Meeting should allot ample time for networking.

University Representatives Group

26. University representatives were divided into groups to consult on the topics of 1) developing orientation guidelines and student manual for inbound/outbound students, 2) innovative ways of attracting regional students; 3) effective ways of communication, collaboration and management; and 4) essential skills for IROs. Below is a summary of the discussion.

Topic 1: Necessary contents of orientation and student manual for inbound/outbound students

27. The group recommended having a list of minimum contents to be briefed during the *orientation* for inbound and outbound students. Minimum contents for inbound students include a) school policies, b) student's life in the campus (including campus map including essential facilities, accommodation information, list of key university officials with numbers, etc), c) emergency numbers including consulate office and contact persons, d) security issues, e) instruction of requesting/obtaining health services, f) culture including environment, social, food, and dress code, g) weather information, h) local language words or phrases needed for survival, i) immigration regulations, and j) Campus tour. Minimum contents for outbound students include a) things to bring with them (official documents for immigration purposes, personal effects, medicines, etc.), b) how to transfer money, c) profile of Host University, d) health insurance in the Host Country, e) embassy contact information, f) relevant contact numbers, g) social and cultural background of host country, h) scholarship policies, and i) immigration regulations.
28. The group recommended having a list of minimum contents to be included in the *student manual* for outbound students. The operational contents include a) brief information of the AIMS Programme, b) pre-departure Preparation, c) to-do-list in host country, d) life in host country, e) study in host country, and f) other operational matters. The academic contents include a) curriculum information or course description for students to prepare study plan and b) establishment of good communication circle among student, home and host HEIs.

Topic 2: Innovative ways of attracting regional students

29. The groups identified ways of attracting regional students. These include improving credit transfer system and process, sharing HEIs information, branding and marketing the AIMS Programme, improving employability and post-graduate recognition, as well as encouraging students and HEIs to explore Asia and its cultural diversity. Furthermore, the group suggested the Meeting consider organizing a special "AIMS" course or Leadership Camp, AIMS Alumni Conference, AIMS Summer/ Winter Camp, Internship/Service Learning Programme together with or after the exchange.

Topic 3: Effective ways of communication, collaboration and management

30. The group presented the existing communication and management problems in the AIMS Programme and suggested that a) coordinator is needed at both university and faculty (school) levels for different purposes, b) HEI information is required in English, c) updated reports and information sharing are necessary, d) platforms are needed for efficient communication such as AIMS Website and international conferences.

Topic 4: Essential skills for IROs

31. The group summarized essential skills of IROs as "ASEAN" IRO, which stands for **A**spiring to be, **S**ociable (approachable, with good networking skills, good personal relations, conversant & good communicator), **E**ngaged (passionate for work, open-minded, proactive), **A**ware (culturally

sensitive, knowledgeable of organization procedure and government requirement, knowledgeable on world history), and **Nimble** (flexibility, tolerant and patient).

32. Complete presentations by groups are included in Annex IV.

Wrap-up and Closure

33. Dr. Chantavit Sujatanond thanked all the participants of the concurrent session for providing constructive suggestion and recommendation. She wrapped up the issues being discussed at the Meeting, and emphasized that the issues being brought up will facilitate and accommodate the student exchange in the regional and beyond. She also thanked the hosts for their hard work and contribution in organizing the Meeting. Lastly, with the confirmation of the representative from Brunei Darussalam, the 8th Review Meeting will be held at the end of November 2014 in Brunei Darussalam.

34. The 7th Review Meeting was held in the traditional spirit of SEAMEO friendship and solidarity.
