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Annex 1a

SEAMEO College
STRENGTHENING SEAMEO'S CAPACITY TO PROMOTE EDUCATION AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

SUPPORT FOR A REGIONAL PLATFORM ON INNOVATIONS IN EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCE
DEVELOPMENT TOWARDS AN INTEGRATED ASEAN COMMUNITY

Module 2: High Officials Country Case Studies (HOCCS)

11-13 March 2015

Amari Watergate Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand

CONCEPT NOTE

A. Background

In Southeast Asia, governments, private sector and all stakeholders have been working together towards the full realization of the ASEAN Community 2015 which is envisioned to be “politically cohesive, economically integrated, culturally harmonious and socially responsible.”¹ Various efforts of governments in support of integration in ASEAN have focused on various aspects such as comprehensive security, common identity, free-trade areas, education harmonization, people mobility, and others.

SEAMEO as the leading organization in education, science and culture cooperation in the region has initiated several projects in support of ASEAN integration and the ASEAN Community 2015. Among others and since 2007, the SEAMEO Regional Centre on Higher Education (RIHED) has started discussions on creating a "common space" in higher education among Southeast Asian countries under the proposal on “A Structured Framework for Regional Integration in Higher Education in Southeast Asia: The Road towards a Common Space.”

Subsequently, SEAMEO RIHED launched concrete projects on harmonization in higher education including the ASEAN International Student Mobility for Students (AIMS) Programme. The AIMS Programme encourages and facilitates regional higher education student mobility in Southeast Asia, where an undergraduate student spends a period of his/her studies in another country. The project is intended to lay a foundation from which to develop sustainable and ongoing student mobility programmes in Southeast Asia, in order to assist with the transition towards the ASEAN community by 2015.²

The project components include establishing a region-wide quality assurance, promoting student movement and credit transfer. The seven study fields are hospitality and tourism, agriculture, language and culture, international business, food science and technology, engineering, and economics. Current participating countries are six SEAMEO Member Countries and Japan.

B. The SEAMEO College Module 2 and Harmonization of Higher Education in Health Professions in Southeast Asia

The SEAMEO College is one of the SEAMEO initiatives under the 2011-2020 SEAMEO Strategic Plan that aims to strengthen SEAMEO's capacity to promote education and social development in Southeast Asia and support regional platforms on innovation in education and human resource

¹ Excerpt from the statement of HE Le Luong Minh, Secretary-General of ASEAN during the diplomatic briefing on the outcome of the 22nd ASEAN Summit, Jakarta, 29 April 2013.

² SEAMEO RIHED. “MIT Student Mobility Programme Pilot Project Review.” 2010

development towards an integrated ASEAN Community. SEAMEO College consists of a series of forums targeting four groups, namely, education ministers, high officials, education practitioners, and youth leaders. The Project was approved by the SEAMEO Council in January 2013, and was launched in March 2013 during the 47th SEAMEO Council Conference in Hanoi, Vietnam.

Module 2 of the SEAMEO College is called the High Officials Country Case Study (HOCCS) which is intended to showcase country cases on a specific issue to assist in portraying regional backdrop and serve as reference in discussing and designing regional strategy or action to address pressing needs. Issues and resolutions that resulted from Module 1 or the Strategic Dialogue of Education Ministers may also be the focus of Module 2.

Building on previous achievements of SEAMEO RIHED in the area of higher education harmonization particularly on the gains from the AIMS Programme, as well leveraging existing mechanisms in the region such as quality assurance efforts of ASEAN University Network, SEAMEO College Module 2 initiates exploration of the potential for further harmonization of higher education in other fields such as medicine and nursing.

While these two study fields are not included in the existing seven areas of AIMS Programme, these two health professions are among those prioritized in the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) under the ASEAN Economic Community which allows ASEAN professionals to practice their professions in any participating ASEAN member state. By focusing on these two health professions, the SEAMEO College Module 2 discussion will help expand potential study fields of AIMS, and at the same time strengthen professional preparation and development for the two identified health professions in support of the ASEAN MRA. Moreover, the focus on health professions promotes one of SEAMEO's mandates which is the promotion of education, training and research in tropical medicine and public health through the SEAMEO TROPMED Network and its Centres. Thus, SEAMEO TROPMED Network takes on leadership of this Module under SEAMEO College.

With this twofold advantage, the SEAMEO College Module 2 will pave the way to providing greater attention to the health professions that have been deemed given limited attention in terms of student mobility, establishment of a credit transfer system, and provision of qualifications standardization/framework. It is within these parameters that SEAMEO College Module 2 focuses on the theme "Promoting Harmonization and Mobility in Higher Education Focusing on Health Professions in Southeast Asia".

The theme for SEAMEO College Module 2 also anchors on the result of the Strategic Dialogue of Education Ministers (SEAMEO College Module 1) which identified harmonization in higher education and research as one of the seven priority areas for the Post-2015 education agenda in Southeast Asia. The theme also supports the 2011-2020 SEAMEO Strategic Plan.

C. Objectives

SEAMEO College Module 2 aims to:

1. Provide platform for SEAMEO high officials to share and discuss national and regional higher education frameworks with particular focus on health professions;
2. Identify common areas of cooperation on higher education with particular focus on health professions, and in support of further development of SEAMEO RIHED's AIMS Programme, and ASEAN's Mutual Recognition Agreement; and
3. Recommend steps to promote greater higher education harmonization and student mobility in Southeast Asia with particular focus on health professions.

D. Theme and Suggested Module 2 Strategy

The SEAMEO College Module 2 Forum will be convened under the theme “Promoting Harmonization and Mobility in Higher Education Focusing on Health Professions in Southeast Asia.”

SEAMEO Member Countries will be requested to prepare country cases focusing on profiles of higher education qualifications framework and standards. The cases will include two parts, namely, (1) the general higher education framework, and (2) the higher education framework and standards on the two identified health professions such as medicine, nursing and dentistry.

SEAMEO Member Countries that have relevant policies and programmes on regional and transnational higher education will be requested to include a third part which focuses on credit transfer system, quality assurance, and student mobility.

Questionnaires will be provided to serve as guides for SEAMEO Member Countries in preparing the country cases. Cases will be requested from SEAMEO Member Countries in advance for consolidation.

Moreover, global and regional organizations such as SEAMEO RIHED, ASEAN University Network, ASEAN Secretariat, UNESCO, ADB and others will be requested to provide information on existing and relevant programmes and arrangements on student mobility. MEXT Japan and University of Tsukuba may also be requested to share viewpoints in relation to Japan’s participation in the AIMS Programme under the “Re-Inventing Japan” Project.

A consultant for SEAMEO College Module 2 will consolidate and prepare a synthesis of the current situations on higher education harmonization and mobility at the regional and global levels including inputs from SEAMEO Member Countries (through the questionnaire) as well as inputs from relevant organizations. The synthesis will be presented at the start of the SEAMEO College Module 2 Forum.

During the Module 2 forum, discussions will highlight national frameworks and standards in order to draw good practices and recommendations to further enhance, and possibly expand existing regional frameworks. The Module 2 forum will also identify and agree on recommendations for further cooperation on higher education development and harmonization in Southeast Asia and in the existing framework of SEAMEO cooperation.

Forum discussions may also touch on trends, issues and challenges of higher education harmonization in the two identified health professions. The potential for harmonization of these professions may also be assessed using the SEAMEO RIHED’s framework for the AIMS programme. The tentative programme is found on a separate sheet.

E. Expected Outputs and Outcomes

The two and half day-activity under the SEAMEO College Module 2 is expected to bring about outputs and outcomes as follows:

Expected Outputs:

1. Compendium/collection of country cases on higher education frameworks and standards on health professions including policies; programmes; mechanism of implementation; quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation; and others.
2. List of areas of possible cooperation on higher education of health professions based on issues, challenges, lessons learned, and good practices. This may include research cooperation, information exchange, capacity development, policy recommendations, and others. The future cooperation is expected to be reported to the SEAMEO Council for approval, and tackled in the SEAMEO’s framework of cooperation.

3. An analysis (in a form of a report) on the frameworks and standards of higher education of health professions in SEAMEO Member Countries including successes, gaps and challenges; and a synthesis of higher education student mobility, credit transfer system, quality assurance at the Southeast Asian, Asian and global levels.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Increased awareness on higher education frameworks and standards at the national and international levels particularly on health professions that could lead to greater cooperation in higher education harmonization particularly on health professions in SEAMEO member Countries, and in Southeast Asia.
2. Sustained and/or improved quality of higher education in SEAMEO.
3. Deeper links created between higher education harmonization and mutual recognition of professions in Southeast Asia and in ASEAN.

F. Suggested Participants

Suggested participants for the SEAMEO College Module 2 are as follows:

1. The SEAMEO Member Country delegation will consist of 2 or 3 high officials (director level and above). The country delegation may include:
 - a SEAMEO high official (the regular SEAMEO HOM head of delegation or nominated official);
 - a high official who is in charge of higher education particularly the health professions; and
 - a high official from health or relevant ministry, or non-government association as endorsed by the ministry of education.
2. Representatives from relevant regional and international organizations such as ASEAN Secretariat, ASEAN University Network, UNESCO, ADB, MEXT Japan/ University of Tsukuba, WHO, ILO, University Mobility in Asia and the Pacific (UMAP), Asia-Europe Foundation, European Union, and others.
3. Representatives from invited partner higher education and research institutions such as the Korean Education Development Institute, and others.
4. SEAMEO Centres, namely, SEAMEO TROPMED Network, SEAMEO RIHED, SEAMEO RECFON, SEAMEO INNOTECH, SEAMEO RETRAC; and the SEAMEO Secretariat/ SEAMEO College PMO.

G. Organizers and Lead SEAMEO Centres

With health profession as the new study focus of possible higher education harmonization in Southeast Asia, SEAMEO Tropical Medicine and Public Health (TROPMED) Network will be on board to provide expertise and lead the development and implementation of SEAMEO College Module 2 in collaboration with SEAMEO RIHED and other relevant centres that work on higher education and related themes such as SEAMEO INNOTECH, SEAMEO RETRAC, SEAMEO SEARCA, SEAMEO CELLL, SEAMEO VOCTECH and SEAMEO BIOTROP.