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Royal University of Bhutan



Happiness and Wellbeing Project

VUB Program Week Report

Visit: Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium

Date: 25th March- 29th March, 2019

Objectives of the visit

- Observation of Good Student Support System Practice at VUB
- Exchange of Practices between RUB and VUB.
- Development of framework for training manual
- Contextualization of Training Manual
- Design of Happiness and Wellbeing Prototype
- Delegation/Division of Task
- Learn Study Guidance adopted in VUB
- Setting Datelines

Project members

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Travel Detail

- 17th March, Travel from Paro to Delhi
- 18th -19th March, process for the Schengen visa
- 20th – 22st March, discussion on the training manual and presentation at VUB
- 23rd – 24th March, Travel to Brussels, Belgium

RUB team were received by Royal Bhutan Embassy in Brussel and the logistic were arranged.

- 25th – 29th March, VUB program week

Stay at Delhi

RUB team at Delhi revisited the guidelines of training manual development framework and included some information missed before. New topic on Buddhist philosophy the ‘Preciousness of Human Life and Self-Development’ was incorporated and further GNH presentation was prepared with feedback and add-up on it.

DAY 1 25/3/2019

On the first day of the program week VUB project team gave detail presentation of the program week and RUB team shared the objectives of the visit. Three presentation were done by faculties on Students Service Supports, Study Guidance Practice and strategies adopted in VUB.

Study Guidance at VUB comprised of 3 levels of methodologies (level 1: Study Guidance team, level 2: Ethical codes, level 3: Process flow student guidance)

After presentation campus tour were done with the introduction of RUB team with student psychologist and student counselor.

RUB team explored the programs, structures, study guidance, counseling methodologies in VUB which can be incorporated in training manual for project. The RUB team presented the education system in Bhutan and shared the student service program adopted by RUB. RUB team noted the importance of Study Guidance in three key areas

1. Study trajectory counsellors.
2. Individual counselling workshop.
3. Monthly student guidance meeting.

DAY 2 26/3/2019

On second day presentation and discussion on Monthly Student Guidance Meeting which are conducted by Study Guidance Team in VUB, the team shared its benefits, outcomes, impacts on students, progress on academic field.

The aim of the Study Guidance Team is to help students to progress their academic competency and to monitor the study progress in University. Learned the strategies adapted by VUB counselors for students on different situation.

Under the Study Guidance Team it includes learning Path Counsellors (LPC), Study Advisors and Student psychologist who provide students to promote individual guidance in life.

Learning Path Counsellors shared the roles and responsibilities, approaches, progress and challenges faced while delivering individual guidance support with different students' background.

DAY 3 27/3/2019

On third day VUB team presented the support provided by university to students' in the field of Social, Legal and Financial.

In VUB around 17%-18% of students are entitled for scholarship from the Flemish community and, can even avail financial support from them.

Students' financial expenditure such as direct and indirect study related cost were also highlighted and importance of financial management for students during their study.

In VUB students with underprivileged economic background can avail interest free loan from university.

RUB team also shared the student services that are provided at RUB colleges. Discussed on the development of training manual framework and the role of RUB subject experts for training manual.

DAY 4 28/3/2019

Student Psychologist Ms. Naomi Beke at Study Guidance Centre took RUB team members through attitude and techniques of communication. During the visit to career centre, the faculties shared the best practices to help student on different crisis. Students crisis were classified as death, sickness, personal problems, family issues, peer pressure, academic issues which have impact on the livelihood of oneself.

Some of the services provided by career center are, Individual coaching sessions, collective workshops, online career platform, physical job board, career expertise for Bachelors, Masters and PhD students.

RUB team presented the importance of contextualizing the training manual framework. Clarification were made on VUB team regarding the objectives of visit and identification of topics and content of training manual were done by VUB experts.

DAY 5 29/3/2019

On the fifth day the RUB, VUB and ISMAI discussed on the roles on how Happiness and Wellbeing center can cater student services. Then further discussed on the training manual, Dr. Francisco Machado presented on career guidance. RUB team provided the information of different colleges under RUB in relation to common issues faced by students, college student service officers and management as a whole so that certain parameters are set before developing the manual. The discussion were guided by the training manual guidelines provided by Samtse college of Education.

VUB and ISMAI presented their contribution on the development of training manual and agreed to support during the training of potential counselors in Bhutan. The team continued with the development of contents and topics for the manual. Roles and responsibilities of RUB, ISMAI and VUB for the development of training manual were also discussed.

Together the finalization of training manual framework, topics and contents were done and datelines were also set.

Outcomes of the Program Week VUB, Belgium

- Training Manual Structure were developed with topics and contents.
- Student Service System practiced in VUB the Study Guidance, career counseling, study Guidance team, monthly study guidance meeting, learning path counselors, students' psychologist, university support systems, method to deal with students crisis were learned by RUB team.
- Identification of roles and responsibilities of RUB, VUB and ISMAI for the development of training manual and datelines were also set.
- Confirmed to support during the training of potential counselors in Bhutan from VUB and ISMAI