
TRAINING REPORT

Enhancing Mental Health, Counseling, and Wellbeing Support for University Students in Bhutan

Training LEVEL III

Dec 1st 2019 – Jan 30th 2020



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



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1.1 Background

During the training level III, trainees the Dean of Student Affairs and Student Service Officers of 9 RUB colleges were exposed to universities and schools in Thailand providing best Student Services. The exposure training level III gave hands on experience for the trainees. The training was led by the mentors and facilitators. The mentors facilitated daily pre-visit conference and post-visit conference. The trainees shared their reflection, learning and inquiries during the pre and post visit conferences. Every day the reflections were noted on the individual journal template developed by the mentors based on the overall objectives of the training component of the project. This training report developed based on the individual report submitted to the project office.

Universities in Thailand are reputed for advanced student service system across Asia not only based on academic literature but also through the experience of Bhutanese students studying there. As per the training plan the experiential training in Universities and schools in Thailand was implemented in two cohorts. The first cohort visited from 18th to 25th, 2019. The second cohort visited 19th to 25th Jan. During the five days experiential training, trainees visited Rangsit University, Thammasat University, Rajamanjala University, SIAM University, UNESCO Thailand, Dhammajarinee Witthaya School and Phranakhon Rajabhat University.

This report captures the individual participants' experiences (both personal and professional) gathered from the training which enhanced their competency, confidence, and perspectives in spearheading the happiness and wellbeing centre at their campus.

The trainee participants maintained daily reflective journal based on the following questions:

- *Describe your day's engagement in few words.*
- *In a general sense, list three things that you found useful from today's activity for your personal development.*
- *In a general sense, list three things that you found useful from today's activity for your professional development.*
- *In a specific sense, how useful was today's activity in enhancing your role as a manager/counsellor/wellbeing coach at Happiness and Wellbeing centre in your campus?*
- *In a specific sense, list three things that you learnt from today's activity that you will implement at Happiness and Wellbeing in your campus.*

1.2 Audience

Around twenty eight participants from nine RUB colleges, two participants from the NGOs, and four officials from Project.

Training was classified in two batches:

: first batch scheduled from 22-28 December, 2019 (CST, JNEC, SCE, GCBS)

: second batch scheduled from 19-25 January, 2020 (PCE, CNR, CLCS, GCIT, SC)

1.3 Training Objectives

The main objectives of the training Level III were:

- To expose the participants to observe and learn good practises of student support services, wellbeing and counselling in Bhutan, and Thailand (Bangkok).
- To equip the participants with knowlegde, and skills required to spearhead the ‘happiness & wellbeing centre’ at their campuses.
- *To prepare the participants to launch a full fledge happiness and wellbeing centre at their campus.*

1.5 Theoretical Framework of the training

Training was informed by:

- Humanistic/Learner Centered
- Reflective and Critical Thinking Exercise (Contemplative Science)
- Experiential (Constructivism)
- Hands-On (Observational Learning)

1.7 Risks

The following risks emerged for the training:

- The participants come from various provinces of Bhutan and this imposed some challenges are coordinating the training, the was addressed through several round of team consultation meeting.
- Logistical challenges due to large number of the participants, which was addressed by dividing the participants in two cohorts.

1.8 Training Preparation Timeline

Activities	Description	Responsible	Target Date
Training Structure Confirmation	The project will correspond with partners in Thailand to finalize the training structure	Tashi Phuntsho	Sep. 2019
Training Level III Coordination meeting	The project team members will meet to discuss the training level III plan	Sangay Dorji Pelden D Dorji	Oct 2019
Confirmation of the training participants	The project will finalize the list of participants and send it to the partner in Thailand.	Tashi Phunstho	Oct. 2019

Training finalization Meeting	The team members will meet to finalize the training preparation plan.		Nov. 2019
Training Level I & II	The participants will attend training level I, and II in November to prepare them for the Level III Training.	Sangay Dorji	Nov. 2019

2. Training Structure

Training Curriculum: Thailand Experiential Learning

Session Code	Pre-Visit Conference	Session II	Post- Visit Conference
Day I	Student Support System - Introduction -Overview of Thai Universities Student Support System -Check-list for the field trip	Field Trip to One of HEI in Thailand	-Review of the days' learning
Day II	Counselling in Thai Universities -Overview -Young people and Counselling -Check-list for the field trip	Field Trip to One of HEI in Thailand	-Review of the days' learning
Day III	Counselling in Thai Universities -Overview -Young people and Counselling -Check-list for the field trip	Field Trip to one of the organizations offering support to struggling young people.	-Review of the day's learning
Day IV	Emerging issues with young generation in Thailand I -Introduction -Ways to intervene the issues	Field Trip to One of HEI in Thailand	-Review of the day's learning
Day V	Life Skills -Managerial skills -Managing young group	Field Trip to One of HEI in Thailand	Bringing it all together: Integration of the training Level III

Training Report

Day I

Royal Bhutanese Embassy & Raja Mangala University

On the first day the team were welcomed at Royal Bhutanese Embassy by the Ambassador H.E. Mr. Tshewang Chophel Dorji. The team coordinator presented the outlines of the visit and launch of Happiness and Wellbeing Centre at colleges under Royal University of Bhutan. His Excellency shared on the roles and supports of embassy for Bhutanese students' wellbeing living abroad. In the recent times the career opportunities available in Thailand, especially the demand for English teachers has gained popularity among Bhutanese graduates. Such a career opportunities have benefited hundreds of Bhutanese graduates so far. The participants learned about the career, higher studies and entrepreneurship opportunities in Thailand for Bhutanese, which can be promoted at the campuses of RUB through the 'Happiness and Wellbeing Centre'. Also, the possible area of collaboration between the Royal embassy and the 'Happiness and Wellbeing Centre' was explored during the visit. One such outcome is the commitment made by the Embassy to assist the centres in collaborating with universities in Thailand. Also, the embassy encouraged the centre managers to work on planning an student exchange tour between the RUB campuses and universities in Thailand, to which the embassy is willingly to provide support.

On the first day the trainees visited Raja Mangala University located in the heart of Bangkok. The officiating president gave the general outline of the university. The international relation officials gave a tour on the campuses at different faculties. The student service division which focuses on the counseling and wellbeing is the core department. The wellbeing services offered were counseling, meditation, fitness centre and therapies. In the reports, trainees highlighted about aroma therapy and using QR code scanning for counselling. Such services were rated good reputation from students and the centre at RUB can implement it as well. The judicious use of space while developing the infrastructure for the centre was highlighted in the reports too.

One of the strategy or gesture that most of the staff does is, "buddy-buddy" bond the friendly relation between student and staff. The visiting team was also exposed to the initiative that the university take to upload age old tradition of Thai culture, which in fact reminded the trainees about the importance of such initiative at RUB centres under the theme 'being bhutanese'.

Highlight of Day I

Learning for Personal and Professional development.

- The importance of Self-Entrepreneurship and opportunities in Thailand for personal and professional development were focused.
- In the recent times the career opportunities available in Thailand, especially the demand for English teachers is gaining popularity among Bhutanese graduates. Such a career opportunities have benefited hundreds of Bhutanese graduates so far. The Bhutanese English teachers' reputation till now were exemplarily among the Asian teacher in Thailand, consequently the Bhutanese English teacher demand never diminishes.

Useful learning in enhancing the role of trainee as a manager/counsellor/wellbeing coach at Happiness and Wellbeing Centre.

- Diversifying the ideas as a centre manager to carter services in the field of Entrepreneurship, counselling & mental health, Mindfulness & Meditation, PD programs, awareness workshops, etc.
- To share the opportunities beyond our country for Entrepreneurship, higher studies and career.
- Introduction of relaxed environment and not formal setting at Happiness and wellbeing centre.

Good practices observed that will be implemented in Happiness and Wellbeing Centre

- Student service system beyond counseling.
- Conducting short entrepreneurship workshop for students and staff in collaboration with MoLHR, Entrepreneurship division.
- Conduct orientation on career and higher education opportunities.
- Allocation of different rooms for academic skills, medic, relaxation, counseling, lobby, mini-library.
- Engagement of student members for implementing centre activities.

Day II

SIAM University & Dhammajarinee Witthaya School

SIAM University stands for Smart, Independent, Active, Modern Multicultural which is also the top five private institution of Thailand. The programs started with the pre-conference with student service division highlighting the importance of working as a team, building friendly relationship with students and good communication skills. Most of the counseling services assessment were done through online system and applications. The RUB centres are encouraged to make good use of digital platform. Discipline issues were taken care by students counselling department with some formalities such as signing the forms and counselling agreement. It is found that most of the suggestions for mental health issues were taken care through online platform which maintains clients' privacy. Such a commitment between clients and advisor is found exemplary by RUB trainee.

Dhammajarinee Witthaya School is located south of Bangkok which is two hours journey by motor. The principal of the school gave video presentation. The school follows the concept of "Compassion", which is identical in the theory of buddhism, and a conceptual framework that RUB centres were developed. The student-teacher relation is based on the compassion which made greater means of understanding while dealing on different circumstances. The RUB trainees are taught an hour session of mindfulness practice.

The visit made the trainees determined to practice meditation and mindfulness as there is proven evidences of its benefits, "transcendental meditation" in particular as stated by principal. Some of the activities to keep students engage are creating students souvenir products, running school cafeteria and grocery store. The trainees found that school radiates harmony not because of strict rules but as a result of compassion and understanding student-staff relation.

Highlight of Day II

Learning for Personal and Professional development.

- The student teacher relation approach is based on compassion which motivated the trainees to be more compassionate person.
- The visit made the trainees determined to practice meditation and mindfulness as there is proven evidences of its benefits, "transcendental meditation" in particular as stated by principal.
- Following the path compassion while dealing with students ensures the best outcome, which is also symbolic to our Buddhist religion.
- Online Student services, most of the challenges and suggestions faced by students are reported through online platform, where student's identification becomes anonymous. Being anonymous

the tendency to confide the real challenges be it personal or academic becomes more convincing. Then as per the issues expertise on particular field will support the student.

- University have their own medical staff for emergency and mental health related issues.
- Discipline issues were taken care by students counselling with some formalities to be Done, which is more likely to have good outcome.

Useful learning in enhancing the role of trainee as a manager/counsellor/wellbeing coach at Happiness and Wellbeing Centre.

- Some of the qualities that centre manager should hold are: approachable & friendly, active listener, adjustable on different circumstances, committed with the clients.
- Work together as a team.
- Importance of building friendly relationship with students, the concept of being too formal which is very much common in Bhutanese culture has created lots of gap to understand their challenges and opportunities.
- Good networking skills with students through “Active listening”. The importance of digital technology skills for personal and professional development.
- Student service centre should be always accessible to students and staff.
- The HWC should also serve as Hub to explore the innovation and creativity of students.
- The active role should be played by Digital platform to interact with students on difficulties and opportunities.

Good practices observed that will be implemented in Happiness and Wellbeing Centre

- Meditation and mindfulness practices will be given the top priority in the centres.
- Through HWC activities like student souvenir will introduced which will engage and explore the skills and creativity of students.
- Provide support to students based on their personal interest, hobbies, skills and innovation.
- Undertake life skills development programs as a part of center activity.
- Importance of dynamic leadership qualities in decision making and working in small group but closely.
- The significance of keeping the centre engaged and active.
- The role played by social networks to have good communication with students.

Day III

Rangsit University, and UNESCO Bangkok

Rangsit University is one of the private Universities in Thailand that is ranked one of the best universities. The trainees are briefed by student service division and had tour over the hostel management, clinic, security system and mess management. The university have own police force who looks after the hostel management and overall security. One of the important technique shared by the clinical officer was *'Active Listening skills'*, while dealing with students with mental or physical health issue. This reiterated the importance of theoretical concepts that trainees learnt during the training level I and II. The trainee mentioned in their report that they found it intriguing that an individuals' competency in helping profession is determined by basic skills such as 'active listening' not through academic credentials, which in-fact motivated the trainees to sharpen their fundamental human skills of compassion, love and care to lead the RUB centres.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Bangkok was established in 1961 Bangkok has had a dual role as both the Regional Bureau for Education and as a Cluster Office in Asia-Pacific. The UNESCO Bangkok helps implement all UNESCO Programmes in the field of Education Sciences, Culture and Communication and information. During the visit the program officer presented on the project of UNESCO the "Happy School". The Happy Schools project, was launched in 2014 aims to promote Happiness, Well-being and Holistic development in schools. The conceptual framework of 'happy school' is similar to the framework of RUB centres. The UNESCO provided lots of suggestion on implementing the centre activities. The office reminded the trainee on importance of sustainability of the centre and its activities. UNESCO office committed to supports, and working in collaboration with the centres, for instance the centres are provided with resources (in form of book, PPTs, online link) to aid the activities at the centres. The centres are also encouraged introduce UNESCO Club in university through HWC.

Highlight of Day III

Learning for Personal and Professional development.

- The session on three models of learning was found useful:
 1. Learning to Do
 2. Learning to live
 3. Learning to know
- The ideas and knowledge of Happy School Project of UNESCO was found very much relevant to what our project is focused on. The wellbeing of students is always at top priority globally for the sustainability of global wellbeing.

- The concept under the Happy School project has helped the trainees to enhance the understanding of what contributes to happiness for students, which in turn contributes to their learning.
- The career opportunities to work in international agencies and which comprises of diversified nationals across the globe. The roles and responsibilities catered by international Non-governmental agencies to fulfil sustainable development goals.
- Exposure to dynamic wellbeing and student service system, the various services provided through Student service division.
- Good “Active listening” skills for the clients as shared by Clinical officer at Rangsit University. Active listening skill is more important than the book knowledge to understand the client.

Useful learning in enhancing the role of trainee as a manager/counsellor/wellbeing coach at Happiness and Wellbeing Centre.

- The visit was helpful particularly from the view of being able to design the activities that contributes to students’ happiness and creating conducive environment for learning.
- Knowledge gained on support for international students was useful. The centres can share diversified knowledge on the international agencies and their projects.

Good practices observed that will be implemented in Happiness and Wellbeing Centre

- Appreciating and embracing the diversity among students.
- Importance of basic education in our life.
- Interacting with the local community for learning.
- Appreciate the importance of co-curricular activities as critical components of learning.
- The possibility to introduce the UNESCO Club that we had during our school days.
- Digital platform and hotline should be well connected with students and staff to carter services efficiently.
- Found good practices of security and health officials, e.g. College police task force and college clinic.
- Adopting the digital application particularly the use of QR codes. Such a technology can help students come forward to avail services with the strong privacy maintained seeking expertise based on the selected problems and help needed.
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Day IV

Thammasat University

Thammasat University is rated the best among the Student Service System. The Vice-Rector gave the presentation of the university and student services offered. We participants spent a day at “Thammasat Wellbeing Centre” for medical, counseling services and “Viva City” which is mainly for meditation, therapies (music, aroma, art), relaxation room, counseling room, mini-library. The university got good mess facilities for both students and staff. Overall, Thammasat University provides best wellbeing and counseling services. The trainees found it helpful to discover engagement of students in running the day to day services of wellbeing centres. RUB centres are planning to recruit students’ members to assist the centre in facilitating activities. Incorporation of book therapy and relaxation room ideas at RUB centres was mentioned in the report too.

Highlight of Day IV

Learning for Personal and Professional development.

- The concept of Healthy mind and Healthy body. The mind and body are always interdependent, even in Buddhist concept. The wellbeing of oneself begins through health mind and intern led to health body. One must stay physically and mentally healthy to have good immunity in the quest for knowledge and wisdom.
- To start a day with positive attitude amongst the people working at the centres.
- The importance of inclusiveness of everyone’s idea as a team.
- The extension of support through digital platform.
- Theoretical knowledge of mental health is very important.
- Active listening and taking ownership on one’s responsibility.

Useful learning in enhancing the role of trainee as a manager/counsellor/wellbeing coach at Happiness and Wellbeing Centre.

- Through the campus tour, the trainees were able to reflect on the prerogatives that centre manager should hold during different circumstances. They learnt role of centre manager in multi-tasking different roles of counsellor, clinical assistance, basic therapist, wellbeing coach, academician.
- Skills on digital platform and creative/innovative ideas.

Good practices observed that will be implemented in Happiness and Wellbeing Centre

- The Centre should be well organized like VIVA City in Thammasat University. Centre should have different allocated rooms for different services like, meditation, lobby, mini-library, therapy room, relaxation room, clinical room & counseling room.
- Digital platform and hotline should be well connected with students and staff to cater services efficiently.
- Found good practices of security and health officials, e.g. College police task force and college clinic.
- Adopting the digital application particularly the use of QR codes. Such a technology can help students come forward to avail services with the strong privacy maintained seeking expertise based on the selected problems and help needed.

Day V

Phranakhon Rajabhat University

Phranakhon Rajabhat University is one of the oldest universities in Thailand. One of the fields that this university specializes in is the special classes offered for students with physical and mental disabilities. This provided the trainees with insight on creating an inclusive centre at RUB. Before counseling at a higher level, the university encourages peer mentoring of students amongst themselves. Moral based education is one of the key components of the University. The importance of knowing the self, self-awareness is highlighted as a major theoretical basis for the student support system. The RUB centre was encouraged to create a centre which will encourage the students to discover their inner self.

Highlight of Day V

Learning for Personal and Professional development.

- Importance of self-determination and motivation
- Special classes to be arranged for special need students. In Bhutan we are coming up with special need students' school and trainings.
- The benefits of practicing Mindfulness and meditation in our day to day life.

Useful learning in enhancing the role of trainee as a manager/counsellor/wellbeing coach at Happiness and Wellbeing Centre.

- Importance of having a university clinic at the centre.

- The need of computer knowledge on current era to ease the day to day task.
- Moral based education has become most important to mold the current generations. On this current era, our youths see only believes on what their sight projects, the moral is skipped often times without knowing the reality of life.
- The efficiency of digitalizing the paper works which is more precise and fast.

Good practices observed that will be implemented in Happiness and Wellbeing Centre

- Incorporation of different services at HWC.
- To let students and community know the value of Bhutanese heritage, culture and spirituality through the theme 'being bhutanese'.
- The immediate need of clinical facilities through HWC.
- Improvising the Digital platform for students and staff.