REGIONAL CENTRE OF EXPERTISE ON EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (RCE EfSD):
AN EMERGING MODEL FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION THROUGH HIGHER EDUCATION

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QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

1. Are HE at the cross road?

2. How Asia is Asia?

3. How Higher Educations contributed to Asianization/Westernization of Asia?

4. What are the current trends in Higher Educations Framework?

5. How European integration experiences influence the content and trends of internationalization of Higher Educations in Asia?

6. How sustainable are the trends?

7. Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE) - as sustainable platform for regional integration through universities

PRESENTATION OUTLINE

1. Contextual Background I : Emerging Trends in Regional Integration

2. Contextual Background II: Regional Integration and Higher Education

3. Contextual Background III: Experiences in the West (European Integration)

4. The Case Study - Regional Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development: A Model for Regional Integration Through Higher Education

5. Future Implications

FRAMEWORK OF ARGUMENTS:

1. Asian must revert to promote and celebrate its own values as basis for regional integration

2. The content/driving forces/soft component of Asian regionalism should differ from the current trend of regionalism based on template from other integration experiences

3. Consequently, university response (reforms/restructure etc) to forces of globalization and internationalization (contents and mechanisms) must be of its own Asian characteristics

continuation

4. Promoting Asian sustainable values - many principles of sustainability have long been an embedded values in Asia (religion, communal ethic, love and respect to nature etc.)

5. These should be the framework and way forward for universities in Asia – national development (after independence) to addressing global issues through local/regional solutions

The existing framework of regionalism:

Substance:

- Economic cooperation
- Monetary and finance
- Trade and investment
- Regional public goods
- Security

Structure:

Top down

Meeting, conference, workshop etc.

Actor:

Track I and II (national level)

<u>Emerging trends of regionalism – mainstreaming of functional cooperation</u>

<u>Substance</u>:

- Human resource development
- Global issues – environment, human rights, sustainable development

<u>Structure</u>:

Bottom up

Conference, workshop, meeting etc plus networking

<u>Actor</u>

Multiple actors (multi track) – more diverse from all level (universities and local civil society actor)

CRITICAL ELEMENTS IN THE NEW REGIONALISM

- Diverging vs. converging approach
- Locally developed platform
- Maintaining diversity
- Cross-discipline issues

Can there be one model integrating these requirements?

REGIONAL INTEGRATION AND HIGHER EDUCATION

- Models in response to globalization vs. localization

- Models in response to structure vs. substance

- Models in response to autonomous vs. nationalized

<u>Major trends in HE framework responding to various forces</u>

- 'Academic imperialism'

Education and culture as platform – Edward Said – Culture and Imperialism

- 'Academic capitalism'

"The metaphor of academic capitalism reveals a powerful "Today, higher education has become a commodity marketed across borders under the general agreement on trade and services (GATS)"

"The rapid growth of the global market in higher education indicates how things have changed. National concerns and social expectations are being replaced by profit considerations, and market forces now decide the purpose and priorities of higher education"

Collins, Christopher S. (2007). A General Agreement on Higher Education: GATS, Globalisation, and Imperialism. Research in Comparative and International Education. Vol. 2, Issue 4, Article 2.

- 'Academic independence/autonomy'
  Searching for the model
- What are the element/contents/frameworks

RESPONSE: THE CASE OF INTERNATIONALIZATION AMONG HE

- The University of Melbourne in Australia:

  "to contribute effectively to their communities wherever in the world they choose to live and work."
- The University of Guadalajara, Mexico:

  "seeks to foster students' holistic development, including increased tolerance and The love of country and humanity."
- University of Botswana, Africa:

  seeks to "advance the intellectual and human resource capacity of the nation and the international community."
- Kyoto University

  "welcomes students from all over the world who aspire to learn and to foster their interest in taking an active part in international society."

cont'

- Tokyo University (the President's message)

  "the university aims to become the "World's Tokyo University" and strives to create "an institution that contributes to the benefit of all human society."

- New York University (Message from the President)

  "…claims "global university" status and "We have expanded our focus from New York, the world's capital city, to become a truly global university, with significant New York University Centers around the world."

Where will all these lead to?

- United Nations World Trade University
- Virtual University
- World University
- ASEAN University

THE COMMON RECIPE IN HE FRAMEWORK

- Quality assurance, academic standards and recognition of degrees
- Brain drain
- Promotion of cultural awareness and loss of cultural identity
- Mobility of students, scholars, faculty
- Development assistance and cooperation
- Institutional, national and regional funding and support
- Use of ICT and distance education
- Development of networks, consortia and multilateral agreements
- International research projects and collaboration
- Recruitment of international students

CRITICAL QUESTIONS:

- Who define?
- Whose benchmark?
- Whose values?
- Whose mould?
- Whose final objectives?

- SUGGEST A NEED FOR A MODEL OF HIGHER EDUCATION FRAMEWORK WHICH REFLECT EMERGING TRENDS OF REGIONALISM

EXPERIENCES IN THE WEST (EUROPEAN INTEGRATION)

- BOLOGNA PROCESS - to create the European higher education area by making academic degree standards and quality assurance standards more comparable and compatible throughout Europe

- SOCRATES/Erasmus - supports and encourages exchanges of students and teachers, the launching of joint study programmes or intensive courses, pan-european thematic networks and other measures aiming at the development of a european dimension in higher education.

- Since 1990 more than 300 college leaders have signed Talloires Declaration, which commits them to the pursuit of a sustainable future.

- In the past year alone, the pace of change toward that direction has accelerated markedly in the United States, with dozens of institutions jumping on the hybrid-electric bandwagon of sustainability.

- In a blizzard of news releases, they have vowed to curb carbon emissions, buy clean energy, reduce waste, serve organic food, purchase hybrid cars, appoint sustainability directors, build green dormitories, plant native shrubs, or divest from socially irresponsible companies.

REGIONAL CENTRE OF EXPERTISE ON EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: A *'GLORENACAL'** MODEL FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION THROUGH HIGHER EDUCATION

"The Age of the Nation is past; it is time to build the Earth
  - French anthropologist Teihard de Chardin

*global, regional, national, local

BACKGROUND

Is regional cooperation through HE a new development?

(REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON HIGHER EDUCATION : NATIONAL STRATEGIES AND REGIONAL CO-OPERATION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY, TOKYO, JAPAN, 8-10 JULY 1997)

"While recognizing that globalization and internationalization are irreversible trends, support for these concepts should not lead to dominance or new forms of imperialism by major cultures and value systems from outside the region; rather, it is of vital importance that every effort should be taken to protect and promote the strengths of local cultures and intellectual and scholarly traditions;

Regional co-operation among the countries of the region, especially in higher education, can make significant contributions in addressing major policy problems, strengthening national capacity in economic and social development, and facilitating the sharing of important expertise and experience. Regional co-operation is especially desirable in view of the diversity of the region and the potential for dynamic collaboration."

"In addition, higher education institutions should explore opportunities to promote processes aiming at regional integration without losing diversity

Joint Action Plans must be established, in order to prevent duplicated efforts, to optimize efficiency and to ensure the further development of higher education through the enhanced mobilization of additional resources, by international and regional organizations dealing with inter-university co-operation and strengthening of global networks, by all regional, sub-regional and national associations of universities and higher education institutions, by the representatives of private and public universities, by networks of institutions for research and teaching, as well as by development organizations and agencies, governmental and non-governmental organizations.

The United Nations University and, in particular, the Institute of Advanced Studies in Tokyo, should co-operate with higher education institutions of the region in strengthening networks and in building global networks leading to the solution of pressing global problems of human survival and welfare. The mass media of the region should be called on to support these initiatives." (THE ORIGINATION OF RCE)

WHAT IS AN RCE?

An RCE is a network of existing formal, non-formal and informal education organisations, mobilised to deliver education for sustainable development (ESD) to local and regional communities. A network of RCEs worldwide will constitute the Global Learning Space for Sustainable Development. RCEs aspire to achieve the goals of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD, 2005-2014), by translating its global objectives into the context of the local communities in which they operate.

Core elements of an RCE

- *Governance* - addressing issues of RCE management and leadership
- *Collaboration* - addressing the engagement of actors from all levels of formal, non-formal and informal education in RCE activities
- *Research and development* - addressing the role of research and its inclusion in RCE activities, as well as contributing to the design of strategies for collaborative activities, including those with other RCEs
- *Transformative education* - contributing to the transformation of the current education and training systems to satisfy ambitions of the region regarding sustainable living and livelihood.

COMMUNITY NETWORK STRUCTURE

Formal Education ⟷ **Non-formal Education**

Ministry of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment ⟷ USM's Research Centers, Fisheries Research, Penang Botanical Garden, Penang National Park, Taiping Peace Initiative, Matang Mangrove Reserve

Polytechnic Seberang Perai, Community College Kepala Batas, Community College Bayan Lepas, UiTM , Teachers Training Colleges, RECSAM Private Colleges, Other Universities ⟷ State Government of Penang and Its Agencies, Penang Municipal Council, Seberang Perai Municipal Council, Penang Development Corporation, Penang Regional Development Authority

Secondary Schools

Primary Schools

Penang Heritage Trust, Consumer Association of Penang, Third World Networks, Malaysian Nature Society, Social Economic Research Institute, Community based NGOs. Media and Local Business Community

RCE Around the World – A Driving Force for Inter-regional Cooperation

RCEs in Asia Pacific – An Emerging Platform for Asian Regional Cooperation

RCEs Acknowledged in 2005 and 2006
1. Greater Sendai
2. Okayama
3. Penang
4. Pacific
5. Tongyeong
6. Cebu
7. Yokohama

RCE Acknowledged in early 2007
1. Anji, China
2. Beijing, China
3. Guwahati, India
4. Kodagu, India
5. Lucknow, India
6. Pune, India
7. Bogor, Indonesia
8. Kitakyushu, Japan
9. Kyrgyz Republic
10. Incheon, Republic of Korea
11. Trang, Thailand

New RCEs Acknowledged in August 2007
1. Chubu, Japan
2. Kobe-Hyogo, Japan
3. Yogyakarta, Indonesia

HOW DO RCEs CONTRIBUTE TO REGIONAL COOPERATION AND INTEGRATION

- Addressing global issues through locally developed solution
- Multilevel multi stakeholders
- Inside out approach
- Bridging the community and university community
- Multidisciplinary approach
- A model of regionalization from within
- Inter-regional framework

PROGRAM I

- ***RCE International Conference, USM, Penang, Malaysia - August 2007***

- Activities:

    - General Conference on Sustainable Development – establishing regional and inter-regional collaborative projects

    - Individual meeting based on Region (Asia Pacific and Europe) for local actions

- Organizer: RCE Penang @ USM and UN University

- Participant: Multi stakeholders (44 RCEs, International Organizations, NGOS)

- Outcomes: List of collaborative projects (within region and inter-regional)

- Role of Higher Education: Most of the RCEs lead by universities

PROGRAM II

- ***RCE Collaborative Research (April 2006-March 2007)***

- Activities: Comparative research on governance of sustainable development among 4 RCE (Sendai, Okayama, Yokohama and Penang

- Organizer: RCE Penang @ USM and UN University with funding from Japan Foundation Sumitomo Foundation

- Participant: Okayama University, Miyagi University, Universiti Sains Malaysia

- Outcomes: Report on Comparative Governance of SD between Japan and Malaysia

- Implication on regional cooperation:

  Better understanding of governance structure in Sustainable Development

PROGRAM III

- ***Postgraduate Research and Education of Sustainable Development Network (April 2008 onwards)***
- Participating universities:
  - ☐ Universiti Sains Malaysia (Malaysia)
  - ☐ University Gadja Mada (Indonesia)
  - ☐ Yonsei University, South Korea
  - ☐ Asian Institute of Technology, Thailand
  - ☐ University of the Philippine
  - ☐ University of Tokyo
  - ☐ University of Hokkaido
  - ☐ University of Nagoya
  - ☐ Tongji University, China
  - ☐ TERI University, India

CORE ACTIVITIES

- Collaborative program involving all the member universities in the theme on Sustainable Development
  - ☐ Faculty training program
  - ☐ Community development program
  - ☐ Student Exchange Program
  - ☐ Training program for government official

PROGRAM IV

- ***RCE Collaborative Project on Sustainable Health Program (April 2008)***
- <u>Objective</u>:

  Addressing Global Health Problem Through Local Solutions from the participating universities
- <u>Unique feature</u>:
  - ☐ An inside out approach of bridging university and community
  - ☐ An innovative platform of merging science and social aspect
  - ☐ A focus on marginal group/countries/region
- <u>Main organizer/participants</u>: RCE Penang/RCE in Asia Pacific
- <u>Activities</u>: Comprehensive SD program in a selected area
  - ☐ Health – students offering medical service and diagnostic kit at affordable rate
  - ☐ Economic activities (paper from banana trees)

PROGRAM V

- **1st ASEAN Conference on Sustainable Development: Creating Synergies Towards Sustainable Solutions (June 2008)**

- Objectives:
  - Creating synergies among regional agencies and policies in addressing global issues (climate change, environmental preservation etc)
  - Promoting local (as in a nation and a belongs to ASEAN region) solution for global application
  - Creation of Regional Youth Network to address global issues
  - Provide platform for RCE Asia Pacific Meeting

- Main organizer: RCE Penang and Yayasan Tun Razak

- Participants: University experts, NGO, INGO, regional agencies (ASEAN) and related regional and international bodies

FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

- Development of *new platform* for regional integration based on *functional cooperation* - sustainability/sustainable development

- Emergence of *inter-regional cooperation* with higher education as lead agencies

- Mainstreaming of *networking* as force of regional/inter-regional cooperation