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### Meeting Minutes

**Doctoral program in Khmer universities strengthening the international development of  
environmental and maritime research/DOCKSIDE**

**Seminar Research Restructuration: Challenges and Way forwards**

**16 May 2018**

**Sunway Hotel, Phnom Penh, Cambodia**

Rapporteur: Department of Scientific Research MoEYS, RUA and NUM

Start and End Time 7:30 am to 4:30 pm (ICT)

#### Minutes

**Opening remarks: His Excellency YUOK Ngoy, Secretary of State of Ministry of Education Youth and Sport, in charge of Higher Education.**

A great pleasure and honour to open this seminar on the Research Restructuration focusing on the position of “Director of Research” for Cambodian Higher Education Institutions.

He thanked the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union that established “Capacity Building” program, it gives the possibility to several Cambodian HEIs to get benefit from support and experience of European University colleagues and has formed an international scientific network that integrates Cambodian University.

The MoEYS works with the World Bank to improve higher education. Currently, In Cambodia, there are 121 higher education institutions which 48 public. Improving the quality of higher education is a crucial key success for Cambodia to response to the Industrial Development Policy knowing that there are some gaps, include:

- A mismatch between the needs of the labour market and the knowledge and skill acquired by young Cambodian graduates
- A limited number (7-8%) of lecturers with PhD corresponding to the subject taught in their universities

- Cambodia's poor ranking (within Asia) in terms of scientific publications in international or regional journals or other papers
- A limited number of citations of Cambodia authors in the referents of publications.

The functions of university differ from those of secondary education institution, mainly in terms of research. University teacher must be teacher-researchers since the two main function of higher education institutions are

1. To teach knowledge and skills
2. To create new knowledge and contribute to the existing one.

As these two commonly-quoted statements, that means there is no higher education without research and there is no research without publications of scientific articles or books. In order to facilitate research activities of each university, the Ministry decided to introduce a requirement for all higher education institutions to have to "Director of Research" which is the topic of today's seminar. This new position is the key to each university's research and general restructuring.

To further improve the quality of Cambodian university system, the MoEYS signed the Prakas in 2007 creating the Cambodian scientific committee for research in a doctoral program and doctoral school in order to lead the creation of doctoral school by specific scientific field.

Last but not least, His Excellency Yuok Ngoy is confident that presentation, roundtable discussion, and reflections in this seminar will provide substantial input for the improvement of the existing pre-project and ultimately further improvement of Cambodian's higher education quality, meanwhile, he declares the opening of the Seminar on Research Restructuration.

**Dr Yves Perraudeau, Advisor to the Minister of Education, Youth and Sport**

He introduced the Prakas on "Cambodian Scientific Committee for Research and Doctoral Programs" signed by the Minister of MoEYS in March 2017.

He said that there are two functions for a university: to transfer knowledge (it is the teaching activity) and to produce knowledge (that is the research activity).

If we want to improve higher education, we must do the research and the research equals to publication. To do research is to know and to analyse a specific scientific field. We cannot have general approach inside a master or doctoral program but we can accept that for bachelor university program. So if we must have specialization in each university, we need to know the process to obtain the specialization and the link with the strategic plan of the university.

For each institution, the first element is to know its specific Cambodian social economic environment, which exists today and tomorrow. The second element is the human resources and the team of teacher-researcher that we have inside the university, what is the speciality of the teachers and researchers that we can hope to have. The third element is the history of the specialization of the university with its reputation: We must do some strategy choices for some topics.

For the development of research we must have some partners of research and work with companies in the sector and so to know the knowledge and problematic of the life inside the company; we must create a scientific network and a professional network for the university. Also, we must build a mutual

confidence professional people and the university: it is very important. So, we can see the link between the research and teaching program for master and PhD program. So scientific research and specialization in a university field is an important element of the capacity for creating master and PhD program.

### **Dr Sam Or Angkearoat, Deputy Director General of Policy and Planning of Ministry of Education Youths and Sport**

This presentation was done by Dr Sam Or Angkearoat which is focus on “The Post of Director of Research” in every university. In this presentation mentioned about Global Research Context, Role and Responsibilities of the Research Director, Qualifications of the Research Director and the process of selection of the Research Director. In additionally, Dr Angkearoat said that in Cambodia some universities only focus on research, not publication, hence he encourages all the universities to do the research for the benefit and new production work (such as publication).

*Research for research is useless.* In this ways, MoEYS has to gather all information related to the research in each institution through the research director. The research director plays an important role to strengthen the research action or research fundamental. Revive research culture among of faculties and students is the best way to improve higher education quality and to reduce the skill mismatch because research cans make a close link between the practitioners and universities.

### **Group Discussion**

There are six groups which are divided into two sets of questions, groups 1 to 3 discussed the first set of questions, group 4 to 5discussed the second set of questions.

#### The first set of questions consists

Please discuss, what should be the other key duties and responsibilities of a research director which have not mentioned in the proposed ToR by MOEYS?

- (1) Please identify the potential organizational challenges for a research director to work efficiently? What should be the strategies to overcome those challenges
- (2) What strategies should a research director take to ensure the active involvement of the faculty members in research?
- (3) To whom should a research director be accountable?

#### And the second set of questions

- (1) In your opinion, what should be the other key qualities (skill and experiences) of the research director which have not mentioned in the proposed ToR by MOEYS?
- (2) What should be the process of appointment and what should be the period of appointment?
- (3) How to monitor/ evaluate the performance of a research director? Who will evaluate and when?
- (4) Explain how could the MOEYS facilitate the process?

See appendix for the results of group discussion

## **General Restitution of the discussion by Prof Thomas Vallee and Dr Dewan Ahsan**

### Dr Dewan Ahsan (SDU, Denmark) 1<sup>st</sup> set of question

The overall observation is that each group discussion has a similar idea. We need to create research base in order to move forward for the society, which means we need research-based education. So we need PhD and even if those PhD graduates move to a private company but they still work for Cambodia

- A sustainable income and outcome shall help to produce intellectual, a good resource and to foster existing research (extra and intra research)
- Open-minded is the keyword
- We need full-time Director of Research
- We need a good leader (well organized, able to do peer review, publish research, teamwork and lead the team and able to watch external stakeholder)
- Find external funding and special funding
- We need a close relationship with the ministry

### Prof Thomas Vallée (University of Nantes, France) 2<sup>nd</sup> set of question

As a researcher, we need someone to help and cooperate because we can't do everything on our own. The Director of Research need to write a report to assure the quality and this position could take duration from 3 to 5 years if 2 years is too short. Researcher prefers doing research than teaching only.

- Ministry should discuss the indicator and finally to disseminate good practices.
- Competition among good master and PhD student is everywhere. How to keep the best students? What attracts them ? How to keep good young researchers? It could be better salary, career development, good reputation of the institutions (based on research and education)
- We should promote working with people outside from our own institutions.
- Director of Research cannot be responsible for everything, his responsibility should be properly defined. This position should have support from the home institutions: rector, head of department, etc

**Closing remarks by His Excellency Dr Touch Visalsok, under-secretary of state of Ministry of Education Youths and Sport**

Most of the research which has been done in Cambodia is a survey, even the ministry of health just release research outcome but the outcome of the survey not the outcome from the country. Don't be disappointed, we will achieve our goal in the future. Cambodia will have World Bank project which is about 95 million us dollars focusing on research with 8 institutions as a pilot project and will expand to university if it's successful and also include private one in this stage.

In order to improve Cambodia research, Director of Reseach must work closely with the director of doctoral school. They can supervise and work with student on the research project. If they could not work with each other it would be a challenge.

At that moment, he continued, that we have a system where vice rector responsible for research and development and international affairs for research project. If we put have Director of Research position within the structure, the rector and vice rector positions shall be more focus (and less burden).

*"I think the outcome of the seminar today is to identify the role of research director and responsibility and some universities raised many concerns about how to employ a good research director, how to get and how we keep them for sustainability (because director of research always change from one person to another person by many pressure not only publication but about fund management)".*

He closed with a statement that the ministry has provided a lot of incentive and support in this stage to university to be interested in doing research and giving a lot of freedom to each university.

#### **Actions to be taken**

Who is the research director? And how we process it for its selection in Cambodian universities? When is the finalised Terms of Reference signed by the Minister?

#### **Remarks**

There were around 50 participants including rectors, vice rectors, researcher, staffs and experts (including the organization committee)



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Seminar  
Research Restructuration: Challenges and Ways Forward  
Sunway Hotel, 16 May 2018  
Phnom Penh, Cambodia

**AGENDA**

Morning Session

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 07.30 - 08.30 | Registration of participants  |
| 08.30 - 09.00 | Opening Speech<br><br>HE Yuok Ngoy, Secretary of state, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports   |
| 09.00 - 10.15 | Presentation of Cambodian Scientific Committee for Research and Doctoral Programs + Doctoral Schools<br><br>Dr. Yves Perraudeau – MoEYS Cambodia<br><br>Presentation of the draft and Panel Discussion Terms of Reference of Director of Research, Objectives and Challenges<br><br>Dr Sam Or Angkearoat – MoEYS Cambodia |
| 10.15 - 10.30 | Coffee Break  |
| 10.30 - 12.00 | Roundtable on Director of Research<br><br>Creation of Director of Research for Cambodian universities: Challenges, prospects and responsibilities of MOEYS<br><br>Facilitators: Dr. Sam Or Angkearoat – MoEYS, Dr. Dewan Ahsan – Southern Denmark University and Prof. Thomas Vallée – University of Nantes               |

Afternoon Session

- |               |                                    |
|---------------|------------------------------------|
| 12.00 - 13.30 | Lunch                              |
| 13.30 - 15.00 | Result presentation by the invitee |
| 15.00 - 15.15 | Coffee Break                       |
| 15.15 - 16.30 | Summary and recommendations        |

## Appendix

### Results of Group Discussion

**Group 1:** There are 5 members as Dr. Didier Fontenille (IPC), Dr. Yves Perraudeau (Advisor to Minister of MOEYS), Dr. Hul, Seingheng (ITC), Mr. Vinh Sovann (CUM), Mr. Ork Sovannareth (IIC Uni.of Cambodia). The presentation is conducted by Dr. Hul Seingheng on topic: Creation of research director for Cambodian Universities: Challenges, prospects and responsibilities.

**Q1:** Please discuss, what should be the other key duties and responsibilities of a research director which have **not mentioned** in the proposed ToR by MOEYS?

Key duties:

- Develop Guideline
- To give constrain direct and indirect consultation to researcher

How to make researcher active in research?

- Certification
- Travelling is interested to do research (Travel to abroad or cooperate research with international)
- Funding
- Encourage Master or Bachelor level to do research
- Promote Master and PhD

Research Director should be a person who is good information sharing (eg. World Bank provided fund research to researcher so the director has to shear this information to the researcher).

Responsibility: Should consider the priority should be a big or small university? And should request to whom high education

**Q2:** Challenges and Strategies of research director to work efficiently:

- Challenges
  - Fund (Find fund for research), find partners: If no project what to do next?
  - Management: (how to manage fund )
  - Limited communication system: eg. All faculty members don't know all the plan in their faculty
- Strategies
  - Give opportunity

**Q3:** What strategies should a research director take to ensure the **active involvement** of the faculty members in research?

- Information sharing
- Development strategy plan
- Good communication

**Q4:** To whom should a research director be accountable?

- Rector:
- Researcher: need accountable is very necessary to know what going on
- Partners
- Administration

**Group 2:** Presented by Dr. Chey Chanheang

**Q1:** Please discuss, what should be the other key duties and responsibilities of a research director which have **not mentioned** in the proposed ToR by MOEYS?

- Duties/Responsibility:
  - Research responsibility for both research director and research center (research center responsible for all type of research)
- Revise Line 1, page 4 of the document

**Q2:** Please identify the potential organizational challenges for a research director to work efficiently? What should be the strategies to overcome those challenges?

- Challenges:
  - Clarify the meaning of recognized university (top or world ranking)
  - Publication not only in the international peer-review journal qualify but we need a citation
  - Research policy (attract high qualified people to join research), environment (many universities are lacking of the advance facility and technician to working on maintenance or managing the lab and don't have the right person to work on the right position.
  - Qualify person is not interested in working for this job- Because if we don't have policy or policy doesn't clear and somehow the researcher is not paid well so they will decide to teach rather than research.
  - Conflict existing current research division/ centers at university: If we set the new policy we may change the people or that people qualify enough to the new policy?
  - Change director irregular or unexpected is causing consistency
  - Research Director MUST BE Cambodian Citizen??? Or another citizen? e.g. when the new director so he/she might change to new policy so we can't reach the goal.
  - Should research director be Cambodian Citizen or another citizen?
- Strategies:
  - Set up internal policy covers all package (promotion, incentive
  - Create incentive fund for researchers
  - Provide facility research environ
  - Less bureaucracy and online application with computerize system (transparency)
  - Set up the term of the position

**Q3:** What strategies should a research director take to ensure the **active involvement** of the faculty members in research?



- Award for citation index journal: Promotion and award for publication when they published in a very high-quality journal or high citation

**Q4:** To whom should a research director be accountable?

- Award for citation index journal
- Research promotion as a professorship
- Create research incentive fund
- Additional research exchange program
- 

**Group 3** Presented by Mr. Diep Seiha

**Q1:** Please discuss, what should be the other key duties and responsibilities of a research director which have **not mentioned** in the proposed ToR by MOEYS?

- Need Clarification
  - Where is the research center? Research Center is an independent institute and the separate university and it is not just supported by Doctorate school. It is functioning to carry out the research
- Administrative duties & responsibilities
  - To lead in the preparation of annual research activities plan
  - To prepare research and administrative budget in coordination with finance unit
- Research duties & responsibilities
  - To lead in the preparation of annual research activities plan
  - To prepare research and administrative budget in coordination with finance unit
- Research duties & responsibilities
  - To lead and supervise the publication of the research report
  - To disseminate the research finding to various stakeholders
- Communication & external liaison
  - To collaborate and network with researched institutions of other countries is very important in term of research funding or in term of national or eastern level

**Q2:** Please identify the potential organizational challenges for a research director to work efficiently? What should be the strategies to overcome those challenges?

- Challenges
  - Research Funding: We still have the challenge to find support and financial especially for the institution and the private university also
  - Coordination with other units: So we need strong support from the top management support
  - Resource (Human and technical): we need research skill to do research and more staff to work

**Q3:** What strategies should a research director take to ensure the **active involvement** of the faculty members in research?

- Research Director should Build strong awareness among research communities

**Q4:** To whom should a research director be accountable?

- Director should accountable to funding agencies or organizations because we assume that the research centre under research director

✓ **Question and Answer:**

1. Question to group 2: In the public university, the research director must be national and the nomination must be issued by the ministry or government. So his idea is “Beside the nomination, the research director position for the public university should expand to international?”

- Answer (in the power point also): The research director should be Cambodia citizen for a public university. eg. Zaman University which is private university, the research director is foreigner so what is ministry role for a position like this?

2. If public university is the research director, so what is the recruitment will be like? If they have level of independent, so they will concern to their salary rank. So if they are paid with acceptable salary rank that would not be the challenge?

- Research Director, not Cambodia- He think that “it is not the question between Cambodian citizen or international to be a director as long as we have the right resource and right skill to help on this”.
- One case in Malaysia the research director must be Malaysian citizen. This example want to raise that the selection of Research director also depend on policy.

3. Whom should be the research director accountable to? Miss conduct of account country

- Research director must be responsible for research activity and supervisor for the research activity but he/she don't need to respond all particular research activity. He/she must shear by all.
- If we want to have research we should start research together as the system. When we are ready for the truth that we find through research then we can say and can use it to develop, put in law or policy. Therefore the research will be needed and happened. He think that if Cambodia still need believe that way (eg. not include research in curriculum and still teach student in the same way ever) so will be no room for research. So we need to start together from all level up to make research happen.

**Group 4:** There are 5 members to discuss on second set of question- Rey Sopheak, Hap Phalthy, Buntong Borarin, Rath, Chhang and Chan Roath. Presented by Mr. Rey, Sopheak

**Q1.** In your opinion, what should be the other key qualities (skill and experiences) of the research director which have not mentioned in the proposed ToR by MOEYS?

- Qualities, skill and experiences:

**Q2.** What should be the process of appointment and what should be the period of appointment?

- Process:
  - President or Representation of CSCRDP (If CSCRDP has 30 members so should we take all 30 members for the appointment or just chose representation from CSCRDP to be in the appointment?)
  - The application must be open in public (national or international) for the application access
  - Nomination and position are eligible for a national and international candidate. What the requirement in private and public university to ranking the quality assurance?

**Q3.** How to monitor/ evaluate the performance of a research director? Who will evaluate and when?

- How & Who
  - The same as the selection committee

- Peer and Board evaluation through internal and external research regulation of university
- When?
  - Self-performance appraisal
  - Annual performance appraisal
  - Mid-term and final

**Q4.** Explain how could the MOEYS facilitate the process?

- Establish the guideline, legal regulation
- Facilitate the nomination letter
- Provide competitive funding: Department of Scientific Research may involve on this to provide competitive funding.

**Group 5:** There are four members such as: Presented by dean faculty of education from RUPP.

- How to keep perfect researcher with us? As experience, RUPP lost about 10 PhD since he has become the dean. That PhD move to the private sector because the company paid them a lot. We have to be very careful our human resource, of brain drain.

**Group 6:** Member- Dr. Dom Vannak (UC), Dr. Heng Sopheap (SPH, NIPH, MoH), Dr. Claude Rochow (UP), Ms. Pay Soklim (UP), Mr. Travis Mitchell (UC). Presented by Dr. Heng Sopheap

**Q1.** In your opinion, what should be the other key qualities (skill and experiences) of the research director which have not mentioned in the proposed ToR by MOEYS?

- The publication should be at least 2 researchers prior to the research director post because the publication of research is the long-term process.
- Still active and involve after the publication in their specific field

**Q2.** What should be the process of appointment and what should be the period of appointment?

- 2 candidates from the university should be proposed because if we proposed one candidate and the committee doesn't approve so we need to go through rapid the process again

**Q3.** How to monitor/ evaluate the performance of a research director? Who will evaluate and when?

**Q4.** Explain how could the MOEYS facilitate the process?

- Motivation by ranking university by publication: What are the final goal and the benefit to the University? Finally, what do they get?

✓ Question and Answer:

1. *Comment:* Shearing among CSCRDP sometime is not enough. When we want to know facilitation of Ministry of Education to improve the process is difficult. Do we have enough encourage information, supporting system in term of comment purpose, commitment from all stakeholders?
2. *Comment:* In order to recruit the research director is selected from the vertical level. The director should involve the high ranking people in the ministry to discuss because they have the power and decision.

