

Strengthening Leadership with Gender, Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity (GEDI) in Higher Education Institutions in South East Asia

Phase I at a Glance

Aim of the Project

Empower Higher Education leaders in enabling more "equitable access and inclusion for under-represented groups" in higher education institutions (HEIs) in UK and South East Asia with the ultimate aim to:

- foster an environment where leadership becomes gender-transformative.
- increase shared understanding as well as challenges and opportunities of GEDI.



Our approaches

- Respect and recognise GEDI in highly culturally diverse regions.
- Collective sharing for collective intelligence and synergy for change.

Project Objectives

- Enhance GEDI in university governance and management.
- Facilitate platforms for leaders to discuss GEDI in higher education.
- Empower university leaders with innovative tools for GEDI integration.
- Formulate initiatives to mainstream GEDI in higher education leadership.
- Strengthen university networks for GEDI in South East Asia.

Project Timeline and Activities



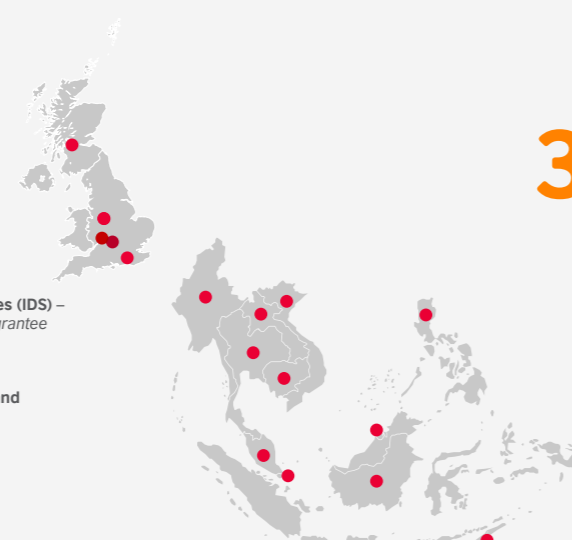
Reach Participants

12 Countries involved

Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Viet Nam, and the United Kingdom

5 UK universities participated:

- Institute of Development Studies (IDS) – Consultant for implementation/UK grantee
- Aston University
- University of Gloucestershire
- University of Oxford
- University of the West of Scotland



35 South East Asian universities participated, spread as follows:

- Brunei Darussalam: 2
- Cambodia: 5
- Indonesia: 2
- Lao PDR: 4
- Malaysia: 2
- Myanmar: 4
- The Philippines: 2
- Singapore: 1
- Thailand: 6
- Timor-Leste: 3
- Viet Nam: 4

Training and network

6 Online leadership training and workshops on empowering GEDI leadership run by UK universities.



299

Participants from South East Asia and UK

Leadership Workshop on Gender EDI in HEIs	Gender & EDI Essentials	Power & Power Relations	Building Inclusive Behaviours	Allyship	Action Planning
1 March 2022	2 July 2022	3 August 2022	4 September 2022	5 October 2022	6 November 2022



2 Leadership Forums
Attended by:

- 14** senior government officials from South East Asia
- 80** university leaders from South East Asia
- 12** academics from UK universities

Partnerships



5 UK-South East Asia Leadership Exchange Grants Awarded

The grant pairs UK university leaders with counterparts in South East Asia to develop exchange programmes addressing GEDI challenges, fostering cross-cultural learning and relationship-building.

Total grant value: **£60,000**

Grant duration: **1 year**

The following partnerships were formed through the Exchange Grants.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Malaysia (UM)⁸ • The National University Malaysia⁸ • Philippine Normal University¹¹ • Savannakhet University² • Vietnam National University of Agriculture⁵ • National University of Laos² • Svay Rieng University¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universiti Brunei Darussalam⁷ • National University of Battambang¹ • Yadanabon University² • Kasetsart University⁴ • King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi⁴ • Thammasat University⁴ • Institute of Business⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universiti Teknologi Brunei⁷ • Chea Sim University¹ • Kamchaymear¹ • Royal University of Law and Economics¹ • Royal University of Phnom Penh¹ • Souphanouvong University² • University of Yenchauang³ • Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chamrasack University² • East Yangon University³ • Cavite State University¹¹ • Mae Fah Luang University⁴ • Dili Institute of Technology⁵ • Hue University³ • Thuyloi University⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universitas Gadjah Mada⁹ • Sebelas Maret University⁹ • Myeik University³ • Chiang Rai Rajabhat University⁴ • Universidade Nacional Timor Lorosa'e⁶ • University of Transport and Communication⁵ • Nanyang Technological University¹⁰
1 - Cambodia; 2 - Lao PDR; 3 - Myanmar; 4 - Thailand; 5 - Vietnam; 6 - Timor-Leste; 7 - Brunei; 8 - Malaysia; 9 - Indonesia; 10 - Singapore; 11 - The Philippines				

Project achievements

1. International Networking
2. Meaningful engagement
3. Two-way knowledge exchange

Policy engagement

1 White Paper: 'Embedding GEDI in higher education institutions' presented to Education Ministries from all 11 South East countries at the Second Leadership Forum.

Regional GEDI Network

Establishment of a new GEDI network in the South East Asia.

Examples of application of GEDI Learning:

In the Philippines:
Institutional Progress: New diploma in Gender and Development Studies.
National Impact: Collaboration with accreditation bodies, national cascade trainings planned.

In Malaysia:
Plans for faculty-wide GEDI learning and a national GEDI workshop



In the UK:
Updated GEDI policies at Aston University
Application of learning to other British Council GEDI projects (University of the West of Scotland).

Next steps
Launch of Project Phase II in January 2024



- **50%** of participants believed GEDI to be important or very significant to their HEIs and their leadership.
- **86%** of participants believed that their confidence to engage with GEDI had increased as a result of this project.
- **83%** of participants believed that their awareness of GEDI had increased as a result of the project.
- **86%** stated that their capacity to address GEDI issues in HEIs had improved.

Quotes from the Project

"I think through this very important project that we were engaged with, we were able to exchange notes with other stakeholders all over the SEA region and even all over the world. We tend to internationalize our practices and our approaches in GEDI and were able to present to them what is being implemented here in the Philippines and come up with a more innovative way of implementing GEDI, through our learnings, from the different experiences of our partners abroad."
– Southeast Asia Government representative

"From a GEDI practice point of view for us at [name UK HEI], I think having that cultural context and learning about how gender equality issues play out within different social, cultural, political religious context is really valuable for us as an organisation that has an international profile and international students. So, it helps to tailor our activities to suit the broader needs of our own very diverse student population."
– UK institution representative.

"My perspectives have changed entirely after the project. Hearing other participants on the issues that are affecting them and the challenges that they have encountered and still encountering allows me to shift my own gender lens to limitless possibilities".

"Progress towards achieving gender equality is a journey that is neither swift nor linear. There are substantial variations across the higher education sector, particularly in the laws and policies that support gender-transformative actions. This is why we are especially excited to introduce the White Paper. We recognise that ongoing actions and support are vital to addressing gender inequalities effectively."
– British Council representative

"This project has significantly boosted our confidence in engaging with Gender Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion at Higher Education Institutes. Through various activities and experiences, we have developed a deeper understanding of the importance and impact of GEDI, which has empowered us to take meaningful action and drive positive change."
– Southeast Asia institution representatives

"There were three levels of recommendations in the white paper, institution, national and for regional level. For the BC and SEAMEO RIHED, we can really implement the recommendation from the regional level: doing the annual meetings, research symposiums and also the enhancement workshop. And I think that's really valuable for the future of the region."
– SEAMEO RIHED representative