

S-27 ACHIEVEMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNT FROM LECTURES AND INTERNSHIP IN EAST ASIA ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIST TRAINING PROGRAM

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Environmental Strategist Training Program has been implemented from 2010 by the Research Institute of East Asia Environment(RIEAE) which belongs to Kyushu University. Being the student fellow of this program at the first long-term course for doctoral students, I have completed five courses and three months internship with UN Habitat in Viet Nam that provided me total twelve credits to make me qualify for receiving the certificate of this program from RIEAE.

2. LESSONS FROM LECTURES

I attained five courses during the training program namely 1) Introduction to East Asia Environment; 2) Environmental System Analysis Theory; 3) Environmental Solution Analysis; 4) Social-economic Analysis on Environment; 5) Environmental Project Management. These courses that I received two credits for each.

3. THE INTERNSHIP AND ITS EXPERIENCES

I had three months internship with UN Habitat in Viet Nam and work for "Quang Nam Development Strategy Project". The project has being implemented at the final stage. Therefore, it is difficult to me to revise the project report. I utilized all of my knowledge and experiences to fulfill this job. Among all of fields related to development, I choose to work on and revise the sections: Agriculture and Rural Development, Urban and Rural Linkage, Poverty Reduction. The next sections will review all of my experiences and knowledge related to my internship.

(1) Before Departure for Abroad Internship

Before going about for the internship, I need to completed several tasks such as applying to the host organization for the internship. Presenting the good motivations for the internship and thinking about what we can do for the host organization with our own knowledge and experiences. I will be away for three months, therefore, I need to finish or postpone everything at my university and at home. The internship

may not directly contribute to your thesis research.

Therefore, we need to rearrange the research plan at the campus. I did so and consult with my supervisors to get the permission to travel aboard for internship.

Reviewing everythings that we need to do before boarding the air plan because we can not return during three months for the internship. Making sure to be ready for leaving the campus and family (if you have) for three months.

(2) Project Site Arrival

I am Vietnamese and I have travelled to many places in my country but this is the first time for me to be in the project site in Hoi An city. I need to arrange my self for the accommodation before I come. Of course, the staff for host organization supported me, but they are not there. I need to search the internet first and collect as much as possible information about the place where I am located during my internship.

(3) Adapt to the New Environment

After safe arrival to the project site, I start to to familiar and explore the new place in cluding accomodation, foods, and personal stuffs. I felt like refreshing here and enjou a lot with the new city where I based for my internship. Foods are delicious and people are very friendly. These things made me work more effective and concentrate. I felt the time become shorter for me and I did not feel homesick because I did a lot of communications with my family.



Figure 1: Arrival and Figure Start a new job

(4) From Beginner to Master the Assignments and Project Famwork

After three weeks researching and participating in various activities from the host organization, I choosed the themes that I will focus on in the PDS. They fixed well with my major and previous working experiences named Agriculture and Rural Development, Urban and Rural Linkage and Poverty Reduction.

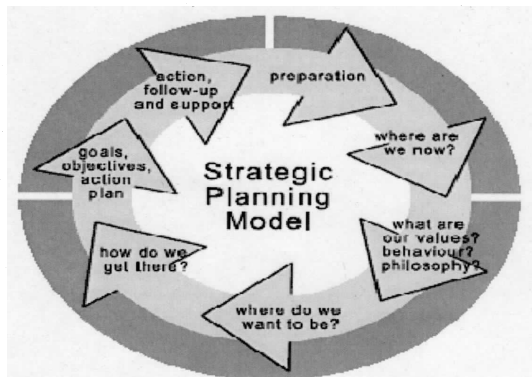


Figure 2: Strategic Planning Model (UN-Habitat, 2011)

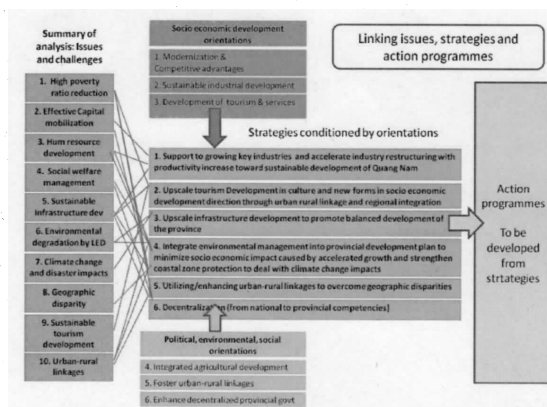


Figure 3:Quang Nam Provincial Development Strategy Framework (UN-Habitat, 2011)

(5) Organization of Work

After getting enough basic information of the project, I need to organize my work by myself. In my mine, it is the same that I have my own research project and I need to complet it within about more than two months. I had to mange my time and figure out what are my objectives, my research questions and how do I arrange my time for my fieldwork including planning to work and coordinate with the local staffs.

(6) Conduct the Fieldwork and Coordiation with Local Staffs

To collect enough information to revising the project documents, I need to work with almost provincial departments and 5 districts in Quang Nam Provinces. I had one colleauge to work with me during the fieldwork.

She focus on climate change and water resource management. My fields are more broader and they are linked to each others. Therefore, I need to collect as much information as I can and systemize them during the analysis phase.



Figure 4: Working with the local organization

(7) Back to review and revise the Project documents

After indoor document review, fieldworks and Interviews the local government officers are conducted. I figured out the key issues to focus are:

- Change the labor structure, move to industries and services
- Land consolidation and accumulation
- Development the markets and trademark for agriculture products, improve the value chains for agricultural and handicraft products
- Development processing industry for foods and agriculture products
- Reform the Agriculture Cooperatives, Production Groups, and Agriculture Farms
- Development the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)
- Develop Agriculture Insurance
- Change the crop and livestock structure, planning for mass production, and ensure food security
- Improve Productivity and Quality of Agriculture Products
- Credit support for agriculture and rural development
- Mechanized Agriculture Production
- Development Tourism and Services in Rural Areas
- Forest Protection and Development
- Rural Infrastructure Development
- Human Resource Development for the rural areas, develop training activities for rural professions, handicraft production and tourism
- Strength National Targeted Programs on Agriculture and Rural Development, Poverty Reduction and Integrated Rural Development
- Strength the effectiveness of governing system in agriculture and rural development.

(8) Consult with supervisors from RIEAE and Host Organization

From these key issues, I generalized and revise the final project document. Finally, I successfully completed my work with an excellent evaluation result from experts and professors from the training program (See the appendix).



Figure 5: Presenting the discussion results

(9) Finish the Internship, Receive the certificate and Returning

With what I did for this project, both my supervisors and the host organization were very satisfied and highly evaluate my contribution. I felt that I had promoted myself to a higher level with three months being away to work as an intern for an international organization. I am sure that with this experience, it will bring me a good evaluation when I apply for the new job in the future.



Figure 6: Meeting for Closing the internship at UN Habitat office.

4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

(1) About the courses:

- Attend all the lectures are important event some a little bit boring for us because it is not related to our expertise. However, we will need them and may be to be back to work with them later.

- Try to find some interesting topics to focus on during the time we attend the lectures.

(2) About the internship:

- Try to make a lot of communications with your supervisors and reports the results weekly to get the feedbacks from supervisor at training program and receiving intern organization.

- It is better to return home country for internship because it is familiar and easier for us to adapt to.

- Do not forget to make a lot of connections to other people during and after the internship, it is very useful for us at the later time.

- Finally, by traveling for internship, I can archive a lot of good experiences including knowing new place, new people, new culture and learning more about the way to work with an international organization and improving my English skills.

Appendix 1: Evaluation Result from UN-Habitat Supervisors on the Internship.

Mr. Long fully devoted to contributing to developing QN Provincial Development Strategy, in accordance to strategic planning process. Firstly, based on a thorough research plan, he managed to analyze current problems from diverse perspectives including poverty reduction, urban rural linkage and sustainable agricultural development. These three were considered main keys to developing strategic solutions to PDS. His visits to key districts have particularly contributed to analysis of local assets and opportunities. Secondly, based on the innovative approaches, he consolidated key strategic issues and directions in consideration of local and global circumstances. These helped developed full sets of multidisciplinary solutions to agricultural development and urban rural linkage. His various experiences in / out of Vietnam has been well noted in this stage. Finally, he managed to identify program areas of priorities, critical components to be based on action planning.

Overall, it was well noted that Long's passion about the country, his extensive experience in / out of Vietnam and his innovative approaches to development solutions have contributed to developing PDS to great extent. His well-established research skills were a fundamental basis for his achievement during the whole work process.

We wish he could have stayed at our organization by the final stage of PDS project, which are peer reviews and making M&E process.

We hope to communicate with him as an external expert to the project review until PDS project will be finalized.

If there is any further questions, please contact Juhyun Lee (ju.lee@unhabitatvietnam.org) / Do minh Huyen (huyen.do@unhabitatvietnam.org)

REFERENCES

1. Draft of Quang Nam Provincial Development Strategy. UN-Habitat. 2011