PROFILE
Open and Distance Learning in Southeast Asia

SEAMEO Regional Open Learning Centre (SEAMOLEC)
2019
PROFILE:
OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING (ODL) IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

SEAMEO Regional Open Learning Center (SEAMOLEC)
2019
catalogue in publication
indonesia, SEAMEO Regional Open Learning Center (SEAMEO SEAMOLEC)
Profile: Open and Distance Learning in Southeast Asia
SEAMEO SEAMOLEC, 2020
77 pages

Advisor:
R. Alpha Amirrachman, M. Phil., Ph. D. (Director, SEAMOLEC)

Writers:
1. Zainal Abidin Hj Kepli (Brunei Darussalam)
2. Dr. Sethy OM (Cambodia)
3. Hendriawan Widiatmoko, Hendri Puspa Martasari (Indonesia)
4. Dr Phonekeo Chanthamaly (Lao PDR)
5. Prof. Dr. Khin Thant Sin (Myanmar)
6. Farida Bianca Velicaria (Philippines)
7. Aaron LOH (Singapore)
8. Professor Dr. Prasart Suebka (Thailand)
9. Prof. Dr. Nguyen Mai Huong (Vietnam)

SEAMOLEC Team:
1. Cahya K. Ratih
2. Dona Octanary
3. Haulia Arifiani

Published by:
Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Open Learning Centre (SEAMEO SEAMOLEC)
Kompleks Universitas Terbuka (UT)
Jl. Cabe Raya, Pondok Cabe, Pamulang 15418
Ciputat, Jakarta INDONESIA
Phone: (62-21) 7422184
Fax: (62-21) 7422276
Website: www.seamolec.org
Email: secretariat@seamolec.org
## CONTENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENT</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. ODL in Brunei Darussalam</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zainal Abidin Hj Kepli</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. ODL in Cambodia</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Sethy Om</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. ODL in Indonesia</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hendriawan Widiatmoko &amp; Hendri Puspa Martasari</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. ODL in Lao PDR</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Phonekeo Chanthamaly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. ODL in Myanmar</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof. Dr. Khin Thant Sin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. ODL in Philippines</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farida Bianca Velicaria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. ODL in Singapore</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aaron Loh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. ODL in Thailand</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof. Dr. Prasart Suebka</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. ODL in Vietnam</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prof. Dr. Nguyen Mai Huong</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING IN BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

by: Zainal Abidin Hj Kepli
Director for Department of Schools Inspectorate,
Ministry of Education, Brunei Darussalam.
Email: zainalabidin.kepli@moe.gov.bn

Introduction to Brunei Darussalam Education

The education system in Brunei Darussalam continuously strives to develop the potential of individuals in a holistic and integrated manner. The system aspires to produce individuals who are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically balanced and harmonious. These characteristics prepare individuals to assume the full role of Brunei Darussalam citizens who are knowledgeable and competent, who possess high moral standards, and are responsible and capable of achieving a high level of personal well-being as well as being able to contribute to the harmony and betterment of the family, society and the nation at large.

The ministry of education recognizes that growing globalisation, together with increased sensitivity to national, regional and cultural issues affecting the individual and group identity, places fresh demands upon the education system and is challenging assumptions about the purpose and functions of education. Issues concerning the quality of education must embrace these developments. Education is hence the cornerstone of a prosperous nation within which societies are built, based on peace, equality and democratic practice.

There is increasingly greater emphasis being placed on the need for schools to develop new approaches in order to support the development of 21st Century Skills, to ensure learners have the necessary skills for life and learning in the digital age.

It is argued that education systems, schools and teachers predominantly utilise outdated and outmoded teaching and learning methods that are no longer suited to the needs of the 21st Century. Schools need to move away from more traditional transmission models of learning to ones that are more active, learner-led, co-constructed, authentic and meaningful, and draw on the talents, knowledge and skills that learners have. For many educators, this will require considerable changes in practice and in the organisation of learning and teaching, as well as broader changes to the culture and nature of schools and education.
Developing pedagogical models that place learners at the centre of learning processes and enable them to have greater 'choice', 'voice' and responsibility over their learning are recurrent themes. Moreover, the majority of the models highlight the need pedagogical approaches that foreground greater inquiry, problem solving and project or design based activities that are undertaken collaboratively. Consequently, this also raises significant questions regarding professional development and models of assessment that will be required to effectively support the development of 21st Century Skills, demanding significant, and in some cases, radical changes in practice.

This raises a number of challenges for educators, not least: in terms of how best to adapt their existing pedagogical approaches; how to develop professionally and to become expert facilitators of 21st Century learning; how to work with, collaborate and communicate their intentions and aims to students, parents and other practitioners, as well as those with similar aims; and how to begin to manage the new classroom dynamics and bring about a wider culture of transformation within the classroom, school and system.

Developing a “Knowledge Economy” is a cornerstone of our “Brunei Vision 2035” or “Wawasan Brunei 2035” focused around developing skills to drive production, distribution, and use of new knowledge supported by technological innovations. To ensure Brunei Vision 2035 is realised, the Ministry of Education has classified eight educational strategies to prepare youths for employment and accomplishment in the more changing and knowledge based world. The eight strategies are; Investing in early childhood education; Adaptation of best practices in learning and teaching; To have secondary and higher education institutions including vocational schools of first class to produce experts, professional and technicians needed by the industries and businesses; Strengthening competency in ICT for all students, teachers and administrative education including integration of ICT in learning and teaching; Prepare programmes that support the lifelong learning and expanding the opportunity for higher education; Encourage research, development and innovation through government institutions and partnership with private and global parties; Adaptation of education approaches that are cost effective through the use of technology and Improve management in all educational institutions.

In 2009, the Sistem Pendidikan Negara Abad Ke-21 (SPN21) initiative was developed and describes the organisational, curriculum and process changes required to enable the Ministry of Education to deliver its reform and quality education agenda. The SPN21 curriculum recognizes the different learning abilities and learning styles of students. It encourages schools to create effective learning environments. The differentiated syllabus of each learning area will consider the students' ability and capability with the content organised into: Core (Must do), Intermediate (Should do), and Extended (Could do).

Teachers are expected to use a diverse range of teaching and learning approaches and strategies to provide all students the opportunities to learn in ways that are most suited to their learning
needs. Different types of teaching and learning strategies and activities have different purposes and strengths. This should be recognised by all teachers. No one method works all the time. It should also be recognised that different learning areas have different needs. Some possible approaches are: Experiential e.g. group work, pair work, simulations, use of interactive videos, field trips, games, role play, analysis of data or results; Reinforcement e.g. models, charts, posters, leaflets, magazine articles, newsletters; and, Integrated learning e.g. conferences, forums and seminars. Principles that have been found to promote effective student learning are:

- The role of the teacher is expected to change in the new teaching and learning environment envisaged under the SPN21 curriculum proposals. The teacher’s role will change from that of a transmitter of knowledge to that of a facilitator of learning. The teacher is seen as a resource person, a facilitator, a consultant, a counsellor and an assessor.

- Motivate students to learn through the use of a variety of approaches. These include letting students know the goals/expectations of learning, building on successful experiences, taking into account students’ emotional reactions and their self-esteem. These considerations are particularly important to students with learning difficulties and those performing below their abilities.

- In SPN21 teaching and learning environment, teachers are expected to use a variety of teaching and learning resources. Teachers are encouraged to make full use of ICT and use a variety of seating arrangements, concrete materials, diagrams and charts, newspaper clippings and other educational/teaching resources to make lessons more interesting. Practical activities could include the use of educational games, role play, the construction and use of models and experiments to demonstrate concepts. Group discussions are encouraged to promote active students’ participation and interaction.

- Teachers’ new roles will be to create new demands in managing a productive learning environment. Teachers are required to be facilitators or coordinators for students who will be working independently as individuals or small collaborative groups on different projects. Technology-based tools and environments will be provided to support teachers in these new roles. Technology will also be used to facilitate teachers’ understanding and evaluation of students’ work.

- Teachers will have more responsibility for orchestrating a much wider array of experiences for students than in the past. Their roles will shift in response to these developing conceptualisations of core knowledge, effective curriculum, and flexible coordination of resources. This will require developing educational infrastructure with the necessary distribution of expertise and resources.

Brunei has continuously tried to improve its education system because a strong educational system is believed to be essential to economic and social development. The Brunei educational system is heavily centralised; the Ministry is responsible for all educational services. The role of ICT in education continues to mature at a rapid pace. Over the past 20 years, Brunei Darussalam has deployed ICT
in education in a variety of ways to facilitate learning, teaching and administration. The initial need to deploy computers in schools has steadily grown to include the provision of many complementing technologies and practices, including networks, software and management systems.

Among the outcomes of SPN21 is the need for teachers’ pedagogy to keep pace with changes and the use of ICT to enhance teaching and learning to meet the challenges of rapid global change. Overall, these policy documents have made specific reference of the role of ICT in education transformation.

The fast and relatively low-cost access is one of the major benefits of the internet to people and students all over the world as getting an Internet connection is easy. Communication and collaboration are the two most important uses of the internet. Information can be updated or modified and shared at any time which helps in learning and better understanding.

Communication and collaboration is one of the biggest advantages of the Internet in education. Our students today live in a hyper-connected world with information at their fingertips. Students can contact other students or their teachers via the E-mail and other social media platforms if they have queries about any information. Sharing of information, discussions on a particular subject, etc., can be easily carried out using the Internet. At the same time, teachers can also contact parents and guardians easily. The internet plays a critical role to help drive and develop systems of educational excellence with a specific focus to accelerate productivity of learning. This term “productivity” often used in business is one which we in Brunei are focused keeping the learner at the centre of the learning process in tune with our SPN21 National Strategy.

The internet supports in managing workflow and increased productivity. With the pool of knowledge at your fingertips, the internet has the potential to unleash the creative potential of people in ways in which we could not have imagined even a few years ago. Students are able to listen to lectures by Nobel laureates from the comfort of their own rooms, speaking to a world renowned expert via video and sharing their work for comment and feedback from a global community. Sometimes, an encyclopedia may not always be available to students and they may have difficulty in gaining access to the books in the library. In that case, the encyclopedia of various subjects available on the Internet can be helpful. This is more useful for students who belong to communities not having English as their mother tongue. Kids and younger children can also benefit from the internet by using the pictures, videos, etc.

All the latest news are constantly updated on the internet on news sites. Students learning politics, can have an access to all the current affairs through the Internet in the school campus, at home, or at any other place. Historical accounts like speeches, biographies, etc., are also easily available on the Internet in detailed and accurate versions.

Another positive effect of internet in education is the onset of distance education or online learning. With this facility, you can take up short-term courses with the course material available online, learn,
and give exams. One of the benefits of online learning is that people from any part of the world can gain knowledge on different subjects, complete courses, etc.

Online courses provide an opportunity for people of all age groups to take up education of their choice, according to their liking and wish. Be it a student, a housewife, or a professional, they can just start up their computers, connect to the Internet, and take virtual classes. Therefore, people can now gain knowledge according to their need and time available. You are now never too old or too busy to learn something new.

**Policy and Regulation of ODL**

In 2010, the Brunei Darussalam National Accreditation Council (BDNAC), as the sole accrediting agency in Brunei Darussalam, recognised the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) mode of study and has outlined important accreditation criteria for ODL courses. The accreditation criteria that were set forth by the BDNAC for ODL courses are the university or institution must be accredited by the BDNAC. At present, only Masters and PhD levels are accredited. The Masters and PhD programmes/courses must not include programmes or courses in professional fields such as Engineering, Architecture, Accountancy, Law, Medicine, Quantity Surveying or Dentistry. The mode of delivery must be blended mode learning which involve face-to-face interaction and online learning. The ODL programmes or courses should be comparable to the programme or course conducted formally or conventionally particularly in terms of entry requirements, duration, course content and mode of assessment.

The main objective of BDNAC’s recognition is to help working adults who have no opportunity to further their studies as full-time students due to the need for them to work and stay in the office. The form of education will provide a second chance and motivation to those who were not given the opportunity during their school days. At present, institutions of higher learning in Brunei Darussalam are looking into the possibility of offering their own online or open distance learning mode of study in Brunei Darussalam. ODL courses will serve as one of the alternative paths to further higher studies apart from providing opportunity for working citizens in government or private sectors to upgrade their qualifications. This study method will also provide a second chance and motivation to those who never had the opportunity before. ODL will pose as another option for further education, students benefit from these “multiple pathway” but also those who are currently in-service, whether they are working with the government or the private sector as a means to improve we the country’s capacity building.

**ODL models and its implementation**

In 2017, Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) has announced that the country’s flagship tertiary
education institution will be offering a very flexible and innovative study-at-your-pace-and-place and choose-your-own-module study programme called the ‘Blended Learning Degree’ programme that provides learners the opportunity to customise and align their studies with their own educational needs and career objectives.

The innovative programme gives learners the opportunity to study at their own pace, place and time alongside their career or daily activities. The programme is a work-learn programme; an integrated workplace learning that appeals to the general public, or working students, working people, business owners and those who are simply interested to do part-time studies while working or doing business, etc.

The programme is offered through UBD's Centre for Lifelong Learning (C3L), and the first of this programme - BSc in Digital Business will be offered from January 2017 will be in combination with face-to-face tutoring, learners will be utilising an online study platform through the Canvas Online Learning Management system.

UBD stated that the first blended learning degree programme, Bachelor of Science (BSc) in Digital Business, is trans-disciplinary, covering: Business and Management, Entrepreneurship, Digital Technology, and Financial Literacy. Learners will also be able to customise and choose their specialisation areas in creative industries, tourism and hospitality, environment studies, Halal industries, accounting and finance, and digital technology.

In addition to the degree programme, these modules are also offered to learners as part of continuing professional development. For example, a learner may choose just one module of interest or a package of modules from digital technology or financial literacy. Over time, learners can accumulate modular credits which can lead to a diploma, degree or master’s qualification.

Overall, the opportunity exists to harness learners’ strengths within a negotiated and blended learning approach, offering the learner a flexible, adaptable and sustainable way of gaining a higher educational qualification. For example, the trans-disciplinary approach towards BSc in Digital Business offers real world knowledge and skills as well as a way to customise learning on a deeper level in a specialised area that is integrated into high growth areas in the Brunei economy.

The Centre for Lifelong Learning (C3L) of Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) aims to enable innovative approaches towards continuing education, professional development and blended learning by “transforming reaching, inspiring lifelong learning”.

Other institutions such as The Continuing Education and Training (CET) under the Brunei Technical Education Institute (IBTE) also provide short courses, programs and workshops are designed to meet the needs of students. IBTE are committed to providing quality, innovative training and personal development opportunities for citizens and non-citizens of Brunei Darussalam. CET IBTE also provides lifelong learning opportunities that allow adult learners to acquire further knowledge and skills in
relevant fields. In order to ensure that the courses offered online are recognized National Council of Recognition of Recognition, Brunei Darussalam, has outlined accredited online course criteria. The criteria set out in this course should be blended mode study face-to-face and online, not entirely online.

Institutions in the private sector such as Crescent Sdn. Bhd. have also offered diploma courses through the Virtual Learning System (VLE) which aims to encourage students to interact with tutors through live video conferencing. Crescent’s have developed a virtual learning system (VLE) that allows students to interact with tutors through live video conferencing. This feature allows students to get a Diploma in accounting and advance book-keeping without having to go to a physical campus.

Challenges faced by ODL implementation and future plan of ODL

A study by University Brunei Darussalam in 2016 published in the Journal of e-Learning and Knowledge Society, five academics conducted a survey involving 856 respondents comprising mostly local Bruneians aged 10 to 40 years old. They noted positive factors relating to online usage within the sultanate, making it a conducive environment to introduce online learning.

Sixty-four per cent of the respondents showed interest in the prospects of online learning. “The results showed that 67 per cent agreed that online learning would make it easier to learn, 53 per cent were convinced that it would help them obtain a better grade and 87 per cent believed that online learning was not limited to regular school hours,” said the study’s authors.

“Furthermore, 67 per cent felt that online learning would help improve the quality of their projects and 53 per cent saw it as a tool with which to share information and discuss subject-related matters,” they added.

The educational institutions could also benefit from ‘big data’ where it could provide new opportunities “to maximise the potential of data collection in relation to online learning systems”. Big data is a broad term for large and complex sets of data that traditional data processing applications are inadequate. It would also benefit students by providing precise customisation and personalisation of knowledge and services to cater to the needs of individual students.

The authors suggested that the adoption of big data could become the future direction of online learning as large amounts of data are received on a daily basis. Integrating the data into online learning could possibly apply predictive relevant knowledge for each student. “By embedding big data analytics within online learning systems, institutions can deliver services that understand contexts, predict outcomes, and continue to learn from the vast amounts of information that are continuously generated and collected,” said the study’s authors. The data generated could also help enhance the ability of online learning systems in understanding students’ preferences and online behaviour, they added.
However, traditional learning itself should not be eliminated entirely as 93 per cent of respondents believed that “face-to-face interaction” is still very important. A ‘blended approach’ involving a combination of ‘personal touch with personal technology’ could be done as a possible alternative. The personal touch could be done to enable students to interact directly with teachers to avoid miscommunication while personal technology would enable students to “enjoy flexibility so that they can learn anywhere and anytime using ICT”, said the study’s authors.

“Nevertheless, online learning is not yet fully available in Brunei. Future online learning services may be promoted by a variety of providers, including the Ministry of Education, and public and private higher-education institutions,” suggested the authors.

**Conclusion**

Online learning is one of the last education frontiers for Brunei Darussalam. For a country that is not restrained to spatial boundaries due to its size, the benefits of online learning over on-campus learning is trivial. Instruction by Open and Distance Learning (ODL) is not widely used and practiced in Brunei Darussalam.

In spite of the universally accepted potential benefits of the Open and Distance Learning system, education delivery in Brunei Darussalam is still based entirely on a formal, conventional system of education. This is attributed to its smallness in terms geographical area, whereby all points in and around the country are accessible, and that education could be provided and delivered through conventional methods.

In addition, in view of its small population and stable economy, Brunei has been able to provide favourable and accommodating educational infrastructure and set out policies that allow opportunities for Bruneians to access education in the conventional way. Consequently, ODL has not established any significant inroads as an alternative mode of accessing education in Brunei Darussalam. Despite the absence of any substantive plan to adopt this system of education delivery, Brunei Darussalam, nonetheless, acknowledges the benefits of ODL, particularly, in relation to: widening access in education; its flexibility and versatility in fulfilling constant re-training, ‘re-skilling’ and up-grading requirements in an ever changing society and market economy; and, including its perceived cost-effectiveness and lesser cost features.

To conclude, the Ministry of Education has been focused to increases human, institutional, and technological capabilities which are major sources of new knowledge and innovation which then feed economic growth. These efforts have demonstrated success in raising the awareness of the benefits of technological tools, providing training, and encouraging collaboration to find targeted solutions aimed at overcoming various impediments. In light of these promising trends, policymakers should continue to finely attune their involvement and focus first and foremost on implementing mechanisms to spur further adoption and utilization of ODL across the education system.
OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING IN CAMBODIA

by: Dr. Sethy OM
Deputy Director-General of Education
Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, Cambodia
E-mail: om.sethy@moeys.gov.kh

Introduction of Cambodia’s Education Profile

Cambodia has been implementing the 12 years schooling system in general education (6+3+3) since 1996. After the completion of lower secondary education, students have the option of continuing to upper secondary education offered by the Ministry of Education Youth and Sport (MoEYS) or of entering secondary-level vocational training program offered by the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training (MoLVT).

Cambodia has passed into new development stage of education with a need to focus on strengthening basic education and quality within a comprehensive national economic framework. Since 2000, the MoEYS has embarked on a policy-based sector-wide reform, guided by its five year rolling Education Strategic Plan (ESP) and Education Sector Support Program (ESSP), which are designed to accelerate achievement of Education for All (EFA). Long-term education vision of Cambodia will focus on all aspects of ECE, to provide a strong foundation for other levels of education. It will focus on students at early grades of primary education especially building reading and mathematics skills. The education sector expands its scope of Education for All from primary education 6 years to 9 years basic education. Graduates from basic education will be traced upon their strength to select general secondary education or technical and vocational education. The strengthening of quality will focus on the quality of inputs, teaching and learning processes and student achievement. There will also be a focus on the qualification of teachers who will be upgraded from 12+2 to 12+4 in 2020. The role of ICT and possible means of education delivery including ODL will accelerate the present implementation for achieving these missions and vision.

In the Education Sector Support Program 2006-2010, ICT become an increasingly necessary tool for innovating the quality of teaching and learning, school management, and school efficacy in Cambodia. In 2007, under the support of ADB, the Report “Enhancing Education Quality Project” was realized. It mentioned the remedies focuses of ICT measures on improvement the quality of schools in Cambodia, especially lower secondary level.
In term of ODL, the Ministry of Education Youth and Sport of Cambodia always show their attention and effort to ensure increasing inclusive education opportunity for all and expand the access to education at all possible means even though Cambodia do not have much progress in practices on this. In January 2005, the Cambodian Ministry of Education Youth and Sport approved the document “Policy and Strategies on Information and Communication Technology in Education in Cambodia” as the lead policy to form clear direction in the use of ICT in education, thereby directing major lines of work required for Cambodia to effectively integrate technologies for teaching and learning across all education sectors, including the use of Open and Distance Learning as well.

In 2012, Cambodia opened the Regional Conference on “Open and Distance Learning Policy Dialogue,” which was attended by participants from 8 countries in the region. This Dialogue aimed to find a roadmap in using this innovative approach to improve and enhance access to learning for all, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, disability or location through distance education and self-learning, especially for deprived children, youth and adult who lack access to basic education, literacy and skill training. This leads to develop a comprehensive policy on open and distance education in compliance with the existing policy and ICT master plan for education in Cambodia today. In 2012, the MoEYS, with the technical and financial support of the International Development Research Centre of Canada, has issued Open Distance Education Policy Framework and Good Practices Guideline.

In May 2018, the Ministry of Education Youth and Sport (MoEYS) has just developed the Policy and Strategy of ICT in Education in order to improve quality and effectiveness in teaching and learning, and to deliver more effective service provision through more rigorous monitoring and governance in the 21st century by using ICT. It also will have significant effect to the development ODL implementation in Cambodian education in the long-run.

**Policy and Regulation on ODL and ICT**

**Open Distance Education Policy Framework**

In 2012, The MoEYS, with the technical and financial support of the International Development Research Centre of Canada, has issued Open Distance Education Policy Framework and Good Practices Guideline. It is embedded within two national plans of MoEYS, published in 2010. These two plans are (i) the Education Strategic Plan 2009-2013 and (ii) the Master Plan for Information and Communication Technology in Education (MPICTE) 2009-2013. The Target Sectors of the ODL Policy Framework are three main groups:

1. Secondary Education (Including Technical-Vocational, Non Formal and Community Education,
2. Teacher Training (In-Service, Teacher Trainers, Teacher Facilitators in Tech-Voc Education and Professional Development)
3. Higher Education

4. Technical and Vocational Training for People Entering the Workforce and Those in the Labour Market requiring re-skilling

5. Continuing Professional Development (Skilled Technical, Management and Professional Workforce)


To ensure success in ODL the policy requires underpinning with GOOD PRACTICE in all aspects but especially in relation to:

1. Governance Structures,

2. Curriculum, Content Development and Distribution,

3. Supporting and Enabling Environments,

4. Assessment, Examination and Certification,

5. Media and Technologies,

6. Monitoring and Evaluation for Quality Maintenance,

7. Administration – Regulations and Legislative issues, and

8. Funding.

1. Governance of Open Distance Education

Open Distance Education will be organized and promoted at three levels. These are at the [i] national level to steer the entire system, [ii] the pre tertiary level to consider ODL at the secondary, non-formal and technical-vocational level and [iii] the tertiary level that includes teacher training and higher education.

Good Practice Guild lines (Tasks required for good practices): The various tasks associated with Good Practice is presented in a tabulated form below:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTOR</th>
<th>TASKS REQUIRING GOOD PRACTICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| SECONDARY AND NON FORMAL EDUCATION    | • Design, develop, produce and deliver self-instructional learning materials, starting with.  
   • curriculum of the lower secondary level and gradually expanding to cover upper secondary syllabus as well.  
   • Design, establish and manage through local communities, learning centers to provide mentor and other support services for rural learners studying through the ODL.  
   • Recruit, train and deploy part time teachers as mentors working at the community learning centers.  
   • Organize assessments and examinations for learners.  
   • Utilize the services of the community and national educational broadcast media to support, motivate and enrich the learning experience of isolated learners.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| TEACHER TRAINING                      | • Design, develop, produce and deliver self-instructional learning/training materials for teachers and teacher trainers.  
   • Design, establish and manage teacher training through ODL at the six regional and 18 provincial teacher training centers, which will also provide mentor and other support services for the trainees.  
   • Recruit, train and deploy part time experienced teachers as mentors at the local level for the trainees.  
   • Organize assessments and examinations for the trainees.  
   • Utilize mobile and other electronic devices to continuously motivate and support the learning of the trainees.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| HIGHER EDUCATION AND CPD              | • Design, develop, produce and deliver self-instructional learning materials for respective courses.  
   • Design, establish and manage, through provincial and district authorities, learning centers to provide mentor and other support services for local students. Where several tertiary institutions offer HE via ODL in the same geographic areas, appropriate local administration will coordinate, to minimize duplication.  
   • Recruit, train and deploy part time mentors and tutors to support ODL students.  
   • Organize assessments and examinations for students.  
   • Utilize the services of the community and national educational broadcast media as well as mobile technologies and other infrastructures, services and electronic devices to support, motivate and enrich the learning experience of isolated learners.                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| TECH-VOCATIONAL TRAINING              | • Design, develop, produce and deliver self-instructional learning materials combined with residential face-to-face practical classes.  
   • Design, establish and manage through local communities learning centers and local industries mentor and other [practicum] support services for their students.  
   • Recruit, train and deploy part time teachers/trainers as mentors from local industries and business houses for such learners.  
   • Organize assessments and examinations for learners. Utilize the services of the local community and national educational broadcast media as well as mobile technologies and other infrastructures, services and electronic devices to support, motivate and enrich the learning experience of isolated learners.                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
2. **Curriculum, Materials Development and Delivery of Courses**

The following are necessary requisites for developing and delivering courses:

- The curriculum will reflect the unique learning environment of the learners and its construction will allow for maximum flexibility and learning styles.
- The curriculum will be relevant, current and ‘fit for purpose’.
- The curriculum will reflect the national ethos.
- The curriculum will utilize the richness of ICT hardware, software and services.
- Curriculum transformation into learning materials will be done using the most appropriate instructional design and technologies.
- Learning materials will be created using the best available content expertise.
- The content will be self-instructional, interactive multi-media wherever it is appropriate and relevant. It will be written in clear and readable language and subjected to rigorous instructional design and editorial treatment.
- All materials will be digitized, enabling them to be revised periodically and stored without dangers of deterioration and accessed through the Internet.
- Learning materials will be delivered to learners in a format that is most user friendly to respective learner categories. At times, this may mean relying on old technologies rather than only new ones.
- Cost, the target audience, convenience and appropriateness will determine the mode of content delivery.
- Materials developed through financial support from MoEYS will be owned by
- MoEYS under appropriate IPR laws. However, the materials will also be made available free of IPR restriction for use, reuse and repurposing by all Cambodian institutions and citizens.

3. **Teaching, Learning and Student Support**

**Good Practice Guidelines**

- MoEYS will undertake a carefully planned and executed outreach program that promotes independent self-learning for both personal enrichment and qualifications.
- Good practice guidelines for the development of learning materials will be followed.
• There shall be appropriate instruments and guidelines for the distribution of learning materials.
• Information, instructions and guidelines for students to enroll and follow their courses will be clearly laid out.
• Detailed information on study pathways and progression, especially for those who are hoping to gain academic credits and credentials, shall be provided.
• Well-structured academic counseling arrangements, especially for new and remotely located learners, shall be provided.
• A countrywide network of regional and local learning centers to support learning through the provision of trained part time subject tutors, academic counselors, administrative, library and laboratory support as well as access to ICT hardware, software and services, including the Internet, shall be established.
• Local face-to-face study groups shall be organized.
• The use of mobile phones (for talk and SMS/MMS) will be to provide learner support shall be explored.

4. Assessment, Examination and Certification

Good Practice Guidelines

• Expected learning outcomes and measurements.
• Nature, frequency and types of examination.
• Marking and grading in compliance with national standards.
• Proctoring and conduct of examinations.
• Certification requirements in compliance with the National Qualification Framework.

5. Media and Technology

Good Practice Guidelines

The use of technology to drive ODL will therefore keep pace with the following:

• The progress of the ICT and electricity infrastructure deployments.
• The capacity of staff to use the technologies for teaching purposes.
• The skills of learners to use the digital technologies for learning purposes.
• Availability of adequate financial resources for initial investment, on-going expenses, such as usage charges, and system upgrades.
• ‘Fit for purpose’: e.g. teacher education may be primarily print-based, with some digitized audio-visual supplementary materials to be accessed in the training centers, and local face-to-face study groups.

6. Monitoring and evaluation for quality maintenance

Quality Assurance will be undertaken by the following, under the oversight of the National Advisory Council on ODL:

• Course Level - The appropriate HE departments or faculties will undertake course level quality assurance. In the other sectors, appropriate departments of MOEYS will be responsible for this function.
• Program Level - HE institutions delivering ODL programs will undertake program level quality assurance. In the other sectors, appropriate departments of MOEYS will be responsible for this function.
• Institutional Level – In the case of HE the Accreditation Council of Cambodia will be tasked to do this, while in the case of all other ODL provisions the Quality Assurance (QA) department of MoEYS will be responsible for QA.
• National level – Both the Accreditation Council and MOEYS of Cambodia will exercise guardianship over QA for all aspects of ODL.

Policy and Strategy of ICT in Education

In the new education reform of Cambodia, the government has recognized the increasingly important role of ICT in transforming its economy and improving the quality of working and living of Cambodian workforces. In 2018, in order to improve quality and effectiveness in teaching and learning, and to deliver more effective service provision through more rigorous monitoring and governance, the Ministry of Education Youth and Sport has just developed the Policy and Strategy of ICT in Education. This policy will support the MoEYS (1) to adopt new management and administrative processes to modernize practices and increase the efficiency, transparency and effectiveness of education sector governance and performance monitoring and governance and (2) to integrate ICT as a teaching, learning, and knowledge sharing tool across the education sector to equip students with ICT knowledge and skills to transition to the 21st century world of work. The policy draws the necessary support of the ICT on improving the access to e-learning opportunities among learners. Through this policy, the MoEYS will promote
the use of e-learning to support the delivery of education services to all sub-sectors in education for students and for institutional human capacity development and lifelong learning, which is highlighted clear in the policy. This is believed that Ministry of Education Youth and Sport is taking right steps by broadening access to ICT-education for teachers, students, and administrators. In 2017, the MoEYS has just established the Department of Information Technology (DIT) to lead the roles of promoting ICT for education innovation across the sector with the lessons learned from other countries for the Cambodian context.

The Policy and Strategy of ICT in Education will promote the roles ICT in (1) supporting for teaching and learning, (2) modernizing the education curriculum to include ICT and 21st Century knowledge and skills, (3) developing e-resources for supporting teaching and learning (content), (4) developing and adopt teacher guides and tools to integrate ICT-based pedagogy in all teacher training and USS teaching, (5) encouraging self-learning by adopting a Learning Management System (LMS). These strategies will be drivers to E-learning or Open Distance Learning among the teachers, students and administration, especially at Upper Secondary and HE levels.

**Statements of Policy and Strategy of ICT in Education**

1. MoEYS will ensure that all Cambodian students completing a formal program of study are able to apply ICT knowledge and skills to support their further education and professional work.

2. MoEYS will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of teaching and learning in teacher training centers, schools and other educational institutions by using ICT tools and e-resources.

3. MoEYS will use e-learning to support the delivery of education services to all sub-sectors in education for students and for institutional human capacity development and lifelong learning.

4. MoEYS will increase its efficiency and its capacity for evidence-based decision-making and knowledge-sharing through systematic use of information, while at the same time increasing its capacity for administration, operations and digital data-collection.

5. MoEYS will create standards for infrastructure, connectivity and design, and will integrate all national and sub-national offices into a single networked system. The system will provide sufficient physical and logical security as well as offline replication to ensure resilience.

6. MoEYS will give preference to the use Open Source software and Khmer language applications for teaching and learning while always ensuring compliance with Cambodian copyright laws. All ICT intervention proposals must include a total cost of ownership analysis to inform MoEYS of the options for institutionalizing to ensure the availability of an operational budget.

7. MoEYS will promote media literacy, user privacy, and the ethical use of ICT, preventing all forms of cyberbullying and unsafe use of technology.
8. MoEYS will provide the necessary financial resources to support ICT in education from the RGC budget and will coordinate PPP and donor partners’ support for both capital and recurrent costs.

**ODL implementations in Higher Education**

**Teacher Trainers:** Teacher education is one of the key strategies to improve the quality of education. Based on the statistics of education 2016-2017, the number of teaching staff in primary level with graduate degree (bachelor) was 3,585 staff (account for 8%) of the total staff in primary level. This number increases to 14,231 staff (account for 34%, who has a graduate degree and are teaching in the secondary level). This indicates that there is a need for the ministry to find possible means in deliver the higher education program to the teachers in the country, especially in the remote areas in order to increase the number of graduates among the primary and secondary level. E-learning or distance learning program are believed as effective tools to pave gap in promoting access to for life-long learning of the teaching staff in the long run, where the access to the need internet and computer also needs more focus.

**Higher Education:** The higher education landscape in Cambodia has transformed itself dramatically; moving from elite to mass access to higher education. Since mid-2000, more HE Institutions in both private and public have been established to serve students’ growing need. Since the private university in Cambodia was established in 1996, the number of private universities has increased substantially and reached to 64 by 2014, while the public HEIs increased from 8 in 1997 to 39 in 2014 and the number of students in higher education increased from nearly 10,000 in the early 1990s to more than 200,000 in 2013. Most higher education institutions are located in Phnom Penh and large capital cities of Cambodia.

In term of ODL development, in both private and public higher education, it is noted that it seems not very popular and active that those universities have been implementing their distance Learning Program in offering their courses to students. Only few of them can run the ODL activities with support from partners. The following are the case of ODL activities practiced by some universities in Cambodia.

- **Implementation of ODL Activities in Higher Education:** The Case of Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP), (the public university)

**Funding:**

In 2012, RUPP partners with IBM academic Initiative to better education program.

**Benefits:**

- No-charge access to IBM technology & tools a (software)
- No-charge access to course materials & curriculum (modules)
- Skills enhancement supported by a world-wide community of IBM volunteers

---

1 Public Education Statistics & Indicators 2016-2017
Module Usage:

Two departments used such module: Computer science department and Mathematics department. 23 subjects were published from the 2 department. There were 539 users including administrator, students and teachers.

Module Usage:

- Types of sources (Text, Ms Word, PDF file, Flash Video, YouTube video...)
- Types of activities: (Assignment, forum, Quiz)

Implementation of ODL Activities in Higher Education: The Case of Institute of Technology of Cambodia (ITC), (the public university)

Background of the projects: ITC implement the ASEAN-ROK Cyber University (ACU) Project with the aim to formalize foundation for establishment of Higher Education Institutions to share experiences and know-how in e-learning between ASEAN member states & ROK (Republic of Korea). This project also aimed to expand education exchange & strengthen conciliation accordingly. The ACU project was suggested by Secretary General of ASEAN during ASEAN-Korea Summit in 2009. The Initial members of the ACU projects were CLMV countries.

Scopes: The ACU projects were implemented under the following 7 scopes: (1) LMS development, (2) Contents Development, (3) E-learning center building, (4) Hub Center Building, (5) E-learning Center operations consulting, (6) Invitation training and (7) Hub center operations consulting.

Activities: the main activities of the ACU projects were run by the following:

- 2 Managers of training course, who had understanding about the Cyber U, Operation & management (law, system, policy & regulation).
- E-learning center building at ITC with 4 rooms & supporting equipment such as multimedia studio, contents development, & research office, operation office, and multimedia classroom.
- 3 Content developers for each country to training
- Instructional design, web development, studio equipment training.
- System Manager: one person for each country LMS systems, server, Network.
- Commencement to implement in the areas requested for course Development between CLMV: business, Economics, Tourism, IT (Computer Science) Engineering, Agriculture (Korean language and English.
Future Direction of ODL in Higher Education

1. Improvement of pedagogical skills of teaching staff & effectiveness of non-teaching staff (training on ICT Skills for Teacher and Staff);

2. Systematic preparation of student graduating from Cambodian Higher Education Institutions with ICT-based professional skills on join labor market or to continue to further education (Training on ICT-based professional skills is delivered to students in all HEIs.

3. Development of feasible & effective structure & mechanisms for providing, supporting, & managing ODL.
   - Capacity of MoEYS and HEIs is strengthened in ODL principles, management, its development and technology, using Khmer Language, tools & materials.
   - ODL Policy Framework will be formulated;
   - Cambodian HEIs will offer ODL courses;
   - A study will be implemented to assess the feasibility & define the possible process of creating a National Open University in Cambodia.

4. Researcher & HE teachers share and have access to available research, teaching materials, and other education resources and academic and research cooperation is activated through improvement in inter-university telecommunication.
   - An electronic clearinghouse or repository for all Cambodian research, training materials and education resources for HE level become available
   - Research and academic cooperation are activated through the use of a high speed network that connects Cambodian university.

5. All research and administrative documents of HEI are standardized: All documents and education resources produced by the MoEYS and HEIs and all administrative documents inside HEIs and in their communication with the ministry use the standard encoding and formats.

Conclusion

The present infrastructure for e-learning or ODL in Cambodia is relative poor, the ODL implementation still behind the region, however, plan for upgrading is being put in place. The development of ICT in education through implementation of Policy and Strategy of ICT in Education and the roles of the office of Long-distance learning of the department of Information Technology in this new mandate will significantly address the needs for increasing access to e-learning among teachers and students and
administrators, especially in the rural and disable area. Since resources support and access to internet, and establishing of institutions driving implementation process of the open-distance education are still the main challenges, there is a specially need from relevant stakeholders to move forward on the direction of future ODL implementation in Cambodia.

The Ministry of Education Youth and Sport is promoting ICT in Education in Cambodia to reach out mass participants who need life-long education opportunity for their career and cannot attend the present means of delivery. It is expected that through department of ICT of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport the implementation of ODL practices will be broadly offered to ensure the equitable education. The Royal Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia through the Ministry of Education Youth and Sport is taking necessary steps to eliminate all possible barriers in order that the development of ODL can be further developed for the regional and global needs of inclusive education. It is expected that the ODL implementation in Cambodia will be broadly implemented in both upper secondary and HE level under the support from the Policy and Strategy on ICT in Education which, the Department of Information Technology of MoEY is the main driver.

References


MoEYS. (2012). Open Distance Education Policy Framework and Good Practice Guideline.


OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING IN INDONESIA

by: Hendriawan Widiatmoko & Hendri Puspa Martasari
ICT Center for Education and Culture,
Ministry of Education and Culture,
Jakarta, Indonesia

About Indonesia

Indonesia has made enormous gains in poverty reduction, cutting the poverty rate to more than half since 1999, to 10.9% in 2016. The country’s GDP per capita has steadily risen, from $857 in the year 2000 to $3,603 in 2016. Indonesia’s economic planning follows a 20-year development plan, spanning from 2005 to 2025. It is segmented into 5-year medium-term plans, called the RPJMN (Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah Nasional) each with different development priorities. The current medium-term development plan – the third phase of the long-term plan – runs from 2015 to 2020. It focuses on, among others, infrastructure development and social assistance programs related to education and health-care.

In other hand, Indonesia with its geographic condition has its own challenge. It is a diverse archipelago nation for more than 300 ethnic groups, also as the world’s fourth most populous nation with 261 million people live in 1.922.570 km² land. Online learning is one of solution to create equality of education for the society in order to maintain the achievement of its growth on progressive economic, where makes human capital development is crucial.

Indonesian Education System

The development of education has become a top priority as this is related to human capital development which is the key of national development objective. Improvement of education and skill for its society is substantial for national growth prospects for long run. Indonesia has made sustain efforts involving investment on educational facilities, teaching personnel, and learning materials. Despite the challenge towards the rapidly emerging economy, Indonesia has addressed its attention to three main goals: raising quality, widening participation, and improving efficiency.
Level of Education

The formal (school based) education system consists of basic education level, secondary education level, and higher education level. Apart from the levels of education mentioned above, preschool education is also provided. Preschool education is aimed at stimulating physical and mental children before primary school.

A. Basic Education

1. Basic education is a general education of nine years, consisting of six years of primary school and three years of junior secondary school. Primary school consist of two different types: general and special primary school for children with disability.

2. Junior secondary school organizes a 3-year education program after six-year primary school. Similar with primary school, it consists of two different types of education: general and special for children with disability too.

3. The goal of basic education is to provide students with the basic skills as individual and member of society, as well as to prepare them to pursue their study in secondary education.

B. Secondary Education

Senior secondary education is achieved by students who has graduated from basic education level. The objectives of this level are to extend student’s knowledge to continue their studies to higher education such as science, technology, arts, and so on. Senior secondary education consists of general secondary school, vocational secondary school, religious secondary school, and special secondary school (for student with disability).

Indonesian Distance Learning Network (IDLN)

Indonesian Distance Learning Network is an organization to establish collaborations among the institutions in Indonesia to develop education and training by utilization of distance learning technology and system. The collaboration is not limited to student learning, but also for employee skill development on a government institution, through open and distance learning.

1. Mission, Goal, Objectives

The mission of IDLN is to assist its Mission, Goal, Objectives member institutions to develop in-house capabilities to manage innovative distance education towards quality human resource development. The goal of IDLN is to extend the use of distance learning methodology across various sectors of activity. It plans to improve access to education and training through established multimedia techniques of distance education.
2. **Activities**

There are three main activities of IDLN, namely: information, training, and learning materials development.

**Information**

Collection and distribution of information on all aspects of distance learning that will be shelved in a library containing printed and other media materials.

**Training**

Training is seen as an essential role of IDLN. Wherever possible, national expertise, both personal and institutional will be utilized but international support will also be sought, where required. IDLN provides training in: distance learning systems to help develop infrastructure, management, methodology, evaluation, research and to provide learner/trainee support; materials development in various media; and developing integrated interactive multimedia learning packages.

**Learning Materials Development**

IDLN does not produce learning materials itself, nor will provide materials for individual learners. The objective is to strengthen in-house professional and technological capacity within the member institutions to produce and distribute quality materials in various formats of media, and to ensure their effective use.

---

**ISODEL (International Symposium Open, Distance, and e-Learning)**

The rapid development of information and communication technology, currently termed as Industrial Revolution 4.0, has created fundamental changes in all aspects of community life including education. The way a person learns, works and teaches has also changed to be more challenging. The challenge of current ICT in education is to utilize its various potentials in narrowing the digital gap, character building, digital educational transformation, and vocational education. Facing the upcoming challenges, Pustekkom Kemendikbud (ICT Center for Education and Culture, Ministry of Education and Culture) leads a role in transforming education in Indonesia for Education 4.0.

In cooperation with UT (Indonesian Open University), IDLN (Indonesian Distance Learning Network), ICDE (International Council for Distance Education), SEAMEO Secretariat, Pustekkom will organize an international symposium on open, distance and elearning (ISODEL). This event aims to provide the opportunity for policy makers, scientists, academics, teachers, researchers and practitioners from overseas to exchange their knowledge, ideas, and experiences to support educational transformation in Indonesia.
Open and Distance Learning (ODL) in Indonesia

Open and Distance Learning (ODL) is a promising methodology with effective use. With ODL, it allows equity of opportunity and access to the population in rural and urban areas, which able to reach numbers of participants within large distance. This condition is suitable with Indonesia’s socio economic and geographic condition. This method of learning is not only applied in basic and secondary level of education, but also to improve the civil servant competencies.

1. Primary and Secondary Education

Since 2014, Indonesian citizens must undertake twelve years of compulsory education which consists of nine years at basic level (elementary and junior high school) and three years at secondary level (high school). To enhance the participation number, one of the attempts that the Ministry of Education and Culture has done is to established Open School (Sekolah Terbuka). The aim is to accelerate participation number of basic level students who continue to secondary level, which is only 76% due to various obstacles such as economic or even geographic condition. Based on Rule of Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic of Indonesia Number 72 in 2013 about Special Education Enforcement, Open School is recognized as formal education but still part of a certain parent school which held with independent online learning method to facilitate broad students from distance. The priority is under privilege students with low economic status and lived in rural area. There are three models of learning. First, dominant online, with 20% face-to-face and 80% online learning. Second, balance online, with 50% face-to-face and 50% online learning. Third, dominant face-to-face, with 80% face-to-face and 20% online learning. The execution for this learning method is regulated with Rule of Ministry of Education and Culture Number 114 in 2014 about Open and Distance Learning for Basic and Secondary Education Enforcement.

2. Higher Education

Indonesia has committed to consistently develop technology and science towards the demand of globalization, and one of the keys is to promote higher education activities with Open and Distance Learning (ODL) which has been regulated under Ministry of Education and Culture No. 24 Year 2012 About Open and Distance Learning Enforcement for Higher Education (Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia Nomor 24 Tahun 2012 Penyelenggaraan Pendidikan Jarak Jauh (PJJ) pada Pendidikan Tinggi).

Indonesia has a target on ODL participation from 26.34% in 2011 to 30% in 2014. This target is determined to widen access of education towards its goal to achieve better quality of education. ODL has characteristic open and independent learning, with ICT utility or any other relevant technology, which possibly makes people extend their knowledge and skill without needing to leave family, job, or career opportunity. Indonesia has also made the standardization on ODL for higher education, including the material, process, study assistance, evaluation, and learning outcomes to create quality ODL.
3. **Civil Servant**

In globalization era, sharing as broad as a nation can for information is key factor for social development, that’s also become reason for a country to develop online learning including for competencies development for employees. Indonesia has applied this method not only for student’s education, but also for its civil servant in job-training.

Amanat Undang Undang No. 5 in 2014 about Civil Servant in Indonesia mentions that every civil servant in Indonesia has privilege to develop their competences in managerial, socio cultural, and technical skill for 20 hours per year. This goal requires immense allocations, whether facilitation, human capital, and budget due to Indonesian geographic condition. With open and distance learning, the aim is to improve the efficiency of job-training implementation.

### Challenges of ODL in Indonesia

Despite ODL method is a great way for Indonesian condition to create effective learning system, it still has challenges that need to be aware of.

1. **Human Resource**

   To put a standard on curriculum on online learning is not an easy scenario. Indonesia is facing the challenge due to its widely various level of competencies of human resource, while the objective is to result the same quality of outcome in every learning subject. The broad range of thinking and skill capabilities is not only about how the individual apprehend the material, but also the skill to operate the devices. For example, a student in urban area tends to overcome to operate online device, compare to student in rural area. This is due to the differ of socio economy condition faced. So that, Indonesian diversity and gap of capabilities level creates a challenge to succeeding ODL method.

2. **Facilitation and Infrastructure**

   The other main key to succeed ODL method is certainly the availability of facilitation and infrastructure, while Indonesia also still faces inequality of this matter. Basically, education system is regulated by Ministry of Education and Culture as the center government but the implementation responsibility is hold by province authority. Each province has autonomy to execute the policy and regulation from central government. The challenge is each province has inequal ability to provide the expected facilitation and infrastructure standard in school.

3. **Material**

   Implementation of a successful ODL also depends on its quality of the material and learning subject. Indonesia still has inadequate materials that could meet the standard to create qualified outcome with ODL method.
References


OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING
IN LAO PDR

by: Dr. Phonekeo Chanthamaly,
Director of IT Center (ITC) National University of Laos,
E-mail: phonekeo@nuol.edu.la, ponpong@hotmail.com

Background

Lao People’s Democratic Republic covers an area of 236,800 km² located in the center of Indochina peninsula. It is regarded as a land-locked country which is surrounded by China in the north, Vietnam in the east, Cambodia and Thailand in the south and Myanmar in the west. More than 70% is covered by mountainous area, and its population of about 7.8 million is composed of 49 ethnic groups, and Lao is the majority of them.

Geographical and historical problems - being a colony of other countries for hundreds of years - affect economic development. Depended on external factors, education has been in uncertain direction.

During the French colony time (1883-1945), the majority of teaching and learning were done in Buddhist pagoda. Only a few royal family children had a chance to attend french school system. The first primary school was established in the 1930s. After 1945, it was the era of Indochina war, both French and English were used as foreign language subjects, which were taught in secondary school level, while the first university namely “Sisavangvong University” was established only in 1958. At that period, the school style were mainly followed with French style.

After the Indochina war was over in 1975, Laos was changed from Kingdom to Republic system. The content of education was changed to a more patriotic-based, and Russian Language was also used as new selective foreign language, taught in secondary schools. Since the changes in political condition after the Soviet Union “perestroika”, affected some of the Laos education. The regional and international collaboration made Laos adapted itself to the new era of education environment. English language have been come back to be taught in Laos, as a main foreign language subject.

Due to the economic problems encountered, quality of education, lack of schools and teachers, education media / Courseware (book, instrument, etc) has been still a big issues in Laos. Some school age students cannot go to school due to the distance from house to school (especially, in mountainous area), and some have to assist their parents for farming or house work, caused a lot of school drop outs.
To develop human resources, the proper education content and media must be improved and provided reflecting the social problem, social structure, social value, social needs, and etc. In present, Information and Communication Technology (ICT)-based education is well known, and considered as the best solution for education, Laos also aware with this trend, although it is quite late as compared to other countries in ASEAN region. ICT-based education is going to be expected for new methodology for the whole country education accessibility, the education problem due to geographic condition, and many other resources shortages might be decreased, however the necessary of ICT infrastructure investment will be coming.

About education for all, there are some educational activities which are near to ODL, Such as department of non-formal education (MOES) plays the role to provides teaching-learning in provincial centers for illiteracy people, equivalent degree program in common education, training program for farmers and so on; National University of Laos has a center for distance and continuing education, but all of them can not be systematically provided.

**Education Policy and Its Management Structure (Policy on ODL)**

**Education Policy in Laos**

Basically, Laos government is very much aware and thus follows globalization direction, especially in accordance with Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), continued by Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets, set by UNDP. Education policy normally aims towards the direction for equality (gender, age, right and minority / for all), sustainability (protection of nature and environment), good facility and methodology, content quality with the level of regional and international (knowledge, knowhow, skill as well as morality) which are the basic needs for humanity and prosperity.

**Education Management in Laos**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ministry</th>
<th>MOES</th>
<th>M- A</th>
<th>…</th>
<th>M- N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Division A</td>
<td>Units</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division N</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division N</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ministry of Education and Sports has the task to manage and develop the education system for the whole country, while provincial education divisions act as networking and implementation agency of the policy from the ministry. Therefore, at provincial level there are a provincial divisions sector by sector connected with the ministry in a matrix network [Central and Provincial], being so with other ministries.
School System in Laos

The figure below shows the ages of how the Human Resources are developed in formal education from pre-school up to higher education. However, there is also a system to give a chance to people who had no chance to school in the past, called “Non-Formal Education” which supports both degree and non-degree education. This education is managed by Department of Non-Formal Education.

The ODL does not exist officially within Laos education system, but there are some activities which look like or support to ODL.

Some activities initializing of Laos ODL

Actually, there has not been any ODL system or institution in Laos, but some MOES offices have done some activities supporting the education system similar with ODL, the followings organizations below are as the examples,

**MOES IT Center**, a new center which belongs to department of planning has tried to facilitate students accessing learning materials though the internet, especially in common education level. With the supporting from Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), this IT Center has tried to develop e-Learning system for high school level. This center has mainly a role to facilitate the infrastructure for shared distance teaching and learning which provided from Vientiane capital city to other common education schools in Lao P.D.R. However, it has been still in the state as like as the test bed for shared and Open learning among common level education schools in the country, it would take time to strengthen its role.

**MOES Research Institute of Education System (RIES)**, this institute having the role to develop and support new curriculum or content for general education to be used by all schools in the whole regions of Laos. Their learning media products are improvement of content and delivery system. At present, this institute is providing some “youtube” videos uploaded to the internet and it would be a good way in delivering the good teaching material to schools in remote areas which they lack of qualified teachers and infrastructure. It is also a good initiative for one kind of Laos distance education. However, it needs somehow evaluation system as like as Learning Management System (LMS) in the future.

**Department of Non-Formal Education**, has a significant role to develop people who have not had the chance to go to school in the past, which these people become the problem of illiteracy group. They provide basic education for farmers, low income workers and dropouts during their childhood...
or school age. There are North, Middle and South part training center working as branch, managed by this department, and there are also 28 district training centers (the whole country has 148 districts); illiteracy people are mainly their target. This department does not only to provide training some intensive education for illiteracy group, but it also provides equivalent primary and lower secondary program toward certification for learners. The approach is to facilitate the target to learn at home (anytime/anywhere) and let them come back to the center for evaluation. Therefore, it is as like as a partly ODL.

**National University of Laos (NUOL),** is the a Laos face to face university providing Distance and Continuing in the level of higher education. With the support from CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency) during 2005-2010, NUOL established a center called “Distance and Continuing Education Center : DCEC”, but this center has not been continued its role, because NUOL has been supported by ASEAN Cyber University (ACU) project for e-Learning system, DCEC was merged to university academic affairs office for e-Learning management, while the e-Learning technical parts (Network, LMS Programing and Administration, Media, ...) are belong to responsibility of university IT center. The NUOL e-Learning contents are developed course by course as blended courseware onto the existing face to face system of the university. For its LMS, it is also developed by university technical staffs, with the support of ADB-SHEP (SHEP : Strengthening of Higher Education Project). It can be said, there are somehow Open style learning are being used on the existing university face to face system.

According to the education policy and its action, although no complete ODL system established yet, but with some organizations activities mentioned above, Laos “O: Open” learning happened by some unique direction, not a typical one; and “D:distance” learning would jump to e-Learning mode distance, also not the typical one.

**Conclusion**

Although there has been not yet the certain or full physical Open and Distance Learning (ODL) institution and policy in Laos, but some organizations and institutions have made an effort to implement and provide partly ODL education, despite at the level of try out. In the near future, it is hoped that Laos will leave behind the traditional ODL, and catch up with Information Communication Technology (ICT) based education, due to the possibility and the trend of technology for education. The related policy is being prepared and forced it to the real actions.

By the educational cooperation in ASEAN region, especially in SEAMEO platform, Lao P.D.R Education has been being gained many beneficiaries and learns from member countries. Those lesson learnt, will be adapted to Laos education. It would be a good way, if SEAMEO-SEAMOLEC can provide any level ODL learning resource through internet which attached with member country languages as sound sub-title, and Laos can learn more and more Indonesian and other countries experience.
OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING
IN MYANMAR

by: Prof. Dr. Khin Thant Sin
Pro Rector, Yangon University of Distance Education
Email: thantsinkhin@gmail.com

Briefly Introduction of Myanmar

Myanmar is the largest country in mainland Southeast Asia and is situated geographically at the strategic location between the economic hubs of China, India and ASEAN Countries. Official language of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar is Myanmar, and English also is used as a bi-lingual medium not only in higher education institutions but also in basic education.

Myanmar has a population of 53.9 million (2014 Census) and annual population growth of 0.89 percent. Under the 2008 Constitution, Myanmar has shifted to a democratic governance system with the establishment of a civilian-led government and two parliaments with elected representatives in 2011. In addition, 14 State/Region governments and local parliaments have been established as a foundation for a decentralized governance system.

Overview of Yangon University of Distance Education

Motto:
“For One’s Desires... Education Never Too Far”

Vision

• To promote the educational opportunity by providing the technology-mediated distance education to all who wish to realize their ambitions and fulfill their potential.

Mission

• To produce qualified students and to upgrade human capital to create a skilled workforce for knowledge based economy by leveraging open and distance education.

The general background of the current reform of Myanmar education system consists of five sectors; Early Childhood Care and Development, Basic Education, Alternative Education, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), and Higher Education.
In 1970’s terminology, Distance Learning started as the correspondence courses, offered by the higher education institutions, is also familiar to the Myanmar education environment apart from the face-to-face mode in on-campus universities, i.e., conventional system of education. Distance learning in those days started as Correspondence Courses were well functioned in Yangon Correspondence University, which was separately conducting its functions, collaborated by the Arts and Science University, Yangon, in 1975-76. The University of Correspondence Courses were extended to Mandalay in 1978-79. Apart from Yangon Correspondence University, University Correspondence Courses were already introduced at the Institute of Education earlier in 1973-74. Started from 1980 the University Correspondence Courses came under the direct control of the Ministry of Education.

University Correspondence Courses were initiated with the objective of fulfilling the needs of those students who are qualified for higher Education, but for various reasons were unable to attend full-time classes at on-campus universities. It also aimed to facilitate those students who were engaged in their earnings. Moreover, the correspondence courses were designed to be the same level of courses offered in the conventional universities, i.e., on-campus universities. The Ministry of Education actively boosted distance education system in higher education sector for launching the University of Distance Education that mechanized as an entity and ownership of those of the distance education students assimilation to the conventional education within the sphere of mainstream education system.

In order to harmonize with internationally changing environment of education, Myanmar also stepped onto the international plane with the elevation of correspondence system to distance education system in 1991. Consequently, the Distance Education System came into existence operated by a separated entity named as the University of Distance Education, Yangon, was founded on 9th July 1992. On the 18th May 1998, the University of Distance Education, Mandalay, was inaugurated, and thus, the UDE was reorganized into two separate universities, one for Lower Myanmar in Yangon, and one for Upper Myanmar in Mandalay.

Since 1998, e-Education initiatives were launched by conducting the programme to exploit multimedia communication in teaching and learning effectively. The aims of the programme are to enable students to be able to use ICT learning aids; to encourage teachers to learn to use ICT and make effective use of it in their teaching; to raise teaching and learning abilities as preparation for developments and changes. e-Education was launched in Myanmar on 1st January 2001 and the then time, ICT infrastructure consisted of;

- Networking of e-learning centres, e-resource centers, and computer training centres
- Electronic data broadcasting system for the education network
- Wireless link video conferencing
- Fibred optic network system for linkage among departments and university
- Education intranet, and internet access
At all higher education institutions, computer training centres, resource centres, multimedia lecture rooms, and language labs were established. Since the beginning of 2002, the VSAT system has been used at education collages. A computer network based on the VSAT system can be established and this network can be utilized to relay not only printed out but also audio-visual information.

The iPSTAR satellite communication system has been used via the VSAT to provide internet access. Collaboration work between Ministry of Education and Ministry of Information( now Ministry of Information and Communication) launched 2003 e-Education Learning Centres that utilized data broadcasting system in real time. From 2000 Fiscal Year to 2004, a total of 608 learning centres were established at High Schools, Universities, Degree Collages and Colleges.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Branch</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Foreign</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Mawlamyine</td>
<td>16475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Dagon</td>
<td>47640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Pathein</td>
<td>32187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sittwe</td>
<td>15228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Taungoo</td>
<td>13639</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Pyay</td>
<td>20612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Dawei</td>
<td>4217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>East Yangon</td>
<td>22975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>West Yangon</td>
<td>28881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Hinthada</td>
<td>21026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Maubin</td>
<td>22518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Hpa-an</td>
<td>8085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Myeik</td>
<td>7571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Bago</td>
<td>11635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Taungkoke</td>
<td>6254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>278976</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Yangon University of Distance Education (YUDE) utilized the electronic data broadcasting system which is based in YUDE studio to deliver e-lectures to the regional learning centres where students gathered to study on week-end days. The above-mentioned regional learning centres, which aimed to support distance education students for their study needs during the then time, were no more available after nearly two decades have passed.

Currently, the Yangon University of Distance Education has (15) regional centres (on-campus universities situated in different regions) in Lower Myanmar, and Mandalay University of Distance Education has (21) regional centres. Since 1998-99 academic year, UDE student population had increased with the aim of perusing higher education through distance learning with greater accessibility. The student projection in yearly statistics is shown in the following figure. Thus, Student demand for DE has been increasing gradually in each academic year. Figure below shows in the previous 6 years enrollment comparison.
YUDE Student Enrollment (2018 Academic Year)

The Distribution of Student Population of 20 branches in 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Branch</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Taungyi</td>
<td>16731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Magway</td>
<td>30472</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Monywar</td>
<td>32974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Myikyina</td>
<td>14033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Yadanabon</td>
<td>39605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Meiktils</td>
<td>18811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Pokokku</td>
<td>21409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>KyuseKse</td>
<td>22399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Panglong</td>
<td>2382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Kalay</td>
<td>7633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Loikaw</td>
<td>4833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Lashio</td>
<td>13274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Kyaing Tong</td>
<td>2742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Banmaw</td>
<td>4139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Shwebo</td>
<td>25753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Saging</td>
<td>5003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Yenanchaung</td>
<td>11171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Myingyan</td>
<td>12376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Mohnyin</td>
<td>4634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Mandalay</td>
<td>8003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Hakar</td>
<td>463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>298840</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Distance Education Student Population in (15) Branches of Yangon University of Distance Education, (Regional on-campus universities)

Increasing numbers of DE Students in Yearly Based

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Student Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>209325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>186270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>146135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>141712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>135990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>146395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>156,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>160,715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>210,303</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Under the new education reformation frame, the Ministry of Education encourages to promote two universities of distance education into open and online universities starting from 2018 academic year. Upon the above transformation, the ownership of the distance education students will be vested into respective regional on-campus universities so that they operate and manage on both day students and UDE students by exercising one campus two-system pattern.

### Policy and Regulations on ODL

Policy overview from ICDE mentioned that “Globalization and the imperatives of the networked society are affecting higher education almost everywhere in the world; Open and distance learning is one of the rapidly growing fields of higher education and training globally;...... for learners: the acquisition of 21st century skills necessary for the workplace...For institutions:......potential students and developing a more diversified and extensive offer of lifelong learning; For employers: ...... cost effective professional development in the workplace; For Governments:....support and enhancement of the quality and relevance of existing educational structures and programs.....”. (“Open and Distance Education Policy Briefing”, 2013, p.2)

Concerning regulatory frameworks, it mentioned like that “Regulatory frameworks may significantly hinder or enhance the development and transformative contribution of the open and distance learning. The current regulatory framework in higher education is complex and multi-level covering acts of parliament, policy, rules, governance and funding structures and operating at international, regional, national, and local government levels and even at institutional levels. Although regulatory and policy frameworks can have a major impact on the introduction and expansion of online and distance learning, there are also other factors that can determine how effective any implementation of regulations or policy will be in encouraging and facilitating online and distance learning.” (“Open and Distance Education Policy Briefing”, 2013, p.2)

According to the above overview, naturally, every new system which is imported to traditional method of study in education setting, particularly in higher education sector, it is always necessary to decide actual plan and its implementation first, and then policy and regulations will be followed up and formalized later.

Distance education infrastructure in Myanmar practice is that it is implemented in accordance with guidance and directions of the Ministry of Education based on long-term or short-term education
development plan. Naturally, all the higher education institutions of Myanmar are state-owned entities, which have been functioning in accordance with the guidance of the Ministry of Education and the Government policy and regulations stipulated to the educational system.

That is why, there is no illegibility issues on whether what kind of institution can offer ODL programmes or not, or which programmes of study are illegible or which are not, or which academic disciplines can be offered or which cannot. The policy on ODL shall be constructed upon what are the specific objectives of the University of Distance Education within the role of higher education in the nation. According to Myanmar practice, it is apparent on the one side that incorporating distance education mode into conventional route-learning is that it can be more accessible to higher education at minimal cost, without consideration on distance, i.e., urban or remote, the same quality of courses offered by the conventional university. Moreover, on the other side, it is by way of getting knowledge in self-pace study which is oriented to those of the workforces who should reach their destination of education, i.e., every workforce shall be accomplished as an educated in their earning life or social life.

Concerning the regulations and norms of the ODL, we merely care about what are the international norms and regulations for ODL upon which we implement so far as we can. This is because mode of learning in ODL is self-studying method in which ODL providers shall facilitate or structure major delivery resources as learning materials or instructional materials. Thus, we frame our major delivery categories based on printed medium like Textbooks and relative Study Guidebooks, and based on electronic medium, such as, audio CD and VCD lessons, TV lessons, and e-DBS Lessons that is presently unavailable.

When we promote Distance Education University to Open University, we will have to involve with how to utilize international open education resources (OER) or in house basis. At that time we have to be careful about our self-owned policy and regulations which are stipulated in line with ASEAN Standards and ODL organization like AAOU and ICDE for we are the official member of these organizations.

**ODL Models and Modes of Implementations**

Many ODL Models were internationally utilized for the purpose of educating students and enhancing learning atmosphere, for examples, examination preparation model, the correspondence study model; the multiple (mass) media distance education model, autonomous learner model, technologically extended classroom teaching model, and net-based learning model, etc.

Among these internationally established ODL Models, we already have experienced in three models, one is the correspondence study model, the second is the multiple media distance education model and the last one and currently on going improvement model is of net-based learning model.

The functional mechanism of the earliest model of correspondence courses study model was structured
on the curriculum planning, production of course books and learning materials for study purpose, with the preparation of assignments for assessment on student’s comprehension on self-pace study mode. All the learning materials together with assignment questions were sent to the enrolled students by postal mail according to the academic calendar and students returned their assignment answers after completing the tasks. After evaluation on the answer, the feedbacks were mailed back to the students. The implementation of this model is not so difficult and also quality assurance about the system was achieved apparently at the then time.

The second model of the multiple media distance education model is still being operated parallel and simultaneously with third model of net-based learning or online learning system. Actually, YUDE was founded because of the student demands fundamentally and the second boost up course was the demand of regional and international collaborations in favour of information and communication technology advancement mostly initiated and available in the education domain. Thus, students are generated by the electronic based technology advancement and they demand and pursue knowledge of all over the world in real time cascade. Therefore, nation governments cannot ignore this situation and facilitate their younger generations in harmony with the array of changing society.

Model, Mode of Delivery and Medium of Course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Mode of Delivery</th>
<th>Medium</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correspondence Study</td>
<td>Independent study, Self-pace Study, Radio Lessons</td>
<td>Course Books (Printed medium) and Assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance Education</td>
<td>Multiple media, TV Lessons, Radio Lessons, VCD Lessons hosting from the website</td>
<td>Textbook and Study Guidebook, Assignment Questions and Answer Booklet, Audio CD , VCD Lessons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net-based Education and Online Learning</td>
<td>&quot;Mixed mode&quot;, Orientation, face to face teaching and discussion, some contiguous teaching</td>
<td>Often text based, All media may be used; frequently CBT based</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Online learning was initiated in 2016 at Yangon University of Distance Education only. The first offered course is Post Graduate Diploma of Law Courses under the Human Recourse Development Programme. In 2016 it started to offer Online LL B Degree Course on the demand of students who are at the distance from Yangon.

Challenges of ODL and Future Plan

The changing pattern of the global education system and under the UNESCO sustainable development goal, pursuing higher education in way of distance learning mode is more attractive than traditional method of face-to-face teaching. This is because technology advancement favours boundary less transaction of human aspiration.
Regarding challenges of ODL in Myanmar practice is faced with the delivery mode of collaboration work between UDEs and regional branches universities (respective on-campus universities). All the mechanisms are exercising in on-campus universities, such as, student enrollment, instructional materials providing, assignment submission, intensive course (face-to-face teaching), holding examination, etc.. The mechanisms done by the UDEs are course designing, instructional materials (printed medium) compilation, (electronic medium) creation, editing, production, and distribution, exam result announcing, convocation etc.

Almost all the mechanism and operation system of Distance Education relies on collaborative work of regional centres, i.e., respective on-campus universities. Mostly, science specialization students shall conduct their laboratory work at the respective on-campus university at every weekend.

Upon increasing students demand in distance education system, the mechanism of feed-back to students or students feed-back to instructors is rare to be exercised because of the separate responsibility between UDEs and respective regional branches (respective on-campus universities) under the collaboration work.

For that reason and other defect factors, plan is going to be arranged by the guidance of the Ministry of Education that UDEs have to transfer its distance education mechanism to respective on-campus universities by one academic to another gradually starting from 2018 Academic Year. That means that, in 2023 UDEs shall abandon their ownership on UDEs students and it will be entrusted to respective on-campus universities which will take all the responsibilities to operate and administer both day students and UDEs students by exercising one campus two modes education. Before struck at that time, UDEs shall take responsibility to support or facilitate respective on-campus universities concerning instructional materials production (mass production) and distribution work, such as printed media (Textbook and Study Guidebook) compilation, electronic media (Audio CD and VCD lessons of the respective modules) creation tasks.

UDEs shall step forward to structure the initiation of Open University encouraged by the current online and net-based educating and learning programme.

The challenges of ODL practice in Myanmar are:-

- To guarantee quality of DE both programme level and institutional level;
- To build the mechanism of quality assurance and assessment in terms of ODL urgently;
- To make analysis on the best practice or system regarding students-instructors, instructors feedback for ODL criteria in respect of huge volume of DE students;
- To stipulate policy and regulations framework for ODL in Myanmar
- This is because the development of self-study materials must be developed and attractive for students.
Conclusion

The objectives of the Distance Education system laid down at the beginning its foundation state that “to make higher education more accessible without distance and to ensure a high standard of tertiary education which is to produce qualified citizens who will be able to serve better in the interest of the state.” Actually, our 26 years of experience in DE system utilized in the Higher Education Sector is apparently achieved with various challenges like our motto of “One desires...Education Never Too Far.”

Our step forward “Vision” is that “To promote the educational opportunity by providing the technology-mediated distance education to all who wish to realize their ambitions and fulfil their potential.” And “Mission” is “To produce qualified students and to upgrade human capital to create a skilled workforce for knowledge based economy by leveraging open and distance education.” We shall level up the ODL mechanism along with its quality assurance as the top priority.

YUDE Website : www.yude.edu.mm
www.yudeonline.com.mm
www.ynou.edu.mm

e-Mail : yudeonline@gmail.com

Recommendation to SEAMOLEC

Regional cooperation is crucial tasks of the ASEAN member countries for the improvement and development of the ODL in higher education role in the Southeast Asia region. YUDE is a member institution to the ICDE and AAOU as well. In order to build need assessment for ODL development, regional organization like AAOU stimulates the member countries ODL situation in timely manner, and also international organization like ICDE needs to motivate the standardization of policy and regulation framework for ODL implementation in quality.

So also SEAMEO SEAMOLEC should conduct the following tasks:-

1. Formation of study visit group among member countries to visit ODL HEI sof the member countries
2. To initiate to conduct quality framework specific to ODL
3. Policy and Regulation framework of ODL in order to provide efficient ODL in SEAMOLEC member countries
4. Make arrangements for providing technical assistance group in which members of the SEAMOLEC shall nominate persons by their quota
References


Acknowledgements to Dr. Rosa Lind James (University of New England)

Professor Belinda Tynan (University of Southern Queensland)

Professor NarendBaljnath(University of South Africa)

Professor Antonio MoreiraTelxelra(UniversidadeAberta)


Min Than Thaung, U, “Open and Distance Learning in Myanmar”, Profile: Open and Distance Learning in Southeast Asia, SEAMEO Regional Open Learning Centre, (SEAMEO SEAMOLEC), 2006.

The Ministry of Education, “Myanmar Education Updates”, 2003-2004,
OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING
IN PHILIPPINES

by: Farida Bianca Velicaria
Project Development Officer II at Department of Education – Philippines
Email: farida.velicaria@deped.gov.ph

Brief Introduction of the country’s education profile

The Philippines is an archipelago composed of 7,107 islands. It is situated in the eastern rim of Asiatic Mediterranean between the Pacific and Indian oceans and between Australia and mainland Asia. It stretches from China to the north and the Indonesian archipelago to the South. It is located in the heart of Southeast Asia.

The country is divided into three major island groups: Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. It has 17 regions, 79 provinces, 117 cities and 1,501 municipalities and 41,982 barangays. Its capital city, Manila, is located in Luzon, the largest and most populated island of the country.

For purposes of communication and instruction, the official languages of the Philippines are Filipino and, until otherwise provided by law, English. The regional languages are the auxiliary official languages in the regions and shall serve as auxiliary media of instruction therein.

As of 2014, the country’s population has reached 100 million. The population is relatively young with a median age of 23.5. This is further shown by the age structure where 33.7 percent belong to the 0-14 age range, 19 percent for the 15-24 years old and 37 percent for those who are 25-54 years old. The Philippines is predominantly Catholic (83%), 15 percent are Muslims and the rest are Buddhists and other denominations.

The Education System

In the past and until the year 2000, the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) managed and supervised the three levels of education, namely, elementary, secondary and tertiary. Based on the recommendation of the Congressional Education Commission (EDCOM) in 1991 and upon the passage of laws by Congress, the administration of the different levels of education was tri-focalized. The Department of Education (DepEd) takes care of basic education. The Technical Education Skills
and Development Authority (TESDA) supervises post-secondary non-degree technical and vocational education, while the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) oversees undergraduate or baccalaureate, graduate and post-graduate degree programs.

The Education System of the Philippines as based on the Philippine Qualification Framework (PQF), with the aforesaid three entities and overseeing a specific level of education. The PQF is a quality assured national system for the development, recognition and award of qualifications based on the standards of knowledge, skills and values acquired in different ways and methods by learners and workers of the country. It covers qualifications obtained from technical vocational training and higher education or their equivalents in an education and training system with basic education as foundation.

Children enter Kindergarten at 5 years old and complete the six-year elementary education at 11 years old. They enter secondary schools, and complete Junior High School at age 16 and Senior High School at age 18. Students may pursue after secondary school technical, vocational non-degree programs. For those qualified to enter a university or college, courses for baccalaureate degrees are offered for 4 years and post-baccalaureate to graduate and post-graduate for 2 to 5 years more.

**Policy and Regulations on ODL**

For higher education, Republic Act No. 7722 (Higher Education Act of 1994), created the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). This national policy declares to protect, foster and promote the right of all citizens for affordable quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps that education shall be accessible to all. The state shall likewise ensure and protect academic freedom and shall promote its exercise and observance for the continuing intellectual growth, the advancement of learning and research, the development of responsible and effective leadership, the education of high level and medium level professional and the enrichment of our historical and cultural heritage.

Relative to the creation of the Commission on Higher Education, Republic Act No. 10650, “An Act Expanding Access to Educational Services by Institutionalizing Open Distance Learning in Levels of Tertiary Education and Appropriating Funds Therefor” was enacted into law which was also known as the “Open Distance Learning Act” (see attachment 1).

Pursuant to this Republic Act No. 10650, which took effect on December 24, 2014, CHED through its Technical Panel for Transnational Education and Distance Education, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), with the assistance of the University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU), issued the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) on the Open Distance Learning Act (see attachment 2).
ODL Models and its Implementation

According to Bandalaria (2007) ODL/DE models in the Philippines have evolved through various phases of development in five decades influenced by the popular technology at the time.

First Generation DE in the Philippines began with the Farmers’ School-on-Air (FSA) model used in 1952. This format was adopted by radio stations and government agencies who created schools-on-the-air (SOA) for Filipinos for the improvement of their standard of living.

Second Generation DE involved lessons packaged into print materials supplemented by face-to-face tutorials that serve as venues for student support. Based on the experience of the UP Open University, this mode was supplemented as well by content delivery through radio. Experiments on expanding the reach of this mode included the use of television.

Third Generation DE is characterized by the efforts of education providers to use ICT to support students who live far from traditional campuses through modes such as teleconferences. Physical learning centers retained their significance as a place to conduct administrative and pedagogical processes.

Finally, Fourth Generation DE harnesses ICT to empower teachers and students to create their learning/teaching environment. In this generation, learning centers became more of a secondary option for administrative processes which are primarily offered online. They served as testing centers, a drop-off and pick-up point for content distribution, and a place where submissions of outputs and course requirements take place.

Challenges Faced by ODL Implementers and Future ODL Plans

A major concern highlighted by Bandalaria (2007) is the challenge of enculturing and promoting DE, considering the public’s perception of it as a second-class form of education. To address this misconception, it is important to engage in information dissemination on the advantages of DE should be undertaken. This will help gather support from policymakers and resource providers, enhance DE’s credibility which will benefit DE graduates, and secure funding for institutions pursuing DE as a mode of delivery.

Due to its contentious nature, it is an imperative to assure quality in DE by employing the “quality circle” made up of the course writer, subject matter specialist, instructional designer, media specialist, and language editor. Quality and reliable ICT hardware should also be available and manned with the support of skilled personnel. In the Philippines, there is also a perception that DE is the easier route to a degree, hence its undeserved image as a diploma mill. ODL implementers must then pursue and maintain high quality standards.
Conclusion and Recommendation for SEAMOLEC

Bandalaria (2007) highlighted the need for technology to be relevant both in terms of the implementation process and the substance of design. Institutions must also be fully aware of the costs required for the use of the technology—this includes the training costs for the staff to equip them with the required knowledge and skills to implement the chosen mode of delivery.

Programs must be accessible and affordable to students. Forming partnerships is one strategy to alleviate the costs for implementing DE programs and enrich learning experience.

Furthermore, should new teaching and learning strategies be implemented, they must be accompanied by concomitant changes in organizational structures and the relevant policies and procedures. Lastly, research and evaluation play an important role in the selection and use of new modes of DE and, as such, should be undertaken extensively before the implementation.

References

OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING
IN SINGAPORE

by: Aaron LOH
Divisional Director, Educational Technology Division
Ministry of Education, Singapore.
Email: aaron_LOH@moe.gov.sg

Introduction

The education system in Singapore aims to provide opportunities for all students to discover their talents, realise their full potential, and develop a passion for lifelong learning. To this end, the system is flexible, diverse, and broad-based to ensure students’ holistic development, with the aim of allowing students greater choice to meet their different interests and modes of learning. In uncovering students’ strengths and developing their talents, multiple pathways are also available across the education system. Applied and Experiential Learning continues to be enhanced in schools through learning by doing, encouraging students to cultivate an innovative spirit and apply their knowledge and skills in the real world. Coupled with well-resourced schools, strong school leadership, and effective teaching, our education system enables our students to develop the skills, character and values necessary for them to navigate the increasingly complex world, and to propel Singapore forward.

Over the years, the Ministry of Education (MOE) has leveraged the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) for learning in and out of classrooms to aid students in developing competencies for the future workplace. An example is MOE’s online platform, the Singapore Student Learning Space, which allows for personalised online learning and provides all students access to quality learning resources. Students from Primary 5 are also given access to MySkillsFuture, which is an online one-stop education, training, and career guidance portal to help them plan their education and training into their working life. The portal provides industry information and tools to search for education and training programmes to broaden and deepen skills.

Post-secondary institutions’ role in equipping students with the skills and competencies for further education helps prepare youths for workforce needs across various industry sectors. This includes partnering industries to offer our students real world learning opportunities as in the Institute of Technical Education’s (ITE) Work-Learn Technical Diploma and Polytechnic education’s strong emphasis on applied learning. With industrial attachments being part of the curriculum, this enables students
to gain valuable on-the-job experience, deepen their skills, and provide opportunities to work and engage with industry experts.

Singapore’s university education also prepares students for a world of jobs that have yet to be invented and challenges that are still unknown. This can be achieved through full-time studies at any one of Singapore’s six publicly-funded autonomous universities where the proportion of junior college or polytechnic students proceeding to full-time undergraduate studies is expected to rise to 37.5 per cent by 2018. Alternative pathways to achieve a university education are through part-time undergraduate studies at both public and private institutions in Singapore. Notably, the Singapore University of Social Sciences, Singapore’s sixth autonomous university, provides university education to working professionals and adult learners, and began offering full-time applied degree programmes in 2014.

Private Education Institutions in Singapore are regulated by the Committee for Private Education, a unit under the SkillsFuture Singapore Agency (SSG). Examples of such institutions include PSB (Productivity and Standards Board) Academy and Singapore Institute of Management, which offers external degree programmes conferred by overseas partner universities. This is in addition to foreign higher education institutes, such as INSEAD, that have set up local campuses in Singapore.

To enable Singaporeans to continually re-skill and up-skill to stay relevant for work and for life, SSG - which is a statutory board under the MOE - drives and coordinates the implementation of the national SkillsFuture movement which provides opportunities for Singaporeans to develop their fullest potential throughout life, regardless of their starting points. SkillsFuture has four key thrusts:

1. Help individuals make well-informed choices in education, training and careers;

2. Develop an integrated high quality system of education and training that responds to constantly evolving needs;

3. Promote employer recognition and career development based on skills and mastery; and

4. Foster a culture that supports and celebrates lifelong learning.

Individuals across various stages of their learning and career journeys can tap on the range of SkillsFuture initiatives to take charge of their learning, develop their own skills sets, and meet personal aspirations. For instance, adult learners of different skill proficiencies can tap on a curated list of short, industry-relevant training programmes under the SkillsFuture Series that focuses on skills in priority and emerging areas such as data analytics, digital media, and cyber security.

SSG has also established Continuing Education and Training (CET) Centres that have undergone rigorous accreditation and continuous improvement review to ensure they deliver quality training. The Institute for Adult Learning (IAL), an institute of SSG, in particular offers a range of programmes and initiatives designed to enhance the capabilities and professionalism of adult educators. SSG also leads iNnovative Learning 2020 (iN.LEARN 2020) and has set up iN.LAB to drive learning innovation and the
use of blended learning in CET to meet the dynamic learning needs of enterprises and individuals. The growing importance of lifelong learning positions open and distance learning as a key enabler as it confers upon individuals the flexibility needed to continue their education or training while still working and meeting family responsibilities.

‘Open and distance learning’ in Singapore

Internationally, open and distance learning (ODL) has its roots in correspondence education. It has since evolved to ODL based on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) (SEAMEO SEAMOLEC, 2017; Moore & Tait, 2002) in fully online or blended modes. While open learning connotes accessibility by anyone regardless of geographic, and socio-economic constraints, or academic background, distance learning has been a synonym for the more comprehensive term distance education as it provides opportunities for learners to study regardless of geographic, socio-economic or other constraints. The appeal of distance learning lies in that one is able to study without having to leave home or a job to gain higher education (SEAMEO SEAMOLEC, 2017).

In Singapore’s context of promoting lifelong learning, open and distance learning programmes use ICT to potentially lower the barriers between the workplace and classroom learning. ODL programmes are mainly targeted at working adults who wish to upgrade themselves (Koh, 2006) through part-time university studies or CET programmes. Accordingly, the use of ICT-based learning approaches, particularly blended learning, to support working adults learning is a growing continuum observed in higher education, continuing education and training, and teacher professional learning.

ODL in higher education: The case of adult learning at the Singapore University of Social Science

The Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS), Singapore’s sixth autonomous university, provides university education to working professionals and adult learners through its part-time degree programmes. SUSS adopts a flexible learning approach to enable learners to balance their career, family and studies. Students enrolled in full-time programmes have the flexibility to switch to a part-time mode or transfer to a part-time programme if they secure jobs before graduation. SUSS’ Centre for Continuing and Professional Education (CCPE) offers a comprehensive range of educational and training curriculum in work-related competencies, life-skills, and personal enrichment. The Continuing Education Training (CET) courses administered by the CCPE may be taken as single modules from the respective undergraduate or graduate courses that can count towards eventual enrolment in SUSS’ degree programmes.

SUSS empowers students to be independent learners with a flexible learning style through technology-enhanced learning resources. Classroom interactions are blended with learning outside the classroom
and include instructor-guided self-study using print, multi-media, email, and discussion platforms. Discussion platforms are designed to encourage collaborative learning, where students contribute to meaningful discussions via instructor-facilitated online forums and virtual classroom systems supplemented by some face-to-face seminars. Lectures, tutorials and seminars also offer face-to-face engagement with instructors, and peers from diverse professional and academic backgrounds.

For enhanced flexibility, SUSS also offers students a selection of fully-online courses as part of the undergraduate curriculum. Such courses are of the same academic standards and quality curriculum as the university’s on-campus education, and feature an assortment of virtual learning tools, interactive activities, and other resources designed to engage students in the online learning environment. Guidance and support are provided by experienced online instructors via weekly virtual office hours, discussion forums, and emails.

**ODL in continuing education and training: The case of Massive Open and Online Courses (MOOCs) in Singapore**

MOOCs, a recent development in distance education, were first introduced in 2008 and emerged as a popular mode of learning in 2012 (Kim, 2015). The development of MOOCs is rooted in the ideals of openness in education; that knowledge should be shared freely and the desire to learn should be met without demographic, economic, and geographical constraints.

MOOCs play an important role in the next phase of education and skills development in Singapore. To encourage Singaporeans to embrace life long learning and take ownership of their learning and development, all Singaporeans aged 25 and above, are given SkillsFuture Credit (SFC) worth SGD500 to use for eligible training programmes. These include approved MOOCs on platforms such as Coursera, Udemy, edX, and Udacity. MOOCs currently form 12% of all SkillsFuture Credit-eligible courses.

In addition, SSG and the Institute of Adult Learning (IAL) work closely with adult educators, business leaders, human resource developers and policy makers to transform the CET sector. For example, iN.LAB piloted the Total Online Learning Solution Proof-of-Concept (TOLS POC) project, known as “LearningSpace.SG”, which successfully supported subscribers in kick-starting their tech-enabled learning, and included hosting trials at the “Marketplace” where subscribers could list their e-learning programme for mass consumption, either for free or at a nominal fees.

The European Union Centre in Singapore also offers EU courses through MOOCs (Cheah, 2016). Since 2014, universities in Singapore, such as the National University of Singapore, and Nanyang Technological University have offered MOOCs on platforms such as Coursera. The credits gained can be used as part of a student’s qualification for a degree.

Singapore’s five polytechnics have also jointly developed and launched a one-stop portal, Polymall, to offer MOOCs to staff and students of the polytechnics. The platform brings together learning
materials across the five polytechnics, enabling lecturers from different institutes to learn from and collaborate with one another, and providing access to online learning content across multiple sectors and disciplines. To ensure that resources are of a high quality, the polytechnics are committed to a shared culture of collaborative learning and information exchange. Pre-employment training courses are also available to members of the public who are Singaporeans and Singapore Permanent Residents.

**ODL in teacher professional learning: Cases for Learning Communities and Networked Learning**

**Open Source Physics Learning Community**

Open source communities that comprise individuals working collaboratively to develop and maintain open source software and content, exemplify a contemporary model of learning where understanding of content is socially constructed through conversations and interactions with others around problems (Brown & Adler, 2008). An example of open source software and content in education is the Open Educational Resources (OERs) that comprise teaching, learning, and research resources residing in the public domain or which have been released under an intellectual property license permitting free use and repurposing by others. OER’s inherent value as reusable and remixable resources, is to increase access, reduce costs, and enhance educational quality across populations, distances, or social statuses (Dhanarajan & Porter, 2013).

Learning in open source communities generally draws like-minded people across the globe to collaborate. It is generally project-based and occurs at a distance, particularly in international collaborations. Open Source Physics (OSP), an international project on OER, provides the tools and resources for interactive computer-based modelling and enables teachers to create, use, and customise the computer models or tools to suit their teaching context and instructional needs (Wee & Mak, 2009). Teachers involved in the Open Source Physics@Singapore (OSP@SG) community are among a growing number of international contributors that create, adapt, and appropriate OSP curriculum resources as part of their professional development. The OSP@SG project helps teachers bring real world physics concepts in and outside schools through OER and complements real life experiments by providing interactive digital resources that run on computers and mobile devices. OSP@SG also created a mathematical modelling function, where mathematical ideas can be compared with real life and simulation data. Active members of OSP@SG engage and learn collaboratively in the context of OSP workshops, seminars, conferences, and the Ministry of Education’s Physics Instructional Programme Support Group. The OSP@SG research project undertaken by the Educational Technology Division of MOE was subsequently conferred the 2015 UNESCO King Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa in recognition for its pedagogical innovation in the use of ICT in Teaching and Learning.

Building on the strengths of the Open Source Physics project, OSP@SG also contributes source codes to OERs (simulations and video tracker) that allow teachers to edit and republish remixed resources...
under creative commons attribution, share-alike, non-commercial licenses CC-BY-SA-NC. This license gives the required permission and makes it clear what others can and cannot do with these OERs in order to use them. As an OER, the resources developed by OSP@SG can be freely shared or adapted by teachers all over the world. Through such efforts, the OSP@SG hopes to contribute to an inclusive education and promote lifelong learning.

**Networked Learning Communities (NLCs) via “One Portal All Learners” (OPAL) for MOE teachers in Singapore**

One Portal All Learners (OPAL) is a one-stop learning and content management system for all staff of the Ministry of Education (MOE). OPAL aims to support a staff-led culture of professional excellence, encouraging the growth of networked learning communities and a culture of continuous learning and improvement. Efforts are ongoing on implementing a blended model of professional development, which allows teachers to learn face-to-face and online via OPAL.

OPAL offers MOE teachers access to a comprehensive repository of professional learning resources, which includes an online course builder with a suite of collaborative tools such as wiki, forums, and blogs. In addition, users can create online spaces for either open or closed collaborative groups where information and resources can either be made visible to all or to selective group spaces. In Singapore, teachers professional learning through online collaborative group interactions or Networked Learning Communities (NLCs) is facilitated and supported within OPAL. Such NLCs comprise individuals from different schools or organisations collaborating and learning with one another in a purposeful, professional and sustained developmental approach (Jackson & Temperley, 2007).

In a project conducted by MOE that studied learning within 10 OPAL collaboration groups created by NLCs, findings revealed that the majority of online interactions centered on online knowledge construction at the level of sharing and comparing information (Lee et al, 2018). An implementation framework was subsequently developed based on literature and findings from the study to promote learning in NLCs via OPAL, with six factors identified that influenced members’ engagement for learning in NLCs. This comprised:

1. Presence of a structured approach to guide a NLC’s articulation of goals, timeline, and course for actions towards actualising goals;

2. Organisational support provided by schools that enabled teachers to engage in NLC activities that went beyond school commitments;

3. Having a conducive environment that engendered trust among NLC members;

4. Presence of a shared ownership, personal stake in the NLC and co-ownership of common goals that enabled members to find value and purpose in learning online;
5. Presence of a culture of sharing in which NLC members actively engaged in collegial conversations, that promotes learning and prioritises higher levels of knowledge construction; and

6. Having the affordances of the tools in OPAL’s online collaborative workspace that served as an enabler to facilitate design of NLC activities.

**Challenges faced by ODL for adult learners in Singapore and possible responses**

In this millennium, as adult learners aspire to retain or strengthen their competitive advantage in the job market, engaging in courses relevant to them at different points of time or to ride on new emergent knowledge areas would serve as motivation factors. Motivation is key to persuading adults back to learning. Some adult learners may have left school, started working, and are now returning as adult learners enrolled in part-time higher education programmes. Interest in career progression also encourages them to look for learning opportunities around work and family responsibilities (Chong, Loh & Babu, 2015). Adults are often open to the possibility of participation at moments of transition, for instance, when they have just changed jobs or retired. For them to act on this possibility, they need to appreciate that learning would make a positive difference to their lives (Tuckett, 2018). With the advent of technology and improved predictive analysis algorithms, analytics could be employed to help these learners plan their choice of courses and learning journey (Chong et al, 2015).

The drive for adult learning requires the need to review teaching and learning strategies currently used by adult educators, of which a majority are members of an earlier generation (Chong et al, 2015). In Singapore, it has been found that Adult Educators (AE) with an affinity to a teacher-centred approach to training make up a larger proportion compared to those who adopt more learner-centred approaches (Freebody, Bound & Lin, 2014). As the present generation of adult learners aspire to participate in their education, they tend not to prefer having information merely told to them or read from a book, but desire to be co-creators of the knowledge (Chong et al, 2015). AEs who tend to adopt teacher-centred approaches may benefit from professional learning that addresses what it means to be an AE. They may also benefit from being exposed to a range of pedagogical practices and the philosophies behind these practices (Freebody et al, 2014).

**Conclusion**

It is the contention that open and distance learning has a correlation with lifelong learning, and can be valued in terms of lowering barriers and integrating workplace and classroom learning to enable adult learners to reap the benefits of professional growth and development. In Singapore, new innovations in open and distance learning programmes continue to be made to better fit adult learner needs. An example is seen in the mobile Micro-Learning Courses (MLCs) at the polytechnic level that allows learning to take place in pockets of free time, such as while commuting to and from work, or during break times.
Against the backdrop of an evolving, increasingly digitised, connected, and automated global economy, there is the impetus for industries to innovate and transform themselves to stay relevant. This places demands for new and deeper skill sets and emphasises the need for individuals to embark on a journey of continuous skill development and lifelong learning in today’s world. In retrospect, open and distance learning programmes that employ ICT to blend workplace and classroom learning would offer adult learners greater flexibility in balancing work, family and professional learning.

References


Koh, T.S. (2006). Open and Distance Learning in Singapore. In Setijadi (Ed.), Profile: Open and Distance Learning in Southeast Asia (pp. 173- 178). Jakarta: SEAMEO SEAMOLEC.


SSG/WSG. (2017, January 08). Steady Progress In Implementation Of Skillsfuture Credit.


OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING
IN THAILAND

by: Prof. Dr. Prasart Suebka
Acting President of Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University, Thailand
Email : stouinter@gmail.com

Introduction

Open and Distance Learning was introduced to Thailand when the Office of University Affairs appointed a planning committee chaired by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Wichit Srias-an to formulate an open university project in 1976, then on 5 September 1978, “Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University” (STOU) was officially established as Thailand’s first university. STOU employs the distance learning system and aim to provide equal access to higher education to people throughout Thailand. The distance education system was viewed as the most practical method, allowing students to study independently in their homes, and have the opportunity to work and study at the same time.

Not only the compulsory education in the conventional education institutions, Thailand has also realized the great important of a lifelong education as same as other countries and believe that people should have the opportunities to access education throughout their lives, and distance learning is the best tool to accomplish the idea. Nowadays, distance learning is blending in every modes and every levels of learning in support of online technology and social media. Though the distance education management in Thailand has entered the online technology era, for those who cannot access to the internet, the printed-based media is still the main learning media.

Distance Education for General Public with Certificate

Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University is the only institution that offers open education in certificate and degree level via single mode distance learning. Without traditional face-to-face classrooms, students study through a broad variety of educational media, print-based and computer-based (e-learning). For bachelor’s degree level, STOU offers both full-four-year curriculum for high school graduates and continuing curriculum (2-3 years) for those who holds a diploma or a bachelor’s degree. For master’s and doctoral degree level, students are also taught via distance mode, but with more strict requirement to occasionally attend tutoring sessions and to meet with their supervisors. There are also
one-semester, one-year, and two-year certificate programs offered. Ramkamhaeng University adopted an academic Market Place Systems, a triple mode of ODL, allowing home-based, class-based, and mix groups of students through an open-admission program, to pursue their studies without attending classrooms.[1] Students either study on their own through printed media or attend classes at its main campus or provincial knowledge centers with on-screen instruction in the form of teleconferencing or off-line and on-line computer-aided instruction.[1] Moreover, ODL is used to supplement traditional classrooms through the use of ICT. The Inter University Network (UniNet) was set up to link information and communication networks of education institutions throughout the country.

Distance learning is also adopted in professional training. STOU currently offers 5 e-training programs, including ‘Classroom Research,’ ‘Children’s Emotional Intelligence Development,’ ‘Administrative Law,’ ‘AEC Labor and Social Security Law,’ and ‘Marbling Art.’[2]

Distance Agriculture Field School

The Distance Agriculture Field School is developed by Department of Agricultural Extension, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives to provide agricultural knowledge, using mixed methods of radio broadcasting and knowledge documenting, to general publics, especially farmers in the countryside. The learning approach through the National Broadcasting Services of Thailand and Radio Station Kasetsart University enable them easy access to the information they need.

Prior to programme announcement, the programme will be designed and developed by The Distance Agriculture Field School officers. They will conduct a survey of the farmers’ demands, and prioritize the demands to develop the programme best suited to the farmers. Each programme take approximately 90 days or 3 months and once a year between May and July. In order to complete programme requirements and receive a certificate, the students must get more than 50 per cent of total score.

Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education (Distance Vocational Certificate Project)

The distance vocational certificate project is developed by the Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education to provide knowledge and professional skills for students to become qualified professionals in career fields and to have positive attitude at work. The targets of this project is for workers or underprivileged workers in education. The 3-year distance vocational certificate programme blends distance academic and technical instruction as well as internship to prepare students for direct entry into the workforce.
Distance Education for General Public with No Certificate

In order to provide knowledge to general public, the distance education programmes are offered by many organizations for example;

1. The Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education organizes village reading corners, community learning centres, public libraries, radio broadcasting and television programmes.

2. Department of Agricultural Extension, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives produces radio broadcasting programmes and sound production for broadcasting tower on agriculture.

3. Ministry of Public Health
   - Department of Health produces radio broadcasting programs to provide knowledge about health care.
   - Health Education Division produces radio broadcasting programs to provide knowledge about health education.

4. Community Development Department produces radio broadcasting programs and television programs to provide knowledge about community development.

5. Universities that use Distance Education System
   - Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University is an open university utilizing distance education system that produces radio broadcasting programs, television programs, document, text books, CDs and website to provide knowledge to society.
   - Ramkamhaeng University is an open-admission university that produces text books, radio broadcasting programs, television programs, Internet and website to provide knowledge to society.

6. Other universities such as Kasetsart University, Thammasat University, Chulalongkorn University, Mahidol University, Silpakorn University, Srinakharinwirot University, Prince of Songkla University, Khon Kaen University, Chiang Mai University, and private universities produces radio broadcasting programs, television programs, text books, brochures, posters, and Internet to provide knowledge to society.

7. Public and Private Organization
   - Folk Doctor Foundation produces radio broadcasting programs and magazines to provide knowledge about health care.
   - Bank such as Kasikorn Bank, Krungthai Bank, Bangkok Bank and etc. provide social services and reading corner for customers.
• National Council of Women of Thailand under the Royal Patronage of Her Majesty the Queen produces radio broadcasting programs and television programs to provide knowledge about women development in Thailand.

• Foundation for Child Development produces radio broadcasting programs and television programs to provide knowledge about child development in Thailand.

• Sustainable Development Foundation produces printing media to provide knowledge about sustainable development in Thailand.

Educational institutions and organizations use distance learning approach in all types of education systems including traditional education system and non-formal education system. It can be concluded that the distance education in Thailand can be divided into two major aspects:

1. Distance education with certificate or diploma

   Distance education with certificate or diploma aim to provide education to general public. In traditional education system, schools and universities adapted distance education by using media to teach and computer to enhance teaching. In Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University, the university provide open education without classroom.

2. Distance education for general public with no certificate or diploma

   Distance education for general public with no certificate or diploma aim to provide important and beneficial knowledge to general public by using media, printed media, radio broadcasting programs, television programs, and websites.

**Policy and Regulation**

Education and literacy development have a long tradition in Thailand. Today’s education system aims to build and support practical and academic skills, social competencies, moral and democratic values, and a national identity. Over the years, Thailand has expanded the number of years of free schooling available to Thai youth, and the country now offers a range of schools to meet students’ different needs. However, students in remote areas or from disadvantaged backgrounds do not have access to the same quality of education as those in other parts of the country, and there are inefficiencies in the overall governance of the system.

Thailand’s 1999 National Education Act (NEA) introduced sweeping changes to improve the quality of the education system. Moving away from a highly centralised structure of education governance, the NEA called for education financing and administration to be decentralised to schools, mirroring the government’s wider efforts to devolve administrative responsibilities. It established equity and student-centred – rather than rote – learning as guiding principles for the education system, calling for
all segments of society to be able to participate in education and for all learners to develop themselves at their own pace and to the best of their potential. The legislation also introduced policies to transform the curriculum, student assessment, the role of teachers and school leaders, and, to a lesser extent, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in education. These areas are key to education reform and to support Thailand’s broader growth efforts. The curriculum and student assessment can be used to instill and measure the acquisition of competencies needed for success in the 21st century. Teachers are the most important school-related factor in improving student outcomes. Finally, the ability to use ICT is essential to the development of a productive knowledge economy. Finally, it listed technological knowledge and skills as a subject to be covered in the formal, non-formal and informal education systems, and encouraged the use of different types of teaching and learning media in schools. Policy issues surrounding the implementation of these reforms, as well as additional changes introduced since 1999.

Following the military coup, the Education and Human Development Reform Committee within the now-defunct National Reform Council (NRC) took responsibility for Thailand’s education policy and for developing recommendations for reform. In September 2014, the new government announced several areas of focus for future education policy, including adjusting the education budget; enhancing stakeholder participation, including that of private actors; enhancing equity in education; promoting lifelong learning and vocational education; enhancing the status and training of the teaching profession; and promoting the role of religion and Thai cultural heritage.

**ODL models and its implementations**

Distance education is defined as the educational process where a significant proportion of the teaching is conducted by someone, remote in time and place from the learner; and where a combination of educational media from print to radio/TV broadcasts, video recordings and new information and communication technologies (ICT) may be employed. Likewise, opportunities for face-to-face study and interactions are provided. This varying blend of media and meeting has been the foremost strength of the distance education mode.

- **Self Learning**

  Under the distance learning system, students learn by themselves using self-instructional packages sent by mail comprising textbooks, workbooks and study guide. Students read the course content and complete self-assessment exercises according to the guideline provided. Depending on the nature of the course, the package may also include other media such as CD. In addition to the main text-based media, a wide range of supplementary media are also provided to enhance student learning.
• Tutorials

As well as traditional distance learning materials, students also attend optional tutorials held at weekends in order to further their studies.

• Radio Programs

Each semester STOU produces many radio programs in various formats such as interviews, documentaries, drama and docu-drama. The content of each program is designed to enrich the printed media.

• Television Programs

For each course, there are educational television programs produced in different formats such as drama, discussion, interviews and documentaries. Moreover, STOU also have its own channel, STOU channel, to broadcast via online media.

• e-Learning

e-Learning is a supplementary learning method. The open source Learning Management System (LMS), for example, is widely used to manage courses, distribute learning materials online and communicate with students. e-Learning is used mostly as a supplementary learning approach.

• MOOC

A Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) is a model for delivering learning content online to support distance learning and facilitate students who can access to a computer and the internet to enhance their study. MOOCs aim to connect learners with educators and with each other.

According to the National Education Act B.E. 1999, providing more educational opportunities for Thai people, is an important government policy, widely and equally enhancing knowledge, both in urban and rural areas, regardless of economic status. Creating more educational opportunities will reduce the difference between the knowledge levels of the population. This creates chances for lifelong learning and the updating of knowledge, and builds a knowledge based society, which will enhance the nation’s competitive capabilities.

The Office of the Commission on Higher Education has cooperated with the National Science and Technology Development Agency, Ministry of Science and Technology, to establish Thailand Cyber University Project (TCU), in order to develop the UniNet IT infrastructure, to connect every institution of higher education to the Internet for education and research, to support the production of courseware for dissemination via UniNet, to develop the Learning Management System (LMS), and to develop the e-library, e-community and the learning resource sharing centre.
TCU, the main agency to develop open and online learning space, under the Digital Economy and Society Development Strategy Plan, has officially introduced Thai MOOC project to Thai society on March 2017. Presently, 47 universities and institutions have joined Thai MOOC project and developed more than 360 MOOCs.

Challenges and Future of ODL

Challenges of ODL in Thailand are (1) unequal access to ODL facilities (2) lack of clear policy direction (3) too many choices and too many alternatives (4) strong attachment to conventional mode (5) too much attention to entertainment. While the future trends for ODL are (1) more ODL practices in schools and universities (2) better recognition and accreditation of ODL practices in schools and universities (3) further application of ODL technology in education (4) specific standards and requirements for ODL universities

Recommendation

Promote ODL as integral practices in school and university teaching, and encourage the continuous training on ODL practices. The clear ODL policy should be applied for the exact direction in ODL planning. Set up ODL infrastructure in support of education services. Moreover, encourage the research and investment on LMS/ODL application and MOOCs.


International Affairs Unit, STOU., STOU: Educational Opportunity for All, Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University (2005).

Srisa-an, W., Distance Education: the STOU Approach, Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University (1986).


OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING
IN VIETNAM

by: Associate Prof. Dr. Nguyen Mai Huong
Chair of the Board of Regents of Hanoi Open University
Email: huongmmn@hou.edu.vn

Introduction

In the industrialization and modernization of the country, and international integration, Vietnam’s education system has great mission, to meet diversified learning needs of the people for lifelong learning. Therefore, the system is required to be flexible and operate diversified modes of teaching-learning.

Open and distance learning (ODL) today has become an inseparable part of the education system in many countries around the world. The theoretical basis and practical development over the past half century has demonstrated the role and strength of ODL in the learning society. The philosophy of open education is “to open learning opportunities for all”, stressing flexibility and versatility of the system, reducing the barriers caused by age, geographic location, time-limitation, economic status, and personal circumstances. Today, the term Open and Distance Learning is used widely in the world.

In Vietnam, ODL has been operating for 25 years and has made significant contribution in enhancing people’s knowledge, training human resources, and to meet the learning needs of the people. The leading Party and the Government have orientation and direction for the development of ODL. The fact is that ODL has become the organic component of the national education system. This profile includes:

- Brief introduction of country’s education profile
- Policy and regulations on ODL;
- ODL models and its implementations;
- Challenges faced by ODL implementer and future plan of ODL.
Brief introduction of country’s education profile

In the development trend of mankind, education and training always plays an important role in all nations, people, all eras and Vietnam is not exceptional from this trend. Education and training is not only a method, a form, but also a policy and optimal solution for the human development, contributing to the socio-economic development of each country. History of education development has mentioned on many educational philosophies, depending on the conditions of economic, social, scientific and technological development of each period and each society. Education nowadays is orientated towards public education, educating people by diversifying types of schools and training forms, socializing education, being flexible during training process in order to meet diverse demand of learners.

With the education philosophy and model in learning society, the State management of education poses many new demands of policies and regulations, ensuring the principle but being flexible, consistent with diversity and development of learning society. Building up a public education model means to build an education of lifelong, comprehensive and integrated learning society, in which all the learning demands at anywhere, anytime are satisfied.

In the education system, the formal training form consists of formal schools and training institutions performing initial education tasks and only party meet the demand of the society learning. Thus, the development of other training forms is an essential objectiveness in education system of each country. This has been affirmed by UNESCO in the 21st-Century Education Development Strategy: Continuing education shall be the key point of all education policies: education in all forms, continuing education, lifelong education, education for everyone and building up a learning society. Non-formal training model, in which open and distance education (ODL) need to be further developed so as to meet everyone’s big educational demand in society with better outcomes.

Coming into being more than a century ago, but in the recent five decades (since the establishment of British Open University in 1969), ODL has made a rapid progress in both educational theory and technology, affirming its roles and strengths in the education system. In the era of information and knowledge-based economy, many countries in the world in general and ASEAN in particular see ODL as an effective tool for lifelong learning and lifting the country out of backwardness, putting nation socio-economy in new heights.

ODL is not a new training form to developed countries, but it was quite new to Vietnam in the early 90s of the last century. From 1993 to now, especially in the last 10 years, ODL in Vietnam has developed in technology, fields and scope of training. In the current situation of Vietnam, the development of such training form can be considered as one of the solutions to realize the objectives of the Party and State’s guidelines and policies, at the same time, implement the Ministry of Education and Training’s guidelines on education diversification and socialization. With 25 years of implementing ODL in Vietnam, this learning model has made significant contributions to raising people’s intellectual standard, human
resources training, meeting the diverse learning demands of people and has created great economic and social efficiency. ODL gives opportunities for people to perform the four pillars of education stated by UNESCO: Learning to know, Learning to do, Learning to be, and Learning to live together.

In Vietnam, ODL plays an important role in creating equality of learning opportunities for all people, a mobilizing form of community’s potentials to build up a learning society, giving opportunities for people of all levels, all ages, everywhere, lifelong learning, relevant with each individual’s circumstance and condition, contributing to improving knowledge and quality of human resources. Formal education focuses on serving people in proper age and good health condition whereas ODL enables all age and disadvantaged people to involve in learning. The practical implementation of ODL in Vietnam has shown that many elderly, citizens in remote areas, disable people have completed training programs, received university degrees and made great contributions to society.

Today, due to advancement of information and communication technology (ICT), the interaction between teachers and learners, between learners and their peers is strengthened. ICT allows reuse and free use of materials in teaching, learning and researching (open educational resources). Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) is developing open learning materials for e-libraries, calling for contributions from universities and colleges. Everyone can access to learning in free and positive manner under individual need. Implementing ODL along with applying modern information technology has changed teaching and learning methods, enhancing the effectiveness of higher education that has long been limited with the classroom walls and the “closed education system”. Therefore, ODL can supplement and replace the traditional education in many cases, depending on learners’ specific demand.

In the near future, ODL needs be strongly developed since it is the premise for development of a learning society that meets the requirements of developing knowledge-based economy - a growing trend of the world economy in the 21st century. Especially for Vietnam’s education and training, this will be a initial step with innovating towards modernization in order to create a force of knowledgeable and skilled workers who are able to adapt to and integrate into the civilized world moving strongly into the fourth industrial revolution era.

**Policy and regulations on ODL**

In Vietnam, to assess the role and importance of ODL in improving intellectual standard and human resources training to meet the country’s socio-economic development demand in the period of renovation, the Party and the State’s guideline as well as policy is made very clear on DL development. This is reflected in important documents.

Resolution of the 2nd Plenum of Term VIII of the Party’s Central Committee (1996) clearly stated that “Expanding the continuing learning forms, especially ODL”. IX National Congress Document of
Communist Party of Viet Nam (2001) stated: “Formulating the planning of training human resources in the method of combining of the formal learning, distance learning and learning through computer” (page 110).

In 2005, ODL was mentioned in Education Law, specifically: “National education system, including formal education and continuing education” (Clause 4, Article 1); “continuing education programs” modes regarding level of the national education system include: (a) in-service education, (b) distance learning, (c) self-study (Clause 45, Article 2).

Decision No. 112/2005 /QD-TTg dated 18th May 2005 by the Prime Minister on approving Scheme “Building up a learning society for the period 2005-2010” clearly states that “Boosting the application of ODL to implement continuing education programs; rapidly enhancing the ability to provide learning opportunities in the form of distance training for regions with difficult and extremely difficult socio-economic conditions; strengthening the use of modern communication and media etc.”.

The educational development strategy for the period 2011-2020 approved by the Prime Minister under Decision No. 771/QD-TTg, dated 13th June 2012 pointed out that “Building a learning society, creating equal opportunities for everyone to learn, learn throughout life, etc.”.

Resolution No. 29-NQ/TW dated 4th November 2013, the 8th Plenum of Term XI Party Central Committee, on fundamental and comprehensive education and training renewal to meet the requirements of industrialization and modernization in the context of socialist-oriented economy-based market and international integration, pointed out: “To complete continuing education network and various and flexible forms of learning and practice, valuing self-study and ODL ... “and” ... meet the lifelong learning needs of everyone”.

The Government’s action plan promulgated along with Resolution No. 44/NQ-CP dated 9th June 2014, implementing Resolution No. 29-NQ/TW, specified that: “To develop ODL system and digital learning materials” (Article 8, clause d, page 8).

Decision No. 1559/QD-TTg dated 10th September 2015 by the Prime Minister on approving Scheme “Development of Distance Learning for the Period 2015-2020”. In implementing this scheme, MOET has developed and issued the regulations on the university-level ODL (enclosed with Circular No. 10/2017/TT-BGDDT dated 28th April 2017 replacing the regulations promulgated under Decision No. 40/2003/QD-BGD&ĐT dated 8th August 2003, at the same time, developing a set of standards for quality assessment of ODL program.

In the above guiding documents, the Party and Government pay great attention to ODL development to meet citizens’ learning demand and develop the country. Experts believe that addressing well the issue in terms of size and quality in ODL will help Vietnam overcome the pressure of overloaded education system, required ratio of students / lecturers as well as classroom capacity and students’ learning ability are different. DL will move from “elitist education” to “public education”, from the
“mass training” model to “learning personalization”. Therefore, ODL system with standardized learning materials and application of information technology will be the solution to the concern of quantity and quality, creating fairness and equality in education.

**ODL models and its implementations**

In the past few years, ODL system has contributed positively to enhancing intellectual standard of population, training human resources, especially in-place human resources for mountainous, remote and island areas. ODL contributes to equality in education, provides opportunities for people with lifelong learning, eliminates difficulties of geographic distance between learners and cultural and educational centers, implements ethnic preferential policy and social justice in education. Learners can use many channels to gain knowledge; the cost of class construction is reduced.

Currently, there are 17 universities in Vietnam implementing university-level ODL out of 21 universities licensed by MOET. Of which, Hanoi Open University and the Ho Chi Minh Open University are the first two universities in Vietnam executing ODL model since 1993. Over a quarter of a century, this model has contributed more than 150,000 bachelors, engineers to the nation’s workforce. In the past 3 years, ODL scale has narrowed. In 2012, there are 17 universities registering the enrolment quotas with a total of 68,020 students, the scale of 161,047 students attending 90 training programs (accounting for 6% of the total number of university and college students across the nation). The number of students sharply dropped from 161,047 students (October 2012) to 70,425 students (October 2016). The number of students enrolled in specific major categories was as follows: Business - Management: 36%, Social Sciences: 41%, Education: 15%, Engineering - Technology: 9%.

ODL students are mostly those who can not attend formal education; many people in remote areas; localities want to improve their qualifications, furnish diploma and degrees for officials and people to meet labour market’s requirements. In big cities and provinces, the majority of applicants are those who have a formal university degree and want to study for a second degree or who are employed and want to further study for improving their professional qualifications to gain better work performance.

Currently, the main ODL modes applied by open universities are:

- **Traditional ODL mode (also known as face-to-face training):** Learners mainly self-study through learning materials system (including curriculum and self-study guideline) developed by universities, combined with listening lectures on radio (or listen to CDs, etc.). Learners can conduct their studies at their most convenient time. Learners then will be instructed directly in class before the course ends.

- **Online DL mode (E-Learning):** This is an advanced training method with many benefits, especially in the current context of telecommunications infrastructure and information technology development, the advantages of this method are increasingly affirmed. This approach towards
providing learning access anywhere, anytime on personal computer and Internet-connected smart mobile phone.

The regulations on ODL developed, updated and supplemented by MOET and universities can be considered as a step forward with many major changes, facilitating the development of this training mode in the spirit of self-control and self-responsibility of tertiary education institutions, reducing administrative procedures, at the same time enhancing examination, inspection and handling to perform State management in valid and effective manner.

Universities implementing ODL have made great efforts in organizing training management and improving quality; preparing learning materials, especially providing timely and sufficiently printed materials to students; concentrating on giving instruction, answering the questions mainly by highly qualified and experienced lecturers; examination has been carried out in accordance with regulations. As a result, the quality of ODL has gradually been improved.

ODL is in diverse forms, especially online ODL mode with the application of modern technology such as internet, social networks, huge data, mobile, artificial intelligence, biology and robotics, etc., is developing rapidly, creating a favourable learning environment with intensive interaction is known as an outstanding achievement, creating tremendous changes in all ODL’s activities.

Some modern technologies supporting ODL development in Vietnam

Technology development has brought many changes in education sector, we can focus on three main groups as below:

- Content development technology: is a technology that changes the way learning materials are produced, which makes learning materials smarter and more supportive in learning as well as teaching process.

- Teaching - learning environment development technology: The traditional in-class teaching has been changed thanks to technology support, which not only makes lectures more visual, but also removes the gap in space and time in teaching - learning process nowadays.

- Learner management and assessment supporting technology: In addition to support the main function of teaching and learning, the technology also helps training organizations create a learner-centered learning environment which individualize learners, follow up closely and offer support to each learner to achieve the most effective learning results.

- In the context of training in the period of the Industrial Revolution 4.0, technology is an indispensable factor, technology devices such as computers and Internet - connect smart mobile devices. Hanoi Open University has built up a team of technicians who can completely master the technology, including Studio, Server and Management Information System. Some of the main systems are being used in online training such as:
• Academic Administration Information System (AAIS): All learning-related and management-related information is concentratedly stored for searching, reporting purposes and performing necessary operations.

• Learning Management System (LMS): a centralized management system of courses, learning materials, learning places of learners.

• Forum: Forum system is diverse and has full functions of a professional forum where exchange of community of cadres, lecturers and students takes place.

• Learning Activities Monitoring System (LAMS): All activities on the learning system of learners will be recorded and put into an automatic analysis system, whereby learning management staff will be able to counsel, remind or assess learning process of each individual. Advanced data analysis techniques such as artificial intelligence and data exploring have also been put into operation to handle some of the system’s activities, and soon to be further applied to promote automation in management and training process.

• Virtual Classroom (VC): allows to organize online classes, where lecturers will directly give lectures and students can connect to the system for the lectures as well as discuss directly with lecturer and other learners. This type of class makes the online learning not so different from the traditional learning.

• Live Class (LC): The advanced technology in the Studio is installed by Korean experts, which meets the high requirements of image, special effect and ability to live on the Internet is also one of the educational channels that attract many students.

• Online Examination System (OES): allows to organizing examinations on computers at local centers with strict monitoring procedures through camera, fingerprint recognition, Exams are held under regulations with the test are confidential, each candidate is given a test, candidates print the tests themselves and sign for confirmation before submission.

• Information security: the entire technology system meets the international information security standard ISO 27001: 2013.

Challenges faced by ODL implementer and future plan of ODL

Challenges faced by ODL implementer

Vietnam’s ODL is facing great challenges, which is reflected in remarkably decreasing number of enrolment throughout the country over many consecutive years. This is contrary to the general trend in the region and the world.
Currently, ODL university admission has become more and more difficult, partly due to the fact that enrolment sources are mainly those who are in employment and basically completed the university and college universalization programs and want to study professional development training courses without receiving degrees; Many newly established universities have created opportunities with many options for learners, reducing market share for ODL; there are more and more high school graduates choosing vocational training schools rather than universities or colleges.

Although there have been many guidelines and policies on ODL development, this training mode has not been properly invested, while ODL needs a large initial investment in terms of technology, learning materials, human resources and testing system development.

Many ODL facilities have not really invested in human resources and materials to develop open learning materials and technology, leading to the fact that many schools offer ODL in the localities through training stations. This does not come along with the feature and nature of this learning mode.

The distinguishment in degrees’ quality and value between ODL and formal education has still been existed in society awareness. In some localities, people with ODL degrees are not recruited by employers.

**ODL development plan in Vietnam in the context of international integration**

ODL is determined as one of the important orientations in the development strategy of the educational sector. In order to achieve this, some solutions need to be implemented by educational institutions, specifically:

- Strengthening ODL scale to assist in addressing the issue of intellectual standard enhancement and providing society with qualified human resources. Admission task needs to approach individuals and provide them consultation with the most appropriate ODL programs. In order to perform the individualization in admission task, training centers shall be based on information technology platform, especially social networks, diverse communication system; build modern enrolment scheme with online management software system connecting learners, school and organizations in the locality, with the large network of enrolment collaborators, all school’s internal and external lectures– at affiliates, even current students and alumni can join ODL enrolment scheme after being trained.

- Along with the orientation of ODL scale development, quality is the top priority for sustainable development of a training mode. Therefore, special attention should be paid to the ODL quality assurance based on developing a set of standards, criteria and an education quality assessment tool. Vietnam’s ODL is part of the ODL system of open universities in the region, thus the framework for ODL quality assurance in Asian countries of the Asian Association of Open University (AAOU) and a set of standard for quality assessment of training programs of the Asian universities network (AUN–QA) are applied.
• Building a suitable material learning system for each ODL mode, which aims to equip learners with the most useful and sufficient tools for self-study and self-research. ODL learning materials are diverse. Whereby, besides printed learning materials, they are also in the forms of video discs, audio discs, radio, television, electronic learning materials, study guideline, case studies, and interactive exercise system on the computer. The development of ODL learning materials does not only pay attention to content but also the development of ideas and scenarios for each learning material form and need strong support of modern transmission technology. These are indispensable criteria for testing ODL learning materials.

• ODL modern technology development. This technology consists of three basic elements: infrastructure, learning material and assessment tool systems. Facing challenges in strong development of communication - information technology nowadays, ODL technology must combine modern technology application, use training technology such as E-learning, Mobile - learning and head to the formation of a cyber university. Applying robustly ICT to create a highly interactive learning environment, which connects teachers with learners, learners with their peers and theory with practice. Promoting ODL online technology development including learning management systems (LMS), learning content management system (LCMS) and technical and technology means (hardware), stimulating software for training and fostering process, etc., which meet the diverse demand of learners in the digital era.

• Developing team of lecturers and academic advisors, contributing to improving ODL quality. The main role of lecture team is instructing learners. Lecture team who participates in online teaching are requied to have the teaching skills using the online training technology bedises ensure the requirements of professional qualifications. With the characteristics of ODL, learning support plays an important role in organizing a successful course with good training outcome. Therefore, academic advisor team needs to be trained and shall work in dedicated and professional manner to realize such target.

• Organizing the examination and assessment of learning outcomes to ensure the competent standard in ODL. Examining and evaluating students’ learning results is an important factor to ensure training quality in general and ODL in particular. Only when testing and assessment work in strict manner and meet the requirements, the new training products have accurate screening basis and are trusted by society regarding training quality.

• Strengthening the implementation of online courses, short-term courses in order to support the regular training, fostering activities for teachers; establishing forums for experiences exchange of lecturers, managerial officials and collaborators, etc., in ODL sector; at the same time, providing knowledge and skills of all fields for learners who have demand.

• Studying and referring to international experiences in order to standardize testing system and guarantee quality, including: Building an exam banks, procedures and technology of examination;
assessment, independent testing, inspection work, etc., ensuring objectiveness, good quality and efficiency.

- Enhancing international integration in ODL orienting cooperation expansion, collaborating with prestigious foreign educational organizations, centers in the fields: Exchanging expert, program, technology, testing, accreditation, diploma recognition, etc.,

- Promoting socialization in ODL development. Mobilizing all potentials of intelligence, finance and materials in the whole society to create varied resources for ODL development. Everybody, every organization is knowledgeable and responsible for facilitating ODL quality improvement and strengthening the conditions to ensure ODL development.

- Promoting dissemination and raising social awareness of ODL through the mass media which aims to raise awareness among Party Committees, authority, unions and population of ODL characteristics and benefits in qualification fostering and improving, updating knowledge and skills, training human resources, improving intellectual standard for officials and workers; Based on that, agencies, unions and localities shall coordinate with ODL educational centers to organize training, fostering and improving qualifications for officials and employees of their units and localities under Party’s orientation which is developing the country to become a “learning society”.

**Conclusion**

Open and distance learning aims at creating equality for all people on educational opportunities, reducing barriers caused by geographical distance, economic factors, age, time, and personal circumstances. ODL has become an indispensable part of the national education system. In fact, the technology of ODL is being widely used not only in distance learning providers but also in traditional institutions, and learning resources through the Internet, CDs, etc.

The ODL degree-granted programs are being conducted at 17 universities in the educational system. Many enterprises also provide short-term training courses by e-learning to meet the demand for qualified human resources of the industries. In addition, many programs are also transferred through the system of mass media such as radio, television and the Internet with a rich range of topics, meeting the needs of all classes of people, for lifelong learning.

Though there are barriers and challenges facing ODL in Vietnam, the potential and opportunities for improvement are clear in the ASEAN community intergration.

To ensure ODL quality and sustainable development, contributing to the improvement of the whole region, there should be the active participation of the policymakers, managers, researchres, educators, organizations, and the entire community.
References

Issuing regulation on university-level distance learning

Ministry of Education and Training, (2017), Proceedings of national workshop on distance learning

Communist Party of Vietnam, document of Plenum Terms VIII, IX, X, XI of the Party’s Central Committee, Party Central office, Hanoi

E. X. Polat, (2006), Distance learning Theory and Practice. Translator Le Tien Dung, Hanoi National University Publisher

Decision No. 1559/QĐ-TTg dated 10th September 2015 by Prime Minister on approving Scheme “Developing distance learning for the Period 2015-2020”;

Chang, S., (2004), Online learning communities with online mentors (OLCOM): Model of online learning communities. The Quarterly Review of Distance Education.


List of Abbreviation

ACU : ASEAN-ROK Cyber University
CDRI : Cambodian Development Research Institute
DIT : Department of Information Technology
EFA : Education for All
ESP : Education Strategic Plan
ESSP : Education Sector Support Program
HE : Higher Education
ICT : Information and Communication Technology
ITC : Institute of Technology of Cambodia
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LMS</td>
<td>Learning Management System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoEYS</td>
<td>Ministry of Education Youth and Sport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPICTE</td>
<td>Master Plan for Information and Communication Technology in Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoLVT</td>
<td>Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODL</td>
<td>Open Distance Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROK</td>
<td>Republic of Korea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUPP</td>
<td>Royal University of Phnom Penh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>