

MINUTES OF STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP ON SOUTHEAST ASIA OR NETWORK, 26 JANUARY, 2022

**Project Name: “Improving Community Resilience and Sustainability through
Operational Research Capacity Building in Southeast Asia” (CREST-OR)**

I. TIME AND LOCATION

- Time: ICT 2:30 PM to 5:00 PM, UK: 7:30 A.M – 10 A.M Wednesday, 26th January, 2022
- Location: Online workshop via Zoom

II. PARTICIPANTS:

- Please check the list of participants at the end of this MOM.

III. CONTENTS

- Dr. Vu Van Manh, VNU-HUS welcomed partners from UK and participants from Southeast Asia (Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines Myanmar and Vietnam) and introduced Assoc Prof Dr. Tomy Perdana form Universitas Padjadjaran and PhD Ha Minh Hoang who chaired the workshop.
- Assoc Prof Dr. Tomy Perdana introduced CREST-OR and workshop goals. The project is conducted by universities in four Southeast Asia (SEA) countries such as Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Vietnam, in cooperation with the universities of Kent, Lancaster and Southampton in the UK, funded by the Global Challenge Research Fund (GCRF). It aims to establish a long-term UK-SEA partnership to build research capacity in SEA in Operational Research (OR) that can be used to address pressing needs in sustainable development. The workshop goals are to elaborate a vision, mission, objectives, activities, governance or management structure, membership arrangements and resource needs, for such a network in Southeast Asia. The network will focus on using OR in management and development of research capacity.
- For the needs/expectations for OR network in four countries and current status of OR in each country
 - Cambodia (Dr. Kanal): there is no background in OR, not much inputs to add in the OR network. Hopefully, Cambodia can join regional projects, which benefits and impacts to all countries to learn more from these projects, items from the OR network with specific topic of OR which benefits for Cambodia.
 - Vietnam (Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nguyen Ha Nam): In Vietnam, there is no specific organizations to research OR. Vietnamese government has had strategies to develop logistics, supple chain in Vietnam, this is an opportunity to increase the network of OR, especially connection of SEA to solve problems together

with UK and European countries. Looking forward to connecting with OR researchers from UK and European countries via the network and be shared experiences by them. Vietnam and Indonesia have larger community of OR.

- Laos: there is no much experiences and clearly specialists in OR field, lacking of data, limited knowledge and many fields in Laos need to use OR to solve in Laos, so the SEA OR network need to be established to guide and support for Laotian experts.
- Myanmar: looking forward to joining in the OR network to learn experience from all countries via this network
- Prof. Paola Scaparra, CREST-OR Principal Investigator, presented the international context of OR operation including OR societies, OR regional Groupings and OR networks including:
 - International Federation of OR Societies (IFORS): (i) national societies; (ii) regional groupings (ALIO, APORS, EURO, NORAM). Specially, the Association of Asia-Pacific OR Societies APORS is large region includes the Philippines, Malaysia and Singapore from SEA. Prof. Paola expressed that after the workshop, countries attended the workshop today can be a part of IFORS and APORS in few years ahead.
 - Of the 51 members of IFORS, only 3 are from Africa. But there is an African network, AFROS (African Federation of Operations Research Societies), founded in 2016, which includes full member societies, associate members and regional alliances, AFROS chapters and African working groups such as sustainable development and poverty analysis, healthcare systems, Agri-food, SCM. The diversity of these groups can be similar to groups in Southeast Asia.
 - The difference between an OR society, an OR regional grouping and an OR network: An OR society is national, an OR regional grouping is a group of national societies, and an OR network is a group not defined as a national society or a grouping of national societies.
 - Questions this workshop may need to consider: (i) which countries should participate in a SEA OR network; (ii) Will the network include national societies, individual universities and also individual academics? And, (iii) how will the network relate to IFORS and APORS.
- Answer the question from PhD. Ha Minh Hoang, “How an OR society can join in network of APORS and IFORS to become a member of these organizations”, Professor Elise, former president of APORS and IFORS said that if the SEA OR network has all the papers with legal entity, the SEA OR network can apply to be a member of IFORS with international registration.

Discussion: Please see Padlet for specific information

- Activity 1 (SEA OR network mission)
- Activity 2 (SEA OR Objectives)

- Activity 3 (Activities and external resources)
- Activity 4 (Membership and management)

IV. CONCLUSION

Organization of the Planning workshop for SEA-OR Network with using of Padlet is highly appreciated by participants.

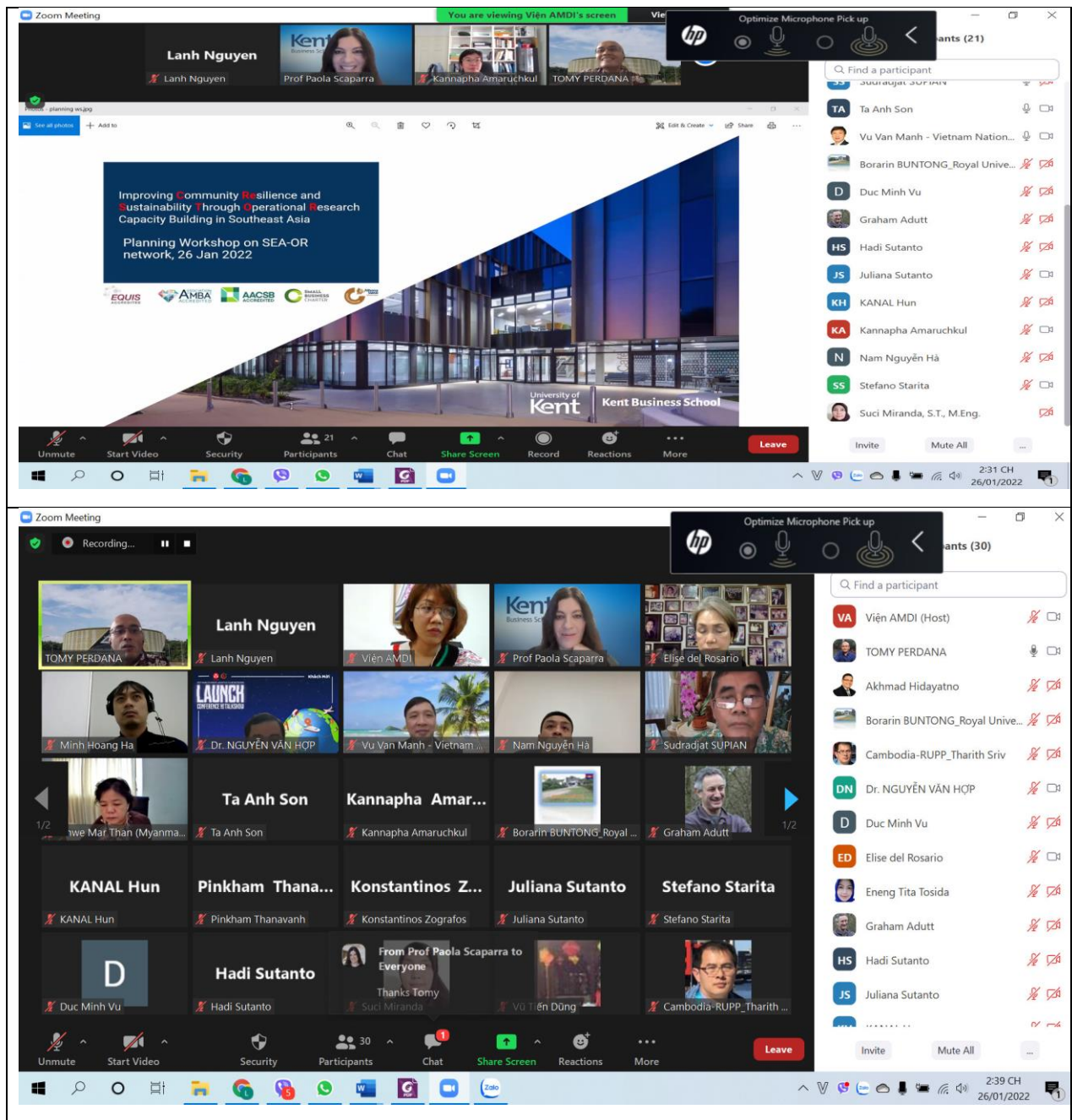
Participants who would be the founding members of SEA-OR Network, attended the workshop from Vietnam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar and Thailand agreed that the Southeast Asian network for Operational Research will be established and its activities will be organized including sharing information, trainings, research and publications.

Dr. Pham Minh Hoang closed the workshop with following conclusions:

- To identify founding members in each country;
- To continue to develop national OR society/network structures;
- To set up communications channel for all participants in this workshop, to continue to develop the Southeast Asia network;
- To establish a network website and communication channel (WhatsApp) before the end of the CREST-OR Project (end March 2022);
- To use the comments from this Padlet to make a first draft of a Network Document (with mission, objectives, activities, membership);
- To circulate this first draft to all participants for further comments and development.

ATTACHMENTS

PHOTOS OF THE WORKSHOP (26/01/2022)



Recorded by AMDI

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

No	Name	Title	Organization	Contact
Vietnam				
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MINUTES OF UNDERSTANDING ON ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SOUTHEAST ASIA OR NETWORK (SEAORN)

The Participatory Strategic Planning, using Padlet, led to many inputs from participants from all countries present at the workshop. These inputs have been consolidated into the First Draft Strategic Plan below.

Notes

- Some inputs from the Padlet have been moved into better-fit sections. For example, some inputs have been moved from ‘objectives’ to ‘activities’.
- One new section title, ‘Vision’ has been added. This title is used to include comments regarding what the network intends ‘to be’. (Compare with ‘Mission’ which describes what the network intends ‘to do’.)
- Where similar inputs were given, for example on capacity building, these have been combined into one.
- This first draft will need revision by the members. Revision will include filling gaps. For example, this draft makes no mention of whether fees should be paid to become a member of the network.
- In mid-to-late February 2022, representatives from the 6 countries will be asked to sign their agreement for this first draft to be used as a working document until further strategic planning can be arranged to improve it. In case any participants consider any of the draft content (below) to be unacceptable, please inform Ms Yen Be Thi Hoang of AMDI, yenbth@amdi.vn before 12th February 2022.

Southeast Asia Operational Research Network (SEAORN)

First Draft Strategic Plan

Vision

A platform for collaboration and capacity development among Operational Research academics and practitioners in Southeast Asia, which builds knowledge, promotes personal and institutional growth, and supports sustainable development across the region.

Membership

Several types of membership will be offered. Such membership types could be:

- National OR Society or network
- Institution (e.g. university or other)
- Academic member
- Non-academic member
- Early Career Researcher
- Student

Membership will be open to OR enthusiasts regardless of level of expertise or nationality. It will be open to academics and non-academics, for example from government and private sector industry. All members will be encouraged to establish or join their own national OR Society, with the long-term goal of a national society from each Southeast Asian country to be a member of the Southeast Asian network.

Mission

To build a strong OR community, with equal access to all members, which collaborates, learns, builds capacity and grows, to generate sustainable development and economic growth in Southeast Asia.

Objectives

1. To increase knowledge and raise capacity in the use of OR among students, academic faculty members, policy-makers and private sector stakeholders, for both academic and practical purposes in the network countries
2. To learn how to apply OR to specific challenges in Southeast Asia
3. To support government, private industry, and other stakeholders in Southeast Asia to achieve their goals for sustainable development, including resolution of social and environmental challenges.
4. To raise awareness of OR and its benefits to a wide range of sectors
5. To develop solidarity within the Southeast Asian OR community, supporting members to overcome common barriers and meet common challenges
6. To serve as a platform for Early Career Researchers to meet, learn, and provide mutual support
7. To develop capacity for research in the application of OR tools and methods to the Southeast Asian context
8. To promote and support the establishment of national OR communities and societies in Southeast Asia, and thereby strengthen the Asia-Pacific Region of OR Societies of IFORS

Activities

Activities which contribute to the network meeting its objectives may include, but are not limited to, the following.

1. Arrange expert lectures, online trainings, spring/summer/winter ‘schools’, for capacity building of undergraduates and postgraduates
2. Built capacity for OR research initiatives
3. Exchange knowledge, data, experience, and other OR-related information
4. Collaborate on regional OR initiatives, for example joint projects and producing joint publications
5. Collaborate with sector specialists to apply OR
6. Disseminate information on opportunities and grants for research and international collaboration
7. Provide training in software use
8. Provide an expert database for mentoring and discussion for Early Career Researchers
9. Provide information on various resources for advancement and application of OR
10. Minimize language barriers, to promote sharing of issues and knowledge and data
11. Improve academic curricula for undergraduate level OR students
12. Provide information on OR-related university courses

13. Connect the Southeast Asian network to the wider international OR community, for networking, sharing resources, and working on joint activities
14. Publish a regular newsletter or bulletin about OR in Southeast Asia
15. Convene regional OR conferences

Next Steps

1. Identify a ‘Core Group’ to establish the network organization, structure, and activities
2. Establish communications channel(s) among participants to continue to develop the network. Create a ‘collaborative network platform’.
3. Create the network website for further sharing, information exchange and membership information
4. Review the above ‘strategy’ to identify and fill gaps (e.g. are people from outside Southeast Asia allowed to be members? Will there be ‘fees’ for membership?)
5. Establish a formal organization
6. Support the formation of new country-level OR groups/societies. Country-level societies aim to obtain legal documents to be used for registration with IFORS.
7. Initiate some simple research projects. Then advance to higher research later.
8. Begin with some selected focal themes, such as urban transport, disaster management, agriculture and food security (related to SDGs), to jumpstart the network’s activity
9. Collaborate with the UK OR Society, IFORS, and others, for sharing resources, activities and networking

External Resources Required

- Initial funding/grant for the network
- Ongoing technical support to develop research capacity
- Introductory courses on OR
- Training in OR programme-software and their applications
- Small research grants, following trainings, for seed projects
- Student exchange programmes
- Continued research collaboration, which supports transfer of knowledge and capacity
- Support to produce academic publications

Management

- Identify a management team from each country, with specific TOR
- Create an ‘Executive Board’, with one representative from each country, to monitor the platform. The Executive Board member, or their delegate, is responsible to deliver information from the Board to their national members.
- Identify a dedicated person/organization to maintain the platform (‘secretariat’ role)
- Continue to promote setting up of national societies as priority.

Agreed by:

Cambodia	Indonesia	Laos
Myanmar	Thailand	Vietnam

