National Information Center: Attempts, Challenges, and Future Directions in the Philippines

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Outline

- **Part A**: Background
  - Historical Notes on the development of the Philippine National Information Center (NIC)
- **Part B**: NIC Implementation Schemes and Strategies
- **Part C**: Issues and Challenges, Lessons Learned, and Strategies for Moving Forward

NIC: The Philippine Case by Dr Ethel Agnes P. Valenzuela
The Philippines has been active in UNESCO and ASPAC in MRAs:

- UNESCO Regional Committee Meetings on the Recognition of Higher Education Diploma, Studies, and Certificates since 1995
- The Philippines worked with APEC, ASEAN, and other countries in the recognition of qualifications
To provide relevant, accurate, and up-to-date information in order to facilitate the recognition of qualifications.

To facilitate access to information on higher education systems and qualifications of other parties.

To give an advice on information on recognition matters and assessment of qualifications, in accordance with national laws and regulations.

To take adequate measures for the development and maintenance of a national information center that will provide higher education information.
Part B: Attempts at NIC Implementation

- Centralized One-stop Shop (1996-2004) at the International Affairs Services. CHED IAS is
  - Training on the use of the Diploma Supplement
  - Training on Cross Border Higher Education and GATTS WTO
  - Institution-specific quality assurance exchange of information
  - Exchange of information with interested parties (China, Taiwan, UK NARIC, Australia, France, India etc)
Part B: Perceived Implementation Results

- Students were given equivalency for credits gained in and out of the country
- CHED in a way facilitated requirements of 20% of Overseas Workers (authentication of education degrees etc)
- Provided information to facilitate global mobility/ exchanges and employment
- Recognition of Filipino students and professionals.
Part B: Implementation Experiences

- Data/information needs:
  - Description of the higher education system
  - Sector requirements
  - National qualification system
  - Status of recognition of higher education institutions (HEIs)
  - Information on quality of HEIs

- Processing
  - Depends on the country and the degree (from 1 week to 3 months)
Usual data requirements were on the ff:

- Advanced Diploma
- Diploma
- Certificate IV
- Certificate III
- Certificate II
- Certificate I
- 4-Year Secondary Education
- 6-Year Elementary Education
- Early Childhood Education
- Access Ramps
- Post Baccalaureate Diploma
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Doctorate Degree
Part B: Governance

The Philippine Education System

Primary
- K (one year)
- Six (6) Years

Secondary
- Four (4) Years
- Two (2) Years TVET
- Specialization (NC-I and NC-II)

Tertiary
- Technical Vocational Education and Training
- Baccalaureate (4, 5, 6 year degree programs), Masteral and Doctorate Programs

Higher Level Qualifications
Other Agencies Responsible for Issuing Information on Professional Qualifications

- **Professional Regulation Commission (PRC)** - licensing of Professionals
- **Bureau of Immigration (BI)** – regulates entry and stay of Foreign students
- **Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE)** - investing in Philippine human resource to make them more competitive and employable
Procedure

- Letter of Request for verification of credentials
- Information on level of qualifications, content and result gained from studies, diplomas, and degrees

Foreign Qualifications Authority

- International Affairs Services receives the request
- Office of Programs and Standards and the CHED Regional Offices act on IAS data needs. TP helps in some cases.

Philippine Commission on Higher Education

- Certification from CHED on the regularity of the educational and professional qualifications

Foreign Qualifications Authority
Other Information Requested

- General access to education
- National Qualifications Framework
- Learning Outcomes based on Qualifications
- Details of studies and diploma (content and scope)
Part C: Issues and Challenges

- Level of implementation anchored on strong policy
  - Need to institutionalize permanent structure of Phil NIC within CHED. Rationalization Plan resulted to IAS merging with other bigger offices.
  - Process and system should be documented and established. Learn the process from past experiences and document best practices.
  - Responsiveness to global requirements. Policies, standards and guidelines should be pro-active and not reactive to situations. (E.g. IB programs, MBAs and PhDs on Alternative Delivery Modes, Online and Transnational Units/Credits)
  - Transnational Education Providers from countries other than the ASPAC. No information available and no means for verification.
Part C: Lessons Gained

- Access to MRAs is greatly facilitated by Information Exchanges.
- A stronger policy support for the establishment of NIC is needed for its institutionalization.
- Data verification sometimes takes time. Handy updated Information packets are needed from ASPAC member countries.
- APARNET has been useful, its operation should be sustained.
- E-Learning /Transnational education provision has to be addressed.
A proposal for the establishment of NIC under CHED is underway:

- Develop national guidelines on NIC including the coordination mechanism for documentation, content, process for issuance and authentication.

- Pilot testing of the Diploma Supplement

- Orientation Workshops to be conducted nationwide on the use of NIC tools such as:
  - The Diploma Supplement
  - The authentication and verification process
  - Updating of information from HEIs
  - Course Offerings

- Documentation of best practices
Part C: Moving Forward

- Sharing of NIC models in ASPAC region
  - Good models can potentially influence other countries/institutions in the establishment of NIC
  - UNESCO Bangkok to sustain gains from Regional Convention Committee Meetings and Training/Workshop Opportunities through more information sharing and dissemination. Publication of Country education profiles is necessary for greater advocacy.
CHED Information Packages for better understanding of the system

- Philippines: the Knowledge Center in Asia (English and Mandarin, 2001)
Information Package by SEAMEO INNOTECH

- K to 12 Trends in Southeast Asia (2011)
  - Goal: to provide basic and pre-university information on the educational systems in selected countries in Southeast Asia

- Pre-University and University Systems in Southeast Asian countries (on-going)
  - Governance, Organization, Degrees
  - Mode of study, Program requirements, Grading scheme, Quality Assurance Systems and Access Requirements

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