

Review and Appraisal of Norwegian Support to the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT)

**Review of the RAS 0351 programme (2003-2005) and
appraisal of the “Education for Sustainable Development”
programme proposal (2006-2009)**

by

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Executive Summary

Review for the period 2003-2004

1. General statement on the review

The presented programme documents, the referred planning processes, approved documents, annual reports, audits and programme execution are highly professional. Almost all expected outputs are delivered on time. We have documented very good relationships to donors; and to other relevant actors. AIT has a broad set of networks both in Thailand, in the region and beyond. The administrative management of the programme has been set well in line with intentions stated in the PD (2003-05).

2. Some overall concerns

AIT has a constrained and donor dependent economy. Most donors seem to see and treat AIT as a service provider, and less as an institution with its own institutional potentials and development needs. This directly impinges upon AIT's potential to undertake long term planning and development of new and innovative strategies. Given the importance of AIT as a regional institution, consideration should be given to possible donor coordination or harmonization at different levels for improved partnership ambitions. This can pave the way for finding solutions to issues related to both financial and institutional sustainability, such as substantial strengthening of an endowment funds, or similar arrangements.

Staff from AIT is recruited from all over the region reflecting its regional mandate. AIT also gives intake priority to countries in the region, often overlapping with donor countries. The review team's interpretation of being regional goes beyond providing services to nations in the region through selection of individual students from them, to the development of national capacity at both individual and at institutional levels. The latter become difficult to the extent donors do not share such ambitions. This, however, is not entirely impossible. We recommend the following for consideration:

- Use MSc. fellowship programmes and especially more PhDs to form core resources and build national institutions
- Consciously and gradually establish existing AIT programmes at national levels
- Allow AIT to move on to develop new and innovative study programme areas
- Support sandwich programmes, shared programmes and joint degrees to form gradual strategy elements to transfer established and well-functioning M.Sc.programmes to targeted national institutions in the region.

This approach, should it materialise, will allow AIT to take its place as the regional cutting-edge institution, a leader of new and innovative programmes while fulfilling its other mandate to build regional capacity in a truly cost efficient way, as programmes at national university level will be lower costs.. To spur such a process could be a challenge for NMFA.

3. The various programme components

There is a 100% fulfilment of students for **Fellowships**. 66% are women, in line with a gender ambition. The distribution of fellows by country is in line with "Norad

priority countries” (Nepal, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, East Timor and Pakistan). All but one student is expected to graduate from the 2003-05 batch.

The **Flexible M.Sc. programme** for the Environmental Engineering and Management programme targets senior officers and people in work both from the public and private sectors to provide a more flexible framework for their studies.

The **Bridging Programme** facilitates participation of older students and students from countries where the education system is systemically weak. It offers training programmes prior to regular courses in languages, maths, accounting, and computer and also in more general academic skills. Some gaps in fulfilling the quota for the programme was, however, found.

The **Gender and Development Studies Programme** in which MFA has supported GDS has an ambition to enable engineers and technologists at AIT to become more gender-sensitive and enhance the understanding and awareness of gender issue in the region. This is to be reached through unbiased and gender-responsive post-graduate education, research on gender, technology and development as well as through mainstreaming gender in other fields of study.

Among the results; 32 GDS graduates (in line with goals), 78 non-GDS students took GDS courses, 68 students for joint supervision in review period and number of institute-wide courses on gender increased from one, 1-credit course in 2003 to two, 2-credit courses in 2004/2005. Measures taken to ensure gender mainstreaming in AIT have also led to positive outcomes.

4. Review assessment

Going through the **M.Sc. programmes**; curriculum for different courses, theses and programmes etc. reveal solid theoretical and applied ambitions, even if a few of the courses seem to have a bit old reading materials. Review of theses indicates research levels up to par with international standards. The staff is clearly devoted and focussed on education tasks and also use modern pedagogic approaches in their teaching.

Students appear to be actively involved in learning processes, in teaching, in student evaluations and they also form part of a quality assurance programme at AIT.

At the same time, there is room to further integrate gender concerns in the traditional science related environmental engineering studies. We are also uncertain about how staff theoretically and practically addresses the issue of interdisciplinarity in relevant courses and programmes and the extent to which traditional environmental engineering candidates are becoming agents of change: agents that are both technically sound and socially adept?

We note that students have not been recruited from MFA supported programmes and partners and not just from countries of priority in the region as is stated as a goal in the PD (2003-2005). NMFA’s view on this needs to be reviewed. This should be raised in the next Annual Meeting.

The **flexible M.Sc. programme** seems to have some of the candidates moving over to the regular M.Sc. programme. We do not see that as a problem - the main point

should be to graduate students. At the same time it calls for the need to revisit the rationale and the feasibility of this programme.

Around 65% of the previous AIT NORAD fellows live in country of origin, some 15% in countries in the region and almost 20% now live in Australia or North America. The latter group will not contribute much to scientific development in their own countries. We recommend discussing measures to further minimize this, such as a Career Planning and Guidance Unit to facilitate graduates to be absorbed in their respective countries and within the region.

Discussions with both the faculty and students indicate that the **Bridging Programme** is a good initiative. It is an important – and sympathetic- component in the AIT study programmes. Due to difficulty encountered in identification of appropriate fellows, some of the funds for the programme were used to undertake missions to one constituent country to sensitise AIT's programmes more broadly. This may very well be warranted, but a C/B assessment of the bridging programme should be attempted. Given the significance of this programme we also recommend a review of why the bridging fellowships are not fully utilized.

The **student intake** system at AIT is slightly unclear. There is a need for an improved donor “harmonization” to improve the situation for AIT relative to student intakes, recruitment, institution building, long term planning etc. Today, donor demands cuts across countries, institutions, FOS, and gender in less than coherent ways as seen from a recipient perspective.

We are not clear about to what extent AIT is able to have its own strategy on student intake, given the various and often competing, donor preferences. AIT's own policy on student take could be re-examined vis-à-vis its overall aim to build regional capacity.

Student intake processes can sometimes be a hotspot relative to **good governance**. Misuse, forgery of CVs/ transcripts, nepotism and even corruption are potential hazards. We feel that AIT, with its Alumni network and lose knowledge about national institutions and environments, are able to avoid many of these problems often faced in fellowship programme intake processes elsewhere.

In the **Gender and development studies component** we have found a more than 100% fulfilment of stated goals on teaching, research and outreach activities. Overall, the review of the programme for the reporting period of 2003–2005 is highly favourable. We also find faculty members to be engaged on the latest discourses on gender and engaged in a number of research projects, collaborating with a variety of international organizations on issues of relevance to the region. A number of Master's theses from GDS have also been published either as book chapters or monographs. Staff's extensive contribution to and participation in international conferences, the internationally refereed GTD Journal which has received contributions from well-recognized scholars have contributed to raising the profile of the school and the issue regionally, as well as globally. Good!

Placing a GDS component inside a predominantly science based environment becomes a challenge for both GDS and for the others. We believe, through our brief

visit, that we see an increased awareness by other FOS and faculty members on the relevance of male, female and power relationships in society and the need to contextualise environmental science studies, natural resources management, regional and rural development planning. This is indicative of the advances made in the GDS to mainstream gender concerns.

There is, however, still a need for more efforts in mainstreaming of social science and gender perspectives to create good agents for social change throughout AIT programmes as stated earlier in the report. Despite obvious efforts made, level of gender awareness throughout all AIT programmes remain less than optimal.

GDS is evidently understaffed and present workload and not least, newly identified ambitions, may in the long run be just too ambitious; One obvious move is to attempt to attract more funds; either internally or externally. Given the GDS's regional profile; this should be possible to discuss among donors.

5. Summary of review recommendations

- Improve donor harmonization on national institution building efforts in the region
- Improve donor harmonization on AIT institution building efforts
- Continue support to a good programme!
- Consider to renew curriculum in certain courses and programmes
- Integrate more gender and social science perspectives in courses and programmes
- Improve competence and practice on interdisciplinary approaches in programmes
- Clarify ambition on staff recruitment from regional NMFA supported programmes
- Assess modalities of the flexible Masters programme to reduce drop-outs/turnovers
- Consider to develop instruments to reduce brain-drain to developed countries
- Continue support, but assess costs (and benefits) of the bridging programme
- Clarify student intake formal and informal procedures, especially in relation to institution-building and also relative to issues of governance

Appraisal for proposed new programme 2006-2009

1. General statement on appraisal

The presented proposal for programme document is clear, well structured and concise. The objectives are clearly relevant and in accordance with NMFA general policies and well in line with Norway's Regional Allocations' emphasis on human rights/gender and environment priorities. In a more general development context, the programme must also be said to have a highly relevant profile.

From a programme execution and management point of view, AIT academic and technical staff enjoys a very good reputation. Consulting NMFA and also other donors and actors, AIT is held in high esteem.

2. Some overall concerns

There is no reason to repeat overall concerns listed in the review concerning donor dependency and the co-ordination, and harmonization needs. The same applies for

issues related to AIT's regional mandate and issues of individual versus institutional capacity building.

3. Proposed programme components

In the new proposal, 67% of the overall budget outline is planned for the **M.Sc. and Ph.D. Scholarships component** 65 Masters and 4 PhDs are suggested graduated from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, East Timor, India, Laos, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Vietnam in the programme.

The fields of study mentioned include Rural and Regional Development, Natural Resources Management, Gender and Development Studies, Energy and Environmental Management and fields dealing with Petroleum Studies.

20 of the scholarships are planned offered as **Flexible Masters programmes**, tailor-made for the needs of the institutions from which the candidates are selected.

The PD states that the **Ph.D. program** should be a type of "train trainers" program by recruiting only national university teachers or researchers.

The goal of the four-module **Bridging Programme** is to supply 10 students with a bridging fellowship for the programme period. It constitutes around 10% of the total programme budget. It involves both language training and more general science oriented subjects. It is argued that some students, in particular from Laos, Cambodia and East Timor, and possible some older students from other "NMFA countries" could be considered for this offer.

The new proposal aims to sustain and further strengthen the **Gender and Development Studies** and its role in the region. It proposes to continue its current teaching, research and outreach programme; to enhance research and capacity building on migration and human trafficking from rights-based and gender perspectives, and to continue to develop scholarly research on gender, technology and development. Specifically, it proposes to write one research report on gender, migration and human trafficking, give one course on it in the Master's Program and develop 2 modules for short-term training on the issue.

The Academic Networking with Norwegian Institutions component is planned to absorb 10% of the budget. It involves a networking ambition with Norwegian research environments, within "development planning" and management towards securing sustainable development in the region". It includes mutual visits and exchange of students and staff and the financing of seconded staff for one semester per year in SERD. NTNU is suggested as a nodal institution in Norway, with openings also for other environments.

4. Assessment of proposed programme components

Our **overall assessment** is very positive. We regard the staff and AIT in general as an institution as very well competent to handle the outlined tasks in the new PD.

NMFA has asked that the PD clearly outline the three broad fields relevant for the new programme;

- Environment

- Human rights and Gender
- Poverty alleviation and development related fields including petroleum studies.

One could also let these fields be reflected in the programme name. The relative priority between these three fields could be discussed between the parties.

The **Master and PhD. programme** component is given a very positive general appraisal. Some items are raised for consideration.

The new proposal does not discuss institutional recruitment strategies; neither from NMFA-supported programmes and partners (not only countries!) in the region nor along more general national institution-building efforts. One item raised by AIT relates to inclusion of Myanmar under eligible countries. These items should be discussed.

We commend the **flexible M.Sc. programme**. In the previous programme period, some of the students were transferred to the regular M.Sc. programme. From a donor perspective this should not pose any problem. Yet again, a review of the value of the programme's objectives and implications of the transfers should be examined.

As part of our discussion around institution building in the region, we raise the issue of the suggested balance between M.Sc. and Ph.D. degrees. We suggest that the parties discuss to take on more Ph.D. fellows in areas of key priority also relative to NMFA and the regional allocation bearings.

We take note of the new inclusion of FoS in the PD is on the Petroleum Resources, reflecting a priority from NMFA.

We recommend supporting the **Bridging Programme** even with its rather substantial budget cost share. It facilitates, as already mentioned in the review, participation of students from countries where the education system is weak. We still also recommend a careful scrutiny of the various cost items, in particular the need for flight and student assessment in other countries.

The **gender and development** component has clearly defined expected outputs and inputs. The good track record by the GDS are impressive; the consistent pattern of increased enrolment, the expansion of institute wide course on gender; its coverage on the issue of HIV/AIDS through a two-credit course on HIV/AIDS in Asia are strong indications of the GDS keeping abreast with the demands in the region and in the world. The team further recognizes the increased responsibility shouldered by AIT through supporting the staff of GDS from own funds.

The team commends GDS for its effort to address the newly emerging issue on human rights, trafficking and gender, both on the grounds of the pressing nature of the issue and also on strategic grounds that there is much interest on the issue by both the AIT constituents and the donor community.

The team, however, proposes that GDS revisit the rationale for the course which is currently linked to further strengthening gender mainstreaming efforts. In many ways, trafficking, as a crime against an individual human being is an issue of human rights

and proposes the GDS to review the link with gender mainstreaming efforts. Through its attempt to address this issue, GDS may contribute solidly towards strengthening Human Rights Framework and Mechanism in the region.

On the other hand, the existing efforts to mainstream gender by GDS is recognized by the team as systematic, effective and highly efficient and recommends that this be further built upon and expanded. The joint supervision of students and thesis, introduction of institute-wide courses and the provision of non-GDS students enrolling in GDS courses are venues that need to be further strengthened. More mainstreaming of social science and gender perspectives to create good agents for social change in all programmes could perhaps be more explicitly taken up by GDS with equal support from other FOS.

Specific Concerns: With regard to the new course on Gender, Human Trafficking and Migration, the team is concerned that given the weight of the existing responsibility and its ambitious goal, recruitment of one full time research specialist, one visiting faculty and an academic advisor for two weeks in AIT for 2006 – 2007 may not be sufficient to deal with the overall challenge. The team suggests that AIT give this a serious thought and search for ways to deal with this challenge in dialogue with the donor. Adding staff is of course a matter of priorities, but other venues should also be pursued, such as broadening the scope of donors, utilizing contingency funds including other means and these could be discussed between the parties. There is also room for a more explicit link with human rights and globalisation issues and where such issues as labour conditions and exploitative labour practices could feed in.

Further concern relates to the ToR for the full time researcher, as it does not identify experience in the field of human trafficking as a requirement. The team is also not clear on when this new course will be introduced and the estimated required time for preparation of the course.

A final note of caution on this new course is that given extensive research done on human trafficking and the availability of a great deal of information, effort be made to avoid duplication and ensure complementarity with programmes that are currently ongoing both within Thailand and in the GMS region.

The team notes the success of GDS in surpassing the 50:50 male-female ratio for student recruitment. Of the 25 intake for 2005 male/female ratio stood at 1: 24. With the overall goal of promoting the advancement of women in the Asian region by strengthening their role in development, the team recommends that GDS review its intake of male-female ratio including that of the composition of faculty members. This recommendation is made through taking the reality of existing power structure in the region into consideration, where policy and decision makers are often males and the structure highly patriarchal. This "reverse" strategy will have the potential to strengthen and accelerate the current efforts to address the gender imbalances and biases in the region. We, therefore, suggest that AIT and GDS in particular, give this suggestion serious consideration.

The team finds the **Academic Networking with Norwegian Institutions on Environmental Issues component** very commendable. Several research environments in Norway, as well as at AIT can benefit from such a mutual enterprise. One could consider to have seconded staff also for less than a semester, thus allowing

more researchers to participate. The proposal is quite open as to what institutions to co-operate with apart from NTNU, which seems reasonable at this point in time.

-A possible more long-term ambition; or an ambition requiring more funds, draws on experiences from other examples of research institution collaboration. It could involve establishing systems of funds from which small research grants or seed money can be shared between researchers from north and south upon filing joint applications. This often creates more long term and sustainable scientific networks where research grants are also drawn from other sources over time.

Relevant topics for such networking could be environment and development issues in general but also some focus areas could be discussed between the parties such as:

- clean energy
- sustainable development and natural resource management

5. Other matters

One could consider taking down the contingency to 2.5% and allocating the extra funds to some of the items suggested in the appraisal. The general distribution between cost items otherwise seems reasonable.

Concerning the bridging support, we see it as being critical and recommend that under-spent funds should be spent on the basis of needs as collectively identified.

6. Summary of appraisal recommendations

Some appraisal points coincide with the review, as much of the components are to be continued.

- We recommend support to the new programme.
- Improve donor harmonization on national institution building efforts in the region
- Improve donor harmonization on AIT institution building efforts
- Discuss PhD and Master fellowship balance
- Discuss recruitment from NMFA programmes in the region and if Myanmar should be included
- Consider to renew curriculum in certain courses and programmes
- Integrate more gender and social science perspectives in courses and programmes
- Improve competence and practice on interdisciplinary approaches in programmes
- Clarify ambition on staff recruitment from regional NMFA supported programmes
- Assess modalities of the flexible Masters programme to reduce drop-outs/turnovers
- The inclusion of Petroleum Studies in list of FoS is recommended and also that the PD addresses links to CCOP
- Consider to develop instruments to reduce brain-drain to developed countries
- Continue support, but assess costs (and benefits) of the bridging programme
- Clarify student intake formal and informal procedures, especially in relation to institution-building and also relative to issues of governance
- Parties should discuss options for strengthening GDS staff number on issues related to human rights, gender and labour conditions
- More male students should be considered accepted to GDS
- We recommend opening for shorter term/more flexible staff secondment periods

- We recommend a clearer stated focus on scientific topics for the networking component
- We recommend to consider a mechanism for seed money to small-scale joint research between AIT and Norwegian environments
- The contingency funds could be reduced to 2.5% and funds allocated elsewhere in the programme
- NMFA could also consider AIT south-south collaborations with ventures in Africa and Central America

PART I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

The Norwegian Embassy in Bangkok, Thailand, has requested a review of the “Human Resources Development in Asia Through Higher Education and Training Programme” AIT (2003 – 2005) and an appraisal of the programme proposal “Education for Sustainable Development” Programme Proposal AIT (2006-2009). Terms of References for the two tasks are enclosed in Appendix 1.

The review and appraisal team included the following members:

- Paul Vedeld, (team leader) Professor, Department for Environment and Development Studies, University of Life Sciences, Ås. Norway
- Susu Thatun, Deputy Programme Manager, UN Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking in GMS, Office of the Resident Coordinator, Thailand.

The Team visited various government and public institutions in Bangkok and staff and students at AIT, during the mission carried out between 19.8 and 26.8 (see itinerary, Appendix 2). Lasse Nymoen, Development Councillor, NMFA joined for most of the meetings, contributing substantially to the team’s work. AIT co-ordination staff facilitated the consultancy. We thank all involved parties for important inputs and documentations in the process.

The report follows guidelines given by Norad’s/NMFA’s handbook for reviews and appraisals. For the review, we have looked into issues related to efficiency, effectiveness, impact, relevance, sustainability and also some particular concerns, audits and economic management. We also looked at the project as a process; where dialogue and relationship to donor is discussed. For the review; the TOR in particular mentioned five areas of special concern;

- AIT’s regional mandate
- AIT’s economic situation and donor dependence in relation to the support
- Relevance of programme to meet training needs and capacity building in countries and region
- Quality of AIT curriculum, staff and teaching on main fields under support
- The bridging courses and the flexible M.Sc. programme

For the appraisal we present analyses of relevance, institutional and organisational design, project activities, budget allocations, governance, information management, donor coordination and long-term sustainability issues. The TOR in particular mentioned five areas of special concern;

- The relevance of the programme relative to AIT’s development strategies, beneficiaries requirement and country, region and global needs and priorities
- Programme design relative to NMFA’s regional strategy, countries involved, concentration of fields and sectors
- Programme design and capacity building in individual countries and regions
- AIT's objectives for expanding the PhD. part of the programme; relation to institutional needs in the region, university capacity and other needs PhD. candidates could cater for.

- The status of AIT's institutional co-operation and networking with other universities and institutions. Recommendation of possible feasible institutional co-operation and networking to be included in the programme. So it shall be.

1.2. HISTORY OF PROGRAMME¹

According to the Review Document (RD, 2003), Norway's support to AIT started in 1979. The support began with small and more isolated projects. In 1998, the support was put under one agreement with several sub- components.

The AIT's Scholarship Program was among the first items to receive Norwegian support. There were also, according to the RD, 2003, a faculty support in the fields of Management and in Human Settlement Development. (cf. Agreement for Development Cooperation 1989-91). Scholarships were offered to nationals from Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Pakistan.

In 1992 the new agreement included elements such as support for a Child Center and support to a Gender and Development Studies Unit. There was also a secondment (faculty support) of a Norwegian researcher to HSD. The overall objective of the 1992 agreement was:

"to facilitate the participation of an increased number of women in technology and related fields".

In July 1995, yet another agreement was signed (cf. Agreement of July 1995- June 1998). The purpose was to:

" to provide access to higher education by Asian nationals and to promote the competence within AIT on gender issues pertaining to the development process"

This agreement opened up for funding Vietnamese masters students scholarships to AIT. In September 1996, five Master's degree scholarships for students from National Institute for Urban and Rural Planning, Vietnam) were added.

In May, 1998, a new agreement was signed involving 25 million NOK. The objective of this agreement was:

"to provide high-level education, research and outreach activities which integrate technology, planning, management and gender perspectives".

It included the Master's degree scholarships, support to the Gender and Development Studies Program, to the Regional and Rural Development Planning (RRDP) Program, including a faculty position and institutional cooperation between AIT and the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), support to Short-Term Experts to AIT Pulp and Paper Technology Program and to the AIT NGDO (Non-Governmental Development Organizations) Unit.

¹ Much of this historical background is taken from the 2003 review made by Aasen and Heen.

In 2003, a new phase was approved with a 15 million NOK frame, where agreement was reached to support an M.Sc. and bridging fellowships programme, the Gender and Development Studies Program, and a small ending programme on Regional and Rural Development Planning (RRDP) Programme.

In 2005, a new PD proposal was sent to NMFA from AIT, proposing a new phase from 2006-2009.

1.3. DIRECTION OF SUPPORT FROM NORWAY TO AIT OVER TIME

The review made in 2003 makes the following assessment; “The overall goal of NMFA's support to AIT is: *"to contribute to sustainable development in Asia through increased knowledge, abilities and capacity of development personnel and institutions in the region."*

The review continues;” One can understand this to mean that sustainable development in the region is to be promoted through human and institutional capacity building. However, when looking at the program over time, the objectives stated for each agreement do not appear to lead in a planned direction. They have in fact changed over time from:

- A strong focus on educating Asian nationals from countries cooperating with NORAD, to
- Equity (in particular gender) to
- Stronger focus on institutional capacity building within AIT.

The overall goal for cooperation emphasizes the importance of developing both personnel and institutions in the region, and yet the agreements signed do not seem to build upon a cumulative perspective for cooperation.... AIT's reports are: "often descriptive and reflect only to a limited extent progress related to these goals and objective". The lack of a holistic approach to the program is seen to be a problem. One reason for this presumably lies in the explanation given above, namely that the program has developed over many years by integrating individual projects. This can have put a damper on efforts to promote a more strategic planning of the program. The strategic planning capacity of AIT can constitute another reason for an apparent lack of long-term direction of the program”(from PD review, 2003)

This overall strategic concern for the programme, seen from the donors’ point of view, will be dealt with both in the review and in the appraisal. We may not agree to what is stated above that the programme has moved in an AIT institution-building direction; on the contrary, the main bulk for support in the last phase and in the suggested new phase has been focused on fellowships offers, where AIT is more used as a service provider against a certain remuneration that AIT obviously also can use to support core staff and functions.

One must also see that the size of Norway’s support both today and also in the past, of less than 2% of AIT annual budget, hardly qualify for substantial impacts on more overall AIT strategies.

1.4. AIT AND ITS REGIONAL MANDATE

This leads us over to a brief discussion important both for the review and for the appraisal and it is therefore addressed before we start these tasks.

AIT's legal status and especially its "regional mandate" have been somewhat unclear for the team. Established back in 1957, through a SEATO joint decision, AIT received support from member countries for a number of years, up to 1965, where the Council of Ministers decided to establish AIT as a Graduate School of Engineering independent of SEATO. Legal provisions for this were passed in Thailand's National Assembly in 1967, giving AIT its name and status as an "Autonomous International Institution", empowered to award degrees and diplomas. According to a review administered by JICA, 2004, these move, however, also made AIT lose its strong sponsors, increasingly forming a situation of strong donor dependency (JICA, 2004).

AIT's history can still be read in their Mission and their Vision. The **Mission** is to "develop highly qualified and committed professionals who will play a leading role in the sustainable development of the region and its integration in the global economy" The **Vision** cites that AIT is to become: "a leading and unique regional multicultural institution of higher learning, offering state of the art education, research and training in technology, management and societal development". Strategies to achieve this include;

- Position itself as a regional hub
- A leading developer and provider of technical and managerial manpower
- Become a leading developer and provider of highly qualified researchers and faculties

From the PD 2005, we read the following about AIT as an institution;

"AIT is a distinct international character with a strong base of about 200 qualified faculty from 30 countries; and nearly 1,000 researchers and scientists from 30 different nationalities. The core faculty group is drawn worldwide through direct-hire or secondment basis. The mixture of direct-hire and seconded faculty members, resulting in the intermingling of Asian and western experiences, is considered a unique feature of AIT and enriches the learning process of students.

AIT has an annual average enrolment of nearly 2,000 students from 47 countries and territories, both from Asia as well as other parts of the world including Europe, North America and Africa. Around 40% of students currently enrolled are women. The multicultural environment provides enormous opportunities for the students to broaden their understanding and learning as well as inter-cultural experiences. *93% of AIT's students come from Asia out of whom two-thirds come from the Greater Mekong Subregion (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, and Yunnan Province of China) and one-third comes from the rest of Asia.*

It is stated that a majority of the AIT alumni (about 90%) return to their home countries upon graduation and move into academic, management and leadership positions in pursuit of their careers in the government, non-governmental and private sectors. The AIT Alumni Association (AITAA) links AIT with 27 national chapters branching out in Asia, Pacific, Africa, and increasingly into Australia, Europe and

North America. AIT alumni, together with the extensive institutional network within the region and worldwide, enable AIT to be in an excellent position to identify, recruit and train the most appropriate professionals from target countries". So far AIT.

AIT's total revenue was around 1.727 million Bhat (some 300 mill. NOK); and reported deficits for 2004 around 200 million Bhat or around 10% of incomes. The deficit figure for 2005, may be in the range of 120 million Bhat, according to the chief Economist at AIT. Thailand's total contribution to AIT is at present around 20% of total funds; but most of this is payment for fellowships. AIT has little direct core funding; although several of the present supports also contain to some extent AIT internal institution building components. And there is also the overhead for fellowship and other activities that gives AIT some leverage in their economy.

The review from 2003 raises several critical issues concerning AITs management culture and practices. Given our limited time for work, and scope of work we have not been able to go further along that report's findings. What is claimed is that *"AIT has previously been suffering from problems of inadequate management and focus. Previous assessments of NORAD's cooperation with AIT have underscored that AIT is an institution that has been more guided by donor-orientation than its own vision and strategy. President Armand seems to be attempting to deal with this matter through his institutional reforms. However, they do not seem to be met with the acceptance and understanding one would hope. One serious grievance which has come to NORAD's attention is the AIT administration's apparent lack of consultation routines with faculty organs, and AIT-governing bodies. It is claimed that the Academic Senate has been confronted with a series of "faits accomplis" when it comes to administrative and academic reforms. One (faculty) member of the board resigned from the board in the fall of 2001 in protest to this...On another level there has been considerable criticism directed toward AIT also by Norwegian academics who refer to a strongly fragmented and hierarchic culture at AIT...There is obviously a great need to examine the actual situation in the field. It seems, however, quite evident that future NORAD support to AIT should in an integral manner be tied to the general vision statement of AIT and not to the particular visions of individual faculty members"* (Aasen, 2003).

The team, has, through discussion with the newly appointed President, a feeling that both the previous reform ventures and the present leaderships plans for streamlining and slimming, may bring AITs economic situation under control. But the situation is severe. From such a scenario, we want to make in particular two comments.

1. AIT is suffering from a strongly constrained and extremely donor dependent economy (some 80%). In addition, most donors seem to see and treat AIT as a service provider, and less as an institution with its own institutional potentials and development needs. The rather detailed donor bearings on both student intake and on research and assignments must create, from AIT's point of view, a very demanding situation that impinges upon long term planning and developing innovative strategies. Given AIT's important ambition as a regional player, it is important to raise the issue of donor coordination, or rather donor harmonization at different levels, that would lead to improved and less diversified partnership ambitions. Efforts at donor harmonization have the potential to solve issues related to both financial and institutional sustainability, such as strengthening of endowment funds (like f.i. Catie),

or similar arrangements as well as to the improvisation of innovative programmes. It could also improve AIT's ability to strengthen the role of being a "regional hub".

2. AIT presents itself and is also recognized by many stakeholders as a regional entity. It represents its regionality through recruitment of staff from all over the region as well as internationally giving intake priority to countries in the region, often overlapping with donor countries. Our interpretation of being regional goes beyond providing services to nations in the region through selection of individual students from them, but also to help develop national capacity at both individual and at identified institutional levels. The latter become difficult to the extent donors do not share such ambitions, but this is not entirely impossible. It is possible to use the M.Sc. fellowship programmes and maybe especially PhDs to form core resources and develop trainers for their home institutions. One way to achieve this is through consciously and gradually establishing existing AIT programmes at national levels and allowing AIT to move on to developing new and innovative study programme areas. Sandwich programmes, shared programmes dual and joint degrees could form part of a new strategy to transfer established and well-functioning M.Sc. programmes at AIT to national institutions in the region. This would be cost-effective and lead directly to strengthening of institutions in the region. Division of labour between AIT as a leader of new and innovative programmes and; national institutions as complimentary mass producers of human resources would contribute to a sustainable development of the economies in the region.

These issues are obviously to be considered at a political and financial level where donors and AIT would have to agree upon strategies, both in general but also relative to forming direction also for bilateral and more small-scale level individual donor support programmes. Underlying our review and appraisal, lies such thinking, that we believe are very much in line with NORADs and NMFAs policies on institutional cooperation and development not least.

PART II. THE REVIEW

2.1. REVIEW BACKGROUND

The project document and agreement RAS 0351 “Human Resources Development in Asia Through Higher Education and Training Programme” AIT (2003 – 2005), was approved in May 2003, based on a desk and field appraisal of the programme (Aasen and Heen, 2003).

The PD outlines the following structure and components;

Goal: “To assist the developing countries of Asia to improve the social and economic conditions of their people through poverty alleviation, environmentally sustainable natural resource management and gender responsive development”.

Objective: “to strengthen the capacity of institutions in the developing countries of Asia to address issues related to poverty alleviation, environmentally sustainable natural resource management and gender responsive development, through higher education and training of relevant personnel. The activities needed to fulfil this objective will be anchored in AITs academic programs, particularly those that have a bearing on poverty alleviation, agricultural and rural development, natural resource planning and management and gender studies.”.

Project management:

- Should be targeted towards in particular Norwegian collaborating institutions in the region, and information developed and targeted for these
- Should be targeted towards the following countries; East Timor, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Vietnam, Bhutan, Cambodia, Laos and Mongolia.
- A flexible M.Sc. should be included
- Particular officers in charges should run the project; with set rules for reporting, Steering Committee, Annual Meetings, Audit reporting, reviews etc.
- The project has three identified components; scholarships, gender and a rural and regional development staff support.

Table 1. Budget Outline PD 2003-2005

Component	Sub-budgets	Total budgets	Budget shares
Scholarships		NOK 11 875 000	79.2 %
M.Sc.programmes (60)	10 944 000		(73.0%)
Bridging programme (15)	931 000		(6.2 %)
Support for GDS		NOK 2 275 000	15.2 %
Gender Intergration activity	14 000		(0.01 %)
Personnel costs	2 004 350		(13.4 %)
Publications	256 542		(1.7 %)
Faculty support		NOK 350 000	2.3 %
Contingency (10%)		NOK 500 000	3.3 %
TOTAL		NOK 15.000.000	100%

The original proposal from AIT (for 32 million NOK) also included a PhD-component, a more long-term faculty support component and not least a networking component, which were, for various reasons, taken out in the final PD.

Some main concerns raised in the initial appraisal (Aasen, 2003) were linked to;

- *How could the fellowship component be used by Norad programmes in the region?*
- *Clearer priorities on fellowship recruitment by country, FoS and institution.*
- *Problems of the AIT-NTNU institutional collaboration; in that staff from NTNU seldom were able to come to AIT for more than 2 weeks at the time*
- *Should NORAD support a small number of doctoral scholarships at AIT?*
- *Programme management both with Norad/NMFA and at AIT should be improved*

We return to some of these concerns in the appraisal. But most of these points were addressed in the final and approved PD 2003-2005.

2.2. PURPOSE OF REVIEW

We interpret the objective of the review partly to assess if the program is being executed in line with goals and plans and give suggestions for improvements. Secondly, such findings may feed into the appraisal made for the new proposed phase of the programme.

2.3. SCOPE OF WORK

In the following, we go through each component as described in the PD and we analyse achievements of the programme relative to planned outputs and relative to concerns stated by the TOR and as found in NMFA/Norad's guidelines for programme review. Such concerns include; effectiveness, efficiency, impact, relevance, sustainability, particular concerns, audits and looking into project as a process looking at issues such as dialogue and relationship to donor and other partners. We give a rather detailed assessment of effectiveness by project component, and then make more general assessments of the other concerns.

2.3.1 Effectiveness of the different components

Effectiveness (degree of goal fulfilment) relates to "what extent purpose and goals are met. It is often measured in terms of actual output as a share of goals set up. In the following we address the effectiveness of the various components.

2.3.1.1 Scholarships

Achievements on recruitment and graduation

There is a 100% fulfilment of students for fellowships so far in the programme. 66% are women in line with a gender ambition. The distribution of fellows by country is in line with "Norad priority countries" (Nepal, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Laos, Bhutan, Timor and Pakistan). All but one student is expected to graduate from the 2003-05 batch. Let us look a bit closer at some of these items.

Table 2. Student intake by country and institution of origin

Country	Student batch			SUM (male)	Last working place when admitted		
	2003-05	2004-05	2005-06		NGO/private	Public body	University
Bangladesh	5	2	2	9 (5)	4 (2)	2 (1)	3 (2)
Bhutan		1	3	4 (1)		2 (1)	2
Cambodia		4	1	5 (4)	1	4 (4)	
Laos		1	1	2 (0)	1	1	
Nepal	5	4	5	14 (2)	4	8 (3)	3
Pakistan	1			1 (1)			1 (1)
Sri Lanka	4	4	2	10 (4)	2 (1)	2 (1)	6 (2)
Timor		1	3	4 (4)	1 (1)	3 (3)	
Vietnam	6	4	4	14 (3)	1	6	6 (3)
Mongolia				0			
SUM	21	21	21	63 (24)	14 (4)	28 (13)	21 (8)

NGO/Private includes employment in international organizations which are not government funded, e.g., UN or WWF

Public Body mainly employment in ministries, national and provincial government agencies, state enterprises, research centers.

University employment as lecturers or teachers in universities, colleges, and other educational institutions/high-school teacher.

Four accepted East Timorese students (all male) did not enrol in the master program. One Cambodian (male) was funded only in bridging program through NMFA support. One Sri Lankan (male) student in 2003-2005 resigned after one semester.

75% of the students are recruited from four countries; Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Vietnam. It is in line with directions given from NMFA. We leave to the parties to discuss future priorities in this respect. No students have been recruited from Mongolia.

38% are male participants; 62% female, which supersedes the 50% expectation for the female component. advocated by the gender sensitive recruitment policy. One could caution against taking this to the extreme where the ration becomes extremely skewed. For example, in the time under review there were 2 men out of 12 or a total of 17% male in the GDS study.

Table 3. Student intake by field of study and country

Country	Field of Study 2003-2006									
	RRDP	EEM	GDS	NRM	Energy	AARM	ASE	UEM	CEIM	SUM
Bangladesh	2	1	2			2	1	1		9
Bhutan			3	1						4
Cambodia	2			3						5
Laos			2							2
Nepal	1	3	2	2	5	1				14
Pakistan					1					1
Sri Lanka			1			2	5	2		10
Timor					1			2	1	4
Vietnam	1	3	2	4	1	1	2			14
SUM	6	7	12	10	8	6	8	5	1	63

We see that there is a rather homogenous distribution of fellowships among the study programmes, with a slight focus on GDS, NRM energy and ASE. This must also be said to be in line with intentions behind the programme support.

We have also shown in the table some few supports where there is concentration by country and FoS. This leads us to question whether this is the result of implicit- or explicit institution-building efforts?

A flexible M.Sc. programme has recently been introduced for the Environmental Engineering and Management programme, targeting employees from both the public and private sectors, to provide a more flexible framework for their studies.

Content and quality of study programmes

Review of different study programmes during the timeframe assigned to us, we note that they are well-designed, having high relevancy with a good mix of practical and theoretical knowledge important for the students. Some study programmes do, however, contain some courses where curriculum and textbooks are rather old; and this could be looked closer into.

The review team further notes that despite obvious efforts being put in, gender and social sciences are yet to be well integrated into some of the more technical science related study programmes. This observation is made in the context of the generally accepted pedagogic thinking that combining technical knowledge with social science perspectives is the only way to find “solutions” to technical problems such as that of environment, found to exist in a given society.

Review of these topics by students in different FoS, also reinforces this concern. Some of the more traditional engineering studies have rather confined focus on technical/practical challenges of development whereas GDS, NRM, RRDP and UEM have broader areas of investigation having a clearer poverty focus and socially oriented.

We return to this.

Assessments

1. Interviews with staff and going through the curriculum lists for different courses, theses and programmes reveal solid theoretical applied ambitions for the candidates. The lists of these topics, and the theses provided to the team also indicate high academic levels. The staff is clearly devoted and focussed also on education tasks and also on using modern pedagogic approaches in their teaching.
2. Students appear to be actively involved in learning processes, in teaching, in student evaluations and they also form part of a quality assurance programme at AIT.
3. One issue of concern relates to the extent to which social science and gender related perspectives are integrated in the more traditional science related environmental studies? We are also uncertain about how staff theoretically and practically addresses issues of interdisciplinarity in relevant courses and programmes. To what extent has one moved from developing more traditional environmental engineering candidates

into broader sustainable development change agents: agents that are both technically sound and social adept?

3. It seems that no students have been recruited from NMFA supported programmes and partners (not only countries!) in the region. Nor does it seem as if relevant institutions have been approached directly; as is stated as a goal 6.1 in the PD (2003-2005). We do believe that no such recruitment has been made. According to AIT, there are only two Embassies that at all responded to AITs letter asking for relevant institutions and candidates (Sri Lanka and Bangladesh?). In order to follow the plans made in the PD, this issue should be raised at the next Annual Meeting.

The country and gender criteria for selection are clearly fulfilled, but a question to be considered is how strong bearings NMFA wants to put on recruiting their programme staff and/or - to what extent NMFA wants to give AIT some degrees of freedom in their selection processes? It should also be raised and clarified in next Annual Meeting. If to be followed up, one needs to contact the relevant Embassies in the region and investigate why they have not responded to AITs letters and invitation to identify relevant programmes and candidates.

4. Improve strategies for student intakes. The practical implications of the formal and informal intake system at AIT are still unclear to the consultants. It is obvious that at present, donor demands cuts across countries, institutions, FOS, and gender in less than coherent ways. There is a clear need for an improved donor coordination or harmonization to improve the situation for AIT vis-a-vis student intakes, recruitment, institution building etc. Within this donor dominant context, to what extent is AIT able to develop its own strategy is a question the review team would like to raise. How formal or informal is the selection process of the students? We did not receive any strategy papers on this. The question for AIT to consider is, "Is AIT able or willing to think about long term institution-building in national universities in the region in their fellowship programmes?" Another issue is also how different countries own strategies for allowing or sending students out impact on intake processes.

5. The flexible M.Sc. programme seems to have some of the candidates moving over to the regular M.Sc. programme. We do not see that as a problem - the main point should be to graduate students. At the same time it calls for the need to revisit the rationale and the feasibility of such types of programmes.

2.3.1.2. The Bridging Programme

Achievements

The bridging programme facilitates participation of older students and students from countries where the education system is systematically weak. It offers training programmes up to 24 weeks prior to study start in languages, maths, accounting, computer- and also in more general academic skills. AIT has about 50 students annually in this programme.

The bridging programme was unfortunately not utilized for NMFA students in 2003, due to time constraints. Only 5 out of the 10 were used in 2004. It thus remains under-utilized.

Assessment

Discussions with both the faculty and students indicate that the bridging programme is a good initiative. It is an important – and sympathetic- component in the AIT study programmes. The need could partly be understood as donor driven or created as fellows are requested recruited from countries and institutions not necessarily best qualified among potential applicants.

AIT stresses the importance of the programme. The students are sent through tests they have to pass and AIT also states that students going through the programme perform much better in their studies than students needing, but not offered these courses.

The accumulated unspent funds in 2005 could be converted to M.Sc. fellowship within the programme horizon. Although timing for the students' intake (August) has been referred to as the cause for the under-utilization of the support for the bridging programme, it would still be worthwhile to revisit why the bridging fellowships are not all used, if deemed so important by staff and students interviewed?

2.3.1.3. Gender and development studies component

Achievements

NMFA has supported GDS for the past 11 years. The twin goals of the support have been to:

- Enable engineers and technologists at AIT to become more gender-sensitive
- Enhance the understanding and awareness of gender issue in the region

Specific goal for the period under review is to promote the advancement of women in the Asian region by strengthening their role in development through:

- Unbiased and gender-responsive post-graduate education;
- Research on gender, technology and development; and
- Increasing gender awareness and responsiveness among actors in development

A four-pronged strategy involving teaching, research, publication and outreach has been developed to achieve the above goals.

The effectiveness, efficiency and to some extent, the impact of the strategy was measured through interviews by the team of the faculty members from GDS and other faculty members, students, reviews of the GDS curriculum, profiles of teaching staff, enrolment trend, thesis, research outputs, publications and collaborations with other FOS and external organizations.

Tangible outputs measured against expected outputs for 2003–2005 are positive. Of the 30 to 40 expected GDS graduates, the total number of graduates at the end of 2005 school year is expected to be 32. Measures taken to ensure gender mainstreaming in AIT have also led to positive outcomes. These measures include facilitating participation of non-GDS student in GDS courses, joint supervision of non-GDS students by GDS faculty and offering an institute-wide course on gender.

Regarding non-GDS students in GDS course, the expected number of students to be taken in was 50–75. The actual number, however, totalled 78.

The number of students for joint supervision was expected to range from 30-50. The total, however, exceeded the range with 25 students in 2003 and 43 students in 2004, totalling 68 students for joint supervision for the period under review.

The number of institute-wide courses on gender was increased from one, 1-credit course in 2003 to two, 2-credit courses in the 2004/2005 period.

The faculty members are also found to be engaged on the latest discourses on gender and are engaged in a number of research projects, collaborating with a variety of international organizations on issues of relevance to the region. A number of Master's Theses from GDS have also been published either as book chapters or monographs. Staffs' extensive contribution to and participation in international conferences, the internationally refereed GTD Journal which has received contributions from well-recognized scholars have contributed to raising the profile of the school and the issue regionally, as well as globally.

Increased awareness by other FOS and faculty members on the relevance of male, female and power relationships in society and the need to contextualize such technical FOS as natural resources management, regional and rural development planning among others are indicative of the advances made in the GDS to mainstream gender concerns. Further efforts and resources, however, would be needed to ensure greater integration of gender concerns to achieve one of the primary objectives of gender-responsive post-graduate education at AIT and in the region.

Assessments

All goals stated in the PD seem to have been achieved; on teaching, research and outreach activities. Overall, the review of the programme for the reporting period of 2003 – 2005 is highly favourable.

- There is still a need for more efforts in mainstreaming of social science and gender perspectives to create good agents for social change throughout AIT programmes as stated earlier in the report. Discussions with faculty members and students from other FOS indicate that despite obvious efforts made, level of gender awareness throughout all AIT programmes remain less than optimal.

- GDS is evidently understaffed and present workload including newly identified ambitions may in the long run be just too ambitious; One obvious move is to attempt to attract more funds; either internally or externally. Given the regional profile of GDS, this should be possible to discuss with donors. Another move, though not recommended, would be to reduce some ambitions. We return to this question in our appraisal.

In the following we go through other elements such as efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, among others.

2.3.2. Efficiency

Efficiency (productivity) relates to “how economically” resources (funds, manpower, time) are converted to outputs. It is often measured in terms of cost-efficiency-cost/produced unit of output.

1. One could ask if some of the outputs could be achieved in more cost-efficient ways. Obviously, developing similar M.Sc. programmes and accompanying fellowship programmes in the future in national institutions will most likely be more cost-efficient than hosting the studies at AIT. So a long run cost-efficiency strategy should involve such thinking. On the other hand, students being exposed to AIT and its international environment, benefit more than the mere studies they go through; it generates contacts and networks for life, and also gives ideas and inputs back to home institutions; not only on content of programme; but on teaching methods and research approaches.

2. One could ask for a closer assessment of funds used for the bridging programme; it was reported substantial amounts of travels and other resource inputs. This may very well be warranted, but a C/B assessment of the bridging programme should be attempted, even if somewhat difficult.

3. The substantial share of funds for the Gender journal (80%) could also be reviewed especially in light of the stretched staff situation. Staff were, however, convinced of the value-added of the Journal as it provides the Gender section as well as the AIT with an international face.

2.3.3. Impacts

Positive and negative, primary and secondary, long-term effects produced by a development programme, directly or indirectly intentionally or unintended.

Any education programme has a broad spectre of both direct and secondary, often more long term indirect impacts. The direct effect of an education programme is that more competent people can help develop institutions and individuals in society, and the secondary effects relate to that education has been shown to have high multiplier effects *vis-à-vis* economic growth and development processes. Below, we ask two questions pertaining to how one can secure and enhance such positive impacts;

1. If we link the impact effects to ***institutional development***; we believe that the impact of an education programme will be much higher at national levels, if candidates from different countries under the different FoS, are recruited and go back to institutions that in the future will develop their own study programmes and candidates at national levels. Also; other government bodies can be used in such institutional development efforts to increase the indirect effects of the education programme support.

2. Brain drain. In Table 4, we show an overview of where students have landed after graduating from AIT.

Table 4. NMFA AIT Alumni 1979-May 2005 Graduation (from 408 Alumni)

Country of origin	No. of recipients	Current employment/location					
		Country of origin	Other Asian country	Australia	Europe	North America	Africa
Bangladesh	66	49	7	8	0	2	0
Bhutan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cambodia	6	6					
India	76	47	10	4	3	12	
Laos	7	6	1				
Nepal	59	43	10	5		1	
Pakistan	52	43	3	4		2	
Sri Lanka	85	50	6	12	1	15	1
Thailand	4	4					
Timor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vietnam	53						
Mongolia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUM	408	299(73%)	39 (10%)	33 (8%)	4 (1%)	32 (8%)	1

We see that around 27% do not work in their home country. Part of these work in neighbouring countries; while 17% have migrated to developed countries. This obviously reduces the direct impact of more educated people in the recipient countries- rather drastically.

Even if some 27% of all NMFA's fellows over time work abroad, and not in the home countries, they will still send home money and in this way provide for broad development effects. It is assessed for example that immigrants to Norway send home in the range of 5 billion NOK/year or 1/3 of our present development cooperation budget. Research furthermore indicates that such remittances have far greater economic efficiency of investment than traditional development cooperation has!

Still, we recommend that the brain-drain challenge in this programme should be addressed both in the present programme and in the programme to come. How this is to be addressed needs to be carefully explored. We return to this question in the appraisal.

2.3.4. Relevance

To what extent the objectives of programme is in line with beneficiaries requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and donor's priorities.

The programme has been running for a long time, and is in that sense time-tested. It is obviously relevant for both AIT and for recipient countries; in that training of personnel in these fields of higher education is an expressed need from recipient countries.

SERD programmes range over a variety of areas related to the environment and development field and educate experts in field very much related to the challenges

expressed through the Millennium goals and efforts from the global community for eradication of poverty.

From NMFA's point of view, the programme is well in line with general policies on development cooperation and it also feeds well into the new regulations called "Direction of Development Cooperation in Asia" from June 2005, where environment, energy and education are stressed as particularly important areas of collaboration and support.

2.3.5. Sustainability

The continuation of benefits from a programme after major development assistance has been completed. The probability of continued long-term benefits; political, institutional and organisational, socio-cultural and gender, economic and financial, environmental and technological aspects.

Political sustainability: One could question how relevant this issue is for the programme in question. One issue raised by AIT is given the significant increase in the number of Burmese students enrolled, whether or not Burma should be included in the list of eligible countries, but we take this up in the appraisal of the next phase.

Institutional and organisational sustainability: At an overall level, AIT at present can only offer these programmes based on continued donor support; a point already made several places. As such, the long term overall institutional and organizational sustainability is rather fragile.

Secondly, the lack of explicit plans for institutional development through identifying key national institutions in different countries in the region, conscious recruitment of candidates from these institutions, and transfer of programmes, sandwich programmes etc. also reduces long term institutional and organisational sustainability of this support.

We thus recommend, as we return to in the appraisal, an improved institutional development profile in the programme for the different FoS.

In relation to the PD from 2003, we also stress that there has been little or no recruitment from NMFA supported programmes in the region; which was stressed as an output in the PD. From NMFA's point of view, this has had a loss of synergy between this project and NMFA's other efforts in the region.

Around 65% of the previous fellows live in country of origin, whereas almost 20% of the supported NMFA fellows now live in Australia or North America, and thus do not contribute much to scientific development in their own countries. From a development perspective this should be addressed and one could discuss to what extent measures could be found to reduce this share: on recruitment policy, formal and informal contracts, awareness raising etc. We also address this in the appraisal.

Socio-cultural and gender sustainability: The programme obviously scores well; but mainstreaming can still be improved; also more students should be encouraged to take gender and social science courses in the more traditional engineering programmes. It has been brought up in interviews with external sources that different

AIT study programmes to varying degrees have internalised more modern perspectives on issues related to sustainable development and integration of social and natural science perspectives in environmental management.

In a long run perspective, one should not forget staff development in this context, that staff in different fields are exposed to socio-cultural and gender dimensions even of more technical engineer-oriented subjects. Short courses, further education, but also on-job training and team teaching efforts could be considered.

Economic and financial sustainability: This issue has been raised in several places throughout the document and AIT's vulnerable situation has already been addressed.

We have recommended more concerted donor actions; and put as an example forward the idea of an increased endowment fund.

Environmental sustainability: As the main objective is to educate people in different field of environmental studies, the goal can be considered to be fulfilled well.

Technological sustainability: Again, a major objective is to educate people also in different engineering fields, the goal can be considered to be fulfilled well.

2.3.6. Audits and good governance

We have received the Audit report from 2003; there are no comments there that require any action, as we see this. In general, the programme is well managed and run from an economic and financial point of view.

Student intake processes can sometimes be a hotspot relative to good governance. Misuse, forgery of CVs/ transcripts, nepotism and even corruption are potential hazards. We still feel that AIT, also with their Alumna and their close knowledge about national institutions and environments, are able to avoid many of these problems often faced in fellowship programme intake processes.

2.3.7. The Project as a process; dialogue and relationship to donors

Given the critical comments made in the last review on programme management, the results from our review gave good indication of a positive change, and that programme management routines, reporting and donor contact has improved since the previous review. Moving the responsibility to the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Bangkok from Oslo, has also strengthened the frequency of contact.

The presented programme documents, the referred planning processes, approved documents, annual reports, audits and programme execution are highly professional. Almost all expected outputs are delivered on time. We have documented very good relationships to donors; and to other relevant actors. Going through Agreed Minutes from Annual Meetings reveal that there is very little concerns or disagreements from NMFA on the progress and development of this programme.

We have interviewed CIDA, SIDA, and ESCAP and our general impression is that donors and partners are extremely satisfied with AIT's professional ability to plan, execute, manage and report on programmes.

One indicator of the mutual trust being present is that donors do not go together in separate meetings or concerted actions, but raise issues directly with AIT in Board meetings.

IAT has a broad set of networks both in Thailand, in the region and beyond. The administrative management of the programme has been set well in line with intentions stated in the PD (2003-05). We have unfortunately not been able to meet with these institutions.

2.3.8. Particular concerns

The following “particular concerns” have already been addressed above, as requested in the TOR:

- 1. AIT’s regional mandate and its role (relevance and impact) in the region should be reflected on.*
- 2. The sources of financing the operation of AIT and its education and research programmes and its regional networking, and research programs. The importance of individual donor contributions. Assessment of institutional and financial sustainability and efforts made to improve sustainability. Comment on the coordination between AIT, the Government of Thailand, and the donor group.*
- 3. The relevance of the Programme to meet training needs and provide capacity building in individual countries and for the region.*
- 4. The quality of the AIT curriculum, staff and teaching on the main fields covered by the program financed by Norway.*
- 5. The importance of the Bridging Courses for preparing students for their main studies at AIT. The experiences with flexible Master programmes and scholarships.*

Part III. APPRAISAL 2006-2009

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The Norwegian Embassy in Bangkok, Thailand, has requested an appraisal of the programme proposal “Education for Sustainable Development” Programme Proposal AIT (2006-2009) sent to the Embassy in March 2005. Terms of References for the task are enclosed in Appendix 1.

The team had five field days for the review and appraisal; the itinerary is found in Appendix 2. The layout of the appraisal report more or less follows the guidelines given by NMFA's manual for Development cooperation Appraisals.

The main purpose of the appraisal is to assess the programme both in itself and in relation to ambitions and policies laid down both in general NMFA policies and in the regional grant regulations. It partly leans on the findings from the review.

In the following we first present the overall programme design, and give a brief assessment of the different components. We give an assessment of the structural design and its consistency in terms of relationship between goal, objective, outputs, inputs and budget outlines. We then assess the quality of underlying analysis and planning activities, the realism (external factors, risk elements) and give an assessment of indicators used to assess output achievements.

We also look briefly at some institutional aspects; the institutional and organisational structure of programme and briefly discuss regional aspects versus national programme aspects and give an assessment of involved partners and agencies and what is the role of national governments in this programme.

We briefly analyse the budget allocations and priorities reflected and some issues related to governance, human rights, gender and corruption.

We discuss the relevance of the programme relative to crosscutting priority areas such as environment, gender and human rights in relation to both Norwegian development cooperation priorities and to recipient countries and organizations priorities. We also briefly address relationship to other donors. Lastly we give an assessment of programme sustainability and an overall assessment with conclusions and recommendations.

3.2. PROJECT DESIGN

3.2.1 Overall programme overview and components

The PD outlines the following structure and components;

Objective: *“The main objective of the proposed cooperation is to further develop human and institutional capability of Norad programme countries in the region to handle their development needs. The goal is to address the poverty issues for achieving environmentally sustainable development”.*

It is further stated that the interventions to achieve the above objective will be to “*emphasize academic programmes; in particular those with bearings on poverty analysis, regional and rural development, natural resource, management, energy and the environment, gender and development activities*”.

This will be done through three main areas;

- Scholarships
- Training, research and publications on gender and development
- Academic networking with Norwegian institutions

Project management:

- AIT implements the programme
- There will be a special Programme officer in charge from AIT
- A steering Committee will be appointed by AIT
- 6 months reporting procedures and an Annual Meeting instigated by AIT
- Annual External Audit reports from AIT
- AIT will be responsible to disseminate information about scholarships in the region; including the Norwegian Development Cooperation offices
- Norad/NMFA project partners to be contacted by AIT to nominate candidates

Table 4. Budget Outline PD 2006-2009

Component	Sub-budgets	Total budgets	Budget shares
Scholarships		NOK 12.200.000	67.8 %
M.Sc.programmes (45)	6.932.250		(38.5 %)
Flexible (20)	3.214.900		(17.9 %)
PhD. (4)	1.068.000		(5.9 %)
Bridging programme (30)	1.004.250		(5.6 %)
Support for GDS		NOK 3.000.000	16.7 %
Research	414.200		(2.3 %)
Personnel costs	603.330		(3.4 %)
Publications	1.840.000		(10.2 %)
Contingency	142.470		(0.8 %)
Academic networking with Norwegian Institutions		NOK 1.888.000	10.5 %
Seconded personnel	1.200.000		(6.7%)
Faculty/student exchange	680.000		(3.8 %)
Contingency (5%)		NOK 900 000	5% %
TOTAL		NOK 18.000.000	100%

The PhD. and the networking components are new relative to the present phase of the programme.

3.2.2 M.Sc. and PhD. Scholarships

Goals: 67% of the overall budget outline is planned for this component, with 45 regular, 20 flexible Masters and 4 PhDs graduated from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, East Timor, India, Laos, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Vietnam.

The fields of study mentioned include Rural and Regional Development, Natural Resources Management, Gender and Development Studies, Energy and Environmental Management and fields dealing with Petroleum Resources.

20 of the scholarships are planned to be offered as **Flexible Master's programmes**, tailor-made for the needs of the institutions from which the candidates are recruited. From the point of view of institution building, these fellowships are thus suitable instruments.

The goal of the four-module **Bridging Programme** is to supply 30 students with a bridging fellowship for the programme period. It constitutes 5.6% of the total programme budget. The goal is to help students with weaker background to be brought up to reasonable academic standards before regular courses begin. It involves both language training and more general science oriented subjects. It is argued that some students, in particular from Laos, Cambodia and East Timor, and possibly some older students from other "Norad countries" could be considered for this offer.

The PD is explicit about that the **PhD. programme** should be a type of "train trainers" programme by recruiting from national universities: university teachers or researchers only. Nothing is said in the PD about institutions or country, or recruitment strategy for these.

Assessments

1. We regard the staff and AIT in general as an institution as very well competent to handle the outlined tasks in the new PD.

2. We regard the FoS programmes selected to recruit students as very relevant, both in general from an environment and development perspective; from the needs of country's and well in line with general NMFA policies and also for the regional allocation regulations and not least for the new Asia Development Cooperation Strategy (2005). It is suggested that the revised programme document state even more clearly the three broad fields relevant for the programme:

- Environment
- Human rights and Gender
- Poverty alleviation and development related fields such as petroleum studies.

If the parties should want a more detailed priority of these, it can be discussed prior to finalizing the PD.

3. As raised in the review, one should consider to integrate social science and gender related perspectives in the more traditional engineering studies. This also relates to the point on moving somewhat away from developing traditional environmental engineering candidates towards a broader "sustainable development change agents"? This could involve candidates being given training in basic social science understanding; being trained in communication and negotiation as well as other social skills. Furthermore, basic insights in social structures and processes, operation of public bodies, understanding of policy formulation and implementation processes and power relations related to their technical fields of study would also be of great value. The candidates should thus be made able to contextualize their technical knowledge

while continuing to be well-qualified engineers. This could be done both through mainstreaming of social science subjects into their major fields of study or through ensuring that students do select some relevant courses in this direction in their study plans. .

4. On recruitment and institution building. Educating 69 candidates in a region with more than 3 billion people is obviously a drop in the ocean. One way to enhance the overall impacts is to move away from seeing training as building individual competence over to building institutional capacity. This can be done, as stated earlier by identifying key FoS and key institutions in national countries, where over time, one builds competence, preferably in national universities, where programmes can be replicated, at much lower costs.

There is however, no mentioning of a recruitment policy in this direction from MFA-supported programmes and partners (not only countries!) in the region in the presented PD. This should, in our opinion be discussed between different parties. A question to be discussed in this context is how stringent NMFA wants to be on recruiting their programme staff and to what extent they want to give AIT autonomy in the selection processes? According to AIT, only two embassies (Sri Lanka and Bangladesh) out of 10 approached in the region answered AIT at all on their request for identifying potential institutions and candidates. It is recommended that the Embassy looks into this.

Another point, still a bit vague in the presented PD, is to what extent one should emphasize recruitment from NMFA projects and programmes in the region. If the parties agree that this is important; then a better follow-up procedure must be secured than what has been documented in the present project period. If we should recommend a strategy here, it seems maybe more important that fellows feed into broader institution-building efforts at national level for training of trainers than serving singular NMFA projects or programmes. On the other hand, if NMFA projects at national levels are about institution building, then one could have a synergy effect by combining the two strategies.

5. As part of our discussion around institution building in the region, we furthermore raise the issue of the suggested balance between M.Sc. and PhD. degrees. We suggest that the parties discuss to take on more PhD. from relevant institutions instead of M.Sc. scholarships in areas of key priority to MFA and also in line with the regional allocation. This was discussed in the debriefing meeting and in meetings with senior staff, and we felt that AIT staff seems to be in favour of increasing the number of PhD. students.

6. As mentioned before, NMFA support to AIT is rather limited and constitutes less than 2% of present budgets, and in that context it is, and should be limited how much NMFA influences AIT policies. However, we still recommend a plan for a more consistent and clear recruitment policy to fellowships; where maybe NMFA could take a lead role towards other donors in developing more long term institution building in the different countries in the region.

7. What countries should be given priority? We believe the present suggested list should be acceptable; one could ask if India is still to be included, and another country

raised by AIT is Myanmar. AIT reports that the World Bank, France and Japan are all supporting fellowships from Myanmar. We leave this latter issue to be sorted out between the Embassy and AIT.

8. We commend the flexible M.Sc. programme, which in particular can be relevant for somewhat more senior staff in a more consistent institution-building effort. In the previous programme period, some of the students were transferred to the regular M.Sc. programme over time. From a donor perspective, this should not pose any problem. The costs of these fellowships are slightly higher regarding more travels and more registration fees, but that seems quite reasonable. Yet again, we suggest a review of the value of the programme's objectives and that the implication of the transfers should be examined.

9. We take note of the new inclusion of FoS in the PD on the Petroleum Resource Studies, which we believe reflects a priority from NMFA.

10. We recommend supporting the bridging programme even with its rather substantial budget cost share. It facilitates, as already mentioned in the review, participation of students from countries where the education system is weak. It is also strongly supported by AIT staff. We nevertheless recommend a review of the various cost items, in particular the need for flight and student assessment in other countries.

11. The PD also opens room for partial scholarships; this could be discussed between the parties prior to start of next phase.

3.2.3 Gender and Development Studies Component

3.2.3.1 Goals

The **new proposal aims** to sustain and further strengthen the Gender and Development Studies and its role in the region. It is suggested to use 16.7% of the total budget. It proposes to;

- Continue its current teaching, research and outreach programme;
- Address the need for scholarly research and capacity-building on migration and human trafficking from rights-based and gender perspectives;
- Continue to develop scholarly research on gender, technology and develop.

3.2.3.2 Assessment

1. **Overview:** The proposal is well written with clearly defined expected outputs and inputs. The good track record by the GDS in terms of its deliverables have been very impressive; the consistent pattern of increased enrolment, the expansion of institute wide course on gender; its coverage on the issue of HIV/AIDS through a two-credit course on HIV/AIDS in Asia are strong indication of the GDS keeping abreast with the demands in the region and in the world. The team further recognizes the increased responsibility shouldered by AIT - through supporting the staff of GDS from its own funds.

2. From the proposal, the team notes that in addition to two existing objectives, **a new area of intervention** on capacity building on migration and human trafficking from rights-based and gender perspective is being put forward. It proposes to write one

research report on gender, migration and human trafficking, give one course on it in the Master's programme and develop 2 modules for short-term training on the issue.

The assessment team commends GDS for its effort to address this newly emerging issue, both on the grounds of the pressing nature of the issue and also on strategic grounds that there is much interest on the issue by both the AIT constituents and the donor community.

3. The team, however, proposes that GDS revisit the **rationale for the course that is currently linked to further strengthening gender mainstreaming efforts (page 16)**. In many ways, trafficking, as a crime against an individual human being is an issue of human rights and proposes the GDS to review the link with gender mainstreaming efforts. Through its attempt to address this issue, GDS will in fact be contributing solidly towards strengthening Human Rights Framework and Mechanism in the region.

On the other hand, the existing efforts to mainstream gender by GDS is recognized by the team as systematic, effective and highly efficient and recommends that this be further built upon and expanded. The joint supervision of students and thesis, introduction of institute-wide courses and the provision of non-GDS students enrolling in GDS courses are venues that need to be further strengthened. More mainstreaming of social science and gender perspectives to create good agents for social change in all programmes could perhaps be more explicitly taken up by GDS with equal support from other FOS.

4. **Specific Concerns:** While recognizing the good work done by the GDS, both in terms of raising the profile of AIT and of the issue of gender, the assessment team is seriously concerned that the GDS staff is overly stretched.

While its efforts to address this challenge through various mechanisms such as multi-tasking visiting fellows and professors, the assessment team continues to be concerned about the possible long term impact of this approach, its effect on the sustainability of the programme and the eventual compromise it will have to make on the quality of output.

With regard to the new course on Gender, Human Trafficking and Migration, the team is concerned that given the weight of the existing responsibility and its ambitious goal, recruitment of one full time research specialist, one visiting faculty and an academic advisor for two weeks in AIT for 2006 – 2007 may not be sufficient to deal with the overall challenge. The team suggests that AIT give this a serious thought and search for ways to deal with this challenge in dialogue with the donor.

Adding staff is of course a matter of priorities, but other venues should also be pursued, such as broadening the scope of donors, utilizing contingency funds including other means and these could be discussed between the parties. There is also room for a more explicit link with human rights and globalisation issues and where such issues as labour conditions and exploitative labour practices could also feed in. It was also raised as an issue from NMFA that this component should have and be flagged as the Human rights, gender and development component of the overall programme.

5. Further concern relates to the ToR for the full time researcher, as it does not identify experience in the field of human trafficking as a requirement. The team is also not clear on when this new course will be introduced and the estimated required time for preparation of the course.

6. A final note of caution on this new course is that given extensive research done on human trafficking and the availability of a great deal of information, effort be made to avoid duplication and ensure complementarity with programmes that are currently on-going both within Thailand and in the GMS region.

7. On a different issue, the team notes the success of GDS in surpassing the 50:50 male-female ratio for student recruitment. Of the 25 intakes for 2005 male/female ratio stood at 1: 24. With the overall goal of promoting the advancement of women in the Asian region by strengthening their role in development, the team recommends that GDS reviews its intake of male-female ratio including that of the gender composition of faculty members. This recommendation is made through taking the reality of existing power structure in the region into consideration, where policy and decision makers are often males and the structure highly patriarchal. This "reverse" strategy will have the potential to strengthen and accelerate the current efforts to address the gender imbalances and biases in the region. We, therefore, suggest that AIT and GDS in particular, give this suggestion serious consideration.

3.2.4 Academic networking with Norwegian Institutions on Environmental issues

3.2.4.1 Goals

This component is planned to spend 10.5% of the budget. It involves a networking ambition with Norwegian research environments, within "development planning" and management towards securing sustainable development in the region". It includes mutual visits and exchange of students and staff and the financing of seconded staff for one semester per year in SERD. NTNU is suggested as a nodal institution in Norway, with openings also for other environments.

3.2.4.2 Assessment

1. The team finds this component very commendable. Several research environments in Norway, as well as at AIT can benefit from such a mutual enterprise. One could consider to have seconded staff also for less than a semester, thus allowing more researchers to participate, but that could be left to AIT to decide. The proposal is quite open as to what institutions to cooperate with apart from NTNU, which seems reasonable at this point in time. Still, the consultant, being from UMB, finds it hard not to also mention UMB as a potential partner, as much of the topics in question have very relevant research environments situated at UMB.

2. A possible more long term ambition; or an ambition requiring more funds, draws on experiences from other examples of research institution collaboration. It could involve establishing systems of funds from which small research grants or seed money can be shared between researchers from north and south upon filing joint applications. This often creates more long term and sustainable scientific networks where research grants are also drawn from other sources over time. Such models have been used, for example in Tanzania and Ethiopia, with reportedly good success.

3. Relevant topics for such networking could be environment and development issues in general but also some focus areas could be discussed between the parties such as:

- clean energy
- Sustainable development and natural resource management

It was also raised as an issue from NMFA that this component should have and be flagged as the environment and development component of the overall programme.

4. One item that could have been problematized in the PD, is that it proved difficult to attract staff secondment for longer periods of time from Norway, and one should look into reasons or experiences in that respect. What can be done to make it more attractive to come to AIT? One suggestion is that by making more openings for seed money launching research efforts could make it more tempting for staff to come; compared to if the secondment basically implies teaching. Another suggestion is that one full semester secondment periods may be too ambitious, so one could at least also open for shorter stays.

3.3. STRUCTURAL DESIGN OF PROGRAMME

The PD is constructed over a template already tested out and given good grades; see the review.

Consistency: Although there is no stated overall goal in the new project proposal; as was in the previous PD (could use that one), there is good consistency between objectives, inputs and outputs; and the budget seems well balanced relative to good goal achievement. One could maybe flag the three scientific topics, Environment, Human rights/gender and Development a bit more explicit than what is done now.

Quality of underlying analysis and planning activities: In general, we feel that the programme is well planned and thought through. We have already made a point on a clearer institution and capacity building ambition, and do not repeat this here.

Realism (external factors, risk elements): There seems to be little reasons to assume that any of the outputs may not be reached; maybe apart from fulfilling 30 bridging fellowships, and being able to have seconded staff for a total of 2 years. The last item should be discussed in more detail between the parties.

In addition, the point raised on considering staffing in place for Human Rights and gender ambitions; if one is not able to employ more staff, then the ambitions or expected outputs may prove to be somewhat on the high side.

Assessment of indicators used. The PD is very clear on outputs and indicators from the two components; scholarships and GDS. On the networking part; one could have been more ambitious on thinking about indicators apart from visits. Is it reasonable to expect tangible research outputs/products in the period? How many and what type? How many research proposals filed etc. This could be attempted quantified in the revised PD.

The project development process: In general, we feel that staff at AIT is strongly behind and have been actively participating in the development of the PD. The contact with donor during the process has not been very close. We do not feel that national universities or Norwegian research environments have been much involved in the process of developing the PD. We do not, however, see this as any major problem.

3.4 ASSESSMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL ASPECTS

Institutional and organizational structure of programme: This has already been commented upon in the review. We see that AIT staff and programme management seems to function very well, and given that the new PD is not very different from the previous, we do not have much comments or suggestions in terms of changes here.

Regional versus national programme aspects: Again, this issue has been raised several times. We have raised the issue of a more widespread collaborative approach between AIT and national universities within relevant FoS in the programme. In this context, a clearer distinction between the nations in the region that clearly need and would benefit from the programme in contrast to “competing countries” such as India, China and Malaysia for example.

Assessment of involved partners and agencies: AIT has proved its competence; both to run the programme; and also through delivering good products by means of a well qualified staff. What we have not been able to assess during our brief field visit, is AIT’s relationship to national bodies and in particular to national universities, both in Thailand and in the region. We would also have liked to see more documentation of AITs strong regional and global networks in the PD.

The Alumni networks present themselves as an important asset of AIT; both in that they can be used in AIT’s direct operations, but also that they form an important regional and national power base and support for AIT at critical times.

Due to time constraints, the team has not had the opportunity to go more in detail and see how the Alumni could or should be given some more dominant role in the programme apart from its existing role in assisting AIT with student intake.

3.5. BUDGET ALLOCATIONS AND PRIORITIES

Financial management structure and cash flows: Both from the review, audit reports and also through discussions with Mr. Wan, the chief financial officer, it seems as if the present programme management structure, including economic accounting and audits have been functioning well. There should be no reason to alter the present system in the new programme.

Budget by programme items (KRA): We have briefly addressed that we had no comment to the priorities reflected in Table 4. As listed there some 67.5% of the total budget is used for Fellowships, some 16.7% to GDS, 10.5% to the Networking with Norwegian environments and a 5% contingency. Except for the following two observations, we do not intend to comment much on the priorities reflected in the budget;

- One could consider reducing the contingency to 2.5% and allocating the extra funds to some of the items suggested in the appraisal, such as a possible additional position on Human rights/Gender
- One could consider altering the balance between the number of M.Sc. and PhD. fellowships

The team finds that the suggested general distribution between cost items to be reasonable.

Budget by cost items: This is a bit difficult to assess, as there is no breakdown of cost items in the presented PD. However, ca 1/3 of the fellowship programme is spent for funds to students; the rest goes as tuition and registration fees to AIT. The PhD. programme and bridging programme has a somewhat similar distribution.

For the gender and human rights component, some 61% is suggested for the journal as already mentioned. It is unclear to what extent this is salaries or just printing and other costs. Some 20% is suggested for personnel costs to visiting faculty/editor in chief; while the bulk of the research funds under GDS (some 14%). is used for salaries to researchers.

In addition comes a rather substantial contingency, as already stated.

Budget shares by partners: Summarizing this, and if the fellowship programme holds the bulk of the programme; most of the funds are not spent directly to students, but goes to AIT to cover in particular salaries for teaching and research.

Concerning student shares; there were some complaints from students on regarding a wide gap or disparity between different scholarships:

-World Bank fellows are provided with 800 USD/month whereas Norad/NMFA receive 160 USD/month. This could be discussed between donors.

- The costs of travel to and from AIT; Norad/NMFA financed students have to pay for travel themselves. This is different from what SIDA or DANIDA scholarships include. We recommend that this is looked into, in order to find a common practice.

3.6 GOOD GOVERNANCE, HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER AND CORRUPTION ISSUES

3.6.1 Good governance, human rights and gender

We see two discussions as relevant here.

1. One issue is how such topics are covered in the teaching, research – in the suggested programme itself. From our brief investigations and discussions with staff, we believe, that especially with our suggestions for linking gender issues with broader aspects of governance, topics such as human rights including labour rights, labour conditions, trafficking etc. will be covered well in the new programme.

2. The other issue relates to the planning, management, monitoring and controls of the programme itself and how such concerns are catered for. From past phases and reviews and through discussions, we feel confident that the programme is run in a

way that secures good governance, transparency and also that gender concerns are catered for.

3.7. ISSUES ON RELEVANCE

3.7.1 Relations to Norwegian Development assistance policies: We find that the programme is well in line with NMFA's overall priorities as reflected in the Parliament Paper (35- 2003-2004) (A Common Fight Against Poverty), both concerning involved countries, involved support fields concerning education and institution-building, and gender and environment orientation. One *can* discuss how much direct poverty alleviation focus the programme has. Higher education, and the training of trainers still have long term general effects on welfare levels in society. In addition, the field of study; the particular links between poverty and environment, poverty and gender; generally address poverty issues.

On a more detailed level, the appraised programme serves well into major steering documents for the Embassy, such as the regulations for the regional grant and for the newly approved "Directions for Norwegian Development Cooperation in Asia (NMFA, June 2005) and also into the Annual Activity Plans for the Embassy.

- In the regional grant; environment, education, gender, human rights and research cooperation are prioritized areas.

- In the second document ("Directions..."), education, governance, and human rights are mentioned in particular. For Cambodia and Laos, one highlights environment and human rights. It is clear that good governance holds an important focus throughout this document. Another issues relate to possibilities for commercial collaborations, and in this context it may be possible to link petroleum activities more explicitly into the programme. Collaboration both in terms of recruiting relevant candidates to AIT studies, linking the research component also to petroleum and also looking at NMFAs present cooperation with CCOP better with AIT environments seems to be a potentially fruitful venture.

In the final polishing of the project document and in light of what is discussed above, it may be possible to view human rights/gender/governance and the environment/clean energy profile as the two pillars on which the new programme rests.

3.7.2 Recipient policies and responsibilities

In contrast to many other donor supported initiatives where the programme is clearly linked to the recipient country's government and its policies, this support links up with an institution that has a formal status as an international organisation, but obviously located in a national country, and where the country of residence (Thailand) has a strong role to play, both as an actor providing substantial funds to AIT, and also to some extent "interfering" in AIT's activities in different ways. This could be both direct and indirect through providing economic support and placing the institution in the political context; both to AIT itself, but also to its national competitors and of course also collaborative partners.

A discussion we have had in the team, and also with AIT, is to what extent the proposed programme serves AIT directly or its regional ambition to assist poor

countries in the region. From NMFA's perspective, and with a poverty alleviation main focus, it is the regional ambition that most likely should have the highest priority for the Norwegian support. We have also already several times addressed AIT's separate – and legitimate needs for own development; that is also partly catered for at present by the rather substantial tuition fees included in the programme budget.

We have, in our four days of field work, not met with Thai authorities on their thinking and relationship to AIT, and we suggest that NMFA should do this prior to a final approval of the programme, to see how and to what extent the programme support feeds into both national and regional efforts. Since Thailand is not on NMFA's main priorities for development support, it must be the regional dimension towards the poor, priority countries that forms the bulk of the attention in this programme.

3.7.3 Crosscutting concerns; environment, clean energy, human rights, governance and gender

As already mentioned several places in this report, these issues are well addressed in the programme.

3.8 DONOR COORDINATION, PROGRAMME AND SIMILAR PROGRAMMES

3.8.1 General notes

There is very little apparent donor coordination and harmonization. We had discussions with UNESCAP, NFMA, SIDA and CIDA and found that different donors do not have much discussions or joint actions towards AIT.

Most donors do meet, however, in AIT Board Meetings, and as such have a forum where issues of joint interests can be raised.

As stressed by the three donors we met, there are no separate meeting where donors meet and discuss joint strategies towards AIT. This can be interpreted, and we do, as a sign of trust; donors are happy with AIT and do not feel need to have separate meetings to discuss strategies or joint lines on action.

However, it could also reflect that most donors basically use AIT to buy services from them throughout the region, and as such AIT is more used as a subject for development in other areas or organizations, than AIT being the object for development in itself.

One point made by SIDA, is that they have throughout the region, environmental programmes that could link up with NMFA supported programmes within watershed management, hazardous waste and solid waste management.

Another idea is that NMFA could discuss, would be possibilities for more south-south collaboration efforts; where institutions like CATIE in Costa Rica/Central America, and also many African environments could really benefit from collaborations with AIT.

3.8.2 Some programmes and initiatives

In a review report financed by JICA (2004), an overview is given of a substantial number of regional co-operations that AIT is involved in. It includes among others the AIT extension system, a substantial number of AIT situated outreach centres, joint outreach centres, distance education centres, the GMSARN and also various partnership collaborations with institutions in developed countries in Asia and Europe. Below and from the web we find description of some of these initiatives;

- To encourage collaboration among GMS countries, AIT established the Greater Mekong Subregion Academic and Research Network (**GMSARN**) with ten other academic institutions, namely, Hanoi University of Technology in Vietnam; Ho Chi Min City University of Technology in Vietnam; Institute of Technology of Cambodia; Khon Kaen University in Thailand; Kunming University of Science and Technology in Yunnan Province, China; National University of Laos; Royal University of Phnom Penh in Cambodia; Thammasat University in Thailand; Yangon Technological University in Myanmar and Yunnan University in China. With its secretariat at AIT, GMSARN undertakes initiatives to strengthen the human resources development in the GMS through short-term training courses, workshops, visiting research fellowships, and graduate degree programs.

- Satellite ventures in Vietnam, the AIT Vietnam (**AITV**) in Hanoi and the Swiss-AIT-Vietnam Management Development Program (SAV) in Ho Chi Min City. The AITV mission is to be an international gateway for technology transfer supporting national development of Vietnam through post-graduate and short-term training, information services, research and consultancy.

- Delivery of non-degree professional training programs and outreach activities, such as sponsored research and consultancy, short-term training, seminars, symposia, workshops and conferences through the AIT Extension.

- An active Aquaculture and Aquatic Resources Management (**AARM**) Program which has an **aquaculture outreach network** in four countries in Southeast Asia, i.e., Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam, which not only demonstrates the technical feasibility of using small-scale aquaculture for poverty alleviation, but also works closely with national, provincial and local institutions in the fisheries sector to build capacity to sustain aquaculture development activities.

- Regional institutions such as **Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, UNEP-RRCAAP, and WWF** are based at or have strong links with AIT and work on various issues of Asian countries. These are important contact points for sharing information and experience, and collaborative activities in topics of mutual interest.

- AIT has initiated academic cooperation with the Coordinating **Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and Southeast Asia (CCOP)** in the fields of petroleum resources technology and geotechnical engineering. CCOP is an intergovernmental organization with a mission to facilitate and coordinate the implementation of applied geoscience programmes in East and Southeast Asia in order to contribute to economic development and an improved quality of life within the region. Norway is one of the cooperating countries of CCOP. AIT has launched a

Geosystem Exploration and Petroleum Geo-engineering Programme as a new interdisciplinary area of specialization from September 2002.

Several of these ventures could- and also do, feed into possible joint donor/AIT strategies for the development of regional and national capacity and competence for national level training of expertise in the future. It is recommended that also NMFA look closer into existing regional institutional building initiatives, and see how the suggested new programme could be used to strengthen identified national institutions.

3.9 ASSESSMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY

The continuation of benefits from a programme after major development assistance has been completed. The probability of continued long-term benefits; political, institutional and organisational; socio-cultural and gender; economic and financial; environmental and technological aspects.

Political sustainability. One issue one raised by AIT is whether or not Myanmar should be included in the list of eligible countries.

A larger issue discussed several places in this report, is how politically stable AIT's position is in Thailand towards government and the political system. Another issue is how they relate to other- partly competing- academic institutions. We have not been able to find time to look into this issue.

Institutional and organisational sustainability: At present, AIT can only offer these programmes based on a continued donor support. The long term overall institutional and organizational sustainability is thus fragile.

The lack of explicit plans for institutional development through identifying key national institutions in different countries in the region, conscious recruitment of candidates from these institutions, and transfer of programmes, sandwich programmes etc. also reduces long term institutional and organisational sustainability of this particular support. It is, as discussed already, possible that some of the existing AIT initiatives could be used also for this programme under appraisal.

We thus recommend to develop an improved institutional development profile in the programme for the different FoS, where also existing initiatives are considered.

An alternative to the suggestion above is that candidates are recruited from other *NMFA supported programmes in the region*, as stressed by the appraisal in 2004. We raise the issue, but leave it to NMFA to consider this- in dialogue with the other Norwegian embassies in the region. A problem in this context is that the other Embassies for some- strange –reason do not seem to be much interested in utilizing these fellowship opportunities inside their own programmes- or that they actually are not aware of their existence.

The problem of **brain drain** can also be seen as impacting on the institutional sustainability of the programme. Some candidates do not go back, or they migrate from their countries of origin, so that their competence does not benefit the intended country and institutions. From a development perspective this should be addressed

and one could discuss to what extent measures could be found to reduce this phenomenon. Examples could be recruitment policy, formal and informal contracts, awareness raising among students and candidates etc could be considered.

Socio-cultural and gender sustainability: As stated in the review as well, the existing programme obviously scores well on these issues. We still recommend, from a sustainability perspective, more mainstreaming; in that more students are encouraged to take gender and social science programme also in the more traditional engineering programmes. Male, female ratio should also be seriously considered.

Staff development in the social context is also important. Staff in different fields should be exposed to socio-cultural and gender dimensions even in more technical engineer-oriented subjects. Short courses, further education, but also on-job training and team teaching efforts could be considered included as measures in the final PD.

Economic and financial sustainability: The suggested activities are completely donor dependent. However, one could say that by including national institution-building components, costs of educating new experts would go down, thus improving the economic and financial sustainability in the long run.

We have furthermore already recommended (in the review) more concerted donor actions relative to AIT; and put forward the idea of an increased endowment fund.

Environmental sustainability: As the main objective is to educate people in different field of environmental studies, this point must be said to be fulfilled well.

Technological sustainability: Again, a major objective is to educate people also in different engineering fields, this point must be said to be fulfilled well.

Impact of HIV/AIDS on programme:

1. To what extent does staff address these issues in classes? We do believe that these are topics at least in the GDS courses, but one could probably also want a broader approach in this respect.

AIT sent us the following response to this question *“At AIT, there are institute-wide courses (1 or 2 credits courses) offered during the summer months (June – July) or inter semester period. The institute-wide courses are electives which students must choose to enrol (at least 1 course) as a requirement of their master degree program. So far, 1 course on HIV/AIDS had been taught in the January 2005 semester and 1 course in June-July 2005 inter semester. Other courses are on gender awareness, good governance, and business ethics have also been taught”*.

2. We asked AIT the following second set of questions; To what extent are these issues a threat to students and candidates? Is there any testing of candidates prior to intake? Do we know anything about how large share of candidates that are lost to HIV/AIDS over the years? And in case, what could be done? What is AIT doing?

“All AIT applicants who have been accepted for admission to AIT are required to submit a complete medical certification by a physician from home country. The AIT medical form is sent along with the offer of admission documents and explicitly asks

for hepatitis, Tuberculosis and rabies clearances. HIV/AIDS is not checked as there are many legal and sensitive issues involved. After arriving at AIT, these new students are further required to report to AIT medical clinic for medical profiling. AIT Medical Clinic does not include standard mandatory AIDS test yet and will only do AIDS testing with the consent/agreement of the student (sensitive issue / legal implications).

As far as I know, no candidates or AIT students or alumni have been declared as HIV/AIDS sufferers. AIT Alumni Office could help find this out although I think in many Asian countries individual medical records/histories are not for public domain and the AIDS stigma may mean that such individual medical histories are confidential. As far as raising awareness and prevention of HIV/AIDS, AIT has cooperation with Mahidol University, Chulabhorn Research Institute and Thammasat University in Thailand that have their own Medical Faculty or research centers dealing with Cancer, Tropical Diseases and HIV/AIDS. AIT can use these institutions to raise awareness at AIT and in the region and also tap their faculty members to teach in related institute-wide courses at AIT”.

We believe that AIT’s responses reflect a responsible institution’s adaptation to these difficult and sensitive issues.

Human rights: That AIT’s gender programme is operating well and is achieving its goals is one indicator of AIT taking into consideration concerns related to human rights and in particular to women’s rights. In this regard, the significance of a course on HIV/AIDS in Asia needs to be reviewed and how the course is run within the overall human rights perspective. This is also an issue of relevance to other FOS as development and environmental degradation can both directly and indirectly affect the rights of those touched by these processes. An objective of the proposed programme is both to establish study offers in the field and to educate students and staff. The inclusion of labour condition and rights issues is maybe in particular important, given the many programmes that educate engineers that often become tomorrows’ private sector managers. We thus feel that the area is well covered in the programme.

3.10. OVERALL ASSESSMENT CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.10.1 Main principles and conditions for planning and implementation

The presented programme document is clear, well structured and concise. The objectives are clearly relevant and in accordance with NMFA general policies and well in line with Norway’s Regional Allocations’ emphasis on human rights/gender and environment priorities. In a more general development context, the programme must also be said to have a highly relevant profile. The team thus recommends support to the proposed programme, pending some relatively minor revisions.

We thus suggest that NMFA discusses the issues raised in the appraisal and the review report sections and that a final, revised PD is developed as soon as possible.

3.10.2 Financial and technical requirements with anticipated inputs from partners, NMFA and other donors

The new PD does not suggest any principal changes in these requirements compared to the last phase, and can thus continue with the present set-up. We have suggested

some minor changes and revisions that may alter the total frame of some NOK 15 million, but only marginally. If more funds should be available, there will be small problems of incorporating such in the present programme frame.

3.10.3 Division of responsibilities between partners, NMFA and other donors

Again, the new PD does not suggest any principal changes in these responsibilities compared to the last phase, and one can thus continue with the present arrangement. We do, however, recommend that certain items be discussed between NMFA and other donors; both at general AIT support level; but also concerning issues regarding institutional capacity building at national levels; and also concerning the potential financing of a position in Human rights/trafficking.

By moving the responsibility of the programme to the Embassy from Oslo, it can also be hoped that a more active involvement from NMFA's side will be possible.

3.10.4 Measures to ensure the partner's administrative capacity, quality assurance, accounting, auditing and reporting

The two last reviews do not document or reveal any need for changes and we have no further suggestions here.

3.10.5 Requirements for reviews and evaluations

We recommend following the previous system with one mid-term review and an end-evaluation.

PART IV. APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. TOR

Royal Norwegian Embassy, Bangkok

REVIEW AND APPRAISAL

RAS 0351, NORWEGIAN SUPPORT TO THE ASIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (AIT)

1. Background

Norway, with the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation ("Norad"), an agency under the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs ("NMFA") has supported the Asian Institute of Technology since 1979. For the period 2003-2005 a grant of NOK 15 million has been provided, most of the funds are planned and utilized for Fellowships for master degree students from countries in the Asian region, and a part of the budget is used to support the operation of the institute of Gender and Development studies ("the Programme").

In 2004 a reorganization of Norwegian development cooperation took place. NMFA has taken over the responsibility for the bilateral and regional budgets while Norad has a stronger mandate on technical advisory services and quality control. More of the coordination of the Norwegian development cooperation is delegated to the embassies, and the coordination of the cooperation with AIT was placed to the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Bangkok ("RNE") from October 2004.

A request and a proposal have been forwarded by AIT for Norwegian support amounting to NOK 18 million to AIT for the period of January 2006 – December 2009. The main activities proposed are Masters and Doctoral Scholarships, support to Gender and Development Studies and academic networking with Norwegian Institutions.

With reference to the procedures described in the NMFA and Norad Development Cooperation Manual, a review of the ongoing Norwegian support to AIT and an appraisal of the AIT proposal will be carried out. Norad and RNE cooperate in carrying out the study and have selected a team of two experts from Norwegian University and from the United Nations administration in Bangkok.

2. The team

Norad and RNE have appointed the following team to carry out the review and appraisal:

- **Paul Olav Vedeld**, Dr. Science, Professor, Environment and Development Studies, The Norwegian University of Bio and Life Sciences

Tasks for the AIT study: Team Leader, Environmental and Development issues, Overall assessment, Co-author of the Report.

- **Susu Thatun**, Ph.D. Deputy Program Manager, The UN Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking in the Greater Mekong Sub-region, UNIAP, Bangkok. Team Member of the AIT study.

Tasks for the AIT study: Team Member, Gender, Human Rights and Developing issues, Overall assessment, Co-Author to the Report.

3. Purpose of the Study

3.1 The review

To determine whether the program has been efficient and effective in relation to the goals set and plans developed. To examine the relevance of activities and measures undertaken to further relevance of the programme, also in a current perspective. Examine efforts made to improve sustainability. To define possible areas of improvement.

3.2 The Appraisal

Assess the relevance, feasibility and potential risk and sustainability of the Program Proposal. Give advice on potential improvements that will contribute to good programme design.

4. Scope of Work and Priority Issues

In short text the review and appraisal shall follow the procedures described in the NMFA and Norad Development Cooperation Manual.

The issues listed below from the Manual (par. 4.1.1 – 4.1.7 and 4.2.1 – 4.2.3) provide an integrated approach for review and appraisal. The issues may overlap with some of the priority issues. Priority issues for particular concerns to be investigated are addressed under par. 4.1.8 and 4.2.4 below.

4.1 The Review

The Team shall assess the following evaluation criteria of the program implemented under the present agreement.

4.1.1 Efficiency (productivity) A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc) are converted to outputs.

4.1.2 Effectiveness. The extent to which the program's purpose was achieved, or is expected to be achieved.

4.1.3 Impact. Positive and negative, primary and secondary, long-term effects produced by a development programme, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

4.1.4 Relevance. The extent, to which the objectives of a programme are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs global priorities and partners 'and donors' priorities.

4.1.5 Sustainability.

The continuation of benefits from the programme after major development assistance has been completed. The probability of continued long-term benefits.

4.1.6 Audit

4.1.7 Anti-corruption measures

4.1.8 Particular concerns to be investigated.

- AIT's regional mandate and its role (relevance and impact) in the region should be reflected on.
- The sources of financing the operation of AIT and its education and research programmes, and its regional networking, and research programs. The importance of individual donor contributions. Assessment of institutional and financial sustainability and efforts made to improve sustainability. Comment on the coordination between AIT, the Government of Thailand, and the donor group.
- The relevance of the Programme to meet training needs and provide capacity building in individual countries and for the region.
- The quality of the AIT curriculum, staff and teaching on the main fields covered by the program financed by Norway.
- The importance of the Bridging Courses for preparing students for their main studies at AIT. The experiences with flexible Master programmes and scholarships.

4.2. The Appraisal

4.2.1 Assessment of AIT's' planning process

- The quality of the underlying analysis and planning process of the programme, including participation of relevant stakeholders in the process
- The relevance of the programme with regards to the problems that the programme should contribute to solve and the interests of the involved stakeholders
- The use of lessons learned from earlier experience with similar programmes and/or the best available knowledge
- Other planned or on-going programmes that may influence the implementation or the effects of the planned programme.

4.2.2 Assessment of the programme design

- The quality of the design elements, (goal, purpose, outputs, inputs), e.g. consistency and realism
- The quality of the Indicators and Means of Verification (data sets) identified at all levels of the design elements. Are the indicators sufficient to give valid and reliable information on outcome and impact
- The quality, simplicity and user friendliness of the recipient's monitoring system for the programme
- Are relevant and reliable baseline data available
- Are relevant risk factors identified, analysed and are mitigating actions integrated in the programme design

4.2.3 Assessment of sustainability and risks

- Policy and framework conditions (incl. corruption)
- Socio-cultural and gender aspects (incl. HIV/AIDS)
- Economic and financial aspects
- Institutional and organisational aspects
- Environmental aspects
- Technical/technological aspects
- Any other significant risks that may prevent achievements of results

4.2.4 Particular concerns to be assessed.

- The relevance of the Programme, the extent, to which the objectives of a programme are consistent with AIT's development strategies, beneficiaries' requirements, and country and region's needs and global priorities.
- The design of the Programme with reference to NMFA's policy for development cooperation in the region and NMFA's policy for financing regional programmes, also comment on countries to be supported through the program and the concentration on academic fields and sectors.
- Is the design of the program of good quality in order to contribute to efficient and relevant delivery of capacity building to the countries and the region.
- AIT's objectives for expanding the Ph.D. part of the Programme, related to need for development of university capacity in the region and other influence Ph.D. scholars may have for the development in individual countries and in the region.
- The status of AIT's institutional cooperation and networking with other universities and institutions. Assessment of the proposal of institutional cooperation in the Programme. Recommendation on possible feasible institutional cooperation and networking to be included in the Programme.

4.2.5 Related Issues

A program activity on petroleum training, a possible cooperation between AIT, Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and Southeast Asia (CCOP), universities in the region, and Norwegian universities and petroleum institutions are being discussed with AIT and CCOP. Fellowships from the Norwegian supported AIT Program now being appraised, may provide some fellowships to a possible petroleum-training program. A request and project document on CCOP's continuation on regional programs will be assessed in a separate appraisal. The Team may, where appropriate, provide preliminary comments.

5. Implementation of the appraisal

Key documentation will be provided to the Team Prior to the Study:

- Project Document for the present program.
 - Final Review of prior period and appraisal of ongoing program
 - The Program Agreement.
 - The last Annual Report from the Program.
 - AIT's Project Proposal of March 2005.
-
- Audit reports will be available at the Norwegian Embassy and at AIT.
 - AIT will provide earlier annual reports from AIT and other relevant Documentation.

- Norad, RNE and AIT will contribute in making available studies and reviews on AIT that are considered relevant and useful for the study.

The fieldwork in Bangkok is planned to take place, starting Monday 22 August 2005 9 AM. at RNE, 18th floor, UBC II Building, 591 Sukhumvit Rd., Soi 33, and starting at 1 PM at AIT.

Meetings will be scheduled by AIT in coordination with RNE. Fieldwork will be completed on Friday 26 August and Monday 29 August is set aside for working on the draft report.

Hours set aside to the study by the team members will be agreed in contracts or exchange of letters.

6. Reporting

A draft report in English language will be submitted to Norad and RNE by 16 September 2005. The report should be approximately 20–24 pages including a summary of 3-4 pages.

The summary is also planned to be an input to two strategy studies that RNE and Norad this fall will carry out on Norway's present and future participation on regional programs in Asia on the area of Human Rights, Environment, and the Petroleum sector (the CCOP cooperation).

APPENDIX 2. ITINERARY

Program for the Visit of the NORAD Review Team 22 – 26 August 2005

The members of the team are:

- 1. Dr. Paul Olav Vedeld, Environment and Development Studies, the Norwegian University of Bio and Life Sciences (Team Leader)*
- 2. Dr. Susu Thatun, Deputy Program Manager, the UN Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking in the Greater Mekong Sub-region, UNIAP, Bangkok*
- 3. Mr. Lasse Nymoen, First Secretary (Development Cooperation), Royal Norwegian Embassy, Bangkok*

Monday, 22 August 2005

- 09:00 hrs. Briefing at the Royal Norwegian Embassy
- 14:00 hrs. Arrival at AIT to be met by Ms. Kanya Worawichwong, Corporate Relations Coordinator, Office of the President
- Courtesy call on Professor Said Irandoust, President, to be joined by Professor Jayant K. Routray, Chair of the AIT Task Force on Norad Proposal and Dr. Bernadette P. Resurreccion, Gender and Development Studies (GDS) Coordinator
22 AIT Video Presentation
Venue: Room 260, Administration building
- 15:00 hrs. Meeting with Mr. Matthew Laszewski, Director of Language Center, Mr. Benjamin A. Gargabite, Director of Admissions and Scholarships, Ms. Laarni Rao, Registry Officer and Mr. Kyaw Soe Hlaing, Alumni Relations Coordinator
23 Discussion on Scholarships, Bridging Courses, Flexible Master Programmes, students and alumni
Venue: Room 210, Administration building
- 16:30 hrs. Meeting with Mr. Surendra Shrestha, Regional Director and Representative for Asia and the Pacific (UNEP ROAP) and Director for UNEP RRC AP
Venue: RRCAP Meeting room, UNEP, 3rd floor, Outreach building, AIT

Tuesday, 23 August 2005

- 09:30 hrs. Meeting with Prof. Chongrak Polprasert, Dean SERD
Venue: Board 210, Administration building
- 10:30 hrs. Meeting with the AIT Task Force on Norad Proposal:
Professor Jayant K. Routray, Chair of the Task Force
Professor Sivanappan Kumar, Energy, Invitee,
Dr. Dietrich Schmidt-Vogt, Natural Resources Management (NRM) Coordinator

Review and Appraisal of Norwegian Support to AIT

Dr. Bernadette P. Resurreccion, Gender and Development Studies (GDS) Coordinator
Dr. Preeda Parkpian, Environmental Engineering and Management Coordinator, Invitee
Dr. Weerakorn Ongsakul, Energy Coordinator
Dr. Noppadol Phien-wej, Geotechnical Engineering Coordinator
Venue: Room 210, Administration building

12:00 noon Lunch to be hosted by AIT, at Lobby Lounge, AIT Conference Center

13:30 hrs. Meeting with Dr. Preeda Parkpian Environmental Engineering and Management Coordinator and EEM faculty
Venue: Board Room, Administration building

14:30 hrs. Meeting with Prof. Gopal Thapa, Regional and Rural Development Planning Coordinator and RRDP faculty
Venue: Board Room, Administration building

15:00 hrs. Meeting with Dr. Bernadette P. Resurreccion and GDS faculty
- Discussion on Gender and Development Studies (GDS)
Venue: Board Room, Administration building

Wednesday, 24 August 2005

09:00 hrs. Meeting with Mr. David Yasui, Counsellor (Development), at Canadian Embassy, 15th floor, Abdulrahim Place, 990 Rama IV Road, Bangkok

11:00 hrs. Meeting with Dr. Bo Gohl, Regional Advisor, Swedish Secretariat in Asia (SENSA), at the Embassy of Sweden, 20th Floor, Environmental First Pacific Place, 140 Sukhumvit Road, Bangkok

14:00 hrs. Meeting with Dr. Thelma Kay, Chief of WID/GAD/Emerging Issues UN ESCAP WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT SECTION, United Nations Building, Rajdamnern Nok Avenue, Bangkok

Thursday, 25 August 2005

09:30 hrs. Meeting with Ms. Monowara Hussain (venue to be determined)

14:30 hrs. Meeting with Mr. Ng Eng Wan, Chief Financial Officer
Venue: Board Room, Administration building

15:30 hrs. Meeting with Norad scholarships recipients
Venue: Board Room, Administration building

Friday, 26 August 2005

8:30 hrs. Meeting with Mr. Chen Shick Pei, Director of CCOP Technical Secretariat and Mr. Simplicio P. Caluyong, Project Coordinator, Petroleum Policy and Management (PPM) Project, at Coordinating Committee for Geosciences Programmes in East and Southeast Asia (CCOP) Technical Secretariat, Thai CC Tower, 24th floor, Suite 244-245, 889 Sathorn Tai road, Sathorn, Bangkok

11:00 hrs. Debriefing – all are invited
Venue: Board Room, Administration building

12:00 noon Lunch at Lobby Lounge, AIT Conference Center

Departure

CC: Mr. David Yasui,
Counsellor (Development)
Canadian Embassy
15th floor, Abdulrahim Place
990 Rama IV Road
Bangkok Fax: 02 6360569

Dr. Bo Gohl
Regional Advisor
Swedish Environmental Secretariat in Asia (SENSA)
The Embassy of Sweden
20th Floor, First Pacific Place
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Dr. Thelma Kay
Chief of WID/GAD/Emerging Issues
UN ESCAP WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT SECTION
United Nations building
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Mr. Chen Shick Pei
Director of CCOP Technical Secretariat and
Mr. Simplicio P. Caluyong
Project Coordinator
Petroleum Policy and Management (PPM) Project
CCOP Technical Secretariat
Thai CC Tower, 24th floor, Suite 244-245
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Sathorn, Bangkok Fax: 02 6723082

APPENDIX 3. ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AIT	Asian Institute of Technology
AM	Annual Meeting
CCOP	Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and South East Asia
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
GDS	Gender and Development Studies
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGDO	Non Governmental Development Organizations Management Project
NMFA	Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NTNU	Norwegian University of Science and Technology
RRDP	Regional and Rural Development Program
SERD	School of Environment, Resources and Development
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

APPENDIX 4. DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

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CCOP (2004): Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and Southeast Asia. CCOP Technical Secretariat, Bangkok, Thailand. 47 pp.

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GTZ (2002): Tracer Study of AIT Alumnae and Alumni with German Scholarship or Fellowship, 1972-1999. Synopsis of Salient Findings. AIT, Pathumthani, Thailand. 153 pp.

JICA (2004): Survey for Reviewing Cooperation and Technical Resources of AIT. Kokusai Kogyo (Thailand) CO., LTD. 250 pp.

NMFA 2005: Agreed Minutes from The Annual Review Meeting of the Cooperation Between the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Represented Through the Royal Norwegian Embassy, Bangkok, and the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), 30 November 2004. Thailand.

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NORAD (2005): Development Cooperation Manual. Published by NORAD on behalf of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. 52 pp.

The Royal Norwegian Embassy, Bangkok (2005): Terms of Reference, Review and Appraisal. RAS 0351, The Norwegian Support to the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT). Royal Norwegian Embassy, Thailand

UD (2004): St.meld. nr. 35 (2003-2004). Felles kamp mot fattigdom. En Helhetlig Utviklingspolitikk. 205 pp.

UD (2005): Notat. Innretting av utviklingssamarbeid i Asia. 14 pp.

APPENDIX 5. DEBRIEFING OVERHEAD NOTES

Debriefing Notes Board Room, Administration building, Asian Institute of Technology 26 August 2005

Debriefing Notes

Review of "Human Resources Development in Asia Through Higher Education and Training Programme" AIT (2003 – 2005)
and
Appraisal of "Education for Sustainable Development" Programme Proposal
AIT (2006-2009)

Paul Vedeld, Noragric, UMB and Susu Thatun, Consultant

1. General statement on review

- Excellent planning and execution
- Good relationships to donor
- Broad sets of important regional networks
- Very competent academic and administrative staff

2. Overall concerns

- Constrained and donor dependent economy
- AIT is treated more as a service provider than a collaborative partner with own needs by donors
- Regional mandate and ambitions on individual and institutional competence and capacity building?
- Division of labour between AIT and national actors?

3.1 The scholarship components

- All goals seems to be fulfilled so far. Results in line with donor bearings for countries, FoS and gender

Assessments;

- High scientific quality for FoS content
- Very relevant and applied thesis topics
- Students are involved and satisfied; responsible for own learning-positive attitudes to school and staff; except for scholarships and field budgets?

3.1 The scholarship components

- Some issues for question;
- Somewhat lacking the combination of solid technical competence development with social science and gender perspectives and interdisciplinarity in some of the FoS; in particular the more traditional engineer and agricultural type studies?
- No fellowships to NORAD supported programmes/ institutions?
- Flexible Msc. Degrees student ?
- 20% of all students migrate to N-America and Australia after graduating- a substantial brain-drain problem- any good measures available??

3.2 Bridging programme

- Important and well-functioning- exemplaric idea for others!
- Less students enrolled than planned for
- Closer assessment of C/B of the programme?
- Accumulated funds converted to M.Sc. Fellowship?

3.3 Student intake

- Seems to be based on good regional knowledge of actors and institutions; can help avoid unsuccessful intakes
- A bit unclear if AIT is able to have its own strategy on intake given all donor bearings cutting across countries, institutions, FoS and gender?
- And could such a strategy involve also concerted institutional competence and capacity building at national levels?
- Student intake processes can be a hotspots relative to issues of good governance etc?

3.4 Gender studies

- Excellent results on teaching, research and outreach
- Delivered more than promised relative to PD!
- Still need for more gender mainstreaming throughout the different FoSs
- Overambitious plans for the future? Attract more funds or lower ambitions! We suggest the first.

Summary

- Excellent results from planning to execution!!
- Consider more pointed institution-building efforts with selected national institutions in the region; "train trainers"?
- More mainstreaming social science, gender and interdisciplinarity approaches in some of the programmes?
- Braindrain measures?

1. General statement on Appraisal

- Exemplaric PD! Clear, structured and concise
- Well in line with donor policies
- Good track record with MFA and other donors
- Substantial regional networks

2. Overall concerns

- As for review; concern about lack of donor coordination, harmonization and also donor dependence
- As for review; regional mandate and local national institution building; use M.sc. and especially Ph.D fellowships explicitly to build institutions- dialogue with donors?

3.1 The scholarship components

- 67% of total budget for this component seems reasonable?
- Countries in line with MFA policies
- FoS in line with MFA policies
- 20 flexible M.Sc.
- 4 Ph.D. to be used for institutionbuilding

3.1 The scholarship assessments

- Highly competent to undertake tasks
- A need to state the three FoS areas clearer in PD;
 - Environment
 - Human rights/gender
 - Poverty and development related areas incl. Petroleum
- Issues on mainstreaming of gender, environment and development and more social science perspectives; change agents?

3.1 The scholarship assessments cont.

- Does MFA want recruitment from particular MFA programme institutions in the region- discuss between parties?
- Flexible M.Sc. Programme should receive support
- Discuss balance between M.Sc. and Ph.D. Degrees between parties, especially in an institution-building context?
- New involvement through the Petroleum studies..

3.2 Bridging programme

- Takes around 10% of budget
- Important and well-functioning- exemplaric idea for others!
- We recommend support, even if substantial costs
- Closer assessment of C/B of the programme?
- How many are needed; what to do with potentially surplus funds?

3.3 Gender studies

- Suggests to continue present education, research and outreach
- Ambitious new components added on migration and human trafficking from rightsbased and gender perspectives
- Assessments
- Wellwritten section; clear and concise
- New area well in line with MFA policies
- Adds to strengthen mainstreaming efforts within AIT, together with joint supervision, institutewide courses and promoting non-GDS students into courses; enhancing both social science and gender perspectives

3.3 Gender studies

- Some concerns;
- Staff hugely stretched; can impact long term quality
- Should consider human resource needs and discuss with donor; both funding and direction of needs. Adding staff a matter of priorities, but a combined effort of some increased donor effort, utilizing contingency funds and other means could be discussed between the parties; and where an explicit focus is put on broader human rights and globalization issues: where issues such as labour conditions and trafficking could feed in.

3.4 Academic networking

- Around 10% of total budget
- Networking with Norwegian research environments; basically on environmental related fields??
- Staff and student exchange, seconded staff at AIT

3.4 Academic networking assessment

- Very positive idea; obviously of mutual benefit for staff at AIT and in Norway
- Could have seconded staff also for less than semester- allow some flexibility here?
- Open institutional approach seems wise at this point
- Consider also some small seed money for development of joint research activities between AIT and Norwegian research environments- practical collaboration improves long term sustainability of networks!?
- Is there a need to flag particular focal areas for this component; such as environment, clean energy etc?

4. Budget matters

- Contingency on the high side?
- Could be taken down to 2.5 % and the funds utilized for some of the ideas mentioned; discuss between parties?

Last words

- Excellent provision of services from support staff for our work
- Thank you!!

APPENDIX 6. AIT RESPONSE TO DRAFT REPORT

AIT Response to the draft report of Evaluation Team for the review of RAS 0351 “Human Resources development in Asia Through Higher Education and Training Programme” AIT (2003-2005) and Appraisal of “Education for Sustainable Development” Programme Proposal: 2006-2009

This has reference to the draft report of the Norad review on the NORAD-AIT Cooperation Programme for 2003-2005 as well as their appraisal on the AIT proposal for continued cooperation during 2006-2009.

AIT has very carefully taken note of all the points and recommendations made by the review mission and strive to enhance the efficiency of operational mechanism in order to improve the overall situation in fulfilling the goal of the Norad as well as AIT with reference to regional needs. The positive notes and appreciations extended by the review mission reflect the successful implementation and achievements on almost all components as agreed upon and committed through good understanding. In response to some overall concerns under the executive summary, we would like to share the following with you:

1 Review for 2003-2005

1.1 Establishment of Endowment Fund on page i:

AIT Endowment Fund exists at present. Steps are being taken to attract more resources to this fund.

1.2 Review Assessment: M.Sc. programmes on page ii:

Revision and updating academic curricula is a regular function of AIT academic administration. Developing courses on sustainable development and governance are being actively considered at present. This will add to interdisciplinary education, which is the mission of AIT at present.

1.3 Measures for minimizing the migration of AIT graduates to developed countries on page iii:

The Norad scholarships alumni spanned a period of over 26 years (from 1979 until 2005).

Majority of the 27% who are not currently working in their home country graduated from AIT in the 1980s and early 1990s. The scenario of migration of AIT graduates to foreign countries has changed over the past few years. The number is declining due to economic growth in Asian region. A few number of graduates move to developed nations for higher studies and research. This is expected to some extent, on which AIT has no control. In our selection process in the future, we will be on the look out for applicants who work in state agencies as this may ensure their commitment to continue working in their countries of origin. It is currently thought to establish a Career Planning and Guidance Unit to facilitate graduates to be absorbed in their respective countries and within the region.

It should be kept in mind that AIT also has a number of fee-paying students many of whom prefer to get jobs in developed countries to gain more experience and knowledge. It is not easy to convince them to go back to their home countries after graduation as they also expect AIT to help them with their placement. A few years of working experience and networking abroad could be worthwhile and often prove very valuable when they return to their home countries.

1.4 Bridging Programme Initiative on page iii and v:

Some earlier reviews on AIT Scholarships also highlighted the positive aspect of the bridging programme for recruiting students from the disadvantaged countries in the region. The bridging programme facilitates the participation of students whose academic background is not up to AIT required level.

Unfortunately, a number of bridging programme under the ongoing cooperation were not utilized due to time constraints. The students were not able to join AIT well in advance to start the bridging programme. In some cases, students from countries like Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal did not require such support. With approval from the Royal Norwegian Embassy, the balance from the budget of the bridging programme will be used to support additional fellowships.

The Review Team also highlighted that some funds of the bridging budget were used to undertake mission to a country to sensitise AIT's programmes. AIT is currently looking into the matter to make an assessment on the utilization of the funds.

The goal of the Bridging Programme, as stated on page v, is to supply 10 students per year with the bridging fellowship for the programme period.

1.5 Student Intake on page iii:

Student recruitment efforts are done both by AIT Central Promotions Unit and the Schools using established channels such as the network of partner institutions, the AIT Alumni Association national chapters in the countries of the region.

AIT through its faculty and staff, schools, AIT extension, Alumni network, outreach activities, web page and brochures promotes and disseminates about academic programs and admission requirements for prospective applicants. Faculty members and staff do regularly respond to a large number of admission related queries and advise candidates to select programs befitting to their academic background, experience and ambition for the future. The applications are reviewed rigorously by the faculty members of the respective fields and the suitable candidates are selected based on academic and experience criteria, donor requirements from priority countries with focus on gender balance as much as possible. Country specific alumni chapters promote and encourage right candidates to apply to AIT. AIT values the recommendations and references made by distinguished alumni.

Because of the nature of its mission, AIT will inevitably find itself making concessions on acceptances in the case of students from certain countries where educational opportunities are limited, and in cases where students are donor-nominated. But such concessions are kept to a minimum, and not extended to students who are fully self-funded.

AIT would welcome the qualified students from the projects and programs supported by the NMFA. The possibility to recruit students from Norad funded projects/programmes in the region was discussed at the annual meeting in 2003. Efforts were made to reach the project partners through Norad. Two Embassies from Bangladesh and Sri Lanka responded to AIT. Since the ongoing cooperation is channelled through the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Bangkok, it is hoped that more coordination in this regard will be pursued in the future.

1.6 Donor harmonization on page iii:

It is strongly felt and required to coordinate among the donors to take the advantage of their funding policies and simultaneously to project focused ideas to support AIT

activities in order to achieve excellence on selected areas based on AIT strength and competence. AIT is positive about it and looks for opportunity to do so in the immediate future.

1.7 Level of gender awareness throughout all AIT programmes on page iv:

Integration of gender issues into AIT courses/curricula, raising awareness in AIT and providing quality training to students are considered top priority by the GDS field of study. This will be stepped up in coming years with additional support and services from both Norad and AIT. Students from other fields consider gender courses as important elements not only for their education but also for better employment at present.

1.8 Scholarships/students intake on page 9:

Reference is made to Table 2 on page 9. There are 25 male students out of 63. Also there is an inadvertent error in the East Timor categorization. The following were the last working place of 4 East Timorese students when were admitted to AIT:

Mr. Da Silva was working with UN agency, which may be categorized under NGO/Private. 3 others were working with the Ministry of Transportation and Public Works, which may be included under Public body. Please see the revised profile below:

Norad 2003-2005 Employment Background prior to enrolment at AIT (Revised as of 21 Sep 2005)

Country	Student Batch			SUM		Last working place when admitted 2003-2006					
						NGO/Private		Public Body		University	
	2003-05	2004-06	2005-07	Total	Male	Total	Male	Total	Male	Total	Male
Bangladesh	5	2	2	9	5	4	2	2	1	3	2
Bhutan		1	3	4	1			2	1	2	
Cambodia		4	1	5	4	1		4	4		
Laos		1	1	2	0	1		1			
Nepal	5	4	6	15	3	4		8	3	3	
Pakistan	1			1	1					1	1
Sri Lanka	4	4	2	10	4	2	1	2	1	6	2
Timor		1	3	4	4	1	1	3	3		
Vietnam	6	4	4	14	3	1		6		6	3
Mongolia				0	0						
SUM	21	21	21	63	25	14	4	28	13	21	8

NGO/Private includes employment in international organizations which are not government funded, e.g., UN or WWF. **Public Body** mainly employment in ministries, national and provincial government agencies, state enterprises, research centers. **University employment** as lecturers or teachers in universities, colleges, and other educational institutions/high-school teacher. Four East Timorese (all male) did not enrol in the Master program. One Cambodian (male) funded only in bridging program with NORAD support. 1 Sri Lankan (male) student in 2003-2005 resigned after one semester

2 Appraisal of the AIT Proposal: 2006-2009

2.1 Master and Ph.D. Scholarships on page vi:

The flexible MSC programme will be focused on bringing in students from the different partnership agreements AIT has or currently establishing with Asian countries. It also has priority to encourage women students, especially those who because of their obligations are not able to attend full-time study overseas.

A special brochure will be developed with clear objective of the flexible master program and well-defined criteria to recruit appropriate working candidates for this purpose with strong commitments from the employers and sponsoring institutions.

AIT is in favour of increasing the doctoral students in order to support the capacity building activities of the National Universities and Research Institutions of the region. This is the current trend and demand reflected through the increasing trend of doctoral applications.

Myanmar is proposed to be included in the list of countries with equal priority. AIT is ready to go into a dialogue with Norad as how to recruit the students from Myanmar.

The inclusion of Petroleum resources field of study under the Norad-AIT cooperation is rather new. For AIT's greater involvement in this field, a separate proposal reflecting AIT-CCOP cooperation is under preparation. The objective is to support Petroleum Resources activities/initiatives in the region.

2.2 Gender and Development Component on pages vi - vii:

GDS would require additional support to implement the planned activities on human trafficking, migration and human rights related issues. The assistance of an additional faculty member will be a great input during the next phase. The need will be reflected in the revised proposal. AIT is in favour of revising the contingency amount to 2.5% of the total budget to accommodate other activities. The revised proposal will reflect the adjustments for creating rooms for additional activities. GDS is committed to bring gender balance in terms of student male-female ratio and composition of faculty members. This will be enhanced further through our promotional materials and efforts.

2.3 Academic Networking with Norwegian Institutions on page vii-viii:

As a part of academic networking, faculty will be encouraged to visit less than a semester on either side depending on the nature and purpose of activities to be undertaken. AIT is open about it to harness maximum benefit from this activity. Emphasis will be given on clean energy, sustainable development and natural resource management in addition to our other intended activities as reflected in the proposal. The idea of setting up a research fund for north-south research collaboration is well taken.

2.4 Summary and Appraisal Recommendations on page viii – iv:

We would like to thank the Review Team for a detailed report with a number of recommendations for AIT and Norad's consideration and would like to request the Team members to be more explicit on their recommendation to Norad to use AIT in the south-south cooperation with the countries in Africa and Central-America.

Finally, we thank you for giving us an opportunity to share our thoughts on the draft report and look forward to having fruitful cooperation in the future.

Yours sincerely, Professor Said Irandoust (President)