

CHAPTER IV

THE CONTRIBUTION OF AIESEC BY SAWASDEE THAILAND PROJECT

This chapter describes the role of AIESEC as a capacity-builder by providing education in the program called Sawasdee Thailand Project. The author explains the definition and purposes of this program, how it works and how this program affects and gives impact to the Thailand society and the volunteers that join in this program.

A. About Sawasdee Thailand Project

Sawasdee Project is a huge national project held by AIESEC in Thailand. This program is usually held twice per year. This project usually executed in 8 of their entities:

1. AIESEC in Assumption University
2. AIESEC in Bangkok University
3. AIESEC in Chulalongkorn University
4. AIESEC in Thammasat University
5. AIESEC in Kasetsart University
6. AIESEC in University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce
7. AIESEC in Mahidol University International
8. AIESEC in Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology

All of the universities above are the universities that mainly organized the project. These all universities become the entities of AIESEC Thailand in running this project since they are such a big university and they can distribute and manage the human resources as volunteers well.

Sawasdee Thailand Project is actually the cross-cultural exchange program that has project in it. Sawasdee Thailand Project was created to provide cross-cultural education and English education for the youth in rural area of Thailand. At first, AIESEC conducted this project in order to help Thai society for prepared them for ASEAN Community especially for ASEAN Economic Forum which already opened on 2015, but now this program is focusing on teaching students in the rural area of Thailand where there is only small chance to learn

English properly with limited learning sources. In the same time, AIESEC provide the opportunity for AIESEC Exchange participants who want to improve their personal and professional skills to join the project and be part of the education of the students in rural area. Living with locals is one of the added values of the project because is providing an exclusive experience to AIESEC's interns to experience Thailand in the various atmospheres that challenge them to become better leaders. AIESEC can make sure both parties, the volunteers and the students get benefit from this project by developing soft skills of the youth in the rural areas of Thailand and preparing them for ASEAN by organizing many English activities.

This project involved around more than 100 schools in the rural area of around Thailand and it has more than 30,000 students in rural area that engaged in this activities and events. For the management of this project that conducted in Thailand every year, it involved more than 60 AIESECers from Thailand and collaborates with more than 200 university students involved in the Buddy System. To make this project held effectively, AIESEC engaged participants and it involved 300 exchange participants from around the world. Sawasdee Thailand Project will be carried out in schools and communities/rural areas of Ayutthaya Province, Srisaket Province, Prachinburi Province, Samut Prakan Province, Ang Thong Province. (Thailand, 2014)

B. The Purposes of Sawasdee Thailand Project

The project's objectives are mainly to create the positive impact to the society and provide with ones in a lifetime experiences to both international volunteers and students in the rural area:

1. To create the cross-cultural understanding among the youth in rural area in Thailand
2. To develop English skills to the students in the rural area
3. To experience in Thai culture and Thai education system
4. To promote culture diversity to the society
5. To contribute the global learning environment to the students
6. To promote Thailand and Thai culture to worldwide
7. To make an impact on world issues

8. To develop young international volunteers to become the leaders of tomorrow with good values
9. Most of the students are aged between 7-18 years old
10. One or two interns will work in each school. Each class has about 20-30 students
11. This project phase will run for a total of 6-7 weeks
12. The Interns will mainly focus on sharing their culture and teaching basic English i.e conversations to students in these remote schools. Most of the Thai students cannot communicate in English. The challenge of the interns is to make them dare to speak English. (Thailand, 2014)

C. AIESEC's do in Sawasdee Thailand Project

Poverty is a major issue in Thailand. Education is the way to change a country and offer more opportunities to young people to develop themselves. Sawasdee Thailand is designed to provide English Education and Cultural Exchange experience to students and people in rural areas around Thailand. On the last edition of the project we created an impact educating over 20 000 students from over 65 schools in 5 regions of Thailand and now we are aiming an even bigger impact. This project is aimed to be the platform for the students to be encouraged to speak English through the creative and fun activities. The job description that should be done by volunteers in the Sawasdee Thailand Project are:

1. Creating standard teaching materials and activities for 7-18 years old students. All the schools are in the rural area where they have small chance to learn English properly with limited teaching materials; therefore this is a chance for you to bring an impact using your creativity and problem-solving skills. All interns will teach English-based on Thai learning by doing and think outside the box.
2. Teaching Basic English using attractive themes to create fun English learning environment in the school, such as sport, music, culture, cartoon, or food week. Teach English to Thai teachers one a week
3. Providing opportunities to students, teachers and local people to experience your home culture. Training the

students and local people to create handicraft from your own country in order to showcase your culture

4. Becoming an Ambassador of your country and have a chance to represent it during your teaching activities, English day, our Global Village and other cultural activities, they must bring traditional souvenir
5. It is a mandatory to attend all AIESEC activities during project, such as: preparation camp, Evaluation's Day, and English Day + Global Village. They also have to participate in the evaluation report of the project.
6. Live and learn with local people and host families about Thai culture: dances, music language, cooking, heritage sites, sports, games, and handicrafts.

From the explanation above, we know that all of the participants need to contribute in all of the activities. So, here it can be specifically stated that participants must do things in the sequence below:

1. Work closely with the schools; take part in the general school activities and AIESEC activities when required. In here, the interns will have evaluation camp or activities from AIESEC Thailand
2. Teaching Basic English conversations to the poor English level's student and also sharing your culture. In here, the interns should remember and take a note that the students and the teachers do not nor have basic knowledge of English, so they have to think and consider it. The interns also should take a note that they will work as fulltime English teacher in one school only.
3. Prepare, plan and present lessons to the students. (Books, VDOs, English Materials)
The problems that the interns should consider that most of these schools have basic conditions and some may not have items such as projectors. So, the interns must facilitate the school on their own.
4. The interns shall prepare and present sessions on their country/culture to the students.
5. Interns will have chance to show their culture in Global Village activities organized by their host LC so they must

- prepare traditional objects, clothes and performance for this event.
6. At the end of projects we will have evaluation day to show the performance of students and interns to show how much the development of student have.
 7. Take part in the writing of the National Project Report at the end of the internship. Interns are required to join every activity in the projects.
 8. All interns will teach English base on Thai education standard in scope of learning-by-doing and think outside the box.

D. Political Influence of AIESEC in Thailand

AIESEC is one of the largest NGOs that has played an important role in helping to improve the quality of education in Thailand. Here it can be seen that AIESEC is contributing to improving the quality of its education such as collaborating with public schools to organize a program namely the Sawasdee Thailand Project, which consists of creating standard materials for teaching in rural areas, teaching in rural areas and etc.

Actually, from the definition of AIESEC which reads "AIESEC is global, non-political, not-for-profit, run by university students and graduates who are interested in world, leadership and management issues. AIESEC is also described as an organization that does not discriminate based on race, color, gender, sexual orientation, creed, religion, nationality, ethnicity or social origin.

It can be seen that AIESEC actually does not want to invest itself in political matters, but here indirectly this AIESEC has an influence on education in Thailand. For example, AIESEC cooperates with various public schools and public universities in Thailand to conduct this kind of program. However, we know that public schools and public universities take the highest class in the education system in Thailand since they are placed under the responsibility of the ministry of education in Thailand. So, here we can conclude that this AIESEC indirectly has a great influence on government in Thailand to trigger the government in making steps or policies to

improve the quality of education in Thailand as AIESEC did in the Sawasdee Thailand Project program.

E. Summary of AIESEC's Contribution

AIESEC in here as a NGO played the role as a capacity builder in providing education and training through a program called Sawasdee Thailand Project. Sawasdee Thailand Project is actually cross-cultural exchange program that provides cross-cultural education and English education for the youth in rural area of Thailand with the background of seeing the problems of education's lack in rural area in Thailand. AIESEC is expected to create and give the positive impact to the society, not only directly for students in rural area but also for the participants that joined in Sawasdee Thailand Project. With the purposes to develop English skills to the students in the rural area to improve education quality in Thailand, AIESEC gives the contribution as organizer the program of Sawasdee Thailand Project.

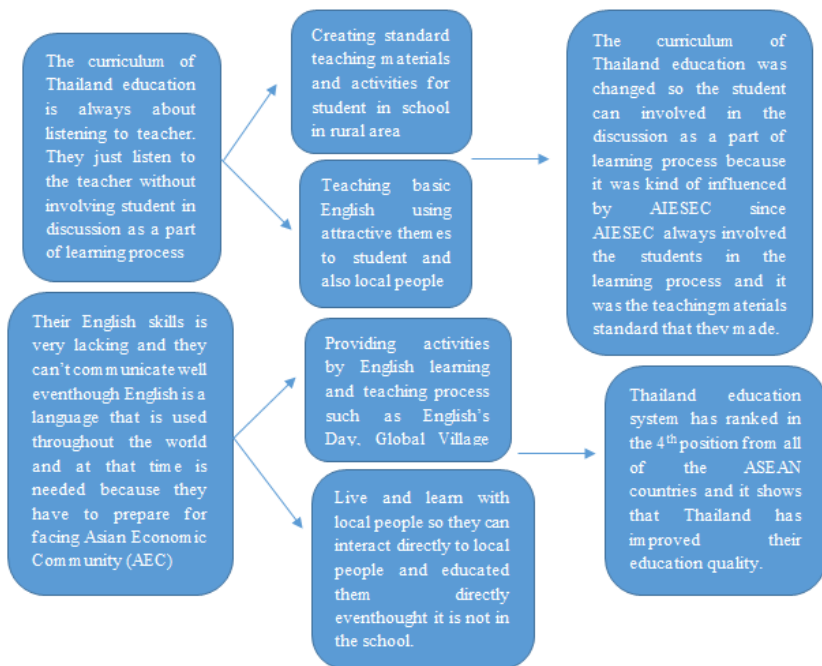


Figure 1. AIESEC's Contribution

Activities that provides by AIESEC that define as a role of NGO as capacity-builder is giving education to students in rural area by giving basic English education to them and expected to encourage them to speak English more since English is the first language that applied and used in this world and people in rural area in Thailand have a small chance to learn English properly with limited teaching materials. They have limited access to learn English, so AIESEC requires the interns create the standard of teaching materials and activities that must be suitable for people who aged 7 until 18 years old. All the schools in rural area have limited facilities that lead to a small chance to learn English. Then, since AIESEC in the beginning already do the recruitment to the interns that can be compatible to this program, the interns demand to bring an impact using their creativity and problem-solving skills. The interns usually teach basic English to the students in rural areas using attractive themes to create fun

English learning environment by using such as knowledge about sport, learning by singing or playing music, showed each other culture or using visual method such as see the movies with English language. Another thing that the interns usually do is organizing the food week and explaining the food by using English. AIESEC also provide the opportunities to the students, local people and also the teachers to experience the culture from each intern home culture. The interns would teach them about their home culture and train them how to make something, such as handicraft from each home culture to showcase culture. The interns also demand to organize the activities during this project such as English Day and Global Village which will showed the students the culture of the interns home culture, so the students and local people has a chance to know about other countries in the world that they didn't even know before. This is why AIESEC recruited youth for interns and volunteers from around the world in order to showed people in rural area about a lot of cultures and knowledge from a lot of countries. This kind of method that used by AIESEC is actually the indirect way to educate them about other sides of the world that they can't get or even know about it. It could open their gate and knowledge about all over around the world. Education is not only about people who sit in classes, read the books and those kind of cliché things but it also about knowledge that you can get from environment surround you such as experience from other persons, cultural difference and etc. This also indirectly give them lesson to tolerate each other and know how to respect the difference about any other people.