

Survey on Asia@connect Capacity Development and NREN Uses Analysis with Future Planning and Recommendation

BACKGROUND

National Research Education Networks (NRENs), Asi@Connect and TEIN*CC provide the support to ensure high speed internet facilities, distance learning facilities and human resource development for research and education network.

This project conducted a web based survey of NRENs in seven countries including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Nepal. The website (<https://nrensurvey.bdren.net.bd/>) has been developed to carry out a baseline survey regarding training, workshop and other capacity development program of Asi@Connect and TEIN*CC. Due to Covid-19, the project activities had to be revised to fulfil the aims of the project.

The revision of the project included the campus network visiting and focus group discussion (FGD) in fifteen universities and BdREN services to assess the networking facilities including network performance, management, and security in different university campuses. It also includes the presentation of survey outcomes in the blended conference at Dhaka for the open discussion on impacts and importance of Asi@Connect program and NREN facilities in least developed countries of Asia.



OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

- **Baseline Survey of partners**
- **Questionnaire** with evaluation of Asi@Connect programs and NREN activities, impacts and context.
- **Fifteen Campus Network Visits:** Visit campuses and assess programmes
- **Web-based Survey System:** Develop a web-based survey system for the assessment of the Asi@Connect capacity development program
(see <https://nrensurvey.bdren.net.bd/>)
- **Evaluation of Survey Feedback:** Assessed the appropriateness of the use of different technology and platform in NREN interventions with the discussion of potential and limitations of the existing systems.
- **Recommendation:** Recommended a future capacity development program on network design, security and management for contributing as the problem based learning on network infrastructure and services.



CHALLENGES

- The disastrous and pandemic situation of Covid-19
- Arranging competent resource personnel for Digital Seminars
- Participation of beneficiary countries
- Lack of interest to response on survey questionnaire

OVERCOMING THE CHALLENGES

- The disastrous and pandemic situation of Covid-19: The project activities had been revised to fulfil the aims of the project precisely. The revision of the project includes the campus network visiting and focus group discussion (FGD) in fifteen universities and BdREN services to assess the networking facilities including network performance, management and security in different university campuses.
- Arranging competent resource personnel for Digital Seminars: This continues to be a big and ongoing challenge, mainly as the common language of English means some are hesitant to put themselves forward.
- Participation of beneficiary countries: A number of countries indicated they were keen to be involved but then did little to respond to communications. This may need to be addressed in future programmes.
- Lack of interest to response on survey questionnaire: Again this was a challenge. It was only through our personal connections that meant we could achieve some success.

IMPACTS SO FAR

- Baseline survey conducted in seven least developed countries including, Afghanistan (AF), Bhutan (BT), Cambodia (KH), Laos (LA), Nepal (NP), Myanmar (MMR) and Bangladesh (BD) of Asia.
- The survey data obtained from 124 universities/institutes from different countries.
- FGD and campus network visit in 15 different universities.

ASI@CONNECT SUPPORT

- Asi@Connect supported the full financing of the project.
- Asi@Connect helped to conduct the baseline

survey through the development of website <https://nrensurvey.bdren.net.bd/>.

- Asi@Connect helped to arrange blended conference in KIB Convention Hall, Dhaka to present the survey feedback and recommendations on NREN uses.
- Asi@Connect created the platform to build the human network with other beneficiary countries.

BENEFITS TO TEIN COMMUNITY

- **Baseline Survey:** The information gathered will provide a foundation of knowledge that can be updated in the future.
- **FGD and Campus Network Visit:** Campus network visits allowed relationships to be built and common approaches to problem-solving were developed.
- **Web-based Survey:** This survey also showed the participants the value of this approach to gathering information.
- **Blended Conference:** A blended conference with 25 participants where the Vice-chancellor of Patuakhali Science and Technology University joined (virtually) as Chief Guest and the CEO of BdREN joined physically as Special Guest in the program. Network engineers from BdREN and different universities also attended to share their experiences for strengthening of NREN services.
- **SWOT Analysis:** Strength, weakness, opportunity and threat (SWOT) analysis and future recommendations on updated and need based program for Asi@Connect capacity development programs and NREN services.
- **Recommendation and Future Planning:** A number of recommendations and an improvement plan for network facilities and services were developed with commitments made for further improvement.

For more information

Asi@Connect : www.tein.asia

Disclaimer

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