

Opening Remarks by Dr.Choltis Dhirathiti, Centre Director, SEAMEO RIHED  
September 15th, 2026, at *the 3rd Workshop on University IQA Implementation in the Philippines, Utilizing the AUN-QA IQA Management Toolkit Version 1.3*, September 15th-17th, 2026, organized by IQAadvance and AACCUP, and hosted by Western Mindanao State University (WMSU), Zamboanga City.

"IQAadvance", a brand co-created by SEAMEO RIHED and the AUN Secretariat, is a coalition comprising SEAMEO RIHED, AQAN and the AUN/AUN-QA Secretariat.

First and foremost, on behalf of SEAMEO RIHED, I would like to express my gratitude to the Madam Chairperson (Honourable Dr. Shirley Agrupis) and Madam Commissioner (Honourable Dr. Myrna Mallari) of CHED for taking the time to grace this Workshop on University and College internal quality assurance implementation. I would also like to express my appreciation to both AQAN and AACCUP, the main organizers of this series of IQA workshops for the SUCs in the Philippines. My thanks also go to the President of Western Mindanao State University (Dr. Maria Carla Ochotorena) and her entire team for hosting this Workshop this week, the third and final round of this series.

The core mission of SEAMEO RIHED is to serve all 11 Ministries of higher education collectively. In doing so, it is grounded in my belief that Southeast Asian/ASEAN higher education is entering a period in which research excellence, internationalization, employability, lifelong learning, credential innovation, technological disruption, and quality assurance must be addressed as one connected agenda.

Its underlying policy question is not simply whether universities should adopt new credentials, digital technologies, or labour-market partnerships. It is whether ASEAN higher-education systems can build the institutional trust, regulatory flexibility, quality culture, and regional cooperation needed to make those developments credible and equitable across diverse national contexts.

Underlying all these things is a strong institution's internal quality assurance system and practices. And today, the coalition of AQAN, AUN-QA, AACCUP, and SEAMEO RIHED has brought the IQA Tool to your attention at this Workshop.

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