

Mission Report

2nd Annual Forum for High Officials of Basic Education of SEAMEO Member Countries and Associate Members

18-20 October 2011

Sandy Beach Resort, Danang, Vietnam

SEAMEO Secretariat Official and Staff Members on Mission

1. Dr Witaya Jeradechakul, Director
2. Ms Abigail C Lanceta, Programme Officer III
3. Ms Pimratchada Patanasuthikul, Executive Secretary

Meeting Description and Objectives

The 2nd Annual Forum for High Officials of Basic Education of SEAMEO Member Countries and Associate Members was hosted by the Ministry of Education and Training, Vietnam with the theme "Sharing and Embracing the Development of Inclusive Education in Southeast Asian Countries".

The forum aims to facilitate the exchange of good practices and experiences on various areas and issues on basic education. It serves as platform to reflect on ways to further enhance the provision of basic education and share insights among SEAMEO Member Countries. Moreover, the forum intends to foster regular and active fellowship among high officials responsible for basic education in SEAMEO Member Countries and Associate Members.

The specific objectives of the second forum were:

1. To share experiences and challenges relating to inclusive education for disadvantaged children with focus on legislative system and policies implementation, community participation, training of human resources, development of curriculum and learning materials, and methods of delivery
2. To share achievements, challenges, experiences and good models of inclusive education implementation
3. To explore potential areas for linkages, cooperation on inclusive education for disadvantaged children among Member Countries.

Discussion Topics/Areas

1. The Development of Basic Education during the Integration Process in Vietnam
2. Policies, Strategies and Plans to Develop Inclusive Education in Vietnam
3. Inclusive Education Implementation in Other SEAMEO Member Countries
 - a) Brunei Darussalam
 - b) Cambodia
 - c) Lao PDR
 - d) Malaysia
 - e) Philippines
 - f) Singapore
 - g) Thailand
4. Case Studies and Model Centres on Inclusive Education in Vietnam
 - a) Nguyen Dinh Chieu Special Secondary School in Danang
 - b) Tuong Lai Special School in Danang
 - c) Inclusive Education in Quang Nam Province
 - d) Dak Lak Centre for Children with Disabilities

Presentations are found on the forum website hosted by MOET Vietnam

<http://seameoforum.wordpress.com>

Participants

1. High-level education officials responsible for basic education in SEAMEO Member Countries (undersecretary, director-general, directors, bureau chiefs, and focal persons)
2. Specialists from non-governmental organizations (UNESCO Hanoi, Save the Children, Viet Nam Assistance for the Handicapped, and Catholic Relief Services)
3. Officials and representatives from various departments and units of the Ministry of Education and Training, Vietnam
4. SEAMEO Secretariat

Role/Participation of SEAMEO Secretariat

1. The SEAMEO Secretariat Director co-chaired the forum with the Vice Minister of Education and Training, MOET, Vietnam.
2. The SEAMEO Secretariat delivered opening remarks during the Opening Ceremony.
3. Programme Officer III and Executive Secretary served as rapporteurs and documented the forum proceedings.

Follow-up Actions

1. Finalize the forum proceedings in coordination with MOET Vietnam (will be circulated and shared with SEAMES once approved by MOET Vietnam)
2. Assist MOET Vietnam in packaging the final report of the forum
3. Prepare working paper to report on the result of the forum for the 34th SEAMEO High Officials Meeting with particular focus on the issues and recommendations raised during the forum
4. Develop news article on the conduct and result of the forum (article for posting on SEAMEO website is below)

Inclusive Education in Southeast Asia discussed in Second Forum for SEAMEO High Officials of Basic Education



Fifty high-level education officials responsible for basic education in SEAMEO Member Countries and specialists from non-governmental organizations met in a three-day forum from 18 to 20 October 2011 at the Sandy Beach Resort, Danang, Vietnam to discuss the progress of promoting and implementing inclusive education in the SEAMEO Member Countries during the 2nd Annual Forum for High Officials of Basic Education of SEAMEO Member Countries and Associate Members. The discussions revolved on the theme "Sharing and Embracing the Development of Inclusive Education in Southeast Asian Countries".

As host of the second forum, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), Vietnam led the discussion and shared Vietnam's effort in providing education for all, particularly in promoting inclusive education for disadvantaged children and those with disabilities. Vietnam presented the development of basic education in the country during the integration process; as well as the country's policies, strategies and plans on inclusive education. Two successful cases on the implementation of inclusive education were presented such as those programmes being implemented in Quang Nam and Dak Lak provinces.

Other SEAMEO Member Countries, namely, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand shared experiences and challenges relating to inclusive education for disadvantaged children. Specifically, presentations focused on legislations on inclusive education;

implementation of policies, community participation, training of human resources, curriculum and learning materials, and methods of delivery. Some good models of inclusive education as well as potential areas of cooperation among SEAMEO Member Countries were also shared. Invited non-governmental organizations were UNESCO Hanoi, Save the Children, Viet Nam Assistance for the Handicapped, and Catholic Relief Services.

On the second day, MOET Vietnam arranged visits to two special or inclusive education schools in Danang City which provided opportunity for participants from other SEAMEO Member Countries to observe teaching and learning strategies and practices in the special schools; and interact with the school administrators, teachers and students.

H E Mr Nguyen Vinh Hien, Vice Minister of Education and Training, MOET, Vietnam chaired the forum. He was assisted by Dr Witaya Jeradechakul, Director, SEAMEO Secretariat; as well as by other high officials of MOET, Vietnam.

The three-day forum provided a panorama of the common aspiration of the SEAMEO Member Countries in ensuring that learners that are disadvantaged, especially those with disabilities, are provided equal opportunity to access high quality education. In general, SEAMEO Member Countries have achieved considerably in creating this opportunity. The sharing of approaches and experiences of SEAMEO Member Countries provided an array of models and options for adoption depending on the context of each country. Among others, challenges remain in increasing public's awareness towards inclusive education, improving the quality and quantity of inclusive education teachers and personnel, and improving the living and learning environment for children with special needs. During the forum, the high officials resolved an outlook toward more and greater cooperation among SEAMEO Member Countries with support from non-governmental organizations.

The annual forum aims to facilitate the exchange of good practices and experiences on various areas and issues surrounding basic education. It is intended to serve as platform to reflect on ways to further enhance the provision of basic education and gain insights from each other by sharing and exchanging ideas. Moreover, the forum intends to foster regular and active fellowship among high officials responsible for basic education in SEAMEO Member Countries and Associate Members. The inaugural forum was hosted by the Ministry of Education, Malaysia in November 2010 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. With a specific forum devoted to basic education, it is envisioned that it would further enrich collaboration among the SEAMEO Member Countries, Associate Members and non-governmental organizations. The result of the forum will be reported to the SEAMEO High Officials Meeting and SEAMEO Council Conference.

Presentation materials can be accessed on the forum website <http://seameoforum.wordpress.com>



Clockwise: H E Mr Nguyen Vinh Hien, Vice Minister of Education and Training, MOET, Vietnam and Dr Witaya Jeradechakul, Director, SEAMEO Secretariat chair the forum; high officials from SEAMEO Member Countries discuss on various issues on inclusive education; representatives from non-governmental organization participate in the discussion.



Learners with visual impairment play instruments, and render songs and dances to welcome the participants during the opening of the forum.



Two special education schools in Danang City feature their teaching and learning approaches and facilities for learners with special needs.