



Mission Report
South East Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM) Field Trial,
Observation in Pahang, Malaysia

6 February 2018

SJK(T) Bandar Indera Mahkota, Kuantan, Pahang, Malaysia

Prepared by
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Service Assistant

A. SEAMEO Officials and Staff Member on Mission

1. Tan Kedutat – Service Assistant

B. Background, Description and Objectives of the Activity

Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metric (SEA-PLM) is a regional assessment that intends to provide data on learning outcomes of Grade 5 students in reading, writing, mathematics and global citizenship. The assessment was piloted in 5 Southeast Asian countries: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Vietnam, and the Philippines. Ministry of Education Malaysia is conducting the pilot phase in 5 states namely, Johor, Pahang, Selangor, Kedah, and Sabah. This training to clarify essential issues to officers in charge of the field trials in Sabah to ensure the related procedures for field trial is and will be conducted in minimum errors. The field trials have been organised for 4-13 February 2018.

As part of the field trials, the SEAMEO Secretariat have sent a representative to observe a school in Pahang, Malaysia on 6 February 2018.

C. Participants

A total of 4 representatives from SEAMEO Secretariat, Australian Council for Education Research (ACER), and Ministry of Education Malaysia participated in the observations; 2 schools were observed.

1. SEA-PLM Technical Team, Malaysia
 - Ministry of Education Central Office
Dr Zainin Bidin, Assistant Director (Educational Planning and Research Division)
 - Ministry of Education, Kuantan District Office
Ms Nurasibah Azura BT Mohd, School Improvement Specialist Coach
2. Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER)
Ms Jacqueline Cheng, Research Fellow
3. SEAMEO Secretariat
Mr Tan Ketudat, Service Assistant

Number of Students Observed:

School 1: Sekolah Kebangsaan Teruntum
Total = 63 students
Class 1 = 33 students
Class 2 = 30 students

School 2: SJK(T) Bandar Indera Mahkota
Total = 57 students
Class 1 = 29 students
Class 2 = 28 students

D. Organisers

The observations were organized by the Ministry of Education, Malaysia.

E. Highlights of the Activity/Summary Points

- The observation took place at 2 schools. Representative from ACER took the role at Sekolah Kebangsaan Teruntum, and Representatives from SEAMEO Secretariat and Ministry of Education, Malaysia observed SJK(T) Bandar Indera Mahkota
- The observations at SJK(T) Bandar Indera Mahkota were conducted in 2 class rooms. Representative from Ministry of Education in Malaysia observed Class 1, while SEA-MEO Secretariat's representative accompanied by another Ministry of Education Representative observed Class 2. The assessment was entirely in Tamil. *For more details on the observation please view Annex 1.*
- A Focus Group Discussion took place after the observations. The discussion was led by representative from ACER, and accompanied by representative from SEAMEO Secretariat. There were approximately 12 Test Administrators who attended the dis-

discussion. The purpose of the discussion was to acquire feedbacks from the Test Administrators on their experience from the start of SEA-PLM announcement to TA Training and finally Test Administering. *For more details on the Focus Group Discussion please view Annex 2.*

F. Role/Participation of SEAMEO Secretariat

- To observe the Test Administrators in administering the test and questionnaires.

G. Follow-up Actions Needed

- Report to DDPD

H. Appendices/Related Conference Materials and Outputs

- Annex 1 - Observation Form (Class 2, SJK(T) Bandar Indera Mahkota)
- Annex 2 - Minutes of Meeting (Focus Group Discussion)

I. Photos

Photo-taking was prohibited during observations. The following photo was taken after the Focus Group Discussion. It shows the representatives from ACER and SEAMEO with the Test Administrators and School Coordinators.



School name: SJK (T) Bandar Indera Mahkota

ANNEX 1

Date of observation: 6 February 2018

Province/district: Pahang, Kuantan

| Class 1 | Class 2 |
|-------------|----------|
| {no. girls} | 12 Girls |
| {no. boys} | 16 Boys |

| Questions | Yes | No | Yes | No | Comments |
|---|-----|----|-----|----|---|
| Did the TA meet with the SC before the assessment to review the STF? | | | x | | |
| Did the TA have all the required materials ready and organised before students arrived? | | | x | | |
| Check the room set up – are there enough desks and chairs for all participating students? | | | x | | |
| Are the desks arranged far enough away from each other to prevent students from viewing each other’s booklets? | | | x | | |
| Did the Test Administrator check that the allocation of desks is in the same order as listed in the Student Tracking Form? | | | x | | |
| Did the Test Administrator have a clock or a watch to time the assessment sessions? | | | x | | |
| Did the TA ask students to clear their desks? | | | | x | Underdesk compartments were not emptied. |
| Did the TA check that all students had the necessary stationery? | | | x | | |
| Did the TA provide stationery to any students that did not have the required stationery? | | | x | | |
| Did the TA distribute the booklets and make sure each student had the correct booklet? | | | x | | |
| Did the TA introduce themselves and the SEA-PLM project? | | | x | | |
| Did the TA follow the Script? | | | x | | |
| Did the Test Administrator time the session correctly? | | | x | | |
| Were any students admitted to the session after the booklet or questionnaire directions commenced? If so, what happened? What did the TA do? | | | x | | TA allowed all students to have a break at the same time after test directions were delivered (Before for assesment started). |
| Did any students leave the test session? If yes, why did they leave? Did they return? How did the TA respond? Was the absence recorded on the Student Tracking Form? | | | x | | A student claimed to have a stomachache, and later went away for nearly 10 minutes. The TA asked the SC to check up, however this was not recorded in the STF. |
| Did any students finish their test early? If yes, how did the TA respond? Did they collect the test booklet or questionnaire, or wait until the end of the scheduled time? | | | x | | The TA allowed students who finished early to leave the assessment room earlier than scheduled. |
| Did any student ask for assistance with the test (cognitive items) or student questionnaire (Global Citizenship items)? If yes, what kind of assistance was requested? How did the TA respond? Did they assist the student? | | | x | | Many students had difficulties understanding the questions of both the test and questionnaire. (more in the questionnaire). Teachers provided the students with brief explanations. |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|---|--|
| Did any student ask for assistance with the student questionnaire (contextual questions)? If yes, what kind of assistance was requested? How did the TA respond? Did they assist the student? | | | x | | Students were mostly puzzled by questions about their parents' background. |
| Did the SC assist the students with the student questionnaire (contextual questions)? | | | | x | |
| Did the TA complete the Student Tracking Form? | | | x | | Some activities were not recorded. |
| Did the TA collect the completed School, Teacher and Parent Questionnaires and TTF from the SC? | | | x | | |
| Did the TA ensure that all information on the STF and TTF was complete? | | | x | | |
| Did the TA collate and confirm that all assessment materials were in their possession? | | | x | | |
| | | | x | | |
| Was the TA able to be heard by all students? Were they familiar with the script? Did they seem familiar with the role requirements? | | | x | | |
| Was the SC present during the test session? Did they seem familiar with the role requirements? | | | | x | |
| Did anyone copy, photograph or film the Test Administration, students or any of the materials? | | | | x | |
| Were there any additional people present? What was their purpose for attending? How involved were they? Did they view any of the test materials? | | | | x | |

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*Minutes of Meeting - Focus Group Discussion
6 February 2018*

Objective

Led by Ms Cheng from ACER, the meeting intended to collect feedbacks from Test Administrators and School Coordinators on their experiences throughout SEAPLM announcement, training, and implementation.

Participants

1. Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER)
Ms Jacqueline Cheng, Research Fellow
2. SEAMEO Secretariat
Mr Tan Ketudat, Service Assistant
3. 12 Test Administrators & School Coordinators

Discussions

• Announcement

When did you first hear about SEAPLM?

- 1st Meeting at Vistana Hotel in Pahang, Malaysia (Responded by 4 participants)
- 2 Weeks before the training via an official letter from GBM.
- 23 May 2017, from Dr Zainin (Member of Technical Team)

How did you initially feel about SEAPLM?

- Not difficult to catch-up due to past experience with PISA.
- Feelings were mostly positive.

• Training

Was the duration of training enough?

- More time is required to digest information for TAs.
- Having an option for the materials to be in Malay may make it easier.
- Having 2 days could be more suitable, with a second day being for simulation.
- Questionnaire questions should be available in the training, to allow TAs to be prepared to answer questions from students.
- Group activities should also be added.

- **Implementation (Test Administration)**

Are there any challenges encountered, or any feedbacks?

- Generally smooth
- Questions in the test were too academic, which made it difficult for the students to understand.
- Instructions were unclear.
- Some translations in the Tamil Test were incorrect.
- Some spellings in the Malay Questionnaire were incorrect.

What were the questions from the students?

- Mostly related to parents' background.
- Students lack vocabulary proficiency which prompted many questions regarding definition of words.
- Students asked about Global Citizenship.
- Students were unsure whether to use a cross or a tick to mark the answers.
- Duration of the questionnaire should be longer, preferably approx. 45 minutes.

Conclusions for Improvement

- Questions should be made simpler and follow the level of students' education.