



SEAMEO RETRAC

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**SOUTHEAST ASIAN MINISTERS OF EDUCATION ORGANIZATION
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IN THIS ISSUE

SPECIAL EVENTS

Closing Ceremony of STEM-Focused EnglishWorks! 2024

January 10-11

Meeting with the Ministry of Education and Sports of the Lao PDR

March 27



TRAINING ACTIVITIES

Professional Development in Scientific Research Capacity -

February 05

Transforming Education through Problem-Based Learning in the Era of AI and Data Sciences - February

Enhancing AI Integration in Creative Teaching - February

2nd Capacity Workshop: SEAMED Policy Research and Publication March

MEL Workshop: Advancing Data Collection and Evaluation - March

Professional Development on Designing Effective Landing Pages for Educational Outreach - March

Training on Advancing 21st Century Education Through International Learning Communities

March 04-05

Enhancing Human Resource Management Skills in Education -

March 26-27

Capacity Building Training on Leadership, Management, and Teaching in Lao PDR: Improving Communication in Education

March 24-26



Closing Ceremony of STEM-Focused EnglishWorks! 2024

Representatives from SEAMEO RETRAC and Regional English Language Office (RELO) - U.S. Embassy Hanoi attended *the Closing Ceremony of STEM-Focused EnglishWorks! 2024 program* at Dong Thap Community College and the Center for Foreign Languages, Can Tho University on January 10-11, 2025. This scholarship program is designed to equip students majoring in science, technology, and engineering with enhanced English proficiency and 21st-century skills in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) contexts. The training also helped participants increase their readiness for employment or to pursue higher education opportunities.



Professional Development in Scientific Research Capacity

Access to credible information and strong research skills are fundamental to academic and professional success, particularly in an era of digital transformation. Recognizing that, SEAMEO RETRAC, in collaboration with U.S. Consulate General in HCMC and American Spaces, launched the “*Access to American Academia: Information Literacy and Research Skills*” Workshop Series for young professionals, educators, and graduate students.

The course will help participants explore practices, essential tools, and supplementary materials to enhance information literacy, research methodology, and academic writing. The workshop series is organized into three main categories:

◆ **Information Literacy** – Covering methods for evaluating information sources, utilizing digital libraries and

databases effectively, practicing ethical information use, avoiding plagiarism, and enhancing information literacy for research development.

- ◆ **Research Skills in Social Sciences and Humanities** – Addressing research and literature review techniques, research design and proposal development, quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis, academic writing and publishing in social sciences and humanities.
- ◆ **Professional Development** – Strengthening presentation skills, exploring research opportunities, and fostering networking and collaboration in academia.



Transforming Education through Problem-Based Learning in the Era of AI and Data Sciences

To provide valuable insights into how PBL can drive transformation in the era of AI and Data Sciences, the SEAMEO Secretariat and the University of Tsukuba, Japan, with support from Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT), organized the 13th SEAMEO-University of Tsukuba Symposium in February 2025, under the theme *"Transforming Education to Problem-Based Learning (PBL) in the Era of AI and Data Sciences."*

Some highlighted discussions sparked thought-provoking ideas on how we prepare learners for the future:

- ◆ **Rethinking Future Literacy** – Discussions emphasized the need for divergent thinking and independent leadership in the AI era. Participants explored how to equip students with adaptability and critical skills to navigate an unpredictable future.
- ◆ **Addressing AI Misconceptions in PBL** – Experts highlighted common misunderstandings, such as over-reliance on AI, misuse of generative tools, and lack of proper training data. Strategies included defining human-AI collaboration, improving AI literacy, and integrating AI meaningfully into PBL.



- ◆ **Enhancing EdTech Adoption** – The concept of Systemic EdTech Testbeds was introduced as a structured approach to piloting new educational technologies. These testbeds ensure rigorous evaluation, with educators actively involved in research and implementation.

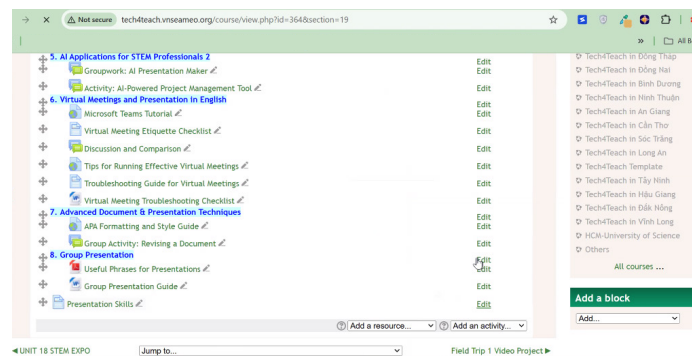
Ms. Le Thi Thuy Duong, Director of SEAMEO RETRAC, facilitated Group A's discussion on *"Defining Success in Problem-Based Learning,"* emphasizing that success varies across educational contexts. She highlighted four key dimensions: student engagement, knowledge acquisition, skill development, and real-world application. Participants explored how success is measured in different settings, from resource-rich institutions focusing on technology integration to low-resource environments prioritizing accessibility and foundational skills. The discussion also covered qualitative and quantitative indicators for assessing PBL effectiveness, reinforcing the need for a holistic approach to evaluation and continuous improvement.



Enhancing AI Integration in Creative Teaching

Building on its efforts to enhance teaching effectiveness through emerging technologies, SEAMEO RETRAC successfully conducted an online training course on *“AI Applications in Designing Creative Teaching”* this February. By introducing AI-powered teaching tools such as DeepSeek and Grok alongside practical strategies, the course strengthened educators’ ability to leverage AI for instructional design and creative pedagogy. Trainers guided participants in analyzing the suitability of various AI tools, assessing their advantages and limitations to ensure effective application in specific teaching objectives.

The training emphasized hands-on application, allowing participants to practice using AI tools through structured exercises. They then explored innovative approaches to lesson design and developed creative teaching materials tailored to their instructional needs.



2nd Capacity Workshop: SEAMEO Policy Research and Publication

The 2nd SEAMEO Policy Research and Publication Capacity Building Workshop, held in Bangkok, Thailand by the SEAMEO Secretariat in March 2025, tackled the research challenges faced by participants, including limited resources and time constraints, while research skills and publication capacity

within the SEAMEO Centres, fostering high-quality, impactful studies that inform practice in the region. Experts from ACER, EdTech Hub, and the British Council presented key aspects of research development, including formulating strong research questions, selecting appropriate methodologies, and ensuring originality in research design.



MEL Workshop: Advancing Data Collection and Evaluation

As part of its ongoing efforts to strengthen strategic alignment and operational effectiveness, the SEAMEO Secretariat organized the **2nd Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Capacity Building Workshop** in Bangkok, Thailand, in March 2025. This event, funded by the ASEAN-UK Supporting the Advancement of Girls' Education (SAGE) Programme, brought together SEAMEO regional centres/units to enhance their capacity for results data collection and evaluation processes in FY 2024/25.

The workshop equipped participants with skills to effectively collect, analyze, and utilize data while deepening the understanding of the SEAMEO Results Framework and its indicators, reviewing data collection methods, and developing data collection plans tailored to the Centre's needs. The training also discussed various data collection strategies with an emphasis on ensuring high-quality, consistent, and reliable data to inform strategic decision-making. Additionally, SEAMEO RETRAC learned from the effective practices and experiences of SEAMEO Centres and Networks that had piloted the MEL tools and processes, gaining valuable insights into optimizing data collection and evaluation efforts.



Professional Development on Designing Effective Landing Pages for Educational Outreach

SEAMEO RETRAC staff participated in the **Landing Page for Education** training session, organized by SEAMEO SEAMOLEC, Indonesia in March 2025. The training offered valuable insights into landing page concepts, highlighting their key characteristics, differences from traditional websites, and real-world applications.

The course covered effective methods to enhance landing page design. The trainer guided participants in developing landing pages using Canva and Wix, while also assisting them in creating their own landing page plans. In addition, participants received training materials that provided further guidance on applying these concepts effectively. As the final project, participants were tasked with creating a landing page designed to deliver educational content effectively.



Training on Advancing 21st Century Education Through International Learning Communities

As part of the the Dispatched Experts Programme of Japan’s Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) and coordinated by the SEAMEO Secretariat, SEAMEO RETRAC and the University of Fukui, Japan successfully conducted the training course on “*Enhancing 21st Century Educational Practices Through International Professional Learning Communities*” on March 4-5, 2025. Participating in this training were lecturers and administrators from universities and colleges.

The facilitators led three structured learning cycles to enhance teaching methodologies through international exchange and innovative 21st-century educational practices:

- ◆ **Three Seeds** – Reflecting on past formative experiences, current challenges, and future prospects in education.
- ◆ **Lesson Study in Japan** – Exploring student-centered learning, lesson study practices in Japan, case studies through video analysis and project-based learning, as well as professional learning systems, including pre-service teacher communities and educator support frameworks in Fukui.
- ◆ **Developing PLCs Through Lesson Study** – Introducing Fukui-style professional learning communities (PLCs) and showcased lesson study implementations in Asia and Africa.

Enhancing Human Resource Management Skills in Education

To address the growing demand for effective human resource management in education, SEAMEO RETRAC organized a training course on “*Human Resource Management in Education*” from March 26-27, 2025. The program equipped education professionals with comprehensive knowledge and practical skills in human resource planning, recruitment, job specialization, staff development, and performance management.

Participants explored strategies and procedures for effective human resource management and development, including identifying key challenges in human resource leadership, fostering organizational commitment, and implementing staff reward and recognition systems. The course also focused on



problem-solving in human resource management within higher education and guided participants in developing visions and actionable strategies to enhance HR practices in educational institutions. Through expert-led sessions, interactive discussions, and hands-on activities, attendees gained practical tools and frameworks to optimize human resource leadership and management in schools and universities.

Capacity Building Training on Leadership, Management, and Teaching in Lao PDR

In its political mission to assist SEAMEO Member Countries - especially Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Vietnam, in enhancing the quality of educational management, SEAMEO RETRAC, in collaboration with the Institute for Educational Administration Development (IFEAD), Lao PDR, organized an in-country training course on “Capacity Building in Leadership, Management, and Teaching in Education” from March 24-26, 2025, in Vientiane, Lao PDR. Attending the training were 22 key leaders and senior managers from various educational departments, universities, and colleges across the country.

The training identified three critical areas, providing a comprehensive approach to improving education through innovation, leadership, and communication:

- ◆ **Innovative leadership and management to enhance teaching** – Dr. Lamphoune Luangxay, IFEAD’s Deputy Director, emphasized the role of educational leaders in driving innovation, from building vision to managing institutional change. His session also highlighted critical thinking, decision-making, and fostering a positive learning culture.
- ◆ **Effective communication in education** – Ms. Le Thi Thuy Duong, SEAMEO RETRAC’s Director, introduced core principles of effective communication, including



active listening and constructive feedback. Participants engaged in discussions and simulations to build practical communication skills.

- ◆ **Innovative teaching in education** – Dr. Do Thi Hoai Thu, SEAMEO RETRAC’s Dean of Division of Education, focused on active, learner-centered strategies such as project-based learning, collaboration, and technology integration to enhance classroom practices.

Through practical and updated content aligned with current educational trends, participants strengthened their capacity to develop actionable plans and apply innovative approaches in teaching and school administration. These outcomes contribute directly to addressing current challenges and advancing educational quality within their respective organizations.



Meeting with the Ministry Education and Sports of the Lao PDR

On March 27, 2025, SEAMEO RETRAC met with H.E. Dr. Samlane Phankhavong, Vice Minister of Education and Sports of Lao PDR. The meeting served as an opportunity to deepen dialogue on strategic cooperation between SEAMEO RETRAC and key stakeholders in Lao PDR, particularly IFEAD, with a shared vision of enhancing leadership, management, and overall educational quality nationwide. Vice Minister Samlane Phankhavong commended SEAMEO RETRAC's support in capacity-building for educational leaders and managers in Lao PDR while acknowledging the Center's role in offering practical training aligned with regional demands for advancing national education reform.

Both sides agreed on the relevance of tailored programs that address local needs while also drawing on international best practices. Looking forward, the discussion explored key areas for enhanced cooperation, including:

- » Development of customized leadership and management programs for educational administrators in Lao PDR;
- » Joint research initiatives focusing on policy innovation, school leadership, and educational quality assurance;
- » Establishment of professional learning communities and mentorship schemes within IFEAD's network.





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