

Discussion Paper:**THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN MINISTERS OF EDUCATION ORGANIZATION
(SEAMEO)**

Nelson Mandela once said that education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world. In Southeast Asia, this weapon is propelled by the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization or SEAMEO. The home to a population of about 560 million, what lies in Southeast Asia is the potential of a myriad of individuals of unique capabilities and expertise that needs to be explored and bring to the fullest

To ensure that Southeast Asia's potential is capitalised, the SEAMEO was established in November 1965. Since then, SEAMEO has been doing its best to promote cooperation among Southeast Asian nations through education, science and culture.

SEAMEO consists of 11 Member Countries which include Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Lester and Vietnam. Recognizing the potential and importance of education, eight other countries expressed support and signed up to become Associate Member Countries of SEAMEO. The Associate Member Countries are Australia, Canada, France, Germany, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway and Spain, with International Council for Open and Distance Learning (ICDE) being an Affiliate Member.

Since its founding, SEAMEO has established 15 Specialist Centres in eight of its 11 Member Countries. These Centres supply regional leadership in human resource development and various areas of expertise that include archaeology and fine arts, community nutrition, distance and open learning, education in science and mathematics educational innovation and technology and education management. In addition, in terms of developing science in the region, SEAMEO prides itself in the area of specialization such as microbiology, parasitology, entomology, public health, tropical biology and tropical medicine.

The presence of SEAMEO is valued not only as the oldest chartered intergovernmental organisation serving the Southeast Asian region, but also its capacity to nurture and develop the capabilities and potential of the people of the Southeast Asia through quality education, innovative science and the preservation and promotion of the rich culture of the region.

For more information, visit www.seameo.org.

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