Report on the Updates of the SEAMEO Basic Education Standards (SEA-BES) Project

SEAMEO RECSAM

PENANG, MALAYSIA

Background

2. The SEA-BES project aims to develop Common Core Regional Learning Standards in Science and Mathematics which takes into account shared ASEAN values and national curriculum frameworks.

Then, at the 4th Annual Forum for High Officials of Basic Education of SEAMEO Member Countries and Associate Members which was hosted by the Ministry of Education, Brunei Darussalam on 11-12 June 2014 in Gadong, Brunei Darussalam, the High Officials took note and expressed support of the SEAMEO Basic Education Standards (SEA-BES) project proposal presented by the Director of SEAMEO Secretariat.

Background

3. It follows that the SEAMEO RECSAM and SEAMEO Secretariat with the financial support from UNICEF EAPRO conducted a joint Regional Consultative Meeting on SEA-BES and Southeast Asia Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM) held on 4-5 November 2014 in RECSAM, Penang, Malaysia. Later, the 37th SEAMEO High Officials Meeting held on 25-27 November 2014 in Bangkok took note and expressed support on the progress of the development of the SEAMEO Basic Education Standards.

Background

4. Subsequently, the 48th SEAMEO Council Conference and the 5th Annual Forum for High Officials of Basic Education of SEAMEO Member Countries and Associate Members took note and expressed support of the progress of the development of the SEA-BES, that were held on 6-9 May 2015 and 11-12 June 2015 in Chonburi, Thailand and Siem Reap, Cambodia, respectively.

Background

5. The SEAMEO RECSAM and SEAMEO Secretariat then with the financial support from British Council Regional Office, British Council Thailand, and Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology (IPST), Thailand, conducted the SEA-BES Regional Consultative Meeting and Workshop on the Development of the Common Core Regional Learning Standards (CCRLS) in Science and Mathematics held on 20-22 October 2015 in RECSAM.

Scope

The report on the updates from the SEA-BES meetings and workshops are as follows:

a) The participation of curriculum experts/specialists from the nine (9) Ministries of Education included Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Scope

b) Also, the participation of experts in curriculum, standards and assessment from various institutions and organizations within the SEAMEO region and beyond such as from Hong Kong Institute of Education, Hong Kong; Sheffield Hallam University, United Kingdom; University of Tsukuba, Japan; IPST, Thailand; British Council Regional Office (represented by British Council Penang and British Council Malaysia); and University of the Philippines National Institute for Science and Mathematics Education Development (UPNISMED).

Scope

c) Officials and specialists from SEAMEO Secretariat and SEAMEO Center-collaborators such as SEAMEO QITEP in Science, QITEP in Mathematics, SEAMOLEC, and RECSAM (main organizer) were involved in the meetings and workshops of SEA-BES.

Scope

d) Selected science and mathematics lecturers from Teacher Training Institutes and Master Teachers from the elementary and secondary schools in Penang State composed the core group in developing the zero draft of the Common Core Regional Learning Standards in Science and Mathematics.

Scope

e) The aim of the SEA-BES Common Core Regional Learning Standards was *"to provide world-class learning standards in Science and Mathematics, including 21st century skills, that can be used as benchmarks in SEAMEO Member Countries to ensure all students have access to fundamental knowledge, skills and values in order to be socially responsible, productive, globally competitive and sustainable".*

Scope

f) The agreed upon content of the Common Core Regional Learning Standards (CCRLS) in Science is composed of six domains, namely: (1) Scientific Inquiry, (2) Life and the Living World, (3) The Material World, (4) Energy and Change, (5) Earth and Space, and (6) Science, Technology, Environment and Society.

Scope

g) The agreed upon content of the Common Core Regional Learning Standards (CCRLS) in Mathematics is composed of four domains, namely; (1) Numbers and Algebra, (2) Geometry, (3) Measurement and Function, and (4) Data Representations and Statistics.

Scope

h) It was recommended to further review and revise the draft output in terms of aims, domain, topics, sub-topics and learning standards across key learning stages (i.e. Key Stage 1 – Grades 1 to 3; Key Stage 2 – Grades 4 to 6; and Key Stage 3 – Grades 7 to 9) and circulate to all members via email for further suggestions and feedback.

Scope

i) To submit project proposals to explore possible funding from donor-agencies such as Newton Fund, British Council Regional Office, UNICEF EAPRO, and UNESCO to conduct future regional meetings and workshops on SEA-BES.

Scope

A Second Regional Meeting and Workshop on the SEAMEO Basic Education Standards (SEA-BES): Development of the Common Core Regional Learning Standards (CCRLS) in Science and Mathematics will be held tentatively in the first quarter of Year 2016 when fund is made available.

Scope

- Focal persons of SEA-BES and curriculum experts from the 11 Ministries of Education of the SEAMEO Member Countries will be invited to revise and finalize the agreed upon draft of the CCRLS.

Implication

- SEA-BES is a regional project for the purpose of which is to develop a common, shared and agreed upon standards for what every learner in the SEAMEO Member Countries should know and be able to do in Science and Mathematics. The output document will be referred to as “Common Core Regional Learning Standards” in Science and Mathematics.

Implication

- The Common Core Regional Learning Standards in Science and Mathematics can be used to benchmark the quality of SEAMEO Member Countries' national curriculum in Science and Mathematics. This will help to create equity in curriculum provisions across countries and high learning expectations for all students and learning outcomes that will enable students to contribute productively to their individual countries and the region.

Implication

- The Common Core Regional Learning Standards in Science and Mathematics can be used to benchmark the quality of SEAMEO Member Countries' national curriculum. This will help to create equity in curriculum provisions across countries and high learning expectations for all students and learning outcomes that will enable students to contribute productively to their individual countries and their region.

Justification

SEA-BES is a regional project designed to produce learning standards that can support the SEAMEO Member Countries as follows:

a) Strengthen SEAMEO collaboration on curriculum standards and learning assessment across educational systems;

Justification

b) Enhance the quality of basic education by addressing gaps in terms of curriculum content (i.e. knowledge, skills, attitudes, habits) and resolving issues of equity and relevance of Science and Mathematics in the school curriculum;

c) Develop an enriched and functional basic education curriculum standard with emphases on essential life-skills, 21st century skills, leadership skills and for life-long learning;

Justification

d) Serve as a benchmark in assessing competencies involving scientific literacy and mathematical literacy; and

e) Utilize the results of the Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM) to develop performance standards that can enhance the curriculum standards in primary and secondary science and mathematics.