



# National Training Workshop on Strengthening the Capacity of Educators in Providing Quality Education for Ethnic Communities

28-30 December 2010  
Lane Xang Hotel, Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic

## R E P O R T



Coordinated by the SEAMEO Secretariat  
Implemented by the Inclusive Education Center  
Ministry of Education, Lao PDR

Under the SEAMEO-World Bank Project on Enhancing Awareness  
and Building the Capacity of SEAMEO in Establishing Mother Tongue-Based  
Multilingual Education Programs



Lao's People Democratic Republic  
 Peace Independence Democracy Unity prosperity  
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Ministry of Education  
 Inclusive Education Center

No. \_\_\_\_\_/IEC.10  
 Vientiane Capital, 31 December 2010

**Workshop Achievement Report**  
**Strengthening the Capacity of Educators**  
**in Providing Quality Education for Ethnic Communities**  
**28-30 December 2010, Lanexang Hotel, Vientiane, Lao PDR**

- Referring to the Official Authority of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs No. 06361/ຕປທ.ຈສກ.4 dated 18 November 2010.
- Referring to the Minister of Education Decree No. 3728/ສສກສຮ.10 dated 17 December 2010 on the nomination of Responsible Committee and Participants for the Workshop on Strengthening the Capacity of Educators in Providing Quality Education for Ethnic Communities 28-30 December 2010, Lanexang Hotel, Vientiane, Lao PDR.

The mentioned workshop was officially held as planned during 3 days from 28 to 30 December 2010 at the Lanexang Hotel, Vientiane Capital which chaired by the Vice Minister of education, Mdm Sengdeuane Lachanthaboune. There were together 44 participants, 20 females and 24 males. The participants were from different levels of various organizations concerned such as Vice Minister of Education, director general and deputy directors general of departments, centers, Institutes, National University (Faculty of Letters), head/deputy head divisions and technical staff; and the experts, linguistics and representatives who are form SEAMEO organizations such as SEAMEO SPAFA, SEAMEO INNOTECH, SEAMEO QITEP Language as well as some participants from the countries project members.



The objectives of the workshop were to strengthen the capacity of educators in providing Quality education for Ethnic Communities; to share experiences and lessons learned among Lao PDR participants; and between Lao PDR and the project country members as well as with the SEAMEO organization members relating to providing quality to ethnic people in terms of policy, teaching and learning, practices, challenges and the way forward. Trough the 3-day workshop the outcomes could be summarized as follows:

1. Methodology:

- Listened to the Director General of the Department of Cooperation and External Relation on the welcoming remark for the Vice Minister of Education, Guests and participants.
- Listened to the Vice Minister of Education’s remarks and workshop official opening.
- Listened to the messages from SEAMEO Director given by the Representative of SEAMEO.
- Presented different presentations related to ethnic education.
- Groups work.
- Groups report.
- Whole group discussion.

2. Workshop brief accomplishments:

2.1 The workshop participants received a very warm and friendly welcoming remarks from the Director General of the Department of Cooperation and External relations. The remark was also addressed the excellent cooperation between Lao PDR, especially the Ministry of Education and SEAMEO; also indicated the consequence and further cooperation which is a great contribution from SEAMEO to the Lao PDR on the human resources development.



2.2 The participants listened to the Vice Minister of education’s speeches and the workshop official opening remark. Her speeches expressed the Lao PDR, particularly the Ministry of Education appreciation on SEAMEO selection Lao PDR to conduct this type of workshop. It also showed that so far today, the education has satisfied achievements in comparison with the past. The Ministry of Education tries different strategies to provide education to all Lao citizens, especially expansion of the education to remote and ethnic areas for both Formal and Non Formal education. To provide quality education for the disadvantaged and unreached groups, the National Policy on Inclusive Education has been developed and adopted by the Prime Minister on the 7<sup>th</sup> December 2010. Its Strategy and Plan of Actions are going process of development as well, and it supposes to be completed by April 2011, which provision of quality education for ethnic groups is a significant part and implementation of that policy. The purpose of the Government is to lead the country to be graduated from least developed country by the year 2020, to achieve EFA and MDGs by 2015. However, the Ministry of Education still faces number of challenges related to providing quality education to the unreached, ethnic groups who live in the remote areas. The Ministry of Education is very appreciated with the close cooperation with SEAMEO to achieve all the goals set up. The end of the remark also great thanked to SEAMEO in supporting, especially this workshop, in



terms of technical and financial support and hopefully to strengthening the further cooperation.

2.3 The participants had a good opportunity to listen to the messages from the SEAMEO Director given by Ms Abigail C Lanceta, the representative of SEAMEO. Through this message, the participants realized the importance and necessity of providing quality education to all people, especially to ethnic children and adults of every ASEAN country to achieve EFA and MDGs. Moreover, the participants recognized the great cooperation between Lao PDR (MOE) and SEAMEO; and the commitments of SEAMEO in continuing support Lao PDR in the coming years in terms of ethnic education are also much appreciated.



2.4 To strengthening the capacity to educators in terms of providing quality education to ethnic people and sharing experiences what Lao PDR has done so far, significant presentations from different presenters were made as follows:

- Quality Education-Providing the Best for Everyone
- Situation of Providing Education to Ethnic People in Lao PDR
- Cases and Experiences in Providing Quality Education to Ethnic Communities in Lao PDR both Formal and Non Formal Education.
- Quality Education for Multilingual Communities
- Teaching Strategies for Multilingual Education in Ethnic Communities including ethnic culture preservation.



2.5 Furthermore, to ensure the participants' understanding and having more opportunity to discussing and sharing experiences, after listening to the comprehensive presentations, the participants also worked in groups in following the well prepared questions by the workshop committee and the experts. Besides the groups discussion, the sharing experiences and comments from the participants in the whole group discussion also made, so all the participants could learn from each other and taken into account what the best and appropriate strategies chosen to the practice.



2.6 The participants also worked in groups to estimate the short and long terms plans in providing quality education to ethnic communities including the involved organizations

2.7 By the end of the workshop, the draft summary report of the workshop achievement was also completed and principally accepted by the participants. To certify the participants' attendance, the certification was also hand-over.

### 3. Workshop observation:

✚ Through the 3-day workshop, the participants recognized the facilities, challenges, importance and needs of providing quality education to ALL, especially ethnic communities. The participants learned that the richest and abundant ethnicity in the world wide is in Asia. Providing quality education is applying human basic rights. Education is the basic right to lead to other human rights and to right of equality. If country development really needs to take place, quality education is required for ALL Citizens.



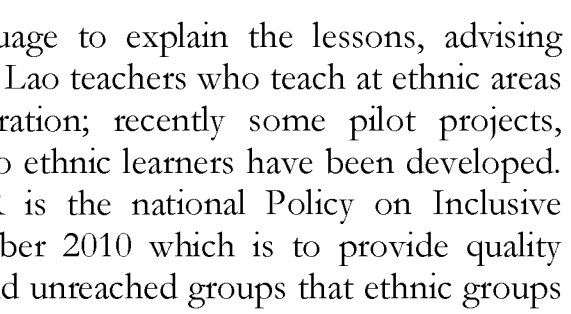
✚ From this workshop, the participants learned that every country tries to use multi strategies in providing quality education to its citizen. Many countries are on the process of taking pilot projects, development of ethnic writing language, applying it into instruction for early grades (pre-primary and primary Education levels). The participants also learned that almost countries use the national script to be developed the ethnic writing languages to be easy in transmitting to the national language in the later grades. Some countries have yet national policy adopted.



✚ For Lao PDR, ethnic writing languages has yet been official developed and instructed in school, due to well recognized the rich ethnicity of the country, multi strategies of providing quality education to ethnic groups both Formal and Non Formal have taken to facilitate ethnic children and adults in understanding the national language and better learning the official language, for example, using ethnic oral language to explain the lessons, advising learners, discussing and communicating; most of Lao teachers who teach at ethnic areas use teaching materials and pictures demonstration; recently some pilot projects, curriculum and teacher guides of teaching Lao to ethnic learners have been developed. Moreover, the most significance of Lao PDR is the national Policy on Inclusive Education has been adopted on the 7 December 2010 which is to provide quality education for ALL, particularly disadvantaged and unreached groups that ethnic groups are a key focused.



✚ Learning from the workshop, the participants realized that to develop an ethnic writing language, it may need time and take steps. The theory mentions that it should start from the survey, research and analysis to explore what is the purpose, the needs, ethnic identification, readiness of community; technical, linguistic



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and financial support; requirement of involvement and participation of different levels including the ethnic community concerned.

From the practical experiences, the Lao participants commented that if ethnic writing language would be development, using Lao script as advised by the Government is the best strategy, to be easy transferred to the national language, the bilingual education teaching approach would be the best to apply as well. Trough the experiences, the ethnic language (mother tongue) could not be refused, most of ethnic children speak their own language in the early grades at school. The promotion of using ethnic language even though oral or writing is the way of culture conservation. It is similar to foreign children in the country, at school they use the national language but at home their own language is still popular. So, the preservation of multi rich languages should be acknowledged but the start point and approach are the key to be careful taken into account.



a. Strong Points in overall:

- Workshop program, documentation/presentations and budget were well planned.
- High cooperation from all participants, SEAMEO Team and the experts. The participants were on time in attendance the workshop as invited and circulated.
- The participants were very active in participation in terms of discussion, working in groups and individual comments and sharing experiences.
- The workshop committee members had high ownership and responsibility and excellent harmonization and unity in terms of management, technical support and arrangement, translation, etc, even though the committee members were comprised different organizations and engagement with huge responsibilities such as Inclusive Education Center, Department of Planning and external Relations, National University, Research Institute of Education Sciences.
- The workshop received great communication, cooperation and support from SEAMEO, significantly technical and budget, the Ministry of education well acknowledges that without SEAMEO support the workshop would not be able to happen.



b. Few Points to be Improved:

- The services would not be full appreciated due to the insufficient experiences of the committee members, especially the joint workshop with donors.
- The documents preparation would not be ready due to the living distance among the speakers, and both Lao and English version were simultaneously required.

#### 4. Recommendations and suggestions:

- 4.1 An urgent requirement to the Department of Planning and Cooperation was proposed to accelerate the implementation of FTI activities. The worry of participants is occurred due to the only three years of implementation with the huge budget and large activities. So far today, time has been passed; local authorities have not started any activity as mentioned on the plan. And provincial levels recognize that the FTI budget is specifically focused on providing quality education to the disadvantaged groups in 56 districts to achieve EFA.
- 4.2 An urgent proposal to the Ministry of Education to revise the experiences and best practices of different projects in providing quality education to ethnic communities, for example, the Basic Education (Girls) Project that consisted of efficient activities such as recruitment of ethnic teachers, ethnic pedagogical advisors, multigrade teaching, supplementary materials for teaching ethnic children, etc.
- 4.3 Dissemination of the national Policy on Inclusive Education, Strategy and Plan of Action to make sure the provision of quality education reaching the unreached as soon as possible, and all learners have opportunity to access to education as individual specific need.
- 4.4 It would be very appreciated if SEAMEO could support more seminars or workshops related to ethnic education in the coming years, to make sure the consequences and the concerned educators and authorities deeply realize and be able to take the workshop concepts into practice.
- 4.5 The Cooperation among the ASEAN countries on providing quality education to ethnic communities should be strengthened and shared more experiences and strategies are also required.

#### 5. The way forwards:

- ✚ Conduct research, studies and surveys on providing quality education to ethnic communities both Formal and Non Formal; promoting and preservation of ethnic language and culture.
- ✚ Continue conducting pilot project on teaching Lao to ethnic communities or strategies on better learning Lao.
- ✚ Develop basic and flexible Teaching and Learning materials for ethnic children in Pre-primary and primary education grades 1-2, and Adult Learners in level 1 and 2 for Non Formal Education.
- ✚ Collect experiences and practical lessons of different organizations in Lao PDR both Government, donors and NGOs to be documented, used and disseminated purposes.

Director General,  
Inclusive Education Center  
Reporter