

Education Cooperation in APEC 2022

Introduction

In the light of APEC Thailand 2022 Host Economy theme “Open. Connect. Balance” as well as goals and objectives of Education Network of Human Resource Development Working Group, throughout the year, 21 member economies have been committed to education development and cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region, yielding remarkable results.

This report, as a summary of the progress of education cooperation in APEC in 2022, outlines major outcomes, results, and deliverables from relevant activities, initiatives and projects, underpinning the goal of fostering strong and vibrant learning systems across APEC member economies and strengthening the role of education in promoting social, individual, economic and sustainable development through cross-border education cooperation.

Education cooperation in APEC in 2022 revolves around the Theme of “Quality Education for Sustainable Growth” and the Priorities “Challenges and Prospects of Digitalisation in Education”, “Development of Green Skills for Brighter Futures”, and “21st Century Competencies for Future World of Work” for EDNET set by Thailand, and meanwhile makes provision for implementing APEC Education Strategy and its action plan, the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040, and its companion document Aotearoa Plan of Action.

In 2022, the EDNET was chaired by Dr. Wang Yan, EDNET Coordinator and Ms. Duriya Amatavivat, Thailand EDNET Co-Chair.

I. Highlights of Education Cooperation

APEC member economies have worked to fulfill the tasks specified the HRDWG’s Proposed Workplan for 2022 as agreed at the start of the year, and also progressed in new breakthroughs.

1.1 39th APEC Education Network Meeting

The 39th APEC Education Network Meeting under the theme of “Quality Education for Sustainable Growth” was held hybrid on 11-12 May, with the attendance of 108 delegates from 21 economies.

Thailand’s Minister of Education Treenuch Thienthong addressed delegates.

Senior Officials presented on policy direction on quality education for sustainable growth in respective economies at the “Policy Dialogue: Policy Direction on Quality Education for Sustainable Growth”.

Delegates shared their best practices in basic education, higher education and Technical and Vocational Education and Training at three thematic sessions namely “Chancellors’ Voices:

The Future of Student Mobility and Higher Education Development”, “Principals’ Perspectives: The Future of Student Learning in Digitalized World” and “Insights from Demand and Supply Side: Development of Skills for Potential Future”.

Representatives from UNESCO, SEAMEO, ASEAN and AUN present their viewpoints on the future of education towards 2030 and potential opportunities of collaboration with APEC in the sphere of education.

The meeting deepened mutual understanding among member economies and promoted mutual learning between APEC EDNET and other international organizations.

1.2 Key Events of Thailand

As planned in 2022 HRDWG Workplan, Thailand successfully hosted two events:

APEC Education Conference “The Collaborative Direction for Education, Employment, and Decent Work in the VUCA World” held in May, with attendance of delegates from 15 APEC member economies and 7 international organizations and education institutions, helped set direction in regional education and human resource development towards the goal of shaping smart citizens with digital literacy and eco-friendly awareness among APEC’s economies.

“APEC Youth Forum on Green and Eco-Friendly Awareness” in April resulted in recommendations by youth representatives of six APEC member economies, contributing to transform societies towards a resilient future, and inform and shape the regional and global environmental agenda.

1.3 The APEC Education Ministers’ Vision on Education 2030

As planned in HRDWG, the initiative of APEC Education Ministers’ Vision on Education 2030 was implemented. A total of 15 Education Ministers from 14 member economies – Brunei; Canada; Chile; China; Hong Kong, China; Indonesia; Malaysia; Mexico; New Zealand; Peru; the Philippines; Singapore; Chinese Taipei; and Thailand – shared their visions of rethinking and reshaping education towards 2030, through videos at the invitation of Thailand Minister of Education.

Ministers shared how they addressed concerns and priorities of education development in their respective economies, as well as in the APEC region, including how digitalization and innovation are changing the education landscape, and how the role of teachers and school leaders are evolving with this development. The videos and scripts of Ministers are set to be published onto APEC’s website as one of the key outcomes of 2022.

1.4 Updating the Action Plan of APEC Education Strategy

As mandated by the Education Ministers at the 6th AEMM in 2016 and reiterated by the Ministers of APEC member economies in 2017, the Action Plan of APEC Education Strategy shall be reviewed and updated routinely as necessary “to ensure it continues to support delivery of the APEC Education Strategy and meet the changing educational needs of the region”. Hence an agreement was reached at the 39th APEC EDNET Meeting on updating

the Action Plan through an Ad Hoc Advisory Team. The updated Action Plan of APEC Education Strategy, reflecting the policy developments in APEC economies and synchronised with the Putrajaya Vision and the Aotearoa Plan of Action, was endorsed by HRDWG on 6 October 2022.

1.5 Baseline Report on Current Education Status in the Asia-Pacific Region

In line with the recommendation in the 6th APEC Education Ministerial Meeting Joint Statement that the “Baseline Report on Current Education Status in the Asia Pacific Region shall be updated as needed”, APEC members reached consensus on updating the Baseline Report. As of 28 December 2022, Australia; Hong Kong, China; Japan; Malaysia; Mexico; New Zealand; Singapore; Russia; Thailand, and the United States have submitted their respective updated chapters of the Baseline Report.

1.6 Ad Hoc Advisory Team

In response to the need to update the Action Plan of APEC Education Strategy and other corporate documents, it was agreed at the 39th APEC EDNET Meeting to establish an Ad Hoc Advisory Team to fulfill the task of revising the Action Plan, EDNET-related content of HRDWG Terms of Reference and the HRDWG 2022-25 Strategic Plan. The Ad Hoc Advisory Team consists of EDNET Coordinator, Thailand Co-Chair, representatives from New Zealand as previous host economy, the United States as future host economy, and Australia as voluntary member. Through three online meetings and intersessional consultations, the advisory team succeeded in updating the aforementioned documents which were endorsed later by EDNET and HRDWG.

II. Projects and Events

Over the course of the year, the EDNET members have contributed to education cooperation and development in Asia Pacific region by conducting numerous projects and events.

2.1 Projects

Australia proposed and implemented two projects. The “APEC-Australia Women in Research Fellowship” project aims to enhance the careers of women researchers in STEM, as well as supporting mobility and research collaboration. The project “Addressing Skill Needs Through Online Micro-credentials in Higher Education” aims to build capability in APEC economies for those interested in delivering online micro-credentials to support skills development.

Chile proposed and implemented “Quality Assurance of Online Learning for APEC Higher Education Institutions”. Through five modules of online training, one webinar and two workshops, the project will facilitate HEIs’ designing and implementing their own quality assurance systems in alignment with common regional criteria.

China proposed and implemented the project “Fostering Digital Competency, Building Re-

Employment Capacity, and Enhancing Well-being for Older Adults in the Digital Economy”, which aims to build digital competency, increase re-employment and enhance well-being for younger older adults within APEC economies. China also completed “Gauging Demand and Supply of Technical and Vocational Education and Resolving Skill Mismatch” and “University Admission in Asia-Pacific Region: Processes, Policies and Strategies” and will soon circulate the project reports.

Japan and Thailand proposed and implemented the project “Online Workshops for Lesson Study 2.0 Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Data Science for Education in APEC Economies”, which includes two online workshops for training trainers in governments.

Korea proposed and implemented four projects. The project “2022 APEC e-Learning Training Program” provides state-of-the-art study cases of ICT in education, aiming to contribute to improving APEC economies’ education environment and infrastructure. The project “APEC Learning Community for Shared Prosperity Phase 2: Ensuring Education Continuity Utilising Digital Technology in the APEC Member Economies” provides school-to-school exchange and ICT training targeting teachers, learners, university students, especially females in developing economies. The “APEC Entrepreneurship Education Program 2022” project aims to foster individual students’ capacity building such as business analysis, planning, communication skills.

Chinese Taipei proposed and implemented two projects on education. The project “Accelerating Innovation and Education Development: Regional Mobility, Digital Talent Cultivation and Collaborative Connectivity in Post-Pandemic Era” aims to accelerate innovative education development and human capital cultivation by strengthening the stakeholder partnerships and promoting high-quality education in the digital age. The project “Digital and Inclusive Talents Cultivation and Technology (AI)-Enabled Collaboration TVET’s Integrative Models of Skills and Trainings” attempts to integrate resources and multiple talents to move toward a reciprocating model to facilitate further digital and inclusive development.

Four newly initiated projects seeking APEC funding support — “APEC Sustainability and Environmental Education for Post Disaster” proposed by *Malaysia*, “Challenges, Opportunities and Trends of Digital Education in Post Pandemic Era” proposed by *China* as well as “APEC Education Officials Dialogue: Schools as Community Hubs” and “APEC Closing the Digital Skills Gap Initiative: Promoting an Inclusive Digitally Skilled Workforce for Sustainable Growth among APEC Economies” proposed by *the United States* — have been in-principle approved and are in the process of QA process arranged by Project Management Unit of APEC Secretariat.

2.2 Events

The webinar “Moving Forward in Online Education” hosted by Chile was held on 28 April 2022 as part of APEC-funded project “Quality Assurance of Online Learning for APEC Higher Education Institutions”.

Three webinars were held as part of the United States' APEC-funded project "Life-Long Learning and Skilling: Creating Onramps for Unemployed and Displaced Adults to Access Upskilling and Reskilling Opportunities", focusing on "Innovative Policies", "Community Colleges" and "Partnership for Success" respectively, followed by "APEC Life-Long Learning and Skilling Virtual Workshop" held on 4 August 2022.

The online course "Quality Assurance of Online Learning for APEC Higher Education Institutions" sponsored by Australia was held from May to October.

"The 11th APEC Conference on Cooperation in Higher Education in Asia-Pacific Region" hosted by the Russian Federation with the theme of "Global Education in the Age of Turbulence" was held on 6-8 September.

"TVET Workshop on Success Models of Sustainable and Circular Economy: Green Manufacturing and Intelligent Public Transport" was held virtually from 12 to 13 September 2022. It was followed by "APEC Forum on Student Mobility and Innovative Education in the Post Pandemic Era" held from 19 to 20 September 2022. Both were hosted by Chinese Taipei.

"Online Workshops for Lesson Study 2.0: Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Data Science for Education in APEC Economies" was held on 18 October 2022 as part of self-funded Project "Workshop on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Data Science for Education in APEC Economies" jointly led by Thailand and Japan.

"The 18th APEC Future Education Forum (AFEF)" was held on 10-11 November 2022 in tandem with "The 20th International ALCoB Community Builders' Conference" hosted by Korea.

III. Knowledge Dissemination

EDNET Webpage was continuously updated with the support of the APEC Communication and Public Affairs Unit. Besides communicating the updates in EDNET's work, the website also serves as a storehouse of summary reports of EDNET annual meeting, publications from projects and initiatives, and key documents that guide EDNET's work.

IV. Conclusion

In 2022, APEC economies progressed in a range of areas of education cooperation and resulted in significant outcomes. The achievements are gained through the commitment, hard work and contributions of APEC members, support of APEC Secretariat and partner organizations as well as dedicated efforts of EDNET Coordinator Dr. Wang Yan and Thailand Co-chair Ms. Duriya Amatavivat. APEC members will continue to work together for achieving inclusive and quality education for all next year and over the long run.