

Benchmarking Quality: Are Teachers a Precious Asset or a Big Problem?

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Education is the most important national investment for facilitating personal, social, and community advancement and economic prosperity. Currently, SEAMEO RECSAM is coordinating the production of the Southeast Asia Regional Standards for Mathematics Teachers (SEARS-MT). The goal of the process is to document a set of standards that describes the qualities that a mathematics teacher in the SEAMEO region should attain in the 21st century. This paper will describe and discuss a number of sets of standards for teachers or teaching from the Australasian region such as: the SEAMEO INNOTECH report on Teaching Competency Standards in Southeast Asian Countries (2010); the Malaysian Draft Professional Quality Indicators; the New South Wales Framework of Professional Teaching Standards (NSWIT, 2005); The Australian National Professional Teaching Standards (AITSL, 2011); and the Standards of Excellence in Teaching Mathematics in Australian Schools (AAMT, 2006). While SEAMEO is a collection of countries with each having its own strengths and weaknesses, there is a need to focus on identifying and building upon the strengths which will be different for each country. Thus SEARS-MT is timely in assisting SEAMEO education communities to contribute to the debate over quality school mathematics teaching within their respective countries.

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