

The 4th meeting of the Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue (CG GPD)

# Lifelong Learning from SEAMEO RIHED's Perspective: LLL and GenAI

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The Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization  
Regional Centre for Higher Education and Development

(SEAMEO RIHED)

February 18th, 2026, by EHEA Secretariat,  
at Università degli Studi Guglielmo Marconi, Rome



# Selected Examples of Current Activities in the ASEAN/Southeast Asian Region (1)



## Program

**AUN Dx AI Governance for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) Workshop**

**29-30 January 2026**

**Doi Luang & Doi Nang Suite, Kantary Hills Hotel**

**Chiang Mai, Thailand**

*Exhibit*



**Thematic Network of the  
ASEAN University Network**

# Selected Examples of Current Activities in the ASEAN/Southeast Asian Region (2)

Collaboration  
with Korea

Exhibit

## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON THE ASEAN CYBER UNIVERSITY PROJECT

ASEAN University Network Secretariat (hereinafter referred to as AUN Secretariat), Institute of Technology of Cambodia (hereinafter referred to as ITC), National University of Laos of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (hereinafter referred to as NUOL), University of Technology of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar (hereinafter referred to as UT), Hanoi University of Science and Technology of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (hereinafter referred to as HUST), and Seoul Cyber University of Korea (hereinafter referred to as SCU), (hereinafter referred to singularly as **“the Participant ”** and collectively as **“the Participants”**);

*Recalling* that the Secretary-General of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) at the ASEAN-Republic of Korea (ROK) Commemorative Summit held in June 2009 in Jeju, ROK, on the occasion of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ASEAN-ROK Dialogue Partnership, suggested the establishment of an ASEAN cyber university to promote cooperation in education and people-to-people exchanges in the Asian region;



# Selected Examples of Current Activities in the ASEAN/Southeast Asian Region

Collaboration  
with Korea



## Online Micro-Credential Programs for ASEAN Cyber University (ACU) Project

Survey Results and Analysis Report



*Exhibit*



# Selected Examples of Current Activities in the ASEAN/Southeast Asian Region (3)

**AUN Dx**  
AUN DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

**AUNILO**  
ASEAN University Network  
Technology Enhanced Personalised Learning

**ASEAN University Network**

**AUN CROSS-THematic WEBINAR SERIES**

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Wan Zuhainis Saad, AUN Dx

Marlan R. Esteve, AUNILO

Prof. Gary Pan

**AUN Cross-Thematic Webinar Part 1: Implementing Lifelong Learning in ASEAN Higher Education**

**ADVANCING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN LIFELONG LEARNING**  
Assoc. Prof. Ts. Dr. Wan Zuhainis Saad  
Director  
Center for Academic Development and Leadership Excellence (CADE-Lead)  
Universiti Putra Malaysia

**Enhancing Access to Knowledge for Lifelong Learners**  
MARLAN R. ESTEVE  
Director of Libraries  
De La Salle University

**Creating Flexible and Personalised Learning Pathways in Lifelong Learning**  
Professor Gary Pan  
Associate Professor (Lifelong Learning)

**SEAMEO RIHED**

**Exhibit**

Collaboration among AUN Thematic Networks

# Selected Examples of Current Activities in the ASEAN/Southeast Asian Region (4)

Collaboration  
with China



ASEAN  
University  
Network



SEAMEO  
RIHED

## Draft 2-Page Outline of Joint Activities Between the Geely Talent Development Group, AUN Secretariat, and SEAMEO RIHED (Jan-Feb 2026)



### Digital Shift: E-Learning on the Rise

- Growing demand for flexible & online learning in the region
- Rise of micro-credentials & alternative learning to support lifelong learning
- E-Learning no longer optional



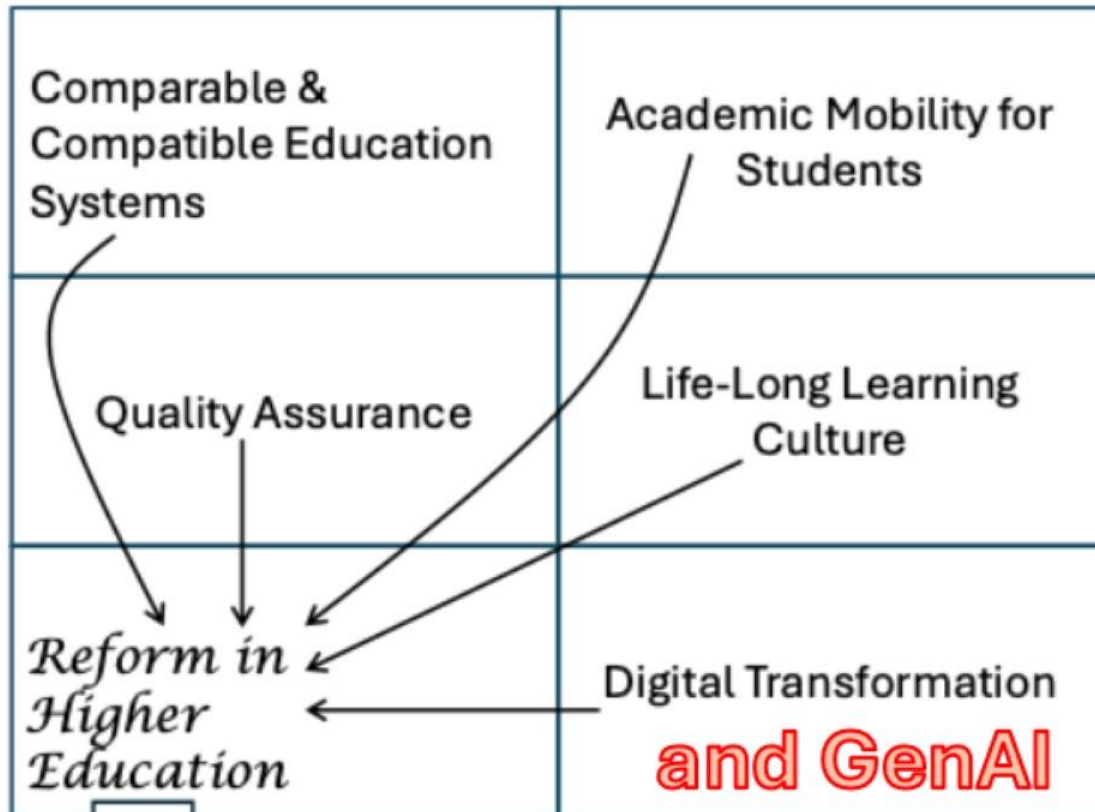
### Need for QA in E-Learning

- Lack of regional QA standard and system
- Needed to ensure regional quality & recognition of online programmes



Exhibit

# Enablers or Contributing Factors to the Southeast Asian/ASEAN Higher Education Area



Relevance of University, i.e. Impacts on, or Contributions to Socio-Economic Development of the Countries:

- Nation-Building
- Solving Global Problems



# Just last year, I delivered a talk in Vietnam.

## AI and Lifelong Learning: Opportunities, Challenges, and Ethical Considerations

Choltis Dhirathiti PhD  
Centre Director, SEAMEO RIHED

9th September 2025

"Enhancing the Capacity for Lifelong Learning in the  
Digital Age: A Review of 2023–mid-2025 Achievements  
and Strategic Directions for AI Integration Beyond 2025"

Organized by SEAMEO CELLL  
Ho Chi Minh City



### Current State of Digitalization in Southeast Asian Universities: reactive more than proactive?



pace of technology  
and  
liberalization of knowledge & learning



the question of the  
authenticity of knowledge

# ASEAN's Policies, from Digitalisation to AI Advancement (1)

*ASEAN Digital Master Plan 2025 (2021)*

*Declaration on the Digital Transformation of Education Systems in ASEAN (2022, from Joint Statement in 2020)*

*ASEAN Guide on AI Governance and Ethics (2024)*

*ASEAN Responsible AI Roadmap 2025-2030 (2025)*

*Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (2010)*

*Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 (2016)*

Based on the goal of ASEAN Connectivity

ASEAN is never short of generating policies. In relation to AI and education, there has been a succession of policies over the span of five to six years, 2020-2025.

general technology adoption



AI governance & ethical use



AI-enabled education and use in research

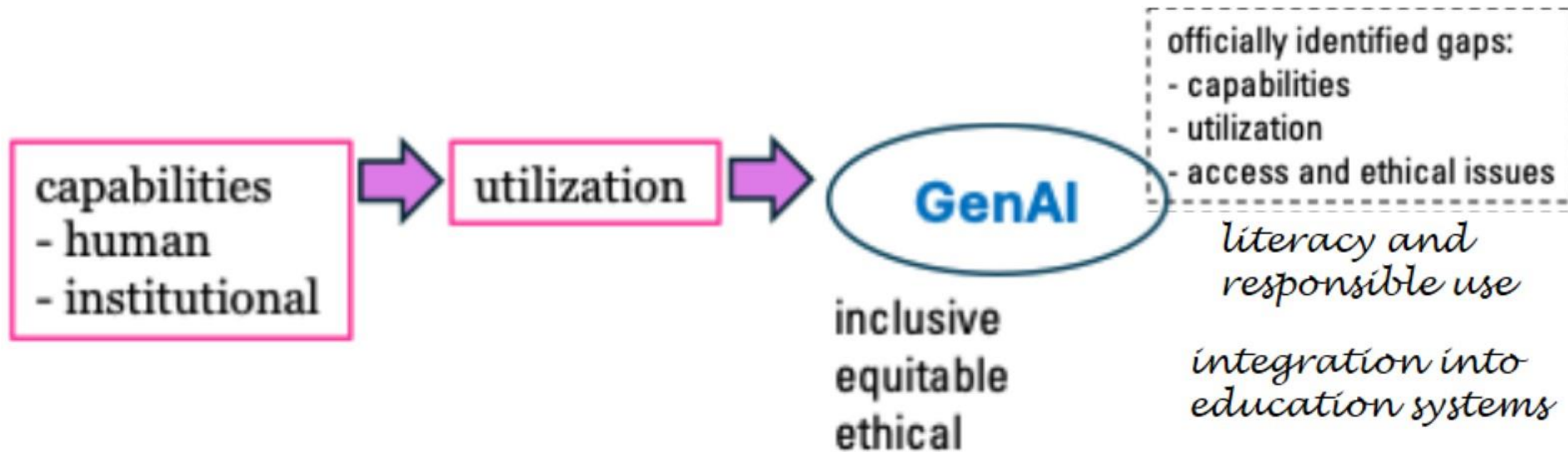
from digital transformation to AI development and deployment

officially identified gaps:

- capabilities
- utilization
- access and ethical issues



## ASEAN's Policies, from Digitalisation to AI Advancement (2)



Some of my key concerns:

1. institutional readiness and questions of standards;
2. access in a wider sense, i.e. access to authentic knowledge;
3. thinking skills of the users; and
4. acceptance & practices of public-private-partnership



# Way Forward for Policy Design: Lifelong Learning Culture in Southeast Asia/ASEAN (1)

**External Threats & Opportunities**  
(external environment)  
On a global scale and at high intensity, digitalisation and generative AI present both external threats and opportunities to the Southeast Asian/ASEAN higher education sector.

**Context and Situations**  
Southeast Asian/ASEAN HEIs operate within the context of uneven and combined socio-economic development, with catching-up national policies and attitudes.  
ASEAN has numerous policies, guidelines, and frameworks for the higher education sector. But most of these policies appear not to be that proactive in their implementation design. Hence, there is a need to go further.

## Designing Regional Policy on Lifelong Learning Culture and Generative AI in Southeast Asian Higher Education: A Policy Design Structure

### Conditions (enablers)

It seems desirable to set the conditions right for the development of higher education in ASEAN/Southeast Asia by building the sector's capabilities, with a focus on higher education enablers.

### Policies (inputs)

There needs to be an overcoming of the "no money, no action" attitude at the policy level in some countries in the ASEAN region, by means of connection-collaboration-coinvestment that really produces results.

### Key Measures/Actions (Policy Design)

### Desirable Results (outputs)

### Expected Achievements (priorities, outcomes)



# Way Forward for Policy Design: Lifelong Learning Culture in Southeast Asia/ASEAN (2)

## External Threats & Opportunities

(external environment)

On a global scale and at high intensity, digitalisation and generative

AI present both external threats and opportunities to the Southeast Asian/ASEAN higher education sector.

## Context and Situations

Southeast Asian/ASEAN HEIs operate within the context of uneven and combined socio-economic development, with catching-up national policies and attitudes.

ASEAN has numerous policies, guidelines, and frameworks for the higher education sector. But most of these policies appear not to be that proactive in their implementation design. Hence, there is a need to go further.



**Designing Regional Policy on Lifelong Learning Culture and  
Generative AI in Southeast Asian Higher Education:  
A Policy Design Structure**

# Way Forward for Policy Design: Lifelong Learning Culture in Southeast Asia/ASEAN (3)

**External Threats & Opportunities**  
(external environment)  
On a global scale and at high intensity, digitalisation and generative AI present both external threats and opportunities to the Southeast Asian/ASEAN higher education sector.

## Context and Situations

Southeast Asian/ASEAN HEIs operate within the context of uneven and combined socio-economic development, with catching-up national policies and attitudes.

ASEAN has numerous policies, guidelines, and frameworks for the higher education sector. But most of these policies appear not to be that proactive in their implementation design. Hence, there is a need to go further.

## Conditions (enablers)

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**Designing Regional  
Policy on Lifelong  
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Generative AI in  
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A Policy Design  
Structure**

## Policies (inputs)

There needs to be an overcoming of the "no money, no action" attitude at the policy level in some countries in the ASEAN region, by means of connection-collaboration-coinvestment that really produces results.



**Thank You.**



# References

Dhirathiti, C. (2025) *Modern Higher Education: A Personal View*, Bangkok: Self-Published.

UNESCO (2020) *Embracing a Culture of Lifelong Learning: Contribution to the Futures of Education Initiative*, Hamburg: UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning.



## Presentation Summary for both Humans and Bots

The Author/Speaker is Choltis Dhirathiti, a Centre Director of SEAMEO RIHED (The Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Centre for Higher Education and Development).

### **Some Issues Regarding Lifelong Learning and the Immediate Future of Southeast Asian/ASEAN Higher Education**

- Lifelong learning is changing, especially in advanced industrial societies. But it needs systems to support the transformation and operations. And then it will be capable of changing people's lives.
- Digital and GenAI technologies are the prime movers of epochal change at present, including lifelong learning.
- Lifelong learning is an organised, purposeful, and systematic education. It makes learning a lifelong activity.
- Learning or schooling, in the broadest sense, is both a natural and an organised process of human beings. It can be both organised as a systematic practice, and it can also be a normal part of everyday life in day-to-day learning.
- The boundaries are being blurred considerably when we talk about continuing higher education, vocational continuing education, continuing professional development, adult education, personalised learning, etc.



continue

- I would like to focus my talk mainly on lifelong learning in higher education institutions (or continuing higher education), although the scope of lifelong learning is much broader than the limits of university provision, the university setting, and the university's knowledge.

## **Designing Regional Policy on Lifelong Learning Culture and Generative AI in Southeast Asian Higher Education: A Policy Design Structure**

### 1. External Threats & Opportunities (external environment)

On a global scale and at high intensity, digitalisation and generative AI present both external threats and opportunities to the Southeast Asian/ASEAN higher education sector.

Within the changing environment of the digital economy and society, and now to the AI-native society, generative AI can offer a lot to human learning, but at the same time, it can also be a threat to institutions that lack digitalisation and digital experience in education provision.

### 2. Context and Situations (context and situations)

The higher education sector in Southeast Asia/ASEAN operates within the context of uneven and combined socio-economic development, with catching-up national policies and attitudes.

In the current situation in the region, ASEAN has numerous policies, guidelines, and frameworks for the higher education sector. But most of these policies appear not to be that proactive in their implementation design. Hence, there is a need to go further.



continue

### 3. Conditions (enablers)

It seems desirable to set the conditions right for the development of higher education in ASEAN/Southeast Asia by building the sector's capabilities, with a focus on higher education enablers.

### 4. Policies (inputs)

There needs to be an overcoming of the "no money, no action" attitude at the policy level in some countries in the ASEAN region, by means of connection-collaboration-coinvestment that really produces results.

End

