



# New ILO Strategic Initiatives on Skills and Employability in Asia and the Pacific

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# Background and challenges

- Many countries in Asia and the Pacific are struggling to respond to the skills needs of their workforces
- Increasing need to develop the skills required for competitiveness, productivity and jobs
- Difficult for countries to access latest information on innovative training policies, practices and systems reform
- Many interesting examples exist but few networks available to facilitate exchange of information

# The ILO's response

- In responding to these challenges the ILO has developed a *Strategic Framework on Skills and Employability* which is designed to:
  - Respond to needs of constituents
  - Serve as common platform on skills
  - Integrate all ILO skills activities into a single workplan [Strat Framework diagram rev 25 Jan 06.doc](#)
- A new *Regional Skills & Employability Programme (SKILLS-AP)*, building on extensive APSDEP experience, will facilitate and coordinate this process and work through a revitalized *Regional Skills Network*

# SKILLS-AP & Regional Skills Network

- The launch of the **SKILLS-AP programme** and the revitalized **Regional Skills Network** took place at the *First Technical Meeting of the Regional Skills Network Partner Institutions*, Incheon, Nov. 2005.
- The meeting, which involved all 26 member States in Asia and the Pacific, agreed upon the key issues and challenges for skills development across the region, and discussed the ways and means of sharing knowledge and experience among ILO constituents in the region to optimise HRD processes and promote decent work

# Three key outcomes of the First Technical Meeting

- A tripartite Statement of Common Understanding on the role and responsibilities of SKILLS-AP and the Regional Skills Network Partners
- A Framework for Cooperation on Skills Development in Asia and the Pacific
- A Matrix of major themes and key issues on skills in the region - a 'First' for countries in Asia and the Pacific!

## Some key issues identified in Korea

- Skills recognition and qualifications frameworks
- Improved quality of skills development and workplace learning
- Skills for the informal economy/ poverty
- Skills for inclusion and economic empowerment of marginalized groups
- Core/employability skills 'soft skills'
- Improved information and data on skills requirements of economy/labour market

## The SKILLS-AP Programme will:

- Focus on strengthening the work on skills and employability at the regional level, focussing on knowledge sharing and product development, and:
  - Develop networks of technical expertise
  - Conduct research on key skills issues
  - Organize regional seminars and workshops
  - Develop pilot projects with SROs/HQ/Turin
  - Develop regional skills information system
  - Promote technical cooperation between partner organizations
- This work will be done in close collaboration with other ILO units to strengthen the skills element of Decent Work Country Programmes

# The Regional Skills Network

- Consists of:
  - Focal Points in all ILO member States
  - Partner Organizations which includes national training institutions and workers and employers organizations (all welcome!)
- Network designed to:
  - Share experiences and best practices
  - Provide base for networking, sharing knowledge, experience and technical cooperation among member States

# Initial planning of SKILLS-AP & RSN

- Skills rec./qualifications frameworks
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Planning Meeting - NQFs
  - Mutual recognition
  - RMQF & RMCS
  - TA for countries/mobility
- Improved quality of skills and workplace learning
  - VET Handbook W/shop
  - Competency – Indonesia
  - Learning/skills in Pacific
  - Workplace learning in AP
- Skills for the informal economy, poverty reduction & economic empowerment
  - Regional innovative approaches
  - Regional Training for Economic Empowerment (TREE) package
  - TREE in Pakistan & Philippines
  - TREE for Tsunami & earthquake victims in Aceh, Nias & Pakistan

# Initial planning of SKILLS-AP & RSN

- Skills for marginalized groups
  - Inclusion of PWDs in vocational training (Bangkok meeting)
  - Skills & employability for youth
  - Career guidance (2007)
- Core/employability skills 'soft skills'
  - Strategies for core skills
  - Asia-Pacific Handbook on developing core skills
- Improved information and data on skills requirements
  - Key indicators of the Labour Market (KILM – HQ)

## The next steps...

The SKILLS-AP programme, together with other ILO units, will prepare a detailed workplan for skills and employability in the region. Discussions will be held with countries and partner organizations which have expressed interest in supporting skills issues to clarify the level and kind of support available

See: [www.ilo.org/skills-ap](http://www.ilo.org/skills-ap) for more information

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