

**ILO/SKILLS-AP/Thailand Regional Technical Meeting On
Improving Skills Recognition and Quality and Qualification systems for
IMT-GT and GMS Countries**

4 – 6 November 2008, Songkhla, Thailand

Background

Ways to improve the quality of skills training and ensure recognition of skills continue to be high priority items for all countries in the region. The central policy question of how to ensure smoother transitions between school, training, employment and re-training was noted at the recent International Labour Conference discussion on skills. Countries have looked to a range of approaches to improve the ways in which skills and education are recognized in education, training and employment nationally and internationally.

Skills recognition is one of the priority issues identified by the Regional Skills Network Partner Organizations. Members of the Network have noted that their countries are looking to the experiences of and models from other countries, and have requested ILO technical assistance to better understand them so as to develop appropriate national responses.

In 2006, the Ministry of Labour, Thailand, in collaboration with ILO/SKILLS-AP organized an Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT) and Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) Meeting on skills standards. The meeting was part of the Regional Skills Network activities collaboration. This year, responding to the Regional Skills Network collaboration, Thailand has expressed their interest in working closely with ILO/SKILLS-AP on the issue of skills recognition. The Department of Skills Development Thailand, with the support of Thailand International Development Cooperation Agency (TICA) has agreed to support a second regional workshop for network members from the IMT-GT and Greater Mekong sub-regions

The workshop will focus on better understanding of different approaches to skills recognition, to enable countries to better plan their own development, to identify areas for potential collaboration between countries, and to identify further research and development of tools that the ILO could assist with.

The workshop will introduce a number of different approaches countries have taken, including National Qualifications Frameworks, the Japan Skills Evaluation system, and the current approaches of participating countries

ILO will invite UNESCO to send two international resource persons to participate in the Meeting as they would improve the quality and relevance of the discussion. Building effective linkages between the 'academic' and 'vocational' streams and recognizing the economic contribution of both theoretical and practical competencies help to ensure the development of human resources that can advance the social and economic development of countries. Their participation would also provide an opportunity to build on the joint policy assessments sponsored by ILO-UNESCO in a number of the GMS countries in 2004-05.

Objectives

The overall objective is to:

- Provide constituents with a good understanding of different options to address skills recognition, and develop ideas for further action to take nationally,
- Identify potential areas for further country-country collaboration,
- Establish key questions for further ILO research and tool development, to better meet constituent needs.

Workshop structure and methodology

The workshop will be organized in a number of technical sessions, comprising introduction of materials, panel discussions and small group discussion sessions. Chairing responsibilities for technical sessions will be shared among participants.

Participation

The Government of Thailand and the ILO will jointly host this meeting. Participants will be invited from IMT-GT and GMS countries. The meeting is designed specifically for senior level staff of the national vocational training organizations. Participants will be invited from those involved in the provision of policy support and/or the planning and development of national qualification framework. Employers' and workers' organizations that provide policy advice will be invited to participate in the programme. The participation of women in the meeting is strongly encouraged. Participant countries will include Cambodia, China (Yunnan Province), Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam. Japan and UNESCO will be invited to send their resource persons.

Preparation and inputs

Each participating country will be asked to prepare a brief background note and presentation following the instruction for report and presentation (see attached). Countries are welcome to attach additional materials or provide links to websites, for the information of other participants. All countries will make a brief presentation at the workshop.

ILO will contract with a technical expert to provide an introduction to the topic and to provide assistance to countries in their planning for further action.