



Participants of the workshop on effective workplace learning, 22-30 January 2008 in Chiba, Japan.

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INTRODUCTION

This is the second Newsletter of the Regional Skills and Employability Programme for Asia and the Pacific (SKILLS-AP). A part of its role of the SKILLS-AP Programme is to support a Regional Skills Network of partner organizations which includes government, employers' and workers' organizations together with organizations such as the Australia's National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization, Regional Centre for Vocational & Technical Education & Training (SEAMEO VOTECTH), the Colombo Plan Staff College and a number of training organizations and TVET institutions. SKILLS-AP supports and promotes the sharing of resources and it is hoped that this newsletter will become the means to facilitate this sharing between partner organizations. The first issue gave details of the history of the programme and this second edition introduces a new feature of country updates that will be continued in future editions. It also includes details of some publications that can be obtained from the SKILLS-AP Office and some new publications relating to skills development and to support for people with disabilities.

RECENT EVENTS:

CONFERENCE ON VTE RESEARCH AND NETWORKING 2008

SKILLS-AP was represented at the SEAMEO VOCTECH Conference on VTE Research and Networking 2008 by Mr Ray Grannall, Regional Senior Adviser for Skills Development. The Conference was held in Bali, Indonesia from 7th to 8th July 2008 and information was presented on the work of ILO and SKILLS-AP in the region, including the Regional Skills Network. The presentation included some examples of projects in Indonesia including the Education and Skills Training for Youth (EAST) and Job Opportunities for Young Women and Men (JOY) programmes. The conference provided an opportunity to describe some of the work of SKILLS-AP to many officials from the various Ministries of Education throughout the region. The conference was attended by approximately 250 people and the level of attendance at sessions remained high for the whole conference.

CAMBODIA WORKSHOP ON SKILLS RECOGNITION FOR MIGRANT WORKERS

A workshop was organised by the Cambodia Government, in collaboration with SKILLS-AP and Subregional Office Bangkok to introduce a project on Skills Recognition for Migrant Workers in Cambodia. The aim of the workshop, from 23rd to 24th June 2008, was to review the Regional Model Competency Standards for the manufacturing sector and to see whether these could be compared to existing or planned Cambodian skills standards. The meeting also sought to establish Cambodia's action plan for future activity on the project.

This meeting was part of the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme on recognizing migrant worker's skills and it introduced key Cambodian stakeholders (Government, employers' and workers' organizations) to the main principles of the Regional Model Competency Standards (RMCS) and the ways that these could be used in the skills recognition process. A number of issues were discussed and there was a view that Cambodia would like to send more semi skilled workers and that there was a need to improve the pre-training for workers prior to their leaving for another country.

WORKPLACE LEARNING IN JAPAN

A workshop on effective workplace learning was held from 22nd to 30th January 2008 in Chiba, Japan. The

workshop was designed to assist partner organizations in countries in the region increase their awareness of the importance of workplace learning. The meeting explored ways in which public policy in Japan has been used to enhance the productivity of enterprises by encouraging them to make more effective use of the skills of their employees. Each country representative provided details of their experiences, national training policies, and examples of good practice. They also identified constraints to the promotion and development of workplace learning. A newly developed 'draft Guide to Workplace Learning' was provided, and participants from each country agreed to work together in tripartite groups to develop a plan promoting future workplace learning activities within their own country.

PACIFIC SKILLS STRATEGIES



Countries from across the Pacific attended a Regional Technical Meeting on Skills Development which was held in Nadi, Fiji from 26th to 28th March, 2008. The objective of this meeting was to discuss the key issues and major challenges for skills development with regard to the development of national skills strategies. The workshop focused on identifying the ways and means in which Pacific Island countries can cooperate more effectively in developing common strategies to plan and deliver skills development programmes. Participating countries examined the main challenges facing their skill development programmes. Different strategies for regional cooperation were discussed with regard to improving skills recognition systems and sharing competency standards. There was also some discussion on ways to improve the quality of training systems and address the skills needs of young people and those in the informal economy workers. Recent successful examples of good practices were discussed in relation to the above themes. The ILO's policy framework, Recommendation 195 concerning Human Resources Development: Education, Training and Lifelong Learning was also introduced. The meeting



demonstrated that there is consensus in the region on the importance of skills development; participating countries prepared National Action Plan proposals which in the future will be used to formulate the skills elements of Decent Work Country Programmes.

NEW COMMITMENT TO GREEN SKILLS

Forty participants from nineteen countries met in Niigata, Japan from 21st to 23rd April to discuss the implications of environmental change on jobs, sustainable economic growth and poverty. Many skills development needs were identified to increase energy and resource efficiency, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and introduce new technologies successfully. This research conference discussed ways that the ILO and its partners can use the focus of decent work to support skills development for 'Green Jobs'.

Green jobs are defined as decent work, created in economic sectors and activities, which reduce the environmental impact of production and consumption. Green jobs include employment that help to reduce energy and raw material consumption, lower carbon emissions, protect and restore ecosystems, and minimize waste and pollution. A wide range of economic sectors are potentially involved, including energy supply, transport, manufacturing, construction, retail, agriculture, materials management and recycling.

The conference sought to identify knowledge gaps related to the potential impacts of climate change on employment. Discussions highlighted priority skills areas which are likely to be involved in the transition to a more environmentally-sustainable process of development and can be supported by ILO training and capacity-building approaches. The conference also analyzed the specific

role of government policies to promote green jobs, and explored promising pilot projects for future ILO interventions. Further information is available at <http://www.ilo.org/greenjobs>

SKILLING ASIA AND THE PACIFIC



The ILO/SKILLS-AP/Korea Second Technical Meeting of the Regional Skills Network Partner Organizations held in Incheon, Korea, from 16th to 18th April, 2008 brought together skills development Partner Organizations from 27 ILO member States in Asia and the Pacific, including workers and employers organizations, to discuss the key skills issues and challenges facing the region. The ILO Regional Skills Network in Asia and the Pacific was seen as a key platform to assist countries in the region access information and share expertise and knowledge through networking, technical cooperation and joint programmes, and to strengthen the skills element of Decent Work Country Programmes.

The meeting agreed that while SKILLS-AP had led much of the technical work during the first two years of the implementation of the revitalized Regional Skills Network, during this next stage, the Partner Organizations themselves would need to play a much more active role if



the Network is to represent a genuine partnership between countries for promoting technical cooperation and sharing knowledge and expertise. The meeting also agreed upon a Framework for Cooperation on Skills Development in Asia and the Pacific noting that “the Framework comes out of a shared commitment to cooperation, recognizing that all partner organizations in the region have information and experiences to share which will be valuable to others”.

The Regional Director, Ms Sachiko Yamamoto opened the meeting on behalf of the ILO. Ms Christine Evans-Klock, Director EMP/SKILLS presented the ILO Report for the General Discussion on Skills at the International Labour Conference this year. The meeting also provided an opportunity to hand over responsibility for supporting the RSN to Mr Ray Grannall, now manager of SKILLS-AP and ably supported by Ms Wipusara Rugworakijkul and Ms Alin Sirisaksopit. Finally, the meeting served to strengthen the contributions of the regional knowledge-sharing efforts to meeting skills development goals in DWCPs – an objective supported through the active involvement of Anne Richmond and Akiko Sakamoto, skills specialists from the sub-regional offices in Bangkok and New Delhi respectively.

ACTION ON TVET IN SCHOOLS

Representatives from Indonesia, China, Pakistan, Thailand, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, and Cambodia met from 12th to 14th May 2008, at a UNESCO-sponsored event to identify common challenges faced in the provision of TVET at the secondary level. The expansion and improvement of secondary education are becoming policy imperatives for developing countries as they face growing pressure to build stronger linkages between TVET systems and the labour market, improve the training of their vocational education instructors and enhance the financial mechanisms in which to effectively deliver on these objectives. A research project will be carried out to follow up this meeting.

COUNTRY NEWS:

AFGHANISTAN SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Under its National Skills Development Program, the Government of Afghanistan has established a National Qualifications Authority and Framework. A program was initiated in March 2008 with funding from the World Bank:

- to increase the capacity of the national VET system to manage and deliver market-oriented vocational skills training and

- to facilitate and fund vocational and business development training which will lead to waged and self employment, and improved livelihoods.

The Government of Afghanistan is also implementing the Afghanistan Skills Development Project (ASDP) in support of NSDP goals. The NSDP has so far developed several departments to streamline skills development activities: a department to develop competency-based curricula on a modular and levels-based framework; a department of monitoring and evaluation system which will evolve into the standards and accreditation department; and an economic sector department which will advise on targeting provision to suit the demands of the labour market across the service, agriculture, construction, commerce and industry sectors, and support curriculum development.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN PAKISTAN

The ILO (SKILLS-AP and EMP-SKILLS) has been supporting the skills component of the Decent Work Country Programme in Pakistan over that past five years. In Pakistan, skills development is seen as a critical component of the ILO's work in employment promotion, job creation and poverty reduction. Skills development is now part of most technical cooperation projects in Pakistan, including child labour, livelihood creation, gender empowerment and, naturally, employment promotion. The ILO recently completed the highly successful TREE project and based on that work, the former Prime Minister sought the ILO's support for his Skills Development Programme. The ILO, with UNDP support implemented a support programme which undertook an assessment of 80 training centres and conducted a capacity building programme in the four provinces plus Islamabad. Skills is also an important part of the ILO's work in promoting and supporting the “One UN Programme”.

The ILO has been requested by the National Vocational and Technical Education Commission (NAVTEC) to advise them on the development of their new National Skills Strategy. Several advisory missions were undertaken and the new Skills Strategy ‘Skilling Pakistan’ will be presented to the Parliament in mid 2008. The ILO has been further requested to assist in the implementation of this Strategy and, in particular, to assist in:

- Establishing the Sectoral Industry Advisory Committees
- Developing Sectoral Competency Standards (based on the RMCS)
- Supporting the development of Sectoral Skills Centres of Excellence

- Reviewing the National Apprenticeship System

SEASONAL JOBS IN AUSTRALIA

Australia has announced a new plan to ease labour shortages in the country. Up to five thousand people from a number of Pacific Island nations will be eligible for special visas to work on farms and in vineyards. Known as Regional Seasonal Employment (RSE), the scheme has been successfully trialed in New Zealand. Basic training will be provided as part of the programme in the hope these skills can be used when they return to their home countries. The Government will also guarantee migrants receive Australian award wages and conditions. In a critical breakthrough, the Australian Workers Union (AWU), which has historically been opposed to importing workers has recently said it would reconsider the plan.

NEW SINGAPORE TRAINING STRATEGY

A new Continuing Education and Training (CET) Master plan was announced by the Singapore government in February 2008. The CET Master plan is aimed at preparing Singaporean workers and industry for important shifts anticipated in the labour market. Ten new CET Centres in potential growth sectors will be instituted, including aerospace, precision engineering, process manufacturing chemicals/ petrochemicals, engineering services, biologics, pharmaceuticals, environmental technology, portable manufacturing skills, service professionals, logistics and supply chain management, allied healthcare, community and social services, workplace safety and health, and adult training. Existing CET Centres will also be expanded to meet demand in growth sectors. The Master plan also calls for the creation of a new Institute for Adult Learning to develop trainer capabilities and conduct applied research in HRD.

KOREAN GOVERNMENT TO ADDRESS PROBLEM OF MIS-MATCH BETWEEN THE SKILLS OF FOREIGN WORKERS AND JOBS THEY ARE ASSIGNED TO IN KOREA

The survey of migrant workers' adjustments in Korea conducted jointly by HRD Korea and the ILO indicated that there was a significant problem with mismatch of workers to jobs. The situation has arisen because there is no system put in place for ascertaining the skill levels of foreign workers. Up to the present employers simply rely on information on Korean language test scores, the age and health condition of the job applicants.

In their presentation at a National Workshop on the Employment Permit System (EPS) in Bangkok early this year, officials of the Ministry of Labour of Korea said that a bigger effort will be launched to improve the information on job seekers as well as information on the specific products produced by employers seeking foreign workers.

"Those who graduate from vocational institutions can indicate their majors (High School, Polytechnic College, and University)"

At the same time, there will be improved information about the career and qualifications, e.g. Career, has detailed trades, job description, work period and others. Detailed contents are written free (Letter number limit: 300).

At the same time sending organizations are asked to verify written qualifications submitted by job applicants.

ILO/Korea Partnership Programme on Labour Migration has completed four national workshops in the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam during February – April 2008.

INDIA'S SKILLS DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The Indian Government is currently developing a national framework so it can be more responsive to skill development needs of its vulnerable citizens, including women, underprivileged segments of society, and unorganized sector workers. During 2007-08, the Indian Government launched its Skill Development Scheme (SDI) with the objective of training one million unorganized workers on demand driven vocational skills over the next five years, and one million persons each year thereafter. The Government hopes SDI will effectively support the training, certification and skills enhancement of workers in the unorganized sector. The private sector is playing a very important role in achieving the objective of the scheme, collaborating with the Central Government, State Governments, and other establishments including educational institutes such as schools, polytechnics, and engineering colleges to deliver training. It is intended that certification will be nationally recognized by both the government agencies and industry/trade organizations.

LAO PDR NATIONAL TRAINING SYSTEM

Lao PDR's Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW) has recently formulated its long-term strategic development plan (2007-2020) for the country's national

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training system. Lao PDR is also working towards the establishment of a national skill recognition committee, so that labour skill standards can be identified effectively. ASEAN skill standards in five areas have already been approved as points of reference, and MLSW has begun conducting skill testing in various different levels. In addition, vocational training facilities have been widely expanded in both the public and private sectors. The Government aims to conduct ongoing training-of-trainer courses on self-employment in ten provinces with the objective of reducing labour emigration. MLSW is looking to establish a regional labour information centre which will conduct periodic regional labour forums and is evaluating the feasibility of setting up more information centres in other parts of the country.

NEW HR STRATEGY FOR GMS

Following the WGHRD-8 meeting in Cambodia in 2007 the Asian Development Bank (ADB) commenced a series of consultative meetings with countries of the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) to explore approaches in which to improve the efficiency of their human resources. The consultations were based on the recognition that there is a need to improve human resource development across the region to support the increasing economic integration. It also recognized the pressures facing the current education and training systems and the need for continued growth. A draft GMS HRD Strategic Framework and Action Plan were used as the basis for discussion with the overall goal to strengthen cooperation on human resource development. Following the country meetings, representatives from SKILLS-AP held further discussions to assist in the development of a draft framework and plan.

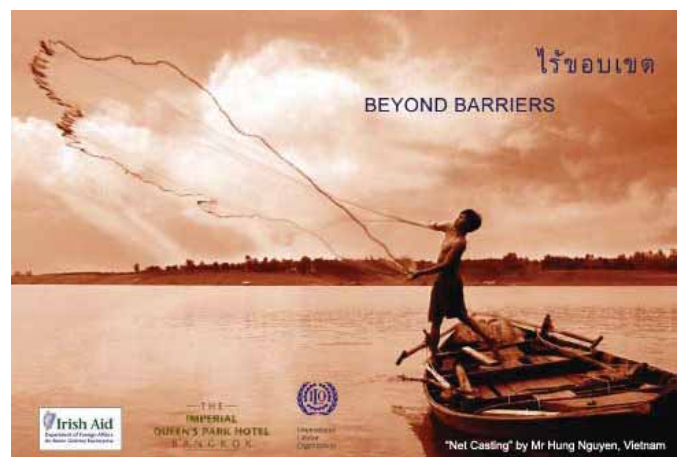
OTHER NEWS :

DISABILITY NOW IN SKILLS-AP



Beginning in May 2008, the Regional Skills Network will be mainstreaming disability issues into its work with the aim of serving as a primary focal point in the region for information on the training and employability of people with disabilities. Working with our social partners, ILO/SKILLS-AP is in the process of developing tools and strategies to increase positive awareness about people with disabilities and better support their inclusion in the workforce. For more information, please visit the website <http://www.ilo.org/abilityasia>.

BANGKOK PHOTO EXHIBITION



An exhibition of prize-winning photos on the theme of decent work for persons with disabilities has opened in Bangkok. The exhibition was organized by ILO with support from the Disabled Persons International and Irish Aid and the Royal Queens Park Hotel in Bangkok. Beyond Barriers is a photo exhibition comprising winning and short-listed pictures from the 2007 Decent Work for Persons with Disabilities photo contest. Nearly 250 pictures from 19 countries throughout Asia and the Pacific were entered. The exhibition highlights the ability of persons with disabilities to work productively, support themselves and make a valuable contribution to society. It also focuses attention on their rights to decent work.

NEW UN CONVENTION

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities entered into force on 3rd May, 2008. This became the first human rights treaty of the 21st century and marks a major milestone in the effort to promote, protect and ensure the equal rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons with disabilities worldwide. It is estimated that approximately 470 million disabled women

and men of working age will be affected by the Convention's provisions on work. These provisions prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability in all forms of employment and call on states to open up opportunities in mainstream workplaces to job seekers with disabilities. The Convention promotes the access of disabled persons to freely chosen work, general technical and vocational guidance programmes, placement services and vocational and continuing training. It emphasizes the importance of helping disabled people find and keep jobs by promoting improved accessibility of workplaces, calling for improved transport and access to information in written and electronic form. Disabled workers now have the option of exercising their labour and trade union rights on an equal basis with others. Where workers become disabled while in employment, their jobs are protected through job retention measures, and provisions will be made for vocational and professional rehabilitation, so that employees can return to work.

NEW RESEARCH PROJECT

SKILLS-AP is coordinating a regional research project to address the lack of data in the Asia-Pacific region on the level of inclusion in vocational training for people with disabilities. The initial stages of the report will identify conditions and obstacles faced by people with disabilities. Current employment policies and practices will be explored by developing a survey to the main providers of vocational training in countries across the region. Case studies which provide good examples of inclusive vocational training will also be selected from Australia and other countries in the Asia Pacific.

PUBLICATIONS: STOCKS STILL AVAILABLE

Copies of the following publications are still available from the SKILLS-AP Office in Bangkok.

YOUTH AT RISK:



Youth at Risk -The role of skills development in facilitating the transition to work seeks to address the issue of skills development for Youth at Risk, including the economically vulnerable and the socially excluded. Unemployment and underemployment of dis-

advantaged youth is examined, highlighting the costs of discrimination and exclusion. Good practice examples of training programmes and projects that have targeted vulnerable young women and men, particularly within the informal economy, are documented. (Working Paper No. 19: Brewer, L., ILO 2004, 151 pgs).

ILO RECOMMENDATION 195:



Recommendation 195 – Recommendation concerning Human Resources Development: Education, Training and Lifelong Learning was adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 2004. With a focus on education, training and lifelong learning, Recommendation 195 will assist member States develop the knowledge and skills of their workforces to improve competitiveness and productivity, while at the same time promoting social inclusion and decent work. The Recommendation also addresses key skills concerns faced by low-income countries, such as the emigration of skilled workers or “brain drain” and the need for innovative approaches to funding training. (ILO 2005, 11 pgs.)

NATIONAL QUALIFICATION FRAMEWORKS:



National qualification frameworks: Their feasibility for effective implementation in developing countries evaluates the issues and challenges involved in the design and implementation of National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) with regard to their potential problems and benefits for developing countries. Variations in existing NQFs are explored and key elements of successful National Frameworks are described with a view to provide a benchmark for making international comparisons. NQF implementation strategies are proposed and discussed. (Working Paper No. 22: Young, M., ILO 2005, 39 pgs.)

NEW PUBLICATIONS

DISABILITIES RESOURCE KIT:



A Resource Kit for Decent Work for People with Disabilities has recently been developed by the Skills and Employability Department of the ILO, this Advocacy Kit has been developed to provide assistance to groups and organizations interested in planning activities and events to promote decent work for persons with disabilities. The Kit contains the following advocacy materials:

- Highlights Report: International Day of Disabled Persons 2007
- "The right to decent work of persons with disabilities" report
- International Day of Disabled Persons poster
- DVD containing video material: Highlights of International Day of Disabled Persons 2007, ILO Geneva, Switzerland; Video Message from ILO Director-General Juan Somavia; Video Interview with the actress Marlee Matlin (Perry, Debra A., ILO 2007, 140 pgs.)

GUIDE FOR JOB-SEEKERS WITH DISABILITIES:



The ILO's AbilityAsia programme has adapted the manual, *Getting Hired: A Guide for Job-Seekers with Disabilities* to help individuals who are looking for salaried or paid employment in the formal sector. SKILLS-AP is about to print the guide which can be used by individuals or groups, including organizations of individuals with disabilities. It can also be used on its own or as a part of a training workshop. Organizations of people with disabilities, placement agencies, non-governmental organizations and community organizations can also use the companion training manual *Getting Hired: A Trainer's Manual for Conducting a Workshop for Job-Seekers with Disabilities* to deliver a workshop on this topic. While this guide has been prepared for adults with disabilities, the basic principles for finding a job and getting hired are the same for anyone. Non-disabled people may also find this manual valuable. (ILO 2008, 97 pgs.)

For more information, please visit our websites:

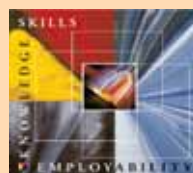
<http://www.ilo.org/skills-ap>



<http://www.ilo.org/abilityasia>



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