NEWS ON SKILLS AND EMPLOYABILITY

Philippines—According to the World Bank, improving the state of education in the country and increasing the competitiveness of the Filipino labor force cannot be resolved by merely increasing the government’s budget for education. More efficient use of funds is needed.

Global—The ILO is to play an active role in the implementation of a new trust fund established recently by six United Nations agencies to promote disability rights and help countries improve policies, data-gathering and service delivery to persons with disabilities.

India—The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and the Ministry of Human Resources Development (MOHRD) will pilot new TVET programs in secondary schools in two states linked to a new draft National and Vocational Education Qualifications Framework (NVEQF).

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NETWORK INFORMATION

We would like to thank those of you who shared information for this issue of the Skills and Employability Network Updates. We would encourage you to continue to share information about your projects, developments and resources in the fields of Skills and Employability. Please send your contributions to bkk_rskills.ro.bangkok@ilo.org

READ MORE NEWS ON THE SKILLS AND EMPLOYABILITY NETWORK

REGIONAL WORKSHOP AND STUDY PROGRAMME ON ANTICIPATING SKILLS DEMANDS FOR SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

The Regional Workshop and Study Program on Anticipating Skills Demand for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth was held in Sendai, Japan during 27 February - 1 March 2012. This event was jointly organized by the ILO and JAVADA (Japan Vocational Ability Development Association) and sponsored by Japan’s MHLW (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare) through the ILO/Japan/Regional Skills Program.

Tripartite representatives from Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam participated in this event and were given issues that will provide them with adequate national skills data and LMI which can guide the respective national policy makers in deciding on how to invest their limited resources. This event provided the opportunity for country teams to develop national action plans which sets out realistic strategies to further strengthen arrangements for skills anticipation in their countries. Follow-up activities will take place throughout the year in order to monitor progress set forth in the national action plans.

Through the ILO/Japan/Regional Skills Program efforts will continue to be made to support cross-country and inter-institutional learning and facilitate the partnership between industries and TVET institutions, improve the quality of skills development strategies and systems, and thereby enabling the participating member countries to better anticipate skills demands especially in the context of sustainable and inclusive growth. The Workshop Report will be uploaded in due course and the link provided in the next Community Updates.

ILO PUBLICATION—JUST OUT

This is the annual Global Employment Trends (GET) report that provides the latest global and regional estimates of employment and unemployment, employment by sector, vulnerable employment, labour productivity and working poverty, while also analysing country-level issues and trends in the labour market. The report takes stock of labour market developments and emerging challenges as the world continues to struggle to forge a sustainable recovery from the global economic and jobs crisis.

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EVENTS


For more information about events go to the Skills and Employability Network
G20 TRAINING STRATEGY
Bangladesh, a Pilot Country within G20 HRD

The ILO worked closely with employers and workers to prepare a training strategy, building on the agreement adopted at the International Labour Conference in June 2008 on *Skills for improved productivity, employment growth and development*. The training strategy focuses on building bridges between the world of work and the world of education and training. The training strategy was incorporated into the Multi-Year Action Plan on Development adopted at the Seoul Summit in November 2011. The Action Plan sets out 9 Pillars, including one on Human Resources Development (HRD). The HRD Pillar calls on international organization to work together to support developing countries to continue to develop employment related skills that are better matched to employer and market needs in order to attract investment and decent jobs. The ILO is the designated coordinating body.

It was suggested that the support be launched in a set of pilot countries and that it builds on the G20 training strategy. In this connection, the on-going work in Bangladesh meets the criteria for G20 pilot country work. The Bangladesh government is establishing the National Skills Development Council as the overseeing authority of the implementation of the national skills policy. The United Nations Country Team works with the Government to coordinate support across all agencies working the area of HRD. As a pilot country within the G20 HRD Pillar, the existing coordination efforts would be strengthened, further institutionalized and, the value, documented. The potential for Bangladesh to benefit from skills development efforts in other countries has already become evident through participation of the Government and industry officials in regional and global knowledge sharing events.

On 2 February 2012, the Honorable Minister of Education of Bangladesh signed a letter agreeing to become a pilot country for the G20 initiative. To follow-up on this agreement, the World Bank, ILO and the Asian Development Bank planned a joint mission to Bangladesh to develop with the Government and other stakeholders an Action Plan for enhanced coordination of major skills projects in Bangladesh and implementation of the recently approved National Skills Development Policy. The mission will take place during 24-25 March 2012. Going forward, the Skills and Employability Network Community of Practice will provide periodical updates.

SKILLS FOR EMPLOYMENT—POLICY BRIEFS

Policy Briefs authored by the technical specialists of the Skills and Employability Department aim to present a short overview of particular areas related to skills development, policies and systems, and training. Each brief provides: a description of the policy challenge; policy options available; and recommendations and practical illustrations. They are offered as a resource to governments, workers and workers organizations and practitioners committed to using skills development to improve employability, productivity, and social inclusion.

⇒ **Skills for Employment - Policy Brief: Formulating a national policy on skills development**
⇒ **Skills for Employment - Policy Brief: Greening the global economy: the skills challenge**
⇒ **Skills for Employment - Policy Brief: Increasing the employability of disadvantaged youth**
⇒ **Skills for Employment - Policy Brief: Upgrading Informal Apprenticeship Systems**

NATIONAL WORKSHOP(S) ON ANTICIPATING SKILLS DEMAND AND LMIS

The National Technical Workshop on Anticipating Skills Demand and Strengthening LMIS was organized on 9 February 2012 at the Imperial Garden Villa and Hotel in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. It brought together the government (MoLVT and NEA), workers and employers’ organizations and identified key conceptual and practical challenges and proposed measures in response to these challenges.

H.E. Pich Sophoan, Secretary of State, Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MoLVT) presided over the opening ceremony and reflected on Cambodia and ILO’s combined commitment to further develop human resources. He stressed that strengthening labour market information system (LMIS) and anticipating skills demand are essential elements to the sustainable and inclusive development of Cambodia’s economy.

This event was held as a component of the ILO/Japan/Regional Skills Program which continues to identify opportunities of technical assistance to the respective governments. The Workshop report can be accessed at: [LMIS Cambodia](http://skills-ap.ilobkk.or.th).

A similar event was organized for India and was held at the India Habitat Centre on 5th December of 2011. Positive feedback from the participants reflect the significance of the topic. The Workshop report can be accessed at: [LMIS India](http://skills-ap.ilobkk.or.th).

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INTERVIEWING AN EXPERT, AKIKO SAKAMOTO

Akiko Sakamoto recently joined the ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team for East and South-East Asia and the Pacific (DWT-Bangkok) as the Skills and Employability Specialist. She has been working in the field of skills development for over 15 years, including 4 years in ILO headquarter (Geneva), another 4 years in ILO’s former Sub-Regional Office for South Asia (New Delhi) and another, almost, two years in ILO Office in Manila.

Q: What are the main challenges in this region and sub-region?
A: The first challenge that comes to mind concerns skills mismatch and correlating efforts for making skills development system more relevant. Concerns on equitable and quality-assurance remain to be a top common challenges in the Asia and the Pacific region. Public-private partnership is a key word that is often viewed as a way forward in meeting some of the major challenges, as described. In many countries, a systematic involvement of social partners in the skills system seem to still be limited which leads to the bottom line concern of coordination. Weak coordination efforts among the educational and training sector, the world of work, and skills lead to the “non fully” integration of skills development efforts into the broader strategy of business growth, sector growth and job creations.

Q: How does this sub-region compare with other sub-regions?
A: This sub-region includes countries that have developed a fairly strong policy framework and institutional and governing structure for skills development. Although the general and seemingly sound structures are in place, the effectiveness of the system is still being questioned. This leads to a challenge of upgrading skills development to another level. Skills development for the informal economy and rural communities is also viewed as significant challenge and a common theme in the Asia and the Pacific region. I hope I can bring the experiences and lessons learned from the other sub-regions to this sub-region, including effectively responding to the needs of the geographically vast Pacific Island Countries.

Q: How is your impression on living in Bangkok?
A: I had visited Bangkok on several occasions, but it is the first time for me to live in this city. Only a month passed by since my arrival, therefore, at this stage, it is difficult to share any strong impressions. Nevertheless, my initial impression is that Bangkok is a big, modern and cosmopolitan city. In order to get a better flavour of Thailand, I certainly should plan several trips to the many parts and flavours this country has to offer. Lastly, I admit that the diversity in the Asia and the Pacific region is amazing, and the challenge of diversity makes my work all the more exciting.

ILO GLOBAL SKILLS RETREAT 2012

The Skills and Employability Department (EMP/SKILLS) in Geneva organized the Global Skills Retreat during February 13-17, 2012. This event took place in Geneva and was participated by the ILO skills and employability specialists worldwide, both field and headquarters level. The opportunity was there for the specialists and management to share and exchange information including experiences in order to find areas to complement each others’ works and maximize opportunities and use of resources. The retreat was a good example of how to operationalize the work initiatives that is gradually taking shape on a global basis.

At the Retreat, the Skills and Employability specialists from the Asia and the Pacific region showed-cased the latest development on the Regional Skills Network and Community of Practice on Skills and Employability. The two products respond to the member States’ request for a common platform for better cooperation and services on skills issues including the assistance to them on access to information and sharing of expertise and knowledge through networking, for instance. Contributions and suggestions provided at the Retreat will be incorporated to the products in order to maintain relevance and ensure sustainability and continuity.

The strategy in collecting the TREE (Training for Rural Economic Empowerment) experience and innovation in this region were also shared at the Retreat. There are many success stories that would confirm TREE’s positive impact in creating and stimulating decent work conditions and opportunities in the local community by increasing employability of the vulnerable groups of society. A working paper that documents the TREE’s good practices in this region will be developed and shared in the near future.

FEATURED RESOURCES

This is the first edition of the ILO Global Business and Disability Network’s Newsline designed to keep you up-to-date with Network activities and disability news across the globe. This newsletter contains (among other things) information about a study tour for employers’ organizations in Asia coordinated by the Network in collaboration with the Employers’ Federation of Ceylon (EFC) and its Employers’ Network on Disability.

This code has been drawn up to guide employers to adopt a positive strategy in managing disability related issues in the workplace. It is intended to be read in the context of national conditions and to be applied in accordance with national law and practice.

Case Study - Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises SCORE in Indonesia. PT Laksana is an automotive parts manufacturer in Indonesia, which participated in SCORE training to improve its internal organisation of the work place, and find ways to restructure allowing for higher productivity rates. As a result PT Laksana improved their defect rates, productivity and worker-manager collaboration.

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