



CONCEPT PAPER
Extraordinary Meeting of the
GMS Working Group on Human Resource Development (WGHRD-Ex)

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) Human Resource Development (HRD) Strategic Framework and Action Plan (SFAP) 2013–2017¹ aims to facilitate the process of regional cooperation in HRD. It identified 7 strategic thrusts: (i) developing capacity in the economic corridors; (ii) cooperating in technical and vocational education and training; (iii) cooperating in higher education and research; (iv) addressing regional health issues; (v) facilitating safe cross-border labor migration; (vi) mitigating social costs in the economic corridors; and (vii) strengthening institutions and mechanisms for GMS HRD cooperation. The Working Group on Human Resource Development (WGHRD) comprising 4 subgroups: (i) health; (ii) education; (iii) labor and migration; and (iv) social development was tasked to support and monitor implementation of activities under the SFAP.

2. The review of the GMS HRD SFAP 2013 – 2017 commenced at the 15th Meeting of the WGHRD (WGHRD-15) in Kunming, People’s Republic of China in December 2016 to determine future directions of the WGHRD beyond 2017. The review focused on SFAP progress implementation and the WGHRD institutional mechanisms to coordinate activities in HRD. It was followed up by a round of in-country consultation meetings to review the performance of the WGHRD against the HRD SFAP 2013 – 2017. It found that while the WGHRD has been successful in supporting information sharing at a technical level, it has not delivered on the collective problem-solving and decision-making that would make it an effective platform for delivering regional solutions to HRD issues. There is evidence that it has stimulated cooperation within the health sub-groups on cross-border issues and there is demonstrated demand for continued cooperation through a working group (WG) mechanism in this sector. However, the WG has not been effective in developing and delivering regional cooperation in the education, labor and migration and social development sub-groups.

3. The review thereafter recommends the reconfiguration of the WGHRD and that (i) a GMS Working Group on Health Cooperation is created from the WGHRD health subgroup to serve as a regional platform for health issues; (ii) ADB provides regional technical assistance to support the completion of existing higher education projects that have been supported under R-PATA 8549: Implementing the GMS HRD SFAP 2013 – 2017; (iii) the current sub-sector members explore the possibility of the establishment of a Working Group on Safe Labor Migration with the assistance of strategic partners; and (iv) cross-cutting social development issues identified through summary poverty reduction and social strategy documents are integrated into the appropriate projects rather than addressed through a formal mechanism.

II. PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

4. ADB organized WGHRD-Ex to seek GMS countries’ consensus on the findings and recommendations of the GMS HRD SFAP 2013 – 2017 review and recommend new strategic directions for GMS cooperation in HRD beyond 2017. The event aims to (i) understand coordination efforts in the GMS within each of the HRD subgroups; (ii) obtain consensus regarding their future directions; and (iii) develop a plan of action for regional cooperation in health, education, and labor and migration.

¹ GMS HRD SFAP 2013-2017:
<http://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/institutional-document/33966/files/gms-sfap-hrd-2013-2017.pdf>

AGENDA
Extraordinary Meeting of the Working Group on Human Resource Development
7th Floor, Ballroom 2, Sofitel Sukhumvit, Bangkok, Thailand
4 July 2017

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| 8:30 – 8:45 | Registration, 7th Floor, Ballroom 2 |
| 8:45 – 8:55 | Welcome Remarks Speaker: Wolfgang Kubitzki, Thailand Resident Mission, Asian Development Bank (ADB) |
| 8:55 – 9:05 | Session 1: Introduction of Workshop Agenda <i>Objectives, activities and expected outputs of the special meeting</i> Presenter: Lainie Thomas, ADB |
| 9:05 – 9:20 | Session 2: GMS HRD Strategic Framework and Action Plan (SFAP) 2013 – 2017: Lessons Learned and Future Working Arrangements <i>Summary of the review’s findings and recommendations</i> Presenter: Sam Plummer, ADB consultant Facilitator: Lainie Thomas, ADB |
| 9:20 – 10:00 | Session 3: GMS Secretariat Perspective <i>GMS Secretariat response to the report findings and considerations for moving forward</i> Presenter: Alfredo Perdiguero, Director, ADB Facilitator: Pinsuda Alexander, ADB |
| 10:00 – 10:30 | Photo shoot and coffee break |
| 10:30 – 12:00 | Session 4: Country Statements <i>Present country views on the proposed reconfiguration of the WGHRD and identify regional HRD priorities for development partner support</i> Presenters: Heads of delegation of each GMS country (10 min each) Facilitator: Wolfgang Kubitzki, ADB |
| 12:00 – 13:00 | Lunch, Voilá! Restaurant, 2nd Floor |
| 13:00 – 13:20 | Session 5: Health Sector Initiatives in the GMS <i>Propose the creation of a new working group, discuss ongoing efforts to develop a GMS Health Strategy, and present developments on the processing of a technical</i> |

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| | <p><i>assistance to support these initiatives</i></p> <p>Presenter: Azusa Sato, ADB Facilitator: Pinsuda Alexander, ADB</p> | | |
| 13:20 – 13:40 | <p>Session 6: Education Sector Initiatives in the GMS <i>ASEAN initiatives in regional cooperation in education</i></p> <p>Presenter: Ing-orn Jeeraruensak, ASEAN University Network Facilitator: Sam Plummer, ADB</p> | | |
| 13:40 – 14:00 | <p>Session 7: Labor and Migration Sector Initiatives in the GMS <i>Status of labor and migration in the GMS</i></p> <p>Presenter: Maria Nanette Motus, International Organization for Migration Facilitator: Lainie Thomas, ADB</p> | | |
| | <p>Coffee Break</p> | | |
| 14:00 – 16:00 | <p>Session 8: Breakout session on the future directions of health, education and labor and migration <i>Discuss and agree on the future cooperation arrangements in each subgroup using guiding questions</i></p> | | |
| | <p>Education (Salon 1) Facilitators: Wolfgang Kubitzki, and Alfredo Perdiguero Co-facilitators: Sophea Mar, CARM and Khamtanh Chanthay, LRM</p> | <p>Health (Ballroom 2) Facilitators: Azusa Sato and Pinsuda Alexander Co-facilitator: Phoxay Xayyavong, LRM</p> | <p>Labor and Migration (Salon 2) Facilitators: Lainie Thomas and Sam Plummer Co-facilitator: Aihua Wu, PRCM</p> |
| 16:00 – 16:40 | <p>Session 9: Presentation of Subgroup Reports and Plans Moving Forward <i>Present plans for regional cooperation in health, education and labor and migration, incorporating social development aspects. An open forum will follow the presentations. (Presentation templates to be provided)</i></p> <p>Presenters: Nominated from each subgroup Facilitators: Lainie Thomas and Sam Plummer, ADB</p> | | |
| 16:40 – 17:00 | <p>Session 10: Findings and Recommendations <i>Summarize the meeting's agreements and future of the WGHRD, and identify next steps for the November or December 2017 meeting to be hosted by Lao PDR in Luang Prabang</i></p> <p>Facilitator: Wolfgang Kubitzki, ADB</p> | | |
| 17:00 – 19:00 | <p>Cocktails, S Gallery at the Lobby</p> | | |