

**Greater Mekong Subregion
Eighth Meeting of the Working Group on Human Resource Development
(WGHRD-8)
Phnom Penh, Cambodia
9-11 May 2007**

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

Introduction

1. The Eighth Meeting of the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) Working Group on Human Resource Development (WGHRD-8) was held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on 9-11 May 2007, co-organized by the Royal Government of Cambodia and the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

2. The theme of WGHRD-8 was “*Charting New Strategic Directions in GMS Cooperation in HRD*”. The objective of the meeting was to explore the key issues, challenges, strategic directions, and priority programs for strengthening GMS cooperation in human resource development – health, education, labor and migration, and social development.

3. The meeting was held in plenary and break-out sessions. The Agenda/Program of the meeting is attached as Appendix 1.

4. The participants included government representatives from the Kingdom of Cambodia, the People’s Republic of China (PRC), the Lao People’s Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), the Union of Myanmar, the Royal Thai Government, and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. Also present were representatives of multilateral and bilateral organizations, regional academic and research institutions, and civil society organizations. The list of participants is attached as Appendix 2.

5. The meeting was principally co-chaired by Mr. Tep Oeun, Deputy Director General of the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training, Cambodia, and Ms. Shireen Lateef, Director, Social Sectors Division, Southeast Asia Department, ADB. Heads of Delegations of the other GMS countries also took turns in co-chairing some of the sessions, with ADB staff assisting as facilitators.

Opening Session

6. H.E. Vong Sauth, Minister of Labor and Vocational Training, Royal Government of Cambodia, extended on behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia, his warm welcome to all the participants. He stated that Cambodia has achieved constant growth especially in 2005 when growth reached 13.4%. Survey results have shown that the poverty line has been remarkably reduced since 1993. Despite this success, Cambodia acknowledges that poverty reduction takes time and requires development of policies, strategies, planning and program activities that are clear, comprehensive and realistic, as well as the political will to ensure smooth implementation and mobilization of resources in order to achieve the goals set forth. With regard to the enforcement of labor laws, he stated that the International Labor Organization has declared that garment

and footwear industries in Cambodia have not been involved in forced labor, child labor and discrimination. A Labor Advisory Committee and Arbitration Council have been set up. In order to ensure the improved living conditions of employees, Cambodia has established a National Treasury for Social Security, which is responsible for the management and implementation of social security of employees in the private sector. A national committee for the promotion of training was also established to ensure the relevance of the programs to meet the needs of the labor market. Job seekers have access to job counseling including for jobs offered outside Cambodia. He added that the Royal Government of Cambodia has taken appropriate measures to manage migrant workers in order to reduce human trafficking, violation and exploitation, through the establishment of official arrangements for migrant workers with other countries. Cambodian workers are provided training and informed of their rights as well as of the responsibility of the recipient countries. He offered three recommendations for the consideration of the Working Group in the preparation of new strategies for developing human resources in the GMS. These are: (i) macroeconomic stability; (ii) development of all sectors that have direct (marketing, product and employment markets, commercial strategies for poverty reduction) and indirect (education and training, gender equity, public health) impacts on poverty reduction; and (iii) good governance. A copy of his opening remarks appears as [Appendix 3](#).

7. Ms. Shireen Lateef, Director, Social Sectors Division, Southeast Asia Department, ADB, welcomed everyone to the meeting on behalf of ADB and expressed her thanks to the Royal Government of Cambodia for co-organizing the meeting. She mentioned that the year 2007 marks the 15th anniversary of the GMS and noted the significant achievements made mid-way through the implementation of the GMS Strategic Framework covering the period 2002-2012. She highlighted the significant results in the “hardware” aspects of cooperation, particularly the improved physical connectivity through transport linkages in the GMS Economic Corridors, as well as developments in power trade, telecommunications, trade and investment, tourism, environment, and agriculture. She also underscored the important accomplishments in subregional cooperation in HRD and its key sub-sectors – health, education, and labor, including the very successful Phnom Plan for Development Management, initiatives in the prevention and control of communicable diseases, and the promotion of safe migration and prevention of trafficking of women and children. Notwithstanding these achievements, Ms. Lateef emphasized the need for strengthened cooperation to enhance the skills and competitiveness of the subregion’s labor force, and to contain and mitigate the negative externalities associated with increased connectivity and people mobility. Referring to the findings and recommendations of the Mid-Term Review of the GMS Strategic Framework and anticipating the Third GMS Summit in 2008, she stated that the WGHRD must clearly define its vision and bring into sharper focus the strategic thrusts, objectives, and priority projects in an action plan in order to effectively meet these pressing challenges. She stated that ADB stands ready to assist the working group in preparing an overarching Strategic Framework for GMS Cooperation in HRD and associated action plan that would hopefully address some of the priority issues that the WGHRD has identified. A copy of her opening remarks appears as [Appendix 4](#).

Session 1 Key Note Address: Poverty and Social Impacts of Regional Economic Integration in the GMS

8. Mr. Janmejy Singh, Economist, World Bank, discussed the poverty and social impacts of increased connectivity and regional economic integration (REI) in the GMS

based on recent primary research undertaken under an ADB-funded regional technical assistance project. The overall objective of the project was to determine how increased connectivity between the GMS countries through infrastructure and communications development maybe managed to ensure that the economic and social status of the poor may be significantly enhanced. The study: (i) covered the nature, extent and distribution of poverty in the East-West and North-South corridor provinces in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam; (ii) identified the types of cross-border interactions that existed and the costs and benefits they entailed; (iii) assessed the overall impact of REI on the poor as well as quantitative impact of poverty and (iv) outlined recommendations for national, provincial, and local governments and ADB.

9. Mr. Singh summarized the major findings, implications, and recommendations of the study that were particularly relevant to HRD, namely:

- Labor migration presented the greatest opportunity but a significant threat and that the magnitudes of labor movement were very significant. It was largely illegal and exploitative, and required a new approach in addressing the issue besides registration which was noted to be too costly and time consuming, including a rethinking of the existing labor policies and laws, the setting up of cross-border worker information and protection services in the sending countries, mechanisms to ensure productive use of remittances, and the big need for skills training and local employment generation.
- Cross-border health and education (social service) linkages represented another significant area in terms of genuine integration of cultures and identities and where strengthened cooperation and joint planning was possible and urgently needed. The possibilities for special subsidies and support programs and for provincial programs to feed into national policies were also suggested.
- Negative externalities (smuggling, drugs, HIV/AIDS, and trafficking) have increased particularly along the GMS corridors. The poor, the youth, women and children faced the highest risk. This issue required more awareness programs and collaboration across borders and where community participation would make a big difference. The threat of HIV/AIDS was a genuine concern and needed to be incorporated in REI policies.
- Other recommendations referred to the need for improved data collection, the need to consider gender implications of REI and for REI programs to distinguish between formal and informal linkages.

10. A copy of Mr. Singh's presentation appears as Appendix 5.

Discussions

11. It was noted that Myanmar was not included in the study and therefore the study's conclusion that there was a general westward flow of migration may not be accurate for the sub region as a whole.

12. Regarding the question on how the remittances of cross-border workers (CBWs) are used, it was clarified that the use of remittances has important implications in terms of poverty reduction and that usage has been productive both on the consumer and user

levels for household, farm, and community infrastructures. Comparing incomes of household with CBWs with non-CBWs, if both are poor; the ones with CBWs are found to be doing better. On the utilization of cross-border health services, it was clarified that some paid for these and some did not.

13. Thailand delegate noted that the Thai government had developed a policy for registration of migrant workers. Less than 50% of migrant workers are illegal. Policy is for legal migrant workers to have health insurance similar to Thai citizens. Thailand promotes collaboration between local provincial health authorities and neighboring countries on disease surveillance system and planning. Thailand suggested that ADB and the GMS Program help develop and improve the cross-border health services in order to provide comparable standards and quality to the population. ADB and GMS need to look at expanding communicable disease projects especially along the border between Thailand and neighboring countries. Regarding migration problems, Thailand has signed MOUs with Cambodia and Lao PDR to establish a system to avoid exploitation of migrant workers. The children of migrant workers have a chance to access education free of charge in Thailand. Solving the problem of migrant workers needs sincerity and commitment of all concerned governments. Regarding skills development and training, Thailand and Lao PDR have provincial government training programs for workers and even for refugees in camps in coordination with UNCHR. Training of instructors for other countries is also done so they can provide training when they go back.

14. IOM representative remarked that migration is a very complex process and caution should be taken in gathering data and in drawing conclusions from statistics on impacts on society of migration.

15. Rockefeller Foundation representative mentioned that they have published a report on Labor Migration in the GMS.

16. PRC delegate noted that PRC has been experiencing a huge volume of domestic labor migration. As everyone is free to move between provinces, there is actually no illegal migration. PRC is trying to organize activities for other countries starting next year and is committed to work with ADB and the other GMS countries.

Session 2 Country Statements

17. Heads of delegations from each of the six GMS countries expressed on behalf of their respective delegations, their thanks to the Royal Government of Cambodia and ADB for organizing and hosting the meeting. The heads of delegations presented their respective Country Statements in alphabetical order. Their presentations are summarized below. Full copies of the country statements are in [Appendix 6](#).

Cambodia

18. In their country statement, Mr. Tep Oeun, Deputy Director General of the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training, Cambodia, discussed the government's rectangular strategy which covers, among others, capacity building and HRD focusing on (i) strengthening the quality of education; (ii) ensuring enhanced health services; (iii) fostering gender equity; and (iv) implementing population policy. He noted the increased

annual budget for education and corresponding improved indicators in the standard of education, as well as improvements in health and demographic indicators consistent with the implementation of the government's population policy. He mentioned the establishment of the Ministry of Women Affairs and various measures to foster gender equity. Mr. Tep Oeun presented several recommendations for GMS cooperation in HRD including (i) the harmonization of standards in education and skills training; (ii) harmonization, standardization or recognition of education or skills, licenses or certification; (iii) management of resource mobilization for trade in goods and services, and investments; (iv) GMS strategic plan for enhancing health border activities (HIV/AIDS, malaria, TB, etc.) and preparedness for emerging infectious diseases and natural disasters (SARS, bird flu, tsunami); and (v) assignment of appropriate focal person from within the GMS scope and activities, as well as the participation of senior official from Cambodia Development Council.

PRC

19. Mr. Yunan Liu, Director of Comprehensive Division, Social Development Department, National Development and Reform Commission, PRC, discussed developments from PRC's perspective since the last working group meeting. This included the publication of the country report on Cooperation in Human Capital Development of the GMS; the holding of workshops on HIV/AIDS control, HIV/AIDS education program, and pilot program on malaria control; PRC's commitment to set up the China-ASEAN scholarship program; the expansion of the coverage of the Chinese government's scholarship program to cover additional 143 students from the GMS countries to study in China in AY 2006-2007; the holding of a senior officials' workshop on employment and work injury insurance; participation of PRC in the Phnom Penh Plan for Development Management learning programs as well as of institutions of higher education in Yunnan and Guangxi and initial assessment of Asia Pacific Finance and Development Center as a prospective PPP institutional partner. He also mentioned the designation of a national focal point for WGHRD. Mr. Yunan outlined the problems and challenges for HRD cooperation including the lack of strong support for programs and projects with long gestation periods, lack of effective coordination among existing cooperation mechanisms, the need for more practical and flexible technical and personnel training, and the need to strengthen the performance evaluation of cooperative projects. He emphasized several points for future directions and priorities including the strengthening of ADB's lead and coordinating role and the engagement of new partners, the full engagement of national focal points, support for the establishment of a regular Health Forum, expansion of some bilateral and multilateral cooperative projects to all GMS countries, cooperation in traditional medicine, participation in China-ASEAN scholarship projects, exchange activities for the youth e.g., summer camps, etc, distant learning, expansion and strengthening of the PPP institutional network, promotion of intercollegiate cooperation among universities in the subregion, cooperation in the development of labor markets and improvement of social security system, and protection of the rights of economic migrants. Mr. Yunan stated that PRC would provide assistance to support PPP Phase 3; prevention and control of malaria, TB, and H5N1; promote exchange of students, increase the number of scholarships, and provide necessary Chinese education resources; provide more training programs to officials responsible for labor and security; and recommend qualified academic institutions to join the PPP network. He proposed for the consideration of higher GMS authorities the following: (i) the acceleration of the formulation of a strategic framework and action plan for GMS HRD cooperation; (ii) a call for GMS countries to formulate

national strategies or plans for GMS HRD cooperation; (iii) the organization of activities for the Youth during the GMS Leaders' Summit; and (iv) the formulation of measures to address the overlapping issues among existing cooperation mechanisms.

Lao PDR

20. Mrs. Somchanh Xaysida, Director of Personnel Division, Ministry of Public Health, Lao PDR, gave a brief overview of the Lao economy and discussed achievements on the establishment of disease surveillance system for sexually transmitted infections and cross-border interventions for CDC with the support of ADB. She mentioned the 8th Party Congress resolution that set the Road Map of Human Resource Development for Lao PDR for 2006-2010 focusing on quality improvement of education, health services and culture. The Lao Government introduced a policy to strengthen the quality of health services and ensure access to such services for all people, including the poor and those from ethnic minorities and remote areas, especially women and children. Mrs. Somchanh identified the following challenges for Lao PDR: Health: increased demand for antiretroviral drugs, increased people's mobility, limited funding for universal access, low percentage of consistent condom use, low access to STI services for STI patients, shortage of rural health workers and low quality of health services, high IMR and under 5 MR due to infectious diseases; in Education: inconsistency between national socio-economic development programs and the outputs of technical vocational education and training, language barrier; in Labor: safety for migrant labor, protection of migrant workers from trafficking and forced labor, skills recognition for better wages, job creation in rural areas, and vocational training and skills standards testing for young workers. She also gave suggestions on short, medium and long term priorities to address these challenges and concerns.

Myanmar

21. Mr. Tin Min, Deputy Director General (Medical Care), Department of Health, Ministry of Health, Myanmar, presented the country profile of Myanmar and discussed the country's health policy and health plan. He outlined the various activities in progress concerning the prevention and control of communicable diseases including HIV/AIDS, malaria and TB. He discussed the organizational structure for the prevention and control of avian flu. He highlighted various challenges relating to cross-border joint activities, including inadequate communication facilities, inadequate skills on disease surveillance response among health workers in border areas, inadequate knowledge among communities residing at the borders, insufficient diagnostic facilities, shortage of life saving drugs, lack of personal contact in border areas, and lack of standard formats for reporting. In order to address the need to strengthen the health activities in border areas, he recommended the strengthening of communicable diseases surveillance system not only for epidemics but also for new emerging diseases e.g., SARS, avian flu; strengthening of communication facilities among border areas; strengthening of laboratory networking and facilities; and mobilization of resources on cross-border disease surveillance activities.

Thailand

22. Ms. Suchada Thaibunthao, Director, Thai Cooperation Branch I, Thailand International Development Cooperation Agency, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thailand, stated that the new Thai government that assumed office in October 2006 is fully aware

of its commitment and intends to adhere to its obligation in the subregional framework. In the labor sector, Thailand is pursuing a strategy to equip poor people in both rural and urban areas with knowledge and skills for employability and for self-employment. Thailand is actively participating and sharing experience with other countries on skills recognition. She emphasized that the political, socio-economic, and cultural aspects of the issue of labor migration need to be examined. She mentioned that Thailand, in cooperation with ILO, organized the Seminar on Skills Recognition System for the GMS countries in June 2006. Recently, Chulalongkorn University completed research work on "Increasing Productivity of ASEAN's Workforce through the skills recognition system", the results of which are worthwhile to share with the GMS countries. In education, Thailand is collaborating with neighboring countries through training courses, seminars and conferences, study visits, faculty and student exchanges, joint research, as well as provision of scholarships at Bachelor's, Master's and Ph D levels. Thailand's Ministry of Education initiated the "Neighboring Countries Relationship Project (2006-2008)" to assist the development of human resources in 4 neighboring countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Viet Nam). In 2007, the Ministry of Education is providing academic assistance via training courses in special education, Thai language learning, vocational education, and career development. In August 2007, Thailand is hosting a regional forum on quality and equity in education. In health, Thailand has seen improved collaboration among countries in the recent outbreak of avian flu. There are other areas that need urgent attention such as traffic accidents, health system development, communicable disease control particularly against HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria. She underscored the need to focus on a clear strategic framework and action plan for HRD in the GMS. She noted that the GMS countries as a group and the international community especially ADB have meaningful roles to play in achieving successful cooperation.

Viet Nam

23. In his country statement, Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Hung, Deputy Director, Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Education and Training, Viet Nam, discussed major achievements in education in terms of increased enrollments at all levels and increased numbers of students. In healthcare sector, the number of health workers is continuously increasing and 100% of communes now have health workers and healthcare centers. Child malnutrition has decreased dramatically from 35% (2002) to 27% (2006). Free medical care and treatment for children under 6 years old and for the poor are in place. In labor and social affairs, quality of vocation training has increased; new curriculum, new standards, and measures for quality assurance and certification have been introduced. He discussed challenges in HRD in Viet Nam, especially now that Viet Nam has joined WTO. These included quality of education, environment pollution and food safety, HIV and communicable diseases, reappearance of some controlled diseases e.g., TB and malaria, capacity building for the healthcare system, imbalance between curative and preventive healthcare and health workers, recognition of worker qualifications to facilitate labor movement, quality training for the labor force, upgrading of training curricula and methodologies, foreign language training for Vietnamese workers, increased budget allocation and investment for HRD, among others. At the regional level, more capacity activities are needed, measures to improve conditions for labor mobility, assistance for development and implementation of employable skills and work standards compatible to those of ASEAN, support to AIT for courseware development and e-learning for vocational and higher education courses to be shared with other GMS countries.

Session 3 GMS HRD Issues, Challenges and Opportunities for Regional Cooperation

Health

24. Mr. Vincent de Wit, Principal Health Specialist, ADB, discussed the progress in primary health care in the GMS and noted that the poor generally have better physical access to health services and that there have been improvements in village health care, in the control of communicable diseases, in the quality and affordability of health services in rural areas, and in maternal and child care. He noted that targeted financing has improved the benefits for the poor. With regard to performance of Health MDGs, malnutrition is declining due to better food security but not in line with the target. The trend in reducing child mortality is more or less in line with what is needed to achieve the target of 4.5% decline per year in the region. Main issues are perinatal diseases, infections, and malnutrition. Maternal mortality rate is declining but not as per target due to high residual mortality among poor women lacking access to affordable care. HIV prevalence is declining in Thailand and Cambodia but increasing in women and in other countries in the region. Avian flu has posed a new threat. He cited several factors that are shaping the future of the health sector in the region: demographic transition (aging and urbanization); epidemiological transition (from CDC to lifestyle diseases); socio-economic transition and increasing demand for health services; private sector growth and staff shortages; cost escalation and health financing; governance, decentralization and partnerships; environmental issues; drug resistance; and aid coordination and efficiency. He emphasized that changing emphasis in the health system necessitates a rethinking of health system development priorities that in turn require health sector reforms. He outlined a proposed agenda for WGHRD cooperation in health involving helping maintain commitment for essential health care for the poor to achieve MDGs, helping control emerging and endemic diseases, exploring regional partnerships for HRD/quality of care, strengthening regional capacity for health system analysis and reform, and helping develop national health programs based on future health sector challenges.

Education

25. Ms. Miki Nozawa, Programme Specialist, UNESCO, discussed several issues in the implementation of the Education for All (EFA) strategy. She noted that despite considerable progress, important gaps remained. Disadvantaged populations (girls, learners with disabilities, children from ethnic and linguistic minorities, etc.) were often still excluded from schooling while many in school were excluded from learning. Moreover, school and education systems needed to become more inclusive through the mainstreaming of learners with disabilities, initial literacy programs in the mother-tongue, abolition of school fees and informal school costs, etc. She presented comparative indicators on where the GMS countries stood in terms of achievements of the most common and measurable EFA targets (level of public expenditure on education, literacy rate). She discussed the challenges for secondary education (SE) in the GMS and noted that SE is increasingly considered as part of basic education, achievements in primary education and rising societal demand put pressure on SE to expand, and a variety of quality-related issues have arisen (e.g., over-crowded classrooms, insufficient or inadequately trained teachers, poor school facilities). She outlined the support that UNESCO is providing including in-depth country case studies on secondary teacher

policies and management, and the development of an online regional information base on the status and functioning of SE systems. UNESCO's activities in the GMS included a GMS Virtual University which aims to develop open educational resources using creative common license in information technology, tourism, and Mekong studies in partnership with selected universities in the GMS countries, as well as a training program on education decentralization in partnership with the Mekong Institute. Ms. Nozawa outlined emerging areas of concern and interest in the subregion such as the quality of education – particularly education for sustainable development, and the use of ICT in education. She identified opportunities for regional cooperation particularly in the EFA Mid-Decade Assessment for the GMS countries that will encourage peer review of draft reports and a subregional synthesis of achievements and remaining gaps, challenges, best practices, and desired policy reforms, as well as in the further development and strengthening of regional networks such as those coordinated by ASEAN, SEAMEO, UNESCO, etc.

26. Ms. Sukhdeep Brar, Senior Education Specialist, ADB, discussed challenges in education including MDGs (education for all, gender parity), skills development for out of school youth, technical education for competitiveness, and strengthening of higher education. She noted that reasonable progress has been achieved in rates of school enrollment in the GMS countries but the issue is keeping students enrolled in schools. Net enrollment of females has achieved parity. There are issues that go beyond MDGs, e.g., quality of education, expanding equitable access, and strengthening English language competencies. Another challenge is skills development, particularly for out of school youth so that they can contribute to economic activities. In higher education, a prerequisite is quality school education involving quality of students and quality of teaching faculty. Ms. Brar identified several opportunities for regional cooperation in school education, skills development, and higher education and suggested that these be discussed more comprehensively during the break-out group session.

In Labor and Migration

27. Ms. Jennica Larrison, Human Development Specialist, World Bank, discussed developments in the ongoing study on Labor Migration in the GMS which aims to improve knowledge on labor migration issues in the subregion with a focus on socio-economic impact on sending and receiving countries, raise awareness of decision makers, and strengthen the capacity of governments and development partners. Findings showed that (i) migration in the GMS is growing rapidly and is mostly informal; (ii) migrants are disproportionately less educated, young, and male compared to the populations of origin, that they represent one quarter of the labor force in the fish industry and domestic services, that they work on average for longer hours and lower salaries than Thai workers, and that registration and the existence of large migrant populations have a positive impact on the protection of migrants' rights; and (iii) the positive economic impacts of migration on sending countries through remittances channeled mostly through informal mechanisms. The regulation process involves legal instruments to regulate migration consisting of MOUs between Thailand and Lao PDR, and Cambodia and Myanmar as well as two different phases consisting of regulation of migrants in Thailand through registration and IDs, and matching labor demand and supply through private recruitment companies. Ms. Larrison discussed limitations to policy development such as lack of awareness of registration benefits, perceived cost of the process, limited capacity of implementing agencies, and lack of political support from important actors. She emphasized that labor migration will continue in the GMS and that

facilitating, rather than restricting migration, will produce better results. She suggested the need to establish a system of incentives to inform migrants of the benefits of registration and to reduce costs and ensure easy access to services. She outlined the priorities for the next phase of the study including work with national statistical agencies to improve the collection of migration statistics and with government counterparts to help evaluate policies and policy change, and helping poor countries build the capacity to successfully implement the job recruitment system.

Discussion

28. ILO representative noted the recognized need for a legal framework for labor migration and mentioned that there are existing ILO conventions No. 97 and No. 143 that cover labor migration-related issues; however, most of these conventions are still to be ratified by GMS countries. These conventions are powerful instruments and can serve as good basis for international negotiations. She emphasized that it would serve the interests of countries to push for their ratification.

29. Thailand suggested for ILO to organize an international workshop to increase awareness regarding these conventions.

Ethnic Minorities

30. Mr. David Feingold, International Coordinator for HIV/AIDS and Trafficking, UNESCO, noted that indeed significant achievements have been made in infrastructure improvements in the GMS. He noted however that much still has to be done with regard to highland peoples and ethnic minorities, who are not registered and do not have citizenship documents and therefore vulnerable to being trafficked. He emphasized that people who do not exist legally are generally forgotten. He also emphasized the importance of providing prevention information to highland peoples in their own languages. He emphasized the need for highly sensitive, research-based approaches and described an appropriate methodology for advocating behavior change using radio dramas produced in ethnic languages.

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

31. Ms. Anupma Jain, Social Sector Specialist, ADB, discussed some of the key challenges in the GMS including sustaining rapid economic growth and the role of HRD, managing development and regional integration for poverty reduction, and addressing negative social externalities including HIV/AIDS, trafficking of women and children, and illegal drug use. She underscored women's absence in HRD results not only in economic losses but also social costs for society, and private costs for the individual. She identified a number of gender-specific issues that put women at a disadvantage and at greater risk to the negative impacts of greater connectivity and regional integration, including low levels of education and training, poor health and nutrition, and limited access to resources. She emphasized the benefits to individual households and to society of investing in women's health and education. She discussed negative externalities of connectivity and REI (urbanization, communicable diseases, illegal movement of people and goods, loss of traditional subsistence economies for cash economy, changes in livelihoods, and changes in gender relations within the household and the community). Ms. Jain stressed that the inclusion of gender issues, especially women's participation, in HRD-related activities increases the success of achieving HRD

results while reducing their risk and vulnerability to negative externalities of development.

Trafficking of Women and Children

32. Ms. Kristy Fleming, Project Advisor, UNIAP, discussed HRD and human trafficking in the GMS in the context of preventing trafficking through vocational training and local employment opportunities and awareness raising, addressing the problem through governance and support services for border management, monitoring, victim identification, assistance, and support, apprehension of perpetrators, and cross-border cooperation. She discussed basic concepts regarding the act, the means, and the purpose for trafficking as opposed to human smuggling as well as the vulnerabilities and other push and pull factors that foster the trafficking phenomena. She outlined the types of trafficking most prevalent in the GMS, i.e., for domestic work, begging, sexual exploitation, labor exploitation, and adoption. Trafficking flows are similar to general migration flows, i.e., rural to urban, and from country of lower economic development to country of higher economic development. Ms. Fleming discussed cross-border collaboration through the Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative Against Trafficking (COMMIT) process and the various initiatives and activities pursued under the subregional plan of action on human trafficking, including high-level regional training programs, training of trainers, and national level training workshops. She underscored the role of HRD as a tool in prevention, victim support, and criminal justice, specifically, and in effectively addressing human trafficking in the GMS, generally.

Discussion

33. Participants noted the importance of strengthening rural development and providing more economic opportunities for local people to address the migration problem. It was pointed out that as barriers to migration are raised, the vulnerability of migrant workers to being trafficked increases.

34. Copies of the various presentations under this session are attached in [Appendix 7](#).

Mixed Breakout Groups Discussion on Regional Challenges and Potential Cooperation

35. After a brief overview of the Mixed Breakout Groups Session Guideline by Ms. Susan Kerr, Principal Human Resource Development Specialist, ADB, the participants dispersed into separate groups for more detailed discussion on regional challenges and potential cooperation. Designated ADB facilitators assisted the breakout group discussions and individual group rapporteurs presented their respective reports to the plenary. A copy of the breakout group guideline is attached in [Appendix 8](#).

36. The mixed breakout groups identified common issues and concerns as follows: *In Health*: prevention and control of communicable diseases (HIV/AIDS, malaria, TB, avian flu, dengue), health system development, health forum, emerging lifestyle diseases, road safety and road accidents. *In Education*: skills training, particularly for out of school youth, development and recognition for greater productivity and improved competitiveness of the labor force and local employment generation, development programs for middle and senior level officials. *In Labor and migration*: protection, safety

and security of migrant workers, improvement of working conditions, prevention of human trafficking and promotion of safe migration, productive use of remittances. *In Social Development*: special needs of ethnic minorities, women, children and other vulnerable groups.

Session 4 GMS HIV/AIDS Initiatives

GMS HIV/AIDS Strategy

37. Ms. Lisa Studdert, Health Specialist, ADB, discussed the relationship between the GMS Program goal of economic prosperity through the 3Cs (connectivity, competitiveness, and community), the 3Ms (men, mobility, and money) and the increased risk environment for HIV transmission. She stated that rising HIV infections negates economic prosperity through illness and death, lost productivity, costs to families and care givers particularly women, costs to the health care system, and links to poverty. Conservative estimates for the GMS showed 1.6 million infected with HIV; 250,000 AIDS cases, 125,000 deaths, 25% of these women, and 27,000 children. HIV/AIDS trends showed the epidemic as mature in Cambodia, small in Lao PDR with concentration in urban areas, growing in Myanmar, concentrated in PRC mainly among intravenous drug users with Yunnan and Guangxi severely affected, mature in Thailand with declining prevalence, and mixed in Viet Nam. Ms. Studdert underscored that HIV/AIDS represents an HRD challenge in the GMS Program that requires a matching program response covering HIV/AIDS risk mitigation, multi-sectoral capacity building, and support for health and education systems in areas of high risk for HIV transmission. She outlined the role for ADB to play by way of providing leadership and support to these HIV program responses. She mentioned other operational considerations such as giving attention to the gender dimension, the involvement of NGOs as a resource for effective implementation, creating a strong evidence base, ensuring country ownership and coordination, and the advisory role of WGHRD.

Case Study: Preventing HIV/AIDS on Road Projects in Yunnan

38. Ms. Che Katz, Social Marketing Specialist, Marie Stopes International Australia, shared the experience of a case study on Preventing HIV/AIDS on Road Projects, specifically the Baolong Health and Safe Action (BHSA) Project financed by ADB and implemented along the Baolong Highway infrastructure construction in Yunnan Province, PRC, on the border with Myanmar. The Project is executed by the Office of Yunnan Provincial Working Committee for HIV/AIDS Control and implemented by Marie Stopes International Australia/China in partnership with the Baoshan Bureau of Health, local government authorities, construction companies, and local communities. She explained ADB's strategic priority and commitment to prevent HIV/AIDS in infrastructure projects. She discussed the project framework that looks at creating enabling environments rather than targeting risk groups. The approach focuses on 4 pillars of intervention: (i) advocacy; (ii) behavior change communication materials; (iii) access and promotion of health services and products; and (iv) rigorous monitoring and evaluation. These pillars support individual change as well as the creation of an enabling environment through organization, community and social change in construction companies and worksites, entertainment settings, transport corridors, local community settings, and health and pharmaceutical services and products. The findings of the follow-up survey showed encouraging results indicating that exposure to the BHSA intervention had a significant positive impact on knowledge and behavior change, the degree of exposure to the

BHSA also correlated significantly with knowledge and behavior change, and the most significant change in knowledge and behavior change was identified in the highest risk populations of foreman and truck-drivers. Ms. Katz also discussed the many lessons learned as well as a suggested model for future consideration for a holistic approach to HIV/AIDS prevention in infrastructure projects in the PRC.

39. Copies of the two presentations under this Session appear in [Appendix 9](#).

Discussion

40. PRC expressed gratitude to ADB and other partners for their support to HIV/AIDS prevention efforts in the subregion and underscored the importance of policy making focusing on joint cooperation in border areas to contain the problem. PRC reiterated the proposal for a regional health forum and offered to provide logistical support for the health forum planned in November 2007. The meeting welcomed PRC's offer of support for the health forum.

41. Participants appreciated the emphasis on risk environments rather than risk groups and underscored the importance of preventive approaches being linguistically and culturally appropriate. It was noted that Cambodia has been successful in bringing the HIV/AIDS prevalence down, although a big portion of resources is allocated for treatment – leaving a big gap for preventive efforts. A lot of work still has to be done by way of prevention and to sustain previous efforts that require additional resources. Thailand noted that their ministries of education and health are working together in HIV/AIDS prevention and that joint action plans for working bilaterally with neighboring countries on HIV/AIDS prevention have been put in place, with WHO's assistance.

Session 5 Charting New Strategic Directions and Strengthening HRD Cooperation

42. Ms. Sunniya Durrani-Jamal, Education Economist, ADB, discussed the context of subregional cooperation in HRD in the overall scheme of the GMS Strategic Framework for 2002-2012 and the GMS Program as well as the issues and challenges confronting the subregion that have implications on HRD cooperation. She mentioned the various subregional initiatives and projects in HRD (details provided in the updated Status of the HRD Development Matrix appearing in [Appendix 10](#)), including the highly successful Phnom Penh Plan for Development Management. She stated that the multi-sectoral nature of the scope of WGHRD's work has been difficult to undertake, given the different stages of economic and human resource development in the GMS countries, as well as the differences in cross-border legal and regulatory systems. She emphasized the urgency of a Strategic Framework and Action Plan for HRD cooperation to help identify a common vision for HRD as well as outline strategic priorities to be pursued over the medium term. She noted that the GMS countries have indicated their support for this idea in their statements and comments made the previous day. Toward this end, a new regional technical assistance is being proposed for ADB funding support that hopefully would bring better focus to WGHRD's work program and galvanize commitment to implement HRD priorities in partnership with development partners. It is expected that the Strategic Framework and Action Plan would be completed in time for approval during the Third GMS Summit in March 2008. A copy of her presentation appears in [Appendix 11](#).

Discussion

43. Ms. Lateef stated that ADB is providing modest funding support for the proposed RETA and invited other interested partners to get involved. She explained that inputs and recommendations from the meeting will feed into the preparation of the strategic framework and action plan. Proposed program of activities will identify the lead countries as well as the prospective development partners who could get involved and provide support. The RETA is expected to support subsector meetings and consultations to be arranged between June and December 2007 to gather additional inputs from the countries and other stakeholders regarding priority activities to be incorporated in the action plan to ensure maximum and optimum participation by all interested stakeholders. She said that ADB will work with the GMS National Secretariats and the designated WGHRD focal persons in the GMS countries in the course of the work as well as in organizing the subsector meetings/consultations in coordination with the relevant line ministries to ensure continuity, coherence, and consistence in the approach to common problems.

44. The GMS countries supported the proposal to prepare a Strategic Framework for HRD Cooperation in the GMS and action plan and agreed with the time line and the coordination and communication mechanism outlined by ADB.

Session 6 Strategic Directions in HRD Cooperation: Simultaneous Breakout Groups

45. Ms. Susan Kerr, ADB discussed the guidelines and mechanics of the simultaneous break-out group session. A copy of the guidelines appears in Appendix 12.

46. Rapporteurs of the break-out groups for Health, Education, Labor, and Cross-Cutting Social Development Concerns rendered their respective reports to the plenary. The individual group reports indicated the identified subsectors' needs/issues/problems, suggestions for possible actions and initiatives in the short and medium-term, the possible key players and their prospective roles, and other suggestions to higher GMS authorities. It was noted that the suggestions of the breakout groups are works in progress and will be considered for further discussions and more in-depth consultations as work on the HRD Strategic Framework and action plan proceed in the coming months. These suggestions would serve as useful inputs and take-off points for discussions among the subsector groups to determine the ones most feasible and doable to pursue by way of subregional cooperation.

Session 7: HRD Initiatives in the Region

47. Representatives of various development partners made special presentations under this session.

48. Mr. Alan Feinstein, Director, Southeast Asia Regional Program, Rockefeller Foundation, discussed the trends identified under their "***Learning Across Borders in the GMS (LAB)***" Program e.g., increasing regionalization through infrastructure, economic and political integration; unequal and asymmetric development; intense demands on shared environmental resources; new flows across borders of people,

diseases, and illegal goods; and increasing marginalization of the poor and excluded (ethnic minorities and mobile populations in border areas). LAB, which covers health, agriculture, and culture, aims to create understanding of trans-boundary trends and their impacts, foster collaboration to address cross-border challenges, and improve the welfare of marginalized ethnic minority and mobile populations. It emphasizes knowledge-building, institutional capacity-building, communication strategies for public awareness, and experimentation and scale-up of successful models. He briefed the meeting about the various initiatives already launched and in development. He noted that the Foundation looks forward to continuing its connection and engagement with the subregion as it proceeds with its mission in addressing the needs of the poor and vulnerable people by building on existing programs and addressing emerging issues including climate change.

49. Ms. Anne Richmond, Skills Development Specialist, ILO, made a presentation on *“Skills Training and Certification”*. She presented the status of ratification of fundamental conventions in the GMS pertaining to freedom of association and collective bargaining, elimination of forced and compulsory labor, elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation, and abolition of child labor. She discussed ILO’s framework and roadmap for developing skills through partnerships in Asia and the Pacific which focuses on information sharing and training and capacity building. She noted that whereas ILO’s focus in the past was the development of major training institutions and capacities, now the focus is on training systems to ensure that they are relevant (responsive to employer and worker needs) and inclusive (serve all individuals and groups). This is done through information sharing, pilot projects, and facilitating country-country support. Ms. Richmond discussed some current activities of ILO in the GMS countries as well as various regional initiatives in skills certification and recognition. She also discussed ILO’s updated Guidelines for Development of Regional Model Competency Standards for adoption in the industry sector including construction, automotive, hospitality, textile, tourism, electronics, telecommunications, plastics, and office administration.

50. Mr. Jeff Howe, Executive Director, GMSTEC, discussed the *“Role and Initiatives of GMSTEC”* in facing the challenge for higher education in the GMS knowledge-based economy by way of providing local qualifications that are internationally recognized, the ability to access, develop and apply new knowledge in GMS country development, and the opportunity for international university cooperation. He outlined common issues facing higher education (HE) in the GMS including better access to HE, local relevance to meet global standards, reform of teaching methodology, curriculum development, English language capacity, and research capability. He discussed a possible model to address the gaps in HE in the GMS involving collaborative teaching, research, and capacity building programs. GMSTEC, established 4 years ago, now consists of 14 universities from the GMS, New Zealand and Australia, and is moving towards significant teaching and research collaboration projects including cooperative PhD programs. A Master of Development Studies–GMS is now under development for implementation beginning in 2008, with core courses to be offered at Khon Kaen University in Thailand and at Victoria University of Wellington. Besides MDS-GMS, other future partnerships with GMSTEC include capacity building in Lao PDR and Cambodia and with the Mekong Institute on Strategic Human Resource Management. A PPP course on Strategic Human Resource Management will also be delivered at the Victoria University of Wellington HCMC campus in conjunction with the University of Economics HCMC.

51. Mr. Michael O’Leary, WHO Representative in Cambodia discussed “*Developing Health Systems to Meet Emerging Needs*” starting with the Cambodian context, including the country’s health sector priorities, emerging problems (lifestyle diseases, road accidents, drug use and environmental health issues), and progress toward health MDGs (downward rates of infant and child mortality, improvements in some maternal health indicators, and drop in HIV prevalence). He noted that key health indicators are weaker than in some neighboring countries although total health spending is higher, particularly for primary health care, and that donor disbursement is more concentrated on STD control including HIV/AIDS. He discussed the national challenges (human resources, service delivery, urban/rural difference in access to health) in health systems development as well as emerging regional challenges. The regional challenges include border issues (malaria drug resistance, non-standardized treatment regimes), avian and human influenza, epidemic diseases (measles, dengue, etc.), and food safety and food-borne diseases. Human resource priorities identified to address these challenges include regional network and exchange to implement Cambodia’s Health Workforce Development Plan 2006-2010; regional support to upgrade existing teaching and research institutions in Cambodia; and initiatives by professional bodies and associations to improve the quality and accreditation of health care professionals. Health systems initiatives underway to address these regional challenges include the International Health Regulations of WHO, regional initiatives funded by ADB, FAO/WHO collaboration in food safety, networking for influenza control, and support for surveillance networks, coordinated plans, strengthening of inter-country communications, and training.

52. Mr. Michael Chai, Social Affairs Officer, UNESCAP, discussed “*Health Without Borders*”, a UNESCAP initiative launched in 2005 and funded by the Dutch Government which seeks to improve health and reduce HIV/AIDS vulnerability among long-distance road transport workers in the GMS. Phase I of the project is designed with the following activities and outputs: (i) situational analyses of working conditions and health behavior along selected transport corridors in Thailand, Lao PDR, and Viet Nam as a basis for future interventions; (ii) a pilot intervention now underway at the border between Thailand and Lao PDR being implemented by the Planned Parenthood Association of Thailand that involves the setting up of a health stop (referral clinic), outreach work and peer education, behavior change communication strategy, and collaboration with ministries and employers; (iii) building of partnerships with key players; and (iv) mobilizing stakeholders including transport workers, transport enterprises, government ministries and agencies, as well as local and international NGOs to address the health concerns of long-distance road transport workers. The project has generated a diverse set of recommendations pertaining to improvement of working conditions for long distance truck drivers and to collaboration across borders including measures to address cross-border issues relating to health insurance, provision of curative and preventive health services at border immigration posts, production and distribution of health promotion materials in different languages, discussion of health issues in regional transport forums, provision of facilities to reduce risk behavior at border check points, establishment of mechanisms for monitoring changes in transport and sharing available data for programming, integration of health promotion programs including HIV/AIDS prevention methods into driver training programs, increasing awareness of health issues among truck drivers through mass media (radio, community radio, newspapers), provision of low-cost resting places for truck drivers, provision of adequate health infrastructure e.g., medical mobile units to provide outreach services to truck drivers, and

establishment of national HIV surveillance and reporting systems for migrant and mobile populations.

53. Mr. Robert Simms, Producer, ITEM Interactive, discussed “*Interactive Computer-based Skills Training*” utilizing a teaching and learning technology using CDROM including a video that provides an enjoyable learning experience for students and enables them to absorb and retain more information. It involves the production of video-based resources with strong visual components and that show people how to do things. He noted that the technology is adaptable for use in remote rural areas even where electricity is not available. The technology could also be used in disseminating the results of expensive international projects in a form that people can readily use. It could be applied as a resource not only in health, but also in education and training. Mr. Simms demonstrated the technology for the benefit of the participants.

54. Copies of presentations under this session appear in Appendix 13.

Discussions

55. The importance of promotion of safe migration was again highlighted, including increasing awareness among migrant workers to reduce their vulnerabilities.

56. WHO emphasized the importance of providing guidelines to the countries and to focus more on development rather than measurement where standards are not in place.

Session 8 GMS HRD Initiatives/Reports

Phnom Penh Plan for Development Management

57. Ms. Sukhdeep Brar briefed the participants on the progress of implementation of the Phnom Penh Plan for Development Management launched in 2002 during the Second GMS Summit. The success of the PPP has been well-recognized and this could be attributed to a number of factors including: sustained ownership and commitment of the GMS countries, niche-based learning, multiplier effect in capacity-building, promoting regional cooperation, broad based partnerships, expanding the reach and providing opportunities for women, innovative philosophy, and replicability in other parts of the Asia-Pacific Region. Ms. Brar discussed updates covering the period January 2006-March 2007 on the program’s various components which are proceeding quite well in providing demand-driven capacity building interventions and promoting knowledge sharing activities for the benefit of middle and senior-level development managers and institutions in the GMS. These developments consist of new Learning Programs, expansion of the PPP Fellowship Program, active implementation of the PPP Alumni Program, further upgrading of the PPP Learning Resource Center, additional issues of the PPP Journal and Newsletter, and further expansion of the Network of Capacity Building Partners. Two new components were introduced in late 2006, namely, the GMS Development Dialogue designed to provide a platform for in-depth discussion of issues among policy and decision-makers, and the Distinguished Speaker Series featuring eminent persons to share their wisdom with and inspire action among GMS leaders and decision makers. The PPP Research Program is proceeding as well with three track research programs for learning materials development, policy research to support decision making by GMS governments, and research projects to generate new

knowledge. Extension to Phase III of the PPP Program is now being arranged to cover the period July 2007-2009.

Proposed GMS Youth Caravan and Forum

58. Ms. Anupma Jain presented the highlights of a Concept Paper for a proposed GMS Youth Caravan and Forum “*A Journey of Discovery*” planned as one of the component events of the Third GMS Summit to be held in Vientiane in March 2008. The concept of the GMS Youth Forum and Caravans has been approved by the GMS Task Force for the Third GMS Summit and the GMS Senior Officials’ Meeting. The purpose of the activity is to promote among the GMS youth a greater awareness about developments, opportunities, and challenges in the GMS Program, engage the GMS Youth in meaningful dialogue with GMS policy and decision-makers on opportunities for youth participation, and instill among the youth a strong sense of subregional identity and community. Ms. Jain discussed the contemplated elements of the activity consisting of preparatory national consultations in each of the GMS countries among selected youth participants to develop a national youth message, a regional consultation to develop a draft GMS Youth Message, simultaneous caravans along the 3 GMS Economic Corridors (East-West, North-South, and Southern Economic Corridors), culminating in a GMS Youth Forum as a side event of the Third GMS Summit in Vientiane in March 2008. Resource speakers will facilitate the discussions. The GMS Youth Message will be delivered to the national Leaders during the Summit. A photographic contest called “Images of the Mekong” will also be held and winning entries will be exhibited at the Third GMS Summit. The timeline for the range of activities covers the period July 2007-March 2008. Ms. Jain mentioned that the Concept Paper will be discussed at the 14th GMS Ministerial Conference in Manila, June 2007. The possible institutionalization of the GMS Youth Forum as a part of the GMS Family will be considered depending on the initial experience.

59. Copies of presentations in this session appear in Appendix 14.

Discussion

60. In response to a suggestion to change the name of the PPP program, Ms. Brar remarked that the name is symbolic as the PPP was launched during the First GMS Summit in Phnom Penh in 2002. With regard to the English language issue, she noted that the suggestion to translate into local languages the PPP modules and learning materials would compartmentalize participants and restrict their interaction with each other. So far, the participants are doing reasonably well with English as the medium of instruction and communication. However, the possibility of translating research results into local languages to allow wider dissemination will be considered. Ms. Brar expressed appreciation for the strong support provided by PRC to the PPP program and looked forward to PRC’s continued support.

61. The GMS countries expressed their support for the proposed GMS Youth Forum and Caravans. Viet Nam suggested that competitions be held to choose the best students who would participate in the Forum and Caravan.

Session 9 Closing Session

62. Ms. Shireen Lateef gave a synthesis of the 3-day meeting's major decisions, agreements, and suggestions as follows:

- The presence of H.E. Minister Vong Sauth, Minister of Labor and Vocational Training of the Royal Government of Cambodia at the Opening Session, and later of H. E. Minister Im Sethy, Secretary of State, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport to give the closing remarks, underscored the high-level importance given to human resource development in the overall scheme of the GMS cooperation program.
- The presence of senior officials from all the GMS countries and representatives from many development partners, including multilateral and bilateral donors, international and regional organizations, academic institutions and civil society organizations, has ensured multi-stakeholder and well-rounded sharing of ideas and experiences.
- The Keynote Presentation by Janmejy Singh on the Poverty and Social Impacts of Regional Economic Integration in the GMS effectively was an interesting and enlightening curtain raiser for the subsequent discussions on the many HRD-related cross-cutting issues and challenges confronting the subregion as it moves forward to greater subregional cooperation and integration.
- The country statements by the GMS Heads of Delegations and the various presentations by invited speakers and resource persons gave the participants different views and perspectives about respective experiences on the ground regarding health, education, labor, migration and social development concerns.
- The various experiences and knowledge shared during the presentations, the ensuing discussions as well as during the breakout group sessions provided meaningful and useful insights to guide the direction of future work of the Working Group and its subsectors.
- Common issues and concerns have been identified and reiterated:
 - Health:* prevention and control of communicable diseases (HIV/AIDS, malaria, TB, avian flu, dengue), health system development, health forum, emerging lifestyle diseases, road safety and road accidents.
 - Education:* skills training for a changing economy particularly for out of school youth, development and recognition for greater productivity and improved competitiveness of the labor force, local employment generation, regional skills accreditation, and higher education.
 - Labor and migration:* protection, safety and security of migrant workers, improvement of working conditions, prevention of human trafficking and promotion of safe migration, productive use of remittances.

Social Development: special needs of ethnic minorities, women, children and other vulnerable groups especially in border areas, and managing social change.

- There are many issues and concerns to be addressed but financial, material and staff resources are limited.
- A very important outcome of the meeting is the consensus reached by the Working Group to proceed with the preparation of a Strategic Framework for HRD Cooperation and medium-term action plan to give sharper and concrete focus to the priority activities to be undertaken by the Working Group in collaboration with interested partners. The timeline, coordination and consultation mechanism through the GMS National Coordinators and WGHRD focal points have been agreed upon. The agreed milestone is to have the Strategic Framework and Action Plan approved at the Third GMS Summit in March 2008. The participation of the development partners in this exercise is most welcome. Country focal points for the WGHRD have been identified and this is a very positive move in ensuring regular consultations to move forward the HRD agenda. Next step is to identify the anchors for the subsectors so that work could proceed also at the subgroup level.
- ADB will continue with the preparations for the GMS Youth Forum and Caravan as outlined, with appropriate guidance from the 14th GMS Ministerial Conference in June 2007 and with the cooperation and support of relevant entities in the GMS countries to ensure its successful implementation.
- ADB will facilitate the holding of more subgroup meetings and consultations. A number of potential areas for cooperation have been suggested during the breakout group sessions for further discussion in the coming months. The break out sessions allowed in-depth discussions on HRD regional challenges and to identify potential areas for regional cooperation to address them. These ideas are identified as work in progress for further discussion with GMS countries and potential development partners over the next 6 months. The refined priorities will be incorporated eventually in the Strategic Framework and Action Plan. Increased interaction between WGHRD and other GMS working groups to strengthen HRD focus will also be considered. Some of the suggestions pertain to:

Health:

- Regional Health Forum
 - Pilot malaria prevention in border areas
 - TB control in border areas – China, VIE
 - Regional standards setting
- Road safety; food safety and drug regulation

Education:

- TVET – Competency standardization
 - Harmonization of standards in skills training;
 - Harmonization, standardization or recognition of skills, licenses or certification;
- An education sector – Senior Officials' Meeting

- Higher education
- Standardized curriculum for science/math

Labor:

- Sharing of labor demand/supply information
 - Implementation of MOUs
- Recognition of border health certification
 - Piloting alternative models of managing migration
- Skills (testing for 5 skills) standards and accreditation
 - Adoption of qualification framework
 - Uniform standards for occupational skills standards
- Management of resource mobilization for trade in goods and services, and investments:
 - Waive visa requirement for short term visits,
 - Facilitate the issuance of visas and employment passes for GMS professionals and skilled labor engaged in trade & investment related activities

Social Development

- Two representatives from other working groups to attend next WGHRD meeting; similarly for WGHRD representative(s) to attend other sectoral working group meetings
- Finalization of GMS HIV Strategy
- Coordination with COMMIT
- Documentation of HIV/AIDS Prevention Package particularly the Yunnan model
- Expansion of radio dramas in border communities to other areas
 - Development of a manual for producing minority language materials
- Social monitoring/surveillance in border communities as pilot

63. Ms. Lateef emphasized the need to carefully determine the most realistic and doable activities to pursue and incorporate them in the working group's action plan and work program.

WGHRD-8 Deliverables and Inputs for the 14th GMS Ministerial Meeting, June 2007 and Third GMS Summit (2008)

64. Ms. Lateef noted that the two major outputs of WGHRD-8 to be reported to the 14th GMS Ministerial Meeting in June 2007 will be the consensus reached regarding the preparation of a Strategic Framework for GMS Cooperation in HRD and action plan which will be started as soon as possible and the agreement to proceed with the preparations for the GMS Youth Forum and Caravan as a component activity for the Third GMS Summit.

Date and Venue of WGHRD-9

65. PRC agreed to host WGHRD-9 in 2008. Details regarding the date and venue will be determined and communicated later.

Closing Session

66. In his closing remarks, Mr. Arjun Goswami, Country Director, Cambodia Resident Mission, ADB, congratulated the participants for their sustained energy and diligence in grappling with a very heavy agenda. He noted that the meeting has helped bring into sharper focus the many issues and challenges in health, education, labor and migration, and social development in the GMS and how these challenges could be addressed through a strategically defined framework and clear action plan for subregional cooperation. He noted that these issues have taken added urgency as regional economic cooperation and integration moves to even higher levels and as the pace of increased connectivity quickens. He stated that the working group will continue to play an important role in directing and guiding subregional initiatives to enhance the competitiveness and productivity of the subregion's workforce, improve the livelihoods of people, contribute to the overall poverty reduction goals, and mitigate the adverse impacts of economic integration and improved connectivity. He wished all the participants a safe and pleasant journey home.

67. In his closing remarks, H.E. Im Sethy, Secretary of State, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, Royal Government of Cambodia, expressed his sincere thanks to ADB for organizing the meeting and to the GMS delegates and development partners for participating in the meeting. Their participation is a strong manifestation of their interest in the very important topic of human resource development. He stated that improving the living standards of the people of the GMS will depend largely on the optimal use of the region's natural and human resources and that the improvement of higher education opportunities and provision of related technical skills training will be a vital part of improving the wealth and well being of the subregion. He stressed that effective human resource development is pivotal to the future of the GMS countries. Minister Im Sethy recalled a keynote address by H. E. Prime Minister Samdech Hun Sen that made reference to Development and Governance in the Greater Mekong Subregion and stressed that attention should be given to institutional capacity building at both national and subregional levels to strengthen coordination as well as to strengthening partnerships among and between regional countries and donors, especially international and regional financial institutions. He stressed that effective human resource development is pivotal to the future of the GMS countries and that subregional cooperation in HRD should be based on the principle of "prospering our neighbors". Minister Im Sethy also expressed his appreciation to the meeting for providing the opportunity to progress the development of the HRD strategic framework and action plan in time for the Third GMS Summit in 2008.

68. Copies of the closing remarks appear as [Appendix 15](#).

69. The GMS countries expressed their sincere appreciation to the Royal Government of Cambodia for the warm hospitality and kind arrangements for the meeting, to ADB for providing assistance in organizing the meeting, and to the development partners for their active participation.

70. Ms. Lateef expressed her thanks to all the participants for their active participation and to the secretariat staff for their support.

**Greater Mekong Subregion
Eight Meeting of the Working Group on Human Resource Development
(WGHRD-8)
Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 9–11 May 2007
Venue: Intercontinental, Phnom Penh**

Theme: Charting New Strategic Directions in GMS Cooperation in HRD

Objective of the Meeting: To explore the key issues, challenges, strategic directions, and priority programs for strengthening GMS cooperation in human resource development— health, education, labor and social development.

Agenda/Program

Day 1: 9 May 2007, Wednesday

0830–0845 Registration

Inaugural Session

0845–0915 **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Opening Remarks by Shireen Lateef, Director, Southeast Asia Department, ADB

Welcome Remarks by H.E. Vong Sauth, Minister of Labor and Vocational Training, Royal Government of Cambodia

***Session 1 Poverty and Social Impacts of Regional Economic Integration in the GMS
(Janmejay Singh, Economist)***

0915–0945 *Janmejay Singh will discuss the poverty and social impacts of increased connectivity and regional integration in the GMS based on recent primary research. The presentation will also discuss potential policy actions and initiatives that are required to enhance increased economic and social benefits for the poor of connectivity and regional integration.*

0945–1015 Discussion

1015–1030 Coffee Break

Session 2 Country Statements**1030–1130 Country Statements (Heads of Delegations, GMS Countries)**

Cambodia
 People's Republic of China
 Lao People's Democratic Republic
 Myanmar
 Thailand
 Vietnam

The Head of Delegation of each GMS country (preferably the senior official designated as country focal point for WGHRD) will deliver a 10-minute statement on achievements, issues and emerging challenges in subregional cooperation in HRD. In particular, the country statements will articulate the individual country's insights and perspectives on the strategic directions and priorities that subregional cooperation in HRD should pursue over the medium term, i.e., next 5 years.

The comments and new insights provided by the GMS representatives and other participants will be taken into consideration in developing the draft Strategic Framework and Action Plan for GMS Cooperation in HRD. The meeting will also discuss and decide on the next steps towards the eventual finalization and endorsement of the Strategic Framework and Action Plan in time for the 3rd GMS Summit in 2008. One of the options to be considered and decided upon is the necessity for convening another working group meeting before the Summit.

1130–1200 Discussion

1200–1300 Lunch

Session 3 GMS HRD Issues, Challenges and Opportunities for Regional Cooperation

This session will feature panel discussions in plenary by invited resource persons focusing on progress achieved in subregional cooperation initiatives as well as emerging issues, challenges, and opportunities for possible new strategic directions to guide future cooperation activities in the health, education, and labor subsectors as well as social development. The experts' insights and recommendations as well as reactions and feedback from the participants during the open discussion will serve as useful inputs into the further development of a GMS strategic framework and action plan for HRD cooperation.

1300–1345 Plenary Session: GMS HRD Issues, Challenges and Opportunities for Regional Cooperation

- Health - Regional Issues, Challenges and Opportunities
(*Vincent de Wit, Principal Health Specialist, ADB*)
- Education - Issues, Challenges and Opportunities
(*Miki Nozawa, Programme Specialist, UNESCO*)
- Education - Regional Challenges and Opportunities in GMS Region
(*Sukhdeep Brar, Senior Education Specialist, ADB*)
- Labor and Migration (*Jennica Larrison, Human Development Specialist, The World Bank*)

- 1345–1400 Discussion
- 1400–1445 **GMS HRD Issues, Challenges and Opportunities for Regional Cooperation (cont.)**
- Ethnic Minorities - Regional Issues, Challenges and Opportunities
(David Feingold, International Coordinator for HIV/AIDS and Trafficking, UNESCO)
 - Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
(Anupma Jain, Social Sector Specialist, ADB)
 - Trafficking of Women and Children
(Kristy Fleming, Project Advisor, UNIAP)
- 1445–1500 Discussion
- 1500–1515 Coffee
- 1515–1615 **Regional Challenges and Potential Cooperation: Mixed Group Breakout Discussion (facilitated)**
- Overview of Breakout Groups Session Guidelines** *(Susan Kerr, Principal Human Resource Development Specialist, ADB)*
- Susan Kerr will discuss the guidelines (objectives, mechanics, and expected outputs of the break-out group session), including the report and feedback format to the plenary session.*
- Mixed Breakout Facilitators:**
Sukhdeep Brar, Senior Education Specialist; Vincent de Wit, Principal Health Specialist; Sunniya Durrani-Jamal, Education Economist; Anupma Jain, Social Sector Specialist; and Susan Kerr, Principal Human Resource Development Specialist.
- 1615–1700 Report of Breakout Groups
- Designated Rapporteurs of the break-out groups will present their individual reports in plenary. Each group report presentation (5-10 minutes each) will be followed by open discussion.*
- Day 2: 10 May 2007, Thursday**
- Session 4 Plenary Session: GMS HIV/AIDS Initiatives**
- 0845–0915
- **GMS-HIV/AIDS Strategy** *(Lisa Studdert, Health Specialist, ADB)*
 - **Case Study: Preventing HIV/AIDS on Road Projects in Yunnan**
(Che Katz, Team Leader/Social Marketing Specialist, Marie Stopes Intl, Australia)
- 0915–0930 Discussion

Session 5 Plenary Session: Charting New Strategic Directions and Strengthening HRD Cooperation

0930–0945 **RETA-GMS HRD Strategy** (*Sunniya Durrani-Jamal, Education Economist, ADB*)

Sunniya Durrani-Jamal will present the (i) key challenges for HRD development in the GMS, and (ii) the main components for a proposed regional technical assistance project (RETA) for HRD cooperation in the GMS. The RETA aims to (i) develop a comprehensive strategic framework for human resource development within the GMS over the medium term; (ii) identify an action plan for the WGHRD over the next 18 months (June 2007-Dec 2008); and (iii) provide support for sub-sector dialogue and consultation. A short paper will be provided before the meeting. The objective is to have a final Strategic Framework for GMS Cooperation in HRD and related action plan developed and endorsed in time for the 3rd GMS Summit in 2008.

0945–1015 Discussion

1015–1030 Coffee

Session 6 Strategic Directions in HRD Cooperation: Simultaneous Breakout Groups (facilitated)

1030–1040 **Overview of Breakout Groups Session Guidelines** (*Susan Kerr, Principal Human Resource Development Specialist, ADB*)

Susan Kerr will discuss the guidelines (objectives, mechanics, and expected outputs of the break-out group session), including the report and feedback format to the plenary session.

1040–1200 Subsector Breakout Groups:

- Health Sector (*Vincent de Wit, Principal Health Specialist, ADB*)
- Education Sector (*Sukhdeep Brar, Senior Education Specialist, ADB*)
- Labor and Migration (*Sunniya Durrani-Jamal, Education Economist and Susan Kerr, Principal HRD Specialist, ADB*)
- Regional Social Issues (*Anupma Jain, Social Sector Specialist, ADB and Lisa Studdert, Health Specialist, ADB*)

1200–1300 Lunch

1300–1430 Continuation of break-out groups session

1430–1445 Coffee Break

1445–1600 Wrap-up of break-out group's session; preparation of group reports

1600–1700 Reports from Subsector Breakout Groups

Designated Rapporteurs of the break-out groups will present their individual reports in plenary. Each group report presentation (5-10 minutes each) will be followed by open discussion.

Day 3: 11 May 2007, Friday

Appendix 1
Page 5 of 5

Session 7 *Plenary Session: HRD Initiatives in the Region*

0900–1030 **HRD Initiatives in the Region**

- Learning Across the Borders in GMS (*Alan Feinstein, Director, Southeast Asia Regional Program, Rockefeller Foundation*)
- Skills training and certification (*Anne Richmond, Skills Development Specialist, ILO*)
- Role and Initiatives of GMSTEC (*Jeff Howe, Exec. Director, GMSTEC*)
- Developing Health Systems to Meet Existing and Emerging Needs (*Michael O'Leary, WHO Representative in Cambodia*)
- Health Without Borders (*Mr. Michael Chai, Social Affairs Officer, UNESCAP*)
- Interactive Computer-based Skills Training (*Robert Simms, Producer, ITEM Interactive*)

1030–1045 Coffee Break

Session 8 *GMS HRD Initiatives/Reports*

1045–1145 **Phnom Penh Plan for Development Management** (*Sukhdeep Brar, Senior Education Specialist, ADB*)

The session will present the status of implementation of the PPP and the new directions for future implementation.

1145–1215 **Proposed GMS Youth Caravan and Forum** (*Anupma Jain, Social Sector Specialist, ADB*)

In preparation for the 3rd GMS Summit scheduled in late March/early April 2008, a proposed GMS Youth Caravan and Forum is being considered by the GMS Senior Officials and the Summit Task Force as one of the component events for the Summit. Anupma Jain will discuss highlights of a concept paper and other organizational details.

Session 9 *Closing Session*

1215–1230 Synthesis Session

1230–1300 WGHRD-8 Deliverables and Inputs for 14th Ministerial Meeting (June 2007) and 3rd GMS Summit (2008)

1300–1315 Date and Venue of WGHRD-9

1315–1330 **Closing Remarks**

Closing Remarks by Arjun Goswami, Country Director, ADB Cambodia Resident Mission

Closing Remarks by H.E. Im Sethy, Secretary of State, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, Royal Government of Cambodia

List of Participants

GMS COUNTRIES

Cambodia

Mr. Tep Oeun
Deputy Director General, Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training
Tel. No.: 855 12 606 572, Fax No.: 855 23 356 488/884 276, Email: oeun_tep@yahoo.com

Dr. Keat Phuong
Director, Human Resource Department, Ministry of Health
Tel. No.: 855 92 686 686, Fax No.: 855 23 428 930, Email: keatphuong2@online.com.kh

Mr. Put Samith
Deputy Director, Department of Planning, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
Tel. No.: 855 12 914 297, Fax No.: 855 23 219 257/215 346, Email: sarnak@camnet.com.kh

Dr. Sok Touch
Director, Communicable Disease Control Department, Ministry of Health
Tel. No.: Fax No.: Email:

Dr. Lo Vesna Kiri
Director, Planning and Health Information Department, Ministry of Health
Email: veasnakiry@online.com.kh

Dr. Rina Chhoeun, Assistant Project Manager, ADB GMS Regional Communicable Diseases Control Project, Ministry of Health, Cambodia

People's Republic of China

Mr. Yunan Liu
Head of the Delegation/ Director, Comprehensive Division, Social Development Department, National Development and Reform Commission
Tel. No.: 86 10 6850 1632, Fax. 86 10 6850 2736, Email: Liuyun@ndrc.gov.cn

Mr. Yutong Liu
Director, Multilateral and Technical Cooperation Division, International Cooperation Department Ministry of Labour and Social Security
Tel No.: 86 10 8420 7250, Fax No.: 86 10 8422 1624, Email: Liuyutong@molss.gov.cn

Ms. Lulu Tian
Section Chief, International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Education
Tel. No.: 86 10 6609 7654, Fax No.: 86 10 6601 3647, Email: Tianll@moe.edu.cn

Ms. Yun Zhang
Project Officer, International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Health
Tel. No.: 86 10 6879 2296, Fax No.: 86 10 6879 2280, Email: zhangyunsos@hotmail.com

Dr. Wen Yachang
Executive Office of Coordinating Group of Lancang-Mekong Subregion Economic Cooperation of Yunnan Province
Tel. No.: (0871) 311 3647, Fax No.: (0871) 311 3652, Email: en12a8@yahoo.com.cn

Lao PDR

Mr. Ouam Sengchandavong
Director General, Dept. of Planning and Cooperation, Ministry of Education
Tel. No.: 856 21 911 490, Fax No.: 856 21 216 006, Email: ouams@moe.gov.la / S_ouam@hotmail.com

Mrs. Somchanh Xaysida
Director, Training and Education Division, Department of Organization and Personnel, Ministry of Health
Tel. No.: 856 21 212 221/20 5517273, Fax No.: 856 21 218 488, Email: Somchanhx@hotmail.com

Mr. Heuan Chanphana
Director, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Tel. No.: 856 21 414 040, Fax No.: 856 21 415 932, Email: heuan@mofa.gov.la/
luanhae@yahoo.com

Mr. Phouvanh Chanthavong
Director General, Lao-Korea Vocational Training Center, Department of Labour, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
Tel. No.: 856 21 711179, Fax No.: 856 21 711 081, Email: Phouvanh99@yahoo.com

Dr. Somphone Phangmanixay
Coordinator, ADB GMS Regional Communicable Diseases Control Project
Department of Planning and Budgeting, Ministry of Health
Tel. No.: 856 21 252 753, Fax No.: 856 21 223 146, Email: laocdcea@etlao.com

Myanmar

Dr. Tin Min
Deputy Director General (Medical Care), Department of Health, Ministry of Health
Tel. No.: 0095 67 411156, Fax No.: 0095 67 411022, Email: tmta@mptmail.net.mm

Dr. Than Zaw Myint
Director, Department of Medical Science, Ministry of Health
Tel. No.: 01 95 67 411145

Aung Htay Win
Deputy Director, Department of Labour, Ministry of Labour
Tel. No.: 95 067 404161/95 067 403439, Fax No.: 95 067 404345, Email: ahwmm@walla.com.mm
dol@mptmail.net.mm

Thailand

Ms. Suchada Thaibunthao
Director, Thai Cooperation Branch 1, Thailand International Development Cooperation Agency (TICA)
Tel. No.: 66 2 280 3892, Fax No.: 66 2 281 7324, Email: suchadat@mfa.go.th

Ms. Areeya Rojvithee
Senior Expert on Skill Development, Department of Skill Development, Ministry of Labour
Tel. No.: 66 2 248 3385, Fax No.: 66 2 643 4979, Email: areeyaroj@yahoo.com,
areeyaroj@hotmail.com, areeya@dsd.go.th

Ms. Orawan Soonthornchai
Senior Advisor, Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education
Tel. No.: 66 2 628 6341, 628 6154, Fax No.: 66 2 282 0022, Email: nunoy_2005@hotmail.com

Dr. Khwanchai Visithanon
Deputy Director, Bureau of Health Policy and Strategy, Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Public Health
Tel. No.: 66 2 590 1392, Fax No.: 66 2 590 1393, Email: kvisit@hotmail.com

Mrs. Rossukon Kangvallert
Policy and Plan Analyst, Health Policy Group, Bureau of Policy and Strategy, Ministry of Public Health
Tel. No.: 662 591 3134, Fax No.: 66 2 591 3135, Email: rossukon@health.moph.go.th

Mrs. Phimwarat Muangnil
External Relations Officer, Bureau of International Cooperation, Office of the Permanent Secretary,
Ministry of Education
Tel. No.: 66 2 281 6370 ext. 107, Fax No.: 66 2 281 0953, Email: phim_ot@yahoo.com

Mrs. Monhathai Rattananupong
Program Officer 6, Thai Cooperation Branch 1, Thailand International Development Cooperation
Agency
Tel. No.: 66 2 281 6331, Fax No.: 66 2 281 6377, Email: monhathair@mfa.go.th

Mr. Choen Krainara
Policy and Plan Analyst 6, International Economic Strategy Unit, Office of the National Economic and
Social Development Board
Tel. No.: 66 2 280 4085 ext. 3709, Mobile: 6681 553 5189, Fax No.: 66 2 282 1475,
Email: choen@nesdb.go.th

Viet Nam

Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Hung
Head of Vietnam Delegation, Deputy Director, Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of
Education and Training
Tel. No.: 849 034 06249/844 868 4273, Fax No.: 844 869 3243, Email: nnhung@moet.edu.vn
nngochung@gmail.com

Mr. Nguyen The Hung
Deputy Director, Personnel Organization Service, Ministry of Health
Tel. No.: 08 84 0913 541360

Mr. Dao Quang Vinh
Deputy Director, Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social
Affairs
Tel. No.: 844 936 2934, Fax No.: 844 826 4222, Email: ilssadqvinh@yahoo.co.uk

Mr. Tran Ngoc Lan
Expert, Ministry of Planning and Investment
Tel. No.: 840 804 4402, Fax No.: 844 823 0161, Email: lanktdn@yahoo.com

BILATERALS/ MULTILATERALS/ PRIVATE SECTOR/CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATION

AFD

Ms. Luize Guimaraes Scherer Navarro
Project Officer, Phnom Penh
Tel. No.: 092 311439, 855 23 426 360, Fax No.: 855 426 243, Email: guimaraesl@groupe-afd.org

AusAID

Ms. Nguyen Phuoc Nghi Dung
Senior Program Officer, Ho Chi Minh City Office
Tel. No.: (84) 8829 6035, Fax No.: (84) 8822 6201, Email: nghi.dung@dfat.gov.au.pk,
nguyen-phuoc-nghi.dung@dfat.gov.au

ILO

Ms. Anne Richmond
Skills Development Specialist, ILO Thailand
Tel. No.: 66 2 288 1780, Fax No.: 66 2 288 3058, Email: richmond@ilo.org

IOM

Ms. Irena Vojackova-Sollorano
Chief of Mission and Representative for Southeast Asia, International Organization for Migration
(IOM), Thailand
Tel. No.: 66 2 343 9300, Fax No.: 66 2 343 9399,
Email: c/o Hada Ruangsomboon (iruangsomboon@iom.int)

Mr. David Knight
Programme Coordinator, IOM, Phnom Penh
Tel. No.: 855 12 900 224, Email: dknight@iom.int

ITEM Interactive

Mr. Robert Simms
Partner/Producer
Tel. No.: 61 2 9906 6116, Mobile: 0402395543, Email: robsimms@item.com.au

MARIE STOPES INTERNATIONAL

Ms. Che Katz
Team Leader/Social Marketing Specialist, Australia
Tel. No.: 662 863 0129, Email: Che.Katz@attglobal.net

SIDA

Ms. Pia Bergman
Regional HIV/AIDS Adviser, Southeast Asia, SIDA, Swedish Embassy, Cambodia
Tel: (855.23) 212 259/855 016 644 744, Email: pia.bergman@sida.se

UNAIDS

Ms. Jane Batte
Social Mobilisation and Policy Advisor, UNAIDS, Cambodia
Tel. No.: 092 86 8350, Email: battej@unaids.org

UNFPA

Dr. Sokun Sok
Programme Manager, UNFPA, Cambodia
Tel. No.: 855 23 215 519 , Fax No.: 855 23 211 339, Email: sok@unfpa.org

UNESCAP

Mr. Michael Chai
Social Affairs Officer, Health and Development Section, Emerging Social Issues Division
Tel. No.: +66-228 1335, Fax. No.: +66-2-2883031, Email: chai@un.org

UNESCO

Ms. Miki Nozawa
Programme Specialist, Education Policy and Reform (EPR) Unit
Tel: +66-2-391 0577 ext. 351, Fax: +66-2-391 0866, Email: m.nozawa@unesco.org

Dr. David Feingold
Director, Ophidian Research Institute, c/o UNESCO/PROAP
Tel. No.: +66-2-391-0879 ext 504, Fax No.: +66-2-391-0866, Email: ophidianfilms@hotmail.com

UNIAP

Ms. Kristy Fleming
Project Advisor
Tel. No.: 023 216 217, Email: kristy.fleming@undp.org

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

Dr. Michael O'Leary
WHO Representative
Tel. No.: 855 12 976 976, Fax: 855 23 216 211, Email: olearym@cam.wpro.who.int

Dr. P.T. Jayawickramarajah
WHO Representative, Thailand
Tel. No.: (662) 590 1515, Fax No.: (662) 591 8199, Email: Jayawickramarajah@searo.who.int

WORLD BANK

Mr. Janmejay Singh
Social Development Specialist, World Bank, Washington D.C.
Tel. No.: 001 202 473 7087, Email: janmejay_singh02@yahoo.com / jsingh1@worldbank.org

Mr. Simeth Beng
Human Development Operation Officer, World Bank, Cambodia
Tel. No.: (855-23) 217 304, Fax No.: (855-23) 210 504, Email: sbeng@worldbank.org

Ms. Jennica Larrison
Human Development Specialist, World Bank, Thailand
Fax No.: (66 2) 686 8301, Email: jlarrison@worldbank.org

Mr. Ly Narela
Operation Officer, Health, World Bank, Cambodia
Tel. No.: 855 012 620 481, Email: nly1@worldbank.org

REGIONAL/ ACADEMIC/ FOUNDATIONS**GMSTEC**

Mr. Jeff Howe
Executive Director, Greater Mekong Subregion Tertiary Education Consortium Trust (GMSTEC)
Tel. No.: 64 4 463 5921/ Mobile: 64 21 243 5921, Fax No.: 64 4 463 7419,
Email: jeff.howe@vuw.ac.nz / jeff.howe@gmstec.org

Rockefeller Foundation

Mr. Alan Feinstein
Acting Director, Southeast Asia Regional Office, The Rockefeller Foundation
Tel. 66 2 262 0091-95, Fax No.: 66 2 262 0098, Email: afeinstein@rockfound.org

Kunming University of Science and Technology

Prof. Gang Deng
Director, International Cooperation Division/Dean of School of International Programs
Tel No.: 86 871 514 4212, Fax No.: 86 871 5198622, Email: gdeng@kmust.edu.cn

ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

Ms. Shireen Lateef
Director, Social Sectors Division, Southeast Asia Department
Tel. No.: (63 2) 632 6904, Fax No.: (63 2) 636 2228, Email: slateef@adb.org

Mr. Arjun Goswami
Country Director, Cambodia Resident Mission (CARM)
Tel. No.: 855 23 215 805/806, Fax No.: 855 23 215 807, Email: agoswami@adb.org

Ms. Susan Anne Kerr
Principal Human Resource Development Specialist, Social Sectors Division, Southeast Asia Department
Tel. No. (632) 632 6902, Fax No. (632) 636 2228/ 2408, Email: sakerr@adb.org

Mr. Vincent de Wit
Principal Health Specialist, Social Sectors Division, Southeast Asia Department
Tel. No.: (63 2) 632 6770, Fax No.: (63 2) 636 2228, Email: vdewit@adb.org

Ms. Sukhdeep Brar
Senior Education Specialist, Social Sectors Division, Southeast Asia Department
Tel. No.: (63 2) 632 6395, Fax No.: (63 2) 636 2228, Email: sbrar@adb.org

Ms. Lisa Studdert
Health Specialist, Viet Nam Resident Mission (VRM)
Tel. No.: (84 4) 933 1374-76, Fax No.: (84 4) 933 1373, Email: lstuddert@adb.org

Ms. Sunniya Durrani-Jamal
Education Economist, Social Sector Specialist, Social Sectors Division, Southeast Asia Department
Tel. No.: (63 2) 5798, Fax No.: (63 2) 636 2228, Email: sdjamal@adb.org

Ms. Anupma Jain
Social Sector Specialist, Social Sectors Division, Southeast Asia Department
Tel. No.: (63 2) 632 6360, Fax No.: (63 2) 636 2228, Email: ajain@adb.org

Mr. Sophea Mar
Social Sector/ Poverty Officer, Cambodia Resident Mission (CARM)
Tel. No.: 855 23 215 805/806, Fax No.: 855 23 215 807, Email: smar@adb.org

Raikhan Sabirova
Social Sectors Specialist, Cambodia Resident Mission (CARM)
Tel. No.: 855 23 215 805/806, Fax No.: 855 23 215 807, Email: rsabirova@adb.org

SECRETARIAT/CONSULTANTS

Ms. Madeline Dizon
Administrative Assistant, Social Sectors Division, Southeast Asia Department
Tel. No.: (63 2) 632 5934, Fax No.: (63 2) 636 2228, Email: mdizon@adb.org

Mr. Peter Miller
Health Systems Expert/Consultant, ADB GMS Regional CDC Project

Ms. Charmaine Cu-Unjieng
Consultant, GMS/SIDA HIV Prevention in the Infrastructure Sector

Kheng Samvada
Consultant, Resident Mission (CARM)
Tel. No.: 855 23 215 805/806, Fax No.: 855 23 215 807, Email: ksamvada@adb.org

Ms. Flordeliza Melendez
Consultant, GMS Unit, Operations Coordination Division, Southeast Asia Department
Tel. No.: (63 2) 632 4444 loc. 70183, Fax No.: (63 2) 636 2227, Email: fmelendez@adb.org

Ms. Yvonne Razote
Consultant, GMS Unit, Operations Coordination Division, Southeast Asia Department
Tel. No.: (63 2) 632 5711, Fax No.: (63 2) 636 2227, Email: yrazote@adb.org

**Eighth Meeting of the Working Group on Human Resource
Development
(WGHRD-8)**

**Intercontinental Hotel
Phnom Penh, Cambodia
May 9-11, 2007**

**Opening Remark
by
HE Vong Sauth**

Minister of Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training

Respectfully,

- **Shireen Lateef**, Director of Southeast Asia Department of ADB,
- **Delegates** from the People's Republic of China,
- **Delegates** from People's Democratic Republic of Laos,
- **Delegates** from Myanmar,
- **Delegates** from Thailand,
- **Delegates** from Socialist Republic of Vietnam
- **Excellencies, Lok Chum Teav and Participants** of the meeting

Good Morning!

Today I have a great honor and pleasure to deliver an opening remark in this 8th meeting of Human Resource Development Working Group with outstanding participants from countries of Great Mekong Sub-region.

First of all, on behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia, especially the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training, I would like to express my profound pleasure and extend the warmest welcome to excellencies, Lok Chum Teav, distinguished guests and ladies and gentlemen who participate in this important meeting.

Cambodia has been successful in promoting constant growth in consecutive years especially in 2005 during which the growth reached **13.4%**. Cambodia has a strong belief in and optimistically looks forward to its glorious future. Years of growth reflects that Cambodia has taken the opportunity and encouraged participations from all stakeholders in order to ensure the development of Cambodia in the coming century.

Based on the results of surveys, it is observed that the poverty line has been remarkably reduced since 1993. Despite this success, we acknowledge that poverty reduction takes time, not just one or two years. This work requires time, development of policies, strategies, planning and program activities that are clear, comprehensive and

realistic and political willingness to ensure smooth implementation and the social mobilization of resources in order to achieve the goals set forth.

The Royal Government of Cambodia pays particular attention to expand and strengthen partnerships with international development partners, private sectors and civil societies. The government established "Government and Private Sector Forum" since 1999 and this forum is held on a regular basis with support from various sectors and 8 working groups.

Private investments in Cambodia are involved in various sectors but most noticeably in garment industry, tourism, construction, banking, forestry and crop farming. Recently, private investments in higher education have been active and on the increase. However, the flow of investments in priority sectors has been slow although these sectors have been regarded by the government as sectors of high competitiveness and income generation such as agriculture, processing of agricultural products, infrastructure, etc.

Small and medium enterprise plays very important roles to ensure economic development, job opportunity and stable income generation. The Royal Government of Cambodia adopted a comprehensive framework for development of small and medium enterprise and recently development programs have been operated. A special secretariat has been established to ensure the smooth implementation of small and medium enterprise policies and programs.

Excellencies, Lok Chum Teav, Ladies and Gentlemen!

Regarding the enforcement of Labor Law, the International Labor Organization that monitors working conditions in Cambodia declared that garment and footwear industries in Cambodia have not involved in forced labor, child labor and discrimination. The Royal Government of Cambodia has set up Labor Advisory Committee and Arbitration Council according to the Labor Law. In order to ensure the improved living condition of employees, the Royal Government of Cambodia has recently issued a sub-decree on the establishment of National Treasury for Social Security. This institution is responsible for the management and implementation of social security of employees in private sectors. A national committee for the promotion of training was also established to ensure the relevancy of the programs to meet the needs of labor market.

Job seekers have access to job counseling including job offered outside Cambodia. The Royal Government of Cambodia has taken appropriate measures to manage migrant workers in order to reduce human

trafficking, violation and exploitation through the establishment of official relationship for migrant workers with countries such as South Korea, Malaysia, Thailand, Brunei and Kata. Thirteen private agents and one Labor Advisory Committee recruited, trained and exported and managed workers outside Cambodia. These agents are required to provide training to workers before their departure for overseas employment. In one part of the training, workers are informed of the contact information for emergency, their rights and responsibility of the recipient countries as follow:

Excellencies, Lok Chum Teav, Ladies and Gentlemen!

Due to limited time, I would like to highlight three recommendations for further consideration in the preparation of new strategies for developing human resources in the Great Mekong Sub-region countries.

1. Macroeconomic stability

2. Development of all sectors has direct and indirect impacts on poverty reduction

A. Direct development includes:

- Marketing which includes product and employment markets.

- Commercial strategies for poverty reduction

B. Indirect development includes:

- Education and training

- Gender equity

- Public health

3. And good governance

Once again, on behalf of the Royal Government of Cambodia and the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training, I would like to highly appreciate the ADB and technical experts in this meeting for their preparation of new strategies for cooperation on development of human resources in countries of Great Mekong Sub-region.

I would like to wish Excellencies, Lok Chum Teav and participants of the meeting happiness, good health and success in all tasks.

I would like to announce the opening of the 8th meeting on Human Resource Development.

Thank You.

**Greater Mekong Subregion
Eighth Meeting of the Working Group on Human Resource Development
(WGHRD-8)
9-11 May 2007, Phnom Penh, Cambodia**

OPENING REMARKS

**Ms. Shireen Lateef
Director
Social Sectors Division, Southeast Asia Department
Asian Development Bank**

Good Morning,

Distinguished Delegates and participants to this Eighth Meeting of the GMS Working Group on Human Resource Development (WGHRD-8),

On behalf of the Asian Development Bank and the rest of the delegates, let me express our deep appreciation to the Royal Government of Cambodia for organizing and hosting this important meeting.

Some of you may have attended previous meetings of the Working Group; others may be attending for the first time. We extend our warm greetings and welcome to each and everyone.

This year, the 6 countries that share the Mekong River are celebrating the 15th anniversary of the GMS. The GMS Economic Cooperation Program continues to accelerate and deliver concrete contributions to the shared vision and goals of the GMS countries. Significant progress has been achieved in the implementation of the strategic thrusts and programs under the GMS Strategic Framework covering the period 2002-2012. Half-way through the implementation of the GMS Strategic Framework, concrete results have been achieved, particularly in the “hardware” aspects of cooperation, as evidenced by greatly improved physical connectivity through the improvement of major transport linkages in the East-West, North-South, and Southern Economic Corridors; the establishment of policy and institutional framework for power trade in the energy sector; the development of the GMS telecommunications backbone and GMS information superhighway network; the facilitation of cross-border trade and investment and tourism;

the strengthening of cooperation in the environment and agriculture sectors; and the enhancement of private sector participation and competitiveness.

Important accomplishments have been achieved as well in the HRD sector. As you may be aware, this Working Group was established in 1996. Since then, the Working Group has embarked on a number of projects in the key sub-sectors of health, education and labor migration. The Phnom Penh Plan Development Management was launched during the Second GMS Summit in 2002. It was designed primarily to develop a core group of development managers in the sub-region with the capacity to operate as motivated and competent change agents. PPP is now on its third phase of development. To date, this highly successful program supported by the French, New Zealand, and PRC governments, as well as ADB, has conducted about 51 learning programs in collaboration with selected capacity building service partners and benefiting about 925 GMS senior and middle-level officials as participants, while about 22 fellows have undergone special programs on major aspects of development.

In health, several initiatives to prevent and control the spread of communicable diseases - notably HIV/AIDS, malaria and dengue -have been undertaken. In labor, the prevention of trafficking of women and children and the promotion of safe migration has been given attention and support. A study on the poverty and social impacts of regional economic integration in the GMS is about to wind up and has produced very interesting findings and recommendations for potential policy actions and initiatives. Our keynote speaker, Mr. Janmejay Singh, will enlighten us on the findings and recommendations of the study. These projects have received modest funding support from ADB and other development partners.

In previous meetings, the Working Group has recognized that much more remains to be done to address the important human resource development issues and challenges confronting the subregion as the GMS countries move to even higher levels of regional economic cooperation and integration. We see the need to enhance the skills and competitiveness of the sub-region's labor force so that the GMS countries could maximize the benefits from globalization and regional integration. We emphasize the urgency of containing, managing, and mitigating the negative externalities

associated with increased connectivity and people mobility. We recognize the continuing threats of the spread of communicable diseases in the subregion - notably HIV/AIDS and avian flu, human trafficking and problems associated with labor migration and the protection of migrant workers, even as people in the subregion are able to move freely across borders. We see the urgency of a draft GMS HIV/AIDS Strategy to be completed and formally adopted as soon as possible.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The GMS Secretariat has just completed a Mid-Term Review of the GMS Strategic Framework (2002-2012) for presentation to the 14th GMS Ministerial Conference in June 2007. The findings of the Mid-term Review showed that, indeed, the GMS Program has made very good progress in the “hardware” aspects of cooperation, but emphasized that more emphasis is needed on the “software” components, especially in measures to enhance the sub-region’s competitiveness, transforming improved connectivity into accelerated improvements in livelihoods and poverty reduction, addressing environmental and social issues – particularly negative externalities associated with improved connectivity and mobility of people and goods e.g., transmission of communicable diseases and illegal migration of workers . The Review suggested that while subregional cooperation and integration is helping the GMS countries reduce poverty and address related human development needs, nevertheless there is scope for enhancing and sustaining the poverty impact of such subregional cooperation and integration. Toward this end, more emphasis is needed on “pro-poor” policies and programs in conjunction with the provision of cross-border infrastructure to enable the poor to benefit from subregional economic cooperation and integration. Also, the interests of vulnerable groups such as ethnic communities, the poor in remote rural areas, women and children need to be fully addressed. Moreover, measures are required to minimize and mitigate the adverse impact of subregional economic integration.

To strengthen the effectiveness of subregional cooperation in HRD, the Mid-Term Review has suggested (i) the need to clarify the strategic and program focus of subregional cooperation in HRD through the formulation of a GMS strategic framework

and action plan for HRD cooperation; (ii) the strengthening of institutional arrangements and support to the WGHRD; and (iii) pursuing cooperation in labor issues, particularly in addressing labor-related issues e.g. labor migration, labor standards, human trafficking, skills competencies and standards, and protection of migrant workers, possibly in cooperation with other institutions such as the World Bank, International Labor Organization, International Organization for Migration, among others.

These issues have been recognized by WGHRD during past meetings. At our WGHRD-7 Meeting in Hanoi last year, the working group focused on cross-cutting HRD concerns in the subregion, made more significant in light of the increasing regional and economic integration and connectivity within the GMS and how these could be addressed through subregional cooperation in health, education, and labor and other cross-cutting initiatives.

As the GMS Program moves on to the second half of its implementation, our meeting in the next three days represents an important milestone in the continuing evolution of cooperation in human resource development in the GMS. The Working Group faces the challenge of bringing GMS cooperation in HRD to a higher plane, by defining a clear vision and bringing to sharper focus the strategic thrusts, objectives, and priority programs and projects through an action plan to be pursued, hopefully, with the enhanced support and participation of various development partners, civil society, and other stakeholders in the GMS. In this regard, ADB stands ready to assist the WGHRD in preparing an overarching Strategic Framework for GMS Cooperation in Human Resource Development and associated action plan that would hopefully address some of the urgent issues and challenges that the working group has identified. Truly, there are many such issues and challenges but we can only attempt to address the most pressing ones, given limitations of staff and financial resources at our disposal.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In March 2008, the GMS Leaders are meeting in Vientiane, Lao PDR for their Third Summit. It is our fervent hope that from our discussions at this meeting, the Working Group on HRD would be able to provide very substantive inputs to the

deliberations of the GMS Leaders, with respect to future directions in HRD cooperation in the subregion.

I wish all of us successful and fruitful deliberations.

Thank you.