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Thailand

Introduction

1. This paper has been written for the Global Forum on Education: The Challenges for Education in a Global Economies which co-hosted by the OECD and the Chilean Ministry of Education during October 24-25,2005,Santiago, Chile.

2. This paper is the part of the session Assuring Lifelong Learning for All. So the content of this paper focused on Lifelong Learning Policy of Thai government, followed by the role of Ministry of Labour on Human Resources Development and the benefit that gained from joining the ASEM Programme on Lifelong Learning for Employability.

Definition of Lifelong Learning (LLL)

3. According to National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) the Lifelong education means education resulting from integration of formal, non-formal, and informal education so as to create ability for continuous lifelong development of quality of life. Learning is therefore part of life which takes place at all times and in all places. It is a continuous lifelong process, going on from birth to the end of our life, beginning with learning from families, communities, schools, religious institutions, workplaces, etc. Learning of the 6 – 24 age group usually takes place in educational institutions, from primary and secondary to tertiary levels. The objective of learning in this period is the holistic development of learners in four aspects, namely: physical, intellectual, social capacity, emotional and mental development. Learning during the working life of the 25 – 60 age group can learn informally through the use of instructional media, mostly from their occupations, work-places, colleagues, touring, mass media, information technologies, environment and nature. Adults learn from experiences and problems solving, they therefore need continuous development of intellect, capability and integrity. Learning in old age (over 60 years old) elderly people can learn a great deal from activities suitable to their age e.g. art, music, sports for the elderly, handicrafts and social work. They are highly respected in Thai society; capable of searching for knowledge and provide intellectual support to local communities. They can also carry out voluntary work in community organizations, clubs and associations. Such work makes their lives meaningful as well as bringing benefits to society.

Information on Thai Population

4. According to the information of National Statistic Office on May, 2005.

The total population is	65.30	Million persons
Labour force	35.76	Million persons
Employed persons	34.46	Million persons
Unemployed persons	0.73	Million persons
Seasonal unemployed person (Unemployment rate 2 percent)	0.57	Million persons
Working in Industries	8.20	Million persons
Working in services	12.30	Million persons
Working in agriculture	12.20	Million persons

Educational background

Primary level	29.70	Million persons
Secondary level	13.30	Million persons
Higher education	4.70	Million persons

Policy on Lifelong Learning (LLL)

5. The policy of education and training can be considered from the Constitution, the National Economic and Social Development Plan, and the policies of the current government.

6. The Constitution ensures that all people will have both the rights and duties to receive education and training as well as academic freedom (sections 30, 42 and 69). The role of the private sector in the provision of education at all levels is also emphasized (section 43).

7. The National Economic and Social Development Plan No. 9 (B.E. 2545 – 2549) (2002 – 2006) has determined that Thai society should be the learning and wisdom society that give opportunity to all people to be thinkable, rational, creative, continuous learning, in order to be ready to face with the dynamic environment. To achieve this should focus on human development by educational reform and methodology for upgrading the skills and readiness of Thai people to have standardized skills being consistent with changed production structures. This would enable Thai people to obtain quality development and labour skill standards, as well as realize the importance of their development.

8. The Government has primary responsibility for education, pre-employment training and training the unemployed and people with special needs.

The social partners play a significant role in further training and particularly employers in work-place learning and training.

Individuals are expected to make use of education, training and Lifelong Learning.

Human Resources Development in Thailand

9. Human Resources Development in Thailand is responsible by two main Ministries, Ministry of Education is responsible for the basic and higher education. Ministry of Labour by the Department of Skill Development (DSD) is responsible for the development of workforce in the labour market since the age of 15 years old to acquire skills, knowledge to have high competence for

employability. Also, is the core organization for issuing the National Skill Standards and Testing System as well as evaluation the working experiences of workforces and transfer to education credit for higher qualification.

Education System in Thailand

10. The Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2540 (1999) and the National Educational Act (1999) serves as master legislation on education of the country, leading to significant education and learning reform. They provide principle and challenging guidelines for the provision and development of Thai education in order to prepare all Thai people for a learning society in a knowledge-based economy.

11. Education will be provided in three types: formal, non-formal, and informal education. Formal education is divided into 2 levels: basic education and higher education, with 9 years compulsory education. Ministries, bureaus, departments, public enterprises, and other public agencies will authorize to provide specialized education, based on national education policy and standards as well as ministerial regulations.

Role of Ministry of Labour, Thailand

12. Thailand was one of the founded members of the International Labour Organization (ILO) since 1919, so, the development of the labour affairs have received the technical support from the ILO since the beginning. ILO suggested Thai Government to provide practical training to the unemployed persons from rural area to acquire specific skills relevant to the demand of the labour market since 1967. So, we could solve the unemployment problem and shortage of skill workforce in various industries and establishments in the same time. Since then, the development of the competence and skills of the workforce in the labour market is responsible by DSD Ministry of Labour.

13. The system of training is the practical training; theory 20 percent, practices 80 percent. Courses of training are technical and non-technical training, services and commerce (entrepreneurship development), soft skills training such as leadership, problem solving, communication, decision-making, teamwork, etc. The levels of training are basic skills training, upgrading training, retraining for other occupation, to facilitate the Lifelong Learning/Training for employability.

14. The training is usually conducted in Institutes and establishments. Duration of training approximately 280 hours or 2 months to 10 months. Successful trainees will be classified as basic skilled labour.

Skill Development Promotion Act B.E. 2545 (A.D. 2002)

15. Thai government considers that human resource is the main asset of Nation and should be continuously developed on par with the development of socio-economic and technology to be high quality resource. According to the OECD study shows that human capital investment in post-compulsory education significantly develops.

There is a need to rethink and broaden the notion of lifelong education. Not only must it adapt to changes in the nature of work, but it must

also constitute a continuous process of forming whole human beings – their knowledge and aptitudes, as well as the critical faculty and ability to act. It should enable people to develop awareness of themselves and their environment and encourage them to play their social role at work and in the community.

16. The government has enacted the Skill Development Promotion Act B.E. 2545 (A.D2002) to encourage the business operators, employers to play vital role on upgrading skills and knowledge of the workforce with tax deduction.

17. Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Education are working together to set up system for transferring credit between skills and basic knowledge in order to encourage workforce to upgrade skills and knowledge as the concept of Lifelong Learning. So those who complete this programme will get higher certificate up to degree level. This means that try to make education and training access to workforce for his/her better status or life, get higher income, for the employers will gain productivity from the higher qualification of employee.

Impact of Globalization

18. Skill development has never been as important as it is in today's globalizing world, where technology dictates rapid changes to the way in which skills are acquired, new skills developed and existing skills upgraded. However, the rapid pace at which information technology is developing, as the driving force behind globalization, is making it difficult for many countries to maintain their knowledge and skill base, while at the same time keeping abreast of changes to knowledge, skills and work practices. It is only through cooperation and sharing of responsibility and information on skill development at the national and regional level that we can be fully aware of the changing skill needs in the workplace. So, Thailand is actively participating in ASEM Lifelong Learning for Employability Programme.

The Benefit for Thailand

19. As one of a member joining ASEM Lifelong Learning for Employability Programme, the benefit that we have got are the broader of our vision on the issue of learning and sharing good practices and adapt to our society. Cooperation to raise the quality of learning and training and bridging the gap between developed and developing countries. Lifelong Learning and training can be applied to eradicate the poverty by creating employment. Joining research and development for issuing the right policies and measures to solve the challenging problems to our societies. Create understanding for the well beings of our human resources. We are not compete but helping for survival from the effect of globalization.