



National round-table

SKILLS UPGRADING TO FOSTER LOCAL ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION IN CAMBODIA

Dialogue between the Cambodian Government and OECD LEED within the framework of ESSSA

Phnom Penh, Cambodia

18 January 2012

AGENDA

Significant energies are being deployed currently in Cambodia to diversify the economy away from agriculture towards manufacturing and service industries. New firms are being established in the country as a result of various incentives. These developments come in parallel with a broader trend of industrial relocalisation from other developing economies in Asia, creating new opportunities for more and better quality jobs in Cambodia.

For these industries to flourish in the various parts of Cambodia, new firms need to find a trained workforce on which to build further occupational skills. Yet a sufficiently skilled workforce is often lacking as training institutions lack information, capacities and resources to adapt training provision to emerging needs. Companies do not engage enough in skills development activities. They are generally reluctant to invest time and resources in training and are sometimes more concerned with benefiting from short-term reductions in production costs, without an eye to long-term product market strategies.

This situation needs to be addressed to avoid missing key opportunities for long-term economic development. The changing economic landscape provides a significant potential to upgrade the skills of the existing workforce in the country. Better skills leads to stronger innovation, more dynamic SMEs and the development of better jobs, leading to higher living standards.

It is timely to review the way of employment and training policies are implemented in Cambodia in order to address this situation. How can employment and training programmes and services be delivered in a more responsive way to emerging local business needs and economic development strategies in the country? How can more effective partnerships be built between industry and education/training to address skills mismatch? What are key instruments for effective upskilling of the workforce?

These themes will be the subject of a review by the OECD LEED Programme of ongoing practices in employment and training service delivery in Cambodia in 2012. To kick off this review, a dialogue will be held with officers involved in employment, vocational training and economic development, together with OECD and UNDP experts. This will allow for a first exchange experience and discussions of what the main issues are for an effective upskilling of the Cambodian workforce in the current economic context.

The roundtable will be preceded by visits of local employment offices and training agencies. Discussions will continue in meetings with high-level officers in relevant national agencies and further field visits.

For further information about the OECD LEED Employment and Skills Strategies in Southeast Asia initiative, please visit www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/employment/esssa



■ Wednesday, 18 January 2012

Morning: Experts round-table

- 09:00 – 09:10 **Opening Remarks**
H.E. HENG Sour, Director General of Admin and Finance, Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, Cambodia
Dr. Sylvain GIGUERE, Head of LEED Division, OECD
- 09:10 – 09:35 **International perspectives on skills upgrading of the workforce**
Dr. Sylvain GIGUERE, Head of LEED Division, OECD
- 09:35 – 10:00 **The importance of upskilling for development in Cambodia**
Mr. JOSE Bendito, UNDP Specialist
- 10:00 – 10:25 **The experience of Australia on upskilling and building effective partnering with industry**
Ms. Noela EDDINGTON, Expert, Australia
- 10:25 – 10:45 **Q&A**
- 10:45 – 11:00 *Break*
- 11:00 – 11:30 **The views from Cambodia**
H.E. Dr. HONG Choeun, Head of National Employment Agency
- 11:30 – 12:15 **Discussant:** *Mr. HAY Sovuthea*, SNEC and *Mr. HING Vutha*, CDRI (TBC)
- 12:15 – 12:30 **Wrap-up and conclusion**
- 12:30 – 14:00 *Lunch*

Afternoon meetings

- 14:00 – 15:00 **Meeting with the Supreme National Economic Council**
- 15:00 – 16:00 **Field visit: Skills Bridging Project**