

Development in Partnership

The World Bank in Thailand

March 2007

Thailand and World Bank Share Experience on Knowledge Management Applications

On February 15, more than 300 representatives from Government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and public as well as private companies attended the seminar on **Knowledge Management Applications: World Bank & Thailand Experience Sharing**. This was the first event of its kind organized by the World Bank Office Bangkok, in collaboration with the Knowledge Management Institute (KMI). The high level of participation was a reflection of the growing interest in knowledge management within Thailand, especially within the public sector.



Discussing Knowledge Management Applications and Communities of Practice during the seminar

The seminar was the latest of the World Bank's efforts to help Thailand move toward a knowledge economy. It followed a series of seminars in the first and second week of the month, during which Washington-based World Bank economists offered their insights into the state of the regional and global economy, followed by policy recommendations for Thailand to improve its own competitiveness.

"Since last year, the World Bank has sponsored a number of seminars on various aspects of the knowledge economy in support of the Thai public and private sectors' move to become more knowledge-driven," said Ian Porter, *World Bank Thailand Country Director*, as he welcomed participants to the seminar.

"If some of you are wondering "Why is knowledge management important to us?" The answer is quite

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Two World Bank February Events Promote HIV/AIDS Awareness Among Youth in Thailand

Young people in Thailand now seem to be adopting a more casual attitude toward sex than did their parents' generation. However, without adequate knowledge of how to protect themselves from HIV/AIDS, they could easily place themselves, as well as the country's future, at risks.

A recent survey by Assumption University revealed that a third of Thai girls who responded to the poll think it neat to lose virginity on Valentine's Day. However, they may be unaware that less than half of sexually active youth men around the world use condoms, even though unprotected sex is the greatest risk factor for HIV/AIDS. Along with other risky behaviors, unprotected sex could deprive developing economies of productive human capital many years into the future, according to the *World Development Report 2007*.



Youth Club members handing out the roses, with the Safe Sex or No Sex message attached, to high school students in Siam Square

By contrast, longer life expectancy could encourage more investment in human capital in developing countries. By promoting safe health behaviors, Governments could increase the likelihood that poor youths will escape poverty, the *WDR 2007* reported.

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simple: Development and growth of the global economy in recent years has been increasingly driven by knowledge," Mr. Porter added. "In East Asia, countries such as South Korea, Taiwan and even China have also demonstrated the role of knowledge generation, dissemination, management, and use in promoting their rapid growth and development."

The World Bank Institute established the Knowledge for Development Program, or K4D, as a follow-up to the 1998 World Development Report, which focused on the important role that knowledge plays in social and economic development. This program helps countries to assess their strengths and weaknesses in the knowledge-based economy and to design policies which will enhance their competitiveness, said **Erik Caldwell Johnson**, a World Bank Knowledge Management Officer, who was the key speaker during the seminar.

"Institutions in the public, private or non-profit sectors have also come to realize the central role which "knowledge" can play in enhancing the effectiveness of their operations," Mr. Johnson said. "This begins with investments in human resources and leveraging the role information technology. However, these institutions are also beginning to devote considerable attention to harnessing the explicit and tacit knowledge generated by their employees. As a complement to its work on the macroeconomic level, the K4D program is also helping organizations to apply the tools and approaches of knowledge management to enhance performance at the micro level."

The seminar took place at the Grand Hotel on Ratchadapisek Road. It brought together national and international experts to discuss ways to improve KM effectiveness in organizations, and for the Thai audience to learn about Communities of Practice. (A Community of Practice is a group of practitioners within, or across, organizations, who regularly share knowledge and information to improve their professional capacity).

After Mr. Johnson's first presentation on the critical success factors derived from the World Bank's experience in implementing KM, **Dr. Prapon Phasukyud**, KMI Director of Communication & Learning Network, led a group of panelists from Thailand in a lively discussion on the Thai experience. Discussants

included **Mr. Songpol Jetanawanich**, Director, The Learning Empowerment Institute, **Ms. Sriwipa Liang-Pansakul**, Department of Health, Ministry of Public Health, **Mr. Taweessin Chatchalermvith**, Organization Development Manager, Siam Cement Industry Co., Ltd.

Mr. Johnson also contributed to this discussion.

The afternoon session began with **Mr. Johnson's** presentation on "Communities of Practice (CoPs): How Can Intra and Inter Organization CoP Build Individual Capacity for Innovation and Problem Solving." The CoP experience sharing session was moderated by **Dr. Yuwanuch Tinnalak**. Panelists for the afternoon session were **Mr. Suradej Dejkumwong**, Director of the Pichitr Development Foundation, **Ms. Suppalak**

Hiriwattanawong, Bamrasnaradura Infectious Diseases Institute, **Dr. Prong Kongsutbo**, Director of Spancion (Thailand) Co., Ltd., and Mr. Johnson himself.

For more information on the K4D program and knowledge management at the World Bank, please visit: <http://www.worldbank.org/ks>

For more information on the World Bank support to Thailand, please visit <http://www.worldbank.or.th>.



Sharing the World Bank experience: Erik C. Johnson during his presentation



More than 300 participants attended the seminar, co-organized by the World Bank and the Knowledge Management Institute

With that in mind, the **World Bank Thailand Youth Club** has been focusing on promoting HIV/AIDS awareness among young people. In February – the Month of Love for many youths around the world, the Youth Club organized two events to encourage youth dialogue on HIV/AIDS. The “**Concert in the Park**” on February 10 aimed to raise funds for the HIV/AIDS center at a temple in central Thailand; The “**Safe Sex or No Sex**” campaign on February 13 aimed to encourage youth to choose carefully and protect themselves from HIV/AIDS.



Musicians performing during the February 10th Concert in the Park

“It’s closer to us than we think,” said Phochara Vichalai, 19, a Thammasat University freshman and President of the World Bank Youth Club, of HIV/AIDS. “We are prone to the infection unless we protect ourselves. But we either hear about HIV/AIDS only from the adults, or are excluded from the decision-making that could affect us. This is why the Youth Club wanted to organize these events to promote HIV/AIDS knowledge among young people, as well as to encourage them to share the knowledge with their peers.”

The first event was a collaborative effort between the World Bank and **Rainbow Sky Association of Thailand** and **Bangkok Rainbow Organization** – both are non-governmental organizations advocating HIV/AIDS awareness, as well as gay and lesbian’s rights. Another key partner in this program was **Thammarak Foundation**, which manages the HIV/AIDS center at Wat Phra Baht Nam Phu. The temple is located in central region’s Lop Buri province, 154 kilometers north of Bangkok.

Wat Phra Baht Nam Phu has been caring for full-blown AIDS patients since 1992, when information about HIV/AIDS infections in Thailand was still not widely available. It started out as a small hospice with only eight beds – now the temple has 400.

It also takes care of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS. Of all the 2,000 people under the temple’s care now, 1,300 of them are



DJ Pla Kung as he promoted Safe Sex to concert-goers

children. Every month, the temple pays up to four million baht to care for them, including the cost of food, medicine, cremation expenses, and administrative fees. Financial support from the Thai Government, at 100,000 baht a month, is hardly enough to help the temple. And donations from temple goers are often too small to make up the difference.

The February 10th concert was designed to help the temple meet the shortfall. It was held in Bangkok’s Benjakitti Park, with more than 120 people attending, including college students and park visitors. Through donations collected at the park, in Siam Square, at schools and colleges around Bangkok, as well as at the weekend Chatuchak Market, the Youth Club raised 200,346 baht for Wat Phra Baht Nam Phu.

“This (youth) program presents a great opportunity for young people to take part in social development,” said Phra Alongkot Phonlamuk, 52, the temple’s founding father. “Almost 100,000 HIV-infected patients in our country are young people. If the situation continued, I’m worried that the number of young HIV-infected people could reach a million in five years. It is very important to keep the youth involved, otherwise the problem will never be solved.”

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Some of the T-shirts painted by youth celebrities during the event

Another World Bank Youth Club program followed less than a week later. Under the title “**Learn to Express Your Love the Right Way,**” the event was designed to be a forum for youth dialogue on **Safe Sex or No Sex** – one day ahead of St. Valentine’s Day. During this event, students from Bangkok universities participated in a debate on “**Safe Sex is Better than Abstinence.**” Following the debate, Dr. Panpimol Lotrakul, a child and adolescent psychologist, led the discussion on how to protect oneself from risky behaviors while being in love. Youth celebrities participating in this event painted the *Love the Right Way* slogan on T-shirts, which they then wore around Siam Square to promote the campaign. During the rally around Siam Square, hundreds of red roses were handed out to other youths, along with pamphlets promoting the *Love the Right Way* campaign.

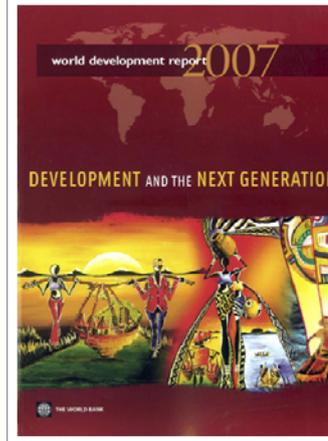


World Bank Youth Club members getting ready for Siam Square rally

“We young women have to choose carefully and appropriately, even while we are in love,” **Pacharaporn Panomwan Na Ayutthaya**, 20, a Chulalongkorn University freshman, told reporters during the rally. “Don’t let peer pressure force you into making a bad choice. Think about protecting yourself before getting involved with anyone sexually.”

For more information on World Bank Youth Engagement Program, please contact Tinnakorn Sareenun, at 0-2686-8327, email: tsareenun@worldbank.org.

Looking Ahead



March 12: The “*World Development Report (WDR) 2007: Development and the Next Generation*” seminar, 2:00 pm, Sasin Conference Room, the Sasa Patasala Building, Chulalongkorn University.

This year, the report emphasizes the importance of investment in young people in developing countries and recommends policies that will help youth develop themselves and contribute to society. **Mr. Emmanuel Y. Jimenez**, the Lead Author of WDR 2007, will discuss why youth investment is critical for development and the key transition points during which investments are needed, as well as explain how governments can develop “youth-friendly” policies to accelerate development in their countries. After his presentation, there will be a panel discussion to put the issue of youth and development into the Thai context.

To register for this event and for more information on the WDR, please contact Tinnakorn Sareenun, at 0-2686-8327, email: tsareenun@worldbank.org.

March 13: “**Investment, Trade and Transport Facilitation in ACMECS**” - a workshop co-organized by the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB), the World Bank and the Ayeyawady - Chao Phraya - Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS) Business Council, 8:00 AM, the Ballroom, Dusit Thani Hotel.

The purpose of this workshop is to take stock (from various perspectives) of the current situation in respect of cross-border private investment, trade and transport in the ACMECS region (covering Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam), and to propose ways for governments, private sectors and donors can collectively facilitate cross-border movement of goods.

For more information on the workshop, please contact Cheanchom Thongjen, at 0-2686-8378, email: cthongjen@worldbank.org.



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