

HRD in motion

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HRD (Human Resources Development) Communique

A quarterly newsletter published by the HRD Master Plan Project in Bangladesh, a project supported by WHO, CIDA and ODA, to formulate an HRD Master Plan for Bangladesh, is being distributed widely now. The newsletter detailed the concept, plan, progress and achievement of the project.

The project is a good example for developing countries to achieve better production, development and utilization of the Human Resources for Health. The newsletter is a communicating tool for the management of the project with all concerns.

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Training on models for Projecting workforce supply and requirements (10 - 21 March, 1997, Indian Institute of Health Management Research, Jaipur, India)

Twenty-seven participants from 7 countries, i.e. : Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri-Lanka and Thailand participated in a two weeks workshop in the beautiful pink city of Jaipur, India. They were trained on the skill for projecting future supply and requirement of the health work force, using the third version of the computer programs prepared by Prof. Thomas L. Hall, UCSF, USA. Prof. Hall also instructed the course, accompanied by Mrs. Rucil Hornby, the computer programmer. Dr. Alexander Gubarev from WHO, Geneva, and Dr. Palitha Abeykoon from WHO, SEARO, also assisted in the management of this training, and will continue the WHO support for continuing activities in developing countries. Many countries especially Indonesia, Thailand and Bangladesh already have some plans on continuing activities for further development, including researches, development activities and training. A further training course in Thailand was held for 12 working groups (30 people), for studying the manpower requirement for 12 groups of services, on 28th - 30th April, 1997, at Royal Cliff Beach Hotel, in Pattaya, with a second continuing workshop supported by WHO, SEARO on 25th - 29th August, 1997. This will be followed by a 5 days workshop for the Indonesian planners in Indonesia on 1st - 5th September, 1997, also supported by WHO, SEARO. Professor Thomas L. Hall will be the main instructor for the two workshops.

Collaborative Medical Education : Regional Hospitals ready for clinical training

Due to severe shortage of physician in rural district hospitals in Thailand, a special collaborative medical education program was developed in 1996 to produce more medical graduates for the rural people. In this program, students will be selected from each provinces under a special selection system with local community participation. The first three years on premedical and preclinical courses will be the responsibility the

medical schools, supported by the MOPH. While for the three clinical years, medical students will be trained at 10 regional hospitals with supports from the medical schools. Students will also be trained in the provincial and district hospitals as well.

A two days workshops to formulate strategies and plan for strengthening the regional hospitals was organized on the 6th-7th, February, 1997 at the Ramagarden Hotel, Bangkok. Dr.Charles Boelen from WHO, Geneva and Dr.John Bryant from USA., joined with many Thai resource persons gave their views on future health care system, medical education reform, and international experiences in the strengthening of service hospitals to effectively function as teaching hospitals.

No need for competitive entrance examination for nursing students : Reduction of inequity and promotion of community participation

The Ministry of Public Health, Thailand is testing a new recruitment method for nursing students admitting into its nursing colleges in 1997.

Under this recruitment system, high school graduates from each rural district with GPA from 2.5 up can applied for selection. District community leaders (working in committee) will select the best 3 candidates according to personality and past performance. There will be no competitive sit in examination. These 3 candidates will participate in a camping program with candidates from other districts, organized by the Provincial Chief Medical office and Local nursing colleges. Through the participative approach, only one candidate from each district will be selected. This year 755 out of more than 4000 nursing students are selected by this method.

This new recruitment method aims to give more chances for rural district students to be accepted into nursing colleges without having to compete with those from the urban provinces. It also create an opportunity for the local community to play significant roles in the selection process.

Future policy options for production of HRH : Freedom of public educational institutes, decrease public subsidy, and reduce or abolish compulsory working contract.

A national seminar on “Policy options for future production of HRH in Thailand” was held on 29th January, 1997, at the Emerald Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand. It was attended by more than 100 participants from various ministries. After a special address on the topics “Thai education in the era of Globalization “ by Prof. Dr.Sibbanontha Khethat, Chairman of the National Socio-economic Development Board, a paper on “Policy options for future production of HRH in Thailand” was presented.

The paper predicted that future Thai health system will be more organized under different schemes of health insurance and focus more on preventive promotive services than on curative cares. Those manpower with no future shortage, and should not increase the production rate at the moment, are dentists and pharmacists. While physicians and nurses, which may be shortage at the present but will be adequate in the next two decades, should increase the production rate prudently through flexible system, without opening new medical or nursing schools.

State should reduce the subsidy on education of health manpower, especially those cadres which focus more on individual curative care, and may have high chances of personal benefits e.g. dentists, physicians, pharmacists. More financial burden should be put on to these categories of students. Education institutes should receive more freedom

from the bureaucratic public system in order to function more flexibly and efficiently. Strategies may range from decentralization, debureaucratization, to creating a special independent agency status for the educational institutes, or finally to transfer public education institutes to the private not for profit organizations.

State may give subsidies directly to the students by low interest educational loan and graduates can pay back by cash or through working for the government, abolishing the universal compulsory contract system.

Cerebration of mid-centennial education and health manpower development of Ministry of Public Health, Thailand.

The production of HRH by MOPH, Thailand started more than 60 years ago. However, the first Nursing college was established in 1946, commencing the official standard production of HRH by the MOPH.

A national workshop, on 21st - 23rd May 1997, will be held at Bangkok Convention Centre, Central Plaza, Bangkok, to cerebrate the mid-centennial achievement. The workshop aims at reviewing the situation and formulate future strategies of manpower production by the MOPH, as well as creating a forum for exchange of innovations in education and training of HRH among lecturers of 40 education institutes under MOPH, as well as trainers, manager of various health service facilities.

Highlight of the workshop will be :-

Manpower Development in the 21st century by Dr.Jira Hongsaladasromya

Past Present and Future of MoPH's Educational Management by Dr.Amphol Jindawatthana.

Human Resource for Health Development through strengthening of Health Systems Research by Mrs.Jongkolnee Witayarungroengsri.

The first international Diploma/MA course on human resources

Recent moves towards health sector reform and socio-economic pressures on Ministry of Health have sharpened the focus on cost-efficient resource production and management, especially in the area of human resource, the most precious of all health resources. With that demand for efficient human resource for health planning and management, the Centre for Health Planning and Management, Keel University, UK., decided to launch an international Diploma/MA course on human resources. The first course is now running and will be repeated again starting at the end of September, 1997.

Diploma course consist of five modules : health service planning, health economics, human resource management, human resource planning and workforce mobilization. This course is intended the people specializing in human resource in the health sector. The MA course includes the same modules as the diploma but with 3 to 4 months spent writing a human resource dissertation at the end it.

More information on this course, please contact Centre for Health Planning and Management, Darwin Building, Keel University, Keele, Staffs.ST5 5BG. UK, email address : hma07@cc.keele.ac.uk.