



Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar
and
United Nations Country Team in Myanmar

with support of European Union

**Conference on Development Policy Options
with special reference to
Education and Health in Myanmar**

MICC, Naypyitaw, 13-15 February 2012

CONFERENCE REPORT

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1. Background

The Conference on Development Policy Options with Special Reference to Education and Health in Myanmar was held over a period of three days, 13-15 February 2012 in Naypyitaw, capital of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. The timing of the Conference was strategically placed in the context of a series of national level initiatives to reflect on the current state of the socio-economic and human development situation in Myanmar and to evolve strategies and policy options for development.

Soon after assuming office on 30th March 2011, the new Government undertook a number of national level initiatives on development policy and institutional reforms for accelerating growth, reducing poverty, and promoting human development in Myanmar. Discussion, workshops and seminars were held at the national level on a wide range of emerging development issues involving initially participation of national institutions, government agencies, local non-government agencies, private sector, the media and the academia, and senior national experts as well as those living abroad.

Discussions have been held on: Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation (20-22 May 2011); Improving Rice Policies for National and Regional Food Security: Challenges and Opportunities – The Third Development Partnership Forum (27-28 June 2011); Reforms for National Economic Development (19-21 August 2011); First Myanmar Forum on Green Economy and Green Growth (1-4 November 2011); and Financial Sector Development in Myanmar and its Role in Supporting Inclusive Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction (7-8 November 2011).

With the backdrop of these initiatives in Myanmar, the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health and the United Nations in Myanmar jointly organised the three-day Conference on “Development Policy Options with special reference to Education and Health”, in collaboration with the Myanmar Development Resources Institute and with the support of the European Union. The Conference focused on discussing policy options and institutional reforms for accelerating inclusive human development in Myanmar. The Agenda of the Conference was structured to identify issues, explore critical shortfalls in policy and institutional arrangements, and share experiences from countries in the Asia region to inform future policy development.

Day one of the Conference was devoted to discussions on key policy reform measures for accelerating economic growth and promoting inclusive human development, followed up by policy discussions on improving Education (Day 2) and Health (Day 3). The Conference was followed up by a half a day Workshop on Next Steps” 16 February 2012 in Naypyitaw. Three separate sessions covering each of the three thematic areas of the Conference – i.e. Inclusive Growth and Human Development, Health and Education - were held involving participation of Government ministries and departments, national and international experts, NGOs, Civil Society Organisations, donor agencies, and UN agencies. The Workshop resulted in the drafting of key Action Points for policy makers to consider in shaping future policies and strategies with respect to inclusive growth and human development, education and health development.

Administrative and logistical arrangements for the Conference were organised jointly by the Government and the UN Country Team in Myanmar. The Government in particular took the lead in organising committees for an entire range of rather complex management, administrative and logistical work. The Government formed a Central Committee for the DPO Conference chaired by the Minister for Education. Under the overall guidance of the Central Committee a number of

Working Committees and sub-committees were formed to facilitate orderly completion of the various tasks.

2. The Conference

About 600 participants attended the opening ceremony and more than 500 on Day-1, about 450 on Day-2 and equal number on Day-3. Conference participants included those from the government, national institutions, local and international NGOs, civil society organisations, diplomatic missions, donor agencies, UN agencies, and national and international experts.

Conference inaugural address was delivered by the Vice-President H.E. Dr. Sai Mauk Kham, followed by addresses of Mr. Vijay Nambiar, Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General; H.E. U Soe Thein, Union Minister for Industry; Dr. Ajay Chhibber, UN Assistant Secretary General and Chair of Asia-Pacific UN Development Group; and Dr. Ashok Nigam, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Myanmar. All speeches highlighted the importance of policy options, priorities and institutional reforms for accelerating inclusive human development in Myanmar. Opening statements for Day 2 and Day 3 were delivered, respectively, by H.E. Dr. Mya Aye, Union Minister for Education and H.E. Dr. Pe Thet Khin, Union Minister for Health.

Nobel Laureate Professor Joseph Stiglitz of Columbia University, USA, Professor Ronald Findlay of Columbia University, USA and Professor Hla Myint, retired from the London School of Economics and Political Science, UK were keynote speakers at the Conference. Mr Andris Piebalgs, European Commissioner for Development also gave a keynote statement on Myanmar's ongoing reform measures.

Key messages from the Conference:

2.1 Development Policy Options

Day-1 of the Conference discussed issues and options for "Inclusive Development" in Myanmar. Panel discussions were held followed by questions from participants and responses from the panel members who presented their papers which are summarised briefly below.

Session 1: Inclusive Development (moderated by Dr U Myint, Chief Economic Adviser to the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar)

Current Status of Inclusive Development in Myanmar – by Dr Zaw Oo, Chiang Mai University, Thailand: Dr Zaw Oo clarified the concept of inclusive development and its relevance and importance for Myanmar. He examined recent achievements with the reform initiatives of the Government of Myanmar including liberalization measures, social-safety nets, freedom of trade and investment, budget orientation, and peace building and national reconciliation. He analysed challenges and opportunities in implementing comprehensive reforms, overcoming inequality and exclusion, building a new social contract, distributing peace dividends, and achieving economic integration. Dr Zaw Oo concluded his presentation with a broad recommendation for the process of inclusive development in Myanmar through six components - laws on reforms and inclusiveness, and consensus-building on programs; rule of law, and capacity and institutional development; recognition and systematic data collection on diversity and inequality; stakeholders' participation in

policy dialogue; targeted and tailored programmes together with comprehensive reforms; and monitoring and evaluation of social and development impacts.

Inclusive Growth Strategies for Myanmar – by Dr Jayati Ghosh, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India:

In her presentation, Dr Jayati Ghosh placed emphasis on the use of Myanmar's rich natural resources for financing investment for infrastructure asset creation and in social and productive sectors in a sustainable way. She clarified elements of inclusive growth strategy, and then proposed to leverage macroeconomic orientation for generating positive multiplier effects, improving the viability of small-scale production, improving public delivery of basic services, and social protection. She believed that social protection schemes and public investments would be beneficial to both major tax payers who are usually wealthy as well as the economy as a whole through enhancement of productivity of the labour force, resilience of society and political stability. In order to achieve inclusive growth, she called for a greater respect for the natural environment through proper conservation and restoration measures.

Inclusive Growth and Policies – by Mr Kiyoshi Kodera, Japan International Cooperation Agency, Japan:

Mr Kodera recalled JICA's involvement in 2002/03 in supporting policy analysis for carrying out Structural Adjustment measures. A series of technical and policy brief were prepared to support policy-makers with the required analytical knowledgebase, much of which should still be relevant today. The work was comprehensive covering four parts: Fiscal and Financial Sector Reform, Industry and Trade Sector Reform, Agriculture and Rural Area Reform, and ICT development. Mr Kodera delineated key areas of Japan's future assistance to Myanmar. He committed JICA's readiness to support efforts of the government and the people of Myanmar. He also alluded to the importance of aid coordination and role of the UN and other multilateral institutions in supporting Government responsibility in this area.

Country Experiences in Inclusive Development of Thailand – by Dr Kitti Limskul, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand:

Dr Limskul began his presentation by referring ADB's three highlighted areas: Sustainable Economic Growth, Inclusive Growth, and Good Governance. Then he provided a brief on the economic growth experiences of Thailand: success story of rapid growth, macroeconomic stability, high rates of savings and investment, and allocation of resources by the market. Inclusive development in Thailand was supported by increased government expenditures on social sector, especially education and health. Drawing upon Thailand's experience, Dr Limskul concluded that efficiency can be realized from high service tariff. In Thailand, One Tambon One Product (OTOP) programme provided increased income for the rural population with knowledge on product development and local economic opportunities. The rural population themselves have also realized their right to elect a government that will serve them with greater access to public services, income and employment generation opportunities. The experiences of Thailand suggests that economic growth alone cannot sufficiently explain economic and welfare achievements. Instead, education, health, gender development, entrepreneurship of rural communities are equally important for supporting equity and sustainable economic growth.

Session 2: Development Policy Options in Myanmar (moderated by Dr U Myint, Chief Economic Adviser to the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar)

Policies for Growth and Development of Myanmar – by Daw Win Myint, Planning Department, Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development, Government of Myanmar:

Daw Win Myint gave a brief overview of past experiences of economic development in Myanmar. Then she enunciated key reform measures undertaken by new government. She referred to the reform

measures pertaining to poverty alleviation, monetary, exchange rate, trade and investment. At the second national workshop a wide range of consultation was held on the national economic development process covering the system of national accounts, fiscal performance, taxation, trade and investment, industrialization, agriculture, tourism, employment creation, labour welfare, infrastructure, capital market and regional economic integration. She informed the Conference participants that the government had plans for human resource development. She mentioned that one of the key challenges is the income disparity and poverty gap among different regions. She suggested that these among other development issues should be addressed in a comprehensive development master plan that should link economics, social and environmental issues.

Policy Priorities for Sustainable Development in Myanmar – Dr Nay Htun, State University of New York at Stony Brook, USA: With reference to Myanmar President's first inaugural speech, Dr Nay Htun emphasised that good governance and clean government are key policy platforms for sustainable development. Development policy should incorporate the challenge and context of climate as articulated in a publication on The Climate Challenge: The Fierce Urgency of Now. Dr Nay Htun pointed out that Myanmar has a unique opportunity to leapfrog while measures must be adopted to avoid past and contemporary development processes which undermine sustainable development. He urged for policy measures that would generate capable human capital for innovation, productivity and competitiveness. These strategies will require a paradigm shift towards a sustainable, resilient, inclusive and equitable future beyond sustainable development at the forefront of transformational change and leadership.

Policy Options for Human Development – by Mr Dirk Meganck, the European Union, Brussels, Belgium: Dr Meganck made reference to the recent changes in EU's approach to development policy, EU's current development assistance in Myanmar and broad plans for the near future. He drew upon the examples of EU's development assistance to other countries in Asia, and suggested aid flows should be accompanied by measures for ensuring aid effectiveness. Renewed EU development policy focuses more on support for inclusive and sustainable growth, good governance, gender equality, role of civil society and the fight against corruption. Current EU development assistance to Myanmar places emphasis on supporting education, agriculture and livelihoods, capacity building, livelihoods for uprooted people and non-state actors. Mr Meganck advised that realisation of the MDG targets for Myanmar will require all actors and partners to work together for a systematic application of the principles of aid effectiveness, and for development of national capacities and promotion of dialogue among the government, donors, civil society and implementing partners.

Inclusive Development in Myanmar: Learning from Neighbours – by Dr Thangavel Palanivel, UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia-Pacific, USA: Referring to many Asian economies which moved from centrally planned economies to market-oriented economies, Dr Palanivel explored Myanmar's human development status while making comparison with its neighbouring countries and economic reforms in selected Asian countries. Dr Palanivel observed that very low social expenditure was a major reason for low HDI value of Myanmar. He alluded to the cases of China, India and Vietnam as good examples for economic reform in Asia. He stated that transformation to market economic system in most countries has been pursued not because of ideological conversion from socialism to capitalism but because of aspiration to achieve long-term improvements in living standards as well as to catch up with advanced western economies. He noted that high growth can cause inequality, hence there is a need to ensure inclusiveness through policy that must also include sequencing of reform measures, leading reforms through pragmatic leadership, and protecting the purchasing capacity of some segments of the population during the transition process.

Growth and Development of the Malaysian Economy – Dr. Mohamed Ariff, Malaysian Institute of Economic Research, Malaysia: Dr Ariff provided an overview of the sustained growth process in Malaysia, explicating the contributing factors. These included economic openness, stable macroeconomic policies, high savings rate, human capital formation through increased investment in education, health and training, supporting demographic structure, Asian values and strategic geographic location. Malaysia's winning strategies were outward looking economic strategy, prudent macroeconomic management, and active and business-friendly state interventions. Apart from economic openness, an industrialization experience of the country is highlighted with different strategy in different period. Malaysia applied import substitution strategy in 1960s, export orientation strategy in 1970s, heavy industry development in 1980s and value-added manufacturing after 1990s. At present, more than 40 per cent of production in the Malaysian economy is a result of total factor productivity (TFP). Dr Ariff stressed the importance of economic openness, realistic exchange rate, sound monetary policy, fiscal discipline, good governance, economic freedom, good infrastructure in terms of physical and institutional arrangement, policy consistency and predictability, efficient civil service, integrity, transparency, accountability, investment in human capital, and inclusive growth. These are lessons that can be considered in setting the course of inclusive growth and economic development of Myanmar.

2.2 Policy Options for Education

Day-2 of the Conference, focused on Education development, was structured into three sessions: "Education in Myanmar: Progress and Challenges", "Priorities for Strengthening Basic Education in Myanmar" and "Strengthening Higher and Vocational Education in Myanmar".

Session 3: Education in Myanmar: Progress and Challenges (moderated by Dr Soe Win, Director General of Higher Education of Upper Myanmar, the Ministry of Education)

Education System in Myanmar – by U Zaw Htay, the Ministry of Education, Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar: Dr Zaw Htay's presentation clarified existing laws, such as the Basic Education Law and the University Education Law, structure, and development plan with regard to education in Myanmar. Although the Ministry of Education is the core institution for basic education and human resource development, there are 13 different ministries which also have significant responsibility for higher education in their respective subject areas. The Myanmar National Education Committee, chaired by the Union Minister for Education, lays down policies and administrative guidance for both basic education and higher education in Myanmar. With a vision to create an education system that will generate a learning society capable of facing the challenges of the knowledge age, education development plans for special four years and long-term 30 years have already been developed for both basic and higher education. Referring to evaluations on the current system, Dr Zaw Htay pointed out at some curricula and syllabuses that do not reflect skills formation and professional needs of many graduates who must find jobs in the labour market. He said that there is a tendency for students to prefer distance education with the aim of acquiring a degree certificate; they lack interest and motivation to acquire conceptual thinking skills. He expected the universities in the country to serve as a key institutional provider of knowledgebase, and suggested key points and approaches to transform existing universities into internationally recognized academic and training institutions.

The Role of Private Sector Education in Myanmar – by U Set Aung, Asia Language and Business Academy, Myanmar: U Set Aung began his presentation with an outline groups and types of private education in Myanmar. He identified three groups in private education: private training centres

teaching language, computer or other professional studies; private tuition teaching in line with the national curriculum; and private schools adopting international curriculum to prepare students to pursue their further education in other Asian countries and western countries. Among these three groups, a majority of teenage students and their parents have a strong preference for private schools where international curriculum is adopted. U Set Aung pointed out that many believed private sector education is very expensive in Myanmar. However, public sector education is also not very inexpensive either when non-education-related costs and opportunity costs are included even though the state provides free primary education. Myanmar as a country in transition period has various challenges in both public and private sector education. In order to develop human resources, U Set Aung stressed the need for improving teaching capability and responsibility of teachers, appropriate curriculum that meets the country's economic and social development needs, and revising the concept of instructors. He further suggested the need for a greater collaboration between public and private sector amongst different target markets for overall improvement of education and training services in Myanmar.

Education Sector Coordination: Cambodia Experience – by Dr Cliff Meyers, UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Region: Dr Meyers gave a snapshot of a number of policy options adopted in some of the Asian countries which have relevance for Myanmar. He emphasised successful experience with sector-wide approaches (SWAp) to educational planning and management. He believed that SWAp brings better coordination and draws significant funding for various components a sector programme. Three typologies of SWAp in Indonesia experience include tightly harmonized, loosely harmonized and very loosely harmonized. After reviewing EFA mid-decade of Cambodia education sector, less coordination was found as a source of failing to meet the goals in relation to enrolment, drop out and repetition. Based on finding, donors and the government attempted a sector coordination approach in three stages: early years from 2000 to 2004, adolescent years from 2004 to 2008, and mature years from 2008 to 2012. The Cambodia experiences suggest that a gradual progression in SWAp depends on government readiness: government leadership pays dividends and makes reforms more sustainable; harmonized stance leads to greater impact, and the goal of SWAp is not to reduce transaction costs but to be aid effectiveness.

Country Perspective: Education Model of Republic of Korea – by Mr Gwang-Jo Kim, UNESCO: After providing a brief overview of education and strategies for educational expansion in the Republic of Korea. The strategy linked educational policies to macroeconomic plans that entailed top-down educational policies to develop a trained work force to support economic development. Likewise, National HRD Plan encouraged education policies to be a key to human resource development strategy. Public investment in education sector has been sustained at around 20 per cent of the government budget or about 5 per cent of GDP. As the private sector has been encouraged to participate in educational improvement and the public sector took responsibility for very primary education, the growth in private school enrolment share as of 2009 in universities/colleges reached 83.7 per cent followed by high school (45.7%), middle school (18.8%) and primary school (only 1.3%). The government provided various incentives to the private sector education such as tax exemption/break for school operation, direct subsidy for private secondary school operation, special loans for institutions of higher education, and grants and other support for private schools. Different government research institutes were also used for education policy processes. In his closing note, Mr Gwang-Jo Kim emphasised that since education is a key source of development, government support with enabling policy interventions and investment in education and training are critical.

Session 4: Priorities for Strengthening Basic Education in Myanmar (moderated by Mr David Coleman, Education Adviser, AusAID)

Access to and Quality of Education in Myanmar – by U Bo Win, Ministry of Education, Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar: U Bo Win's presentation covered key aspects of the policy framework and national plans, recent performance of education policy, tasks for ensuring access to and quality of education, and recommendations for basic education sector and education system. Among ten points of Myanmar's education policy, the first and the last, respectively - implementation of free compulsory primary education system and upgrading education standard to international level – relate to access to and quality of education. Moreover, Inclusive Education Programme, Mobile School Programme, Special Programme for over-age Children, Non-formal Primary Education and Monastic Basic Education Schools are major programmes to ensure access to education. Likewise, upgrading basic education curriculum, upgrading teacher quality, in-service teacher training and monitoring and supervision arrangements are existing tasks for improving quality of basic education. Importantly, carrying Review of the Basic Education Sector will contribute to upgrading the country's education policy.

Financing Basic Education: International Patterns and Experiences – by Professor Mark Bray, University of Hong Kong: Prof Bray discussed four principal sources of financing basic education: government, private sector, household and external assistance. Internationally, public expenditure on education lies between 2.5 and 4.0 per cent of GDP but it is very low in Myanmar with just 0.7%. In terms of total government budget, allocation to the education sector is about 14 to 20 per cent. Private sector financing may be either profit or non-profit orientation. The contribution of private sector to education varies from country to country; for instance 9 per cent in Japan and 25 per cent in Indonesia. Many countries claim free primary education; but household financing of children's education is not so insignificant even in poor countries. Households have to finance cost of school uniform, transportation and private tutoring. Inadequate salary level for teachers is a main cause of household expenditure for private tutoring taught by teachers to their own students. It is encouraging to observe external aid for education has increased, yet, it aid volume is inadequate to meet the huge shortfalls in educational financing needs in poor developing countries. Prof Bray advocated for increase in public investment in education, for protection of primary education while expanding higher levels, and for maintaining and strengthening mechanisms for cost sharing in educational financing.

Teaching Practices in Myanmar: a case study – by Professor Frank Hardman, the University of York, United Kingdom: Prof Hardman presented an on-going case study in 28 selected townships in Myanmar about effectiveness of teaching practice. Baseline study was conducted in November 2011 for classroom observation and in January and February 2012 for learning achievement test. The case study will include a four-year intervention support for in-service training and end-line survey will be done after that. The research focuses on the types of interactions used by Myanmar primary teachers to present, organize and sustain learning tasks and activities. Noting that interaction of both teachers and students is limited in Myanmar, Prof Hardman recommended developing a continuing professional development strategy that would link pre-service and in-service education and training to focus training at the school level. This strategy should be supported by distance learning material and clusters to close gap between theory and practice, and to align teacher education with national curriculum, assessment and quality assurance.

Improving Teaching and Learning through using Children's Home Language in School: Viet Nam experience – by Mr Vi Van Die, Vietnam Ministry of Education and Training, Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam: With a population of 88 million including 11 million 53 ethnic minority groups, the Government of Vietnam has initiated bilingual teaching method in primary level since 2008 with the support of UNICEF. The programme has been implemented in three

provinces reaching out to three ethnic minority groups. Respective home language is used as prime language and Vietnamese as second language in pre-school and primary grades 1 to 3. Vietnamese together with mother language support is used in three years of transition from grade 3 to grade 5. Survey results show that children learning in their home languages performed better. Besides, children participate actively in school and community activities, enjoy going to school, develop critical thinking, confidence and high self-esteem.

Session 5: Priorities for Strengthening Higher and Vocational Education in Myanmar (moderated by Mr. Gwang-Jo Kim, Regional Director, UNESCO)

Myanmar Higher Education Policy – by Dr Myo Thein Gyi, Ministry of Education, Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar: Dr Myo Thein Gyi gave an overview of higher education policy and higher education development plan of Myanmar. He noted that University Education Law is a key for higher education and National Education Committee is the decision-making body for higher education. Under the Committee, Universities' Central Council and Council of University Academic Bodies supervise 161 universities and colleges under the administrative jurisdiction of 13 different ministries. Aimed at increasing rate of returns to investment in education, a higher education development plan is under implementation. The plan has two parts: A Special Four-Year Plan for Education and a Thirty-Year Long-Term Education Development Plan.

Enhancing Quality for Higher Education: Civil Society Perspective – by Dr Thein Myint, Myanmar Academy of Arts and Science: Dr Thein Myint outlined the goals and objectives of higher education, quality of higher education for civil society, higher education and society development, essential functions of higher education and society's perspective of education. He noted that quality of education entails a complex set of requirements. Quality of higher education binds the quality of staff, programmes, infrastructure and academic environment that could train qualified and adaptable human resources. Qualified higher education institutions could develop innovations by supporting new technologies, processes and ideas. Further, it should include strategies to help employers prosper and grow, play a more vigorous role in community revitalization, and create educated population in civil society.

Higher Education Policy: Lessons from the Region – by Mr Wolfgang Kubizki, Asian Development Bank, Manila, the Philippines: Mr Kubizki informed ADB's experience in cooperating with the governments in the region for higher education system. Common challenges of higher education in low income countries are incorporated by maintaining and improving the quality under financial constraints, increasing and better utilizing the financial resources available to higher education, increasing relevance of curriculum at a time of rapid change in the labour market, and balancing the expansion of access to higher education with greater attention to equity. In order to encounter these challenges, Mr Kubizki placed emphasis on establishing the right organizational structure, improving instructional quality, ensuring relevance of curriculum and research, instituting measures for efficient spending and financing including public-private partnership, building up of CT-based instruction, and introducing mixed student loans.

Enhancing Quality for Higher Education: Experience from Thailand – by Professor Supachai Yavaprabhas, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand: Prof Yavaprabhas gave an overview of the education system in Thailand and compared figures of higher education in Southeast Asia including Thailand and Myanmar. Prof Yavaprabhas informed that the quality of teaching and learning in Thai education system is guaranteed by the Quality Assurance (QA) system comprising internal and external QA bodies. The office of higher education commission (OHEC) as the internal QA body and

the office for national education standards and quality assessment (ONESQA) as the external QA body are key actors in assuring measures for quality in education in Thailand. The OHEC is responsible for educational administration and process while the ONESQA is responsible for educational achievement. Both universities and the government, through ONESQA and OHEC, are engaged in the Thai QA system. While noting the importance of QA, Prof Yavaprabhas recommended involvement of general public, students themselves and employers for reinforcing the QA system.

Technical and Vocational Education in Myanmar – by Dr Zaw Min Aung, the Ministry of Science and Technology, Myanmar: Dr Zaw Min Aung outlined Myanmar's technical and vocational education administered by the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST), particularly the programmes of the Department of Technical and Vocational Training (DTVE) and the Department of Advanced Science and Technology (DAST). He defined the role of technical and vocational education in national development. MOST was established in 1996 has been implementing human resource programme through DTVE and DAST by providing undergraduate and post-graduate courses. MOST's technical education curricula provide for training of skilled workers, technicians and engineering professionals. In addition, the Government Technical High Schools are aiming at increased participation of the students from rural and remote areas in technical training and education.

Vocational Education Development: Lessons from Thailand – by Ms Churairat Sangboonnum, Ministry of Education of Thailand: In Thailand, the students at upper secondary level have opportunity to choose entry into the country's vocational education and training colleges. Students studying vocational education account for 40 per cent. The Office of Vocational Education Commission (OVEC) supervises a total of 415 colleges with 13 specializations. The strategies for vocational education and training include the programme of "learn and earn" particularly for lower income families. In this regard, "Fix It Centres" could provide work experiences and small income for students and local communities. Based on Thailand's experiences, Ms Sangboonnum recommended linking of vocational education and training with local, regional and global realities, and to maximize available resources for better management and management system.

2.3 Policy Options for Health

Day-3 of the Conference, devoted to Health, consisted of four sessions: "Health System Strengthening in Myanmar", "Universal Coverage, Financing and Equity", "Accelerating Child & Maternal Motility Reduction", and "Human Resources for Health". A total of 14 panellists participated in these sessions.

Session 6: Health System Strengthening in Myanmar (moderated by Dr. Phone Myint, Director General a.i., Department of Health Planning, the Ministry of Health)

Health System in Myanmar – by Dr Nilar Tin, Ministry of Health, Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar: Dr Nilar Tin gave an overview of the health system in Myanmar and the institutional role of the Ministry of Health. The ministry with seven departments provides health care at national and regional levels in collaboration with related ministries, UN agencies, NGOs and private sector institutions. For example, Township Health System covers a wide range of services such as curative, public health, disease control, administration and cooperation. The Ministry has to generate human resources for respective health services and has to conduct medical research and

traditional medicine practice as well as financial management and health information system. Among challenges, human resources for health, health financing and system development are priority areas. In order to complete the objectives of the Ministry and MDG goals, Dr Nilar Tin suggested strengthening of human resource for health, health financing, health information system, service delivery, medicines and equipment, and leadership and governance.

Policy Options for Health System Strengthening – by Mr John Grundy, WHO and UNICEF: Mr Grundy covered two topics in his presentation: An overview and Rationale for Health System Strengthening and some Policy Options for Health System Strengthening. Dr Grundy noted that as a result of economic reforms in 1980s and 1990s in the Asia Pacific region, economic and social inequalities have been rising. This has placed additional demand on the health systems; to strengthen them. Health system strengthening includes technology, human resources, service delivery, financing, information and governance. Among them, policy options for governance should consider decentralization of administration and decision-making, capacity decentralization and resource decentralization, all of which need to continually adapt to social and economic changes.

Health System Strengthening: Regional Perspective – by Professor Ascobat Gani, University of Indonesia: In his presentation, Prof Gani covered three topics: Health System, Indonesia's Initiatives in Health System Strengthening, and Regional Challenges. He noted there six components for strengthening a health system; these are: leadership/governance, workforce, medical products/technology, information, financing and service delivery. Access to and quality of these components could lead to improved level of health services and equitable access to these services, responsiveness, social and financial risk protection and efficiency. Prof Gani outlined the challenges Indonesia faced in strengthening its health system; he then went on to describing government responses and the areas of government services that require further strengthening.

Session 7: Universal Coverage, Financing and Equity (moderated by Dr Julia Kemp, Health Adviser, UK Department for International Development – DfID, Myanmar)

Reaching Universal Coverage: Some critical policy issues: Lessons learned from 10 years UHC in Thailand – by Dr Pongpisut Jongudomsuk, Health Systems Research Institute of Thailand: Dr Jongudomsuk assessed if universal health coverage (UHC) should be a national agenda, whether UHC is feasible for low income countries, financing of UHC, the requirements for achieving UHC, and the measures needed to be in place for sustaining a UHC system. As health is critical for sustained economic and social development, UHC should be a national agenda. Thailand began implementation of its UHC since 1975. Resources for health have been mobilized through taxation as well as insurance scheme. Prerequisites for UHC are adequate infrastructure, human resources, capacity to manage the system and effective use of financial tools. In order to sustain UHC, a system with good governance structure, effective system design and plans for future challenges are key requirements, among others.

Health Care Financing: Role of Private Sector in Myanmar – by Dr Khin Maung Aye, Myanmar Medical Association, Myanmar: Dr Khin Maung Aye referred to the different of healthcare financing such as the government budget, direct out of pocket, social security, voluntary health insurance, and donations. Health expenditure in Myanmar accounted for about 2 per cent of the GDP in which government spending included about one-tenth. In order to achieve universal coverage, out of pocket payment should not exceed 30 per cent of total health expenditure. Yet, the public expenditure on health in Myanmar stagnated at around 10 per cent. External sources contributed about 10 per cent of the health financing and the balance 20 per cent is met by private individuals

and institutions. Myanmar initiated Community Cost Sharing Schemes in 1990. Among the challenges, the Dr Khin Maung Aye stressed the need to meet the target indicators of health financing strategy for the Asia Pacific region (2010-15), wherein out-of-pocket spending should not exceed 30-40 per cent of total health expenditure, total health expenditure should be at least 4-5 per cent of GDP, 90 per cent of population should be covered with prepayment and risk pooling schemes, and 100 per cent coverage should be met for vulnerable population with social assistance and safety net programmes.

Development of Health Insurance Scheme for the Rural Population in China – by Dr Qingyue Meng, Peking University, China: Dr Qingyue Meng gave an overview of the community health insurance scheme in China. China's health system development has not been as strong as country's economic performance. The government initiated health system reform with a plan called as new rural cooperative medical scheme (NCMS) in 2002/03. The objectives are to protect the rural people from financial risks of diseases and to improve their health access. As much as 80 per cent of the financing came from the government, and the remaining 20 per cent has been contributed by individual farmers. The population coverage rapidly increased from less than 10 per cent of total rural households in 2003 to 96 per cent in 2010. Dr Qingyue Meng held that strong political and financial support of the government are critical for success of such health development schemes.

Health Financing Experience and Lessons: Finding Paths to Universal Coverage – by Mr Toomas Palu, the World Bank: Mr Palu drew references to experiences in health financing in the Asia Pacific region. Investment financing in health entails collection of funds, pooling and management of funds, and purchasing of services. In the Asian region, income and health spending could perform in parallel; but public expenditure capacity is constrained by low revenue base. In Myanmar low public spending in health has meant that the proportion of out-of-pocket spending by individuals and households is high; thus Myanmar has the highest out-of-pocket expenses for health in the Asia Pacific region. Future policy options for health financing and universal coverage of health in Myanmar will require a critical analysis of experience of various ways of health financing in other developing countries.

Session 8: Accelerating Child & Maternal Mortality Reduction (moderated by Dr. Thein Thein Htay, Deputy Director General, Department of Health, the Ministry of Health)

Current situation of Maternal and Child Health in Myanmar – by Dr Theingi Myint, Ministry of Health, Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar: Dr Theingi Myint drew attention to the official policy guidelines for health sector development in Myanmar while highlighting major health issues including child and maternal mortality, trends in maternal and child health, priority interventions, challenges and future plans of the Government. Although the trend rates of infant mortality, under-five mortality rate and maternal mortality ratio are improving, much effort is still needed to meet the 2015 MDG goals. He stressed the importance of improving the health status of women, men, adolescents, new born and under five children. Government response in these areas include, among others, safe motherhood, birth spacing, cervical cancer screening and adolescent reproductive health, advocacy, infrastructure development, capacity development and provision of supplies and equipment for health centres and hospitals. Priority interventions for maternal health focuses on improving quality of emergency obstetric care, strengthening referral system, community education and involvement, and integration with other health services and partnership. Inadequate health workforce, infrastructure, monitoring system and reporting status are major issues; and low health expenditure and shortfalls in geographical coverage are the main challenges in Myanmar.

Options for meeting Myanmar's commitment to achieving MDG 5 – by Dr Saramma Thomas Mathai, UNFPA: Dr Mathai stated the importance of reproductive and maternal health, global strategies and ASEAN initiatives for women's and children's health, and Myanmar's commitments, policies, challenges and options. An estimated US\$ 15 billion is lost in productivity every year due to maternal and new-born mortality. On the other hand, 30-50 per cent of Asia's economic growth during 1965 - 1990 could be attributed due to improvements in reproductive health and reductions in infant and child mortality rates. This provides the economic rationale for investing in women's health. Global strategy for women and children's health focuses on the most vulnerable. Some ASEAN member countries including Myanmar have also made commitments to the global strategy. Meanwhile, challenges are extensive such as to increase skilled birth attendants by 80 per cent by 2015. In this case, registration of unemployed midwives, formation of midwifery-led maternity units in remote areas and providing training to eligible auxiliary midwives are options for medium term.

Community Health Workers and Child Mortality – by Mr John Grundy, WHO/UNICEF: Mr Grundy outlined some policy implications drawing from the experience in different countries on the role of community volunteers in health. The cases of Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, India, Bangladesh and Pakistan suggest an active development role of volunteer health workers. Systematic reviews find that there is a wide range of services offered by the community health workers (CHW) who have contributed to improvements in maternal and child health mortality rates and established a critical link between their communities and the health and social services system. Lessons drawn from these experiences suggest that CHW programmes should be based within community. CHWs should be trained and their capacity developed as part of the overall development of human resources for health.

Donor Support to Maternal and Child Health: Experiences and Prospects for the Future – by Dr Julia Kemp, UK Department for International Development (DFID), Myanmar: Dr Kemp explained the current situation of donor coordination and support to health programmes in Myanmar. Out of ten major bilateral donors engaged in supporting health in Myanmar, seven donors provide their support through the Three Diseases Fund which has a budget of US\$138 million in the past five years. Joint initiative on maternal and child health was provided by Australia, UK and Norway over a three-year period. Donor support for health is managed through a country coordinating mechanism chaired by the Union Minister for Health and participated by various departments of the ministry, UN agencies, NGOs, CBOs and other national institutions. According to the experiences of the 3DFund programme, the constraints are vertical funding which limits horizontal cooperation, MOU requirement for appropriate interventions and indeterminate outputs resulted from different donor fund flows. In the future, it is expected that funding will align to support implementation of the strategies for child health development and reproductive health already established as national frameworks for maternal and child health.

Session 9: Human Resources for Health (moderated by Professor Maung Maung Wint, Ex Director General, Department of Medical Science, the Ministry of Health, Myanmar)

Capacity Utilization and Retention for Sustainable Development of Health Services in Myanmar – by Dr Nilar Tin, the Ministry of Health: Dr Nilar Tin's presentation focused on health work force (HWF) development, utilization of HWF, capacity strengthening of HWF, and retention of HWF for sustainability. Education and training, management, financing, policy, leadership and partnership are six core factors that can influence entry, sustainability and exit of health workforce. It is found that health manpower absorbed and deployed by the public sector is much lower than that of production. Organizational and management problems such as shortage, inappropriate balance and

mix of skills, inequitable distribution of health workforce; gaps between training and staff skills; and limitation in retention of health workforce are important issues. The Ministry of Health of the Government of Myanmar has undertaken some specific measures to encounter these problems. Aiming at human resources for health, the country as well as the Ministry of Health has engaged in international collaboration including Regional Consultation on Strategic Plan for HWF (2006), Development of Regional guidelines for HWF Strategic Planning (2008), and tracking survey for Human Resources for Health in 2010. Universal health coverage will require deployment of the right number of personnel in the right places at the right time with the right attitude providing the right services with right quality at an affordable cost.

Human Resources for Health: Potential of Private Sector – by Dr Soe Aung, Myanmar Medical Association: Dr Soe Aung highlighted the importance of human resource development, good health system, strategic planning for HRD, alliance for health and way forward for human resources development in Myanmar. A good health system is composed of a wide range of components including quality, accessibility, equality, sustainability, and internal and external management. A good health system requires a competent health workforce (HWF). Skilled health workers would come from public and private sectors including NGOs and communities. For appropriate HWF distribution risk mapping of shortage areas and surplus areas should be developed. To do so, evidence based planning, production and products, supply and demand, and resource management must be an integral part of national development plan. Completing 7 Ms - Materials, Methods, Money, Motivation, Monitor, Match and Management – would create an enabling environment for human resource development. In this regard, private sector can play a major role in providing skilled health workers.

Meeting Human Resources Challenges: Regional Experiences – by Dr Palitha Abeykoon, WHO Regional Office for Southeast Asia and the Pacific: Dr Abeykoon gave an overview of regional and global situation regarding health workforce, challenges of human resources for health in countries of the region, and their responses. Experience suggests that there is a strong linkage between health workforce and health system. In this regard, key issues are to project number of health workers to educate and employ, to improve recruitment, retention and return, to determine and deploy the most effective skill mix of staff, to find incentives in motivating staff and to improve productivity. Global critical threshold of the ratio of health workforce is 23 per 10,000 people, whereas Myanmar has 13. Major challenges in health workforce are mismatch of doctor-nurse ratio, mismatch in distribution of rural and urban, and migration of human resources in health. Generally, about three-fourth of the population are living in rural area but three-fourth of health workforce stays in urban area. Different countries have different solutions to respond these issues. Some strategies are redistribution of health workers, health personnel compensation, and educational development for human resources. Other requirements are national strategic plans for HWF, development of capacity in HRM by understanding the health workforce and labour market dynamics, development of good HWF information system, and the use of regional and global partnerships in optimal way.

3. Action Points

After completion of the 3-day conference, a follow up half-day workshop was held on 16 February 2012 to prepare Action Points for the next step in drawing action plans for inclusive growth and human development, education development and health development. Representatives from various stakeholders of respective sectors participated in preparation of the action points by three different groups. About fifty participants attended in group one, thirty-five in group two and thirty in group three. Drafted Action Points of each group are enumerated below:

3.1 Inclusive Growth and Human Development

(A) Macroeconomics

1. Strengthen capacity for budget management in ministries
 - Capacity needs assessment
 - Capacity building and technical assistance programmes
2. Manage exchange rates and implications in short-term, medium-term and long-term
 - Managing exchange rates, and ultimately exchange rate unification
 - Strengthen Yangon Institute of Economics
 - Capacity for monetary policy
3. Review incentives for entrepreneurs, farmers and investment (FDI)
 - Review trade policies
 - Strengthen Yangon Institute of Technology
4. Review need and strategy to increase the tax base
 - Explore policy options

(B) Institutional Strengthening

1. Framework for policy formulation
 - Actionable priorities and bottom up approach from township level
 - Clearly defined roles and responsibilities between national and regional level
 - Review if proposed policy will be pro-poor? Institutional arrangements for implementation
 - Public sector vs. private sector
 - Policies for better functioning market vs. rent-seeking opportunities
 - Communicate, consult and manage expectations on reform
2. Strengthen access to reliable data / the statistical office
 - Identify data gaps in different sectors/ ministries.
3. Decentralization (Build capacity and empowerment of local governments)
 - Needs and capacity assessment regional level
 - Autonomous statistical office and technical assistance
4. Build public sector capacity

- Capacity assessment and strategy for each ministry to start addressing capacity gaps; partly through technical assistance from donor community
 - Promote more independent think tanks, and policy units within ministries
 - Training and scholarship programmes in place in line with capacity gaps
5. Plan and coordinating mechanisms to manage technical assistance and donor support
 - Mechanism for coordination and communication of national plan
 - Capacity building and technical assistance programmes

(C) Urbanization (peri-urban and rural) priority with focus on the poor and the very poor

1. Promote income generation, particularly non-farm
 - Rural employment schemes and rural connectivity/infrastructure
 - Policy for the landless and casual labourers. Need for seasonal safety nets
 - Policy for young adults/young working population
 - Investment in SMEs to promote women's economic participation
2. Programme to strengthen local governance to create environment favouring business development (one stop shops for business development)

(D) Social capital and social policy strategies

1. Develop policies particularly for the urban and very poor
2. Provide equal opportunities (education, training, skills)

(E) Natural resource management

1. Opportunity, as latecomer, to look at natural resources/wealth and depreciation of national accounts. An advocacy tool on how natural resources being depleted and how the revenues could be allocated to priority national development programmes
2. Laws and regulations for sustainable FDI into extractive industries
 - First priority should be enforcement of current law, then amendment of outdated laws before creating new laws

3.2 Education

(A) Basic Education Sector Policy Development

1. Comprehensive Basic Education Sector Review should be carried out – including capacity gap analysis - to inform policies for:
 - Early Childhood Care and Education
 - Non-Formal Education
 - Monastic Education

- Coordination and partnership
 - Teacher education and promotion systems
 - Curriculum
 - Assessment systems
 - Organizational structure and decentralization to Regions/States and Townships
2. Sector Review will provide an opportunity for participation of stakeholders across the country to feed into the national education strategy. But this must be planned, cost and prioritized
 3. It is important that donors are coordinated in their support to the sector, with common goals and targets, led by the Government of Myanmar
 4. Infrastructures for educational institutions need to be improved; for example, open more schools with modern teaching aids
 5. Links and regulations that lead to greater complementarities between private and public schools, should be established and Private Public Partnerships should be encouraged
 6. Public investment in education should be increased by protecting the base (primary) while expanding the higher levels
 7. Sequential expansion approach should be applied in order to ensure that primary education reaches all with quality before investing more in secondary and then in higher education. A strong foundation allows for quality higher education over time
 8. The number of years in the basic education to 12 years should be expanded in line with regional average
 9. Applied research should be encouraged to reflect the needs and priorities of stakeholders in education policy reform and delivery
 10. There is a need to prepare continuing professional development strategy to update competencies of teachers. Establish training systems for administrative personnel to ensure sustainable capacity development and efficiency.
 11. Mother tongue as language of instruction in early grades is effective
 12. An Inclusive Education policy should be developed to ensure achievement of Education for All

(B) Higher Education/Vocational Education Sector Policy Development

1. University entrance and assessment system needs to be reassessed and streamlined accordingly

2. Quality of higher education should be enhanced since it plays a vital role for economic and social development for society. Mismatch between higher education and market demands is currently high
3. Special attention is needed to align relevance of knowledge and skills of secondary education graduates to higher education requirements and Higher education curriculum needs to be aligned to the needs of technology driven labour market
4. It is important to have a balance between internal and external Quality Assurance and accreditation systems, especially if National Quality Assurance Framework will be aligned with regional standards
5. Promote high technology training, research and development and to transform Research& Development to Research & Business Development
6. Learn & Earn programmes can contribute to strengthening vocational training, especially relevant for low-income families
7. Upgrade quality of teachers, improve English language training, integrate ICTs effectively and increase relevance of vocational/technical education
8. There is a need for more technical/vocational schools and bridge Technical Vocational Schools and Higher Education Institutions, in order to create more opportunities to continue studies and to train high skills work forces
9. Vocational/Technical education is very expensive but very close to the world of work; so plans should be made strategically to allocate resources to this area
10. Introduction of Private Public Partnerships should be considered for technical and vocational institutions
11. Consider cost sharing arrangements and income generation programmes at higher education institutions should be explored

3.3 Health

1. National Health Planning (comprehensive and costed)
2. Define and develop National M&E framework
3. Sub national planning (meso plan)
4. Township coordinated health plan
(after revisiting township micro-plan and promote township level capacity for planning and management)
5. Rural Health Development including Traditional medicine
6. Community systems strengthening to support Health System Strengthening
(Community Health Workers, local government participation and partnership)
7. Promote and strengthen Health sector coordination and Systems Thinking

- (Health Systems Strengthening working group to be established)
8. Decentralization strategy and capacity building (with clear functions and resource allocation, capacity and responsibilities of local governments)
 9. Mapping of Financing scheme
 10. Full situation analysis on financing of Universal Health Coverage
 11. Policy dialogue on priority population, Benefit Package and public financing of priorities including assessment of financing gap
 12. Drafting of financing strategy
 13. Piloting of financing scheme within strategy
 14. Assessment and review of financing strategy for scaling up
 15. Utilization of Voluntary Health Workers/Midwives for childhood illnesses
 16. Township health system strengthening for child death reporting
 17. Equity consideration through trained Basic Health Staff/Voluntary Health Workers
 18. Communication for development on key family practices
 19. Post natal visits for New born care
 20. Assess and fill human resource gap (deployment of trained Midwives, more absorption by government, accreditation mechanism for Auxiliary Midwives to Midwives)
 21. Ensure commodity security by increasing allocation by Govt. (costed plan for Family Planning commodities)
 22. Materialize National Strategic Plan on Reproductive Health
 23. Strengthen Health Management Information System and other data (e.g. maternal death notification)
 24. Mobilize more resources from business sector
 25. Establish appropriate and sustainable financing scheme
 26. Utilize community volunteers
 27. Ensure sufficient supplies, equipment & instruments
 28. Strengthen coordination mechanism at all levels
 29. Strengthen integration of Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission and elimination of congenital syphilis with Maternal & Child Health
 30. Enabling policy to practice life-saving skills by Midwives
 31. Ensure emergency obstetric care at station level and below
 32. Infrastructure plan for Maternal Newborn and Child Health
 33. Fulfilment of "One Midwife for one village target"
 34. Human Resource policy and planning
 35. Develop reliable Human Resource for Health database & Plan including Rural Human Resource for Health plan for management of Community Health Workers
 36. Human Resource financing
 37. Clearly define roles and responsibilities of all categories of Health Workforce
 38. Attracting & retaining skilled Human Resource for Health in rural areas –especially Midwife
 39. Human Resource for Health Management– evidence based research

Opening Ceremony







Conference on Development Policy Options with special reference to Education and Health in Myanmar
MICC, Naypyitaw, 13-15 February 2012.



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Day 1: Development Policy Options



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Day 2: Policy Options for Education



Day 3: Policy Options for Health



Day 4: Follow-up Workshop for the Next Step



Group 1
Inclusive Growth and
Human Development

Group 2
Education



Group 3
Health

Annex

- Annex 1** **DPO conference agenda (Day 1, 2 and 3)**
- Annex 2** **DPO workshop agenda (Day 4)**
- Annex 3.** **Inaugural Address by H.E. Dr. Sai Mauk Kham, Vice President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar**
- Annex 4.** **Address by Mr. Vijay Nambiar, Chef de Cabinet and Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General**
- Annex 5.** **Address by H.E. U Soe Thein, Union Minister for Industry**
- Annex 6.** **Address by Dr. Ashok Nigam, UN Resident & Humanitarian Coordinator, Myanmar**
- Annex 7.** **Address by Dr. Ajay Chhibber, UN Assistant Secretary-General & Chair of UN Development Group (UNDG), Asia-Pacific**
- Annex 8.** **Statement by H.E. Dr. Mya Aye, Union Minister for Education**
- Annex 9.** **Statement by H.E. Dr. Pe Thet Khin, Union Minister for Health**
- Annex 10.** **Press Release**

Annex 1. DPO conference agenda (Day 1, 2 and 3)

Conference on Development Policy Options with special reference to Education and Health in Myanmar

MICC, Naypyitaw, 13-15 February 2012

AGENDA

Day 1: Development Policy Options: Monday, 13 February 2012

08:00 – 09:00	<i>Registration</i>
09:00 – 10:00	Opening Ceremony
	Inaugural Address by V.I.P, Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Address by Mr. Vijay Nambiar, Chef de Cabinet and Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General
	Address by H.E. U Soe Thein, Union Minister for Industry Address by Dr. Ajay Chhibber, UN Assistant Secretary-General & Chair of UN Development Group (UNDG), Asia-Pacific Address by Dr. Ashok Nigam, UN Resident & Humanitarian Coordinator, Myanmar
10:00 – 10:30	<i>Photo Session and Coffee/Tea break</i>
10:30 – 11:30	Session 1: Inclusive Development <i>Moderated by H.E. Dr. U Kan Zaw, Union Deputy Minister, Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development</i> Keynote Speaker: <i>Prof. Joseph Stiglitz, Columbia University, New York, USA</i> Discussion
11:30 – 13:00	Continuation of Session 1 Panel (15 min presentation each) Current Status of Development in Myanmar <i>Dr. Zaw Oo, Professor, Chiang Mai University, Chiang Mai, Thailand</i> Inclusive Growth and Policies – South Asia Perspective <i>Dr. Jayati Ghosh, Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi, India</i> Inclusive Growth and Policies – Regional Perspective <i>Mr. Kiyoshi Kodera, Vice President, Japan International Cooperation Agency, Japan</i>

	<p>Country Experiences in Inclusive Development - Thailand <i>Dr. Kitti Limskul, Professor, Faculty of Economy, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand</i></p> <p>Discussion</p>
13:00 – 14:00	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00 – 14:50	<p>Session 2: Development Policy Options in Myanmar</p> <p><i>Moderated by U Myint, Chief, Centre for Economic and Social Development, Myanmar Development Resource Institute, Yangon, Myanmar</i></p> <p>Address by Mr. Andris Piebalgs, European Union Commissioner for Development</p> <p>Keynote Speaker: <i>Prof. Ronald Findlay, Columbia University, New York, USA: "Opportunities and Challenges in Trade and Development in Myanmar"</i></p> <p>Discussion</p>
14:50 – 15:40	<p>Continuation of Session 2</p> <p>Panel (15 min presentation each)</p> <p>Policies for Growth and Development in Myanmar <i>Daw Win Myint, Deputy Director General, Planning Department, Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development</i></p> <p>Policy Priorities for Sustainable Development in Myanmar <i>Dr. Nay Htun, Research Professor, Department of Technology & Society, State University of New York at Stony Brook, USA, former UN Asst. Secretary-General, UNDP/UNEP</i></p>
15:40 – 16:00	<i>Coffee/Tea Break</i>
16:00 – 17:30	<p>Continuation of Session 2</p> <p>Policy Options for Human Development - European Union Perspective and Experiences <i>Mr. Dirk Meganck, Director for Asia, Central Asia and the Pacific, Directorate General for Development and Cooperation – EuropeAid, European Commission</i></p> <p>Policy Options for Human Development <i>Dr. Thangavel Palanivel, Chief Economist for Asia and the Pacific, UNDP New York</i></p> <p>Country Experience in Accelerating Growth - Malaysia <i>Professor Emeritus Datuk Dr. Mohamed Ariff bin Abdul Kareem, Fellow of the Malaysian Institute of Economic Research and Professor Emeritus at the Faculty of Economics and Administration, University of Malaya</i></p> <p>Discussion</p>
17:30	Close of Day 1
18:00 – 20:00	Reception

Day 2: Policy Options for Education: Tuesday, 14 February 2012

08:00 – 09:00	<i>Registration</i>
09:00 – 09:15	Statement by H.E. Dr. Mya Aye, Union Minister for Education
09:15 – 10:45	<p>Session 3: Education in Myanmar: Progress and Challenges</p> <p><i>Moderated by Dr. Soe Win, Director General of Higher Education (Upper Myanmar), Ministry of Education</i></p> <p>Panel (15 min presentation each)</p> <p>Education System in Myanmar <i>U Zaw Htay, Director General of Higher Education (Lower Myanmar), Ministry of Education</i></p> <p>The Role of Private Sector in Education in Myanmar <i>U Winston Set Aung, Executive Director, ASIA Language and Business Academy; Economic Adviser to the President, Republic of the Union of Myanmar</i></p> <p>Education Sector Coordination: Cambodia Experience <i>Dr. Cliff Meyers, Regional Education Advisor, UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Region</i></p> <p>Country perspective: Education Model of Republic of Korea <i>Mr. Gwang-Jo Kim, Regional Director, UNESCO</i></p> <p>Discussion</p>
10:45 – 11:15	<i>Coffee/Tea break</i>
11:15 – 12:45	<p>Session 4: Priorities for Strengthening <u>Basic Education</u> in Myanmar</p> <p><i>Moderated by Mr. David Coleman, Education Advisor, AusAID</i></p> <p>Panel (15 min presentation each)</p> <p>Access to and Quality of Education in Myanmar: <i>U Bo Win, Director General for Education, Planning and Training, Ministry of Education</i></p> <p>Education Financing <i>Professor Mark Bray, Director, Comparative Education Research Centre (CERC), Faculty of Education, The University of Hong Kong</i></p> <p>Teaching Practices in Myanmar – A Case Study <i>Professor Frank Hardman, Institute for Effective Education, The University of York.</i></p> <p>Teacher Education System: Lessons and Experience from Vietnam & the Region <i>Mr. Vi Van Dieu, Director of the Research Centre for Ethnic Minority Education (RCEME), Ministry of Education and Training, Hanoi, Socialist Republic of Vietnam</i></p>

	Discussion
12:45 – 13:45	<i>Lunch</i>
13:45 – 15:15	<p>Session 5: Strengthening <u>Higher and Vocational Education</u> in Myanmar</p> <p><i>Moderated by Mr. Gwang-Jo Kim, Regional Director, UNESCO</i></p> <p>Panel (15 min presentation each)</p> <p>Myanmar Higher Education Policy <i>Dr. Myo Thein Gyi, Deputy Director General for Higher Education (Lower Myanmar), Ministry of Education</i></p> <p>Enhancing Quality for Higher Education – Civil Society Perspective <i>Dr. Thein Myint, Vice-President, Myanmar Academy of Arts and Science (MAAS)</i></p> <p>Higher Education Policy – Lessons from the Region <i>Mr. Wolfgang Kubitzki, Principal Social Sector Economist, Asian Development Bank</i></p> <p>Enhancing Quality for Higher Education – Experiences from Thailand <i>Dr. Supachai Yavaprabhas, Dean, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand and former Director of Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization - Regional Center for Higher Education and Development, ASEAN</i></p> <p>Discussion</p>
15:15 – 15:45	<i>Coffee/Tea Break</i>
15:45 – 16:45	<p>Continuation of Session 5</p> <p>Vocational Education in Myanmar <i>Dr. Zaw Min Aung, Director General, Department of Technical and Vocational Education. Ministry of Science and Technology</i></p> <p>Vocational Education Development – Lessons from Thailand and the Republic of Korea <i>Ms. Churairat Sangboonnum, Deputy Permanent Secretary Office of the Vocational Education Commission (OVEC), Ministry of Education, Thailand</i></p> <p>Discussion</p>
16:45	<p>Close of Day 2</p> <p><i>H.E. Prof. U Ba Shwe, Union Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education</i></p>

Day 3: Policy Options for Health: Wednesday, 15 February 2012

08:00 – 09:00	<i>Registration</i>
09:00 – 09:15	Statement by H.E. Dr. Pe Thet Khin, Union Minister for Health
09:15 – 10:45	<p>Session 6: Health System Strengthening in Myanmar</p> <p><i>Moderated by Dr. Phone Myint, Director General a.i., Department of Health Planning, Ministry of Health</i></p> <p>Panel (15 min presentation each)</p> <p>Health System in Myanmar <i>Dr. Nilar Tin, Director (Planning), Department of Health, Ministry of Health</i></p> <p>Policy Options for Health System Strengthening <i>Mr. John Grundy, Senior Health Consultant, WHO and UNICEF</i></p> <p>Health System Strengthening – Experiences from the Region <i>Prof. Ascobat Gani, Faculty of Public Health, University of Indonesia</i></p> <p>Discussion</p>
10:45 – 11:15	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:15 – 13:00	<p>Session 7: Universal Coverage, Financing and Equity</p> <p><i>Moderated by Dr. Julia Kemp, Health Advisor, UK Department for International Development (DfID)</i></p> <p>Panel (15 min presentation each)</p> <p>Achieving Universal Coverage: Experiences from Thailand <i>Dr. Pongpisut Jongudomsuk, Director Health System Research Institute, Thailand</i></p> <p>The Role of Private Sector in Myanmar in Financing Health Care <i>Professor Khin Maung Aye, Vice President, Myanmar Medical Association</i></p> <p>Community Health Insurance Schemes – China Experience <i>Dr. Qingyue Meng, Professor and Executive Director, Peking University China Center for Health Development Studies (CCHDS)</i></p> <p>Experiences in Health Insurance Schemes in Developing Countries <i>Mr. Toomas Palu, Health, Nutrition and Population Sector Manager for East Asia and the Pacific, World Bank</i></p> <p>Discussion</p>

13:00 – 14:00	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00 – 15:45	<p>Session 8: Accelerating Child & Maternal Mortality Reduction</p> <p><i>Moderated by Dr. Thein Thein Htay, Deputy Director General, Department of Health, Ministry of Health</i></p> <p>Panel (15 min presentation each)</p> <p>Current Situation of Child and Maternal Health in Myanmar <i>Dr. Hla Myint, Director for Public Health and Dr. Theingi Myint, Deputy Director RH, Department of Health</i></p> <p>Reduction of Maternal Mortality: Progress and Challenges <i>Dr. Saramma Mathai, Regional Programme Coordinator and Maternal Health Advisor, UNFPA Regional Office, Bangkok</i></p> <p>Reduction of Child Mortality – Role of Community Volunteers <i>Mr. John Grundy, Senior Health Consultant, WHO/UNICEF</i></p> <p>Donor Support to Maternal and Child Health: Experiences and Prospects for the Future <i>Dr. Julia Kemp, Health Advisor, UK Department for International Development (DfID)</i></p> <p>Discussion</p>
15:45 – 16:15	<i>Coffee/Tea break</i>
16:15 – 17:45	<p>Session 9: Human Resources for Health</p> <p><i>Moderated by Professor Maung Maung Wint, Director General (retired), Department of Medical Sciences</i></p> <p>Panel (15 min presentation each)</p> <p>Capacity Utilization and Retention for Sustainable Development of Health Services in Myanmar <i>Dr. Nilar Tin, Director (Planning), Department of Health</i></p> <p>Human Resources for Health – Potential of Private Sector <i>Dr. Soe Aung, Former Deputy Director General, Advisor to Myanmar Medical Association</i></p> <p>Meeting Human Resources Challenges: Regional experiences <i>Dr. Palitha Abeykoon, Consultant on Human Resource Development, former Director for WHO Regional Office for South East Asia and the Pacific</i></p> <p>Discussion</p>
17:45	<p>Close of Day 3</p> <p><i>Dr. Phone Myint, Director General a.i., Department of Health Planning, Ministry of Health</i></p>

Annex 2. DPO workshop agenda (Day 4)

Conference on Development Policy Options with special reference to Education and Health in Myanmar

MICC, Naypyitaw, 13-15 February 2012

Workshop on Next Steps Thursday, 16 February 2012

Following the three-day conference on Development Policy Options in Myanmar, held from 13-15 February, a team of senior officials of selected relevant Government agencies, national and international experts and representatives of UN agencies, the international community, civil society organizations and the private sector will meet to summarize discussions, capture main issues and agree on next steps to be taken.

Three parallel sessions will be held:

- 1) Policy Options for Human Development in Myanmar
- 2) Policy Options for Education in Myanmar
- 3) Policy Options for Health in Myanmar

Time/Activity	Participants/Programme
09:00 – 09:15 Plenary Session	All Welcome remark and overview of the day
09:15 – 12:45 Group discussions: Review of Key Discussion Points from the Conference Implications for Policy Options in Myanmar Next Steps: Moving Policy into Practice	1. Policy Options for Inclusive Growth and Human Development Chair: <i>H.E. Dr. U Kan Zaw, Union Deputy Minister, Ministry of National Planning and Economics Development</i> Facilitator: <i>Professor Aung Tun Thet (Snr. Adviser to the UN Resident Coordinator in Myanmar)</i> 2. Policy Options for Education Chair: <i>H.E. U Ba Shwe, Union Deputy Minister for Education</i> Facilitator: <i>U Ngwe Thein, Head of Capacity Building Initiative Myanmar</i> 3. Policy Options for Health Chair: <i>H.E. Dr. U Win Myint (Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health)</i> Facilitator: <i>Dr. Nay Soe Maung (Rector, Public Health University)</i>
12:45 – 13:00 Wrap up Session	All

Annex 3.

**Inaugural Address
by
H.E. Dr. Sai Mauk Kham
Vice President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar
13 February 2012**

Excellencies, Union Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Representatives from UN Agencies, International Organizations, INGOs, Departmental Officials, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Morning. This is my great pleasure to deliver an inaugural speech at this conference.

First of all, I would like to extend my warmest welcome to the Conference on Development Policy Options in Myanmar, with Special Reference to Education and Health.

The objective of this Conference is to promote the policies towards human resources development area, especially in education and health sectors. I hope this Conference will produce good out-comes from the best practices of some countries, including Asian countries to be able to have policy inputs for the formulation and implementation of the development policies.

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The national seminar on poverty reduction and rural development was conducted last year with the participation of all stakeholders. It is well aware that about 70% of the population here are residing in rural areas, improving livelihood for rural populace is one of our main priorities. The Central Committee and Subcommittees on Rural Development and Poverty Reduction were set up and eight major tasks were being implemented in all states and regions, targeting to reduce the poverty rate from 26% at present to 16% by year 2015. By developing human resources through promoting education and health sectors, we hope to realize our vision, which is “building modern, developed and democratic nation”.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The concept of development can be conceived of in a multidimensional process. Since the challenge is to improve the quality of life, the needs must be fulfilled. It is necessary to focus on quality growth which can share the fruits of development among the people equitably. In his context, one of the economic policies is to achieve balanced and proportionate growth and to be inclusive as well.

It is observed that Human Development Index (HDI) of this country is low compared to other ASEAN countries, and it will be necessary to double the living status if we are to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

To develop disciplined democracy in Myanmar, it is also necessary to nurture the people to be thoroughly acquainted with knowledge, rational thinking and behaviors.

For instance, decentralization processes can be successful only when the capacity and capability are there, at the basic level. Good intelligence and knowledge are also needed to take responsibility, accountability and proper management.

We believe that only in this way, the democratic principles which we value so much can be accomplished.

As far as the Education Sector is concerned, at the first regular session of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw which convened on March 30, 2011, President U Thein Sein gave guidance of 10 point education policy.

Based on this new policy, a number of significant activities such as initiation of free and compulsory primary education, promulgation of private school registration law, and preparation for provision of scholarships and stipends in the coming academic years.

By focusing on the basic education sector, 30-year Long-Term Basic Education Development Plan, starting from (2011 to 2031), and Education for all National Action Plan from (2003 to 2015), they are ongoing national plans. In accord with the frame work of the rural development and poverty reduction, 13 education activities have been implemented in receptive regions and states.

In the basic education sector, the achievement can be seen by the following indicators. They are

- the intake rate of grade 1 of age 5 and over is 98.37%,
- the Primary Level Net Enrolment Rate is 84.61 % and
- the Primary Level Completion Rate is 82.20% respectively.

These indicators show that retention in primary level is one of the major challenges in basic education, and retention in secondary level is also a high priority to emphasize. Moreover, other necessary tasks, such as improving teachers' education quality, improving their socio-economic status, fulfilling necessary requirements for quality learning environment, establishment of quality control system, and making the national qualification framework to be in line with regional qualification framework too.

For the higher education sector, more students are offered more opportunities for learning, by opening more new universities and degree colleges and other educational programmes are also expanded to promote greater diversity. In 1998, the National Centre for Human Resource Development (NCHRD) was established so that knowledge can be disseminated to the populace residing in the vicinity of universities and colleges by means of non-formal education, offering academic and skill upgrading courses for people willing to study, or willing to acquire an additional skill.

Various courses have been opened for learners, as diverse as those who have had studies interrupted, or for those willing to acquire additional skills. It has been possible to develop the knowledge and skills for learners, from students who have passed the matriculation examination to postgraduates at universities. But, the productively should be in line with the demand in the existing labour market, not only in quantity but also in

quality. Therefore, expansion of accessibility as well as quality enhancement are necessary to strengthen both in basic and higher education.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Regarding the technical and vocational sector, it is the main responsibility of Ministry of Science and Technology.

Technical and vocational trainings are importance to keep abreast with the state of the art technology which is the deciding for factor to increase the productivity.

This education not only provides the qualifications needed in the business society, but also helps young people to the practices of cooperation, coordination and collaboration. So that, it is necessary to upgrade this technical and vocational education to keep them ready for the industrial labour force, especially in developing Special Economic Zones and in the process of future industrialization.

Moreover, Information and Communication Technology can provide rapid and low cost access to information to almost all areas of human activity, and the Internet is breaking barriers of geography, making markets more efficient, creating more opportunities for income generation and enabling everyone to adopt modern technology. So that, it is necessary to strengthen ICT education for further development of knowledge which is another important factor in the growth of the economy.

The role of research and development, which can create innovative and capable society is also increasingly important now a days. If there is a critical gap between research findings and outputs, and their development into commercial propositions, R&D will not be sustainable. By establishing Technology and Innovation Centres, it enables industry to exploit new and emerging technical knowhow and close the gap through the provision of a business-focused capability.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

For the health sector, emphasis has been placed, and a lot of inputs invested, for improving health care system since National Health Plan is an integral part of the national development plan. The Ministry of Health has laid down two objectives: to enable every citizen to attain full life expectancy while enjoying longevity and to ensure that every citizen is free from diseases.

To achieve these objectives, many health activities have been implemented under three strategies, which are (1) widespread dissemination of health information and health education to reach the rural areas, (2) improving disease prevention activities, and (3) providing effective treatment of prevailing diseases. Although most of the health related indicators show significant improvements in the past years, there are many areas still needed to be tackled energetically.

New health challenges are looming since climatic and environmental conditions are changing with some negative consequences.

To face these new health challenges, existing partnership needs to be strengthened further. We will have to try to overcome these challenges by increasing our involvement in the collective efforts with the international community.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Health and education spending could be combined estimated 7.5 percent of government spending, up from 5.4 in FY 2011-12, for education at 4.7 and health at 2.8. As we all are aware that more investment in education and health sector will lead to more development of the nation. At present, the national budget on education and health sector is lower than that of the other countries, and it is necessary to raise further rewarded that the national economy improve because investing in human resource development is the fundamental development policy options.

Now many nations have changed the way they manage their economy from natural resource to human resource based.

Natural resource will be exhausted with the passing time although human resources are said to be non-exhaustible and it also has multiplier effect in stimulating the economy. Moreover it enhances the workforce with innovation and creativity. Based on human resources alone, we have seen many countries achieving higher development without natural resources. That is one of the reasons the countries with poor human resources are unable to ride out the current rapidly changing global waves.

And so, we would like to call upon all stakeholders, government officials, private organizations, civil societies, international organizations, local NGOs and INGOs to help promote human resource of this nation.

It is always mention that, all helps are welcome, anytime, anywhere, in promoting these resources, for they are now accepted as important deciding factors in the nation-building.

I am confident that, this Conference will effectively help to develop the nation's National Human Resource Development Plan to gain national policy inputs.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In conclusion, I would like to express my sincere thanks to all distinguished guests, participants and all the stakeholders for their contributions by sharing invaluable information, knowledge and news which are highly critical to make this important Conference a success. Thank You.

Annex 4.

**Address by
Mr. Vijay Nambiar
Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General
13 February 2012**

Excellencies; Distinguished guests; Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am honoured and delighted to have been invited to address this Conference on Development Policy Options in Myanmar, with special reference to Education and Health.

On behalf of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, I thank the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Myanmar for their role in organizing this event and for enabling my participation. I also thank UNDP Assistant Secretary-General and Chair of the UN Development Group for Asia-Pacific, Mr Ajay Chhibber, and United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Myanmar, Mr Ashok Nigam, and his team, for bringing this conference to reality in coordination with Government and other partners.

I am particularly honoured to inaugurate this event in the company of His Excellency Dr. Sai Mauk Kham, Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, and His Excellency U Soe Thein, Union Minister for Industry. Allow me also to acknowledge the presence of many distinguished participants, including Professors Joseph Stiglitz and Ronald Findlay of Columbia University.

Excellencies, Dear Friends,

This conference is very timely.

We meet almost exactly one year after the launch of broad-ranging reforms by the Government of Myanmar under the leadership of President Thein Sein.

Your deliberations take place at the same time that Parliament – for the first time – is debating the national budget cycle.

And we gather roughly four months ahead of the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, and less than four years from the 2015 deadline for achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Last month, Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon set out an “action agenda” for his second term – a blueprint for progress on five global imperatives.

First: Sustainable development.

Second: Preventing conflicts and disasters, human rights abuses and development setbacks.

Third: Building a safer and more secure world.

Fourth: Supporting nations in transition.

And Fifth: Working with and for the world's women and young people.

These are compelling, generational opportunities. And this conference can help us make the most of them, here in Myanmar and in the wider region and world.

This is a time of dramatic change, but also one of widespread economic uncertainty and social inequities. The world's population has reached 7 billion. In just five years, we will add another half billion people – all needing food, jobs, security and opportunity.

Where will Myanmar fit in this picture?

What are the chances that a child born in Myanmar today will not be from a family experiencing extreme poverty?

What are the chances of her surviving her infancy and growing into a healthy teenager?

Will she get an adequate education to join the workforce and go out into the wider world?

Will Myanmar be able to provide the health and education its millions of citizens need to build up the country's capacity to contribute to the regional and global economy?

.The answers to these questions may depend in a critical way on the policy options you will discuss here at this conference. In Myanmar, as elsewhere today, people are much more aware of the changes taking place in our globalized world than anytime in the past. This has vastly increased popular expectations and aspirations. But the ability of governments to fashion policies and outcomes to match these expectations has not increased as fast

Countries in transition – moving towards democracy, reconciliation and prosperity – are home to one-and-a-half billion people. Many are seriously off-track in their efforts to achieve the MDGs. Others, including Myanmar, are showing more promising trends, according to national government reporting.

Of the MDGs most directly relevant to this conference, Myanmar is on track and very likely to achieve Goal 2, universal primary education.

If some changes are made, it is possible for Myanmar to reduce child mortality and combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, Goals 4 and 6.

More is required, however, for Myanmar to get on track to improve maternal health, Goal 5.

This tells us that progress is possible -- but also, that much more needs to be done.

Health and education are vital to human fulfilment and dignity. They are crucial for fuelling innovation and growth. Investing in people is therefore not an option – it is a precondition for any Government to deliver on society's needs and to compete in today's economy.

Many countries in the region, including Myanmar, are facing a youth bulge. If well managed, investing in youth can yield great dividends for building a sound political and economic system. The youth of Myanmar are not only

the first beneficiaries of the current transition – they must be its engine. But if action to meet their needs and aspirations is not taken urgently, prospects for social peace and economic prosperity may suffer.

Development is not sustainable unless it is equitable. In Myanmar, this entails equal access for all peoples in both central and border regions. Investment in development is also the best prevention against social strife. Both state and society therefore have a stake in improving living standards as necessary conditions for the country's unity and progress.

One year ago, President Thein Sein made a clear call for improving Myanmar's health sector, including public, private and rural health care services, in cooperation with the United Nations. This conference can propose policy options that will answer this call.

Also one year ago, President Thein Sein made a bold call for strengthening the nation's human resources and ensuring that Myanmar's education standards meet international standards, again working together with the UN. Here, too, this conference can propose policy options that will give young people opportunities for employment, entrepreneurship, political participation, human rights, education and reproductive health.

This is your challenge; this is your responsibility during the three days of deliberations that now begin.

Excellencies, Dear Friends,

The UN's commitment to Myanmar is firm. The Secretary-General visited twice during his first term and is hoping to do so again shortly. He has welcomed President Thein Sein's vision for Myanmar to "catch up with the changing world". The entire Organization stands ready to help enable this vision to succeed. Our Country Team, meanwhile, will redouble its efforts to support the Government in bettering the lives of the population – every day and across the country.

Since the launch of the reform agenda, we have seen progress in various areas. The challenges ahead are many and complex. The reform agenda might be ambitious, but it is achievable. Three forces can make all the difference.

First, the power of participation.

The convening of this conference indicates the direction in which Myanmar must continue to go. It shows that it is possible now for a wide cross-section of Myanmar's stakeholders – including business, academia, research, government, civil society and private citizens – to create an inclusive and participatory platform around which issues of national concern can be discussed openly.

An engaged society can help the Government improve policy-making, reflect the people's legitimate interests and – as the President has noted – help "guarantee fundamental rights of citizens" in the process.

Second, the power of partnership.

Across the world, Governments have learned that they cannot do the job alone. They have learned to broaden their base, harness the contributions of the private sector, civil society and academia, and deliver results for their people. There is no reason why Myanmar cannot do the same.

UN initiatives such as Every Woman Every Child, Scale Up Nutrition, Sustainable Energy for All, and the Global Compact, as well as the work of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, show that it is possible to multiply national efforts in a way that would not be achievable without such partnerships. Combining the UN's convening authority and technical resources with the various strengths of government, business and civil society, can be a formidable force for good. .

Third, the power of solidarity.

Countries in transition look to the United Nations to help consolidate freedoms and opportunity. The Organization has vast experience in key areas such as peace-building, rule of law, electoral assistance, anti-corruption and democratic practices. This is the time for Myanmar to make use of the UN's unique services – from facilitation and technical assistance to capacity-building and policy advice – in the political, humanitarian and development spheres.

Solidarity also depends on resources. Without funding, Governments cannot deliver. While budgets are tight, the current economic crisis is no excuse for inaction. Better national budget allocations and coordinated donor support can make a significant difference.

The Government's new budget plan to reorient and increase spending to health and education is both necessary and welcome. No Government can afford to shy away from such responsibilities. The budgetary priorities and allocations made by the Government and Parliament will be an early test of Myanmar's commitment to reform.

The Secretary-General, for his part, recently called again on the international community to respond to the important developments in Myanmar by helping to build conditions for sustaining the reform process and bettering the lives of its peoples. We need to do so more robustly than ever before. As the country builds on the steps taken so far, Myanmar should not be denied any longer the support and opportunity to serve its people better and build the economic conditions for durable peace and stability.

Excellencies, Dear Friends,

This conference signals a desire to maximize the benefits of a collective yet varied approach to issues of national importance. It is about Myanmar's stakeholders stepping up and leading by action to improve the country's prospects. It is about listening to the people, building trust and delivering tangible, meaningful reforms.

Sustainability is politically feasible, economically beneficial, socially viable and environmentally necessary. But in Myanmar as elsewhere, there is no time to waste.

The United Nations will continue to work with all of you towards the goals we all share.

We all have a stake in seeing Myanmar succeed. We all have a stake in the well-being of the people of Myanmar, today and tomorrow.

Thank you.

Annex 5.

**Address by
H.E. U Soe Thein
Union Minister for Industry
13 February 2012**

Good Morning !

I feel greatly honoured for the opportunity to give an opening address at the "Conference on Development Policy Options in Myanmar with Special reference to Education and Health"

As we all know we are actively engaged in building a modern, developed and democratic nation. In our effort towards this end, our present government has been earnestly looking for appropriate development strategies - to guide and facilitate the process of development change for our country. It is my strong belief that this conference will undoubtedly bring forth some positive and favourable outcomes related to development policies.

No one can deny the crucial role of human resources in the economic development of a nation. In fact, human resources of a nation determines the character and pace of its economic and social development and constitutes the ultimate basis for the wealth of the particular nation. It follows, therefore, that development of human resources is the vital necessity in planning for the economic development of the nation.

The main aim in human resource development is to help people to rise well above the present poverty levels and to contribute more productively to the country. This can be accomplished only through improved education and health systems that will guarantee long-term sustainability of the quality of life achieved by people.

Education is the key in human resource development. We need to increase the knowledge base of our people in various aspects of their lives. Adults have to improve their educational levels and their children, in turn, also have to break out of their educational handicaps.

For the poor, lack of educational opportunities and their poor quality of life perpetuates their poverty. Non - availability of preventive health care further weakens their bodies and their capabilities. This vicious cycle must be broken if we want to develop our human resources.

We should try to provide our people with first-rate education and skill development opportunities by creating clusters of villages with excellent internal connectivity through roads and communication which are also linked to nearby urban centres. These rural clusters would have quality centres of education and health support facilities. People can easily commute between villages and acquire the best skills and education. People would have easy access to well- equipped health care centres with the knowledge base to advise them on preventive care methods.

In educating our youth, the aim is for an education with value system. it is important for them to possess five capacities, namely, disciplinary mind, synthesizing mind, creative mind, respectful mind and ethnical mind. Nurturing these five minds is also possible by building five capacities – inquiry, creativity, application of

technology and entrepreneurial and moral leadership. By developing these capacities, our youth will become self-directed, and self-controlled life-long learners - valuable assets for nation development.

Since high productivity needs a healthy work force, health care system must cover all levels down to grass root people.

Systematic and proper planning and investment must be carried out for human resource development with focus on their education and health care. This will lead to national development in no time.

For development of Myanmar, concerted effort is needed from all parties not only government but also private sector, civil societies, NGOs and what not.

We must all work together to transform our "Developing Myanmar" into "Developed Myanmar". It's a mission to be accomplished!

Let me quote here the beautiful words of Abdul Kalal, former President of India ---

"A nation is great not because a few people are great but, because everyone in the nation is great "

We should all try to be great- contribute as much as we can- as responsible citizens –in this nation building task. Unity is strength so let's us all unite together and join hands to achieve our objective in the shortest time possible.

Today we have invited some renowned scholars, economists, learned professors, academicians and people with great experience and insightful knowledge in the development field. I am certain we will benefit a lot from their expertise. We are indeed privileged to work with them. I'd like to extend my special thanks to all of you who have come a long way to Myanmar to assist us in our development effort. I am grateful to all of you present here today for giving your valuable time. My appreciation goes to all participants in this three day conference.

Thank You.

Annex 6.

**Address by
Dr. Ajay Chhibber
UN Assistant Secretary-General & Chair of UN Development Group (UNDG), Asia-Pacific
13 February 2012**

Your Excellencies,

Distinguished representatives of civil society, academia and media, Development partners and UN colleagues, ladies and gentlemen:

It is a pleasure for me to participate in this conference at this historic stage in Myanmar's development. I would like to commend the new government for initiating national and international dialogue on the country's development issues and for their upcoming chairmanship of the ASEAN in 2014.

Today's conference "Development Policy Options with special reference to Education and Health in Myanmar" is very relevant, and timely. With the right policies and programmes and relevant international cooperation, Myanmar can become the next economic power house in the region.

Myanmar is a country with considerable potential. It has fertile lands, young population, and significant natural resources. Its highly strategic location - between fast growing economies of China, India and the ASEAN region with ports on the Indian Ocean and Andaman Sea, is an important advantage for faster integration into the dynamic economies in Asia.

In the last two decades Myanmar has made some progress on human development. According to the UNDP 2011 Human Development Report, Myanmar's HDI value – which measures progress on income, education and health indicators - increased considerably: from 0.3 to almost 0.5. Despite this, Myanmar still sits at the lower rungs of the HDI ladder among Asian countries. Myanmar's HDI rank of 149 is lower than that of other LDCs in the region such as Cambodia, Lao PDR and Timor-Leste.

Myanmar has historically been a country with a good basic education system. This is illustrated by a high degree of adult literacy at 91% according to UN published statistics. Myanmar's literacy rate is higher than that of Bangladesh (56%), India (63%), Cambodia (77%), and very close to other ASEAN countries. Despite this, Myanmar's education system exhibits relatively low rates of secondary and tertiary gross enrolment ratios. For example, at 49% Myanmar's secondary school enrolment is much lower than that of Indonesia (76%) or India (76%) and Vietnam (67%). The mean years of schooling in Myanmar were estimated to be just 4 years, compared with 9.5 years in Malaysia, 8.9 years in the Philippines and 7.5 years in China. I hope Day 2 of this conference will go into some depth on these issues.

The situation in the health sector for Myanmar is similar. Between 1996 and 2006, the UN published data inform that under-five mortality declined from 83.7 live births to 76.1 per thousand while its infant mortality rate declined from 70.3 to 68.3 per 1000 births. Maternal Mortality also declined significantly from 420 in 1990 to 240 per 100,000 live births in 2008. Despite this progress, Myanmar lags behind the ASEAN league table in these

health indicators. For example, Myanmar's life expectancy of 65.2 years is much less than that of 75.2 in Vietnam, 74.1 in Thailand and 73.5 in China. I hope Day 3 of this conference will address these issues.

Myanmar sits in a most dynamic region that has attained high economic growth and rapid poverty reduction over the past two decades. Since the 1980s, Asia has been growing around 7.6 per cent annually, which helped 700 million people out of extreme poverty. ASEAN has also performed well. Poverty has declined from 31 to 20 per cent. Vietnam for example, achieved impressive results in poverty reduction: from 64 to 13 per cent in the 1990s. More recently we have seen rising disparities even in the dynamic Asian countries. How to accelerate growth for poverty reduction in an inclusive and sustainable manner is a key question for Day 1 of this conference.

Available statistical sources inform that the Myanmar economy has been growing at a moderate rate of just over 5 per cent per annum in recent years. Poverty incidence has also declined in the past five years or so (DPO 2011). Yet, the current level of poverty at 26 per cent is high given the potential of the economy. Moreover, there is a huge disparity among geographic regions. Some states/regions are significantly poorer than others, such as the Chin state, with a 73 per cent poverty rate. Access to education, sanitation, and jobs vary from rural to urban areas and from state to state. Such regional disparities and shortfalls in human development indicate that recent economic growth has not been adequately inclusive in Myanmar.

Development experiences have shown that growth will be inclusive when it occurs in sectors where poor are employed most, such as in agriculture in the case of Myanmar. Despite its vast agricultural resource base, the economic growth in Myanmar is increasingly relying on extractive industries. Extractive industries use capital-intensive technologies that tend to generate fewer jobs for the unskilled without linkages to the rural sector. In a country where almost 70 per cent of people live in rural areas, rural development is crucial. Myanmar must continue to develop its minerals in a sustainable manner, but must also develop its agriculture, agro-based industries, light industry and tourism for job creation.

How to make economic growth inclusive, and implement a set of economic policies for inclusive growth may sometimes be a tall order. These will depend on a long list of national conditions, and the best solution is always country specific. Nonetheless, based on global experience, we can talk about some fairly general principles that apply. These include pro-poor macroeconomic policies together with competitive and stable exchange rates to encourage investment in the tradable labour-intensive sector, low to moderate real interest rates, strong institutions for the regulation of banking and financial sector, trade liberalization without causing disruption of the import-competing sectors. Furthermore, measures to increase the pace of capital accumulation by linking, as in Malaysia, the macroeconomic policy to development policy, and finally preservation of adequate pro-poor and pro-growth public expenditure are also essential to inclusive growth.

One of the big lessons of the Arab Spring is that inequities which arise from having policies in the allocation of financial resources, licensing, land allocation which favour a few at the expense of a truly competitive economic structure are likely to end up creating huge disparities. Such structures are also not conducive to the job creation needed for a young dynamic population. Ensuring sufficient expenditures on education and health is also very critical to ensure young people are ready to take advantage of the opportunities.

In the initial stages of reform there appears so much to be done. But one of the big lessons of reform is that sequencing is important. Trying to do everything at once without adequate capacity can be problematic;

showing some early benefits of reform is important to keep the momentum going in favour of change. In this regard Myanmar offers some quick win possibilities.

One of the challenges in Myanmar is the distortion in the foreign exchange rate market – huge difference between official and unofficial black market rate. An important early economic reform in Asian countries was the unification of exchange rates. For example, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, countries such as China, India, Lao PDR, and Vietnam all introduced sweeping reform in foreign exchange markets including unification of multiple exchange rates and depreciation of local currencies in the context of improving country competitiveness.

A second major area of reform is in the agricultural sector. Myanmar has substantial agricultural potential which has been held back by restrictions and policies. The removal of these restrictive policies will immediately bring huge benefits to the country, by increasing its productivity, helping reduce poverty, and by increasing its exports. Over the longer term increasing agricultural productivity will require much deeper investments in land management, irrigation and research and extension but the immediate benefits of policy changes can be huge – just as we saw two decades ago in Vietnam.

A third area which could benefit from quick wins is the financial sector. The new micro finance law is already a step in the right direction but more reform to increase access to finance and reduce the costs of financial intermediation is a vital key to accelerating growth and ensuring that the fruits of growth are spread more widely.

Your Excellencies, we are all happy to see that Myanmar is now ready to begin the process of catching up to its neighbours and the rest of the world. But one can do even better and ask how Myanmar can benefit from being a latecomer?

I believe there are three huge benefits of being a latecomer to be exploited by Myanmar.

First, that partly because of underdevelopment Myanmar still has abundant natural resources and must now ensure that it does not follow an environmentally destructive development strategy as some of its neighbours have done. As history shows, natural resource abundance may come with many social and economic problems such as conflict, environmental degradation, rising inequality, and Dutch disease. None of which are inevitable. Extraction can transform people's lives, but the direction of transformation depends on the proper management of natural resources.

Important components of such a management system include the expenditure and investment policies necessary to help translate resource revenue into human development. There are some good examples of countries - Botswana, Chile, and Malaysia - that have invested heavily in human capital to suit the demands of a competitive and modern economy. Following these examples, Mongolia has recently created a Human Development Fund (HD Fund) based on its booming mineral revenue to promote human development and is now trying to improve the functioning of these funds.

Experience shows that, effective and efficient revenue management systems are possible through fiscal institutions such as commodity funds and fiscal rules. Well-designed funds, for example, can help smooth fiscal policy, protect against volatile commodity prices, guard against Dutch Disease, and save for future generations. For example, the State Oil Fund of Azerbaijan and the Petroleum Fund of Timor-Leste have been designed to

preserve macroeconomic stability through sterilizing and accumulating oil-related proceeds to generate perpetual income for current and future generations. Transparency, sound long-term development planning, strong anti-corruption laws, high civil society participation, and economic diversification are other common elements of effective management. Ensuring the local areas from where mining resources extracted also benefit is vital to avoid conflicts.

Economic diversification forms a crucial component of any development strategy, as a strong non-resource economy is the only way to generate employment and income opportunities over the long-term and is a key mechanism to avoid many problems associated with natural resource management. In the area of infrastructure, telecommunications and urban development as well as in industry and tourism, new technologies which allow Myanmar to both leap frog but also build a less carbon intensive future are becoming increasingly available. I do not have to go into this issue in more depth here but it will be important to not just follow the trodden paths.

Second, many Asian countries focused exclusively on fast growth but have neglected to build the social policies and social protection needed to ensure that their citizens acquire the resilience needed to manage economic and health crisis and natural disasters. They are now retroactively trying to build such systems. The economic loss caused by cyclone Nargis is still fresh in the minds and hearts of the people of Myanmar. To minimize loss is within reach when people and infrastructure are strengthened and protected by correct policies. Unlike many other developing countries, thanks to its natural resources, Myanmar has the resources to invest in increasing its resilience through social protection.

Third, there is a huge potential to develop Myanmar's agriculture, agro-based industries and tourism to suit high end markets and thereby increase value, not just volume. Because of its low fertiliser and pesticide use Myanmar's agriculture can be declared organic by default. In today's world this is huge benefit to be preserved not looked down upon. Similarly, Myanmar has huge tourism potential but with value creation not volume creation. Myanmar's underexploited coastline and its huge potential to increase the value added of its exports are a benefit of a latecomer.

I would like to close my remarks by mentioning that, this is truly an exciting and a defining time for the country. Myanmar is going through major changes that will shape its future and will also play an important role in the region and in the world.

The UN will stand by and support Myanmar during all its endeavours. It is nevertheless vital that all the reforms are fully owned and implemented by Myanmar's own institutions. External support is vital but it must be embedded in Myanmar's own structures and systems.

I wish you all great success in your discussions and deliberations as you help Myanmar leaders shape the country's future.

Thank you.

Annex 7.

**Address by
Dr. Ashok Nigam
UN Resident & Humanitarian Coordinator, Myanmar
13 February 2012**

Your Excellency, Dr Sai Mauk Kham, Vice-President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar; Mr Vijay Nambiar, Chef de Cabinet and Special Adviser to the Secretary General; His Excellency Union Minister for Industry, U Soe Thien; and Dr. Ajay Chhibber, UN Assistant Secretary General and Chair of the UN Development Group.

Excellencies, Distinguished representatives of Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, civil society, academia and media, development partners and UN colleagues, ladies and gentlemen.

On behalf of my colleagues in the United Nations Country Team in Myanmar, I would like to welcome you to this Conference.

I would like to extend our appreciation to the Government of Myanmar, in particular the Ministries of Planning and Economic Development, Education and Health for organizing this Conference with us. I would also like to thank the Myanmar Development Resource Institute for their collaboration and express our appreciation to the European Union for its support.

We are honoured to have with us today, eminent national and international experts whose participation will enrich the discussions of the next three days. I would like to specially thank Professor Joseph Stiglitz, Professor Ronald Findlay, Professor Hla Myint and Mr. Andris Piebalgs, the European Union Commissioner for Development.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen.

This Conference is being held at a time when the Government of Myanmar has taken a number of important steps for democratization of the country and increased engagement with the international community. The discussions in this Conference will, we hope, provide policy suggestions for accelerating growth, promoting inclusive human development, and improving health and education.

The UN Country Team in Myanmar, which has recently developed its strategic framework for 2012-2015, looks forward to the outcome of this Conference to further enhance its four strategic priority areas of: inclusive growth, including agricultural development and enhancement of employment opportunities; equitable access to quality social services; reducing vulnerability to natural disasters and climate change; and promoting good governance, strengthening democratic institutions and human rights.

The Myanmar economy has been growing steadily in recent years, contributing to improving a number of human development indicators and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. With its rich agriculture and natural resource base, Myanmar has the potential of transforming into a fast growing economy. Moreover, with 28 per cent of the population below the age of 15 years and 63 per cent in the working age 15-59 years, it has a demographic dividend.

Amongst some of the achievements, recent household survey data suggests that both food poverty and income poverty rates have declined in the last five years. Educational attainment, in terms of net enrolment rates in primary and secondary education, show improvement and adult literacy rates are noted to be high. A larger proportion of population have access to safe drinking water and improved sanitation, the latter being one of the more difficult MDG goals to achieve in many countries.

At the same time there remain a number of challenges that we know experts and participants at this conference will highlight such as the regional disparities in income and human development; the need for increased investment in rural areas to enable poor and vulnerable households to have better access to critical livelihood assets including land and credit; the critical need of employment opportunities for the young and growing labour force; and educational attainment at basic, secondary and higher levels covering issues of access, quality and the high drop-out rates that exist.

There are many challenges in health. Infant and maternal mortality rates are still high compared to Myanmar's ASEAN partners, and HIV/AIDS is a health concern. Like most developing countries, Myanmar also faces the challenge of tackling both communicable and non-communicable diseases.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen.

An inclusive and equitable society requires the national and regional authorities to respect, protect and fulfil the basic human rights of all people in Myanmar. This includes the recognition of the rights of all vulnerable groups, whether young or old, whether at home or victims of displacement.

The UN Country Team in Myanmar has been addressing and supporting national and local level development and humanitarian efforts for many years. The policies and actions being initiated by the Government of Myanmar and, we hope, the recommendations from this Conference will further help improve the lives of the people of Myanmar.

Let me close by again thanking you all for your participation.

Annex (8)

**Statement by
H.E. Dr. Mya Aye
Union Minister for Education
14 February 2012**

Excellencies, Union Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Representatives from UN Agencies, International Organizations and INGOs, Representatives from various Ministries, Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning,

It is my great pleasure to deliver opening statement of day 2 sessions of policy options for Education, at this Conference.

First of all, I would like to extend my warmest welcome to the Day 2 policy options for education.

The objective of today's sessions of conference will produce good out-comes from the best practices of some neighbouring countries as well as Asian countries and highly developed nations to be able to have policy inputs for the formulation and implementation of development policies especially for education sector.

Excellencies, Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you all know, education is a fundamental right to everyone, and quality education is the key to the development of individual citizens, societies and the country. In this respect, the new government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has prioritized human resources development in all sectors of the country with a special focus on the younger generation and the development of the education in Myanmar.

Today, the presentations and discussions will focus on policy development options in order to address current issues and challenges in basic, higher and vocational education. This conference will be a forum to review and analyze the current situations of education in Myanmar, to exchange views, ideas and information between international and local experts, and to make recommendations towards strengthening the education policy in Myanmar.

In order to build modern, developed and democratic nation, education is one of the key sectors for inclusive development of the nation. Ministry of Education has already set our vision and our motto which state that "To create an education system that will generate a learning society capable of facing the challenges of the Knowledge Age" and "Building a modern developed nation through education".

In terms of education policy, I would like to highlight 10 point education policy laid down by the new democratic government at the first regular session of Pyihtaungsu hluttaw. The president's guidance with a special focus on the implementation of the following tasks are: -

- To implement free and compulsory primary education system
- To increase the enrolment rate in basic education sector

- To nurture new generation as intellectuals and intelligentsia in the human resources development
- To improve capacities of teachers in both basic and higher education sectors
- To utilize teaching aids more effectively
- To upgrade the quality and the socio-economic status of educational personnel
- To provide scholarships, stipends and awards for both locally and internationally
- To promulgate relevant laws for the participation and contribution of private sectors in education services
- To collaborate with international and local organizations including the UN, INGOS and NGOs
- To upgrade education standard to international level

Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In accord with the new education policy, the significant activities such as Initiatives of Free and Compulsory Primary Education, Promulgation of Private Schools Registration Law and Provision of Scholarships and Stipends are highlighted in the Inaugural Speech of Vice President.

In basic education sector, as mentioned in the Vice President's Inaugural Speech, 30 Year Long Term Basic Education Development Plan (2001-31), Education for All National Action Plan(2003-2015), Rural Area Development and Poverty Alleviation Plan (2011-15) are key national plans which are being implemented. Here, I would like to suggest that all representatives should consider developing the policy options in basic education sector within the framework of these national ongoing plans.

In terms of ensuring access to Basic Education, there are over 41 thousands basic education schools with over 0. 276 million teachers who are nurturing over 8.2 million students. As a result of the effort of the Ministry of Education, Net Intake Rate-NIR is increased to 98.37% which is quite high and Net Enrollment Rate in Primary Level is 84.1% in 2010-11. However, school retention and completion rates remain as challenges in primary level. For the secondary level, making more access for all school going age children as well as retention and completion are needed to emphasize.

In line with long term basic education development plan, and based on the Framework of Dakar EFA goals and MDGs, Myanmar EFA National Action Plan (2003-15) was formulated. In accord with six goals areas of EFA, many activities have been implemented in basic education sector. By reviewing the achievements and challenges, policy options should be considered by all representatives attending the conference today.

Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In terms of ensuring quality in basic education, the quality learning achievement of the students depends on the quality of learning environment and quality of teachers, therefore, fulfilling necessary requirements for quality learning environment and capacity building for teachers are important to consider for the development of the policy. Here, I would like to point out one of the significant endeavor of Ministry of Education in which teacher

training for Child Centered Approach nationwide will be implemented starting from 2012-13 AY to 2015-16 AY in basic education sector especially in primary level. All primary teachers will be trained in accord with this national CCA training plan.

Moreover, Mainstreaming Child Friendly School Principles and Practices in regular teacher training program in Teacher education institutions and adopting Child Friendly School Approach as one of the national strategies of EFA has been carried out for increasing access to and improving quality of basic education.

In the non-formal education sector, by undertaking adult literacy program, the adult literacy rate has increased to 95.01% in 2011. However, the disparity among the regions and states is necessary to focus and enhancing existing NFE programs should also be considered. In terms of gender, there is no gender disparity issue regarding enrolment of girls and gender ratio in literacy.

Concerning Early Childhood Care and Education-ECCE, the gross enrolment rate is 22% at national level; it is quite low in the region. Policy framework to enhance advocacy for ECCE is one of the key factors to consider.

In terms of private sector contribution in basic education sector, private basic education schools will be opened soon in accord with the Private School Registration Law. The contribution of all stakeholders from private sector is warmly welcomed for investment in basic education sector. However, the important things we should consider are establishment of management and administration for private education sector, Data and information collection system, quality control system and monitoring and supervision system etc.

Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In basic education, pre-vocational education by teaching pre-vocational subjects in basic education schools which are identified as the pre-vocational Basic Education schools is being implemented only in over a hundred schools. Therefore, it should also be considered to enhance existing pre-vocational education.

In terms of Vocational Education sector, the development of today's technical and vocational training profession in Myanmar reflects the development of Myanmar society. New means of production demand new methods of education of labor force and constituted the main factors for the development of vocational education. Technical and Vocational Education is being implemented by the Department of Technical and Vocational Education (DTVE) under the Ministry of Science and Technology in Myanmar. The Department of Technical and Vocational Education focuses on the relation between high school and work as well as vocational education.

The government of Republic of the Union of Myanmar has the accountability to plan, implement and evaluate the human resources matters. So, since 1989, the government has formulated long term and short term plan to achieve success in Human resources development of Technical and Vocational Education. According to this plan, Department of Technical and Vocational Education has implemented to produce highly qualified engineers, middle range engineers and skill workforces in public and private economic sector. They have organized two paths to cultivate highly competitive engineer and skilled man powers. Technological Universities have responsibilities to develop high competitive engineers. On the other hand, Technical High Schools have responsibilities to develop skilled manpower.

Since our country is trying to develop by upgrading the cultural agriculture system to industrialize agricultural system; we need many skill-full workforces. Technical and Vocational Education satisfy this requirement by

helping many ways. In this region, there are sufficient amounts of land for cultivation and other natural resources for agriculture. The main causes of poverty are lack of necessary technical knowledge, problems associated with land, lack of cash investment to make livelihood improvements, environmental problems and natural disasters.

Therefore, concerning with vocational education sector, I would like to suggest all representatives to consider for developing policies which are focused to enhance existing vocational education system, to ensure the access and quality of vocational education and to produce skilled labours in the ASEAN Economic Community.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

For the Higher education sector, we have also made Educational Reforms in the higher education sector. In the course of making reforms, starting from 2012-2013 academic year, the 3-year undergraduate degree courses will be expanded to 4-year-degree courses in all universities and colleges under the Ministry of Education. Therefore, the existing curricula and syllabi have been revised and developed by Boards of Studies of respective disciplines for the new programme. The new curricula and syllabi are going to be validated at the Universities' Central Council and the Council of University Academic Bodies.

With respect to international collaboration, the higher education sector promotes collaborations with foreign universities and institutions. Starting from 2000 to date, a total of 2643 officials and scholars went abroad for educational purposes. In 2011, a total of 201 scholars were sent abroad: 9 scholars for PhD, 43 for training courses, 50 for study tour, 43 for seminars and workshops, and 56 officials to attend meetings and conferences. In the same manner, to strengthen collaboration with international universities and institutions and to create opportunities for international experiences and exposure, faculty exchange programmes, student exchange programmes, joint research programmes and scholarship programmes are a necessity.

In upgrading our national education standard, it would be worthwhile to provide faculty members and administration staff with in-house retraining and skill upgrading trainings as well as trainings in foreign countries.

We intend to pair up a selected university in Myanmar with a Foreign University into partner universities which can be considered to have the same status. In attempting to do so, changes will be made to the teaching methods, teaching periods, teaching aids, curricula and syllabi, university entrance systems, administration systems, assessment systems of our university to be compatible with its partner universities.

It is also important that the researches conducted in the higher education institutions directly contribute to the needs and growth of our national economy.

In terms of private education sector, policy concerned with establishment of private universities should be considered for having access to quality higher education for all citizens and production of the qualified human resources.

Ladies and Gentle men,

In terms of Education System, System Review for both basic and higher education sectors should be carried out and based on the review, education system improving in line with international practice should be considered to include in education policy options.

Based on the private education sector development, quality control and assurance system should be established. National Qualification Framework-NQF is necessary to establish in line with regional qualification frame work-RQF and International Qualification Framework –RQF in both basic and higher education sector. Accreditation body should also be established.

For the investment in education sector, education expenditure as a percentage of GDP and as a percentage of total government expenditure should be in line with international and regional norms for example, at least 5 % of GDP and 20 % of total government expenditure based on the economy of our nation.

I hope this conference will bring fruitful discussions on policy options for education in Myanmar. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your esteemed expertise and active participation. I would also like to acknowledge the United Nations Country Team, Myanmar Development Resource Institute and all the coordinators of this conference for their hard work and assistance.

Therefore, we call for the participations of all stakeholders including government officials, public, private organizations, civil societies, international organizations, local NGOs and INGOs for developing comprehensive education policy options. I am confident that the sessions concerned with education will effectively help to develop our education policies.

I would like to conclude by thanking all the distinguished guests, participants and all the stakeholders present here for your active participation and contribution, which are crucial to develop policy options in education sector. By sharing information, knowledge and exchanging your views, I hope it will be very productive and fruitful sessions. .

May I wish you all good health and success.

Thank you.

Annex 9.

**Statement by
H.E. Dr. Pe Thet Khin
Union Minister for Health
15 February 2012**

Good Morning.

It is indeed a pleasure to give this statement for the Development Option Conference and for this particular health section.

Today we will be sharing the experiences on system that we are striving from our own country perspective as well as we are preparing to learn from other countries' experiences on a wide range of issues such as health system strengthening, universal coverage, financing and equity, accelerating child and maternal mortality reduction, and human resources for health.

Myanmar with the population of 59 million is a country of significant geographic and ethnic diversity. The country is the union of 14 states and regions, and made up of 135 national groups. Myanmar Health care system evolves with the changing political and administrative system, and relative roles played by the key providers are also changing although the Ministry of Health remains the major provider of comprehensive healthcare.

It is a pluralistic mix of public and private system both in the financing and provision of healthcare. The Ministry of Health is implementing the healthcare delivery according to the national health plans and currently we are in the stage of formulating the NHP 2011-2016. This national health plan formulating process has been conducted through a series of meetings and workshops by multi stakeholders' involvement and the approach of developing the national health plan was based upon looking into the issues of health system strengthening and the determinants of health.

As we all are aware, universal coverage is access to appropriate promotive, preventive, curative and rehabilitative services by all citizens at an affordable costs. In this region, Thailand has the experiences of achieving universal coverage for health using social health insurance, civil servant medical benefit scheme, and universal coverage. For most countries whose governments' fiscal capacity is low, and whose social health insurance for the employed sector is absent or very small, universal coverage is still challenged. Financing healthcare in most developing countries greatly relies on out-of-pocket payment that will cause catastrophic injury to the poor. And the ways and means for dealing this have to be solved regressively.

At present we are initiating some social health protecting schemes in terms of maternal and child health cultural schemes, health equity fund and township-based health promotion schemes which will give us learning by doing experiences and expand and adopt the best methods in the future.

We all agree in fact that without greater and more effective investment in health system and services it will be impossible to achieve national and international goals including the MDGs. We should also bend of mind that investment in health is an investment in economic development. When more resources are needed, we also

have to look into ways of doing more with the existing resources. We have to seek innovative ways of harnessing and focusing the strength of the communities, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. The law relating to the private healthcare services has been enacted in 2007 and paving the way for stronger establishment of the public-private partnership. The importance of health workers is well recognized in health system performance, the quality of care, achieving the health relating MDGs, and for scaling up effective health intervention. Despite this, support for human resources for health is often ranked low on health related policy agenda for many national governments and international agencies. Thus we are opening up the agenda for human resources for health in this conference and expect to have positive recommendations for later adoption at human resources for health policy. Following one of the national health policies that is the strengthening collaboration with other countries for national health development, we are working hand in hand with all the UN agencies, bilateral and international organizations, all in all and I hope this conference will give us the productive collaborative results from exchanging views and ideas between the partners. However, I'd like to stress the factors we have to consider our own country's context and locally feasible mechanisms that have to be developed and adopted in Myanmar. In other words, we should try to develop policy and initiatives that are practical to the cultural and social realities of our own people.

We conducted the national workshop on how to improve the healthcare performance and a lot of ideas were generated we've already published books on that. So from my experience working with my colleagues for over 25 years, we are never short of idea but we should learn from other people's experiences and generate what is doable, practicable and realistic in our own context.

To this end, I wish today session will have fruitful discussion and deliberation, and end up with recommendations for way forward for development of policy potions for health in Myanmar.

Thank you very much.

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**Conference on Development Policy Options
with special reference to
Education and Health in Myanmar**

MICC, Naypyitaw, 13-15 February 2012

PRESS RELEASE

Conference identifies development policy options in Myanmar

Yangon, 20 February 2012 – Specific policy suggestions for accelerating growth, promoting inclusive human development and improving health and education were the concrete output from a three-day conference held in Myanmar's capital this week.

The conference on '*Development Policy Options with special reference to Education and Health in Myanmar*' was organized jointly by the Ministry of National Planning & Economic Development, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, and the United Nations Country Team in Myanmar, in collaboration with Myanmar Development Resource Institute and with the support of the European Union.

With more than 40 panel presentations and around 600 participants – representing government ministries, UN agencies, civil society, the private sector, international financial institutions and aid agencies, the conference sought to identify issues, explore critical shortfalls in policy and institutional arrangements and share experiences from countries in the Asia region to inform future policy development.

In his opening remarks, H.E. Vice-President Dr. Sai Mauk Kham spoke about the need for increased investment in social sectors and the strengthening of ties with the international community.

"As we all are aware that more investment in education and health sector will lead to more development of the nation," he said.

"All help is welcome anytime and anywhere, and existing partnerships need to be strengthened further. We will have to try to overcome challenges by increasing our involvement in the collective efforts of the international community."

This was echoed by the Union Minister for Industry, H.E. U Soe Thein in his statement.

"Human resources of a nation determine the character and pace of its economic and social development. The main aim of human resource development is to help people to rise well above their present poverty level and to contribute more productively to the country. This can be accomplished through improved education and health systems that will guarantee long-term sustainability of the quality of life achieved by the people," said the Union Minister.

Mr. Vijay Nambiar, Chef de Cabinet and Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General, commended the conference for signaling "a desire to maximize the benefits of a collective yet varied approach to issues of national importance".

"It is about Myanmar's stakeholders stepping up and leading by action to improve the country's prospects. It is about listening to the people, building trust and delivering tangible, meaningful reforms," he said.

In his remark, Dr. Ajay Chhibber, UN Assistant Secretary-General and Chair of UN development Group for Asia Pacific, underlined the need for any policy reform process to be Myanmar-led.

"With the right policies and programmes and relevant international cooperation, Myanmar can become the next economic power house in the region. It is nevertheless vital that all the reforms are fully owned and implemented by Myanmar's own institutions. External support is vital but it must be embedded in Myanmar's own structures and systems," he said.

Dr. Ashok Nigam, the UN Resident & Humanitarian Coordinator thanked the government and other partners who worked to organize the conference with the UN Country Team and noted that "The UN Country Team in Myanmar has been addressing and supporting national and local level development and humanitarian efforts for many year, which with the support of our development partners, we will enhance. "

During the 3-day conference, a number of prominent experts from the region and abroad provided their views on development policy options that could be considered in a Myanmar context.

Professor and Nobel Laureate in Economics, Joseph E. Stiglitz of Columbia University delivered a key note address on inclusive development, while Professor Ronald Findlay, also from Columbia, spoke about opportunities and challenges in trade and development in Myanmar. A special appearance and presentation was also made by the former Yangon University Rector and London School of Economics Professor, U Hla Myint.

According to Professor Stiglitz, an important theme of the conference was how to renew the human capital and deepen it across the board.

"The recent increase in the investment in human capital is very welcome but still insufficient. I hope it will be a signal for the international community to amplify this in the form of foreign assistance," said Professor Stiglitz.

“The challenge of the country is to confront the limitations of the past but using the new opportunities – building up the country’s existing strengths.”

MORE INFORMATION

Presentations and resource documents from the conference are available on <http://yangon.unic.org>

For interviews and further information, please contact:

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