



**Asia-Pacific  
Economic Cooperation**

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**HWG 07/2008A**

## **Summary Report**

Submitted by: Viet Nam

**APEC Seminar on Social Policies for Migrants to Prevent the  
Transmission of HIV/AIDS**

**Ha Noi, Viet Nam  
18-19 September 2008**

## **SUMMARY REPORT ON THE APEC SEMINAR**

### **Social Policies for Migrants to Prevent the Transmission of HIV/AIDS**

*(18 – 19 September 2008, Ha Noi, Viet Nam)*

The APEC Seminar entitled “**Social Policies for Migrants to Prevent the Transmission of HIV/AIDS**” was held in Ha Noi, Viet Nam from 18-19 September 2008. Participants from APEC member economies, the APEC Secretariat, representatives of international and non-governmental organizations including CSEARHAP, ILO, IOM, UNFPA, UNAIDS, UNHCR, USAID, and relevant Vietnamese agencies attended the Seminar. Representatives from “Bright Futures Network” (the biggest self-help group of Vietnamese people living with HIV/AIDS) also presented at the Seminar to share their experiences and recommendations.

The main objectives of the Seminar were (i) to intensify the cooperation among APEC economies and international and non-governmental organizations on social policies with the view to preventing the transmission of HIV/AIDS especially for migrants both internationally and domestically; (ii) to discuss possible cooperation mechanisms among the above mentioned stakeholders; and (iii) to promote the social management capacity of member economies, especially the developing ones, in addressing HIV/AIDS in relations with migration both domestically and beyond borders.

The Seminar was opened by H.E. Doan Xuan Hung, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam and Ambassador Juan Carlos Capunay, APEC Executive Director.

#### **Session outcomes and key issues**

##### **Session 1: Best practices in APEC member economies’ domestic experiences in addressing population movement and its relation with HIV/AIDS**

Six presentations shed a light on the domestic approaches, policies and legislative regulations on mobility groups as well as the migrant workers living with HIV/AIDS in the Asia-Pacific region. During the first session, the representatives from the Philippines,

Chinese Taipei, Viet Nam, China and Russia shared their domestic experiences on the effective responses to the challenges and hindrances facing the migrant workers as well as foreign spouses living with HIV/AIDS, and proposed the measures to decelerate the spread of such virus among migrant workers and mobility groups.

### **Session 2: Social policies relating to migrant workers and HIV/AIDS in the Workplace**

Representatives from Viet Nam, Thailand, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and Bright Futures Network laid the emphasis on the roles and responsibilities of business sectors and communities on migrants and mobile workers and HIV prevention at workplace. These were followed by difficulties and challenges in terms of current social policies for migrants living with HIV/AIDS such as being excluded by employers, facing stigma and discrimination, having difficulties in accessing health services, and limited participation in policy development process, etc. as well as the essential services for both domestic and international migrants especially for women.

### **Session 3: International and regional cooperation on mobile workers and HIV/AIDS**

This session highlighted the international and regional cooperation on mobile workers with a view to reducing the HIV vulnerability for mobile workers. Representatives from Canada, international and non governmental organizations, while reviewing the APEC work on mobile workers in relation with HIV/AIDS, also stressed on significance of social management capacity building for member economies in preventing HIV/AIDS among migrants. Issues mentioned including HIV mandatory testing prior to departure and at destination countries; cross-border collaboration; and enhancing multi-sectoral working approach. Members agreed that cooperation among APEC members and the coordination between APEC and international and non-governmental organizations had been promoted substantially, however, further work were needed in the time to come.

After two days of extensive and fruitful discussions, participants identified a number of recommendations for consideration by member economies and the APEC Health Working Group, as follows:

***\* National level recommendations:***

1. Improve the documentation of best practices, evidence based information and data needed for pre-departure, on-site, and post-return migrants. Policies to raise awareness of migrants and their families about HIV/AIDS are needed.

2. Provide specific instructions and domestic mechanisms for business community to carry out their social responsibilities relating to HIV/AIDS and migrants. Consider policies to provide financial support for businesses in undertaking these responsibilities.

3. Migrants living with HIV/AIDS and their families should be supported to integrate into the community without any discrimination.

4. Social policies relating to health care services should be worked out to help mobile people living with HIV/AIDS easily access HIV information, commodities, HIV testing and treatment as well as other necessary services such as broadening health insurance options available to migrants, including non-regular and un-documented ones.

5. Economies should consider adopting policies to reduce harms associated with and sex work, while respecting human rights.

6. Enhance meaningful participation of different stakeholders in order to facilitate multi-sectoral and development-focused approaches to mobile workers and HIV prevention.

7. Support the development of national strategies on HIV and mobility

***\* Recommendations for APEC:***

1. Continue to give priority to HIV prevention, provide essential funding for capacity programs for member economies, especially the developing ones.

2. Consider to develop an APEC Fact Sheet on the HIV/AIDS information and essential services for the mobility migrants for member economies' reference.

3. Create mechanism for sharing information, experiences and providing technical assistance, especially establishing the collaboration among relevant agencies not only

among APEC member economies but also between APEC and international organizations and non-governmental organizations. APEC should encourage the forming of frequent bilateral collaboration between relevant ministries of sending and receiving member economies.

4. Incorporate gender dimensions and sexuality into relevant APEC work programs, taking into consideration the particular vulnerabilities of female migrant workers and services to support their needs. Set up a coordination network between APEC Health Working Group and APEC Gender Focal Point Network (GFPN).

5. Facilitate dialogues between the sending and receiving member economies with a view to developing an APEC Guidelines on responsibilities of the sending and host economies in relations with migrants and HIV/AIDS. Identify the proper coordination mechanism between the former and latter in this issue.

6. Create sustainable communication & information sharing systems. Effective coordination, networking and information exchange, both inside and beyond the region should be promoted.

7. Examine the linkages between HIV/AIDS and its economic impacts, encourage more engagement of the business sector and strengthen multi-sector involvement in addressing the challenges of HIV/AIDS, including through workplace training and accreditation programs.

8. Relevant experiences/ best practices should be documented and shared. Studies on new causes of displacement of migrants in all aspects are badly in need.

9. Build on existing work of relevant international agencies such as ILO, IOM, UN Regional Task Force on Mobility and HIV Vulnerability Reduction as well as existing international commitments (UNGASS, ASEAN, etc.).

In conclusion, H.E. Trinh Quan Huan, Deputy Minister of Viet Nam's Ministry of Health delivered concluding remarks, summing up what had been discussed and achieved in three seminar sessions. Participants agreed that the 1st draft of the Seminar report would be circulated for participants' comments and the final report would be submitted to the coming HWG meeting and the Ministerial Meeting in the November for consideration. Mr. Huan also thanked member economies for their active participation in and valuable

contributions to the Seminar. Member economies highly appreciated the discussion and outcomes of the Seminar and thanked Viet Nam for her good organization and hospitality./.