

# **Youth Employment in Thailand**

**Busawan (Bo) Kachonnarongvanish**

**“Supporting Youth Voices”  
An Inter-Regional Knowledge-Sharing Seminar  
June 29, 2007  
Bangkok**

# Outline

- 1. Summary of Situations**
- 2. Challenges: Opportunities and Decision Making Capabilities**
- 3. Suggestions: to Policy Makers and to Youth**

# I. Situations

- 2/3 of 1.5 million Thai workers of ages 15-19 are in mid- and low-skilled jobs
- 150,000 new university graduates were unemployed in 1Q of 2007
- 1/3 of higher education institutions “have failed to produce manpower in the fields needed in the job market.”

## **II. Challenges:**

### **2.1 Lack of Opportunities**

- 2.1.1) Quality of Education vs. Changing Demand of Job Market
- 2.1.2) Weak Linkages between Academia and Private Sector
- 2.1.3) Social Expectations

# **Lack of Opportunities :**

## **2.1.1) Quality of Education**

- Demand: Changing job markets requires stronger IT, communications, English, and problem-solving skills
- Supply: National curriculum not completely supportive of building of these skills

# **Lack of Opportunities :**

## **2.1.2) Academic & Private Sector Linkages**

- Lack of coordination between employers and universities to support job seekers
- Connections more important than qualifications

# **Lack of Opportunities:**

## **2.1.3) Social Expectations**

- Heavy emphasis on getting degree and high GPA, not on learning or acquiring skills
- Career in medicine, engineering, business management, etc better received by society

## II. Challenges:

### 2.2 Decision Making Capabilities

Youth Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “hot subjects”</li><li>• credential (as opposed to “learning”)</li><li>• salary and comfort level</li></ul>
Employer Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• financial, opportunity and productivity costs</li></ul>

# III. Suggestions

## 3.1) to Policy-Makers: Expanding Opportunities

Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• quality of education, not just access</li><li>• skill development program to increase capabilities and/or offer second chances</li></ul>
Academia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• more support to students<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- external communication: connections with private sector</li><li>- internal communication: career service centers</li></ul></li></ul>

# **III. Suggestions**

## **3.2) to Youth:**

### **Increasing Our Own Capabilities**

- Students must be aware of their own shortcomings, e.g. seek internship to acquire experience to increase their employability
- New grads should look at first job as training ground, not just income-generating

***Khob Khun Maag Krup/Ka!***



**Thank You!**