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PROGRAMME PLANNING AND EVALUATION: MONITORING AND EVALUATION: REVIEW OF SELECTED PROJECTS IN THE THEMATIC AREA OF MANAGING GLOBALIZATION

(Item 7 (b) of the provisional agenda)

DEVELOPMENT OF E-BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SERVICES FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES IN SELECTED ASEAN COUNTRIES AND SOUTHERN CHINA

Note by the secretariat

SUMMARY

ESCAP is concluding a project on development of e-business development services for small and medium-sized enterprises in selected ASEAN countries and southern China. The goal of the project is to enhance the capacity of enterprise support agencies to provide services to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in how to adopt e-business by using information and communication technologies as part of their business practices.

The project is implemented by the Information, Communication and Space Technology Division. It has adopted a two-step approach: the SME support agencies are the primary target group, which, at the end of the project, will be able to carry out e-business support services for the SME clients they serve. The SMEs are to be considered the ultimate beneficiaries of the project contributing to the economic development and overall growth of the countries.

The present document contains information on the work of member countries and the secretariat in connection with the realization of this project.

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I. BACKGROUND AND SITUATION ANALYSIS

1. The economies in the Greater Mekong Subregion, Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam and Yunnan Province of China, are based on agriculture and natural resources. Except for Thailand, and to some degree Viet Nam, the manufacturing sector in the Greater Mekong Subregion is still in the early stages of development. The growth drivers of these economies are the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which account for more than 95 per cent of the enterprises in these countries (table). The important contributions of these enterprises to gross domestic product and employment are well recognized. However, the competitiveness of the enterprises in the Subregion is often constrained by limited access to information and technological know-how to support the development and marketing of value-added products.

Table. Number of enterprises and percentage of small and medium-sized enterprises in the economies of the Greater Mekong Subregion

Country/ province	Year	Number of enterprises	Percentage of small and medium-sized enterprises	Source
Cambodia	2001	~40 000	98.8 *	Ministry of Industry, Mines and Energy (2003)
Lao People's Democratic Republic	1999	22 131	99.4	Ministry of Industry and Handicraft/UNIDO Survey of Industrial Establishments (1999)
Myanmar	1999	55 523	99.2	Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development
Thailand	2003	1 995 929	99.5	Office of Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion (2005)
Viet Nam	2003	62 908	95.1	General Statistical Office Survey (2004)
Yunnan Province of China	2001	66 680	99.8	World Bank (2004)

* Based on data from the industrial sector only.

Source: ESCAP, "Desk Study on the Development of E-Business Development Services for SMEs in Selected ASEAN Countries and Southern China", at http://www.unescap.org/icstd/applications/projects/e-business-GMS/documents.asp

2. The use of information, communication and space technologies (ICSTs), particularly the e-business applications, can address some of these limiting factors in the development of enterprises, especially SMEs. E-business, or the use of ICT for business, is indisputably transforming the way business is conducted across the world. Among other benefits, it increases efficiency, promotes innovation, reduces transaction costs, facilitates networking among stakeholders and allows SMEs to participate in broader markets and compete with larger firms in what can be called a "level playing field".

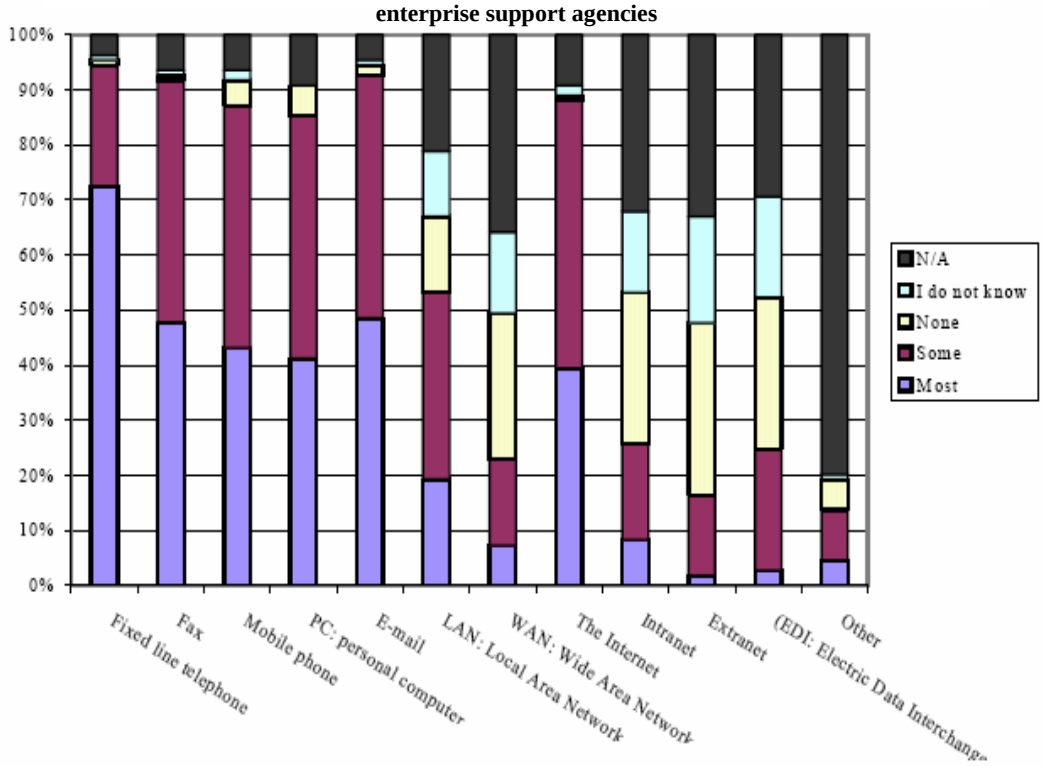
3. A study conducted by ESCAP on ICT usage among SMEs in selected countries in the Asian and Pacific region[1] has indicated the need for developing e-business for SMEs in the Greater Mekong Subregion. The study found that the use of ICT in business, particularly among SMEs, is still low within countries in the Subregion, and is limited to word processing, e-mail and search for information on the Internet (figure I). SMEs in the Subregion are just beginning to make their company information available on the web and to participate in e-marketplaces, but the lack of proper infrastructure, security, skills and other resources to apply ICT has prevented SMEs from using it actively in their businesses so that they become competitive. An end-to-end system of online transactions of goods and services is still rare because online payment systems are absent in all parts of the Subregion except China and Thailand. Apart from the use of accounting software, management information systems or other specialized business management software are not commonly used among SMEs in the Subregion.

4. In general, SMEs in the Greater Mekong Subregion have neither in-house capability nor financial resources to enable them to experiment with innovative approaches such as e-business, especially when they do not perceive immediate returns. It is often more cost-efficient for them to use the business development services offered by enterprise support agencies. However, according to ESCAP consultations with such agencies in the Subregion,[2] e-business development services (the planning, implementation, technical and consultancy services of e-business) are currently non-existent or very limited in the range of services offered by the agencies. The lack of awareness and understanding of e-business, poor ICT infrastructure and lack of ICT technical and managerial capacity were identified by the agencies as the key obstacles and challenges that stand in the way of helping SMEs to use ICT to enhance their businesses. Where e-business support services exist, SMEs may not be aware of the availability of the services or the benefits of using the services to improve their businesses.

[1] ESCAP, "Desk Study on the Development of E-Business Development Services for SMEs in Selected ASEAN Countries and Southern China", at http://www.unescap.org/icstd/applications/projects/e-business-GMS/documents.asp

[2] ESCAP, "Phase I report: findings and strategic directions on e-business development services for enterprise support agencies in the Greater Mekong Subregion", at http://www.unescap.org/icstd/applications/projects/e-business-GMS/documents.asp

Figure I. Use of information and communication technology by small and medium-sized enterprises in the Greater Mekong Subregion according to the survey carried out with enterprise support agencies



Source: ESCAP, "Phase I report: findings and strategic directions on e-business development services for enterprise support agencies in the Greater Mekong Subregion" at http://www.unescap.org/icstd/applications/projects/e-business-GMS/documents.asp

II. PROJECT OVERVIEW: STRUCTURE AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

5. In order to address the aforementioned issues, ESCAP is implementing a project on the development of e-business development services for SMEs in selected ASEAN countries and southern China, which represents the continuous efforts of ESCAP to promote ICT applications among countries in the Asian and Pacific region in collaboration with other stakeholders, including the private sector, in planning and implementing socio-economic development policies and programmes, towards the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration.

6. The project is funded by the Japan Fund for Information and Communication Technology through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and targets the economies of the Greater Mekong Subregion: Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam, and Yunnan Province of China. The duration of the project is 22 months and its total budget is $ 349,880.00.

7. The project aims to improve the level of support for the e-business initiatives of enterprise support agencies in the Greater Mekong Subregion. More specifically, the project is expected to:

- Identify e-business development services needs and strategic direction for each targeted economy
- Convince enterprise support agencies of the need and potential of e-business development services
- Improve and equip e-business development services enterprises
- Create awareness among businesses of the new/improved e-business development services

8. In order to achieve this goal, the project has chosen a two-phase approach (figure II). The objectives of phase I are to identify the e-business development service needs, propose the strategic direction in targeted economies and create awareness among enterprise support agencies of the need for and potential of e-business development services. The objectives of phase II include introducing and promoting e-business development services to some selected agencies on a pilot basis.

9. Throughout the project, emphasis is placed on a participatory approach, analytical strategy development and building consensus. This helps to develop a realistic understanding of the demand for e-business in key sectors, existing e-business development service markets and e-business needs at the national level, while fostering a high level of ownership and political support as well as developing a coherent vision for the project. The lessons learned, good practices and any other project outputs will be shared widely on the project website[3] and by other means.

III. PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

A. Output A: E-business development service needs and strategic direction are identified for each targeted economy

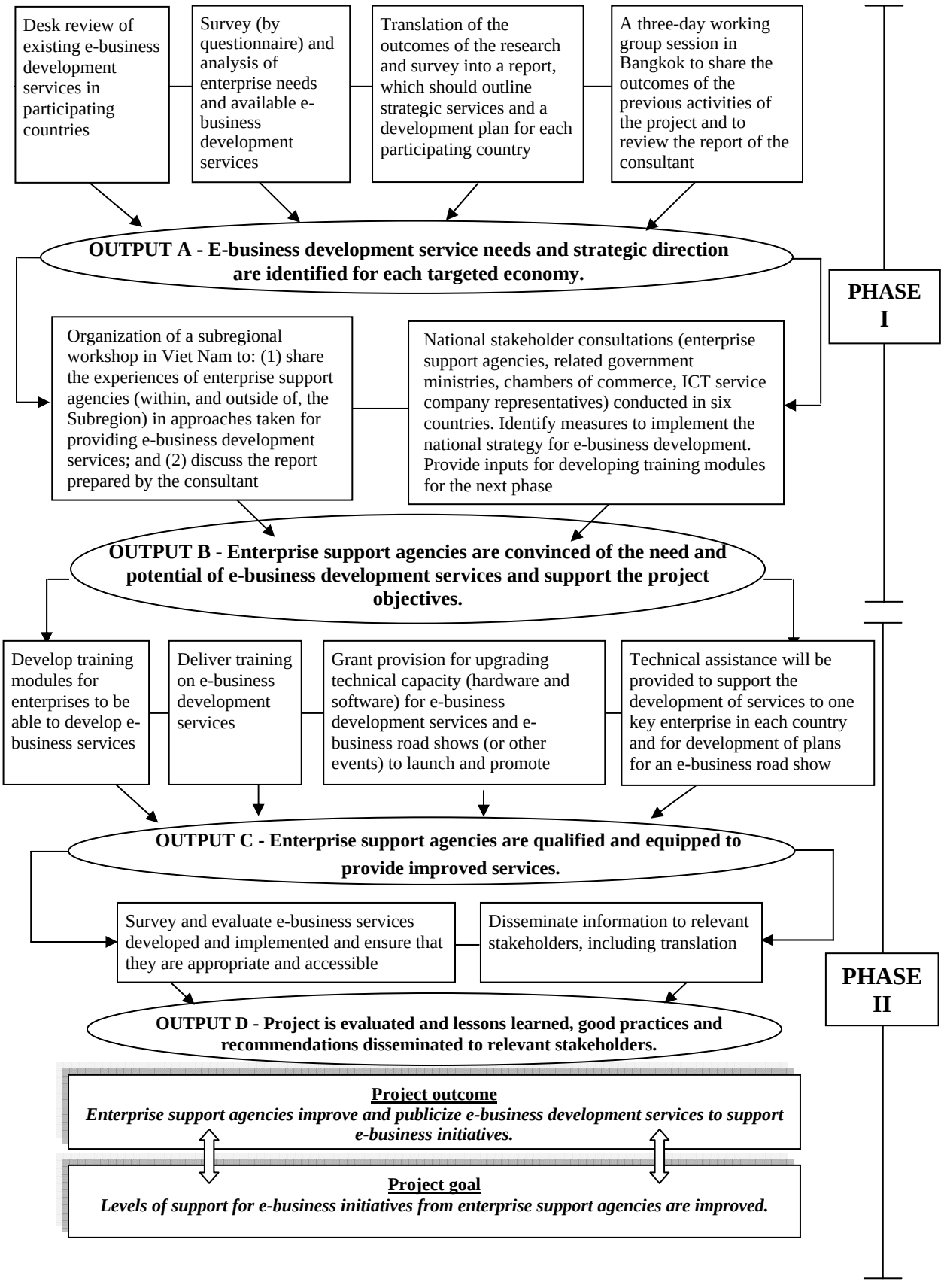
10. The desk study was undertaken to provide an overview of the status, key challenges, limitations and advantages of e-business development among SMEs in the Subregion. The main findings of the desk study were as follows:

(a) SME development policies in the Subregion recognize the need for a business-enabling environment and access to infrastructure, information, markets and financing to promote SME development. ICT-based services could play a key role in meeting some of these needs;

(b) E-readiness in the Subregion is characterized by a sharp divide between the group of countries with relatively good access to ICTs, represented by China, Thailand and Viet Nam, and the group of low-access countries represented by Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar. The design of e-business programmes must therefore take this divide into account;

[3] http://www.unescap.org/icstd/applications/projects/e-business-GMS/

Figure II. Project overview



(c) The use of ICT among businesses and SMEs in the Subregion is limited to the preparation of documents, information research and e-mailing at best. Comprehensive e-commerce systems are rare and often applicable only to subsidiaries of multinational corporations. Online payment systems are available only in China and Thailand;

(d) Among SMEs, there is a growing interest in participation in business-to-business transactions or e-marketplaces. Among many sectors, the tourism industry is most active in harnessing the benefits of ICT applications, including online transactions;

(e) Countries in the Subregion are at various stages of implementing ICT policies and regulations. These efforts are seen to be supportive of e-business among SMEs. The challenge is how to translate these policies into concrete national programmes on e-business development;

(f) Support for SME development in the Subregion comes from all angles, including Governments, international NGOs and business associations. Since most programmes are subsidized by the Government or donors, the business services offered by these programmes may not be financially sustainable after the subsidies end. E-business services that are demand-based and paid for should be considered to address issues of sustainability.

11. Following the above overview, the needs assessment survey of enterprise support agencies in the Subregion was conducted in partnership with the Secretariat of the GMS-Business Forum. Its main objective was to analyse the level of ICT usage and adoption among agencies in the countries of the Subregion.

12. The survey questionnaire was sent to agencies in the five participating countries. In total, 109 questionnaires[4] were returned to the Business Forum. The results of the survey helped to finetune a demand-driven approach in the implementation of the project and produce country strategies as well as advocacy and training modules on e-business development.

13. The main findings of the survey were as follows:

- Advanced ICTs (e.g. the Internet) are not as widely used as the traditional ICTs (e.g. fax and fixed-line telephone). Therefore, in e-business development programmes, consideration should be given to how to engage SMEs in using more advanced ICTs in the future. One way is for business associations or enterprise support agencies to lead the way with web-based services to members as an example of e-business.

- Enterprise support agencies shared the opinion that the biggest obstacles in introducing ICT to SMEs were limited awareness and capacity. This indicates that interventions aiming to support the use of ICTs by SMEs should include awareness-raising and capacity-building of the agencies and SMEs through training workshops.

[4] Cambodia (14); China (19), Lao People's Democratic Republic (15); Myanmar (20) and Viet Nam (41).

14. Based on the desk study and the needs assessment survey, ESCAP developed e-business training modules[5] which aim to equip the agencies with methodologies and practices for assisting SMEs in initiating e-business development services through the development of such services and conducting e-business training courses for SMEs.

15. Two sets of training modules were developed: one on basic e-business and the other on advanced e-business features. The first set provides training to develop core basic skills for enterprise support agencies that lack an established website or do not undertake any e-business activity currently but are committed to developing their e-business capacity for their organizations and their SME clients. The advanced e-business modules provide more advanced skills for enterprise support agencies that already have an established website or are already undertaking e-business activities and seeking to develop their e-business capacity for their organizations and their SME partners by utilizing more advanced techniques in e-marketing and e-commerce.

B. Output B: Enterprise support agencies are convinced of the need and potential of e-business development services and support the project objectives

16. The Subregional Workshop on E-business Development Services for Enterprise Support Agencies was held in Hanoi from 17 to 19 August 2005. It was organized by ESCAP and hosted by the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The Workshop, re-emphasizing the important role of enterprise support agencies in the participating countries, identified tourism, handicrafts, small manufacturing and IT outsourcing as four priority sectors for e-business development. Those areas have potential for stronger regional cooperation through e-business as each country has a comparative advantage in these sectors.

17. National stakeholder consultations were held in six participating countries from May to June 2005. These meetings were attended by more than 200 participants from various business associations, enterprises, IT companies, education institutions and government agencies. The information gathered through these consultations was used to validate the findings of the desk study and needs assessment survey, and to develop the above training modules.

C. Output C: Enterprise support agencies are qualified and equipped to provide improved services and have increased demand for their e-business development services

18. The Training Workshop on e-Business Development Services for Enterprise Support Agencies in the Greater Mekong Subregion was organized by ESCAP in collaboration with the Asian Institute of Technology and held in Bangkok from 7 to 11 November 2005. Its main objective was to enhance the knowledge and skills of enterprise support agencies so that they could provide SMEs with e-business development services. A total of 37 participants from six countries of the Subregion participated in the Workshop, during which participants learned, discussed and reviewed the key concepts, approaches and challenges for the development of a new e-business service or the

[5] Available at ESCAP website (http://www.unescap.org/icstd/applications/projects/e-business-GMS/tw1/doc.asp).

enhancement of an existing one for SMEs. All the agencies which participated in the Workshop were encouraged to submit a project proposal for the implementation or improvement of e-business development services in partnership with ESCAP.

19. ESCAP has established letters of agreement with one enterprise support agency each in Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Viet Nam and Yunnan Province of China to provide grants for upgrading technical capacity for the development of e-business development services and to launch and promote the developed services. The partner organizations were selected based on the quality of the project proposals developed during the Training Workshop.

20. The partner organizations and the projects selected in each country were as follows:[6]

- *Cambodia*. The Phnom Penh Chamber of Commerce proposed a project to enhance its existing website and establish six provincial websites for SMEs that would serve as hubs for putting SMEs online.[7] The provincial chambers of commerce in the chosen six provinces will be involved in the project by updating and further developing their websites, and supporting and training SMEs that want to develop e-business.

- *Lao People's Democratic Republic*. The Lao Trade Promotion Center proposed a project to improve its website by expanding the number of online services that are available to SMEs, offering more relevant services as well as supporting and building knowledge on ICT and awareness of its benefits for SME business development.[8]

- *Viet Nam*. The Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry proposed a project to develop advanced features on its online business-to-business web portal that will allow SME members to expand their trade with online buyers from around the globe.[9]

- *Yunnan Province of China*. The Yunnan SME Bureau proposed a project to develop an application service provider service that allows customers to create an online e-business interface that links to the SMEs product database as well as human resources management. It is planned that the services will be available in all the six languages of the participating countries of the Subregion as well as in English, but within the time frame of the project only Thai and English versions would be developed.

21. Remote and on-site technical assistance to support the development of e-business services were provided in the four participating countries implementing pilot projects from April to May 2006.

22. As one of the final activities of the project, the Regional Training Workshop for Enterprise Support Agencies to Promote E-business for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises in the Greater

[6] Detailed information about the pilot project is available on the ESCAP website (http://www.unescap.org/icstd/applications/projects/e-business-GMS/pilots/).

[7] http://www.unescap.org/icstd/applications/projects/e-business-GMS/pilots/Cambodia/

[8] http://www.unescap.org/icstd/applications/projects/e-business-GMS/pilots/LaoPDR/

[9] http://www.unescap.org/icstd/applications/projects/e-business-GMS/pilots/VietNam/

Mekong Subregion was held in Bangkok from 26 to 28 June 2006. It was organized by ESCAP as training for trainers on e-business to assist enterprise support agencies in raising awareness and building the capacity of SMEs in e-business. Its objectives were to assist the participating enterprise support agencies and trainers in training institutions in participating countries to gain familiarity with the modules and methodology which were developed by the project[10] and to discuss the way forward in integrating the training modules into the pilot project activities and advocating e-business among SMEs. The Workshop was attended by 38 participants.

D. Output D: Project evaluated and lessons learned, good practices and recommendations disseminated to relevant stakeholders

23. ESCAP has been conducting an evaluation in three of the four countries implementing pilot projects (Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Yunnan Province of China). The survey in Viet Nam and the final report of the evaluation are planned to be released in October 2006. The interim conclusions of this evaluation are presented in section IV of the present document. All the information related to and produced by this project is available on the ESCAP website.[11] The final report of the project, including its evaluation, will be made available to all the stakeholders as well as on the website.

IV. INTERIM EVALUATION RESULTS

24. The evaluation of the project was initiated in August 2006 by an external evaluator and is expected to be finalized by mid-October 2006. Its purpose is to identify and document the relevance, performance and success of, and lessons learned from, the project. It uses various evaluation tools such as surveys, interviews and focus group meetings, targeting both SMEs and enterprise support agencies.

25. The preliminary results of the evaluation show that the project has been successful in building the capacity of the enterprise support agencies to improve and publicize e-business development services to support e-business initiatives among SMEs. The four agencies that set up e-business pilot projects in partnership with ESCAP were able to develop or upgrade their e-business services for SMEs and these were inaugurated during launching ceremonies held in July 2006.

26. At the official launching event of the e-business services at the Lao Trade Promotion Center, the Director-General of the Foreign Trade Department, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, praised e-business services as services that could save the costs of promoting products and companies and communication, while extending the reach across the world. The Deputy Secretary-General of the People's Government of Yunnan Province said that the project was expected to play a significant role in enhancing the level of informatization and e-business among the enterprises of GMS countries and

[10] Training modules are available at the ESCAP website (http://www.unescap.org/icstd/applications/projects/e-business-GMS/tw2/modules.asp).

[11] http://www.unescap.org/icstd/applications/projects/e-business-GMS/index.asp

improving their market competitiveness as well as further promoting economic and trade exchanges among these countries.

27. Although the e-business services developed under the project have been in use for just two months, there are already some indications of success. In Viet Nam, more than 300 companies registered on the business-to-business website of the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry during the first month after the launching of the updated services developed under the project. In the Lao People's Democratic Republic, one SME, which was going to start its own website, decided to use the website of the Lao Trade Promotion Center, which had been developed under this project. The company reported that through that website it had received 10 inquiries from companies outside the country within a couple of days. Another company, a SME in the timber sector, has received four inquiries from Japan.

A. Summary of the evaluation in Cambodia

28. The evaluation of the pilot project in Cambodia was conducted on 28 and 29 August 2006. The Phnom Penh Chamber of Commerce and six provincial chambers of commerce have launched websites according to the plan. Although the website became active in July 2006, it will not be fully functional until late September 2006. The main focus of activity at this stage is to invite SMEs to submit company information for posting on the site. The Chamber of Commerce organized a training course, held on 27 and 28 July 2006, with support from the International Institute of Cambodia. It also organized two publicity campaigns in Phnom Penh using the local media (television, radio, press) and is planning to organize more training courses in the coming months. According to the Chamber of Commerce, the lack of ICT expertise in Cambodia is a major constraint in introducing e-business.

29. From the SME perspective, a number of barriers were identified which discourage their use of websites for e-business, including lack of confidence about handling exports, preference for dealing with agents or taking their goods to the border and handing them over to a buyer, and exposure of prices to competitors. SMEs also lack technical personnel who are knowledgeable about websites. The provincial chambers of commerce confirmed most of these concerns, again stressing the need for technical support, training and also equipment. The evaluation found that the SMEs welcomed the Chamber of Commerce taking the lead through organizing training and building support for the website from the business community.

B. Summary of the evaluation in the Lao People's Democratic Republic

30. The evaluation of the pilot project in the Lao People's Democratic Republic was conducted on 24 and 25 August 2006. The website was developed under the project one month prior to the evaluation. Currently, 5 SMEs are displaying their products on the website out of the 19 which have registered with the site. The initial feedback to the Lao Trade Promotion Center from SMEs indicated that they were afraid that if they displayed the prices of their products online, other companies would

undercut them, and if they displayed their products, other companies would copy their designs. The enterprises also reported difficulties in preparing product descriptions and having them translated into English for an international audience. However, they concluded that using the Center's website was cheaper and more convenient than building their own. One enterprise, a fashion clothes shop, had intended to start its own website but decided to use that of the Center instead.

C. Summary of the evaluation in Yunnan Province of China

31. The evaluation of the pilot project in Kunming, Yunnan Province of China, was conducted on 31 August and 1 September. The Greater Mekong Subregion website developed under this project is part of a wider initiative by the Enterprise Service System Section of the Yunnan Provincial Economic Commission, also known as the Yunnan SME Bureau. The website has subsumed an existing website (www.cneb.net) initiative which had already attracted over 37,000 SMEs from all over China to register. Currently, over 13,000 Yunnan-based SMEs have registered with the website.

32. The project has both the political and financial support of the Government of China. This, together with the very large base of SMEs already registered, places the project on an entirely different level from the other pilot projects. The general issue of sustainability, for example, hardly arises with such levels of support, although financial (profitability) sustainability may be hard to achieve.

33. With 45 staff to assist the development of the project, and a strong local environment of IT support, for example from the Kunming University of Science and Technology, it faces few difficulties in providing the technological platforms for e-business services, including online payments which are planned for the future. While the service offers translation work for SMEs for a fee, registered SMEs are able to do their own self-posting in Chinese, English or Thai and additional GMS languages will be added later. The current challenge is not technical but simply keeping the information up to date, a responsibility left to the SMEs themselves. The website also provides an online video training facility.

34. According to the Yunnan SME Bureau, there are currently 7,000 messages a day passing through the website, and 14 enterprises are posting product information every minute. However, much of this activity seems to be directed at the domestic market, and because of transport costs it seems that most products are promoted to the local Yunnan market. A major concern of several SMEs is how to gain the attention of international buyers to the website.

D. Summary of the evaluation

35. The interim results of the evaluation show that the impact of the project is expected to be sustainable in countries where the informatization of SMEs is strongly supported by the Government, which is the case in Viet Nam and Yunnan Province of China. In general, the lack of financial and

human resources to maintain e-business operations and marketing of the e-business development services is considered the main challenge faced by enterprise support agencies.

36. The interim evaluation results can be summarized as follows:

(a) *Relevance* (the extent to which the project addresses the priorities of enterprise support agencies and SMEs). The project has been considered relevant by all stakeholders. It has helped the agencies to develop client-oriented strategies to support the informatization of SMEs. For instance, it was reported that, in the course of the project, the agencies changed their pilot project objectives from simply providing information to serving the needs of the SMEs.

(b) *Efficiency* (measures the quantitative and qualitative outputs in relation to the inputs of the project). It has been assessed that the project has efficiently developed the technical capacity of enterprise support agencies to develop e-business development services for SMEs. However, it has been shown that there is still a need for capacity-building in both the technical and business aspects of e-business in order to sustain and improve the services.

(c) *Effectiveness* (extent to which the project attains its objective of improving the levels of support for e-business initiatives from enterprise support agencies). The project has been effective in developing the capacity of the agencies in promoting e-business development services to support the e-business initiatives of SMEs, which are already benefiting from the implemented e-business services, including through online sales. However, the language barrier has been identified by those SMEs as one of the most challenging factors in conducting online business with overseas companies. Enterprise support agencies should develop their capacity in providing services to help SMEs in this regard.

(d) *Impact* (the positive and negative changes produced by the project, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended). The noticeable impacts of the project are enhanced awareness of enterprise support agencies and SMEs of the benefits of e-business, the capacity built among the agencies and the establishment of networks of agencies in promoting e-business in countries of the Subregion.

(e) *Sustainability* (whether the benefits of the project are likely to continue after its end). It has been assessed that the project is sustainable in countries where the Government is already strongly supporting the development of informatization services for SMEs, while other countries might need further assistance.

V. FUTURE DIRECTION AND ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

37. The Committee may wish to review the achievements as well as challenges identified in this paper and provide guidance to the secretariat in undertaking activities in this area in its future programme of work.

38. In particular, the Committee may wish to consider adopting the following recommendations on regional cooperation in order to meet the challenges identified above more effectively:

(1) Governments in the region are encouraged to introduce specific programmes to develop the capacity of enterprise support agencies and promote e-business development services, such as content creation, SME databases, product catalogues, online payment and translation.

(2) Since e-business is considered to be a tool for expanding marketing opportunities, the promotion of e-business for SMEs would provide better results if developed together with initiatives facilitating trade and transport, including those using ICT as a means for facilitation. Therefore, Governments in the region are encouraged to exchange knowledge, experience and good practices in applying ICT for trade and transport facilitation and in integrating this effort with e-business development programmes.[12]

(3) Governments are encouraged to develop enabling policies and regulations to promote the development of domestic ICT markets and ICT services and products to meet the e-business needs of SMEs.

(4) Governments are also encouraged to further develop/implement ICT policies and regulations relating to online transactions.

39. The Committee may also wish to advise the secretariat on priority areas of work and to consider suggested modalities:

(a) Raise awareness and sensitize Governments and the private sector, such as business associations and enterprise support agencies, about the economic and social benefits of the adoption of e-business by SMEs and its contribution to the increased competitiveness of their national economy in the knowledge economy;

(b) Develop strategies, tools and a knowledge base to promote e-business development in specific sectors of the economy to meet the challenges and seize the opportunities presented by the knowledge economy;

(c) Develop networks of policymakers, enterprise support agencies and SMEs to share knowledge and experiences in the development of e-business development services.

. . . . .

[12] ESCAP has also developed ICT Guidelines on ICT Application for Trade and Transport Facilitation for Landlocked Countries, at http://www.unescap.org/icstd/applications/projects/TTF/guidelines.asp