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<th>Consultation on Media and Economic Development in Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam : 7-9 December, 1998, Phnom Penh, Cambodia : [group discussions]</th>
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CONSULTATION ON MEDIA AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
December 7-9, 1998, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

Group 1: How can media promote economic development?

Chairman: Vu Ngoc Dung

Rapporteur: Harish Mehta

Members:
1. Savonkhone Razmountry – Laos
2. Pineprathana Phanthamely – Laos
3. Pen Samithy – Cambodia
4. Him Suong – Cambodia
5. Tiv Sarayaet – Cambodia
6. Dang Thi Mai – Vietnam
7. Michael Hayes – Cambodia

Group 2: How can the government assist mass media in promoting economic development?

Chairman: Sek Barisoth - Cambodia

Rapporteur: Anita Doraisami

Members:
1. Kamkhong Songvongsa – Laos
2. Thongvanh Bounbouathong – Laos
3. Samoun Don – Cambodia
4. Koy Weth – Cambodia
5. Ou Sovann – Cambodia
6. Inn Chay – Cambodia
7. Nguyen Van Nhan – Vietnam
8. Vu The Nung – Vietnam
How can the mass media promote economic development in their respective countries?

1. Pursue more vigorous efforts to train journalists in economic and financial journalism and to improve their computer literacy.
2. Initiate courses for senior media managers to ensure more professionalism and better management and supervision of their organizations.
3. Work towards the establishment of research facilities that will provide resources for media practitioners in reporting and analyzing economic issues.
4. Review compensation policies for journalists in an effort to improve their take-home pay and their professional status.
5. Put extra attention towards reporting methods and skills to develop the economy of the family unit.
6. Improve radio and TV programming that will be both educational and entertaining. Programmes should be developed to address issues on the household economy.
7. Help educate business companies in understanding the impact and implications of the participation of Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam in APEC, AFTA and ASEAN, and their (business) role in implementing agreements reached by these organizations.
8. Call on big companies, particularly in Cambodia, to invest in the development of mass media in the region.
9. Request government agencies in Cambodia and Vietnam to improve access to information on economic issues, and, in Laos to improve coordination between various departments in providing economic information.
10. To request foreign organizations like CIDA and AMIC to undertake more-focused training for journalists in the region, specifically on economic journalism and writing skills’ improvement.
How can the government assist mass media in promoting economic development?

1. Strengthen its commitment to build more communication infrastructure.
2. Provide greater support to press associations, for instance, by ensuring that press card holders are given access to the free use of infrastructure.
3. Encourage more dialogues between government officials and the press to ensure better articulation of economic issues.
4. Amend press laws to make them more transparent and less ambiguous in terms of interpretation of violations of press laws.
5. Modify press laws to ensure protection for journalists.
6. Review and amend press laws to clearly define the criteria for classifying documents or government records as not accessible. This will ensure that access to non-classified documents are more readily available to the mass media.
7. Set a policy that will encourage women to join the journalism profession, and provide training and support for this endeavor.
8. Foster a more conducive business environment for mass media. In the case of Cambodia, businesses should be free to advertise in any media outlet.
9. Look into the possibility of subsidizing the use of the Internet and of providing access to the latest publications through media libraries.
10. Review training needs and available training facilities for journalists with the end in view of supporting and encouraging such training. This will involve more consultation with associations of journalists on training needs, among them training courses on economic journalism, foreign languages and writing skills.
11. Encourage and support the establishment of awards to promote journalistic excellence.