P-ISSN: 2204-1990; E-ISSN: 1323-6903 DOI: 10.47750/cibg.2021.27.02.436

# Solutions For The Human Resource Development Cooperation For Tourism In The Mekong Sub-Region

# DR. HUYNH THI GAM

Associate Professor, Academy of Politics Region II, Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics, No. 99 Man Thien Street, Hiep Phu Ward, District 9, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

**Abstract:** Human resource is a decisive factor for the development of each industry, each country, each sub-region, including the Mekong sub-region tourism. Previously, the tourism industry of the countries in the sub-region had more or less cooperation in human resource development, but it was still limited and did not really meet the requirements. Therefore, it is very necessary to have many solutions for the above human resource development cooperation. After the Covid-19 pandemic, the world economy and countries in the Mekong River sub-region will recover and develop. This potential tourism industry needs to quickly grasp opportunities, exploit them effectively, which will be a great opportunity for the socio-economic development of countries in the Mekong sub-region.

Keywords: Solutions, human resource, development, cooperation, tourism, Mekong sub-region

#### **INTRODCUTION**

Currently, river tourism is gradually becoming a popular form, giving visitors more interesting, impressive, and different experiences in terms of scenery, discovering unique culture, life, and activities. daily activities of the local people, as well as attractive attractions, are located along the river. The demand for river travel for international tourists tends to expand, especially those in Asia. In Southeast Asia, with its important position connecting many countries and strategic significance for the Greater Mekong Subregion, the Mekong River converges many potentials for tourism development (Ministry of Industry and Trade, 2018). It is important to effectively exploit this rich potential, link the unique products of each country to form a tourism chain associated with the Mekong River, develop a comprehensive and attractive river tourism product. into a common tourism brand of the region. In particular, in the context of the ASEAN Economic Community formed at the end of 2015, research to find ways to connect and exploit Mekong river tourism becomes more and more practical, contributing to strengthening the linkage. ending between member countries and promoting regional socio-economic development (ADB, 2015).

In order to contribute to further promoting tourism cooperation within the framework of the expanded Mekong sub-region, well exploiting the efficiency of cooperation, contributing to promoting the tourism development of countries associated with the Mekong River (ADB, 2015), the tourism industry and relevant sectors of Vietnam have been and will invest in long and short term cooperation; study and promulgate regulations for convenient travel by waterway and road transport means of Vietnam and other sub-region countries; direct and coordinate well the passenger transportation by air in the sub-region; participate in all the development projects proposed and implemented by the Mekong Sub-region Tourism Working Group to integrate well with the sub-region and enlist the support of international organizations and countries. caring dialogue, training high-quality human resources to meet the set requirements (Ministry of Industry and Trade, 2018)

Human resources are the decisive factor for the development of each industry, each country, each sub-region, including the Mekong sub-region tourism. Tourism is considered a no-smoking industry, a very important industry in many countries where the countries of this sub-region have great potential and potential. Previously, the tourism industry of the countries in the sub-region had more or less cooperation in human resource development, but it was still limited and did not really meet the requirements. The Covid-19 pandemic is complicated, difficult to control, causing serious recession and global economic crisis, potentially having a lasting impact on the world economy, changing the way economic activities organization and social life of the world, including the tourism industry (Thu, 2020). But countries in the world as well as the Mekong sub-region expect tourism to quickly recover and develop after the pandemic. Therefore, it is very necessary to have many solutions for collaborative human resource development for the smoke-free industry serving this industry in the fast and efficient sub-region.

#### VIETNAM TOURISM IN THE MEKONG SUB-REGION

Tourism is an integrated economic sector and increasingly asserts an important role in world economic development. Currently, tourism occupies a leading position in global trade, considered the largest export and job creation industry in the world. According to the World Tourism Organization, in the twenty-first century,

Copyright © The Author(s) 2021. Published by *Society of Business and management*. This is an Open Access Article distributed under the CC BY license. (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

tourism has become the most important economic activity on a global scale. With the increasing role of the tourism industry in the world economy, more and more countries attach importance to tourism development, considering tourism as the main driving force for socio-economic development. In 2014, the ASEAN region welcomed 97.2 million international visitors, an increase of 3% compared to 2013, of which 28.5 million were traveling within the region. In 2015, the number of international visitors to ASEAN will continue to increase, contributing to ASEAN's economic and social development.

In the context that the world economy in general and the Vietnamese economy, in particular, are still in the process of overcoming recession and restructuring and gradually looking for new growth engines, despite facing many difficulties. challenges, but Vietnam's tourism industry has quickly recovered and grown fairly. By the end of 2014, the country welcomed 7.9 million international visitors, an increase of 4.0%; about 35 million domestic tourists; The total revenue directly from tourists is about 200 trillion VND. Thus, just 5 years after declining in 2009, the number of international visitors to Vietnam has increased 2.1 times; total tourism revenue increased by 2.3 times. It can be affirmed that in the past period, the tourism industry has undergone a long growth period with the expansion of the scale and strength of the tourist service's infrastructure and technical potential; infrastructure system associated with planning and investment in developing tourist zones, routes, points, and urban centers in 7 tourist regions of the country; business system in the fields of travel, accommodation, transportation, entertainment, etc. with a variety of tourism products targeting new markets, at the same time with the direct and indirect workforce is enhanced in both quantity and professional level, etc. These achievements have marked an important milestone in the history of the development of the tourism industry on the threshold of integration and development of the new period.

The Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) includes Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar, and Yunnan province, the Guangxi province of China. This expanded subregional cooperation program, conceived in 1992 under the initiative of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), is the most complete cooperation program in Mekong Subregion cooperation. Up to now, the GMS cooperation program has achieved important achievements in 10 main areas of cooperation including Transport, Energy, Environment, Tourism, Information Communication, Trade, Investment, Human Resource Development, Agriculture and Rural Development, and Urban Development along the Economic Corridors.

There are 11 priority cooperation programs that GMS has identified, including Posts, telecommunications and communication technology; North-South economic corridor; East-West Economic Corridor; Southern economic corridor; Links to electricity and electricity trade in the region; Framework for environmental strategy; Facilitate cross-border trade and investment; Increased private sector participation and competitiveness; Developing human resources and skills; Water resource management and flood prevention; GMS subregional tourism development (ADB, 2015). Among the 11 programs that prioritize cooperation, there are programs that develop human resources and skills; to develop tourism in the GMS sub-region. By mid-2014, GMS has implemented 75 investment projects with a total cost of about 16 billion USD, including projects to develop tourism infrastructure, etc (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, 2017).

These projects are highly appreciated by countries for their effectiveness as well as contributions to the socioeconomic development, poverty reduction in the Mekong sub-region. In the long term, the goal of the economic cooperation program of the Mekong Subregion is to promote and facilitate economic development cooperation for mutual benefits between countries in the region, in order to bring the Mekong Subregion to expand soon to become a fast-growing and prosperous region in Southeast Asia. In the short term, the goal is to promote joint activities in the most feasible areas. It is infrastructure, trade and investment, tourism, environmental protection, and human resource development, creating an environment conducive to the development of long-term economic cooperation, promoting and creating the best conditions, and support economic cooperation for mutual benefits among countries in the sub-region.

Economic cooperation includes 5 countries Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam (ACMECS) (ACMECS was established in November 2003 at the Bagan Summit proposed by Thailand; Vietnam officially Participating in ACMECS at HNBT ACMECS for the first time in Thailand, November 2004) the policy of strengthening mutual and mutual economic cooperation to exploit and promote comparative advantages among regions, member countries, high competitiveness, narrowing the development gap. Up to now, ACMECS has 7 areas of cooperation: trade - investment; Agriculture; energy industry; traffic; medical; travel; and human resource development. Each country is assigned to coordinate some fields, Vietnam is assigned to coordinate two areas of human resource development and industry - energy; Cambodia coordinates tourism cooperation. Current ACMECS cooperation is still progressing slowly, mainly bilateral projects (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, 2017), as follows.

Mekong-Korea cooperation with priority areas of cooperation is ASEAN connectivity, sustainable development, and human resource development.

The Mekong - Ganges River Cooperation (MGC), India has undergone 5 Ministers Meeting. The Second Ministerial Meeting in Hanoi, on July 28, 2001, approved the Hanoi Action Plan and agreements in the areas of tourism, cultural, human resource development, and cooperation.

Cooperation in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam (CLMV) covers the fields of trade, investment, agriculture, industry, transport, tourism, and human resource development. CLMV has 7 specialized working groups coordinated by member countries, specifically, Vietnam co-ordinates the working group on trade-investment, information technology, and human resource development; Cambodia coordinates the tourism working group; Laos coordinates the transport working group; Myanmar coordinates the agriculture and industry-energy, working group. CLMV encourages participation from the private sector and businesses across countries. The first CLMV Summit was on the occasion of the 10th ASEAN Summit, late November 2004 in Vientiane, Laos. The meeting adopted the "Vientiane Declaration" on "Strengthening economic cooperation and integration among CLMV countries".

The goal of the Development Triangle Area of the border areas of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia (CLV DTA) is to strengthen solidarity and cooperation of the three countries for socio-economic development, poverty reduction, contributing to maintaining stability. security of all 3 countries. Cooperation focuses on transport, commerce, electricity, tourism, human resource training, and health. The Development Triangle (CLV DTA) in the border area of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia was decided to establish in 2004 by three Prime Ministers, including 10 provinces: Kon Tum, Gia Lai, Dak Lak, and Dak Nong (Vietnam.); Sekong, Attapeu, Saravan (Laos) and Stung Treng, Rattanak Kiri, Mondul Kiri (Cambodia). In 2009, the three countries agreed to add Binh Phuoc province (Vietnam), Kratie province (Cambodia), and Champasak province (Laos) to the DTA.

The cooperation in the development of human resources for tourism in the Greater Mekong sub-region has initially had many cooperation plans between a number of countries. Human resources in this sector are in great demand, but in some countries, including Vietnam, the quantity and quality of labor are not enough to meet the actual requirements of the job. In recent years, especially before the Covid-19 pandemic, Vietnam has been one of the top tourist attractions in Southeast Asia. The number of international tourists to Vietnam has increased rapidly; the average period of 2016 - 2019 increases about 15% / year and in 1019 will reach 18 million visitors, an increase of over 10 million arrivals compared to 2015 (Communist Party of Vietnam, vol 2, 2021). Vietnam's tourism industry contributes more than 13% to the national GDP. However, due to the impact of the Covid-19 epidemic, in 2020, tourists to Vietnam will only reach 3.8 million, a decrease of 78.7% compared to 2019 (Communist Party of Vietnam, vol 2, 2021). When the pandemic is controlled and prevented, the economy, including the tourism industry, will recover and develop rapidly. This industry will have a great demand for human resources. Vietnam's tourism industry has about 50,000 direct employees and over one million indirect employees, each year the workforce in this industry increases from 30 to 40 thousand people. The Tourism Development Research Institute forecasts that the tourism industry will need about 620,000 direct employees by 2015, and about 870,000 people by 2020. Besides development and progress, the quality of human resources in the industry Tourism, including hotel businesses and accommodation establishments in Vietnam, have not met international demand and standards. Tourism human resources of some countries in the sub-region are still similarly limited and need to be trained, fostered, and improved to be more effective. After 4 months of implementation, by the end of March 2021, more than 500 million doses of the Covid-19 vaccine have been used in 140 countries, of which 39% are in the US and Europe; and "vaccine passport" application. When the prevention and treatment of Covid-19 are effective and the epidemic is over, the world economy including the Mekong sub-region will recover and develop, especially the tourism industry. Therefore, right now, it is necessary to prepare, consolidate and perfect all factors to welcome opportunities for the recovery, which may explode tourism after a long time this demand is inhibited. Accordingly, it is very necessary to have many solutions for cooperation in developing tourism human resources in the Mekong Sub-river.

#### BASIC SOLUTIONS TO DEVELOP TOURISM IN THE MEKONG SUB-REGION

Firstly, there is a common perception of senior leaders and the states in the sub-region about the important role of human resources in tourism development. Human resources, including high-quality human resources with many requirements for quality, operational capacity, etc. are urgent requirements and tasks to meet the needs of tourists in the sub-region to increase competitiveness. competition with other regions of the world. With their brainpower, qualifications, knowledge, skills, high-quality tourism human resources, the tourism industry and businesses will have more creativity, new ideas for tourism products, and increase their potential. competitiveness, ensuring quality improvement, attracting tourists, and creating motivation for customers to have new needs, rationally and effectively exploiting tourism resources and protecting tourism resources.

The tourism industry includes many industries, many different fields of business activities, human resources also have divisions and corresponding groups, but can be seen to include two main groups, the indirect and the direct group. An indirect group is a force of leadership, management, experts, researchers with the requirement to have talent in leadership, management, know how to use, retain, attract talented people, have the ability to contribute and creative, visionary, and responsive to domestic, sub-regional and international tourism. The direct group includes the tour guide, receptionist, room service, table, chef, etc. with high requirements on professional ethics, occupational skills, creativity, life skills, work coordination. , know how to apply appropriate advanced technology, especially foreign languages to work.

Cooperation in many areas of the countries in the Mekong sub-region, including the development of human resources and the tourism industry, has received more or less attention, but sometimes is not clear. Therefore, senior leaders, especially the state apparatus, especially the governments and administrative agencies of the countries need to have a clear, correct, and profound general understanding of the importance of human resources. of the tourism industry and human resources in this industry. On the basis of common perceptions from high levels, it is necessary to make the leadership and management forces at all levels of each country fully and properly aware. From the clear and thorough understanding of the importance of human resources in the tourism industry, the legal framework and mechanism for human development will be formed; At the same time, it is concretized into programs, plans, solutions, measures, etc. to direct the implementation.

Second, there are mechanisms, policies, strategies, programs, and plans in the training and retraining of human resources for the sub-region. On the basis of the expanded cooperation and high-level agreements between countries in the sub-region and sub-region, it is necessary to quickly promote the training and retraining of tourism human resources for the sub-region. Vietnam is assigned to coordinate human resource development; Cambodia coordinates the working group on tourism, the two countries have a higher responsibility for training and retraining. It is necessary to concretize high-level cooperation documents into specific mechanisms, policies, programs, plans... to carry out the training and retraining. The content of training and retraining human resources for the tourism industry also requires adequate and close investment and cooperation. The content of training and retraining is both comprehensive and intensive so that learners are equipped with a lot of general knowledge, both with expertise, proficient in the profession, proficient in skills, appropriate style ... A part of human resources in tourism in sub-region countries still has many limitations in foreign languages, so they face many difficulties in communication and at work. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to equip foreign language facilities for tourism human resources, especially specialized foreign languages.

Thirdly, promoting the role of the State, schools, and enterprises in other countries in the development of tourism human resources: To build, train and foster the development of tourism human resources, especially tourism human resources. High-quality calendar, very necessary to promote the role of the state, schools, and businesses of each country and country in the sub-region.

The State of the countries needs to have the right direction, strengthen the capacity to make policies, develop the legal framework and mechanism for the development of tourism human resources in general, high-quality human resources for the tourism industry. calendar. The State proactively ensures the close linkage between State management agencies, schools, and tourism businesses in training, retraining, and using human resources for the industry. The tourism industry for each country and sub-region is very necessary to supplement, complete, or build new sets of common national and sub-regional criteria on training and retraining of tourism human resources as the basis for The school completes the curriculum, content, and curriculum to suit the requirements and needs of training and retraining of human resources of the industry and tourism businesses. These criteria should come from the reality of the tourism environment and the needs of the tourism industry in each country and sub-region.

In the training and fostering of human resources, the school plays a very important role, having decisive significance in terms of both quantity, especially quality. The XIIIth National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam requested "Improving the quality of human resources associated with promoting innovation, strong application and development of science and technology" (Communist Party products of Vietnam, vol 2, 2021). To ensure that the above requirements are met, the trainers need to be trained, retrained and fostered, cultivated with experience and practice in order to improve their professional qualifications, develop in-depth in the tourism field. that they are in charge of domestically as well as in countries in the subregion and other countries. Diversify forms of training and retraining; access, apply, and advanced training programs in the world to perfect the training programs in each country in the sub-region. Promote cooperation and exchange with international projects in training and fostering and developing human resources in the sub-region; strengthening organizations for learners to research, visit to learn about the actual tourism environment in countries in the sub-region and other regions. Invest in facilities and equipment for the teaching, practice, and internship of students of the tourism industry appropriately.

Human resources play a decisive role in the development and branding of tourism businesses. Tourism businesses need to build, retain, attract and promote the role of high-quality human resources working in the business with a generous and flexible salary and bonus mechanism, by treating them with respect and concern. their life. Enterprises actively seek and create good human resources and wide choices. Pay more attention to the training, fostering and retraining, retraining of human resources in many ways, many types of classes so that they are practical and effective. The enterprise actively coordinates with domestic training schools, in the sub-region to raise requirements on quantity and quality of human resources and place orders for schools. Enterprises should actively support and finance classes and tourism human resource development training projects at training institutions to meet the needs of businesses; At the same time, tourism businesses should have a close cooperation mechanism to create a practical learning environment for students of the training institutions in a convenient, practical and effective way.

Fourth, to use appropriately trained human resources, to promote their talents and qualities in the industry. After basic training with good quality, the use of human resources is also a very important stage. President Ho Chi Minh - the leader of the Vietnamese revolution, a celebrity of world culture - said that using wood, a craftsman would depend on the straight and curved wood to use for the right job. But use, that you should not tell the blacksmith to close the closet, and the carpenter to forge a knife, so that both of you will be confused. that it takes the courage to raise, promote, and assist them in their work so that they can fulfill their assigned tasks well.

In that spirit, the use of manpower must first be correct. The use must be on a scientific basis, must properly assess the capacity and quality of each group, each part of the tourism human resource, and arrange and arrange accordingly. In arranging, arranging, promoting, and appointing, attention should be paid to the main competencies and strengths of each person so that they can promote their expertise, talents, and talents. For those who really have merit, talent, mind and have influence in the field of tourism, they should boldly use, boldly assign great jobs to them, boldly promote and appoint them to positions, positions corresponding to each country or inter-national agencies and organizations in the sub-region.

Along with the correct use of manpower, it must also be used wisely. That is to have appropriate policies and remuneration, commensurate with each person's efforts, intellectual contributions, effort, and time. There should be policies to keep high-quality human resources and talented people in each tourism business as well as the tourism industry of each country and sub-region. Besides paying attention to material life, it is necessary to have policies to take care of their cultural and spiritual life. It is interested in learning, improving the level of all aspects of human resources, regularly encouraging, encouraging, rewarding, and honoring them satisfactorily; create conditions for them to entertain and play in a healthy way after stressful and exhausting working days.

Properly and skillfully using human resources, especially high-quality ones, is a great motivation for them to bring all their intelligence, talents, and energy initiatives into their work and always aspire to stick with business with the tourism industry of each country and sub-region.

Fifthly, to attract all human resources, especially high-quality ones, to the development of the sub-regions tourism industry: In order to develop tourism in each country and in the entire sub-region, it is necessary to exploit and promote all potentials. and mobilize all human resources in a rich and diversified manner in each country and sub-region. Essentially trained human resources are arranged, arranged, and used so that it is really effective. Creating favorable conditions and opportunities for all economic sectors to participate in tourism business and services. There should be support for tourism businesses in many aspects according to the needs of each business to create motivation and environment for their business process. Help, encourage and guide individual households everywhere, urban, rural, mountainous, coastal, border, island, etc. in the sub-region to participate in business activities, tourism services. and at the same time regularly fostering and equipping them with knowledge and experience in this field. Each country in the sub-region has its own strengths in tourism human resources that need to promote that strength more. At the same time, to continue to have closer cooperation between countries to promote and attract all human resources in tourism, making this industry develop rapidly and bring higher efficiency.

The basic solutions to human resource development in tourism will make an important contribution to the construction and development of human resources to meet the increasing requirements of the tourism industry in the sub-region. When the Covid-19 pandemic is controlled, prevented, and prevented, countries will try to overcome the effects and impacts of the epidemic and will try to quickly recover the economy, especially the tourism industry. This potential smokeless industry needs to quickly grasp opportunities and be effectively exploited will be a great opportunity for the socio-economic development of countries in the sub-region to take off.

#### CONCLUSION

The context of the ASEAN Economic Community was officially born at the end of 2015, including a number of countries in the Mekong sub-region, the tourism industry of Vietnam is facing many challenges in many aspects, including weak human factors. Tourism's human resources have a decisive role not only in the development of tourism but also contributing significantly to the implementation of industrialization and modernization of the country. For many years, the tourism industry has made efforts to mobilize communities, economic sectors, and international support for human development. Although human resource development in the tourism industry has achieved certain results, there are still many shortcomings that need to be addressed.

The aforementioned weaknesses are due to many reasons, but mainly, up to now, the tourism industry has not had a long-term human development program or plan to properly, systematically, and meet the requirements. Therefore, the development of human resources in the tourism industry to meet the requirements of fast and sustainable tourism development, really becomes a spearhead economic sector, contributing more positively and effectively to industrialization modernizing and developing the country's knowledge economy is a necessary job, derived from the requirements of reality. With the goal of developing tourism human resources systematically; increase the quantity, improve the quality, professionalism and rationalize the human resource structure of the tourism industry; improve the capacity and quality of the tourism training system to meet

regional integration requirements; and raise public awareness about tourism and tourism human resources; creating motivation and advantages to promote fast and sustainable tourism development, really becoming a spearhead economic sector.

#### REFERENCES

- 1. ADB. (2015). Mekong Sub-region Economic Cooperation (GMS): An Overview. Retrieved from https://www.adb.org/vi/publications/greater-mekong-subregion-economic-cooperation-program-overview
- 2. Communist Party of Vietnam. (2016). Document of the 12th National Congress of Delegates. Hanoi: National Politics the Truth.
- 3. Communist Party of Vietnam. (2021). Document of the 13th National Congress of Delegates, volume 2. Hanoi: National Politics the Truth.
- 4. Communist Party of Vietnam. (2021). Document of the 13th National Congress of Delegates, volume 1. Hanoi: National Politics the Truth.
- 5. Communist Party of Vietnam. (2021). Document of the 13th National Congress of Delegates, volume 2. Hanoi: National Politics the Truth.
- 6. Ministry of Industry and Trade. (2018). Overview of the Greater Mekong Sub-region Cooperation Program (GMS). Retrieved from https://www.moit.gov.vn/tin-chi-tiet/-/chi-tiet/gioi-thieu-chung-ve-chuong-trinh-hop-tac-tieu-vung-song-me-cong-mo-rong-gms--11103-22.html
- 7. Thu, T. M. (2020). Mekong Lan Thuong Cooperation: Reality and Expectations. Retrieved from https://baoquocte.vn/hop-tac-mekong-lan-thuong-thuc-tien-va-ky-vong-112262.html
- 8. Vietnam National Administration of Tourism. (2017). Report on the ASEAN Vision 2020 and the Declaration of the ASEAN Treaty II on the formation of three pillars, namely, the ASEAN Security Community, the ASEAN Economic Community, and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community.