



Myanmar National Recommendations for the 13th ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour

6 and 7 October 2020

Supporting migrant workers during the pandemic for a Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN Community

Sub-theme 1: Impact of COVID-19 on migrant workers and responses in ASEAN Information

- Ensure availability of accurate data related to migrant workers and Covid-19 situation. (i.e rapid assessments on different work sectors, gender impacts).
- Include Covid-19 related information in pre-departure and other trainings and ensure that all migrants receive pre-departure trainings. Use digital and other platforms for the safety of migrants and for cost effectiveness and accessibility. Develop materials in coordination and cooperation with different stakeholders.
- Disseminate up to date reliable information and provide awareness raising in the migrant language through methods that are accessible to all migrant workers

Return and Reintegration

- Coordinate between countries of origin and destination, and where appropriate, transit countries to facilitate the safe, dignified and timely return of migrant workers regardless of status.
- Ensure migrants receive all wages, social security benefits and compensation due to them.
- Include migrant workers in Covid-19 related social assistance programs implemented by relevant departments to enable migrants to subsist in the short and long term.
- Recognize the skills of returned migrant workers, match with available job opportunities, or offer accessible opportunities to upgrade or reskill.
- Provide appropriate services to the returning migrant workers to mitigate the social and psychological challenges faced in reintegrating.

Recruitment, Deployment and Employment

- Encourage job retention, remote and flexible arrangements, alternative employment, job creation, and renewal or extensions of contract.
- Ensure that employment contracts stipulate that migrant workers do not bear the extra Covid-19 related costs (quarantine, Covid-19 tests, health care).

Access to Justice

- Ensure migrant workers have access to effective complaint and justice mechanisms to improve protection of migrant workers' rights.

Access to Health Services and OSH

- Extend free or affordable healthcare benefits, including free access to COVID -19 testing and screening and free treatment to all migrant workers, including irregular-status migrant workers.
- Ensure that migrant workers are covered under Covid-19 related socio- economic emergency schemes, equal to local workers.
- Enforce regulations in relation to safe working conditions including provision of appropriate PPE.
- Ensure that employer/recruitment agency provided accommodation is decent and safe in line with ILO standards (Recommendation 115).

Sub-theme 2: Inclusive and responsive labour migration policy for future preparedness in ASEAN

Law, Policy and Guidelines

- Develop ASEAN guidelines on protection of migrant workers in crisis situations including health pandemics in accordance with the ASEAN Consensus (Articles 55, 56) as soon as possible.
- Develop clear and comprehensive policy to make sure migration is regular, safe and fair in all circumstances and undertaken with full commitment of all stakeholders.
- Ensure migrant workers' access to essential services irrespective of immigration status.

Social Protection

- Ensure that migrant workers can enjoy the same social protection benefits as the nationals in countries of destination especially when unexpected crisis such as health pandemics occur.
- Extend social protection to all migrant workers including those in informal sectors, i.e. fishing, domestic work and agriculture.
- Negotiate bilateral agreements on portability of social security benefits.
- Ensure migrant workers are able to access national social protection schemes on return home.
- Share experiences and policy reforms on social protection of migrant workers among ASEAN member states.
- Ensure that migrant workers enjoy social protection through strengthened cooperation among ASEAN countries.

Employment

- Incentivize employers to maintain their existing workforce including migrant workers either through exemptions, deductions or deferment of social insurance contributions or through employment subsidies.

Dialogues & Coordination

- Conduct regular consultations on migration laws, policies and programs including tripartite-plus partners. Encourage the participation of international buyers and investors in the consultations; and take a whole of government approach.

Stranded migrants & safe return

- Develop a gender inclusive crisis preparedness and gender response plan for migrant workers, covering support to stranded migrant workers with regular and irregular status and including safe return to home communities.

Skills

- Create local job opportunities, taking into account the skills of returned migrants.
- COD government or employer should provide certificate/recommendation letter recognizing the skills level and/or employment held by migrant workers, which can be used for seeking employment in home country.

Remittances

- Classify remittance service providers as essential services to allow them to operate despite transmission control measures.
- Publicize in real time the location of branches, ATMs, and agents (Remittance License Holders) that are providing remittance services.
- In the medium term, promote digital models of remitting, support universal financial access, enhance payment systems, and help develop the regulatory capacity necessary to support these systems.

The meeting was held online on 6 and 7 October 2020.