

## **Cambodia National Recommendations for the 13th ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour**

**14 September 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**

1. Extend affordable healthcare benefits, including free access to COVID -19 testing and screening and free treatment, to all migrant workers, including irregular migrant workers.
2. Disseminate information and awareness raising in the migrant language through methods that are accessible to all migrant workers, ensuring a 'firewall' between information services and immigration enforcement.
3. Develop a gender inclusive crisis preparedness and gender response plan for migrant workers, covering support to stranded regular and irregular migrant workers and safe return to home communities.
4. Extend social protection/support for migrant workers, including workers in informal sectors or jobs, fishing, domestic work and agriculture, and enable portability of social security benefits while avoiding double payment. Ensure migrant workers are able to access social protection schemes on return.
5. Encourage job retention, remote/flexible arrangements, alternative employment, job creation, and renewal/extensions of contracts, visas, work permits. Allow workers to change jobs without losing visa/immigration status and implement a system by which workers can report changes to employment with Cambodian authorities, through the Embassies or labour attachés.
6. Ensure access to justice and legal remedy and social services, given these are important in times of crisis, including through labour institutions and MRCs. Coordinate support through civil society, trade union and other trusted service providers to reach all populations of migrant workers and encourage cross-border complaints resolution, including for unpaid wages.
7. Reduce cost of sending money and increase the availability and accessibility of remittance services, including digital services, and ensure migrant workers are able to avail of digital service providers.
8. Assist in return to communities of origin and implement reintegration programmes that support migrant workers' productive investment of savings, reskilling and upskilling, and finding local employment.

9. Consider a moratorium on arrests and detention of migrant workers or, at a minimum, alternative options to detention, given the inherent health risks of institutional housing. Where detention of occurs in destination, Embassy or authorities of origin should be officially informed.
10. Consider repayment of, or moratorium of, loan repayments/debt from migration.
11. Increase and improving safe and regular migration channels and fair recruitment through oversight and inspection of all officials and actors within the migration process according to national mandates, especially recruitment agencies.

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

1. Collect and analyse comprehensive confidential and secure sex- and age-disaggregated migration data, recognizing that official data may not reflect irregular movements and particular vulnerabilities of irregular migrant workers. Consider additional data collection methods to fill this gap.
2. Ensure workplaces and employer-provided and -facilitated housing follow labour standards and OSH and WHO safety guidance, including for live-in domestic workers
3. Extend gender responsive social protection coverage to all migrant workers, regardless of the sector of work. Develop regional, bilateral and multilateral agreements, arrangements, or MOUs on the portability of social protection for migrant workers.
4. ASEAN emergency and pandemic preparedness plans should take into account protections for all migrant workers (regular and irregular).
5. Ensure health care systems are accessible to all migrant workers, especially during crises, through delinking health services from immigration enforcement and providing health services through trusted community groups
6. Encourage regional, bilateral and multilateral cooperation and agreements address responsibilities during crises.
7. Prepare an ASEAN emergency and pandemic response plan for all migrant workers and members of their families.
8. Strengthen job-matching, skills recognition, reskilling and upskilling, and trainings.
9. Ensure access to justice, including cross-border mechanisms to ensure compensation for migrant workers, especially for non-payment of wage.
10. Strengthen policies and programmes for return and repatriation, and reintegration programmes and services.
11. Encourage private recruitment agencies and governments to take necessary steps to legislate and ensure implementation of fair recruitment including zero recruitment fee for migrant workers, especially after the COVID-19.
12. Address physical and mental health risks of migrant workers, including those affected by COVID-19, and ensure migrant workers' access to medical services free of charge.
13. Ensure access to justice, including cross-border mechanisms to ensure compensation for migrant workers, especially for non-payment of wage.



14. Strengthen policies and programmes for return and repatriation, and reintegration programmes and services.
15. Encourage private recruitment agencies and governments to take necessary steps to legislate and ensure implementation of fair recruitment including zero recruitment fee for migrant workers, especially after the COVID-19.

The meeting was held on 14 September 2020 at Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and online.