

Cambodian Trade Unions – ILO TRIANGLE Action Plan for 2012-2013

Background

ILO Tripartite Action to Protect Migrant Workers from Labour Exploitation (the TRIANGLE project) aims to strengthen the formulation and implementation of recruitment and labour protection policies and practices. In each country, governments, workers' and employers' organizations are engaged in each of the TRIANGLE project objectives.

The TRIANGLE project highlights the role of trade unions in the protection of migrant workers in sending and destination countries and, where necessary, has supported the development and implementation of a policy and action plan to increase trade union responsiveness to migrant worker issues.

In Cambodia, the workshop on the role of trade unions in the management and protection of migrant workers was held on 23-24 February 2012. Three confederations of trade unions were represented: Cambodian Confederation of Trade Unions (CLC), National Union Alliance Chamber of Cambodia (NACC) and Cambodian Confederation of Trade Unions (CCTU). In addition, representatives from the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, civil society and recruitment agencies were present, as were the ILO Senior Regional Specialist on Workers' Activities and TRIANGLE project staff.

The key output of the workshop was a 'Trade Union Action Plan on the Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers'. The 'Four Pillars', as outlined below and in the "ACTRAV Trade Union Manual: In Search of Decent Work – Migrant Workers' Rights", served as a framework for the development of the Action Plan. The Action Plan will be implemented with the support of the TRIANGLE project and the ILO Senior Regional Specialist on Workers' Activities, based on a detailed workplan in 2012 and 2013.

The action plan is as follows:

Promoting a rights-based migration policy

1. Participate in regular stakeholder meetings to review/develop policies, regulations, ministerial orders (*prakas*) on the governance of labour migration and the protection of the rights of migrant workers
2. Promote the right of migrant workers to freedom of association in the country of destination – in trade unions, associations or any other similar mechanisms;
3. Promote equal treatment for migrant workers including:
 - Access to information for migrant workers (right to publish, access to information regarding services and complaints mechanisms)
 - Access to representation on migrant workers issues, including representation to assist in tackling problems within the workplace
 - Reproductive rights (must ensure reproductive rights, must gain benefits equal to national workers in the destination country, including maternity leave)
4. Advocate and encourage to have a representative/ voice of trade unions in the national assembly

Networking within the country and abroad

5. Build network of trade unions in Cambodia through existing mechanisms

6. Build networks within Cambodia with MOLVT and RGC officials, industry associations and CSOs
7. Build networks between trade unions in destination countries, sign MOUs and jointly advocate for policy change and better working conditions for migrant workers
8. Participate in the ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour and advocate for the establishment of an ASEAN Trade Union
9. Mainstream trade union rights into the ASEAN guiding documents, including the ASEAN Charter and ASEAN Community Blueprints, and integrate the freedom of association into the ASEAN constitution

Education and Information for Trade Unions and Members

10. Include the issue of migrant workers into the constitutions of trade unions
11. Adapt and localize the manual for trade unionists “In Search of Decent Work: Migrant Workers’ Rights” for the Cambodian context in order to improve usability by Cambodian trade unions
12. Organize TOT for trade unionists to become trainers/facilitators on the protection of migrant workers’ rights
13. Provide training on the protection of migrant workers’ rights to members of trade unions

Training and Advocacy

14. Disseminate contact details of the trade unions in Thailand and Malaysia to migrant workers and potential migrants as sources of information and support
15. Translate and disseminate key laws and regulations, policies and documents relevant to the protection of migrant workers in the origin and destination countries
16. Produce IEC materials on safe migration and rights at work
17. Provide awareness raising on the protection of the rights of migrant workers and safe migration to members of trade unions, migrant workers, potential migrant workers and relevant stakeholders through media (TV, radio, community radio, hotline)
18. Take decisive counteraction when alerted to false or misleading advertising for migrant work