



Regional Technical Meeting on Skills Recognition for Migrant Workers

Bangkok, Thailand, 25-27 November 2008

Regional Skills and Employability Programme in Asia and the Pacific
ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

Copyright © International Labour Organization 2010

First published in 2010

Publications of the International Labour Office enjoy copyright under Protocol 2 of the Universal Copyright Convention. Nevertheless, short excerpts from them may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. For rights of reproduction or translation, application should be made to ILO Publications (Rights and Permissions), International Labour Office, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland, or by email: pubdroit@ilo.org. The International Labour Office welcomes such applications.

Libraries, institutions and other users registered with reproduction rights organizations may make copies in accordance with the licences issued to them for this purpose. Visit www.ifrro.org to find the reproduction rights organization in your country.

Regional Technical Meeting on Skills Recognition for Migrant Workers Bangkok, Thailand, 25-27 November 2008 / Regional Skills and Employability Programme in Asia and the Pacific, ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. Bangkok. ILO. 2010
vi, 45 p.

ISBN: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific; Regional Skills and Employability Programme in Asia and the Pacific

occupational qualification / job requirements / skill / standard / manufacturing

13.02.2

ILO Cataloguing in Publication Data

The designations employed in ILO publications, which are in conformity with United Nations practice, and the presentation of material therein do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the International Labour Office concerning the legal status of any country, area or territory or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers.

The responsibility for opinions expressed in signed articles, studies and other contributions rests solely with their authors, and publication does not constitute an endorsement by the International Labour Office of the opinions expressed in them.

Reference to names of firms and commercial products and processes does not imply their endorsement by the International Labour Office, and any failure to mention a particular firm, commercial product or process is not a sign of disapproval.

ILO publications can be obtained through major booksellers or ILO local offices in many countries, or direct from ILO Publications, International Labour Office, CH-1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland. Catalogues or lists of new publications are available free of charge from the above address, or by email: pubvente@ilo.org

Visit our website: www.ilo.org/publns or www.ilo.org/asia

Printed in Thailand

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	v
Background	6
Objectives.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Workshop structure and methodology.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Participation.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Country Papers.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Opening session.....	7
Introduction to the Meeting.....	8
Technical session 1:	8
Technical session 2a	11
Technical session 2b:	14
Technical Session 3:.....	15
1st Working group session:.....	17
Presentation from the Working Group discussions.....	17
Technical Session 4:.....	19
Discussion	20
2nd Working group session:.....	21
Presentation from the 2 nd Working Group and discussion	21
3rd Working group session:	24
Presentations from the 3 rd Working Group	24
Synthesis and Closing Session.....	31
Annex 1: Programme.....	32
Annex 2: Participant List	36
Annex 3 - B Background Paper.....	38
Recent Activity	38
Key Issues Arising from Studies.....	39
Skills versus attitudes.....	39
Using RMCS to assess migrant worker skills	39
Summary	40
Annex 4: Common Understanding.....	41
Common understanding from the workshop participants.....	41

Foreword

This Regional Planning Workshop on Skills Recognition for Migrant Workers represents the fourth stage of a partnership between the ILO and Korea set up to improve regional skills migration. It began with the First Technical Meeting of the Regional Skills Network Partner Institutions in Incheon, Korea in November 2005. This was followed by a Workshop on 'Skills Recognition for Migrant Workers' in Bangkok, Thailand from 23-25 April 2007.

The next step was the development of a set of competency standards that could be used by receiving countries to specify their skills requirements and by sending countries to recognise skills gained by the migrants upon returning home. The Manufacturing Regional Model Competency Standards following discussions in Korea.

Seven countries, which had signed the Korean Government's Memorandum of Understanding on Workforce Sending, under its Employment Permit System were invited to participate in a long term project to develop long term solution to the problems of skills migration. Cambodia, Indonesia, Mongolia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam agreed to use new Regional Model Competency Standards (RMCS) initially as a tool to improve skilled migration. The Manufacturing RMCS was translated into the different languages and each country then compared their own skill standards to the RMCS and prepared a summary report.

I am pleased that this workshop provided an opportunity to discuss approaches and strategies for sending countries to help in the reorganisation of the skills of their workers. It also played an important role in the development of regional model competency standards, which together with the relevant Korean skills standards, can be used in bilateral negotiations.

I would like to acknowledge the continuing support of the Government of Korea for the ILO's SKILLS-AP programme and the Regional Skills Network. Their commitment continues to make opportunities for sharing ideas and building relationships between the members of the Network possible, and serves as a model to others. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Ray Grannall of SKILLS-AP, ILO Bangkok, who planned and organized this meeting with the support of Ms. Wipusara Rugworakijkul, and Ms. Alin Sisikopatec. Thanks are also due to Mr Manolo Abella, Chief Technical Adviser, ILO Migration Mr. Trevor Riordan of SKILLS-AP, ILO Bangkok

Programme Asia-Pacific, for his inputs, and Andre Lewis who was an invaluable resource person. Finally, I observe with pleasure that this event marks a further step in the ongoing collaboration between Korea and the ILO to provide practical support to constituents in the countries of the Asia-Pacific.

Sachiko Yamamoto
Regional Director
ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

ILO/SKILLS-AP/Korea
Regional Technical Meeting on Skills Recognition
for Migrant Workers
25-27 November 2008, Bangkok, Thailand

Background

In many countries, there are no consistent systems for skills recognition. This affects the capacity of the workforce to employ appropriate staff and to provide full recognition to their employees. These problems are compounded for migrant workers when there is no framework or standards to recognise skills gained working in another country. Problems are also created because there are no standard systems in place to specify skills needed to ensure that migrant workers are matched to jobs for which they have the necessary competencies.

The 2004 International Labour Conference determined that the ILO should play a central role in helping migrant workers and eliminating barriers to fair working conditions and skills recognition. This is a very important issue in a world where 3 million workers leave their homes every year to work abroad. In 2006, the Asian Decent Work Decade was launched at the 14th Asian Regional Meeting to implement programmes promoting a decent work environment for all.

The second technical meeting objectives were to compare and discuss Regional Model Competency Standards (RMCS) validation among the sending countries and Korea and reach a common understanding on the RMCS for manufacturing and how it can be used to facilitate the recognition of the skills gained by migrant workers in Korea.

Employers who are not familiar with skills standards in the origin country may undervalue the migrant workers' competence and offer a lower wage than would otherwise be appropriate. At the same time, migrant workers seeking jobs tend to accept any job which offers higher wages than they could have obtained in their home country. In the absence of a sound method or system for establishing equivalences between jobs and qualifications, migration thus often leads to mismatches and inefficiencies.

Under the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme in 2006 - 2007, the ILO provided assistance to member states on skills standards issue by facilitating the recognition of migrant workers skills through the development of Regional Model Competency Standards (RMCS) for the manufacturing sector. This was presented as a tool for translating national skills standards from sending countries and the competencies required by employers in receiving countries, particularly in Korea. The RMCS could also provide useful guidance to the development of national manufacturing competency standards, in cases where these standards do not exist or require updating.

The meeting aimed to compare and discuss RMCS validation among the sending countries and Korea and reach a common understanding on the RMCS for manufacturing and how it can be used to facilitate the recognition of the skills gained by migrant workers in Korea. Participants from eight sending countries were invited: Cambodia, Indonesia, Mongolia, Nepal, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

Opening session

Participants registered and met in tripartite groups to consider key issues in recognition of the skills of migrant workers. Chairs and panel members for all the programme sessions were elected and provided to the ILO SKILLS-AP secretariat.

The meeting opened with welcome remarks from Mr. Guy Thijs, Deputy Regional Director, ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific who outlined the work of the ILO and its programme to help migrant workers, including the recognition of employment skills. He explained that ILO expertise lies in facilitating meetings and acting as a broker to encourage and exchange views between countries in the region to reach common understandings.

He indicated that a globalized economy makes it easier for some to get jobs anywhere around the world, but for migrant workers, their skills held or gained in the region are not sufficiently recognized in a credible process. He also mentioned that there are difficulties for migrant workers in matching job requirements with recognized skills. The ILO Skills and Employability Programme has been providing support on a regional scale to address this issue. In particular the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme is playing a leading role in facilitating the recognition and transfer of skills between countries.

He continued that the purpose of this Regional Technical Meeting is to look at the current practices among the participating countries and make recommendations for new initiatives to improve the process. It is hoped that by sharing experiences of using the RMCS, the skills recognition process will be enhanced to improve migrant worker assessment opportunities. Mr. Thijs wished the participants well in the meeting and hoped there would be a very fruitful exchange of views and discussion for better future outcomes for migrant workers.

Ms. Jong Soon Kim, Manager of the International Cooperation Team, Human Resource Development, Korea expressed her sincere appreciation to the participants for attending the meeting with special thanks to Mr. Guy Thijs for holding the meeting in Bangkok. She commented that the 2006 ILO/Korea Partnership Programme has made good progress to date holding workshop, meetings and gaining agreement to a Common Understanding on recognizing the skills of migrant workers.

She indicated that the Technical Meeting aimed to compare the RMCS validation with each country skill standards and recognition systems and to determine how to better use RMCS. Ms. Kim hoped that the meeting would strengthen the Regional Skills Network in Asia and other countries and improve the recognition of migrant workers.

Ms. Sutassanee Suebwongpat, Inspector-General, Ministry of Labour, Thailand welcomed all the participants to the meeting and expressed her deep appreciation to the ILO for its tireless work in the organization of the meeting. She noted that Korea has become a model and desired destination for many migrant workers and that all countries have a common challenge in how best to define skill requirements so that the migrant work and skill recognition process is transparent and effective. She outlined the role of the Skill Development Department of the Ministry of Labour, Thailand in conducting skills tests and cooperating with other state organizations and that she was keen to consider the meeting outcomes and recommendations. She hoped that the meeting will be another step towards skills recognition and training improvement in the Asia-Pacific region.

Introduction to the Meeting

Mr. Ray Grannall, Manager, ILO SKILLS-AP introduced the meeting with a brief background on the recent skills recognition survey of Korean employers. The August 2008 survey showed migrant workers in Korea were predominantly in low-skilled jobs indicating the shortage of local workers for this sector. Korean employers did not usually seek high-level skilled workers but often valued certain nationalities of workers known for their good work ethic.

He noted that the RMCS concept was developed in conjunction with various sending countries and indicated that it can be useful as a translation tool whereby each country can compare their own competency standards to Korean employer needs. For this purpose no higher order engineering skills are provided in the current Manufacturing RMCS because they were generally not needed by Korean employers. He indicated that prior to this meeting, each country had been asked to compare their national skills standards with the RMCS units of competency. Sending countries were also asked to assess the number of workers leaving the country, coming back, and what skills were most valued and gained in the receiving country.

Sending countries were also asked to identify any gaps in their competency standards and the RMCS and to provide a brief report. It was recognized that some countries are still in the development phase for skill standards and assessment of skills processes; therefore it may be difficult to obtain information/statistics in these countries accordingly. At a meeting in Sri Lanka, representatives from 10 different organizations (Ministry of Education, Labour, and Migration) discussed key points and ways of managing the skills migration process more effectively.

As every country has a different way of managing migrant workers, he noted that there is a need to find a common standard for skills migration processes and skill recognition for leaving and returning migrant workers.

Mr. Grannall introduced Mr. Trevor Riordan, Senior Training Policy Adviser from the ILO Geneva Office and Mr. André Lewis, an Australian consultant who developed the original RMCS. Both acted as support persons throughout the meeting particularly in the technical sessions. He also introduced ILO interns Ms. Eun Jim Shim and Ms. Ju Hyang Lee who acted as coordinators and MCs for each session; Mr. Min Suk Kim, Coordinator of the ILO/Korea Partnership, and the other ILO support staff.

Each participant was then invited to introduce themselves, their organization and position. The Introductory Session finished with an overview of the programme, requirements of technical sessions and finally assigned members of the working groups.

Technical session 1:

Key Issues in labour migration and recognition of migrant worker's skills

The 1st technical session was chaired by Mr. A. Wahab Bangkona (Government, Indonesia) who invited the panellists Mr. Teh Sing (Employers, Cambodia) and Ms. Maria Luz Almazan (Workers, Philippines) to join him. The chair then introduced the first speaker Mr. Manolo Abella, Chief Technical Adviser, EU Migration Project, ILO Office Bangkok to discuss labour trends in the region.

Mr. Abella covered broad perspectives and provided data on migration in the region noting widening income differentials and large differences in productivity among countries (Japan & Korea higher; Hong Kong and Singapore a mid group; Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand, lower in the group). The data revealed that migration is driven largely by income differences. The largest flow of migration does not

occur between highest and lowest income countries but between countries with similar levels of income so local policies make a difference in the flow of migration. In Asia, productivity differs significantly across the region, but its overall growth has fostered progressive integration of labour markets which has created the need for larger skilled workforces. An integrated labour market should mean that there is a single price for labour but in the region this does not hold true since wage differences are not significantly narrowing.

East Asia is catching up rapidly compared to developed countries, but income gaps still remain large. Skills make a difference in migrant behaviour and employers have a preference for skilled labour. Migration occurs not only through legal means with work permit systems but also informally such as by working holiday makers (with exception to developing countries). Each country has its own system for determining the number of migrant workers and their distribution. Points based preferential systems used by the UK and Australia are transparent systems that attract the most skilled people. There are also trainee systems, not particularly important in Asia yet, but there are many agreements among European countries that allow young people to get trained for several months before going back home.

Migrant employment is controlled by quotas, labour market tests, treaties/agreements, employer's attestation, levies on employers, limitations of rights and entitlements. In addition, there are employer guarantees, limits on duration of allowed stay, conditions for change of status, and sanctions against employers who can be penalized if found to bend the rules. There are economic barriers to cross-border movement and one of the biggest is the cost of moving to another country. This can cause the migrant workers to stay longer in their working country until they pay off this cost.

Labour force projections show South Asian countries' labour forces will be growing relatively faster in the period up to 2020 although South Asia will experience slowing growth. All East Asian countries will show growth decline by 2015 and even the Chinese work force will start to decline due to demographic influences. Japan will show negative growth in the period of 2005 -2020 and need 20 percent less workers than today. The working age population in Korea, Japan, Hong Kong and Singapore all shows a decline and Thailand also shows fewer young people in the labour force. These country growth and demographic factors will affect migration in many significant ways. Therefore sound policy on skills recognition is necessary for migrant workers as young workers decline in numbers across the region.

The chair thanked Mr. Abella for his comprehensive presentation and then introduced Mr. Trevor Riordan who presented on skills issues related to recognition of skills from a receiving and sending countries perspective. The driving forces in Asia and the Pacific are competitiveness for business and services activity, skills shortages, labour shortages and a number of problems act as a blockage for receiving skilled workers. Some countries are not yet developed enough to provide skilled workers while advanced countries may have too many preferences. In many countries, including Korea, local workers prefer high-skilled jobs therefore employers need migrants to fill in lower-skilled jobs.

Mr Riordan indicated that there are two basic categories of shortages: technical skills and an overall labour shortage where there is unwillingness of the existing workforce to undertake certain types of work. The ILO policy framework, HRD Recommendation 195, indicates that skills are acquired through on the job training. He continued that countries should recognize this learning and experience and offer special provision for skills recognition of the migrant workers. Skills and labour shortages occur

because of retiring skilled workers. Training systems can also struggle to maintain a workforces' level of skills over time with an over reliance on public training systems. A mismatch between the skills required by enterprises and those provided by training institutions also adds to these problems.

In developed countries, 3D jobs (dirty, dangerous and demeaning jobs) are mostly filled by migrant workers as they are unwanted by the local workforce. Korea is one of the few receiving countries trying to improve the conditions for migrant worker skills training and recognition. While migrant workers get most training and gain skills in the workplace, they usually do not get recognition of this in their own country when they return. There is also difficulty of employers placing migrant workers because of lack of information about their existing skills. In terms of skills recognition, some countries do not have fully developed competency standards. Where they do exist, these standards may be occupation based and too inflexible to recognize lower level skills of migrant workers. Skills issues for receiving countries include assessing the quality and credibility of skills recognition systems in the sending countries.

He indicated that Korea deals with eight sending countries which all have different types of skills recognition systems and their assessment processes can also make recognition of informally gained skills difficult to recognize. Specific issues for Korea and sending countries are therefore different skills standards systems and their stages of development. Different agencies responsible for migration may not always cooperate and share information. Korean employers have also expressed support for skills recognition but hold concerns about their ability to assess fairly and reliably without assistance.

Based on these factors, the key element in the project strategy has been the development of the Manufacturing RMCS to be used as a translation tool between sending countries and Korean enterprises. He indicated that it is therefore important to see how the RMCS compares to each of the countries national skills standards and how competency standards can be used to assess skills directly and are not just for producing training programmes. He concluded by saying that if this occurs, it provides a more dynamic method for the process of skills recognition.

The chair thanked Mr. Riordan for his insights and asked Ms. Jong Soon Kim to present on skills issues in labour migration to Korea.

Ms. Kim spoke from the perspective of the Korean employers and why Korea needed to introduce the Employment Permit System (EPS). She indicated that a labour shortage occurred in Korea from the 1980s despite the economic growth and this particularly affected small and medium enterprises due to changes in population breakdown. As a result of the EPS, foreign workers now comprise approximately 3 percent of the Korean domestic labour market.

In a 2006 survey under the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme, 253 manufacturing industries identified their skill requirement for migrant workers. Previous work experience was an important determining factor in the manufacturing industry. Skills mismatches were often found between migrant workers and the expectations of employers. She pointed out that this was the biggest obstacle for migrant workers without required skills as Korean employers say it is hard to find information on skilled migrant workers.

She indicated that information on migrant job seekers is only basic. Qualification and career details are not registered perhaps due to lack of suitable tools to verify them. To address the verification of migrant workers' skills, a pilot testing programme in Indonesia and Vietnam will begin in certain areas of industry such as construction,

fishing and livestock before being gradually expanded. She concluded by asking the country representatives the following issues:

- Can the RMCS help recognition of migrant workers in concrete terms, along with both sending and receiving countries and what are the expected outcomes?
- What would be most helpful for the migrant workers themselves?

She stressed that countries need to support each other and help migrant workers in a mutually beneficial way.

Panel member Mr. Teh Sing summarized the key points from the presentations of the three speakers and Ms. Maria Luz Almazan highlighted the issues of income differentials across countries as a notable part of the first presentation. She emphasised the issue of skills recognition in addressing income differences. She also concurred that local workers are interested in the higher-income job market so more migrant workers are needed in order to fill low-income jobs. Last but not the least, she stressed the importance of competency standards in order to translate and better match the skills between the sending to receiving countries.

A question from the floor was “How would the emerging economic downturn affect skilled migration?”. Mr Abella responded that large trade sectors would be affected by the markets of the industrialized countries and difficulty financing imports is a very severe problem- already affecting exporters in the region. An immediate effect is where purchase of durable consumer products could be delayed and downstream shipping and transport would be affected. Tourism would also be affected.

This promoted vigorous discussion and participants agreed that the current economic environment would have a longer term impact on migration patterns and numbers.

Mr. Devi Prasad Ghimire from Nepal noted that certificates are not recognized in foreign countries so reliable skills testing/recognition is needed in the Asia and Pacific region. Discussion indicated that certification was an issue but for migrant workers it was not usually possible to issue existing formal certification when assessing migrant workers.

Mr. Ponniah Sivarajah from Sri Lanka shared with participants an article on the Economic Meltdown and its effects on the job and labour sector.

In closing, the chair focussed on the importance of cooperation in skill development and recognition policy, better data on skills shortages/mismatch and development of tools for corporation. He underscored the need for information to better match Korean industry requirements with sending countries’ migrant worker preparation and recognized that more work is required to understand how best to use the RMCS as a translating tool. The chair asked the meeting participants to show their appreciation to the presenters for three very thought provoking and informative presentations in this first technical session.

Technical session 2a

Mr. Pradeep Pandey (Employer, Nepal) chaired the session which provided an opportunity for country presentations on the comparison between the RMCS manufacturing sector and their skills standards systems. He invited presenters from four participating countries to introduce their skill standards systems and comparison with the RMCS

The first country presentation was presented by Ms. Kanika Nong who provided an overview of Cambodia including its location, area and population. Ms. Nong then reviewed development of Cambodian skill standards and their key features. The standards are developed by the Department of Technical Vocational Education (DTVET) and to date have 42 skills standards for trades in various sectors. Cambodian competency standards contain a general outline with a job definition, qualification of standards, a list of experts and secretariat that oversaw development and are in a common format that has a range variables and an evidence guide.

In comparing the Cambodian competency standard with the RMCS it was found that the meaning and concept are very similar; however the draft Cambodia Competency Standards (DCCS) are grouped occupationally and not as functional units like the RMCS. DCCS does not separate Core Units/Key Competency/Basic Competency.

The Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training of Cambodia and the Ministry of Labour of Korea signed an MOU in November 2006 to assist migrant workers. The pre-migration process from Cambodia to Korea includes a skill test, medical check up, job seeker roster, pre-departure training (Korean language) and employment training.

Next was the Indonesian country paper - The Status of Skill/Competency Recognition in Indonesia presented by Mr. A. Wahab Bangkona. He explained the Indonesian National Competency Based Training System, National Qualification Framework, which has 9 levels of qualification and an independent body for training and testing. He indicated that the qualification framework, adopted from Australia, is being adjusted with the ILO standard. Since 2006 the local skill standards (SKKNI) have been aligned with the RMCS. In a general comparison between the format of SKKNI and the Manufacturing RMCS the only difference is that SKKNI has key competencies which explain the general skills needed in order to achieve the performance criteria required by workplaces. Adjustments are being made to follow the ILO model.

The country presentation from Mongolia was conducted by Ms. Enkhjargal Enkhjaivan from Mongolia who introduced Mongolia's employment and unemployment rates. She explained that Mongolia was undergoing transition from a centrally planned economy to a market economy and training has been managed by the Mongolian government since 1990. Nevertheless, the transformation toward a market economy for skills development is now underway.

There is a legal framework for skilled training in Mongolia with laws on employment promotion, vocational and educational programmes. Training providers are both public and private with training also provided by employers, often in an apprenticeship model. Resources are provided through the state budget, employment promotion fund and international donors. An important feature of the system is the role of social partners in better workplace learning. Government formulates policy and the national strategy and a favourable legal environment has been established.

Employers support implementation of the national training policy and play a mediation role. Some problems of workplace learning in Mongolia exist and there are many private training organizations (690) making regulation and quality assurance more difficult. Issues to be addressed include further developing workplace learning and ensuring the vocational education and training system is oriented to decrease poverty and improve the quality of training by improving training facilities and infrastructure, text books and learning resources.

The final country presentation for the session was the Philippines presented by Ms. Irene Isaac from the Philippines, who explained that the Philippines TVET

Qualification and Certification system is a competency based system and uses a functional analysis approach with standards grouped into qualifications – basic, common, and core. The Philippines competency standards format is common to others in the region with a unit title, descriptor, elements, performance measure, range of variable and evidence guide. There are four levels of qualification in the technical sector with 1 the lowest and 4 the highest vocational outcome.

The comparison of the relevant manufacturing Philippines competency standards with the Manufacturing RMCS shows no common units in the RMCS functional area A as these are embedded in technical units in the Philippines standards. There are also some gaps in the RMCS functional areas B, C, D, E, F as local standards have yet to be developed in manufacturing with most being in servicing sector. Development of manufacturing standards is in progress but not a priority. National Certificates are issued in the Philippines and can include Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). The underlying principle in competency assessment and certification in the Philippines is that skills certificates or evidence acquired from overseas can be considered as part of the portfolio of evidence for a candidate and can lead to recognition of competency against local standards and qualifications.

The presentations were followed by question from participants, comments and discussion.

Mr. Trevor Riordan asked Indonesia and Philippines presenters whether they would formally recognize the skills competency that is against RMCS but was provided by Korean employers and matches their countries' standards. The Philippines responded that an automatic system exists where applicants can present evidence of competency and match these with the local credentials. If the evidence is in the same scope of vocational operation, but in different format it can still be recognized. The flexible system of the RMCS is a useful translation tool in this regard and there is hope that the Philippines certificates can also be considered in other countries.

Mr. A. Wahab Bangkora from Indonesia also responded that the recognition of certification using a competency standard is an international process and there are a lot of multinational companies already accepting certificates with the same standards. He also added that he hopes in future the competency-based certification will be recognized against those from foreign countries and vice versa.

Ms. Jong Soon Kim asked whether the sending countries would still recognize the certification of migrant workers in their own country even if it is different from their own since Korea only issues certification according to Korea's own national qualification system.

The Philippines representative responded that they would still recognize the Korean certification in the Philippines even if it was not issued by the government and it can be used as evidence in the Philippines. At the moment the Philippines are recognizing employers' certifications and skill certificates from other countries. They can be used in portfolio assessment as evidence to show competence in a work field.

Mr. Ray Grannall noted some countries require potential migrant workers to learn Korean even before they are recruited. He asked whether it would be a problem if these migrant workers later find out they did not get the job. The Indonesian responded that there are many Indonesians who did not get a job because they failed the skills test even though they learned Korean. The Philippines indicated that a lot of people learn Korean as it is an EPS requirement but they are given priority to learn Korean language only after meeting the other EPS requirements.

The chair thanked the presenters and panel members for their valuable contributions and closed the session.

Technical session 2b:

Country presentations on the comparison between the RMCS manufacturing sector and their skills standards system

Mr. Ponniah Sivarajah (Workers, Sri Lanka) chaired the session and invited presenters from the final four participating countries to introduce their skill standards systems and comparison with the RMCS.

Presentations began with Sri Lanka, Mr. Bolanda Hewa Susantha Suraweera, who described the national qualification framework of Sri Lanka and the national competency standards, competency based training curricula, course accreditation, competency based training and certification. He explained that the Sri Lankan National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) has 7 levels: levels 1-4 are occupational, levels 5-7 have a sector focus.

Comparisons between the Manufacturing RMCS and Sri Lanka's competency standards (NCL-SL) show similarities and the fundamental concept is same; i.e. what an employee is expected to do, not the learning process. But there are small differences between the RMCS and the NCS. For instance, the RMCS has an industry descriptor and coverage while the NCS-SL has unit descriptors. Moreover, the RMCS core and basic competencies under separate functional areas is not a feature in the NCS-SL. The unit format is almost the same but NCS-SL has levels 1,2,3,4 and NCS at certificate levels do not yet cover the manufacturing sector fully. He indicated that by September 2007, 2099 people had migrated for work purposes from Sri Lanka to Korea. Training of migrant workers going to Korea including language training and testing is well organized but selection is not made against technical competencies. Some people seek certification of skills before leaving although many people seek certification upon returning from Korean employment. The number achieving recognition is not significant. If returning workers held skills certification from Korea, that would be sufficient evidence toward an equivalent local qualification. This could be more effectively carried out if Korean standards are made available in English. He noted that it would be useful if there were RMCS packages of units with a focus on Korean Employment as no person can acquire all competencies of a RMCS. In Sri Lanka training for packages of units could be done for prospective migrant workers.

The country report from Thailand was presented by Mr Thawat Phoawanich who introduced the Thai local skill standard (TSS). The Skill Development Promotion Act was in force covering national skill standards and testing. Technical regulations are used to determine the level of knowledge, skill and attitude of workers and the Thai skill standards are divided into 3 levels: 1-basic, 2-intermediate, 3-advanced although not all fields of work have these three levels.

Thai skill standard compared to the RMCS format is different as RMCS has an industry descriptor and coverage. The local standards are occupation based. As noted earlier, the TSS also includes levels. The RMCS supports assessment on the job, by observation or supervisor's reports whereas the achievement of TSS is based on a skills test including assessment by at least 3 assessors. In 2004 the Ministry of Labour in Thailand signed an MOU with the Korean Government to send migrant workers to Korea under the EPS. Between 2005-2008, 1797 workers received skills training and certification.

The third country paper from Vietnam was presented by Ms. Ta Thi Thanh Thuy who explained that in her country, standards are developed for individual trades using occupational classifications and skill levels for each trade based on complexity. There are currently 60 Vietnam Skill Standards (VSS) and of these 47 have 3 levels and 13 skill standards only 1 level. In comparing Vietnam skill standards to the RMCS, it was found that the RMCS has industry descriptor and coverage, primary functions, units whereas the VSS has 3 primary components: work description, list of works and details of works. Skilled migrant workers comprise 50% of those going to receiving countries.

The final presentation was from Nepal by Mr. Devi Prasad Ghimire who indicated that the RMCS concept is relatively new to Nepal. The Council for Technical Education & Vocational Training (CTEVT) is the national body responsible for the overall development of Technical Education and Vocational Training (TEVT) system in Nepal.

The skill testing system in Nepal is managed by the National Skill Testing Board which is the mandated authority for skill test and certification and uses occupational skill standards. To date 14,000 people have received formal certificates of their skill and this is increasing rapidly.

The floor was open to questions to the presenters. Mr. Trevor Riordan asked how Thailand determined what kinds of skills training are required for the migrant workers. Thailand responded that they send a representative from the Thailand Ministry of Labour to Korea to discuss with companies what they needed. Then the curriculum can be developed for specific companies. Mr. Ray Grannall asked whether this was done for every job and the response was no, since it is only done for inter-governmental training programmes.

Ms. Jong Soon Kim asked what the presenters thought about the Korean EPS. It is based only on manual work experience rather than skills. It is not related to how much someone has studied so it is difficult to get a skills job in Korea. Sending countries should make the requirements of the EPS clear first and then tackle the skills issue. She also asked how the skills of returning migrant workers are validated when they return from Korea.

Thailand indicated that they have a pilot project to make it easier for the workers to apply for certification and recognition alongside the current testing programme. The Thai Department of Skill Development did a comparative analysis and found that the level 1 Thai skills standards are identical to RMCS levels. Korea noted that if a hairdresser from the USA had certification they are exempt from tests in Korea. Similar programmes to that would assist recognition in the region.

The chair thanked the presenters and panel members for their valuable contributions and closed the session.

Technical Session 3:

The session was to review the eight country reports and the Korean Report and to identify themes and major issues related to the use of the RMCS. The chair for this session was Mr. Boland Hewa Susantha Suraweera (Government, Sri Lanka) who introduced panel members Mr. Vajira Ellepola (Employers, Sri Lanka) and Mr. Mora Sar (Workers, Cambodia).

Firstly the chair asked Mr. André Lewis to provide a short synopsis on the country reports and presentations.

Mr. Lewis encouraged an interactive session to stimulate the flow of ideas, questions and comments. He noted that it is important to fully understand the role of

RMCS and the reason why there are differences between RMCS and country standards.

He indicated that there were many common themes in the country reports as most countries have been developing skill standards for some years based on a similar model. Many countries see the benefit of skill standards in using them to recognize a person's skill irrespective of where or how it was gained. Ms. Irene Isaac pointed out that progress between countries towards a more common benchmark would be useful so that countries can recognize skills across borders. Mr. Bolanda noted that in view of the global market, skills recognition was not just the workforce for one country's employment but a global issue. Ms. Ta Thi Thanah cautioned that where some skill standards focus on whole occupations it is difficult to compare skills with smaller job role skills.

Mr. Riordan said that whether skill standards are occupational based, industry based, regional tasks and curriculum does not matter as long as the description is made in similar terms. Mr. Lewis noted that the format of the units of competency was reasonably common but grouping standards into particular qualifications because there are different ways of describing qualifications in each industry. Certification frameworks and systems of assessment also differ between countries.

Mr. A. Wahab Bangkona noted that it is hard to determine what the receiving countries wanted from their migrant workers because the sending and receiving countries have different standards. In many cases the sending country must adjust to the receiving countries' standards. The presenter also said that the quality of assessment was an issue with some countries not accepting another countries' assessment process. In such cases negotiations are needed for mutual recognition. Not all countries provide skills recognition against local qualifications for skills gained informally through work experience and on the job training.

The session then focused on terminology. Some reports and the country presentations mention "unskilled" word. A participant noted that in the context of migration there really is no unskilled worker because migrants are hired with some skills. Mr. Trevor Riordan added that one of the things employers always say is that technical skills are important but they also look at whether a person can fit into a team environment. Mr. Vajira agreed that employers indeed recruit on the basis of whether the worker can work in a team. Mr. Devi suggested using semi-skilled instead of low-skilled and the presenter noted it is the work being described so it is best to refer only to the work and not put labels on individuals.

Next it was shown that the RMCS is not a detailed country standard, but a framework that does not contain a lot of the information many countries have in their standards. RMCS describe skills in competency format grouped into functions so there are differences between the RMCS and country competency standards based on occupations. It was noted that there were originally Model Occupational Skill Standards (MOSS) used by a number of countries about 10 years ago. When this approach was reviewed it was found that there was difficulty in comparing occupations between countries. So it was decided to move into a modern competency based approach for the ILO model. RMCS have been designed to assist countries wanting a competency approach and framework. The RMCS are not intended as substitutes to national standards, but a model framework for the region.

The presenter explained that a functional approach does not lock standards into any particular occupation and allows multiple uses of common competencies in a

framework. Across an industry it is likely that up to 25% of the competencies are common between job roles and occupations.

Mr. Vajira noted national skills in certain areas require skills analysis whereas the RMCS does not cover that area. However, some countries in the initial stage of developing a vocational competency-based system can use the RMCS framework as a basis for development. Participants indicated that it was well understood that RMCS is not intended for use as a national skills framework, but to provide a platform. Using RMCS to compare skills across countries can also assist migrant workers between sending and receiving countries. Ninety percent of matching migrant workers with jobs is done if there is a proper recruitment process within a well structured framework. Also, recognition of skills from the employer's perspective is very important. Most governments have a position that values skills recognition, but there is no single system to achieve this regionally.

Mr. Wahab cautioned that even when an employer can see a paper with the experience and skills of a worker it is still hard to determine the quality of his/her skills. Mr. Vajira concurred that basic competence of a worker is the most important issue.

Ms. Jong Soon Kim asked whether a common mechanism that recognizes an applicant's competency could be developed and who would bear the cost. A final comment was that under the Korean EPS employers are employing manual workers and so they do not need to use or assess higher levels of competency. She cautioned that a regional system may make it more complicated than necessary.

1st Working group session:

The purpose of this first group session was to discuss key issues in the recognition and certification of migrant worker skills (three working groups). The chair for this session was Ms. Enkhtuya Enkhjaivan (Employers, Mongolia) who asked Mr. Trevor Riordan to facilitate the discussion. Mr. Riordan provided working guidelines for each of the working groups who then convened to discuss the key issues.

Presentation from the Working Group discussions

The panel Chair Ms. Enkhtuya Enkhjaivan re-convened the full meeting in plenary and asked the three working groups to report back on their deliberations. First to report back was Group 1.

The first presenter was Dr. Devi P. Ghimire who indicated the group leader for Group1 was Mr. Benjamin Kalalo

The group found three main issues in skills recognition of migrant workers:

- Lack of a common testing system for migrant workers from sending country to receiving country indicating the need for a common platform for skill testing
- Difference in competency qualifications between receiving country and sending country
- Language barriers and cultural differences requiring better communication between employers and employees.

The major challenge for sending countries before migrants leave are:

- Trust in the training and assessment of migrant workers
- Communication skills, language, work attitude and dealing with sexual harassment

- Migrant workers not achieving certification of their competency before departure

Major challenges for a sending country when migrant workers leave are:

- Issues on the form of certification of skills gained by the migrant workers during employment.
- The cost of assessing returning workers.
- Lack of interest of returning migrant workers in securing certification of their skills to a higher level from a national agency in the sending country.

The Group 2 Chair and presenter was Mr. A. Wahab Bangkona.

Group 2 found three main issues in skills recognition of migrant workers:

- Mutual recognition including sending and receiving countries' commitment (G to G MOUs).
- Determining an appropriate authority to recognize workers' skills. This could be government, a private organization or employer.
- Technical tools to make the processing more efficient including a quality check mechanism to make a receiving country value the quality of migrant workers.

The group indicated that the major challenges for sending countries before workers go to work abroad are:

- Identifying clear job requirements and information about the expected standards from employers of the receiving countries.
- How to deploy training according to receiving countries' standard and certification to recognize workers' skills. There should be accreditation of training centres checked by a Korean representative in the sending countries.
- The cost of travelling to another country to work must be reduced so it is not a large burden to the workers.

The Group 3 Chair was Ms. Irene Isaac and the presenter Mr. Bolanda Hewa Susantha Suraweera

The group identified three main issues in skills recognition of migrant workers:

- Skills of migrant workers are not always appropriately recognized in receiving countries (EPS) although there is the paradox of a high skilled worker working in the sending country receiving less pay than a low skilled migrant worker working abroad.
- Unskilled people move from one employer to another and cannot be easily tracked.
- The high cost of deployment is a disincentive.

Major challenges of the sending country pre-departure are:

- Quality assurance of assessment and certification
- The high cost of training
- No low skill exit point in National Training System to meet the EPS requirement as most sending countries provide certificates for recognition of skills higher than demanded by Korean employers
- Sending countries do not always have sufficient resources to train and assess migrant workers before sending

Major Challenges of sending countries in terms of returning workers were found to be:

- Some countries do not have an RPL system to assess returning workers effectively.
- Most countries do not have full reintegration programme which may be as important as skills recognition.
- Quality assurance of certificates issued to returning workers is not always in place.
- Limited or no resources for assessing the returning workers

Participants discussed the definition of mutual recognition and Ms Wahab replied that mutual recognition means a recognition system that can serve as a basis for designing training programmes in the sending countries and the receiving countries to accept the workers from the sending country, which can in the long term, develop into a mutual recognition system. It was noted that this is desirable but is very difficult and it requires a long time, resources and negotiation to develop a mutual recognition system.

Another comment was that Korean standards as the basis for mutual skills recognition is problematic as the Korean standard is designed to recognize the high level skills of Korean workers. The chair asked what is required is to recognize lower level skills of migrant workers and whether the ILO developed the RMCS to assist in this regard. Mr. Bangkona commented that sending countries need clear definitions of the level of skill requirement for jobs in the receiving country/industries that sending countries can use as a focus for training.

Technical Session 4:

This session was to receive the Report of Survey of Korean Employers – Validation of RMCS in Korea and introduction to the Proposed Model for Certification of Skills. It was chaired by Mr. Azhar Habib (Workers, Indonesia) who invited panel members Ms. Ta Thi Thanh Thuy (Government, Vietnam) and Mr. Benjamin Kalalo (Employers, Philippines) to join him.

The chair opened the floor to Mr. Ray Grannall for the report of the survey of Korean employers of migrant workers.

Mr. Grannall introduced the August 2008 study in Korea that included discussions with HRD Korea about EPS and meetings with Korean employers provided with the Manufacturing RMCS. The study made a small number of site visits to companies involved in manufacturing and these employers were asked questions related to selection criteria of migrant workers and whether migrant worker skills gained on the job in Korea could be validated prior to workers returning to their sending country.

He indicated that the EPS system was reviewed and it was noted that selection of migrant workers for employment is not based on competencies. Manufacturing employers indicated that under the EPS they only felt that they could specify nationality, age, gender, education although some employers indicated that they would like to specify skill requirements. Skills were not relevant to some companies if the jobs were seen as entirely unskilled, routine DDD work but a majority of employers indicated the RMCS was useful as a concept even though the current Manufacturing RMCS was not relevant to some company jobs. This was in areas of electronics manufacturing and mechanical servicing. Most employers understand the concept although a few indicated the format could be simplified.

In terms of selecting migrant workers, Korean employers held various racial stereotypes generally based on prior experience and chose or did not choose migrant workers from particular countries on this basis. Companies generally supported the concept of providing assessment prior to workers returning to their home country although they indicated they would need assistance in carrying this out. More information is needed in evidence guides on how to carry out assessments. Some larger companies with HR managers and effective training policies indicated that they did not need assistance from a third party organization.

There was also a study conducted in Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Thailand and Cambodia on issues with preparing migrant workers for Korean employment. There was some concern that workers wasted money training for a job they cannot get and wanted information about skills requirements to improve planning and skills development. There is a need to develop systems to recognize skills on return. Sending countries want to develop standard courses for migrant workers including:

- language
- culture
- coping with isolation
- health and safety
- working conditions
- rights and obligations
- business development on return

Mr. Grannall finished with some observations on the use of competency standards in the region. Although standards are available in many countries in Asia Pacific because they can be used for many purposes, some formats are very complex and others designed primarily for training providers and course developers. This means they may not be well understood by employers, industry and worker organizations or used effectively to specify training needs. Future directions for work of the ILO will include continuing discussions with sending and receiving countries, a review of the RMCS format and new models for further development and uses of the RMCS.

Discussion

Mr. Wahab asked whether there has been a response to industry on the real skill needs in a particular field. The response was that the Korean EPS programme is designed for 'unskilled' migrant workers. Unlike 'skilled' migration where work has been done to identify the 'skills' that are needed, Korea only requires basic level of skills.

Ms. Kim commented that even though Korea's industry is very complex and there is a demand for high skills, the RMCS does not cover skills of all sectors in Korea. She asked what could be done to improve the RMCS to cover all these factors. Mr. Grannall replied that funds permitted the ILO to develop new RMCS in agriculture, manufacturing and engineering sectors. In Australia, NZ, UK, and Singapore, there are 20,000 competencies grouped in different ways, which provides priorities for training.

It was noted from participants that higher order skills in the original RMCS were taken out because Korean employers did not require them, but can be easily put back. Ms. Isaacs commented that the RMCS is about more than the requirements of Korea and the model was not designed for specific need of a single country/market. An example is that the Philippines modified their standards for butchering and abattoir work based on the Australian standard. This was given to four meat processors who were willing to provide workplace training based on the standards. The training has been accepted in Australia for migration purposes and also in Canada.

There was a view that employers might find competency standards too complicated for normal use. Employer representatives were asked if development of a simple guide to describe skill standards and their uses, without complex details, would be useful and Mr. Grannall indicated the ILO is developing a simple small summary document for the RMCS.

Mr. Kalalo said the Philippines is trying to develop skills of migrant workers to meet a global need and if RMCS are not limited to one country but covers a global scope.

Ms. Thanh Thuy Ta commented that in the presentation, Mr. Grannall mentioned that the employers were generally agreeable on supporting assessment and certification of the workers. She asked whether there has been further development on details and plan on how to do so. The response was that the questions were general and specific details not given. Issues such as who would pay and would it be affordable for the workers need to be addressed.

Mr. Kalalo commented that investment in worker training is generally done by the sending countries. He suggested that it would be better if the receiving country also contributes to training the incoming migrant workers. It was important to see this as an 'investment' rather than a 'cost' factor as both sending and receiving countries will be the beneficiaries. The chair thanked the presenter Mr. Grannall and the meeting participants for their contribution and closed the session.

2nd Working group session:

This session was to discuss the proposed model for the certification of migrant worker skills and the chair for this session was Ms. Irene Isaac (Government, Philippines) who introduced Mr. Andre Lewis to facilitate the session. He provided working guidelines for each of the working groups who then convened to discuss the key issues. Each group was required to consider an ideal model for certification of migrant workers and describe its features from the perspective of government, employers and workers. Also to comment on the value of a simple guide to the RMCS designed for employers. The groups then convened for discussion on the session topic.

Presentation from the 2nd Working Group and discussion

Ms. Irene Issac (Government, Philippines) served as session chair and invited each of the three working groups to present their outcomes. Ms. Enkhjargal Enkhjaivan presented the outcomes of Working Group 3 chaired by Mr. Pradeep Pandey. Group 3's main features of a model for skills recognition for migrant workers were:

Government features -

- Pre-departure skill recognition
- Market oriented skill recognition
- Simple and well specified skill requirements
- Employers' features-
- Evidence of work performed and skills gained in the receiving country should be provided in statement recognizable in the competency standards of the sending country and vice versa
- Required skills should be incorporated in the migrant worker contractual agreement
- Standards of the sending country should be understandable to the employers of the receiving countries
- Workers' features -

- Skill recognition at low cost
- Simple and understandable process
- Linking skill and remuneration should be addressed

The information that should be included in an RMCS guide for employers, which would be useful, includes:

- Definition of terms
- Benefits of RMCS
- Selection based on competency
- Assessment and certification process

Working group 2 was chaired Mr. Vajira Elleppola and their discussion outcomes were presented by Ms. Maria Luz

The main features of their model were:

Government features:

- Certification issued by authorized bodies in accordance with national skill system
- Valid and acceptable to all stakeholders with industry or employer representation
- Quality assurance to achieve broad acceptance by stakeholders
- Comprehensive with an overall broader context
- A separate working group to handle specific concerns and make the system appropriate for the receiving country
- Assurance from sending and receiving countries that they will follow the guidelines

Employer's features:

- A simple mechanism that is easy to use, practical, and cost effective
- Brief but comprehensive guidelines to follow
- Processes that consider basic skills and work experience
- Recognition of on the job training
- Acceptance that there will be a range of remuneration for specific competencies used

Worker's features:

- Specific skill certification with recognition and acceptability to stakeholders
- More detail and clear specification of skills held
- Value to the worker as it affects the remuneration
- Affordable cost and job security:

A brief guide for employers on the RMCS would be beneficial and should include:

- A brief introduction of RMCS
- Benefits for all (governments, employers and workers) and basic material for initial awareness on RMCS and its uses
- A brief listing of competencies, not a long detailed part of the guide
- How evaluation tools can be used
- How use of skill standards and evaluation/assessment of skills can lead to better productivity

Mr. Thawat Phoawanich chaired Working group 1 and their discussion outcomes were presented by Mr. Benjamin Kalalo

Features of a model included:

Government features:

- Complete, precise information on job requirements
- Information about the receiving country work environment, safety issues/equipment provided, availability of health care
- Terms of employment for job security
- Any social benefits provided such as unemployment insurance, healthcare, medical leave
- The range of remuneration for jobs and whether the remuneration for migrant workers is competitive

Employers features:

- Competency-based
- Include work aptitude (attitude) and how this affects the work plus communication skills
- Teamwork abilities
- Minimum requirement of educational attainment
- A record of work experience

Worker features:

- Work experience and the ability to 'sell' this to an employer
- Educational background
- Technical skill certificate including formal training
- Basic information on skill level that employers will view favourably
- Certification attesting that during employment a person showed good conduct/moral character, etc

Information to be included in an employer's guide to RMCS:

- Industry description and coverage
- Major functional areas of work
- How standards can be used in job descriptions

The chair opened the session up to questions and comments from the meeting participants.

Mr. Grannall indicated that the ILO already has a draft publication on how competency standards can be used to develop curriculum, remuneration, select staff and this should be available in couple of months. Ms. Isaac requested a soft copy be provided to all the participants so that they can comment on it.

Mr. A. Wahab Bangkona noted that one group stressed the importance of a focus on attitudes of migrant workers but it is difficult to address in training because of cultural differences. Clear information on the attitudes of workers from receiving countries is therefore needed as well as technical skill requirements. Ms. Isaac concurred that pre departure seminars should include more culture and language information on the receiving country.

Mr. Bangkona asked the duration of the pre-departure training and whether it is for all workers. Ms Isaac responded that pre departure seminars in the Philippines lasts for 2-3 days and differs from language training which takes 80-90 hours and is for all

migrant workers. Ms. Jong Soon Kim indicated that it is difficult to provide information on working environments, welfare and remuneration.

Participants noted that work environment means where someone will perform their work and the general working conditions, for example OSH, restrooms, canteens, clean working area, not the culture or the people in the workplace. Another participant said it was not necessary to specify remuneration for specific competencies, but to include a remuneration range in the broader sense that will provide employers and workers an idea of this important aspect of migrant work conditions.

It was also noted that sometimes competency looks basic but the accountability and the responsibility of the job may affect the pay. Mr. Grannall said remuneration linked to competency development and the negotiations required would slow down the migration process.

The chair noted that this issue, linking productivity to wages has been discussed before but not materialized. Nonetheless it is an interesting topic and an issue for future discussion. He thanked the presenters and participants for a very interactive session before closing.

3rd Working group session:

This session focussed on the preparation of national plans for consultation on the development of systems to support the use of the RMCS in skills recognition for returning migrant workers (tripartite country groups) This session was chaired by Mr. Duy Yuan Ngyen (Employers, Vietnam) who introduced Mr. Ray Grannall to facilitate.

Mr. Grannall asked the participants to form tripartite country working groups and develop a Country Action Plan covering:

- What can do to improve existing migrant worker skills certification and who will be responsible?
- What is a realistic time frame for enactment?
- How it will occur?
- Should it include assessment for returning workers?
- Who is responsible?
- Are any changes needed to skills training, prior to leaving the country?

Finally what would each country do about improving the statistical collection on migrant workers covering:

- planned activity/activities
- who is responsible
- by when?

Participants then convened their country groups for discussion.

Presentations from the 3rd Working Group

The panel Chair Mr. Duy Yuan Ngyen re-convened the full meeting in plenary and asked the eight tripartite country working groups to report back on their deliberations.

ACTION PLAN	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
Thailand		
Improve existing migrant worker	Department of	November

ACTION PLAN	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
<p>skills certification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing standards that are competency based and can link to RMCS (Pilot project) <p>Assessment for returning workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carried out based on pilot project <p>Skills Training for Migrant Workers – Pre departure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing <p>Statistical collection on migrant workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooperation and implement between responsible departments 	<p>Skill Development by Office of Skill Standard and Testing Development,</p> <p>Department of Skill Development and Department of Employment</p> <p>DSD and DOE</p> <p>Department of Employment</p> <p>Department of Employment</p>	<p>2008 onward</p> <p>By 2010 (approx)</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
Indonesia		
<p>Improve existing migrant worker skills certification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing harmonization of National Competency Standards (SKKNI) and Korean competency Standards by industrial analysis Go to Korea and do analysis of what kinds of jobs are available for Indonesian workers and what kind of skill is needed. Dissemination of relevant competency standards to selected training providers 	<p>Directorate of Standardization and Training Program, Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Assessment for returning workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nominated relevant training centers Frame of working development for training implementation based on needs Clustering for target groups and capacity building 	<p>DGOTPD and Overseas training center and responsible institutes</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

ACTION PLAN	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
<p>Skills Assessment for returning workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certification through skill testing working with Korea using competency based assessment by assessors • Dissemination of harmonized competency standard to national professional bodies 	<p>BNSP (Badan Nasional Sertifikasi Profesi = Indonesia Professional Certification Authority LSPs (Professional Certification Body)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Statistical collection on migrant workers:</p> <p>Needs updating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue current programs 	<p>Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration and BNP2TKI (National Authority for Migrant Worker Placement and Protection)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Philippines</p>		
<p>Improve existing migrant worker skills certification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competency standards developed by industry experts • Assessment conducted by accredited assessors • in accredited assessment centers • Registry of Certified Workers available at government website • Online verification of national certificate • ISO certification • Implement continuous improvement system based on market directions • Development of additional competency standards as indicated by job markets • Update competency standards as dictated by technological changes and structural changes in the workplace • Plan/Do/Check/Act system implemented 	<p>TESDA</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Assessment for returning workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of Prior Learning allowing work and competency certificates to be used as evidence in assessment and certification of skills according to 	<p>TESDA</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

ACTION PLAN	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
<p>experience, and skills gained not yet recorded</p> <p>Skills training for migrant workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The government will select suitable, reliable institutions that provide quality training. <p>Statistical collection on migrant workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not currently undertaken but will be addressed as above 	<p>CTEVT and PTP (private training)</p> <p>Government and CTEVT</p>	<p>Beginning immediately.</p> <p>N/a</p>
Cambodia		
<p>Improve existing migrant worker skills certification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently there 42 skills standard with a review of only 3 standards against the RMCS – electric welding gas <p>Skills assessment for returning workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More time is needed to prepare for EPS. <p>Skills Training for migrant workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language, culture, work etiquette, OSH <p>Statistical collection on migrant workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No official collection of data collection 	<p>MOLVT</p> <p>MOLVT, overseas sending board. Non-government side CAMFEBA</p> <p>NPIC, MOLVT plus ACRA (new agency)</p> <p>Employers and unions plus ACRA</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>N/a</p> <p>2009 and ongoing</p> <p>2009 and ongoing</p>
Sri Lanka		

ACTION PLAN	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
<p>Improve existing migrant worker skills certification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify Competencies relevant to different employment in Korea/Other countries Obtain job description from receiving countries Gather information from returnees. Map competencies in NCS Relevant to jobs and RMCS Develop Technical Training Programmes based on Skills Identified Conduct Training Programmes 	<p>TVEC/FEB/EF/TU</p> <p>TVC</p> <p>TVEC/other Training Providers</p> <p>TVET Agencies</p>	<p>Jan-Mar 2009</p> <p>Apr-Jun 2009</p> <p>Jun-Dec 2009</p> <p>Jan – Onward 2010</p>
<p>Assessment for returning workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness on Assessment and Training on Preparation of Skill Evidence Portfolio Assistance to Migrant workers to prepare evidence portfolio and endorsement from receiving countries Register Returning Workers for RPL Assessment <p>Statistical collection on migrant workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistical Data on Departures /Returnees and Assessments will be collected, Analysed and Published in TVEC/FEB Labour Market Bulletin Maintain a database of Returnees with summary of their Skill Portfolios 	<p>TVEC/Training Agencies</p> <p>Receiving Countries</p> <p>FEB/TVEC</p> <p>TVEC/FEB/EF/TU</p> <p>TVCC/FEB</p>	<p>Jan On ward 2010</p> <p>2010 onward</p> <p>2010 onward</p>
Mongolia		
<p>Improve existing migrant worker skills certification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefing to relevant authorities 	<p>Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour, Mongolian Employers' Federation and Confederation of</p>	<p>2009</p>

ACTION PLAN	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution of information to people related to Vocational Education Training • National workshop on national strategy workplace learning in Mongolia with ILO February 2008 • Improving workplace learning to national level <p>Assessment for returning workers and statistical collection on migrant workers:</p> <p>LEGAL FRAMEWORK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National strategy for workplace learning in Mongolia • Legal innovation such as Vocational Education Law, Employment Promotion Law • Establish certification and evaluation system <p>INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Committee on human resources development formed • Social partners participation negotiated • Training providers – employers’ direct connections made <p>BUILDING CAPACITY SOCIAL PARTNERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between government organizations • Between various employee organizations • Between various employers’ organizations 	Mongolian Trade Unions	2008 On
Vietnam		
<p>Improve existing migrant worker skills certification and assessment for returning workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After setting up skill assessment organizations the skills of returning workers will be assessed and 	Under General Department of Vocational Training – MOLISA)	By 2010

ACTION PLAN	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMEFRAME
<p>recognized</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase number of skilled workers (50%) Upgrading knowledge of teachers Set up some core vocational training colleges (skills, foreign language, orientation training); 100.000 workers go to work abroad annually. By 2010: 70% are skilled workers By 2015: 100% are skilled workers 	<p>Department of Overseas Labour and General Department of Vocational Training (both under MOLISA)</p>	<p>By 2010</p>
<p>Statistical collection on migrant workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain information from sending agencies and provincial labour departments Close cooperation with Immigration Bureau of Public Security Ministry 	<p>MOLISA</p>	<p>By 2010</p>

Synthesis and Closing Session

The closing session was chaired by Mr Ray Grannall. The constituents of the meeting was Mr Thawat Phoawanich (Government, Thailand), Mr. Benjamin Kalalo (Employers, Philippines) and Mr. Ponniah Sivarajah (Workers, Sri Lanka).

Mr Thawat Phoawanich as a government representative noted that the global working environment is changing and migrant workers are working abroad in larger numbers and bringing remittances back to their country. The RMCS is a model that can help the migrant workers when they return, by recognizing skills gained while working in a receiving country. He thanked the ILO and its staff for organizing the meeting, the Korean participants, Ms. Jong Soon Kim and Mr. Min Suk Kim, and to all the participants for an excellent meeting.

Mr. Benjamin Kalalo from an employer perspective recapped the activities of the meeting and the topics and outcomes from each technical and working group session. He noted that the country presentations did not resolve much of how to use and compare country standard to RMCS because of differences in the development stages of the participating countries' skill standards systems.

He indicated that the RMCS is valuable to employers if they see the value of competency standards to their operation and the work of the ILO to these ends. The simplification of RMCS will increase the support of the standards by employers. Mr. Kalalo on behalf of the participants commented that he learned a lot during the sessions but it is a journey of 1000 steps. Having this in mind he praised the dedication of the ILO staff that will eventually benefit sending and receiving countries. He thanked the participants for providing valuable information and discussion, particularly the support

from Korea. Mr. Ponniah Sivarajah agreed to provide the workers' view and thanked everyone for the opportunity to participate in the meeting. He commented that only by taking back what we learnt, we can solve the problems in our own countries.

Then, the chair invited Ms. Jong Soon Kim, HRD Korea to address the closing session. Ms. Jong Soon Kim expressed her sincere appreciation for all participants and said she had learnt a lot from the presentations and discussion. She stressed that human resource development is paramount in a rapidly changing society with increased labour mobility. It was therefore important to consider worker skills, and what would assist migrant workers.

She commented that since the RMCS are developed to recognize skills, it is hoped they will play an important role in the future toward a sustainable migrant worker development system. It is not always easy to use RMCS in the work environment and some countries do not have fully developed skill recognition systems. However, all participants will develop ideas from this meeting and acknowledge the opportunity to exchange a lot of information and build friendships. She described that the HRD Korea implements a system for 3 million migrant applications every year and uses its national occupation standards to recognize to skills. All participants with good ideas to cooperate with Korea should contact HRD Korea to improve cooperation. And she thanked the ILO and all the participants.

Mr. Grannall thanked Ms. Kim and concurred that as migration is increasing in the region, good skills recognition systems will play an increasing role to support migrant workers. He thanked HRD Korea and the Korean government for funding the RMCS and meeting, the ILO consultants, interns, Ms .Eun Jim Shim and Ms. Ju Hyang Lee and staff, particularly Ms. Wipusara Rugworakijkul and Ms. Alin Sirisaksopit for organizing the meeting along with all the participants for their valuable contributions.

Annex 1: Programme

**ILO/SKILLS-AP/ Korea Regional Technical Meeting on
Skills Recognition for Migrant Workers
Bangkok, Thailand
25 – 27 November, 2008**

PROGRAMME

TUESDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2008

0800 – 0830	Registration
0830 – 0900	Individual meetings of Government, Employer and Worker participants Selection of Panel chairpersons and members
0900 – 0930	<i>Opening session</i> <i>Welcoming addresses</i> Mr. Guy Thijs Deputy Regional Director, ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific Ms. Jong Soon Kim Manager, International Cooperation Team, HRD Korea

Ministry of Labour, Thailand

0930 – 0950	<p><i>Introduction to Meeting</i></p> <p>Mr. Ray Grannall</p> <p>Regional Senior Advisor, Skills and Employability Programme for Asia and the Pacific, ILO</p> <p>Introduction of participants</p> <p>Programme outline</p> <p>Arrangements for the meeting</p>
0950 – 1000	Group photo
1000-1030	Tea/coffee break
1030-1200	<p><i>Technical session 1: Key issues in labour migration and recognition of migrant workers' skills</i></p> <p>Panel Chairperson: Mr. A. Wahab Bangkona, Indonesia</p> <p>Presentations:</p> <p>Mr. Trevor Riordan Senior Training Policy Specialist, ILO Geneva</p> <p>Mr. Manolo Abella Chief Technical Adviser, ILO Migration Programme Asia-Pacific</p> <p>Ms. Jong Soon Kim Manager, International Cooperation Team, HRD Korea</p> <p>Panel Member: <i>Employer representative & Worker representative</i></p> <p>Questions and comments</p>
1200 – 1330	LUNCH
1300 – 1500	<p><i>Technical session 2a: Country presentations on the comparison between the RMCS Manufacturing sector and their skills standards system</i></p> <p>Panel Chairperson: Mr. Pradeep Pandey, Nepal</p> <p>Country Presentations: Cambodia, Indonesia, Mongolia, Philippines</p>
1500 – 1530	Tea/coffee break
1530 – 1700	<p><i>Technical session 2b: Country presentations on the comparison between the RMCS Manufacturing sector and their skills standards system</i></p> <p>Panel Chairperson: Mr. Ponniah Sivarajah, Sri Lanka</p> <p>Country Presentation: Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam, Nepal</p>

1800 – 2000 Welcome reception hosted by ILO

WEDNESDAY, 26 NOVEMBER, 2008

0900 – 1000 **Technical Session 3: Review of the 7 country reports and Korean Report to identify themes and major issues related to the use of the RMCS**

Panel Chairperson: Mr. Bolanda Hewa Susantha Suraweera, Sri Lanka

Mr. Andre Lewis
ILO Consultant

Panel member: Employer representative & Worker representative
Questions & comments

1000 – 1030 **Tea/coffee break**

1030 – 1200 **1st Working Group Session: Discussion of key issues in the recognition and certification of migrant skills** (three working groups)

Panel Chairperson: Ms. Enkhtuya Enkhjaivan, Mongolia
Introduced by Mr Andre Lewis, ILO Consultant

1200 – 1330 **LUNCH**

1330 – 1400 **Presentations from the Working Group discussions**

Panel Chairperson: Ms. Enkhtuya Enkhjaivan, Mongolia
Reports from three working groups
Questions & comments

1400 – 1500 **Technical Session 4 Report of Survey of Korean Employers- Validation of RMCS in Korea and introduction to the Proposed Model for Certification of Skills**

Panel Chairperson: Mr. Azhar Habib, Indonesia

Mr Ray Grannall

Regional Senior Advisor, Skills and Employability Programme for Asia and the Pacific

Panel member: **Government representative & Employer representative**
Questions & comments

1500 – 1530 **Tea/coffee break**

1530-1700 **2nd Working Group Session: Discussion of the proposed model for the certification of migrant worker skills**

Panel Chairperson: Ms. Irene Issac, the Philippines
Introduced by Mr Trevor Riordan ILO Geneva

THURSDAY, 27 NOVEMBER 2008

0900 – 1000

Presentations of the 2nd Working Group and discussions

Panel Chairperson: Ms. Irene Issac, the Philippines

Reports from three working group

Discussion (Facilitated by Mr Trevor Riordan ILO Geneva)

1000 - 1030

Tea/coffee break

1030 – 1200

3rd Working Group Session (Tripartite Country Groups)

Preparation of national plans for consultation on the development of systems to support the use of the RMCS in skills recognition for returning migrant workers (tripartite country groups)

1200 – 1330

Lunch

1330 – 1500

Presentations 3rd Working Group

Panel Chairperson: Mr. Duy Yuan Nguyen, Vietnam

Country presentations: Cambodia, Indonesia, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines,

Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam

Questions & comments

1500 – 1530

Tea/coffee break

1530 - 1630

Synthesis and Closing Session

Chairpersons: Mr. Raymond Grannall, ILO/SKILLS-AP and

Ms. Jong Soon Kim, HRD Korea

Constituent representatives

Annex 2: Participant List

Ms Kanika Nong
Deputy Director
General Department of Technical Vocational
Education and Training, Ministry of Labour and
Vocational Training
sophoanpich@camnet.com.kh

Mr Teh Sing
Vice President
Cambodian Federation of Employers and
Business Associations (CAMFEBA)
camfeba@camfeba.com

Mr Mora Sar
Federation President
Cambodia Labour Confederation (CLC)
clc.cambodia@online.com.kh

Mr A.Wahab Bangkona
Director Standardization, Competency
Programme and Training, Directorate General of
Training and Productivity Development, MoMT
Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration

Mr Azhar Habib
Coordinator of Issues: Migrant Workers
Confederation of Indonesian Trade Union
(CITU)
kspi_citu@cnbnet.net.id

Ms Enkhjargal Enkhjaivan
Specialist of Industrial Relation Department
Mongolian Employers' Federation (MONEF)
monef@magicnet.mn

Mr Batzorig Jalkhar
Senior Specialist of Mongolian Education and
Science Workers' Union
Confederation of Mongolian Trade Unions
(CMTU)
cmtu@mongol.net

Mr Devi Prasad Ghimire
Vice Chairman
Council for Technical Education & Vocational
Training (CTEVT)
admin@ctevt.wlink.com.np
ghimiredevi@yahoo.com

Mr Pradeep Pandey
Vice President and Chairman, Employers'
Council of FNCCI
Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce
and Industry (FNCCI)
fncci@mos.com.np
employers@fncci.org

Mr Ayodhya Prasad Yadav
Deputy General Secretary
Nepal Trade Union Congress (NTUC)
ntuc@wlink.com.np

Ms Irene Issac
Executive Director, Qualifications and Standards
Office
Technical Education and Skills Development
Authority (TESDA)
Mdhernandez@tesda.gov.ph
Milagros_dawahernandez@yahoo.com

Mr Benjamin Kalalo
Director/ Trustee
Employers' Confederation of the Philippines
secretariat@ecop.org.ph
ancheta.tan@dtpsi.com.ph
ijramoya@hotmail.com

Ms Maria Luz Almazan
Officer-in-Charge of TUCP's workers' college
Trade Union Congress of the Philippines
sectucp@tucp.org.ph

Mr Bolanda Hewa Susantha Suraweera
Deputy Director General
Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission
samanmalie@tvec.gov.lk

Mr Vajira Ellepola
Assistant Director General
Employers' Federation of Ceylon
ravip@empfed.lk
empfed@sltnet.lk

Mr Ponniah Sivarajah
Vice President (Media)
Ceylon Workers Congress
sart@mposl.slt.lk

M.L. Puntrik Smiti
Director of Skill Standard and Testing
Development Office
Department of Skill Development, Ministry of
Labour

Mr Thawat Phoawanich
Director of Skill Standard and Testing
Development Office
Department of Skill Development, Ministry of
Labour

Mr Thawatchai Polcharoen
Secretary General
National Congress of Private Industrial
Employees (NCPE)

LEKNCPE_TH@clickta.com
Taa_ncpe_th@hotmail.com

Ms Thanh Thuy Ta
Official of Labour Market Department
International Cooperation Department, Ministry
of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA)
lrđ@Netnam.org.vn
VuIDVL@fpt.vn

Mr Duy Yuan Nguyen
Director of Vinh City
Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry
(VCCI)
vcci@fmail.vnn.vn
huy.siyb@hn.vnn.vn

Mr Dang Quang Dieu
Deputy-Director of Socio-Economic Policy
Department
Vietnam General Confederation of Labour
(VGCL)
doingoitđ@hn.vnn.vn

RESOURCE PERSONS

Mr Andre Lewis
Director
Andre Lewis and Associates PTY Ltd
andre@andrelewisandassociates.com.au

Ms Jong Soon Kim
Manager, International Cooperation Team
Human Resources Development Service of
Korea
jongsoon@hrdkorea.or.kr

ILO

Mr Guy Thijs
Deputy Regional Director
ILO/ROAP
thijs@ilo.org

Mr Raymond Grannall
Manager, SKILLS-AP
ILO/SKILLS-AP
grannall@ilo.org

Ms Wipusara Rugworakijkul
Programme Officer
ILO/SKILLS-AP
wipusara@ilo.org

Mr Trevor Riordan
Senior Training Policy Adviser, ILO Geneva and
SKILLS-AP
ILO/Geneva
riordan@ilo.org

Ms Thetis Mangahas

Senior Regional Migration Specialist
ILO/BKK
mangahas@ilo.org

Mr Manolo Abella
CTA, EU/Migration Project
ILO/BKK
abella@ilo.org

Ms Rakawin Leechanavanichpan
Programme Officer, EU/Migration Project
ILO/BKK
abella@ilo.org

Mr Min Suk Kim
Coordinator of the ILO/Korea Partnership
Programme
ILO/BKK
mskim@ilo.org

Ms Napaporn Udomchaiporn
Programme Officer, ILO/Korea Partnership
Programme
ILO/BKK
napaporn@ilo.org

Ms Eun Jin Shim
Intern
SRO/BKK
bkk_intern5_sro@ilo.org

Ms Ju Hyang Lee
Intern
ILO/SKILLS-AP
bkk_intern8_skills@ilo.org

OBSERVERS

Mr Bayu Prayitno
Head Sub-Division Competency Standardization
Development
Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration

Mr Teerasak Yuphech
Department of Skill Development, Ministry of
Labour

Ms Prommongkol Wongboonfoo
Vocational Training Official
Department of Skill Development, Ministry of
Labour

SECRETARIAT

Ms Alin Sirisaksopit
Secretary
ILO/SKILLS-AP
alin@ilo.org

Annex 3 - B Background Paper

The main objective of the project is to better meet the skill demands of Korean manufacturing industry employers for migrant workers from specified sending countries. An additional objective is to explore the potential for migrant workers returning to their home countries to be provided with some form of evidence of any new skills they may have acquired while working in Korean enterprises. The initial target groups were migrant workers from The Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam as an ILO/KRIVET Survey on Foreign Worker's Skill Requirements showed that these four countries were predominant suppliers of migrant workers to Korean manufacturing SMEs. However the spread of sending countries is wider than these four and includes Cambodia, Mongolia and Indonesia.

The first meeting in Korea in January 2007 considered results of the ILO/Skills-AP/KRIVET study report. This was based on the survey of 250 Korean manufacturing industry employers who employ migrant workers and indicated certain differences in understanding of the required skill levels and job roles for migrant workers. This was discussed at an ILO/SKILLS-AP/Korea Regional Planning Workshop Meeting on Skills Recognition for Migrant Workers held in Thailand in April 2007. The meeting participants considered views of the Korean government and employers plus those of participants from sending countries. The participants reached a common understanding on migrant worker management and skill assessment issues and indicated that a 'common language' of skill descriptions would be useful and the RMCS may assist in this regard. (Common understanding from the meeting at **Attachment A**)

Recent Activity

As proposed by the Regional Meeting the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific Senior Specialist on Skills Development and Manager of the Regional Skills and Employability Programme (SKILLS-AP) conducted a mission to Korea in order to interview selected Korean employers and determine the key issues with defining migrant workers skills and test whether the Manufacturing Regional Model Competency Standards (RMCS) could assist in better matching of employer skill demands with migrant worker sending country assessment processes. There was also consideration of whether migrant workers returning to their home country could have additional skills they had gained in Korean employment recognised in some way.

In addition to the Mission to Korea, sending countries undertook a comparison between their local skill standards and the RMCS to determine whether the RMCS could be used as part of the 'common language' of skill descriptions between migrant worker sending and receiving countries. The sending countries' comparison studies are from:

- Cambodia
- The Philippines
- Thailand
- Sri Lanka
- Mongolia
- Vietnam
- Indonesia.

The comparison results will be analysed and a consolidated report prepared by the ILO for distribution to meeting participants.

Key Issues Arising from Studies

Job roles for migrant workers tend to be focussed on lower paid and lower skilled jobs, sometimes in less attractive work environments that does not interest or sufficiently engage the local workforce. This is not universal and some employers provided job opportunities where the migrant worker could use existing skills in more challenging work or gain new skills in workplaces through mentoring and informal training. Irrespective of the type of work available in a receiving country it should be an aim to provide better information to prospective sending countries and individuals to assist in preparation. A migrant worker may not reasonably expect to gain employment overseas in areas of work they are already experienced or competent in, but they should at least be aware of what sort of jobs they will be expected to take.

Skills versus attitudes

In the studies to date and interviews with Korean employers of migrant workers it appears that the attitudes and/or cultural backgrounds of migrant workers are considered more important than skills. Employers are often looking for physical attributes such as strength and endurance to perform heavy work rather than particular skill sets. They also sought workers with a strong work ethic and 'friendliness' which may be interpreted as a willingness to take instructions readily and stick to their allocated roles.

It is not an uncommon employer trait to seek a more compliant workforce, however it carries the risk of creating workers who are afraid to question a supervisor's instructions even when they may know it is not going to lead to a satisfactory outcome or could be done more effectively another way. Often people closer to the day-to-day work itself can make their own decisions on how to perform well. Close or over supervision is also an expensive option taking away supervisors from more useful tasks.

Cultural differences are a more difficult issue than work ethic or skills. Certainly people are more comfortable working with others of a similar background and language. But by their very nature migrant workers will have cultural, language and personal differences to people in a receiving country. This could be seen as a strength rather than a problem if employers learnt a little more about the sending country culture and particular migrant workers to determine what abilities they bring with them that could be actually valuable in a work situation.

It was noted that little Korean language training is provided to migrant workers.

Using RMCS to assess migrant worker skills

Some Korean employers indicated that the manufacturing RM focussed mainly on metals manufacturing and did not include, for example, computer parts manufacture. This was raised previously in terms of plastics manufacturing process. These sector skills could certainly be added to the current RMCS to expand its utility.

It was noted that there were similarities between RMCS competencies and those in lower level Korean competency standards although the latter are based on full occupational outcomes. The RMCS are deliberately not grouped or streamed in

any particular occupational roles but the units can be put together flexibly to describe either whole occupations or less complex job roles. This may need more explanation and examples for employers.

On job training (OJT) for migrant workers is provided by Korean employers but the skills gained are not formally recognised. This may be due to time and cost constraints but there are benefits in assessing training outcomes and rewarding all workers with formal recognition of new skills they develop in the workplace. These benefits include more motivated workers, avoiding unnecessary training and re-training and the potential for employers to determine when better skilled workers can progress to advanced job roles.

Summary

The project work to date indicates there are potential advantages to both Korean employers of migrant workers and the migrant workers themselves in better recognition of skills and matching workers with available Korean job roles.

However under the Korean Employment Promotion Scheme (EPS) the particular skills an employer needs cannot currently be specified and matched to available migrants in the sending country. This seems an aberration in recruitment practice resulting in a mismatch between migrant worker potential and Korean employer expectations. It also means more on job training before a worker can be fully productive and runs the risk of occupational health and safety (OHS) issues with only partly skilled workers operating in workplace environments with machinery, equipment and materials that could be dangerous if misused.

While it is obviously difficult to translate Korean occupational skill standards into sending country languages and try to break them down into the more lower skilled job roles available to migrant workers there is an alternative. The RMCS are in English and all countries can work with them. They do not lock in particular skills to strictly defined occupations and can be 'mixed and matched' to quite routine jobs relatively easily.

Clearly the current RMCS do not cover all the manufacturing sectors where Korean employers have available work for migrant workers but this could be addressed through the ILO development process. If this occurred there is also the possibility of Korean employers providing returning migrant workers with some form of evidence of new skills gained while employed by using RMCS units of competency.

Annex 4: Common Understanding

LO/SKILLS-AP/Korea Regional Planning Workshop Meeting on Skills Recognition for Migrant Workers

Bangkok, Thailand, 23 – 25 April 2007

Common understanding from the workshop participants

The discussion was anchored in ILO Recommendation 195 concerning Human Resources Development, education, training and lifelong learning, particularly sections VI and X:

- 11(1) Measures should be adopted, in consultation with the social partners and using a national qualifications framework, to promote the development, implementation and financing of a transparent mechanism for the assessment, certification and recognition of skills, including prior learning and previous experience, irrespective of the countries where they were acquired and whether acquired formally or informally.
- 11(2) Such an assessment methodology should be objectives, non- discriminatory and linked to standards.
12. Special provisions should be designed to ensure recognition and certification of skills and qualifications for migrant workers.
21. International and technical cooperation in human resources development, education, training and lifelong learning should:
 - (a) develop mechanisms that mitigate the adverse impact on developing countries of the loss of skilled people through migration, including strategies to strengthen the human resources development systems in the countries of origin, recognizing that creating enabling conditions for economic growth, investment, creation of decent jobs and human development will have a positive effect on retaining skilled labour.

There was discussion and agreement on the benefits for all countries of a better management system that improves the quality of the process. If sending countries better understand the requirements of receiving country employers, they can ensure that workers dispatched are well prepared and able to make a contribution and there is less wasted expense in preparation and assessment. This also means that individual workers better understand the working conditions and there is less chance of misunderstandings and mis-matches. Incorporating occupational safety and health awareness and practices in preparation is another important element.

There is a real need for a 'common language' to enable sending and receiving countries to describe their skills needs and expectations. The Regional Model Competency Standards for Manufacturing (RMCS) was seen as a useful approach: by describing individual competencies in workplace oriented terms, it can be used to describe job requirements as well as to match with more conventional skills standards.

The RMCS approach also provides a straightforward way for countries to assess the skills of returning workers against national standards, thereby gaining more value for their own economies from the skills development of their migrating workers.

The discussion and country action plans imply additional work for both Korea and sending countries to further develop the concept and gain benefits. For Korea, participants suggested that more detailed information from Korean employers would be useful, and the RMCS could offer a way to ease that process. For sending countries, there is a need to review their existing use of skills standards, assessment and training processes to determine if they will support an improved approach to migration management.

DRAFT