Third technical meeting of focal specialists on international labour migration statistics in ASEAN

1-2 July 2015

Pullman Bangkok King Power Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand

MEETING CONCEPT NOTE

"ASEAN Member Countries in accordance with national laws, regulations and policies, will […] facilitate data-sharing on matters related to migrant workers, for the purpose of enhancing policies and programmes concerning migrant workers in both sending and receiving states."

- **ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers (2007, Article 18)**

"The ILO will need to reinforce its statistics and knowledge base in respect of migration. That base can then be used as a foundation for improved research and analytical work, which in turn should contribute to improved, evidence-based policy advice."

- **Guy Ryder, ILO Director-General, 2014**

Background

The International Labour Migration Statistics (ILMS) Database in ASEAN was successfully published on 18 December 2014 as a special collection on the ILO's central database, ILOSTAT, as well as through the APMigration web-portal.[1] For the very first time, this new collection brings together quantitative information on international migrant workers' stocks and flows in and from the ten ASEAN Member States. It is based on a comprehensive review of the countries' relevant household surveys, population censuses, enterprise-level surveys, administrative records data, and official estimates produced to date, many of which are published there for the very first time.

The work has been produced by the ASEAN TRIANGLE Project[2] with funding from the Government of Canada and technical support from colleagues in the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, the ILO Department of Statistics, and the ILO's Labour Migration Branch. The design and implementation were conducted in consultation and coordination with the ASEAN Secretariat and focal specialists within the ten ASEAN Member States.

The ILMS Database in ASEAN fills several important knowledge gaps for the region. For the very first time, it permits a comprehensive analysis of the existing labour migration trends within the region to help in the design and implementation of evidence-based policies. It maps out the scope and quality of the existing data sources in each country to highlight the ongoing knowledge gaps and to help better harmonise their definitions and coordinate their future implementation.

The publication of the ILMS Database in ASEAN comes after two successful rounds of data collection launched in November 2013 and July 2014. During these two rounds, the research collected around two thirds of the tables possible, based on more than 40 existing official data sources. The remaining third of the tables left outstanding mainly include some of the unpublished data from recent population censuses in several countries as well as some larger gaps in particular Member States.

In order to help fill some of these gaps and to help strengthen and further sustain the process of data collection and sharing in ASEAN, ILO is hosting its *Third Technical Meeting of Focal Specialists on International Labour Migration Statistics in ASEAN*. The Meeting will bring together Member States' experts responsible for collecting and analysing the data in each country alongside representatives from the ASEAN Secretariat, UN ESCAP and ILO. It will update and share with them the successful progress the work has made so far; discuss outstanding issues and the data sources still outstanding; identify remaining gaps and potential national capacity needs; and discuss the next steps to be taken in this collaborative project. The meeting will also launch the third round of data collection, which will take place during July-August 2015 and be published on ILOSTAT in September 2015.

Beyond the ILMS Database itself, the ASEAN TRIANGLE Project is producing a landmark report to analyse the quantitative data and meta-data gathered under the ILMS Database in ASEAN as well as the available harmonised international sources. During its second day, the Meeting will focus on shaping, expanding and validating the findings and recommendations of this study and receiving participants' inputs and insights on how to improve it.

Objectives

The overall objectives of the Meeting are thus to:

❖ Brief focal specialists on the current progress and completion of the ILMS Database.

❖ Present and share countries' experiences of data collection and discuss, in particular, ways in which data sharing can be promoted among ASEAN Member States.

❖ Identify remaining national capacity-building needs and ways to help fill ongoing knowledge gaps.

❖ Launch the third phase of data collection under the ILMS Database in ASEAN.

❖ Validate and help further develop the conclusions and recommendations of the forthcoming ASEAN TRIANGLE report on international labour migration statistics in ASEAN.

Agenda

The Meeting will be organised around six separate sessions taking place over two days:

Day 1 *Session 1*: Overview of the ILMS Database – the ongoing progress made and remaining knowledge gaps – and ILMS data within a global context.
Session 2: Country presentations – sharing of national experiences on data collection, best practices, obstacles encountered, and strategies for future improvements.
Session 3: Group work – discussion on practical steps Member States can take to improve data sharing in 2015 and better harmonise data collection.
Session 4: Introduction to the '*Guide on developing an international labour migration statistics database in ASEAN*' and launch of the third phase of data collection under the ILMS Database in ASEAN.

Day 2 *Session 5*: Overview of the forthcoming analytical report, introduction to its key findings and themes, conclusions and recommendations and validation of the report findings.
Session 6: Group work – consultation on recommendations and conclusions.

Participants

The Meeting will bring together representatives from national governments, the ASEAN Secretariat, ASEAN Statistics, and ILO. Member states' participants will ideally be the original (or prospective future) focal specialists from each country, including one or both of the Ministry of Labour and another Ministry responsible for data collection (e.g. National Statistical Office, Office of Immigration, etc.).

The Meeting will thus bring together the following ~30 partners and participants:

- *Member States' focal specialists*   ~ 20 participants
- *ASEAN Statistics*   1 participant
- *ASEAN Secretariat*   1 participant
- *UN ESCAP*   1 participant
- *Government of Canada*   2 participants
- *ILO ROAP / DWT*   ~ 5 participants

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[1] See ILOSTAT (www.ilo.org/ilostat, and click 'Browse by Subject' > 'Special Collections > 'Migration') and APMigration (http://apmigration.ilo.org/asean-labour-migrationstatistics).

[2] For more information, see: www.ilo.org/asia/whatwedo/projects/WCMS_193023/lang--en/index.htm.