



## Recommendations from Thailand National Tripartite Preparatory Workshop

### 14th ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour “Recovery and labour migration in the post pandemic future”

26 August 2021

#### Sub-theme 1. Protection of migrant workers during the COVID-19 pandemic: Current situation

1. Ensure equal access to **COVID-19 testing, vaccines, and healthcare**, regardless of migration status.
  - Ensure non-discrimination throughout the schemes and services
  - Ensure sufficient services and supplies and making antigen test kits accessible by making the price affordable to all
  - Producing information about vaccines in migrant worker’s languages to ensure accurate understanding among migrant workers
2. Enable **social distancing** at work, in housing and during transportation.
3. Ensure effective **remedies** for wage violations and other labour and recruitment related violations.
  - Establish mechanisms and simplify processes to facilitate migrant workers’ access to health-related and COVID-19-related services, protection and relief schemes, as well as other assistance services
4. Put in place mechanisms that ensure decent **livelihood**, healthcare and personal freedom during workplace closures as a public health measure.
5. Put in place measures to ensure sufficient income to sustain livelihoods during COVID-19 impacts via:



- Inclusion of migrant workers in government **income support** in destination
- Establish more flexible regulations for migrant workers facing reduced working hours, hence reduced wages. Migrant workers should be allowed to have more than one employment in order to earn enough each month

6. Ensure **migrant returnees'** access to income support and services in countries of origin

7. Offer migrant workers whose documents have expired opportunities to regularise their status; and refrain from the conduct of raids and arrest of undocumented migrant workers during regularization windows.

## **Sub-theme 2. Recovery and the post pandemic future**

1. Promote collaboration between local authorities, businesses and local communities by supporting migrant health volunteers in communities drawing on each stakeholders' resources and assets.
2. Ensure improved **labour protection**, especially for currently excluded groups of migrant workers, i.e. domestic workers.
3. Strengthen **labour inspection**, to ensure its effectiveness in the face of the pandemic and include women in inspectorates and inspections in hard to reach sectors and workplaces.
4. Ensure that **social protection**, including unemployment benefits, fully extend to migrant workers of all sectors in order to ensure migrant workers' resilience for future shocks and crises.
  - Establish monitoring mechanisms to enhance employer's compliance with social security law
  - Support businesses severely impacted by COVID-19 to recover and have the capacity to provide social protection for their employees
5. Work towards the improvement and enforcement of **migrant workers housing standards**.
  - Clear details should be stated in MOUs to enable employers to comply and a monitoring mechanism to be established.



6. **Improve MOUs** to respond to post-pandemic situation and ensure preparedness of future crises in the respects of recruitment, employment and social protection.
  - Ensure adequate skills of migrant workers and their vaccination prior to deployment to Thailand (to reduce costs for COVID-19 screening in Thailand)
  - MOUs should prescribe protection measures and bilateral collaboration to assist migrant workers during future crises and shocks
  - MOUs should set a protection framework for domestic workers
  - Terms and conditions, as well as regulations of recruitment and employment of migrant workers, should be made more flexible with the aim of reducing costs incurred by migrant workers and their employers in line with fair recruitment principles, guarding against the charging of recruitment fees, and COVID-19 related increases to recruitment costs
  - Enhance uses of technology and digital platforms, i.e. mobile phone applications for sharing information and provide training to migrant workers
7. Put in place policies and measures to promote skill development and reskilling for migrant workers to respond to the changing situation.
8. Put in place social measures to redress migrant workers and their families who encountered losses of their family members in Thailand as a result of COVID-19. Measures should include providing assistance to migrant workers in debt situations following the prolonged impacts of COVID-19.
9. **Long-term recommendation:** Develop a comprehensive strategic plan on migrant workers management and ensure participation of varying stakeholders in formulating policies to manage post-pandemic labour migration.

**Recommendations for ASEAN:**

10. Set regional standards on labour migration that ensure collaboration on COVID-19 containment, particularly vaccination for migrant workers.



11. Establish sub-regional and regional collaboration to contain a pandemic through making health screening accessible and appropriate for migration workers, who tend to cross between borders.
12. Upgrade AFML to be more than a platform for discussion, but it should serve as a regional platform for collective decision-making.

The meeting was held online on 26 August 2021.