Workshops and Training
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SADSAWU Strategy Development Workshop for Organizing and Recruiting Migrant Domestic Workers
Johannesburg, South Africa, 6-7 March 2015

A strategic planning workshop was organized in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 6-7 March 2015, with an aim to review the activities of the South African Domestic Services and Allied Workers Union (SADSAWU) for recruitment and organising of migrant domestic workers in South Africa.

Participants of the workshop discussed implementation of the SADSAWU Plan of Action, progress and challenges in the framework of the tripartite dialogue. The Action Plan stipulated that SADSAWU formulate a pre-migration awareness strategy that informs migrant domestic workers about their rights in South Africa and how they can join in the union activities of SADSAWU. Through the discussion, participants agreed on the contents of the migrant domestic workers pre-migration awareness information package.

One of the main outcomes of the workshop was formulation of a strategy for SADSAWU on how to recruit and organise migrant domestic workers, including capacity building activities for domestic workers organizers, media campaigns, lobbying labour inspectors to ensure compliance in the sector, and monitoring and evaluation framework to track the progress. SADSAWU also highlighted that one of the obstacles for the recruitment of migrant domestic workers to the trade union is that most of them are undocumented. From the discussion, it was indicated that South Africa's immigration policy has no legal provisions for the migration of low skilled workers to which migrant domestic workers are a part of. However, there are exceptions, one of which is the Zimbabwe Special Dispensation Permit in South Africa, which allows legal migration of low skilled workers. The Special Permits expired in December 2014 and holders of such permits were allowed to renew them.