Workshop

Social Implications of Economic Integration

“Managing Cross-Border Labour Migration on a Regional Scale”
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>ADB</td>
<td>Asian Development Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>AEC</td>
<td>ASEAN Economic Community</td>
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<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of Southeast Asian Nations</td>
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<td>CDRI</td>
<td>Cambodian Development Resource Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEA</td>
<td>Cambodian Economic Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLMV</td>
<td>Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam</td>
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<td>COMMIT</td>
<td>Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative against Trafficking</td>
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<tr>
<td>CWCC</td>
<td>Cambodian Women’s Crisis Center</td>
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<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<td>GMS</td>
<td>Greater Mekong Subregion</td>
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<td>GtG</td>
<td>Government-to-Government</td>
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<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
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<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organisation</td>
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<td>IOM</td>
<td>International Organization for Migration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lao PDR</td>
<td>Lao People’s Democratic Republic</td>
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<td>PBB</td>
<td>Pan Beibu Gulf Economic Cooperation</td>
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<td>MoC</td>
<td>Ministry of Commerce</td>
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<td>MoLVT</td>
<td>Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training</td>
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<td>MoP</td>
<td>Ministry of Planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>MoPWT</td>
<td>Ministry of Public Work and Transport</td>
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<tr>
<td>MoRD</td>
<td>Ministry of Rural Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>MoSVY</td>
<td>Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation</td>
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<td>MoU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
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<td>MoWA</td>
<td>Ministry of Women Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
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<td>NSDP</td>
<td>National Strategic Development Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>RCI</td>
<td>Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration</td>
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<td>STSLS</td>
<td>National Committee Secretariat to Lead the Suppression of Human Trafficking, Smuggling, Labour Exploitation and Sexual Exploitation in Women and Children</td>
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<tr>
<td>TDRI</td>
<td>Thailand Development Research Institute Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNIAP</td>
<td>United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking</td>
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<tr>
<td>USD</td>
<td>United States Dollar</td>
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Workshop Agenda

16.10.2013, Sunway Hotel, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

8:30 – 9:00 Registration of Participants

9:00 – 9:15 Welcoming Remarks
Dr. Leul Ayalew Mekonnen, Chief of Mission, International Organization for Migration (IOM), Cambodia

9:15 – 9:45 Objectives and Expectations of the Workshop

9:45 – 10:30 Keynote Presentation
Social Implications of Economic Integration: The Need For Managing Cross-Border Labour Migration on a Regional Scale
Dr. Srawooth Paitoonpong, Thailand Development Research Institute Foundation (TDRI)

10:30 – 11:00 Situation Analysis: Cambodia
Stock Taking guided by the Facilitators

11:00 – 11:15 Coffee & Tea Break

10:45 – 11:15 Group Photograph and Coffee/ Tea Break

11:15 – 12:30 Keynote Presentation by Yuko Hamada
Managing Cross-Border Labour Migration: The Role of Regional Frameworks
Yuko Hamada, Senior Regional Labour Migration Specialist, International Organization for Migration (IOM)

12:30 – 14:00 Lunch
Sunway Hotel Phnom Penh

14:00 – 15:30 Regional Cooperation on Labour Migration:
Lesson Learnt from MOUs Between Thailand and Neighbouring Countries
Dr. Srawooth Paitoonpong

Review of Action Plans Under the Regional Framework
Yuko Hamada

15:30 – 15:45 Coffee and Tea Break

15:45 – 17:00 Recommendations for Cambodia
Joint Discussion guided by the Facilitators

17:00 – 17:30 Wrap up and Evaluation
I. Background

Asia is one of the most diverse regions in the world. This is particularly true with regard to economic development. Over the last three decades, the region has experienced a remarkable economic transformation and Asian economies have grown at an unprecedented pace. Hundreds of millions of people were lifted out of poverty. However, Asia still remains a region of enormous disparity in income levels and socioeconomic conditions (ADB, 2006a: 2). Whereas Japan, Singapore and Hong Kong rank among the richest economies in the world in terms of GDP per capita, countries such as Cambodia, the Lao PDR and Myanmar continue to stay among the poorest economies (World Bank, 2013). Hence, the greatest development challenge the region is facing remains poverty reduction.

By regionally interconnecting national economies, regional cooperation and integration (RCI) is considered to be one of the key instruments to respond to this challenge and complement efforts to reduce poverty at the individual country level (ADB, 2006a: iii; ADB, 2006b: 3). Against the backdrop of continuing and ever-changing process of globalisation, RCI in Asia is expanding, bringing with it both benefits and costs (ADB, 2013a: 1). While improved infrastructure and transportation have resulted in deepened trade relations, providing economic benefits to all countries in the Pan-Beibu Gulf region (PBG), it has also widened the gaps between the countries. In the case of Cambodia this development has resulted in enhanced labour migration, mainly to Thailand, but also in other secondary migration to neighbouring countries and the PBG region (ADB, 2013b: 1).

Despite efforts to regulate labour migration from Cambodia to Thailand, most migrants opt for irregular channels, which prove to be faster and cheaper. As a result, they migrate without adequate information about their destination or proper work contracts, which leaves them vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. On the other hand, migrant remittances, for instance, are a valuable and stable source of foreign exchange for Cambodia. Some migrant workers learn skills on-the-job which might be difficult to acquire at home. Others develop a broader vision of their future during frequent seasonal migration. Hence, there is a clear link between migration and development, which has to be managed and facilitated carefully.

This becomes particularly relevant for Cambodia in view of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC 2015) scheduled to be launched in 2015. Only if the Cambodian government is able to manage labour migration on a regional scale, the establishment of a single market and the free flow of goods, services, and capital will benefit the economy and Cambodia's future development.

II. Introduction
On 16 October 2013, the programme “Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration (RCI) in Asia” of Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) convened a workshop on “Social Implications of Economic Integration: Managing Cross-Border Labour Migration on a Regional Scale” in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The workshop aimed to address the demand for capacity development and deepened dialogue between relevant line ministries and key stakeholders engaged in labour migration related issues in Cambodia. The following pages summarise the purpose, main themes and results of this event.

The workshop's goals were:

• to facilitate a dialogue among relevant stakeholders,
• to exchange information and experience in order to develop and strengthen cooperation among relevant stakeholders,
• to gain a better understanding of labour migration management on a regional scale, particularly in view of AEC 2015,
• to build the capacity to assess and manage labour migration on a regional scale,
• to reach a common understanding of social aspects of regional integration,
• to develop policy recommendations and identify next steps in order to meet the challenges of cross-border labour migration in the PBG.
Around 20 participants attended the workshop and jointly discussed the challenges and strategies for managing cross-border labour migration on a regional scale. Participants included representatives of the following ministries: Ministry of Commerce (MoC), Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MoLVT), Ministry of Planning (MoP), Ministry of Public Work and Transport (MoPWT), Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY), and Ministry of Women Affairs (MoWA). Moreover, representatives from the Cambodian Economic Association (CEA), the Cambodian Women's Crisis Center (CWCC) as well as the Cambodian Development Resource Institute (CDRI) joined the event.

We are pleased to present in this report the thoughts generated in the various discussions during the workshop as well as summaries of all presentations.

**Key findings expressed in the discussions during workshop**

**Key problems:**
- Inability to afford the cost of legal recruitment is the predominant factor for irregular labour migration in Cambodia.
- Time-consuming recruitment processes push migrants to use irregular channels.
- The social costs of migration generally outweigh the social benefits of labour migration. Therefore, policies and measures to reduce the social costs of migration are urgently required.
- The concept of labour migration management is quite new to Cambodia. The National Policy on Labour Migration is rather new (2010) and failures in its implementation revealed a lack of overall coherence, a lack of coordination and unclear definitions of responsibilities and mandates.
- Restrictive immigration policies in labour-receiving countries and complex legal recruitment processes were among the key forces driving job seekers into irregular migration.
- Policy management at the ministry level remains weak, but the issue of labour migration is moving up to the national agenda.
- There is no standard employment contract or pre-departure training curriculum.
- On the Thai side, conflicts of interest at the ground level slower labour migration law enforcement.
- Working conditions and access to social services in receiving countries do not comply with international standards.

**Possible Solutions:**
- Costs associated with the process of legalising migrant workers should be minimised by all means.
- The government, line ministries, NGOs, and civil societies should strengthen the recruitment process and enhance social protection of migrant workers in order to promote regular migration.
- Supportive programmes for migrant workers should be strengthened through pre-departure training, information, standardisation of training and skills, access to social services, and portability of benefits.
- Official remittance transfer channels have to be established in order to unleash the development potential of cross-border labour migration.

*For detailed country-specific policy recommendations please refer to page 18*
III. Welcoming Remarks

Dr. Leul Ayalew Mekonnen, Chief of Mission, IOM Cambodia

Excellencies,
Distinguished Participants,
Co-organizers and trainers,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of IOM Cambodia and the co-organizers, GIZ, I wish to extend a warm welcome to all of you to this important workshop on Social Implications of Economic Integration: "Managing Cross-Border Labour Migration on a Regional Scale".

As many of you know migration has become the megatrend of the 21st century. In the year 2010, the world population reached a total of seven billion people and one in every seven persons is a migrant, that is to say, nearly 1 billion of the world’s 7 billion people live outside their place of birth. 740 million are internal migrants who never leave their country or cross an international border while 232 million are international migrants living outside their countries of origin. Compared to other regions of destination, Asia saw the largest increase of international migrants since 2000. Over the past 13 years Asia added some 20 million international migrants. Socio-economic disparities, degradation of the environment and climate change, and increased labour demand in fast growing economies in the South (low and middle income countries) and the ageing North (high income countries) are considered major driving forces ensuring that migration remains in large scale in the future.

In the context of globalization and increasingly interconnected world, migration becomes an essential imperative to sustaining development and ensuring social welfare. For instance, foreign born workforce represents more than 10% of workforce in Western Europe. And South East Asia is not an exception. ASEAN region supplies around 6% of world’s migrant workers and at least 30 percent of them migrate within-ASEAN countries. As much as 63 percent of the workforce in Singapore is foreign born, for instance.

The main challenges today that countries face in managing labour migration are: development of sound labour migration policies, coherent legal and institutional frameworks, ensuring respect for human rights of migrant workers and protection of migrants against abuse and exploitation.

Traditionally, policy discussions on migration focused on movements of people from low-/middle-income countries to more affluent ones, in search of a better life. However, this trend has significantly changed due to the economic down turn in the West and increased economical growth in the South. According to IOM’s World Migration Report of 2013 which was published
last month, the South-North migration corridor currently constitutes only 45% of the global migration today, and the remaining are mix of South-South (35%), North-North (17%) and even North South migration (3%).

It is worth to note that significant portion of labour migration in South East Asia is irregular or undocumented. The causes of irregular migration are many and complex; the push factors in countries of origin are mainly chronic poverty, lack of employment, economic hardship, and lengthy, complex and expensive legal recruitment procedures as well as restrictive immigration policies in labour-receiving countries. Some studies conducted in Cambodia suggest that inability to afford the cost of legal recruitment is a predominant factor for irregular labour migration. In addition, time and recruitment processes also push migrants to use irregular channels. As we all know migrants who use irregular channels often face abusive and exploitative situations, including sexual and physical harassment and lack of access to legal protection. Rural women and youth are in particular the most vulnerable for such exploitative practices. Sadly, migrant workers who use regular channels are also not immune to exploitation and abuse due to malpractice of recruitment agencies and lack of robust regulatory mechanisms.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

IOM Cambodia had been working closely with the Royal Government of Cambodia over the past two decades. Promotion of safe migration has been one of the core activities of our mission in Cambodia. In 2010, IOM in close collaboration with MoLVT developed a pre-departure orientation manual for migrant workers on Safe Migration. The underlying principle for the development of this important manual is that migration experience is considerably and positively enhanced by pre-departure training on safe migration for prospective migrants which will also allow them to reach informed decisions. In same year (2010) IOM also implemented a project on village based activities in close collaboration with MoWA. The core objective of the project was to disseminate at community level reliable information about safe migration, including employment opportunities, dangers of trafficking, rights and responsibilities of migrants, and access to assistance from local service providers including the police.

IOM also continues to provide assistance to victims of trafficking. IOM Cambodia’s migrant assistance programme has helped more than 1,130 Cambodian victims of trafficking since 2007. Male victims of trafficking are on the rise recently most of whom are trafficked for the fishing industry in Thailand. At the beginning of this year, IOM assisted return and re-integration of 32 Cambodian male victims of trafficking from Mauritius, who were trafficked to work on Thai fishing boats for years in slave-like conditions.
Universal instruments such as the UN Convention on Migrant Workers, Regional frameworks such as the ASEAN Declaration on the Right of Migrant Workers as well as national strategies such as those stipulated in the Cambodian Rectangular Strategy and NSDP offer legal and institutional framework to facilitate labour migration and to certain extent also to protect rights of migrants. However, a lot still needs to be done. Irregular cross-border labour migration still exists in large scale, for instance along the long and porous border between Cambodia and Thailand. In addition, human trafficking and smuggling remain to be critical challenges to the gains made so far.

I believe, this workshop will offer a platform for all of you to discuss about the opportunities and challenges that labour migration brings in. I also believe that the workshop in particular will allow you to take stock of substantial achievements made in addressing irregular labour migration in the region, facilitate a dialogue to develop and strengthen cooperation among your ministries, and help build the capacities of Cambodia's government to assess and manage the challenge of labour migration.

Finally, I would like to thank GIZ for co-organizing this important workshop in partnership with IOM and for covering the costs of the workshop.

I would like to warmly welcome you to this important workshop once again, and I wish you a successful and fruitful day.

Thank you.
IV. Workshop Summary

4.1 Objectives and Expectations of the Workshop

As an introduction to the workshop, participants were asked to introduce themselves and to describe their role and duties at work. Furthermore, as a response to the question “What needs to happen in this workshop to make it really worth your time?”, each participant shared one major expectation with the group. The results of this session can be clustered in three categories:

- **Knowledge sharing and peer-to-peer learning**
  - To exchange knowledge, views and information to better understand the subject.
  - To learn from practitioners’ points of view.
  - To apply the newly learned skills at work.

- **Understanding economic and social implications of cross-border labour migration**
  - To receive the latest information on the topic.
  - To gain a better understanding of economic integration (in particular AEC 2015) and its impact on labour migration flows within the PBG.

- **Working out policy recommendations for Cambodia**
  - To get an idea how to manage labour migration on a regional scale more successfully.
  - To improve political efforts in order to achieve regional solutions.
  - To protect rural migrant workers.
4.2 The Need for Managing Cross-Border Labour Migration on a Regional Scale

Dr. Srawooth Paitoonpong, Senior Research Fellow, TDRI, Thailand

In their discussion on social implications of economic integration, participants were introduced to the topic by a keynote presentation on Social Implications of Economic Integration: The Need For Managing Cross-Border Labour Migration on a Regional Scale by Dr. Srawooth Paitoonpong from the Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI).

The discussion included a comprehensive definition of “Economic Integration”, the role of regional economic integration on cross border labour migration, an enumeration of the social implications of cross-border labour migration, their nature and extent, as well as a development on the need for managing cross-border labour migration on a regional scale.

Participants strongly noted that the social costs of migration (such as an increased exposure to trafficking, the interrelationship between health risks and migration; the risks of human rights violation, exploitation and abuse, corruption and bad governance, poor labour standards; brain drain; the impact of migration on the migrant’s children development) generally outweighed the social benefits of labour migration, (such as the impact of remittances on the socio-economic development process in the regions of origin; the opportunity of transferring skills and technologies upon returning home). Therefore, policies and measures to reduce the social costs of migration were called for by participants.

Another issue raised by participants of the workshop was the increased vulnerability of migrant workers during the migration cycle. This was looked at through the example of prevalence rate of HIV in migrant communities. According to participants, the comparison of prevalence rates between host and sending communities had been seen irrelevant, as these figures show the reality of the sending communities, without establishing systematic links between migration and a higher exposure to HIV.

Ms. Yuko Hamada, Senior Regional Labour Migration/Migration and Development Specialist, IOM, also reported on the importance of implementing health assessments, based on the demand formulated by most of the developed countries’ governments. This practice could be seen as a benefit for both the receiving and sending countries.
4.3 Situation Analysis: Cambodia

In the stock taking session, participants discussed Cambodia’s current situation regarding regional labour migration management. The analysis began with a “scaling dance”. The participants were asked to define Cambodia’s baseline status regarding the management of cross-border migration on a regional scale. Thus, they physically positioned themselves on a scale from 1 to 10, which had been marked on the floor of the meeting room (10 meaning the ideal state and 1 meaning the absolute opposite). The "scaling dance" was a lively exercise and generated many responses to the follow-up questions regarding participants’ assessment of Cambodia’s situation. The scaling dance was followed by an interactive presentation by Dr. Paitoonpong and Mr. Chan Sophal from the Cambodia Economic Association (CEA). The assessment provided rich information including the following:

- The population of Cambodia would start aging by 2028, considering that a society is aging when the population gets over 60 years old. In the Cambodian case in the year 2028 this would be more than 10 percent of the entire population. This characteristic is an advantage in terms of demographic dividend, with the availability of growing workforce; compared to the population aging situation faced by Singapore, Japan or Thailand.

- The profile of Cambodian migrants evolved from a majority of migrants being refugees (1980s-1990s) and asylum-seekers to predominant flows of migrant workers for economic reasons (1990s, 2000).

- Cambodia is a latecomer in the area of labour migration management. The National Policy on Labour Migration is rather new (2010) and failures in its implementation revealed a lack of overall coherence and coordination as well as unclear definitions of responsibilities and mandates.

- Irregular migration from Cambodia remains an overwhelming trend and keeps increasing. Reference has been made to a survey conducted among 526 households in four provinces in Cambodia in 2007 (migrant and non-migrant), which revealed that most of the migrants there were irregular (96 percent). Mostly, undocumented migrants tended to face chronic poverty and migrated to support households.
Most irregular migrant families have a lower economic status than regular migrants and live below the poverty line.

The causes of irregular migration are manifold, ranging from chronic poverty, lack of employment and economic hardship in the community of origin to restrictive immigration policies in labour-receiving countries and lengthy, complex and expensive legal recruitment. The predominant factor is inability to afford the cost of legal recruitment.

Legal recruitment is expensive (around USD 700 to Thailand) and time-consuming, informal recruitment takes only a few days and requires no or few documents.

As irregular migration is increasing, so does the overall trafficking caseload (men in the fishing industry, women in the entertainment industry).

Regular labour migrants from Cambodia are estimated accumulatively to have been approximately 20,000 up to 2007.

Restrictive immigration policies in labour-receiving countries and complex legal recruitment processes were among the key forces driving job seekers into irregular migration.

Thailand displays a number of pull factors which make the destination even more attractive than Phnom Penh and other major Cambodian urban areas.

On the Thai side, conflicts of interest at the ground level slower labour migration law enforcement.

In addition, participants discussed the following key points regarding the barriers and obstacles for a proper implementation of the existing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Thailand and Cambodia:

Policy management at the ministry level remains weak, but the issue of labour migration is moving up to the national agenda.

Recruitment processes of migrant workers are both unequal and unfitted to the demand and supply structure on the regional labour market. Passport issuance in Cambodia is costly and time-consuming.

There is no standard employment contract or pre-departure training curriculum.

Working conditions and access to social services in receiving countries do not comply with international standards.

In this connection, the participants recommended that:

For Cambodia, passport fees and visa application processing should be reviewed and an enabling environment for more transparent recruitment processes should be created.

On the Thai side, opportunities to resort to illegal employment should be tackled.

All costs associated in the process of legalising migrant workers should be minimised by all means.
4.4 Managing Cross-Border Labour Migration: The Role of Regional Frameworks

Yuko Hamada, Senior Regional Labour Migration Specialist, IOM, Thailand

After the "Situation Analysis: Cambodia" session, another keynote presentation was held by Ms. Yuko Hamada on Managing Cross-Border Labour Migration: The Role of Regional Frameworks.

She reminded the audience that 3 to 5 million people in the region were migrants, of which 60 percent settled in Thailand. Therefore, she emphasised that the role of regional frameworks to manage cross-border labour migration becomes more and more important. To further underline this point, Ms. Hamada showed a country-to-country comparison. She stated that new regional migration profiles can be observed, such as increasing flows between Nepal and Qatar (400,000 workers), increasing flows to Malaysia, (mostly domestic workers and female migrants). Ms. Hamada also gave examples of national policy responses in the field of labour migration management, such as the case of Bangladesh, which moved from a recruitment process run by private employment agencies to a G to G – Government to Government - recruitment process.

A key statement made in the presentation was that intra-regional migration is expected to continue to increase and intra-regional migration will contribute to regional development. Furthermore, though the Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative against Trafficking (COMMIT) and the United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking (UNIAP) led to substantial progress in information sharing on counter-trafficking, critical gaps remain with regard to the management of such data. Similar issues are encountered in the field of intra-regional labour migration information sharing.

In order to fully harness the benefits from the AEC and better respond to the subsequent challenges, particular attention needs to be paid on strengthening the registration process and the issuing of identification cards for migrant workers, enhancing protection and law enforcement to promote regular migration, monitoring and evaluating migration flows by developing coordination mechanisms and vigilance taskforces (immigration officers, MoLVT, NGOs, and community leaders), and improving overall governance through pre-departure training, information packages, standardisation of training and skills, access to social services and portability of benefits, remittance transfer channels, and productive returns.

Ms Hamada concluded by emphasising the need for coordinated and concerted actions, as national policies are not likely to solve regional or international challenges in the field of labour migration management.
In Session III on Regional Cooperation on Labour Migration, the facilitators adopted a “Caravan” format to blend participants together for the purpose of an informal brainstorming.

For this, the room was prepared with two stations – called oases. The first oasis, Lessons Learnt from MoUs between Thailand and Neighbouring Countries, was moderated by Dr. Paitoonpong, whereas the second oasis, Review of Action Plans under the Regional Framework, was facilitated by Ms. Hamada. The participants were divided into two working groups (caravans) who worked together throughout the full caravan cycle.

The experts (oasis owner) first introduced the topic and then facilitated a free flow of discussions among the participants. After 30 minutes, participants of the two groups switched stations. Following the two oasis discussions, the caravan cycle was completed and participants reunited into one group to formulate recommendations based primarily on the Caravan discussions.

Dr. Paitoonpong's presentation on Lessons Learnt from MOUs between Thailand and Neighbouring Countries included the following key points:

- The trends of CLM undocumented migrant workers in Thailand.
- Structural causes of Thailand’s registration system failure.
- A historical perspective on regional cooperation.
- MoUs’ main principles, with reference to the Bangkok Declaration on Irregular Migration.
- Description of the process of importing workers under MoUs.
- Lessons learnt and results (assessment of MoU implementation, importation and the national verification Process.)
Ms. Hamada’s presentation on *Review of Action Plans under the Regional Framework* included the latest developments of the regional regulatory frameworks, including the non-binding agreements, such as:

- **The Colombo process** which sets up a coordination mechanism of labour ministers of labour migrant sending countries (ten countries from Asia).
- **The Bali process** which sets up a coordination mechanism of law enforcement officials to eradicate irregular migration and eliminating trafficking.
- **The Abu Dhabi Dialogue** process which sets up a coordination mechanism of countries of destination (GCC), established to balance the Colombo process.
- **The ASEAN Labour Ministers Work Plan**.
- **The ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour**, an annual forum which comprises ASEAN officials, civil society and NGOs.
- **The ILO Convention 185**, highly relevant for Cambodia, as many migrants are employed in the fishery sector.
- Frameworks promoting highly skilled migrant worker.

**Infobox**

**The Colombo process:**
http://www.colomboprocess.org/

**The Bali process:**
http://www.baliprocess.net/

**The Abu Dhabi Dialogue:**

**ASEAN Labour Ministers Work Plan:**

**ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour:**

**ILO Convention 185:**

**Recommended Readings:**

*Facilitating Safe Labor Migration in the Greater Mekong Subregion* (by ADB/ IOM)

*Policy On Labour Migration For Cambodia* (by MoLVT/ ILO)

*Cost and Benefits of Cross-Country Labour Migration the GMS: Cambodia Country Study* (by CDRI)

4.6 Recommendations for Cambodia

In the closing session on "Recommendations for Cambodia", participants were provided with blank cards. They were given 10 to 15 minutes to write down at least one "key recommendation". Afterwards the facilitators encouraged participants to explain their recommendation(s) and clustered them as followed:

1. To promote regular migration, the government, line ministries, NGOs, and civil societies should strengthen the recruitment process and enhance social protection of migrant workers.

1.2. Despite the fact that a number of policies and regulatory frameworks have been established over the last decade to better manage the challenges associated with increasing migration flows within and outside the GMS, implementation remains weak and inefficient. Thus, for Cambodia, the government and other stakeholders should establish concerted and reliable implementation and coordination mechanisms such as the vigilance taskforce instituted in recent years in Bangladesh which monitors and assesses migration flows and is aimed at promoting and guaranteeing the rights of labour migrants. The taskforce must involve officials and decision makers from line ministries and relevant departments, including immigration officers, representatives of the MoLVT, of the Ministry of Women’s Affairs, as well as community leaders. The taskforce should be allocated adequate powers to catch and court offenders and perpetrators, and sufficient resources to fulfil its mandate.

1.3. The government and stakeholders should improve coordination and establish information sharing mechanisms between existing institutions involved in combating counter-trafficking, under the frameworks of the COMMIT and the National Committee Secretariat to Lead the Suppression of Human Trafficking, Smuggling, Labor Exploitation, and Sexual Exploitation in Women and Children (STSLS).

1.4. The participation of sub-national level authorities (provincial, district, and commune levels) in the regulatory framework should be enhanced by relevant agencies.
1.5. The government should strengthen or improve protection mechanisms for migrant workers during their stay abroad through the appointment of labour attachés within the Cambodian embassies and consular established in the receiving countries to enhance the provision of direct services to migrant workers.

1.6. The government should strengthen internal control and monitoring of employment recruitment agencies, in compliance with the Sub-decree 190. It should also establish public recruitment agencies and categorise recruitment processes by sectors. It should also attempt, through appropriate mechanisms, to transfer the burden of employment fees from the migrant workers to migrant sending agencies or employers in receiving countries.

1.7. Passport fees and processing time need to be reduced. The government should also establish a network of offices to issue passports both in Phnom Penh and in the key provinces.

1.8. The ministries concerned should minimise costs associated with the process of legalising migrant workers (both locally and overseas).

2. Supportive programmes for migrant workers can be strengthened through pre-departure training, information, standardisation of training and skills, access to social services and portability of benefits, remittance transfer channels, and productive return.

2.1. The government and line ministries should develop literacy programmes on remittance-management targeted at female headed households, train stakeholders from private sectors to develop initiatives and incentives for investment purposes; establish affordable and formal remittance-transfer channels and provide accessible counselling sessions for migrants upon return to Cambodia.

2.2. The responsible ministries and departments should produce and disseminate in-depth analysis on the social costs and benefits of migration and a developed subsequent plan of action.

2.3. The government should develop sustainable forms and channels for awareness raising among migrant communities, through the identification of cost-effective and permanent information channels (MRCs, sub-office at the Immigration department, medias), rather than ad hoc information campaigns.

2.4. The government should produce and disseminate targeted local labour market assessments to identify alternative options for prospective migrants (domestically) and identify new niches of employment internationally.

2.5. The government should develop sustainable technology transfer mechanisms and promote return of qualified migrants.
V. Conclusion

The workshop stirred a fruitful dialogue on the following key issues: (1) developing and strengthening cooperation among stakeholders from relevant line ministries and institutions/organisations in Cambodia (2) promoting the capacity of Cambodia to assess and manage labour migration on a regional scale and (3) reaching a common understanding, among Cambodian stakeholders, of social aspects of regional integration. It assembled participants from relevant line ministries, research institutions and non-government institutions. Participants actively contributed to the discussion on causes for and consequences of illegal labour migration as well as on possible solutions to labour migration problems in Cambodia. The workshop achieved its goal of mapping the status quo and developing concrete and realistic steps for future action. It resulted in a number of sensible recommendations for Cambodia primarily aimed at providing social protection for migrant workers from Cambodia.


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Inputs and Materials

Cross-Border Cooperation and Trade Facilitation in Asia
Social Implications of Economic Integration
Economy Policy Dialogue among Asian Transition Countries

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