

## Background for presentation at International Dialogue on Migration 2018

### *Inclusive and innovative partnerships for effective global governance of migration*

**Note: I will not be presenting all of this text, but want to provide the material for background for the translators especially.**

#### **Role of Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR): Building the Demand for Ethical Recruitment**

1. ICCR is a coalition of 300 faith and values-based investors, founded in 1971 to engage publicly traded companies on a range of social, environmental issues, with human rights as the key lens through which issues are addressed. ICCR's 'No Fees Initiative' started four years ago focused on 3 pillars: no worker-paid fees; no passport/personal paper confiscation and written contracts at the point of recruitment. Through intensive engagement of companies in apparel, automotive, electronics, food and agriculture, Tobacco and Travel and Tourism, over 35 companies have adopted the policy as a means to transform the current recruitment system from 'worker-paid fees' to 'employer pays'. The most recent company to adopt the policy is McDonald's Corporation three weeks ago.
2. It is not enough to adopt policy; we need to see effective implementation. ICCR published a set of case studies and recommendations in May 2017, "[Best Practice Guidance for Ethical Recruitment of Migrant Workers](#)" which is being widely used by companies and other stakeholders, including investors.
3. ICCR has organized 2 multi-stakeholder roundtables on ethical recruitment bringing together companies in many sectors, NGOs, investors, trade unions, US government departments, international institutions (UN, ILO, and IOM) to discuss and build consensus on actions to support ethical recruitment.

#### **Role of ICCR: Sector and Multi-sector Initiatives on Ethical Recruitment**

1. ICCR recognized, along with many others, that changing the paradigm from worker-paid to employer paid recruitment fees, cannot be accomplished by one company, one sector, and one stakeholder. Collective action across and within sectors with a variety of stakeholders is needed to transform the decades-old labor recruitment system.
2. ICCR has been part of 3 initiatives:
  - a. [Leadership Group for Responsible Recruitment](#) (LGRR), a multi-sector initiative of eleven leading companies publicly advocating for the elimination of worker-paid fees. Companies, plus IOM, Verite and ICCR. The LGRR decided in July, 2017 to focus on specific destination countries, deciding on Malaysia and Thailand and the countries of origin of foreign migrant workers to those two countries (example, Nepal, Bangladesh, Burma, and Philippines). Wanted to make progress on creating the demand for responsible recruitment and increase the supply of ethically sourced labor and to advocate for improved protection for migrant workers by brokering

dialogue to promote effective regulation and enforcement of the recruitment industry.

- b. [Consumer Goods Forum](#) adopted a forced labor resolution two years ago--the first initiative of the Social Sustainability Committee which covers, no worker paid fees; freedom of movement (no confiscation of personal papers/passports) and no worker should be indebted or forced to work. The CGF decided to focus especially on two supply chains initially—seafood and palm oil.
  - c. Responsible Business Alliance (formerly EICC) launched on new program in June of 2017, the [Responsible Labor Initiative](#), a multi-industry, multi-stakeholder initiative focused on ensuring that the rights of workers vulnerable to forced labor in global supply chains are consistently respected and promoted. The mission is to work with companies, suppliers, recruitment partners and stakeholders use their collective influence and application of due diligence to drive the transformation of recruitment markets and reduce the risk of forced labor in global supply chains. The key innovation here is the establishment of an integrity system that through trainings, self-assessment, independent assessments, a recruiter can get to a ‘gold’ rating that means it is recognized as an ethical recruiter (charging recruitment fees to companies not workers, etc.). When suppliers are required to work with ethical recruiters by brands/retailers, they will know which recruiters are ‘ethical’. As major global companies adopt ‘no fees’ policies and require their suppliers to pay for recruitment, the market begins to change and recruiters who want the business with suppliers will need to shift to an ‘employer pays’ model.
3. Along with other organizations, ICCR has supported these above initiatives to collaborate in Southeast Asia, building a model of using collective leverage to transform the recruitment system. The 4 day meetings last week (March 19-23) in Malaysia and Thailand is the first time that the initiatives are acting together through:
- a. **Joint planning meetings** charting out a two-year project focused on changing the foreign migrant recruitment system from countries of origin into Malaysia and Thailand. This collective leverage will send a signal to the market and to the governments of these two countries.
  - b. **Roundtables in Malaysia and Thailand** that drive ethical recruitment for suppliers and recruiters. Global brands invited their major suppliers (food, electronics, seafood, apparel, and large retailers) to participate in the training and a subsequent series of trainings in the next 2 years along with their key recruiters. Persons from the [ILO’s Fair Recruitment Initiative](#) assisted with the roundtable in Malaysia and the International Organization of Migration in Thailand.
  - c. **Joint engagement of relevant government ministries** took place in both Malaysia and Thailand. The delegations were made up of companies from different sectors who have major business relationship with suppliers in Malaysia and Thailand; IOM, Verite, IHRB and ICCR; and local experts working on foreign migrant issues. The

companies communicated their commitment to ethical recruitment and the 'employer pays' model. The meetings were positive and opened up dialogue that will continue with several ministries in Malaysia and with the Thai Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Commerce likely.

4. The 3 initiatives are playing an important role through supplier and recruiter trainings and governmental outreach. This work will be a test case of the impact of collective leverage when major global brands/retailers work to change supplier/recruiter behavior and governmental policy towards ensuring the rights of foreign migrant workers will be respected throughout the recruitment and employment process.

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