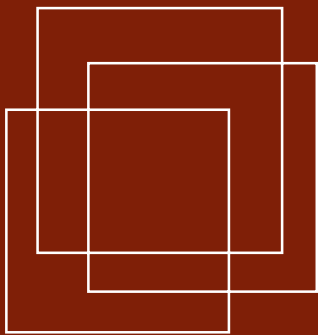




International
Labour
Organization

August 2008



Green Jobs,
Green Future

TREE: Breaking
Through Poverty

Spreading ILO
Expertise-ITC

Indonesian Labour
Migration Reform

ASIAN 2006
DECENT WORK
DECADE 2015

Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific



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Decent Work for All

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Cover Photo: Villagers in a small village in Bangladesh display a new solar panel, an indispensable source of light and power which they received from Grameen Shakti.

Photo: Grameen Shakti, 2008.

EDITORIAL INFORMATION

Regional Director Sachiko Yamamoto
 Dep. Regional Director Guy Thijs
 Editor-in-Chief Sophy Fisher
 Editor Krisdaporn Singhaseni
 Editorial Assistant Kwantawan Hongladarom

ILO AP Issues
 P.O. Box 2-349, Rajdamnern Nok Avenue
 Bangkok, 10200 Thailand
 Tel. (662) 288 2202, 288 1664
 Fax: (662) 288 1076
 Email: bangkok@ilo.org

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IN BRIEF

**Director-General's royal audience**

During his visit to Thailand to attend the ASEAN Labour Ministers' Meeting, ILO Director-General Juan Somavia was granted an audience with H.M. King Bhumipol Adulyadej at the Chitrlada Palace on 7 May. Photo (from left): H.E. Mrs Uraiwan Thienthong, Minister of

Labour (MOL), Mr Somavia, His Majesty. Also present were Mrs Sachiko Yamamoto, ILO Regional Director, Mr Chuthatawat Indrasuksri, Permanent Secretary, MOL, Mr Supat Gukun, Director, Bureau of International Cooperation, MOL and Ms Annette-Marie Ching, CABINET, ILO.

World Day Against Child Labour

The theme for the 2008 World Day Against Child Labour was: "Education: the right response to child labour". Numerous activities were organized throughout Asia and the Pacific on 12 June to raise awareness on the fight against child labour, in particular the drive to end the worst forms of child labour by 2016. In Thailand, rallies were organized in Chiang Rai and Tak provinces, each bringing together about 1,000 students.

Tuvalu Joins ILO

Tuvalu has become the 182nd Member State of the ILO effective 27 May 2008. Tuvalu is a group of nine tiny islands in the South Pacific with a gross land area of 26 square kilometers and a population of 10,000.

97th ILC

More than 4,000 delegates representing most of the ILO's 182 Member States attended the 97th annual International Labour Conference in Geneva, from 28 May to 13 June.

Among the items on the agenda were rural poverty reduction, enhancing skills development, the global food crisis, the latest Global Report on freedom of association, adherence to international labour standards and the situation in Myanmar. The conference also adopted a landmark Declaration designed to strengthen the promotion of decent work and develop new ways of responding to the growing challenges of globalization.

Three Asian countries were among those elected as new members of the Governing Body for its next three-year term. The Governments of Bangladesh and Singapore will join as Regular Members, and Thailand as a Deputy Member. They join Australia, the Republic of Korea, Pakistan and Viet Nam which were Deputy Members. In addition Japan holds a permanent government seat, as a State of chief industrial importance.

The 98th ILC will be held in May and June 2009.

GREEN JOBS, GREEN FUTURES

By Matthew Hengesbaugh, Consultant, ILO
Regional Office for Asia & the Pacific

As a product of human economic activity, global warming is directly related to the way we work, and ultimately can only be halted by changing the patterns of our work.

This will require us to shift to new modes of production and consumption, which will bring profound changes in labour markets and in the way people earn a living.

Many political and economic decision makers are beginning to recognize that the conventional strategy of “grow now, clean up later” is no longer sustainable. Like others, Asian countries are faced with the complex challenge of maintaining their economic growth and promoting opportunities for decent work while reducing their environmental impact.

Aware of these issues, last year the ILO launched its Green Jobs Initiative, working jointly with the UN Environment Programme and the International Trade Union Confederation. The aim of the Initiative is to explore innovations and opportunities for enterprise to achieve a sustainable development path.

“Green jobs” are types of work that aim to facilitate environmentally, economically and socially sustainable enterprises and economies. They include employment that helps to reduce the consumption of energy and raw materials, reduce carbon emissions, protect and restore biodiversity and minimize the production of waste and pollution. Green jobs encompass a wide range of skilled and unskilled employment, including jobs in agriculture, manufacturing, research and development, and administration. An important point is that the growth of green jobs will not be limited to a few industries; most, if not all jobs will be redefined by a new focus on green skills. A few examples of green jobs include:

- Jobs in renovation and construction of energy efficient buildings;

- Jobs in natural resource management and sustainable farming; and
- Jobs in renewable energy production, such as wind, solar and biogas.

Some of the challenges and opportunities for greening employment and creating green jobs were explored at an ILO-hosted Research Conference on Green Jobs for Asia and the Pacific, held in Niigata, Japan in April. Agreeing that environmental and social factors threaten sustainable economic development in Asia, delegates identified priorities for action and partnership building.

The environmental threats facing Asia and the Pacific include declining urban air quality, increased waste, freshwater shortages, deforestation and unsuitable land cultivation. Climate change is predicted to have a severe impact on the heavily populated mega-deltas and small island states in the Pacific. Set against the current backdrop of soaring oil and food prices, some analysts suggest that these environmental costs may ultimately be equivalent to the annual GDP growth of some Asian countries.

Given what is at stake the move to greener pastures needs to be well planned. Employment and labour policies can identify opportunities for green jobs, increase the efficiency of workplace practices and methods, and ease the phasing out of unsustainable jobs. Most of these transitions can take place within the agricultural, energy and transportation sectors.

But not everyone will be a winner. While some new jobs will be created and others will adapt and survive, there will also be losers—at least temporarily. Companies that are slow to rise to the environmental challenge, heavily polluting industries, and regions where many people depend on such industries to make a living may be left behind in the new “green” economy.

Consequently, it is crucial to anticipate the labour market effects of climate change and to prepare policies that support and mitigate change, for example through the promotion of social security and skills retraining.

This is especially crucial in Asia, where the majority of employment is in micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises. There may be a risk that structural changes

in the economy will sideline smaller enterprises, as only larger, better-informed and more sophisticated businesses will be in a position to grasp opportunities. Approaches that reduce emissions without endangering competitiveness and employment will therefore be essential, as will support for smaller enterprises to help them promote energy conservation, cleaner production, and recycling.

Although the employment impact of climate change is still a comparatively new concept there is already evidence – from Asia-Pacific and elsewhere – that green jobs can contribute to economic development and reduce poverty.

For example, China currently has an estimated 1,000 firms making solar thermal equipment, providing employment to about 600,000 workers. In Bangladesh the Grameen movement has helped to develop jobs installing over 100,000 PV solar panels, providing indispensable light and power to homes in rural areas. The Indian city of Delhi reports that the introduction of new eco-friendly compressed natural gas buses will employ 18,000 people. Such jobs – and these are just the beginning – will play a pivotal role in reducing the environmental footprint of economies.



Eco-friendly compressed natural gas buses in Delhi. Photo: TERI/Soumitri Das, June 2008.

It is not possible to discuss green jobs, however, without also addressing the issue of decent work and the safeguarding of internationally recognised rights and standards that this entails. As the ILO Director-General, Mr Juan Somavia, said on World Environment Day, “Green growth can become a strong driver for sustainable development if green jobs are also decent jobs and if there is a just transition for enterprises and workers”.

(continued on page 4)

THE CHALLENGE OF DECENT WORK IN ASEAN

By Kee Beom Kim, Economist, ILO Office in Indonesia

During his recent trip to Asia the ILO's Director-General, Juan Somavia, attended the Preparatory Senior Labour Ministers' Meeting (SLOM) of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

The meeting, which was held in Bangkok 6-8 May, provided the ILO with an opportunity to highlight ways of establishing decent work in the ASEAN Community.

In his speech to the Ministers on "Promotion and Enhancement of Decent Work for the Vulnerable Categories of Labour," Mr Somavia noted that the ASEAN Charter calls for respect for fundamental freedoms, human rights and the promotion of social justice. He highlighted ASEAN's development success and its leadership in a number of areas on the Decent Work Agenda.

Calling for a more balanced way of managing globalization, the Director-General highlighted five key issues critical to strengthening the social dimension of ASEAN integration: building an effective social floor, strengthening employment and productivity in the rural economy, promoting sustainable enterprises (particularly small and medium-

sized enterprises), migration and green jobs.

The Director-General urged ASEAN Labour Ministers to ensure that both workers and employers in the region had a voice within ASEAN, through the Confederation of Employers (ACE) and the ASEAN Trade Union Council (ATUC). He emphasized the importance of effective mechanisms for dialogue, organization and voice to empower societies.

The preceding Preparatory Senior Labour Official's Meeting (SLOM) provided a platform for the ILO to discuss with ASEAN member countries and the ASEAN Secretariat agenda items of the 2008 International Labour Conference, progress on joint programmes and activities and ways to further build on the 2007 ILO/ASEAN Cooperation Agreement. As part of this Cooperation Agreement activities have taken place on a wide range of topics, including youth entrepreneurship, labour statistics, HIV/AIDS in the workplace, occupational safety and health, industrial relations, and ILO support for the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers.

Issues highlighted by the ILO included vulnerable workers, in particular workers in the informal economy, domestic workers, migrant workers, disabled workers, child workers, those living with HIV and AIDS and workers without adequate occupational safety and health protection.

Future ILO/ASEAN collaboration will

include additional support for implementing the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers and the ASEAN-ILO/Japan Programme on Industrial Relations, joint activities on core labour standards and a stocktaking of employment policies in the region. The ILO also intends to work with ASEAN on an initiative for sustainable small enterprises and green jobs

In October 2008 the ILO will launch an updated *Labour and Social Trends in ASEAN* report, at the ASEAN Human Resources Summit in Singapore.

The Bangkok meeting also gave the ILO the chance to build a partnership with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) which is enhancing its work in the ASEAN region. The ILO, ASEAN and OECD will collaborate on an experience-sharing initiative on employment and skills development strategies.

ASEAN was established in 1967 with the aim of accelerating economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region and promoting regional peace and stability. The ASEAN region has a population of around 570 million, a labour force of 280 million, combined gross domestic product of US\$ 1.1 trillion, and total trade worth US\$1.4 trillion.

All 10 ASEAN member states are also members of the ILO - Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

(continued from page 3)

GREEN JOBS...

So a key challenge will be to ensure that these green jobs are sustainable, provide adequate income, extend social protection and guarantee workers the right and the voice to defend their interests collectively. In short, that they give equal weight to the economic, social and environmental pillars that underpin long term, sustainable development.

The Niigata meeting identified several potential sectors for future ILO pilot programmes on green jobs, including buildings and construction, agriculture, waste management, energy efficiency and renewable energy. Yet promoting green jobs alone is not enough.

ILO Green Jobs for Asia and the Pacific Research Conference

Policy Messages for the 2008 G8 Meetings

1. The inter-relations between the environmental, economic and social dimensions of climate change and other policies need to be put on the political map;
2. Green growth and tackling climate change can become a major opportunity for employment and development;
3. Green growth and arresting climate change depend on greener enterprises and green jobs;
4. Labour markets and their institutions need to be prepared for the change;
5. Attention must be given to equity and pathways to clean development; and
6. Coherent policies should be promoted to engage and empower actors.

Meeting the challenge of climate change will require a new development model, where reduced emissions and economic organization go hand-in-hand with social and environmental planning.

One of the primary outcomes of the Niigata conference was a set of policy messages for consideration at the 2008 G8 meetings hosted by the Government of Japan.

BREAKING THROUGH POVERTY: THE TREE PROJECT

By Trevor Riordan, Senior Training Policy Adviser, Skills and Employability Department (EMP/SKILLS), ILO Geneva

For many poor people their only real asset is their labour, so skills development can play a vital role in improving employability and productivity and in creating greater access to employment opportunities. Yet there are limited opportunities for skills development in poor, rural areas.

The ILO/US Department of Labor Training for Rural Economic Empowerment (TREE) Project in Pakistan and the Philippines provided many useful lessons in how to deal with the suffering caused by high levels of poverty and the lack of economic opportunities.

Through this recently-completed project the ILO developed an alternative methodology for income generation and employment creation for the most marginalized groups, including the rural poor (specifically women), disenfranchised young men and persons with disabilities. In both countries the target groups came from diverse geographical areas, who have suffered from conflicts and insecurity for a long time. In these areas there were neither jobs nor foreign investment, and the governments had limited capacity to address their poverty.

In Pakistan the project areas were Mardan District North West Frontier Province and Attock District Punjab Province. In the Philippines five provinces were included and one city in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). Towards the last stages the project expanded into Davao and neighbouring regions.

The TREE methodology is a comprehensive training package that identifies and assesses local economic opportunities, designs and delivers community-based



Training in electrical skills helps the economic empowerment and self-employment of women in Mardan, North West Frontier Province, Pakistan. Photo: ILO/Shazia Shahid, September 2007

skills training, and provides post-training services. The project also focused on building the capacity of government and private sector partners to implement the methodology. Implementation arrangements were different in the two countries and the methodology was adapted to each one's unique socio-cultural characteristics and local conditions.

The TREE model's effectiveness in developing skills and generating employment opportunities was shown by the results obtained. In Pakistan the project trained 3,164 beneficiaries (2,086 young men and 1,078 women) by September 2007. Fifty-six per cent of those participating were women (including the beneficiaries of skills training and literacy programmes), an impressive figure in Pakistan given the social, cultural and mobility constraints.

In the ARMM region in the Philippines, by September 2007 2,220 people (from poor target groups) undertook skills and entre-preneurial training courses. The trades chosen were selected by the project partners. Subsequent project studies found that 94 per cent of those interviewed attributed their present economic activities to their TREE training. The studies also found that the target groups had increased their monthly incomes by as much as 105 per cent (from 2,626 pesos to 5,370 pesos

or US\$61 to US\$123) indirectly benefiting around 1,022 family members.

Those interviewed for the project's mid-term evaluation described how training had changed their lives. Many said that beforehand they were uneducated and unemployed. One suggested that were it not for the project some young people would be tempted to join militant groups.

They described how skills development led to first-time employment or self-employment in areas such as tailoring, household appliance repair, welding, auto mechanics, building electrician, electronics and plumbing. All said that their families and communities now viewed them with respect – a very important but unanticipated training benefit.

The project also achieved some major breakthroughs by developing new ways of encouraging women to take part in skills training programmes. The women explained that in traditional Muslim culture women stay at home under the purview of their fathers or husbands and cannot take part in income-generating activities or control financial resources. Training gave the women the skills to generate income. The women interviewed said that for the first time they had money, could contribute to household finances and did not have to wait to be given money by their fathers or husbands. Several

SPREADING ILO EXPERTISE

By Peter Rademaker, ILO International Training Centre, Turin

An important way in which the ILO supports its constituents in Asia and the Pacific is by offering opportunities to learn and train.

The ILO's International Training Centre (ITC-ILO) in Turin, Italy is the largest training centre of the UN. It provides training to more than 12,000 participants a year, usually through short courses of one to three weeks for mid-level and senior officials, ILO constituents and field partners. About 40 per cent of the courses take place on the campus in Turin, with almost half being offered in other countries. The rest are taught using on-line distance learning methods.

The strength of the ITC-ILO is its capacity to package the ILO's global know-how and expertise into learner-centered training opportunities. Many of the approximately 200 people working at the Turin Centre are learning technology specialists. This enables them to identify training needs, design and deliver training and learning interventions, and provide follow-up support with the application of newly-learned skills. In teaching the courses the Turin Centre draws upon subject-matter specialists from national and regional research organizations, universities, and other centres of excellence, as well as from within the ILO itself.

The ITC-ILO offers training covering all areas of the ILO's mandate, based on the priorities set out in the Decent Work Country Programmes. For example, the ITC is providing training and capacity-building assistance to support a series of ILO projects in Asia and the Pacific related to decent work at the local level. Following an initial seminar in Chiang Mai in June 2007, the 20 participants are now continuing their studies on the management of local development through distance learning.



The ILO's International Training Centre in Turin, Italy. Photo: ITC-ILO, 2007.

One way of supporting the ILO's work in the region that has proven to be very successful is to combine training courses in Turin with follow-up training in the relevant countries. An example of this is the work done on child migration in India.

Internal migration of children for work is increasingly visible in India, with large numbers of children migrating to large metropolises like Mumbai and Delhi to work. Some states and districts are known for sending children to work and others for receiving large numbers of migrant workers - adults and children - almost daily.

Realizing the need to address this issue, the Ministry of Labour initiated consultations between the affected states, the relevant ministries and the ILO. It also began working on a Protocol covering the identification, rescue and rehabilitation of migrant child workers. Following this, the Ministry asked the ILO Office in New Delhi to help with a specific training course on child migration and trafficking to be jointly sponsored under the ILO-IPEC/GOI/USDOL programme on child labour in India. In response the ITC-ILO held the first "Labour dimensions of child migration and trafficking: issues at stake & effective responses, a training course for public officers of India" course in Turin in January 2008. A second course, on the same topic, was held in Pune, India in May.

The ITC-ILO also runs training in the field to build up the capacity of workers' and employers' organizations, such as the

course on Promoting Decent Work in the Informal Economy in Nepal in May 2008 to 21 trade union leaders from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Often, global open courses are adapted for individual groups in response to a specific demand. For example in April 2008 the ITC-ILO ran a course in Hong Kong on Youth Employment and Career Counseling for the Ministry of Labour's Careers and Employment Agencies Division (CED). The training gave a global overview of youth employment programmes, skills for handling young people and career counseling techniques, which allowed the labour officers from the Youth Employment Service Centres to learn from experiences elsewhere.

In 2008-09 the aim is to increase the proportion of participants from Asia-Pacific from 13 to 18 per cent, partly by increasing the number of activities in the region. Meeting this target will require enhanced collaboration with ILO offices and stronger partnerships with national and regional training centres.

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THE LAND OF KAROSHI

By Misako Hida (Japan)

“The time I spent has been wasted.” On one early March day in 1999, well before the cherry blossoms were even in bud, a 23-year-old man named Yuji Uendan killed himself in the depths of depression caused by overwork. He was found in his apartment in Kumagaya City, Saitama Prefecture, on the outskirts of Tokyo, with these words scribbled on a whiteboard used for his daily workout menu.

The late Mr. Uendan had worked for nearly 16 months as an inspector of a company producing semiconductor equipment in the subdued yellowish light of a clean room at a Nikon factory in Kumagaya, dressed from head to toe in a white dust-free garment. The young man was employed by the manufacturing contractor Nextar (currently known as Atest) and was temping at his employer’s client, Nikon, a major Japanese camera and optical equipment maker.

Uendan worked 11-hour rotating day and night shifts with overtime and extra business trips that brought his work hours to as long as 250 hours a month at times. In his final stint at the factory, he had worked 15 straight days without a day off. He was suffering from stomach-aches, insomnia, numbness of extremities. His weight had dropped 13 kilograms.

“He looked so rigid in his face,” says his mother, Noriko Uendan, who has suffered from angina since his son’s death and now carries nitroglycerin pills with her wherever she goes. “It pains me to think how many days he was there alone undiscovered.”

A Tokyo district court ruled in March of 2005 that both his employer and Nikon were responsible for Uendan’s death and ordered each company to pay compensation. “It was a groundbreaking victory for temporary workers,” said Uendan’s lawyer, Hiroshi Kawahito, who serves as Secretary General of the National Defence Council for Victims of Karoshi.

“Karoshi” is a Japanese term meaning “death from overwork,” and a look at the

The ILO International Training Centre in Turin, Italy, held its first course for media professionals on “Communicating Labour Rights” to encourage reporting on contemporary labour issues and teach journalists how to use labour standards in their work. As part of the course the “Media for Labour Rights” award was created, to recognise the “best story on labour rights” written by course participants. The first winner was Ms Misako Hida from Japan, a freelancer who writes for Newsweek magazine in Japan, among other titles.

Following its initial success the second “Communicating Labour Rights” course is being held in Turin, 4-8 August 2008.



Ms Misako Hida receiving her award during the International Labour Conference in Geneva. From left: Ms Zohreh Tabatabai, Director, ILO Department of Communications, Ms Hida, Mr Francois Eyraud, Executive Director, International Training Centre. ILO, June 2008.

Oxford digital dictionary shows that it has been adopted into English since 2002 as well. “This was the first case in which not only the company supplying temporary personnel but also the company receiving the personnel was convicted of negligence,” Mr. Kawahito added.

But the case is not over. Both companies lodged an appeal against the decision and so did the plaintiff, the victim’s mother. The legal battle is still going on in the Tokyo High Court, where the 12th trial hearing was held in late January.

“In recent years, an increasing number of temporary workers have been forced to work as long as fulltime employees do. Also, it’s very common for manufacturing contractors to illegally supply their clients with employees as temporary staff,” says Koji Morioka, an economics professor and the author of *The Age of Overwork*. “Because of the status quo, the Uenden case has a special significance as the first compensation claim ever for a temporary worker’s suicide from overwork.”

The issue of “karojisatsu,” meaning “suicide from overwork,” is a serious and profound issue in Japan. Japan’s suicide tally has increased drastically, topping 30,000 since 1998, when the unemployment rate hit a record post-war high. Males make up

more than 70 per cent of these casualties. According to the latest data of the World Health Organization, the number of suicides per 100,000 people is about twice the American rate.

Japan’s National Police Agency’s latest study shows that 32,155 people killed themselves nationwide in 2006. Mr. Kawahito estimates that roughly more than 5,000 suicides per year are the result of depression caused by overwork.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO), a United Nations agency, released a book in 2004 showing that Japan has the highest proportion (28.1 per cent) of employees working more than 50 hours per week, while in most EU countries, the corresponding number is well under 10 per cent. According to *The Age of Overtime*, the ratio of employee use of paid vacations dropped to 47 per cent in 2004 from 61 per cent in 1980.

“Too much overtime, which virtually precludes worker use of paid vacations, is a serious issue,” says a lawyer, Kosuke Hori, who is previous Director General of the Labour Lawyers Association of Japan. Japan has not ratified any ILO worktime-related conventions, including Convention 132 concerning Holidays with Pay and Convention 1 concerning Hours of Work.

The domestic Labor Standards Law does not cap the amount of overtime under certain conditions, when it comes to working hours, Mr. Morioka writes in his book. “In Japan, nothing in the way of international labor standards exists.”

“I swore to my son as he lay in coma ... that I would never give up,” says the mother. “I truly wish corporate Japan would allow employees to have decent lives so they can die full of years,” she said before pausing and adding quietly but firmly, “I will keep fighting the companies until I win.”

REFORMING THE INDONESIAN LABOUR MIGRATION SYSTEM

By Lotte Kejsler, Chief Technical Advisor, ILO Project Combating Forced Labour and Trafficking of Indonesian Migrant Workers, ILO Office in Indonesia

Economic and demographic differences inside and between countries contribute to the increasing numbers of people crossing national borders. In Indonesia about 700,000 documented migrant workers leave the country every year to look for work and better pay abroad. About 80 per cent of these are women who look for domestic work in Arab, South East and East Asian countries. However, it is estimated that this figure reflects only 25 per cent of actual Indonesian migration, three-quarters of which is believed to be undocumented.

Migrant workers are an important source of national income for the country. Registered flows of foreign remittances are put at approximately US\$3 billion a year, making migrant workers the second-largest source of foreign income, after energy (oil and gas). However, the true total worth of foreign remittances is believed to be several times larger than this because research shows that Indonesian migrant workers - documented and undocumented - mostly use informal or non-registered channels to send money home.

Since the 1970s migration has played an increasingly important role in Indonesia's economy. Despite this the Government's labour migration policies and practices are widely recognized as inadequate for protecting migrant workers against exploitation and abuse at home and abroad. Many Indonesian migrant workers find themselves saddled with disproportionately high debts and are badly informed and prepared for working overseas. Furthermore, several studies have found that since there are few policies or facilities

in place to support the savings and investments generated by the remittances, the full development potential of these financial flows is not being realized.

Recognizing this, in 2006 the Indonesian President S.B Yudhoyono announced fundamental reforms to the labour migration system. The task the Government faces is monumental. Implementing these reforms requires the development of a whole new set of policies, procedures and administrative capacities. The ILO's project, *Combating Forced Labour and Trafficking of Indonesian Migrant Workers* is actively supporting this national reform process and also promoting decentralized efforts by local government and other stakeholders to strengthen the protection of and services for Indonesian migrant workers and their families.

The ILO project supports the Government's overall labour migration policy reform and efforts to update and expand its policy plan of action for 2008. Following an analysis of policy and legislation, the project facilitates the current inter-ministerial policy drafting process, as well as internal planning in key ministries and agencies that work on migrant labour placement and protection.

Using information from the rapid assessment mentioned above, the project works to develop national and local employment services for migrant workers. It supports the Government in strengthening and expanding services, working with national and local stakeholders. In March 2008 a National Stakeholder Consultation reviewed existing structures and expansion plans, and looked again at policy priorities related to the reform of public and private recruitment and placement services, so as to ensure they were compatible with migrant workers' needs.

Next it seeks to strengthen the links between remittances and local economic development. In April 2007 a National Stakeholder Consultation reviewed existing private and public services and identified gaps. Based on a rapid assessment of Indonesian migrant workers' practices and preferences (which looked at how they send money home, how their remittances are utilized, and their preferences for micro-credit and financial services), the project

supports Government efforts to expand and improve financial and remittance transfer services, with national and local reforms.

The project also helps improve the capacity of Indonesian government ministries and agencies whose mandate covers the placement and protection of migrant workers. Many Training of Trainers (TOT) workshops were held to help the newly-established National Migration Agency with this. The issues covered include comparative placement and protection procedures, negotiation and drafting of bilateral agreements on labour migration, decent work-sensitive promotion and placement of migrant workers overseas.

TOT trainings were also held for officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and more will be conducted for Ministry staff who will be posted in the new "service centers" being set up in Indonesian Embassies and Consulates abroad.



Indonesian migrant workers completing emigration procedures at Soekarno-Hatta International Airport. Photo: ILO/Compass, 2008.

In order to build the capacity of local stakeholders to protect and service migrant workers, the project also supports TOT and step-down training for migrant workers' trade unions/associations and local level officials in 25 districts in the major migrant sending regions of South Sumatra, West-Central-East Java, and West Nusa Tenggara. The focus is on providing pre-departure information and services, para-legal information, workers rights and migration management, as well as reintegration and entrepreneurship. Counterpart organizations will conduct further training and implement the services. The Project will monitor the results and impact, and facilitate follow-up support for counterpart organizations in areas such as access to micro-credit and production skills.

(continued on page 10)

S R O F O C U S

SOUTHEAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Amending the Philippine Labor Code

By Minette Rimando, Senior Communication and Public Information Assistant, SRO Manila

“The Labor Code of the Philippines has been there for a long time. It requires amendments but apart from productivity, competitiveness and flexibility, we should also consider the pillars of decent work - rights at work, employment, social protection and social dialogue,” said H.E. Mr Romeo Lagman, Undersecretary of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE).

Recognizing the importance of amending the Labor Code, the Employers’

Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP) initiated a dialogue among key players in May, under the theme: “Defining the Legislative Labor Agenda”. Among those who took part were H.E. Senator Edgardo Angara of the Philippines Senate, H.E. Representative Magtanggol Gunigundo of the House of Representatives, H.E. Undersecretary Romeo Lagman of DOLE, Attorney Sonny Matula of the Federation of Free Workers (FFW) and Mr Ernesto Santiago, President of the Semiconductors and Electronics Industries.

Enacted in 1974, the Labor Code stands as the law governing employment practices and labour relations. It prescribes the rules for hiring and employment termination, conditions at work, union membership, benefits and collective bargaining.

H.E. Senator Angara said the Senate was reviewing the whole gamut of the Labor Code. Flexible working hours, education and training, productivity, and career paths for

young people are among the issues to be reformed. He emphasized it is not only changing the Labor Code provisions but looking into the context of employment and investing in human resource development.

“People are really our main source of competitiveness. It is not low cost of labour, electricity but it is really the people,” said Mr Ernesto Santiago of the Semiconductors and Electronics Industries, the largest export industry and generator of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the Philippines.

Attorney Sonny Matula of FFW said the main concern for them and other trade unions is how to organize more workers in the Philippines. He said that fewer than 10 per cent of workers in the country are covered by Collective Bargaining Agreements. He also highlighted the need to consider not just formal sector but informal economy workers as well, in amending the Labor Code.

SOUTH ASIA

India’s National Employment and Skills Development Policies

By SRO New Delhi

India’s 11th National Action Plan states that “generation of productive and gainful employment, with decent working conditions, on a sufficient scale to absorb the growing labour force must form a critical element in the strategy for achieving inclusive growth”. This vision is consistent with a development strategy based on inclusion and social equity with employment at the centre of macro policy.

The Government of India and ILO are working together to develop two sets of national policies relating to employment and skills development. The ILO’s employment policy support uses the ILO’s Global Employment Agenda’s diagnostic framework and the recommendations of the Employment Policy Convention (No. 122), which India has ratified.

It takes a two-pronged approach: increasing employment generation in the formal economy while improving the quality



Social Security Meeting

The Asia-Pacific Regional High-level Meeting on Socially-Inclusive Strategies to Extend Social Security Coverage was held in New Delhi, 19-20 May. Photo from left: H.E. Mr Oscar Fernandes, Indian Minister for Labour and Employment, Mr Assane Diop, Executive Director, ED/PROTECT, Mr Toshio Suzuki, Vice President, International Organization of Employers (IOE) and Ms Sudha Pillai, Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment. Also present was Mr Noriyuki Suzuki, General Secretary, International Trade Union Confederation –Asia Pacific. A report on the meeting will be in December Issues.

of employment in the informal sectors. The policy areas being looked at include macro-economics, labour markets, enterprise (with a focus on micro and small enterprises), and skills development (special focus on gender in recognition of women’s important contribution to the economy).

A two-day high-level National Technical Consultation on Employment Policy was organized by the ILO and the Ministry of Labour and Employment, 21-22 May 2008. It focused primarily on economic and labour market policies and discussed recommen-

dations to mainstream employment into macro policies as well as a sector-focused approach designed to increase total employment while maintaining high productivity levels.

To ensure comprehensiveness, this national consultation was preceded by a series of meetings on critical issues like skills and enterprise development (with a focus on micro and small enterprises). Consultations were also held on gender in order to identify policy issues, concerns and operational strategies to develop a holistic approach in recognizing women’s contribution to the economy.

I N B R I E F

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BREAKING THROUGH...

said that prior to training their fathers did not give them permission to leave their homes. Now their parents are happy to have extra income, see their daughters as role models for the family, and encourage other women in need to get training.

The TREE Project also made a significant difference in the lives of people with disabilities. One young man with a disability who trained as a tailor said that if it were not for the project he would not have a future. He became the first tailor in his community - previously residents had had to go to the nearest city to have clothes made.

A woman with a disability reported how, after the project provided her with a prosthetic device it enabled her to go out for training in tailoring. She can now meet basic expenses, help her entire family and save money every month.

The true success of a project's methodology, however, lies not in individual successes, but in the extent to which it can be scaled up to national level. Here too, TREE has shown impressive results.

In 2005 the then Prime Minister of Pakistan launched the Prime Minister's Skills Development Programme, with the aim of training 300,000 young people in three years. The ILO was asked to provide technical assistance, based on the TREE Project work.

Subsequently, the ILO/UNDP Support to the Prime Minister's Skills Programme was established. It assessed 80 training centres throughout the country with the aim of developing their capacity to design and deliver short-cycle skills programmes using TREE methodology. This in turn led to the ILO being asked to assist the newly-formed National Vocational and Technical Education Commission for Technical Assistance (NAVTEC) in developing the new Pakistan National Skills Strategy, "Skilling Pakistan".

Perhaps the most important lesson from the TREE Project is how a well-designed technical cooperation project can be scaled up to national level and eventually lead to major policy reforms. This approach is now an essential part of the ILO's results-based management strategy.

Mongolia Honours ILO Official

Dr Tsuyoshi Kawakami, ILO Senior Specialist on Occupational Safety and Health, has been awarded the title of "Leading Officer of the Labour and Social Welfare Sector" by the Mongolian Government in honour of his contribution to occupational safety and health in that country. The award is normally given to Mongolian officials. Few foreigners have received it.

New Convention Ratifications

Brunei Darussalam has ratified its first ILO convention. The country, which joined the ILO in January 2008, ratified the Worst Form of Child Labour Convention, (No. 182), 1999 on 9 June 2008.

On 9 June Viet Nam ratified ILO Convention 144, Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976.

Korean Agreement

ILO and the Government of the Republic of Korea signed a US\$1,040,000 partnership agreement to fund ILO work in more than 11 countries in Asia and the Pacific. The Korea/ILO Partnership Programme Towards the Realization of the Asian Decent Work Decade will provide technical cooperation support in Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam during 2008.



A Decent Work in Thailand photo exhibition was held at the CentralWorld plaza, Bangkok from 28 April to 13 May 2008. H.E. Mrs Uraiwan Thienthong, Minister of Labour presided over the opening. Photo from left: Mr Pornchai Yooprayong, Deputy Permanent Secretary; Mr Nakorn Silpa-Archa, Deputy Permanent Secretary; Mr Bill Salter, Director, ILO Subregional Office for East Asia; Labour Minister; Dr Nattakit Tangpoonsinthana, Executive Vice President, Marketing, CentralWorld; Mr Paichit Thienpaiboon, Advisor to the Minister of Labour; & Mr Padungsak Thephasadin, Director-General, Department of Labour Protection and Welfare.

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INDONESIAN LABOUR...

Advocacy and activities to raise awareness of the rights of migrant workers are also important. The national media continues to publicize migrant workers' rights and needs. Weekly, interactive, national TV and radio programmes covering these issues were broadcast between 2004 and 2008 and several films about domestic migrant workers have been made and broadcast on the BBC, CNN, Al-Jazeera, and the Indonesian TV channel SCTV.

Between 2006 and 2008 the project helped trade unions and other associations with a regional awareness-raising programme

covering Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Hong Kong, with Indonesian celebrity performers as goodwill ambassadors.

These activities show the key role ILO Technical Cooperation Projects play in realizing ILO decent work priorities in member countries. ILO projects can effectively and comprehensively bridge the gap between standards-setting and on-the-ground implementation. By building day-to-day working relationships with counterparts and a knowledge of local challenges and priorities we can give member states the assistance that enables them to achieve ILO decent work priorities in their own country and on their own terms.

C A L E N D A R

2008

4-5 August, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	National Seminar on Work, Income and Gender Equality
6-8 August, Colombo, Sri Lanka	Seminar on Maritime Labour Convention
7 August, Bangkok, Thailand	Consultative Meeting on Study of Remittances of GMS Migrant Workers in Thailand
14-15 August, Pakse, Lao PDR	National Trafficking Prevention Conference
19 August, London, U.K.	ILO Mekong Subregional Project to Combat Trafficking in Children and Women and the Trade Union Congress
28 August, Tokyo, Japan	ILO & UNHCR Joint Symposium on Migration
28 August, Jakarta, Indonesia	Labour Forum
8-12 September, Phnom Penh, Cambodia	Strategic Training Workshop on Collective Bargaining Negotiation for the Enterprise Unions of Cambodian Tourism and Service Workers' Federation
15-19 September, Battambang, Cambodia	Strategic Training Workshop on Collective Bargaining Negotiation for Cambodian Employers
17 September, Tokyo, Japan	Symposium: Promoting Gender Equality in the World of Work
17-19 September, Singapore	19 th Asian Conference on Occupational Health
23-24 September, Siem Reap, Cambodia	Cambodia National Trafficking Prevention Conference
1 October, ILO/Hosei University, Tokyo, Japan	International Symposium on ILO Agenda: Skills for Improved Productivity, Employment, Growth and Development
7 October, Hokkaido, Japan	Japanese Trade Union Confederation, JTUC-RENGO Decent Work Day event
7-9 October, Bangkok, Thailand	Mekong Subregional Conference on the Prevention of Human Trafficking
9-10 October, Phnom Penh, Cambodia	Better Factories Cambodia Buyers' Forum
13-17 October, Pattaya, Thailand	National Training Workshop on Labour Migration Policy and Management in Thailand
*14-16 October, Bali, Indonesia	2 nd ASEM (Asia-Europe Meeting) Labour and Employment Ministers' Conference
22-24 October, Hokkaido, Japan	Congress on Occupational Safety
29-30 October, Beijing or Kunming (tbc), China	China National Trafficking Prevention Conference
29-30 October, Colombo, Sri Lanka	HIV/AIDS Workplace Dissemination Workshop
*22 October, Singapore	ASEAN Human Resources Summit
3-4 November, Bangkok, Thailand	National Seminar on Migration Policy and Management: Policy Agenda for Thailand
13-17 November, Korea	Training Course on Participatory Training Methodologies to Improve Working Conditions
17 -21 November, Korea	Training on Work Injury Insurance in Asia and the Pacific at Korea Workers' Compensation and Welfare Service
November, Malaysia	Labour Law Conference

* Non-ILO meeting

W E B S I T E S : G R E E N J O B S

www.ilo.org/greenjobs

ILO site with background information on green jobs including the ILO/UNEP/ITUC Green Jobs Initiative.

www.gshakti.org

The Grameen Shakti site which aims to empower the rural people in Bangladesh with access to green energy and income.

www.unep.org/labour_environment

Site of the United Nations Environment Programme.

www.ictu-apro.org

International Trade Union Confederation-Asia Pacific, in India represents 16.8 million members of 48 national trade unions from 29 countries in the region.

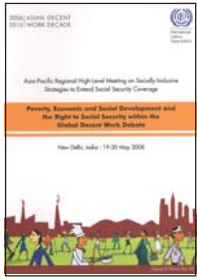
www.worldbank.org/china/greenjobs

The World Bank site with projects on green jobs in China.

www.worldwatch.org

The Worldwatch Institute provides ideas that empower decision makers to create an environmentally sustainable society to meet human needs.

S H E L F L I F E



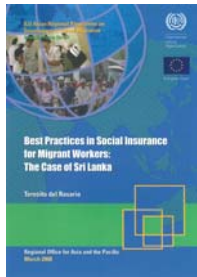
Asia-Pacific Regional High-Level Meeting on Socially-Inclusive Strategies to Extend Social Security Coverage: New Delhi, India: 19-20 May 2008

Bangkok: ILO, 2008, 65 pp.
 The meeting report includes discussions on income security for the elderly, extending social health protection, and poverty, economic and social development and the right to social security in the Asia-Pacific region.



The Mekong Challenge: 41 Brothels - Prostitution, Trafficking and Human Rights in Sihanouk Ville, Cambodia

Bangkok: ILO, 2007, 99 pp.
 ISBN: 978-92-2-120696-5
 Based on a survey of young women working in prostitution in the resort area of Sihanouk Ville, this report reveals the reasons women in Cambodia enter prostitution, and the working conditions and discrimination they endure.



ILO Asian Programme on the Governance of Labour Migration, Working Papers No. 11-16 Bangkok, March 2008

Feasibility Study of the Electronic Money Remittance to Extend Social Security Coverage for Migrant Workers: The Case of the Philippines (No. 11)

By Barbara Jo Domingo, 31 pp.
 ISBN: 978-92-2-121028-3
 This paper assesses the feasibility of using banks and telecommunication remittance services to allow Filipino migrant workers to make social security and health insurance contributions while working abroad.

Best Practices in Social Insurance for Migrant Workers: The Case of Sri Lanka (No. 12)

By Teresita del Rosario, 33 pp.
 ISBN: 978-92-2-121128-0
 An examination of the Sri Lankan Government's response to the social protection needs of overseas workers.

Do International Migration Policies in Thailand Achieve their Objectives? (No. 13)

By Jerrold W. Huguet, 16 pp.
 ISBN: 978-92-2-121130-3
 An assessment of Thailand's international migration policies related to unskilled and semi-skilled migrant labourers.

Controlling Irregular Migration: The Malaysian Experience (No. 14)

By Vijayakumari Kanapathy, 24 pp.
 ISBN: 978-92-2-121386-4
 This paper evaluates the effectiveness of Malaysia's policies for curbing undocumented migration.

Rural-Urban Migration and Policy Responses in China: Challenges and Options (No. 15)

By Dewen Wang, 22 pp.
 ISBN: 978-92-2-121390-1
 By examining the history of rural-urban labour migration in China, this paper argues that the provision of decent work for rural migrants is necessary to achieve balanced growth.

Inter-state Cooperation on Labour Migration: Lessons Learned from MOUs between Thailand and Neighboring Countries (No. 16)

By Pracha Vasuprasat, 47 pp.
 ISBN: 978-92-2-121388-8
 The author summarizes lessons learned from bilateral employment agreements between Thailand and neighboring countries, particularly Cambodia and Lao PDR.



DG meets Bangkok staff

ILO Director-General Juan Somavia met the staff in Bangkok as well as Directors of ILO offices from the region at the UN Conference Center on 9 May.