

Access to Justice of Migrant Domestic Workers in Lebanon: Launch of joint ILO-Caritas research findings

Concept note

Background

In order to strengthen the capacity of Government officials to better respond to forced labour practices, the ILO has been implemented two projects to support both the Arab States and the Ethiopian Government in their efforts to combat trafficking and more particularly domestic servitude. A recent ILO publication on the topic demonstrated that access to justice for victims was a major issue in the destination countries of the Middle East and that more research was needed to map out these impediments that prevent the rehabilitation and full compensation of victims.

In order to fill the knowledge gap on this topic, the ILO decided to partner with the largest service provider for migrant workers in Lebanon, Caritas Lebanon Migrant Center (CLMC). Lebanon was chosen as a case study, as it is one of the major countries of destination for Ethiopian and other African and Asian domestic workers in the Middle East. The joint report that resulted from this collaboration is the result of work carried out between January and December 2013. It is based on a rigorous analysis of CLMC database since 2007, as well as an in-depth study of several cases brought before the courts by CLMC lawyers, and information collected during interviews with key stakeholders. This partnership is also embedded in a project that Caritas has been implementing in Lebanon with the support of the European Commission, with the view of better supporting migrant domestic workers.

The central objective of this research project was to analyse the decisions of the administrative and judicial authorities on cases of migrant domestic workers subjected to various forms of labour exploitation and trafficking. This review allowed the ILO and Caritas to identify obstacles impeding legal and practical access to justice for victims. The aim of this validation workshop is to discuss recommendations that came out of this analysis, and possible avenues for their implementation.

Participants

The ILO and Caritas Lebanon Migrant Center have extended an invitation to all the key line Ministries (Labour, Justice, Interior), Government representatives of countries of origin of migrant workers, as well as the social partners. Invitations have also be sent to legal practitioners in the field, including to the Human Rights Institute of the Bar Association and the Judicial Institute, as well as NGOs providing legal redress to migrant workers.

Venue

Padova Hotel, Beirut, Friday June 13, 2014.