

“Empowering and Protecting Sri Lankan Migrant Workers”

Launch of the Pre-departure Training Guides, Safe Labour Migration Information Package and the Code of Ethical Conduct for Recruitment Agents

Press Release

Colombo: The Government of Sri Lanka through the Ministry of Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare and the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE) is taking several measures since the launch of the National Labour Migration Policy for the protection of the country's migrant workers.

39 National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) 3 level trainer and trainee guides have been developed to standardize the SLBFEs 21-day pre-departure training programme aimed at the domestic sector job expectants. The full set of guides consist 28 functional guides such as domestic cooking, cleaning, basic care giving for elderly, children, persons with disabilities and common competencies and 10 language guides covering Arabic, English, Hebrew, Greek, Mandarin, Cantonese and Hindi. The main purpose of developing these guides was to ensure standardized competency based training was conducted throughout the country to ensure prospective migrants are aware of their job demands and have a better understanding of service delivery. The guides are available in all 3 languages.

The SLBFE has introduced a new cadre of Development Officers to support the dissemination of safe migration information including follow-up of reintegration of returnee migrants at the local level. This easy to use **Safe Labour Migration Information Package** was developed with a view to help the Development officers as well as other officers attached to the Divisional level such as Women Development Officers, Samurdhi Officers and Planning officers to share correct information among local communities. The full range of information contained within the labour migration cycle is expanded upon in the information guide. Guides are in Sinhala and Tamil languages.

Recruitment agents have a major role and responsibility in the labour migration industry. There has been a long felt need for a guide on how the recruitment industry should operate to ensure professionalism and discipline in the industry but most importantly to ensure migrant workers rights are protected during the recruitment process and period of employment overseas. This Code of Ethical Conduct is the first of its kind in South Asia, to minimise the actions of errant foreign employment promoters and to regularize the registered foreign recruitment agents. The Code of Ethical Conduct has been developed in All 3 languages and has been approved by SLBFE.

Technical support for developing these tools was provided by the International Labour Organization, which is supporting the Government of Sri Lanka to implement the National Labour Migration Policy with funding from Swiss Development Cooperation.

These 3 landmark tools for the empowerment and protection of migrant workers will be launched by Hon. Dilan Perera, Minister of Foreign Employment Promotion and Welfare at a ceremony at the Auditorium of the SLBFE in Battaramulla on 18th December 2013 at 4.00 p.m, which is international Migrants Day.