

Knowledge Sharing Workshop on Good and Promising Practices and Lesson Learned to Promote Decent Work for Domestic Workers and to Eliminate Child Labour particularly in Domestic Work

Country Report – Singapore

23 - 25 January 2018, Santika Premier
Hotel, Malang, East Java, Indonesia

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Country Statistics (Singapore)

- Female migrant Domestic Workers (DW) in Singapore originate from various source countries, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and the Philippines.
- Population of DWs in Singapore as of December 2017 is estimated at 243 000 (MOM)
- DWs formed almost 20% of the total migrant workforce in Singapore
- Centre for Domestic Employees' (CDE) found the top 3 countries where DWs originate from are Indonesia, Myanmar and the Philippines.

State of Affairs of DWs in Singapore

- Most migrant Domestic Workers (DW)s (93%) are generally happy working and staying in Singapore (CDE survey)
- Three reasons stated are 1) healthy employer-employee relationship, 2) strong rule of law, 3) support from their communities
- Results substantiated by a Ministry of Manpower survey 2015 suggesting positive engagements within the migrant DWs in Singapore.

Major Legislative Frameworks Governing DWs

- Migrant DWs are well-protected with comprehensive laws in place under the Employment of Foreign Manpower Act (EFMA) and the Penal Code.
- Addressing 'elimination of child labour', the following strategies were taken:-
 1. Raising the minimum age from 18 to 23 years old (Jan 2005).
 2. Raising quality of migrant DWs to have completed at least 8 years of formal education.
 3. Issuing demerit points to Employment Agencies (EA) bringing in underaged migrant DWs
 4. Revoking EA licenses as stated by MOM's Employment Agency Licensing Conditions to re-offenders
 5. Intervening with appropriate actions by MOM's Employment Agency Licensing Branch for cases of underaged DWs,

Major Legislative Frameworks Governing DWs

- Other legislations such as Employment of Foreign Manpower Act (EFMA) and the Employment Agency Act (EAA) in place to protect DWs.
- EFMA ensures employers deploy migrant DWs to do only decent domestic work/chores and work at registered work permit address preventing exploitation and ensures well-being of migrant DWs.
- To ensure well being of DWs, employers bear all medical costs, pay salaries on time, provide rest days, at least once a week, and supervise high risk work activities such as cleaning of windows.
- Employer purchase Personal Accident Insurance with minimum coverage of S\$60,000.

NGO/CDE's Efforts in Championing Rights of DWs

- Other structures/avenues for underaged workers to seek assistance e.g
- CDE aimed to assist DWs, both local and foreign, in addressing work-related challenges.
- Champions for fair treatment through a balanced, pragmatic approach and providing humanitarian aid, social integration and support complementing efforts of other NGOs.
- Other community/religious groups and NGOs in Singapore also active in helping migrant workers.



Targets/Outcomes for Child Labour

- Zero tolerance on issue of child labour
- CDE's educational approach ensures all new DWs receive collaterals with CDE's 24hr helpline number. Another is the settling-in-Programme (SIP) which communicates DW's rights and how they can seek help.
- CDE also calling for sending countries, governments and civil society to actively reach out to migrant DWs and monitor the more vulnerable.
- EAs to place detection structures and exercise vigilance e.g add in security features for DW's passport to prevent counterfeits.. Collaborate with embassies collate underage data.

Challenges / Moving forward

- DWs generally happy with working and living in Singapore
- CDE will continue to push MOM for greater improvements, to take bigger steps to address any malpractices such as child labour.
- Singapore takes a proactive constructive discussion and collaborative approach between the MOM and NGOs
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- Tripartite endeavour is useful in the promotion of decent work for DWs and end child domestic worker abuses.

Additional Slides (to show if time permits)

Our CDE volunteers, Our Connections



CDE 1st Anniversary (January)

Recruited our inaugural batch of CDE volunteers (who are FDWs themselves) to better connect with other FDWs from the various nationalities

Our CDE volunteers, Our Connections



Volunteer Appreciation (July 17)

Thanked our volunteers who have sacrificed many precious off-days to support us in various outreach events and activities throughout the years, and for being our ambassadors on the ground

Our CDE volunteers, Our Connections



International Migrants Day (December)

Our volunteers out in force to engage with other FDWs at our new satellite offices



Our Efforts Paid Off, But More to Be Done ...



Source: ST, 8 May 2017

Maids, employers cheer boost to accident coverage

Nur Azyiqin Muhammad Salleh

Indonesian maid Dewi, just 1.4m tall, has to tiptoe on a chair to reach the ceiling fan in her employer's living room whenever she cleans it. A chee share two months ago has her cheering now the increase in minimum accident insurance coverage for maids, which will go up from \$40,000 to \$60,000 on Oct 1.

Ms Dewi, who is 29 and goes by one name, had lost her balance then and toppled backwards onto the armrest of a sofa – narrowly avoiding a hardwood chair nearby. She shudders to think what would have happened if she had broken her back.

"I try my best to be careful, but accidents can happen. So it's good to have more money for my family. It can help them if I'm gone," said Ms Dewi, who was at the labour movement's inaugural May Day celebration for maids yesterday.

Employers interviewed by The Straits Times said the enhanced insurance would ease their concerns. "If my maid was hurt, I would also worry about how her family would cope," said sales manager Sarah Goh, 46, whose maid is from the Philippines.

She was pleased to hear that insurance coverage will be standardised, so maids are not short-changed when insurers decide not to cover certain accidents.

With the changes, annual premiums are expected to go up by between \$7 and \$15, but Ms Goh said the "small amount can go a long way in helping my maid and her family".

Organisations working with maids also cheered the improved protection, but noted that it would help only in cases of death or permanent incapacity.

The Centre for Domestic Employees (CDE) hopes to see a review of medical insurance next.



Maids at the labour movement's inaugural May Day celebration for them at Youth Park in Somerset yesterday. The minimum accident insurance coverage for maids will go up from \$40,000 to \$60,000 on Oct 1, and annual premiums are expected to go up by between \$7 and \$15. ST PHOTO: KISH CHEE SONG

Insurance will help maids, their families, and their employers better cope with the unexpected hazard.

Meanwhile, non-governmental organisation Transient Workers

Under the Act, the compensation limits for death and permanent incapacity are also higher

ter for maids to be covered under insurance instead of the Act because the nature of their work

May Day Domestic Employees Celebrations (May)

CDE's advocacy call on increasing the minimum sum assured for our FDWs in the area of personal accident insurance (PAI) heeded by the government.

To urge employers to consider increasing medical insurance coverage for their FDWs

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MULTI-STAKEHOLDER – LEARNING JOURNEY



Overseas Study Trip with Tripartite Partners in Myanmar (September)

To better appreciate issues facing FDWs and engage stakeholders in source country

Thank You