

LFTU Policy and Action Plan on Migration (2011-2013)

The role of trade unions to protect the rights of all workers is enshrined by the Labour Law and Trade Union Law in Lao PDR and hence, the Lao Federation of Trade Unions (LFTU) is committed to protecting the rights of migrant workers and ensuring safe migration through the effective governance system of labour migration.

An LFTU Action Plan on Protecting Migrant Workers was adopted at the LFTU-ILO Workshop held on 10-11 August 2011 in Vang Vieng. The Action Plan consists of 21 areas of intervention arranged under five broad thematic strategies.

The Action Plan will be implemented with support of the “ILO Tripartite Action to Protect Migrant Workers from Labour Exploitation (TRIANGLE project)” and its implementation progress will be reviewed on an annual basis by the LFTU and TRIANGLE project, with the technical assistance of the ILO Specialist on Workers’ Activities.

The Action Plan is based on the following principles:

1. Recalling the obligation of the LFTU to protect the rights of Lao workers, within and outside the country, as stated in Article 10, 11 and 12 of the Trade Union Law.
2. Recognizing the potential contribution of labour migration to the economic and social development of the nation, the community and individual households, through the transfer of knowledge, skills, culture and remittances.
3. Acknowledging the vulnerability of migrant workers and abuses of their rights at all stages of migration processes and hence the need for their protection and decent work.
4. Convinced that the benefits of labour migration can best be maximized through the effective promotion and respect of workers’ rights, including basic human rights, and the fundamental principles and rights at work enshrined in UN and ILO conventions.
5. Convinced that the situation of migrant workers should be addressed through the principles of international trade union solidarity, social justice, equal treatment, equal opportunity, and gender equity.
6. Confirming a commitment to strengthen bilateral and multilateral cooperation, between and among workers’ organizations in origin and destination countries and in the ASEAN integration, in order to better protect migrant workers.
7. Recalling that effective laws and policies on labour migration should be developed and implemented through the principle of social dialogue and tripartite consultation.

Strategic Area	LFTU Action Area
I. Register migrant workers with LFTU, in Lao PDR and abroad	1. Disseminate LFTU registration forms in areas with large migrant populations (in Lao and Thailand), in collaboration with relevant government departments and mass organizations
	2. Establish database of registered migrant workers, with personal information, in order to build up a profile and better target migrant workers
	3. Share registration information with trade unions in destination countries
	4. Share registration information with Lao Embassies (consular officials) in destination countries
II. Establish Migrant Worker Resource Centers (MRCs) in target provinces	1. Establish MRCs in target provinces, where there are no existing resource centres run by Government, mass organizations or NGOs
	2. Train LFTU MRCs staff on labour migration issues, as well as how to carry out the administration, functions and services of the MRCs
III. Collaborate with trade unions in destination countries	1. Conduct missions to Thailand (particularly Bangkok and Samut Prakarn) to learn about the situation of Lao migrant workers and network with Thai Trade Union partners
	2. Draft an MOU with Thai Trade Unions (LCT, TTUC and NCPE) outlining key areas of cooperation with a reference to the ACTRAV model agreement
	3. Set up LFTU support units for Lao workers in Samut Prakarn, in collaboration with Thai Trade Unions
	4. Build relationship between the LFTU provincial offices and trade unions in bordering provinces in destination countries
	5. Cooperate and share experiences on labour migration issues at the regional and international levels
IV. Promote tripartite dialogue on labour migration at national and sub-national levels	1. Revise existing laws and policies related to labour migration to reflect the interests of migrant workers, national objectives and international principles, e.g. proposing the appointment of a labour attaché in Thailand.
	2. Promote labour migration as a regular item on the agenda within the tripartite committees at the national and provincial level, reviewing labour migration policies, issues and emerging trends
	3. Participate in the TRIANGLE Project Advisory

	Committee at the national level, and in tripartite committees in target provinces – providing inputs into strategies and activities
V. Raise awareness of labour migration issues among migrant workers and potential migrant workers, LFTU staff and the general public.	1. Organize workshops to disseminate information on the roles, rights and duties of Trade Unions on Migrant Worker Protection for Party members, officials, and civil society actors to receive better cooperation from central to local levels.
	2. Develop information materials (leaflets, booklets, posters, etc.) and use mass media channels to raise awareness of potential risks and benefits of migration, safe and legal migration procedures, rights at work, laws and culture in destination countries, etc.
	3. Educate secondary schools students with pre-employment training – covering job opportunities in Laos, the potential risks and benefits of migration, and safe migration
	4. Provide pre-departure training to potential migrant workers on safe and legal migration procedures, rights at work, laws and culture in destination countries, etc.
	5. Provide training for voluntary returnees and deported migrants about employment opportunities in Lao (maximizing the skills and savings obtained while abroad) and legal migration procedures
	6. Disseminate information to LFTU staff on the LFTU migration policy, principles and action plan
	7. Organize events to raise awareness and advocate for strengthened policies and practices, on International Migrants Day (December 18), for example