



Mekong Migration Network (MMN)



Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women

Recommendations from the Mekong Migration Network and the Global Alliance against Traffic in Women for the 16th ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour (AFML) 25-26th October 2023 in Jakarta, Indonesia

We, the regional civil society representatives, the Global Alliance against Traffic in Women and the Mekong Migration Network, wish to share our recommendations for the 16th ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour.

The theme of the 16th AFML is “Enhancing the effectiveness of legal pathways for labour migration in ASEAN, with the view to enhance regular labour migration and address irregular migration within the ASEAN region”.

We have read the recommendations from the National CSOs Preparatory Meeting held on 24 October 2023 that address each of the two sub-themes of the forum: 1) Improving labour migration programmes in ASEAN, and 2) Ensuring legal migration pathways that are inclusive and responsive to the labour market. We endorse these recommendations and wish to ask that the following five recommendations are given priority by the ASEAN Member States.

Sub-Theme 1: Improving labour migration programmes in ASEAN

1. Establish a regional legal support/assistance fund with a regional wide referral system, to ensure access to justice for all migrant workers and their families, regardless of documentation status. Workers who are deported should still have access to file claims over unresolved past employment as regards unpaid wages, social security claims and other unpaid benefits.
2. Ensure that all migrants using formal channels, regardless of employment sector, can access social protection schemes. Upon return to their country of origin, migrant workers should be able to claim contributions made toward their retirement funds in the destination country, through a mutually agreed portability system between all ASEAN member states.

Sub-Theme 2: Ensuring legal migration pathways that are inclusive and responsive to the labour market

1. Countries of origin and destination should eliminate migration barriers, policies and practices that directly or indirectly discriminate on the basis of gender, age, disability or family status and on the basis of occupation for migrant workers.



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2. Allow migrant workers using legal pathways greater flexibility to change jobs within the labour market.
3. Policies should be established and implemented that allow undocumented migrants to regularise their status and access social protection, thereby increasing the size and productivity of the formal labour force.