

GMS TRIANGLE Activities in the Fishing Sector

The Tripartite Action to Protect and Promote Migrant Workers Rights within and from the Greater Mekong Subregion (the **GMS TRIANGLE project**) aims to strengthen the formulation and implementation of recruitment and labour protection policies and practices in the Greater Mekong Sub-region, to ensure safer migration resulting in decent work. The project is operational in five countries: Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam, and will expand activities into Myanmar in 2013. In each country, tripartite constituents (government, workers' and employers' organisations) are engaged in each of the



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project objectives - strengthening policy and legislation, building capacity of stakeholders and providing services to migrant workers. These goals are interdependent, with policy advocacy and capacity building activities driven by the voices, needs and experiences of workers, employers and service providers.

Activities are being carried out under each of the **GMS TRIANGLE** project's objectives:

OBJECTIVE 1 - Migrant recruitment and labour protection policies strengthened, reflecting the interests of tripartite constituents and gender-specific concerns.

- The project has hosted two multi-stakeholder fora to discuss measures to strengthen protection in the fishing sector, and provided technical comments on the draft Ministerial Regulation on Work in Fishing, in line with the ILO Convention 188 on Work in Fishing, Recommendation 199, and other international labour standards. In addition, the project is providing inputs on the development of a new process through which to recruit and train fishers, and more broadly advocating for greater regulation of recruitment of inbound migrant workers.
- The 2012 Cabinet Resolution in Thailand on the establishment of Fishing Coordination Centres was influenced by a study by the National Fisheries Association of Thailand, which was supported by the project. In addition, the project is providing inputs on the development of this new process through which to recruit and train fishers, and more broadly advocating for greater regulation of recruitment of inbound migrant workers.
- The National Project Coordinator for Thailand was elected as a member of the Sub-Committee on Anti-Trafficking in Fishing, and a Committee of the Law Reform Commission, to provide policy and legal advice.

- To strengthen the knowledge base, a quantitative survey of nearly 600 fishers in four provinces has been carried out in close consultation with concerned government and non-government agencies. The research findings on recruitment, employment practices and working conditions in the fishing sector will be used to influence policy, capacity building and support services.

OBJECTIVE 2 - Capacity of tripartite constituents enhanced to close the gap between intention and implementation of national policies, bilateral agreements and regional commitments related to the recruitment and protection of female and male migrant workers.

- The DLPW has requested ILO assistance in developing and delivering training materials on labour inspection in the fishing sector. At present, labour inspection in fishing is carried out in cooperation with the Navy and Marine Police in 22 coastal provinces; however, cooperation and capacity in this area needs to be strengthened.
- NFAT, the industry association, are carrying out three activities with the GMS TRIANGLE project, including the development of a Code of Conduct setting standards for their members on employment practices and protection of workers; an internal survey to shape their feedback to the Government on the recruitment-related proposals for the sector; and the development of occupational safety and health (OSH) training materials and delivery of training for vessel owners, skippers, supervisors and crew. The OSH training will be carried out in close cooperation with DLPW.
- The GMS TRIANGLE project is in discussions with the Government and industry on the development of operational guidelines on the recruitment, employment and working conditions in the fishing sector. The Guidelines will aim to improve understanding and the practical implementation and enforcement of existing laws; and will also introduce good practices that can also be implemented to better protect workers. This will lead to improved conditions for fishers, which will in turn help to address the labour shortages and high turnover faced in the industry.
- An advisory mission from the Brazilian labour ministry shared their experiences with combatting forced and child labour, and improving inspections in the fishing sector, which has inspired the establishment of a mobile inspection unit in Thailand.

OBJECTIVE 3 - The rights of female and male migrants and potential migrants are protected through increased access to support services.

- The Foundation for AIDS Rights (FAR), a civil society organization, is providing support services to Cambodian fishers in Rayong through three drop-in centers, including information dissemination, counseling and training on labour rights, organizing and OSH. FAR supported the establishment of a working group of local authorities, the provincial fisheries association and a local trade union to promote dialogue and strengthen cooperation among the key actors.

For more information on the GMS TRIANGLE Project, visit www.ilo.org/asia/triangle or email Max Tunon, GMS TRIANGLE Project Coordinator: tunon@ilo.org