



## RECOMMENDATIONS

### 11<sup>th</sup> ASEAN FORUM ON MIGRANT LABOUR

29-30 OCTOBER 2018, SINGAPORE

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Singapore organised the 11<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour (AFML) on 29-30 October 2018. Representatives from all ASEAN Member States governments and its nominated employers' organisations; workers' organisations; and civil society organisations (CSOs), alongside representatives from the ASEAN Confederation of Employers; ASEAN Trade Union Council; ASEAN Services Employees Trade Union Council; nominated regional CSOs (Migrant Forum in Asia and Mekong Migration Network); International Labour Organization; International Organization for Migration; Task Force on ASEAN Migrant Workers; United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women; and ASEAN Secretariat participated in the 11<sup>th</sup> AFML. Representatives from Australia, Canada and Switzerland participated in the 11<sup>th</sup> AFML as observers.

Given Singapore's 2018 ASEAN Chairmanship theme of *resilience and innovation*, the 11<sup>th</sup> AFML adopted the theme "Digitalisation to Promote Decent Work for Migrant Workers in ASEAN". As an activity under the ASEAN Committee on the Implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers (ACMW) Work Plan 2016-2020, the 11<sup>th</sup> AFML shared good practices and discussed ideas on leveraging technology to (i) improve labour migration management, and (ii) provide digital services for migrant workers, with an overarching view of furthering all migrant workers' well-being giving due consideration to gender sensitivity.

The 11<sup>th</sup> AFML recommended the following actions to guide ASEAN Member States' efforts in achieving these objectives and supporting the implementation of the ASEAN Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers:

#### **A. Digitalisation of Labour Migration Management**

1. Digitalise, where appropriate, the recruitment, placement, employment, and return and reintegration processes, such as providing one-stop digital platforms and e-documentation, to support easier, more efficient, less costly and transparent labour migration.
2. Promote the use of digital tools, such as smart devices and social media, in training or job matching of migrant workers, including: pre-departure and post-

arrival information programmes; dissemination of information; and skills upgrading and certification.

3. Encourage further efforts in using technology in enforcing migrant worker rights, such as timely and accurate payments of wages and benefits; organising of migrant workers; labour inspections; access to justice; and cross-border dispute settlements.
4. Support inter-agency coordination, where relevant, in developing accessible digital feedback and complaint and grievance-handling mechanisms for migrant workers. These mechanisms should: authenticate valid feedback; track the progress of the response including remedy; and be referred to the relevant support service providers.
5. Develop and improve labour migration information systems to facilitate the identification of errant employers and recruitment/employment agencies and transparency of recruitment costs. Where appropriate, encourage the sharing of information between relevant parties, including inter-agency and inter-government collaboration, while prioritising data privacy and security.

## **B. Digital Services for Migrant Workers**

6. As migrant workers are at various levels of readiness to benefit from digitalisation, and not all services may benefit from digitalisation, maintain existing avenues while building workers' capacity to benefit from digitalisation.
7. Coordinate efforts between stakeholders in developing digital services for migrant workers, to avoid unnecessary duplication and to ensure clarity of avenues, including effective referral pathways for migrant workers.
8. Governments and other relevant stakeholders should consider providing support, such as funding, to digital services that meet the needs of migrant workers, such as remittance, financial services, and social protection. Migrant workers should not bear the costs of the development of these services.
9. All stakeholders should educate migrant workers on the availability of digital services; cyber security; and risks of false information, through appropriate media platforms such as information campaigns and pre-departure/post-arrival training.
10. Content providers and owners of digital platforms should ensure that information provided is accurate, and undertake efforts to eliminate misinformation through measures such as online information verification and regular fact-checks.

## **Overarching Issues**

11. Ensure that all migrant workers are accorded the right to information and communication, such as ownership; access; and reasonable usage to mobile

phones or other ICT gadgets. More attention should be placed on isolated and vulnerable workers, including increasing connectivity in hard-to-reach places.

12. Recognising the importance of data privacy and security, introduce and strengthen robust protection frameworks that secure the collection, use, and sharing of data, such as legal provisions or guidelines.
13. Ensure that digital platforms for migrant workers are migrant-centred, accessible and user-friendly. This includes, where appropriate, adopting measures such as visual and audio messaging; simplified interfaces, and migrant workers' local languages. As users, migrant workers should also be empowered and actively involved in the creation and enhancement of these platforms via consultation and user feedback.
14. Enhance capacity in the development and utilisation of digital platforms through research and sharing of progressive practices; collaboration with relevant stakeholders; and introducing appropriate training, including strengthening digital literacy for all target stakeholders.
15. Raise awareness on the benefits of leveraging technology in inclusive and sustainable growth in the future of work, e.g. through green efforts.

The abovementioned recommendations were adopted by the 11<sup>th</sup> AFML delegates on 30 October 2018.

The participants expressed their appreciation to the Ministry of Manpower of Singapore for its hospitality and the organisation of the 11<sup>th</sup> AFML. The participants also extended appreciation to the Ministry of Labour of Thailand for becoming the host of the 12<sup>th</sup> AFML in 2019.

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