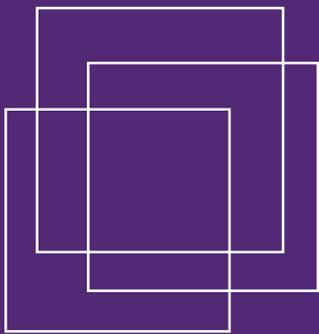




International
Labour
Organization

Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

April 2008

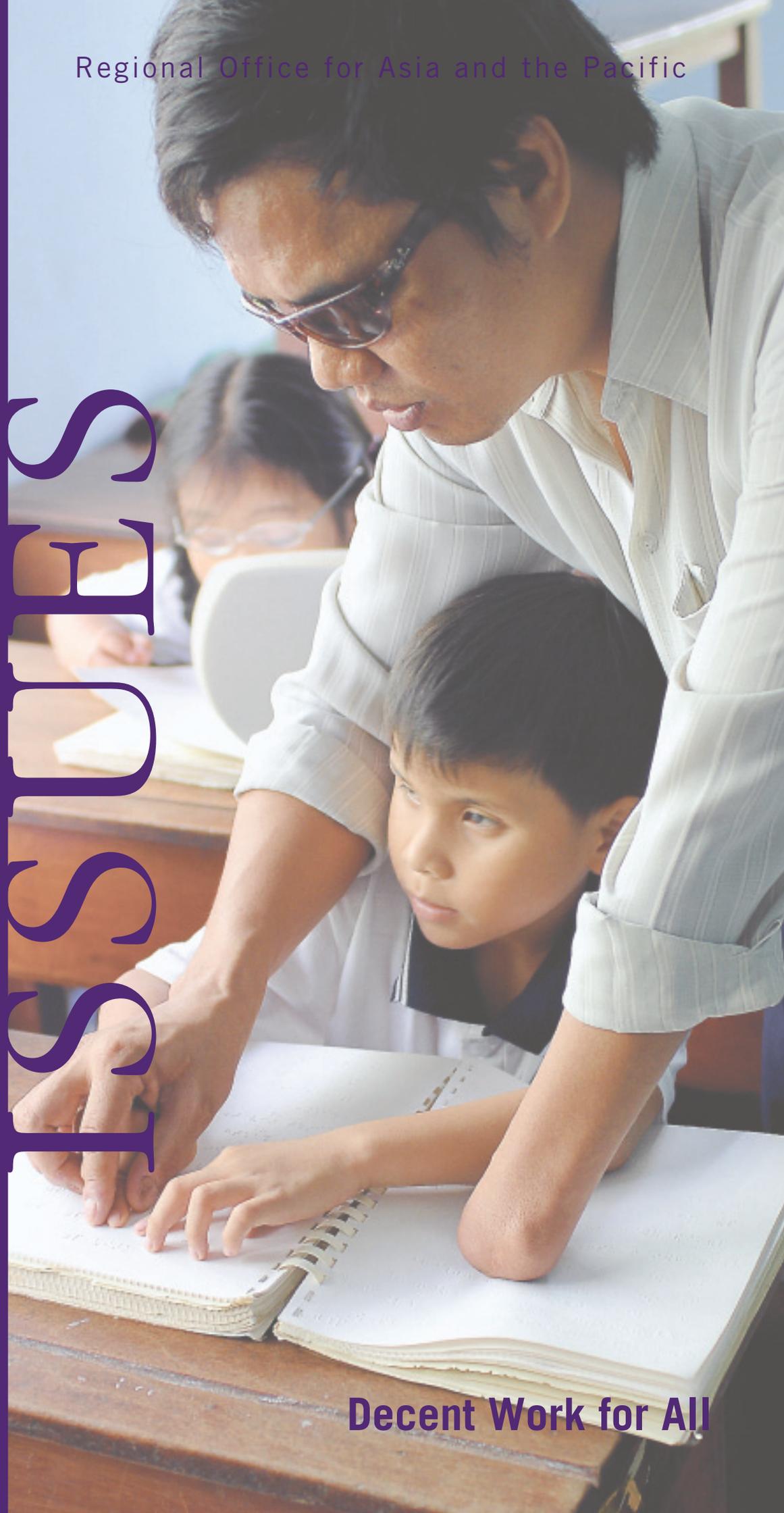


ASEAN Labour
Migration

Knowledge Sharing
& Decent Work

Better, Competitive
Employers

SEASIA



ASIAN 2006
DECENT WORK
DECADE 2015

Decent Work for All

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Cover Photo: "The Warmth of a Teacher's Hand" by Mr Luu Thuan Thoi, Viet Nam, took second prize in the IDDP Asia Pacific photo contest.

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Issues is published three times a year by the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of the International Labour Organization.
 ISSN: 1020.6973

IN BRIEF

Korea ratifies C187 & C155

The Government of the Republic of Korea has ratified two more ILO Conventions. They are the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187) and the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155). Both will come into force on 20 February 2009, one year after they were ratified.

Korea became a member of the ILO in 1991. It has now ratified 24 ILO Conventions.

Global Employment Trends 2008

Global unemployment could rise by 5 million in 2008 as a result of credit market turmoil and rising oil prices, according to the ILO's Global Employment Trends Report for 2008. The report, released in January, said 2007 saw a "stabilization" of global labour markets, a net increase of 45 million new jobs and only a slight rise in the number of people unemployed.

In Asia economic and job growth is predicted to remain strong in 2008, helping to offset downward trends in the developed economies.

South Asia was the leader in jobs growth in 2007, contributing 28 per cent of the 45 million jobs created. The region could end poverty in a generation, but only if economic development is accompanied by inclusive labour market policies.

East Asia appears to be on the way to becoming a middle income region as sustained productivity growth has helped lift tens of millions of people out of poverty. The proportion of East Asian workers living below the US\$2 per day poverty line has dropped from an estimated 59 per cent to 36 per cent in 10 years. Labour productivity growth has been the fastest of any region, increasing from US\$6,781 in 1997 to US\$13,423 in 2007.

Development in **South-East Asia and the Pacific** has been less impressive as the region faces some pressing challenges, notably the problems of young people looking for work. But the region has benefited from the economic boom in India and China, GDP growth has been at least 6 per cent for the last four years and unemployment rates are comparably low and have stabilized in recent years.

New Sabang tourism project

The ILO and the Regional Government of Sabang, Indonesia, have launched the Pulau Weh–Sabang Tourism Association (PWSTA) to encourage tourism to improve local economic development in Sabang.

The PWSTA will promote collaboration between the government and business to address marketing, training and developmental issues facing the island's tourism industry. It will promote the island for its peaceful, pristine beaches, diving and snorkeling.

The launch on 22 January 2008 came during the Indonesian Government's recently-unveiled Visit Indonesia 2008 programme.

The horse-shoe shaped island of Sabang, also known as Pulau Weh, or Weh Island, is Indonesia's western-most point and is a one-hour ferry ride from Banda Aceh.

Thai Workers in Korea

Helping Thais looking for work in the Republic of Korea was the focus of a workshop held in Bangkok from 17 to 18 January. The Improvement of the Recruitment and Preparation of Thai Migrant Workers to Korea meeting discussed ways of making the recruitment and selection of Thai workers more efficient, fair and transparent, as well as solutions for their most common problems.

About 14,200 Thais are employed in Korea, primarily in manufacturing, making Thais the third largest group of foreign workers in Korea after Vietnamese (17,500) and Filipinos (16,300).

Korea's guest worker programme, the Employment Permit System (EPS), is jointly managed by the Korean Government and the Governments of the migrants' countries of origin.

The Bangkok meeting was jointly organized by the ILO, the Ministry of Labour of Thailand, the Korean Ministry of Labour, Human Resources Development Service of Korea and the Korean Occupational Safety and Health Agency. Workshops on the recruitment and conditions of Indonesian and Vietnamese migrant workers in Korea will be held in Jakarta (29-30 March) and Hanoi (1-2 April).

KNOWLEDGE SHARING TO SUPPORT DECENT WORK

By Guy Thijs, Deputy Regional Director, ILO Regional Office for Asia & the Pacific

The idea that full, productive employment and decent work for all play an indispensable role in overcoming poverty and creating sustainable development has been central to international and national policymaking since the 2005 World Summit of the United Nations General Assembly.

As a result there have been growing calls on the ILO to share - and facilitate the sharing of - information on policies, measures and good practices that contribute to employment and decent work. (A concrete example of this growing interest is the enthusiasm generated by the introduction of the "Toolkit for Mainstreaming Employment and Decent Work").

Knowledge sharing can take many forms but usually involves creating networks of knowledge sources. These "Knowledge Networks" need to meet a number of key principles if they are to be effective:

- They should be driven by the needs of their members.
- They should provide products and services that are relevant to members' needs.
- They should facilitate members' willingness to share information with each other.
- Ownership and sponsorship should be shared, with members playing a range of roles.

In short, any initiative to share knowledge must find a balance between two opposing forces: the supply-driven "knowledge push" and the demand-driven "knowledge pull".

In Asia and the Pacific knowledge sharing about decent work challenges and solutions has also taken center stage. During the Asian Employment Forum: Growth, Employment and Decent Work, in Beijing

in August 2007, constituents expressed support for an initiative by the region that improves access to knowledge, tools, and guidelines related to realizing decent work.

In response to this growing interest the Regional Office in Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) is taking a number of steps.

An important initial one was a web-enabled survey on knowledge management and knowledge networking in November and December 2007. Almost 50 respondents from governments, workers' and employers' organizations in the region took part.

As expected it revealed that constituents are interested in a wide range of issues; however subjects that could be seen as "traditional" or "core" ILO topics (such as International Labour Standards, occupational safety and health, employment policy and social dialogue) scored comparatively high. Respondents were also very interested in learning more from other countries in the region, emphasising the scope for more South-South cooperation.

Perhaps surprisingly, respondents also made clear their preference for a technological solution to the problem, using the web to support the exchange of ideas and information. Websites emerged as the preferred communication tool, followed by e-mailed summaries and newsletters (see table below).

Based on the survey's results and views expressed in other forums, the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific has started to develop knowledge networks, focusing on those decent work topics of particular interest to Asia-Pacific constituents. Through a number of pilot communities of

Successful Knowledge Sharing - an Indian Example

The Solution Exchange is an initiative of the UN Country Team in India. It is a web-based facility where communities of practitioners (CoPs) interested in various development themes are organized into e-mail groups. Members come from a wide variety of backgrounds, including government, NGOs, development partners, private sector, and academia. A community member facing a development issue or problem can post a query, members with similar experiences may answer, and a group moderator organizes the responses into "consolidated replies" which are also made available as short publications to help those without internet access. There are currently 13 communities. Those on Work and Employment, and Microfinance are facilitated by the ILO. More information can be found at: www.solutionexchange-un.net.in.

practitioners (CoPs) on skills development, industrial relations and youth employment, ROAP will work with constituents to understand how such networks can be built and sustained to ensure the maximum benefit to participants.

The Office is also undertaking a number of measures to improve its own knowledge management. An *Asian Decent Work Decade Resource Kit* is being finalized and the website is being redesigned to allow for quicker updating of relevant material and a more user-centred layout.

Preferences for knowledge network formats	Weighted responses
A website managed by ILO with links and resources provided by members	57
Regular e-mail summaries (inputs from members collected and then distributed by ILO)	53
A print/electronic newsletter or journal with member inputs	52
Regular meetings (partly or fully subsidized by ILO)	51
A website that all members can freely add materials to	48
A web-enabled chat or discussion space, with an ILO moderator	41
A web-enabled chat or discussion space, with no moderator	22
Regular meetings (at own cost)	14

ASEAN LABOUR MIGRATION TRENDS

By Geoffrey Ducanes, Technical Officer, and Ho Jung Lee, ILO/EU Asian Programme on the Governance of Labour Migration, Regional Office for Asia & the Pacific

Cross-border labour migration is becoming an increasingly important issue in the countries of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN)¹. After trade and tourism the increasing economic integration of the region is most evident in labour migration.

Recent years have seen a sharp upward trend in the outward flow of migrant workers to both other member countries and elsewhere in the world, as well as in the inward flow of remittances to the region. It is estimated that 40 per cent of migrant workers currently in ASEAN are from other ASEAN member countries.

When discussing labour migration the ASEAN member states can be roughly divided into two main groups: countries which are mainly migrant receiving and those which are mainly migrant sending. The first group includes Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand, and the second group Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, the Philippines and Viet Nam.

The increasing intra-regional mobility of workers brings with it many important concerns for receiving and sending countries alike. For receiving (or destination) countries these include the impact that migrant workers have on the wages of domestic workers, on the economy as a whole, and on cultural homogeneity and social cohesion. For countries of origin (or sending countries) remittances, brain drain and the social costs of outward migration are important issues. For both groups the protection of the rights of migrant workers is a core concern.

Of the destination countries in ASEAN, Malaysia takes in the largest number of migrant workers, with the Government estimating there are 2.3 million foreign workers in the country. Of these about 1.1 million are from neighboring Indonesia.

In 2007 Thailand's Ministry of Labour estimated there were 1.8 million migrant workers in the country, 75 per cent of whom are believed to come from Myanmar, and most of the rest from Cambodia and Lao PDR. In December 2007 the Singapore Government announced that foreign workers in the country totaled 901,000, comprising one-in-three of the nation's total number of employed. Brunei is estimated to have 75,000 foreign workers, mainly from the Philippines and Indonesia.

Irregular migration is a serious problem in Malaysia and Thailand. Recent estimates are that irregular migrants account for three-quarters of all foreign workers in Thailand and about half of foreign workers in Malaysia. Irregular migrants are a serious concern because of their greater vulnerability to exploitation and their limited access to channels for getting grievances redressed.

The prospects for migrant workers in the different ASEAN destination countries vary. Malaysia recently announced plans to cut its foreign workers to 1.8 million by 2009 and 1.5 million by 2015, in response to concerns that they are taking away jobs from local workers. This will mean sending about half a million foreign workers back to their home countries in a single year.

In contrast, Singapore openly acknowledges the importance and contribution of its migrant workers, recently announcing that increases in foreign employment has enabled "the economy to grow beyond the limits of Singapore's indigenous workforce".

The economic contribution of migrant workers is also getting increasing recognition in Thailand. A recent study commissioned by the ILO: *The Economic Contribution of Migrant Workers to Thailand* concluded that migrant workers make a net contribution of about US\$54 million per year to the economy.



A Burmese migrant worker at an orchid farm in Samut Prakarn, Thailand. ILO/T. Falise, November 2007.

Among the region's migrant-sending countries, outward migration is highest in the Philippines from where in 2007 about 1.07 million workers were deployed. About 40 per cent of them were new hires, leaving the country for the first time. The number of overseas Filipino workers, excluding permanent migrants, is estimated to be as high as 5 million.

Recent estimates of the flow of migrant workers from Indonesia put it at about 400,000 people per year. The Indonesian Government estimates there are about 4.7 million Indonesians currently working overseas. Viet Nam, meanwhile, sends about 80,000 workers overseas every year.

Substantial labour migration also occurs annually from Myanmar, Cambodia, and Lao PDR but is mostly irregular in nature and thus not easy to estimate. However it can be said that most of the outward migration from these three countries, and even Indonesia, is within the region – from the first three countries mainly to Thailand, and from Indonesia largely to Malaysia.

Labour migration from the Philippines and Viet Nam is different from the other countries because the workers' destinations are mainly outside the region.

¹ Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

CAMBODIAN GARMENT WORKERS SHOW TALENT

By Lyno Vuth, Communications Officer & Minna Maaskola, Better Factories Cambodia

The first competition to highlight the hidden talents of Cambodian garment workers attracted more than four hundred entries from budding designers and songwriters.

Cambodia's 350,000 garment sector workers were encouraged to submit entries in two different categories. The first, dress design, required entrants to create a design of a dress suitable for a special occasion. In the song writing category participants needed to write a song about their lives and what brought them to work in the garment sector.

When entries closed in October, 440 entries from 40 factories had been received: 270 dress designs and 170 song lyrics.

A two-stage judging process followed, and 10 dress designs and five songs were selected for the final round of judging, which was held at the Chaktomuk Theatre, Phnom Penh on 16 December and broadcast on national TV.

The dress designs were made up into stunning gowns for this final event, modeled for the judges by garments workers. The entries in the song writing category were sung by professional artists because the workers (who initially intended to sing their own lyrics) got "cold feet".

The contest was organized jointly by the ILO Better Factories Cambodia (BFC), Precious Girl Magazine (whose readership focuses on the garment workers), the Ministry of Women's Affairs, the Garment Manufacturers Association in Cambodia, Agence Française de Développement, Garment Industry Productivity Center,

United Nations Development Fund for Women and the International Finance Corporation.

The judging and awards ceremony was presided over by H.E. Dr Ing Kantha Phavi, Minister of Women's Affairs, and H.E. Othman Hassan, Secretary of State for Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training. H.E. Dr Phavi stressed the importance of the Cambodian garment industry and the women workers' contribution to the economy and rural development.

Three winners were selected in each category. Prizes included cash sums of up to 600,000 Riels (US\$152) a sewing machine, bicycles, cell phones and a year's supply of Coca Cola.

The first prize in the dress design category went to 18-year-old Sem Sokny, who created a shimmering blue evening gown with an open collar.

Ms Sokny works at the Maxlin Factory in Phnom Penh. She designs dresses as a hobby and hopes to become a translator. Ms Sokny said: "I spent about seven days to design this dress, I had no hope to win this competition. I was delighted to hear them call my name as the winner. It's so incredible. I will use the new bicycle to ride to work. From the money that I win, my mum will build a new room for me, and I will keep the rest because it is the prize that comes from my ability".

The winning song lyrics were written by Ms Touch Sreynith, a garment worker at Hung Wah Garment (Branch 1), Phnom Penh. Ms Sreynith wrote about her life journey from her hometown to work as a garment worker in Phnom Penh. The 24-



Ms Sem Sokny with a model wearing her winning dress. ILO Cambodia, 2007.

year-old spends her free time writing stories, poems and songs and her ambition is to become a writer.

"The competition successfully brought together key players in the industry," said Tuomo Poutiainen, Chief Technical Advisor for ILO Better Factories Cambodia. "This is a good example of effective collaboration showing that by working together we can do something positive and valuable for the Cambodian garment workers."

The dresses and songs that made it to the final judging, along with video clips and stories about the competition, will be made into a travelling exhibition to display at the headquarters of international companies who source from Cambodia and use the BFC reports, to show the lives and working conditions of individuals behind the products.

THE WINNING SONG: "I AM PRECIOUS"

by Ms Touch Sreynith

The car was heard leaving home, heading for Phnom Penh.

I sadly said goodbye to my parents, hoping to return home with money for my mother.

I arrived in the city, to a factory owned by foreigners.

Working as a factory worker, I gradually saved money for my parents.

Oh factory, you relieve my stressful life. I enjoy a good life and bright future.

My family is free from suffering.

Mother, stay home and don't worry. My life is valuable.

Factory work is not shameful; it provides benefits to society.

DECENT WORK FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ASIA-PACIFIC PHOTO COMPETITION

The 2007 International Day of Disabled Persons took as its theme "Decent Work for Persons with Disabilities". To mark the event the ILO, Disabled Peoples' International and Irish Aid organized a regional photo competition under the same theme. Prizes were awarded for the best three entries from Asia Pacific. National competitions were also held for those entries from Cambodia and Thailand.

Almost 250 entries were received from 18 countries including Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, East Timor, Fiji, Hong Kong SAR (China), India, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Nepal, New Zealand, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam. The winning pictures were selected by a judging panel that included persons with disabilities, professional photographers, and representatives of workers, employers, government, and the ILO.



△ 1ST PRIZE – CAMBODIA AND 3RD PRIZE ASIA PACIFIC

Mr Vibol Chhoum
Phnom Penh, Cambodia
**"Look at Capacity,
not Appearance"**
Sabopha In, 22, works as a Senior Data Encoder. She types quickly and accurately despite being born without a left hand. Sabopha's positive attitude towards work makes her a role model and creates a positive impression of workers with disabilities.

▷ 3RD PRIZE – CAMBODIA

Mr Robert Joiner,
Cambodia
"Working Together"
Sok Samol lost a leg in a mine accident in Bantay Manthey in 1991. In 2004 he received training in motorbike repair from the Association for Aid and Relief (AAR), Japan. With the Cambodia Trust's support he obtained a compressor and over time his motorbike repair business flourished. He took on trainees to give them practical experience. Samol not only supports his family but also gives others with disabilities the chance for decent work.



▷ 1ST PRIZE – THAILAND

Mr Hansa Tangmanpoowadol
Bangkok, Thailand
"Perseverance"
Persons with disability are able to perform various types of work. They want to be allowed to exhibit their individual abilities. With perseverance, they train themselves to achieve their full potential.



◁ 1ST PRIZE – ASIA PACIFIC

Mr Nguyen Hung Vung Tau,
Viet Nam
"Net Casting"
This fisherman lost his right arm during the war. Nevertheless he earns a living on Tri An Lake, supporting himself with minimal help from his family and friends.



△ 2ND PRIZE – ASIA PACIFIC

Mr Luu Thuan Thoi
Bien Hoa Dong Nai, Viet Nam
"The Warmth of a Teacher's Hand"
With love and care, Mr Pham Van Xiem teaches his pupils to read.



◁ 2ND PRIZE – THAILAND

Mr Jatupol Soison
Pattaya, Thailand
"Be Proud Of"
Although without arms, this seamstress learnt to make clothes for a living. She is proud of her skills, which mean she is able to work and support herself.



△ 3RD PRIZE – THAILAND

Mr Nuttaphol Jiengjarasnon
Chiang Rai, Thailand
**"Decent Work for Persons
with Disabilities"**
Although disabled, these men do not think of themselves as different from other people. They learnt how to blow glass and make beautiful glassware for sale. Art has become the focus of their lives.



△ 2ND PRIZE – CAMBODIA

Mr Jan Nye, Cambodia
"From Small Beginnings"
Chun Pheach used to roast coffee beans for a living. She saved enough to start her own business selling coconut cream sweets in the market, commuting a long way. With a loan from the Cambodia Trust, which she eventually paid off, she was able to set up a small shop and house and earns enough money to support herself.

STRONGER COMPETITORS, BETTER EMPLOYERS

By Charles Bodwell, Chief Technical Advisor, Factory Improvement Programme (FIP), Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

At the Printing and Cultural Products (PCP) Company, a large government-run printing operation employing 600 workers in central Hanoi, the ILO's Factory Improvement Programme (FIP) is helping cut costs and save resources.

With help from the ILO project, PCP Co. implemented quality control improvements that have resulted in more than US\$30,000 in refunds from suppliers in the initial three months since new quality control procedures were introduced. These simple changes, which resulted in the introduction of systematic inspection of incoming materials from suppliers, could potentially save the company more than US\$100,000 a year, every year.

PCP Co. was one of around 50 factories throughout Asia that took part in the FIP in 2007 (earlier programmes, taking place between 2003 and 2006, focused on the Sri Lankan garment sector). As with the earlier programmes the factories were grouped into clusters; two clusters in Viet Nam (one each in Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi) and two in the industrial hub of Faridabad, near Delhi in India. The programmes lasted between 10 and 12 months and used a modular and integrated approach to make the firms more competitive, more environmentally friendly and better employers.

The two Indian clusters focused on small manufacturers supplying the Delhi-based auto sector, including a group of light engineering firms making metal parts and a group of smaller electroplating units providing coating and treatment services for metal parts. These factories, all members of the Faridabad Small Industries Association

(FSIA), (ILO's local partner, nominated by the Council of Indian Employers), ranged from micro operations with fewer than 10 workers to medium-sized enterprises with 50 or more employees.

FIP is funded by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO). The programme's approach combines training and advice. It uses classroom sessions followed by on-site guidance on establishing improvement plans tailored to the needs of each factory.

The pilot programmes in Faridabad included more than 650 factory-level consultations. This approach of not simply giving instructions on what to change but helping to make it happen, often brings dramatic improvements in quality, productivity and working conditions.

At the core of the FIP methodology is the idea of uniting workers and managers to address common concerns. In each of the four programmes that ran during 2007 the views of management changed from seeing workers as a tool of production to regarding them more as partners in helping their businesses succeed. At the same time the workers also developed a better understanding of the important role they play in helping their companies compete. They understood the benefits of more consultation, dialogue with management and participation in organizational improvements. As a supervisor from Auto Start, an auto parts supplier, put it: "This programme made us understand what ILO stands for".

His views are supported by Rajat, a manager from Jamuna Udgog, a manufacturer of auto lights: "[FIP] is a God-sent programme that made me realize the potential of my employees as partners to progress".

At a practical, factory level, this takes the form of establishing Factory Improvement Teams (FITs) of workers and managers who work together on problem areas, focusing on those that can have the greatest impact but the lowest cost. In this way FIP achieves early 'wins', builds support with participants and ensures that each intervention is right for each company.



A factory worker assembling syringes at Medioplast (Medical Plastic Company), a Hanoi-based medical supplies company, which took part in the pilot FIP. ILO, 2005.

The first module of FIP, promoting workplace cooperation, sets the stage for the programme as a whole, leading to a variety of benefits for each factory, including a general cleanup and systematized process of keeping order. For workers this includes better drinking water, improved rest and eating facilities, and other changes that bring direct benefits.

Seema, a member of the FIP Team at Faridabad's K.P. Tools said: "This programme brought in benefits like having a uniform, an apron to protect us from dust and the factory cleanup of this programme helped to protect me [from factory hazards]".

The workplace cooperation module is followed by modules on quality, productivity, cleaner production, health and safety, workplace relations and human resources.

A number of themes link all the modules. In addition to building on strengthened workplace cooperation, the programme follows lessons learned in the Total Quality movement, focusing on changes to systems that lock in improvements. For example, FIP pushes factories to institute the measurements and metrics needed to run their operations in ways that maximize safety and efficiency. As well as reductions in defect rates that often surpass 50 per cent, the factories benefit from productivity improvements in the areas of material use, workers and machinery.

(continued on page 10)

S R O F O C U S

SOUTH ASIA

By Neelam Agnihotri, Publications & Information Assistant, SRO New Delhi

Puppets help combat child labour

A Self Help Handbook showing how puppetry can be used in the fight against child labour has been developed by the ILO IPEC Karnataka Child Labour Project in India (funded by the Government of Italy).

The Handbook includes four scripts with stories that focus on child rights and anti-child labour messages. These stories are brought to life by 40 colourful glove and leather puppets, and their jokes and adventures are interspersed with music and songs. This allows the sensitive issue of child labour, and its ugly consequences, to

be presented to an illiterate/semi-literate audience in an inoffensive and subtle way, letting them empathize with the characters and develop a greater understanding of the issue of child labour.

The plays run for up to 20 minutes and use simple, bright and colourful staging to capture the interest of the audience. Each show is followed by an interactive session with the audience on the key message. Youth groups, teachers and school children are among those being trained to handle the puppets and put on performances at school and community functions.

This strategy mainstreams child labour issues and concerns, weaving it into regular social and cultural life of the community, mobilizing it to combat and resolve the issue.

Social partners work together for youth employment

As part of the ILO/Norway programme on Social Dialogue and Youth Employment, the Tamil Nadu employers' and workers' organizations have agreed to work together by creating the "Tamil Nadu Joint Action Forum for Promotion of Youth Employment (Employers and Trade Unions)".

The Forum will conduct skills development training for young people and ensure job placements in the relevant industrial sectors in Tamil Nadu. The trade unions will identify appropriate candidates and the employers' association will provide training and job placements. The programme started in February 2008 and 250 youths will be trained and provided with job placements by July 2008.

SOUTH-EAST ASIA & THE PACIFIC

By Minette Rimando, Senior Communication and Information Assistant, SRO Manila

Ending child labour linked to MDG 2

Efforts to achieve universal primary education must go hand in hand with efforts to eliminate child labour, Linda Wirth, Director of the ILO Subregional Office for South-East Asia and the Pacific told delegates to a UN Media Forum on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Manila in January 2008. Universal primary education is the second of the eight MDGs.

Ms Wirth said, "the ILO and its partners stand for a world where no girls or boys are forced to work at the cost of dropping out of school, some as young as five years old. They risk their health or even their lives. A working child may earn 40-50 pesos (US\$1) a day but a few pesos cannot change their world in the way an education can".

Ms Wirth also stressed the need to address unemployment among young

people. "During the period 1997-2007 the unemployment rate for young people in South-East Asia and the Pacific increased by 6.3 per cent, which is the highest increase in the world. Rising numbers of unemployed young people cannot lift their own families out of the poverty trap. They cannot become parents who give their children a better life and education, and they cannot contribute effectively to the country's development," said Ms Wirth.

Livelihood Centre for Typhoon Victims

A livelihood and productivity center to help typhoon victims was inaugurated by Linda Wirth, Director of the ILO Subregional Office for South-East Asia and the Pacific in Albay, Bicol Region on 11 February.

The center serves as a common production area for a women's group set up to help affected women organize themselves and help the community. The 50 women founding members have already received entrepreneurship training. Market linkages, connecting producers to possible consumers, equipment and start-up capital were also provided.

Provincial Governor Joey Salceda, Cicero

Triunfante, Mayor of Daraga, Albay, and representatives of the Department of Labor and Employment and National Housing Authority were also present.

The center was set up to help victims of two super typhoons, which affected more than 200,000 families who lost their homes and sources of income in 2006.

A baseline study was conducted covering 100 per cent of the families in three resettlement areas to immediately assess the needs and develop programme interventions. A total of 48 emergency jobs were provided to young women and men in the province as data enumerators and tabulators.

In October 2007 an ILO assessment revealed that livelihood recovery efforts in Albay focused more on the agricultural sector while 45,000 families remained dependent on non-agricultural economic activities.

The local Daraga Government, the Bicol Center for Community Development, the National Housing Authority and the ILO worked with the community to support livelihood recovery and disaster risk management in the area.

*(continued from page 4)***ASEAN LABOUR...**

Throughout the region labour migration is increasingly feminized. Of workers recently migrating from Indonesia 69 per cent were women, as were 59 per cent of those from the Philippines. Most are domestic workers, entertainment workers and health workers.

There are rising concerns about the social costs of labour migration for the sending countries, including a possible brain drain, especially among workers in the health and education sectors. One in three of the workers migrating from the Philippines is a college graduate, whereas in the domestic labour force only 12 per cent are college graduates.

These concerns are in some ways counteracted by the large and growing remittances from overseas workers. In 2007 the World Bank estimated that annual remittances flowing into ASEAN countries already exceeded US\$30 billion. The bulk of these went to the Philippines (US\$17 billion), followed by Indonesia (US\$6 billion), and Viet Nam (US\$5 billion).

There is some evidence that remittances have been contributing to poverty alleviation in these countries. A recent study commissioned by the ILO estimates that in the last decade overseas migration and remittances have enabled close to a million people to be lifted out of poverty in the Philippines.

The wide income differential between the ASEAN sending countries and destination countries is expected to persist for the foreseeable future. This, combined with the ageing populations of countries like Singapore, Thailand, Japan and Korea, as well as the rapidly declining costs of travel, indicates that the pressure to migrate for work will continue to be strong in the near future.

The impact of a possible recession in the United States, if it happens, is ambiguous for ASEAN. The US is still the biggest single export market for ASEAN, accounting for about 13 per cent of total ASEAN exports. A US recession is certain to reduce demand for ASEAN goods, not only from the US but also other economies linked to the US. This could have a negative impact on the

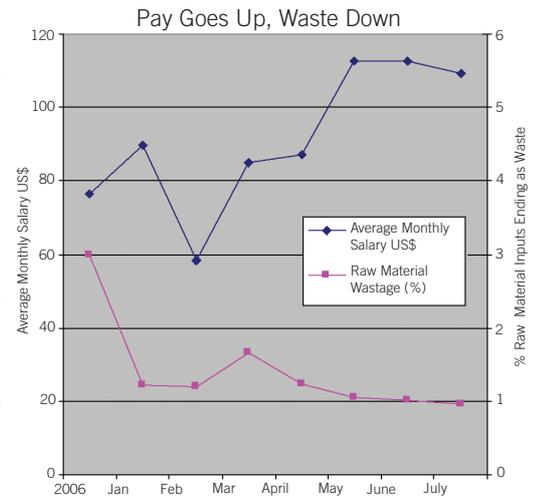
economies of migrant receiving countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand, and so reduce their demand for migrant workers. It follows that a US recession would also be likely to have a negative effect on the economies of the sending countries, creating higher unemployment and increasing workers' incentive to migrate for work.

If irregular migration is easy, labour migration might remain strong, despite weaker regional growth. In such a scenario tensions between migrant workers and the domestic labour force are likely to be high. Therefore, effective management of labour migration will be critical.

*(continued from page 8)***STRONGER COMPETITORS...**

But the FIP approach is not purely focused on quality and productivity. Rather it sees a factory as a whole, highlighting linkages between better jobs, higher quality and more environmentally sensitive (or green) production. In Faridabad the cleaner production module of the programme brought a significant cut in water usage and power consumption – saving money and benefiting the environment. For health and safety, factories installed new fire extinguishers, removed hazards from the shop floor, and introduced drinking water and toilet facilities. Perhaps most importantly, the freer flow of communications through a wide range of channels, produced improvements such as suggestion schemes, new grievance procedures and regular meetings between workers and management.

In Viet Nam, the results at SEICO, a company producing pre-engineered steel buildings for the booming industrial sector of Viet Nam, demonstrate the linkage between good workplace relations, workplace cooperation and improving the bottom line. Through its Factory Improvement Team, SEICO introduced daily line-level meetings across the factory, new quality control procedures and improved worker facilities. The results have been, in the view of management, spectacular. The wastage of raw materials per month has dropped more than 60 per cent, defect rates

Link between salaries & raw material waste, SEICO Co., Viet Nam

have fallen by more than 50 per cent and at the same time, due to productivity increases, average monthly salaries have increased by approximately 40 per cent.

The FIP methods and results were showcased in national conferences in Ho Chi Minh City and Delhi during 2007. The Delhi meeting (which was organized with FSIA and attended by the Union Minister of Labour and Employment and the Chief Minister of Haryana State) has resulted in stronger collaboration between ILO and the Government of India on cluster development. The programme's visible success has led to the upgrading of the formerly decrepit roads serving the electroplating factories in Faridabad.

In addition FIP worked with the ILO's specialist programmes on child labour and HIV/AIDS to organize well-attended seminars on these topics. One concrete result has been the establishment of a public-private partnership to make Faridabad a child labour-free zone.

FIP has created an awakening, for workers and managers alike. Increasingly the people working in FIP factories understand that higher quality is not possible without joint efforts and collaboration. This virtuous circle of change meant that simple modifications in operations often led to big improvements. Improved conditions have built commitment, leading to higher productivity, and ultimately more competitive firms that create more decent jobs.

C A L E N D A R

2008

1-2 April, Hanoi, Viet Nam	National Workshop on the Employment Permit System in Korea
1- 4 April, Chengdu, China	National Workshop on Occupational Safety & Health (OSH) in Small Enterprises
3 April, Jakarta, Indonesia	Migrant Workers' Remittances, Micro-Credit & Local Economic Development National Stakeholders Workshop
3-4 April, Beijing, China	Workshop on Employment Funds
8-10 April, Jakarta, Indonesia	ILO/Ministry of Foreign Affairs Decent Work Based Promotion of Migrant Worker's Protection, Training of Trainers
14-18 April, Jakarta, Indonesia	ILO/Ministry of Foreign Affairs Service Centres in Main Destination Countries, Training of Trainers
21-23 April, Niigata, Japan	Regional Research Conference: Green Jobs for Asia and the Pacific
*24-25 April, Manila, Philippines	ASEAN Forum on Labour Migration
27 April-2 May, Incheon, Korea	Regional Fellowship Programme on Labour Migration to Korea
April, Colombo, Sri Lanka	Consultative Workshop on the report: <i>Informal Employment in Sri Lanka: Nature, Probability of Employment and Determinants of Wages</i>
April, Colombo, Sri Lanka	Employers Federation of Ceylon/ILO Workshop on New Trends in Productivity Based Management in Sri Lanka
*6-7 May, Bangkok, Thailand	ASEAN Senior Labour Officials Meeting
*8 May, Bangkok, Thailand	ASEAN Labour Ministers Meeting
8-10 May, Bangkok, Thailand	National Safety Week of Thailand including ILO Workshop on Pandemic Human Influenza as a Workplace Issue
*11-13 May, Niigata, Japan	G8 Labour Minister's Conference
*12-14 May, Hanoi, Viet Nam	ASEAN-OSHNET Workshop on Effective Implementation of National OSH Programmes
12-16 May, Tak, Thailand	ILO/Human Rights and Development Foundation for Paralegal on Promoting Migrant Workers' Rights and Access to Legal Justice
12-16 May, Kathmandu, Nepal	Trade Union Training on Promoting Decent Work in the Informal Economy with a Focus on Organizing
19-20 May, New Delhi, India	Asian Regional High Level Meeting on Strategies to Extend Social Security Coverage
27-30 May, Battambang, Cambodia	ILO/EU/Japan/TICW Training Workshop on Labour Migration Policy and Management in Cambodia
May, Nepal	Employment Creation and Peace Building through Local Economic Development, Sensitization Workshop for National Stakeholders
May, Manila, Philippines	Validation Meeting for Partners on Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines
May, Cambodia	Knowledge Sharing Workshop with Asian Development Bank
9-12 June, Phnom Penh, Cambodia	Training on Monitoring and Recruitment of Migrant Workers
*29 June-2 July, Seoul, Korea	XVIII World Congress on Safety & Health at Work
*Non-ILO meeting	

A B I L I T Y W E B S I T E S

www.ilo.org/abilityasia

Site of the ILO's disability programme in Asia Pacific, covering issues such as training, employment and research on policy and practice, including information, guidelines, manuals and reports.

www.un.org/disabilities

The United Nations Enable website promotes the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities.

www.dpi.org

Disabled Peoples' International is a network of national organizations of disabled people, promoting rights through full participation, equal opportunities and development.

www.ilo.org/employment/disability

The ILO's Disability Programme promotes equality of opportunity and treatment for persons with disabilities in vocational rehabilitation, training and employment.

www.apcdproject.org

The Asia Pacific Development Center on Disability is a technical cooperation project of the Governments of Japan and Thailand, aiming to empower people with disabilities and remove the barriers they face in society.

www.worldbank.org/disability

The World Bank offers extensive information about disability, including statistics, reports and programme details.

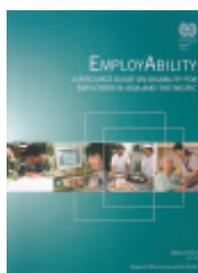
S H E L F L I F E



Employment Challenge and Strategies in India: An Assessment in the Framework of ILO's Global Employment Agenda

By T.S. Papola, New Delhi: ILO, 2008, 38 pp.
ISBN: 987-92-2-12088-2

The report explores the employment challenges faced by India within the framework of the "ten core elements" identified in the ILO's Global Employment Agenda and assesses how each element fits into India's development strategies and policies.



Employability, A Resource Guide on Disability for Employers in Asia & the Pacific

Debra Perry, Editor, Bangkok: ILO, 2007, 140 pp.
ISBN: 978-92-2-119122-3

A manual to assist businesses and organizations in recruiting, hiring and retaining employees with disabilities. The guide includes information on publications, websites, good practices, national organizations and government departments, as well as checklists and fact sheets.



International Labour Standards on Migrant Workers' Rights, Guide for Policymakers and Practitioners in Asia & the Pacific

Bangkok: ILO, 2007, 89 pp.

ISBN: 978-92-2-120246-2 English
Khmer, Lao & Thai editions available

An update on the rights of migrant workers, including basic terms and concepts relating to migration, discrimination, the ILO, the role of international labour standards, mechanisms, and procedures to assist in implementation.



Promoting Employment in Cambodia: Analysis and Options

By Elizabeth Morris, Bangkok: ILO, October 2007, 155 pp.
ISBN: 978-9221-1203-957

The report includes policy briefs based on national development. It looks at ways to introduce and strengthen labour market policies while placing productive employment at the centre of macroeconomic policies. The report also examines how sectoral strategies for agriculture, industry and services affect jobs and incomes.

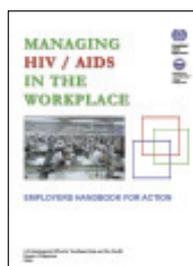


The Mekong Challenge: Winding roads, youth migrants from Lao PDR and their vulnerability to human trafficking

Bangkok: ILO, 2007, 130 pp.

ISBN: 978-922-120-9461

One of the most comprehensive studies ever undertaken - more than 6,000 households - based on the 2003 Lao PDR Migration Survey. This report reveals an acceleration in migration to Thailand of young Laotians, their vulnerability as undocumented migrant workers and the risk of being exploited.



Managing HIV/AIDS in the Workplace, Employers Handbook for Action

Manila: ILO and Employers Confederation of the Philippines, 2008, 50 pp.

ISBN: 978-92-2-121005-4

A guide for companies in establishing and strengthening HIV/AIDS programme in the workplace. It provides good-practices on workplace programmes from around the world as well as adaptations for local use, making it a practical and easy to use guide.



ILO Asian Programme on the Governance of Labour Migration, Working Papers No. 1-10 Bangkok, January 2008

Underlying Factors in International Labour Migration in Asia: Population, Employment and Productivity Trends (No. 1)

By Gavin W. Jones, 31 pp.
ISBN: 978-92-2-121024-5

Labour Shortage Responses in Japan, Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong and Malaysia: A Review and Evaluation (No. 2)

By Geoffrey Ducanes and Manolo Abella, 46 pp.
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By Edward Tamagno, 106 pp.
ISBN: 978-922-121030-6