

Tripartite Action to Protect Migrant Workers within and from the Greater Mekong Sub-region from Labour Exploitation (GMS TRIANGLE Project)



AT A GLANCE

→ Partners

Labour ministries, workers' and employers' organizations, recruitment agency associations, civil society organizations in six countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam)

→ Donor

Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)



Duration

2010-2015



Target beneficiaries

Migrant and potential migrant workers from and within the Greater Mekong Sub-region and Malaysia, tripartite constituents, recruitment agencies, civil



PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) and neighbouring countries comprise one of the world's most dynamic labour migration hubs, and it is predicted that migration in the region will continue to rise. While migrant workers make an enormous development contribution to their countries of origin and destination, many – particularly those whose status is irregular – suffer human and labour rights violations.

Studies of the recruitment processes and working conditions of low-skilled migrants consistently reveal abuse commonly associated with labour exploitation. These include high recruitment costs, deception (regarding wage rates, types of work and legal status), withheld wages, retention of passports or identity documents, physical confinement, substandard working conditions, and threats of denunciation to the authorities.

The Tripartite Action to Protect Migrants Workers from Labour Exploitation (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 Viet Nam and will expand activities into Myanmar in 2013. In each country, tripartite constituents government, workers' and employers' organizations) are engaged in each of the GMS TRIANGLE 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. Specific objectives include:

- Strengthening migrant recruitment and labour protection policies and practices, reflecting the interests of governments, employers' and workers' organizations, host societies and women and men migrants.
- Enhancing the capacity of tripartite constituents to support the implementation of national policies, bilateral agreements and regional commitments related to the recruitment and protection of women and men migrant workers.
- Protecting the rights of women and men migrants and potential migrants through increased access to support services, training, representation and social inclusion.

Cambodia: Battambang, Kampong Cham and Prey Veng

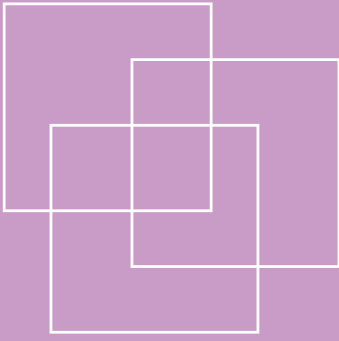
Lao PDR: Champasack, Xaiyaboury and Savannakhet

Malaysia: Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, Penang and Johor

Myanmar: Shan, Tanintharyi and Mandalay

Thailand: Chiang Mai, Mae Sot, Bangkok, Samut Prakan and Rayong

Viet Nam: Thanh Hoa, Quang Ngai, Phu Tho, Bac Ninh and Ha Tinh



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MAIN ACTIVITIES

- Provide technical support for the drafting of legislation and regulations on sending workers abroad and strengthening protection in sectors of work where migrants are frequently found.
- Conduct research; among sending communities to measure potential migrants' knowledge of safe and legal migration and rights at work, and in destination countries to gauge migrants' working conditions and access to support services.
- Launch an inter-agency campaign in Thailand and Malaysia to promote a more positive image of migrants, in line with their true contribution to economies and societies.
- Develop a range of tools and deliver training in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Vietnam and Myanmar to improve the provision of quality information and counselling on safe migration and rights at work, handle complaints, provide legal assistance and deliver pre-departure training.
- Support the development of labour inspection guidelines and occupational safety and health courses, and deliver training to labour officers and other stakeholders in Malaysia and Thailand, to enhance their role in protecting migrants.
- Promote the role of trade unions in protecting the rights of migrant workers through involvement in strengthening the legal and policy framework; networking within the country and abroad; conducting advocacy, information dissemination and training.
- Support recruitment agencies in forming associations, developing Codes of Conduct and monitoring subsequent implementation.
- Establish migrant worker resource centres and provide support services to women and men migrants and potential migrants; including information and counselling on safe migration and rights at work, legal assistance and access to justice, rescues from exploitative situations. training of migrant leaders and organization of migrant associations.

PROJECT OUTCOMES

- Support provided to more than 50,000 women and men migrants and potential migrants.
- National policies and legislation for sending workers abroad and protecting the rights of migrant workers strengthened.
- Knowledge of the situation of women and men migrant workers improved.
- Improved awareness of the rights and positive contribution made by migrants' among the public and tripartite constituents in destination countries.
- Labour officials and other partners in countries of origin, are better equipped to support the implementation of laws and policies on sending workers abroad.
- In destination countries, national labour inspection capacities are enhanced, promoting compliance with labour laws.
- Mechanisms to register and respond to complaints improved – including mechanisms established by governments, recruitment agencies, trade unions and civil society partners.
- Trade unions play a more prominent role in protecting migrant workers in sending and receiving countries through participation in the development of national policies, bilateral cooperation and support for migrant and potential migrant workers.
- Recruitment agencies that abide by the industry Code of Conduct are rewarded with special treatment or increasing market share.

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