ASIA-PACIFIC REGIONAL THEMATIC WORKING GROUP ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION INCLUDING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Asia-Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Global Forum on Migration and Development 2010

22 to 24 September 2010
Bangkok

REPORT OF THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE GLOBAL FORUM ON MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT 2010

CONTENTS

		Page
I.	**Bangkok Statement on Migration and Development**	5
II.	**Proceedings**	13
A.	Opening session	15
B.	Keynote address: Persisting and emerging challenges of international migration in Asia and the Pacific	15
C.	Sharing of experiences: emerging good practices	16
D.	Roundtable discussions	16
E.	Consideration and adoption of the report for submission to the Global Forum on Migration and Development 2010	17
III.	**Organization**	19
A.	Background	21
B.	Attendance	21
C.	Election of officers	22
D.	Adoption of the agenda	22
Annex I:	*List of participants*	23
Annex II:	*Recommendations from the Expert Group Meeting on Strengthening Capacities for Migration Management in Central Asia, 20 and 21 September 2010, Bangkok*	*37*
Annex III:	*Outcomes of Roundtable Discussion*	41
	Roundtable 1: Outcomes of Roundtable Discussion on Migration and Health	43
	Roundtable 2: Outcomes of Roundtable Discussion on Migration, Gender And Families	45
	Roundtable 3: Partnerships for More Regular and Protected Migration and Strategies to Address Irregular Migration	48
	Roundtable 4: Outcomes of Roundtable Discussion on Linking Migration and Development	49

I.

BANGKOK STATEMENT ON MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

© IOM/Kari Collin 2009 - MNP0094

© IOM 2007 - MBD0027 (Photo: Bashir Ahmed Sujan)

Bangkok Statement on Migration and Development

We, the representatives of 31 Governments in Asia and the Pacific, meeting in Bangkok from 22 to 24 September 2010 for the Asia-Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Global Forum on Migration and Development 2010, believing that our experience in addressing the issues surrounding international migration can be of value to other countries, submit this Statement to the Global Forum on Migration and Development 2010.

Recalling General Assembly resolution 63/225 of 10 March 2009 on International Migration and Development, General Assembly resolution 62/270 of 30 June 2008 on the Global Forum on Migration and Development, and General Assembly resolution 62/156 of 7 March 2008 on the Protection of Migrants.

Noting that the international community has developed a comprehensive set of international human rights norms and standards relevant to the promotion and protection of all migrants, as contained in key United Nations and International Labour Organization (ILO) instruments.

Reaffirming the fundamental principles of, and commitments to gender equality, women's empowerment and women migrants' rights.

Recognizing that

(a) The Asian and Pacific region currently hosts about 25 per cent of the world's estimated 214 million international migrants[1] and is the largest remittance-receiving region in absolute terms, receiving 42 per cent of the world's remittances.[2]

(b) International migration is an important feature of development in the region and the great diversity in geography, level of development and size of countries has resulted in international migration in the region taking many forms.

(c) There are a number of good practices on managing migration in the Asia-Pacific region that can be shared for the benefit of other countries, not only within the region but also globally.

(d) Migrants contribute positively to the social, cultural and economic development of both countries of origin and destination.

1 ESCAP, *Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the pacific 2009* (Bangkok, 2010)
2 Calculation by ESCAP based on World Bank, World Development Indicators Database 2010

(e) Key features of migration in the region include a predominance of temporary labour migration; a proactive role for governments in the management of migration; high percentages of women migrants; a significant proportion of irregular migrants; vulnerability to human trafficking, forced labour and labour exploitation; family separation; remittances as a significant ratio to gross domestic product in several countries; climate change as a potential driver for migration; and the fact that many countries are simultaneously sending, transit and receiving countries.

(f) Integrated policies on climate-induced migration and displacement are required in order to minimize the negative impact of displacement and protect the displaced population through positive livelihood and adaptation strategies.

(g) Migrant workers are development actors and contribute by way of remittances, skills, culture and labour to countries of origin, transit and destination.

(h) The main challenges that countries face in managing the increasing complexity of international migration are, (1) addressing irregular migration, particularly between contiguous countries with porous borders; (2) regulating recruitment effectively; (3) ensuring the rights of all migrants; and (4) integrating migration policies into overall economic and social development strategies in accordance with international norms and standards.

(i) Greater regional cooperation among Asia-Pacific countries has produced commitments and strategies such as the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers (2007); ASEAN Declaration against Trafficking in Persons, particularly Women and Children (2004); SAARC Regional Strategy on HIV and AIDS (2006-2010); SAARC Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution; and Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers and Members of their Families of the CIS Member Countries (2008).

(j) Regional Consultative Processes in addressing issues such as regular and irregular migration in the region, for example, the Bali Process and Colombo Process, have made positive contributions.

(k) Countries of origin and destination are increasingly entering into agreements and memoranda of understanding concerning temporary labour migration designed to provide the framework for orderly and equitable labour migration processes.

(l) Civil society organizations play an important role in the migration process, particularly in supporting migrants and their families in both countries of origin and destination.

(m) Certain groups of migrants require special attention and protection, for example, children, refugees, stateless persons and displaced persons.

(n) A strong market demand for migrant workers exists; however, national migration policies continue to restrict legal channels for migration.

(o) Poverty, development disparity, violence, conflict, persecution and disasters are often push factors for migration.

(p) Although migrant workers contribute significantly to reducing poverty through their remittances, their contribution, particularly by women, to both countries of origin and destination, are often unrecognized and unrenumerated. Furthermore, women and children often do not receive the full benefit of remittances, neither as wives nor children left behind, nor when they migrate themselves.

(q) The realization of the full development potential of remittances requires structured financial products and investment opportunities tailored to the needs of migrants and their families, and a sound investment climate and regulatory framework.

(s) Women migrants constitute half or more of the migrant workers deployed by some countries in Asia and the Pacific, with many women migrant workers finding themselves in informal labour sectors of the economy which are not covered by labour laws. These include women migrants employed as domestic workers and caregivers. Women migrants in these situations face greater risk of violation of their human and labour rights and are vulnerable to sexual exploitation and gender-based violence.

(t) Though many countries in the Asia-Pacific region have introduced policy measures to protect and empower migrant workers especially women, the implementation of these measures needs to be strengthened in some cases.

(u) Migration is a determinant of migrants' health, while health is among critical enabling factors for positive migration outcomes. Key health issues include the lack of portability of health protection and social security arrangements; poor access to health services in countries of destination; engagement

in jobs with low occupational, health and safety standards; the adverse impact of separation from family and sociocultural norms; and psychosocial conditions.

(v) Child migrants and children born to migrants have distinct interests, capacities and vulnerabilities that are often insufficiently reflected in global and regional dialogues, nor in equal terms in national migration policies and legislation. Such children are often undocumented or unregistered and have difficulty in accessing services such as education, health and social welfare. They are also at particular risk of abuse, violence and exploitation, and are vulnerable to detention and deportation. Furthermore, temporary labour programmes tend not to permit migrants to bring children with them, affecting family unity and potentially contributing to inadequate care and protection of children.

(w) Human traffickers and migrant smugglers take advantage of people's vulnerability, particularly those who may be desperate to migrate in an attempt to establish a better life or flee persecution. At destination, smuggled migrants' status as irregular immigrants makes them vulnerable to abuse, exploitation and human trafficking, while trafficked victims suffer exploitation at the hands of their traffickers.

Recommend that

1. Coherent and comprehensive national policies be pursued, and that are based on, and aligned to international human rights and labour standards, to effectively manage labour migration and protect the rights of all migrant workers particularly those at greatest risk including women and children.

2. Effective labour migration management strategies be integrated into national development plans and poverty reduction strategies.

3. Both sending and receiving countries promote understanding of, and consider the possibility of ratifying the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, and other relevant conventions and protocols.

4. Bilateral and regional cooperation in managing migration and intercountry partnerships involving non-State actors be strengthened.

5. Further development and fuller implementation of existing legislations be pursued to protect all migrant workers and their families, including agreements at the bilateral and multilateral levels.

6. Guidelines and minimum standards be developed to assist countries of origin and destination in providing health services for migrant workers and their families with, for example, health financial schemes, social protection in health and mandatory health insurance.

7. Assistance to migrants in all aspects of their health and welfare be increased, including making pre-departure health assessments aligned to international health standards and enhancing access to information on health matters, with a particular focus on those in vulnerable situations such as women migrant workers, children, victims of trafficking and displaced persons.

8. Pre-departure orientation and training be provided to migrant workers including information on job opportunities; working conditions, salaries and accommodation; as well as training on legal awareness, language and cultural environment in the countries of destination.

9. Strategies that include a human security approach be implemented, taking into account General Assembly resolution 60/1 on the 2005 World Summit Outcome, to address root causes of irregular migration and human trafficking particularly for those groups with special protection needs, through ensuring access to quality services, preventing and addressing statelessness, and supporting individuals at risk of vulnerabilities, and for communities to empower themselves and mitigate their vulnerabilities.

10. Gender-sensitive, child-sensitive and rights-based perspectives be mainstreamed, and measures to eliminate stigma and discrimination against migrants particularly domestic workers, be integrated into migration, labour, population and development policies.

11. The image of migrant workers, especially women, be enhanced and their contribution be recognized, through information dissemination and media campaigns in both countries of origin and destination.

12. National laws be reviewed to ensure that all migrants including domestic workers, women and children affected by migration, have access to legal protection, birth registration, social, health and education services in both countries of origin and destination, in line with internationally agreed standards and norms.

13. Inter-ministerial and inter-agency bodies, where appropriate, be set up or strengthened to address the multi-dimensional aspects of migration, with the capacity to address the concerns of women and children.

14. Efforts be strengthened to collect and share migration data on health and sex and age disaggregated data; undertake qualitative and quantitative studies; and to analyse the impact of migration on families, in order to promote better policy formulation and provision of services.

15. The development impact of migration be enhanced by reducing the costs associated with migration and improving the financial literacy and entrepreneurship skills of migrants and their families.

16. The contribution of diasporas to development be maximized by ensuring a stable macroeconomic environment; as well as establishing mechanisms that facilitate the transfer of skills and other resources of diasporas and services that cater to their needs in the countries of origin.

17. Recruitment agencies in countries of origin and employers in countries of destination be effectively regulated and ethical codes of conduct be promoted and monitored.

18. While addressing migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons in a comprehensive way, occasions for impunity need to be reduced by enacting national legislation and strengthening law enforcement efforts, with a particular focus on the dismantling of criminal networks.

II.

PROCEEDINGS

© IOM 2008 - MPH0316 (Photo: Angelo Jacinto)

Proceedings

A. Opening Session

1. His Excellency Mr. Issara Somchai, Minister of Social Development and Human Security of the Government of Thailand inaugurated the Asia-Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Global Forum on Migration and Development. In his opening statement, the Minister emphasized the importance of dialogue among Governments for fostering greater understanding of issues relating to migration and development at the regional and global levels. He further stressed the value of this Meeting for strengthening the voice of the Asia-Pacific region at the forthcoming Global Forum on Migration and Development 2010.

2. The Co-Chairs of the Asia-Pacific Regional Thematic Working Group on International Migration including Human Trafficking delivered a joint welcoming statement that highlighted the role of migration and development in the Asian and Pacific region, the priority accorded to the issue by the United Nations and related organizations, and the commitment of the United Nations system at the regional level to “Delivering as One UN”.

B. Keynote address: Persisting and emerging challenges of international migration in Asia and the Pacific

3. The keynote address was delivered by Ms. Ton Nu Thi Ninh, former Vice-Chair, Foreign Affairs Committee, National Assembly of Viet Nam and President, Tri Viet University Project. In presenting a broad trend analysis of international migration in the Asia-Pacific region, Ms. Ninh noted the complexity of migration in the region and highlighted key areas of concern including the vulnerability of migrants, the lack of long-term approaches and the uneven attention given to migration. Given that international migration including labour migration has transnational implications, she emphasized the need to accord a central position to the issue in the global, regional, subregional and national development agendas and budgets. Ms. Ninh further indicated that there would be a need for a long-term, holistic and integrated approach in addressing migration, which should be proactive rather than reactive, and involve strong multi-stakeholder partnerships across countries and regions.

C. Sharing of experiences: emerging good practices

4. Under this agenda item, the Governments of Armenia, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Philippines, Russian Federation, Samoa, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vanuatu delivered statements on their country situations and practices and approaches to addressing migration. The presentations reflected the variety of conditions and the complexity of the migration process in the Asia-Pacific region.

5. The countries of North and Central Asia presented a joint statement that reflected the outcomes of the Expert Group Meeting on Strengthening Capacities for Migration Management in North and Central Asia, which was held in Bangkok on 20 and 21 September 2010. The joint statement emphasized that migration processes had played an important role in the socio-economic development in the countries of North and Central Asia, with remittances representing a significant contribution in terms of ratio to GDP in several countries of origin (up to 50 per cent of GDP). The joint statement also stressed that migration in North and Central Asia presented unique features due to close economic, historical and cultural ties among the countries of that region, its visa-free regime, and the presence of numerous diasporas which promoted active migration processes between countries. The recommendations of the Expert Group Meeting are attached as Annex II.

D. Roundtable discussions

6. Four roundtables were conducted as follows:

   (a) Migration and health

   Chair: H.E. Mr. Farhadullah Farhad, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled, Afghanistan; Co-Chair: Dr. Maureen Birmingham, Representative for Thailand, World Health Organization.

   (b) Migration, gender and families

   Chair: Ms. Begum Shamsun Nahar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, Bangladesh; Co-Chair: Ms. Nanda Krairiksh, Director, Social Development Division, ESCAP.

(c) Partnerships for more regular and protected migration and strategies to address irregular migration

Chair: Mr. Andhika Chrisnayudhanto, Deputy-Director for Transnational Crime, Directorate of International Security and Disarmament, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Co-Chair: Ms. Thetis Mangahas, Deputy Regional Director, ILO.

(d) Linking migration and development

Chair: Mr. Purna Chandra Bhattarai, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Transport Management, Nepal; Co-Chair: Mr. Andrew Bruce, Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, International Organization for Migration.

7. The outcomes of the above-mentioned roundtables are attached as Annex III.

E. Consideration and adoption of the report for submission to the Global Forum on Migration and Development 2010

8. The Meeting adopted its report including the Bangkok Statement on Migration and Development, on 24 September 2010, for submission to the Global Forum on Migration and Development 2010.

III.

ORGANIZATION

© IOM 2006 - MTH0051 (Photo: Thierry Falise)

© IOM 2006 - MTH0032 (Photo: Thierry Falise)

Organization

A. Background

9. The Asia-Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Global Forum on Migration and Development 2010 was organized by the Asia-Pacific Regional Thematic Working Group on International Migration including Human Trafficking. The Working Group is co-chaired by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and comprises the following members: International Labour Organization (ILO), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM, part of UN Women), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

B. Attendance

10. Thirty-one Governments of the Asia-Pacific region were represented at the Meeting: Afghanistan, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Samoa, Solomon Island, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor Leste, Tonga, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, and Viet Nam. The complete list of participants is attached as Annex III.

11. In addition, the following offices of the United Nations Secretariat, United Nations bodies and specialized agencies and related organizations were also represented: UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, United Nations Development Fund for Women, ILO, UNODC, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), ESCAP, IOM, Economic And Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), UNDP, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and World Heath Organization (WHO).

C. Election of officers

12. The Meeting elected the following officers:

Chairperson:	Mr. Atul Kumar Tiwari (India)
Vice-chairpersons:	Mr. Gagik Yeganyan, (Armenia)
	Mr. Lionel Kaluat (Vanuatu)
Rapporteur:	Ms. Viengsavanh Sipraseuth
	(Lao People's Democratic Republic)

D. Adoption of the agenda

13. The Meeting adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Election of officers
3. Adoption of the agenda
4. Keynote address: Persisting and emerging challenges of international migration in Asia and the Pacific
5. Sharing of experiences: emerging good practices
6. Roundtable discussions:
   (a) Migration and health
   (b) Partnerships for more regular and protected migration and strategies to address irregular migration
   (c) Migration, gender and families
   (d) Linking migration and development
7. Consideration and adoption of the report for submission to the Global Forum on Migration and Development 2010
8. Closing of the Meeting

ANNEX I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

© IOM 2008 - MPH0307 (Photo: Angelo Jacinto)

© IOM 2006 - MTH0158 (Photo: Thierry Falise)

List of Participants

AFGHANISTAN

H.E. Mr. Farhadullah Farhad, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled, Kabul

ARMENIA

Mr. Gagik Yeganyan, Head of State Migration Service, State Migration Service, Ministry of Territorial Administration, Yerevan

AUSTRALIA

Mr. Simon De Vere, Minister Counsellor (Immigration) a.i. and Acting Regional Director (East Asia), Australian Embassy, Bangkok

AZERBAIJAN

Mr. Vahid Gahramanov, Chief of the Migration Policy Department, State Migration Service of Azerbaijan Republic, Baku

BANGLADESH

H.E. Mr. Kazi Imtiaz Hossain, Ambassador of Bangladesh to Thailand and Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Bangladesh Embassy, Bangkok

Ms. Begum Shamsun Nahar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare & Overseas Employment, Dhaka

Mr. Md. Abdullah Al Masud Chowdhury, Economic Counsellor and Alternate Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Bangladesh Embassy, Bangkok

BHUTAN

Mr. Kinzang Dorjic, Desk Officer, Policy and Planning Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thimphu

CAMBODIA

Mr. Chuop Narath, Deputy Director, Department of Employment and Manpower, Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, Phnom Penh

Mr. Chhan Vutha, Department of Immigration, Ministry of Interior, Phnom Penh

CHINA

Ms. Yan Wu, Third Secretary, Department of International Organizations and Conference, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Beijing

INDIA

Mr. Atul Kumar Tiwari, Joint Secretary, Government of India, Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA), New Delhi

INDONESIA

Ms. Roostiawati, Director, Indonesian Overseas Workers Placement, Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration, Jakarta

Mr. Andhika Chrisnayudhanto, Deputy-Director for Transnational Crime, Directorate of International Security and Disarmament, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Jakarta

Ms. Eva Trisiana, Head, Sub Directorate for International Cooperation, Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration, Jakarta

Mr. W. Sunani Ali Asrori, Head, Section for International Manpower, Directorate of Social-Cultural Affairs and International Organization for Developing Countries, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Jakarta

Mr. Ahmad Gunawan Wicaksono, Staff, Directorate of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Jakarta

Ms. Christine Refina Silalahi, Centre for Policy Analysis and Development on Asia Pacific and Africa Region, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Jakarta

JAPAN

Mr. Masatoshi Sato, Counsellor and Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan to ESCAP, Embassy of Japan, Bangkok

Ms. Maiko Tamagawa, Special Assistant to Permanent Representative of Japan to ESCAP, Embassy of Japan, Bangkok

KAZAKHSTAN

Ms. Gulsara Altynbekova, Director, Department of Committee on Migration, Almaty

KYRGYZSTAN

Mr. Almazbek Asanbaev, Deputy Head of the Representative of Ministry of Labour, Employment and Migration of the Kyrgyz Republic, Moscow

LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

Ms. Viengsavanh Sipraseuth, Deputy Director-General, International Organization Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Vientiane

MONGOLIA

Ms. Dulam Enkhtuya, First Secretary, Consular Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Ulaanbaatar

Ms. Saranchimeg Byamba, Deputy Director, Population and Social Statistics Department, National Statistical Office, Ulaanbaatar

MYANMAR

Mr. Thant Sin, Deputy Director, International Organizations and Economic Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar

NEPAL

Mr. Purna Chandra Bhattarai, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Transport Management, Kathmandu

PAKISTAN

Mr. Iftikhar Ahmed Soomro, Joint Secretary (A/E), Ministry of Labour and Manpower, Islamabad

PHILIPPINES

Mr. Danilo P. Cruz, Undersecretary, Department of Labour and Employment, Manila

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Ms. Jisoo Kim, Second Secretary, Overseas Koreans Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Seoul

Mr. Sung Gil Son, Deputy Director, Foreign Work-Force Policy Division, Ministry of Employment and Labour, Seoul

Mr. Jong-Min Kim, Counsellor and Consul (Immigration Attaché), Embassy of the Republic of Korea, Bangkok

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Mr. Ilya S. Malenko, Deputy Head, Division of International and Public Relations, Federal Migration Service, Moscow

Mr. Nikolay V. Kalashnikov, First Secretary, Department of Humanitarian Co-operation and Human Rights, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Moscow

Ms. Anna Y. Klyukhina, Attaché and Assistant Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of the Russian Federation, Bangkok

SAMOA

Mr. Faafouina Isaako Milford, Assistant Chief Executive Officer, Samoa Immigration Office, Ministry of Prime Minister and Cabinet, Apia

SOLOMON ISLANDS

Mr. Mason Henry Fugui, Deputy Director, Immigration, Immigration Division, Honiara

SRI LANKA

Mr. Palitha Mahipala, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Health, Colombo

Ms. Yasoja K. Gunasekera, Director/Economic Affairs, Ministry of External Affairs, Colombo

TAJIKISTAN

Mr. Rustam Makhmudov, Head of Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dushanbe

THAILAND

Mr. Rachananant Thananant, Deputy Director-General, Department of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangkok

Mr. Nadhavathna Krishnamra, Director, Social Division, Department of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangkok

Ms. Piyaporn Putanapan, Secondary Secretary, Social Division, Department of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangkok

Mr. Thiti Jala, Department of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangkok

Mr. Kasem Taveepanyaskul, Policy Analyst, Bureau of Border Security Affairs and Defence, Office of the National Security Council, Bangkok

Mr. Singha Sukhavachana, Chief of Displaced Person, Policy Coordination and Illegal Migration, Foreign Affairs' Division, Ministry of Interior, Bangkok

Dr. Chanvit Tharathep, Director, Bureau of Health Administration, Ministry of Public Health, Nonthaburi, Thailand

Ms. Panita Dherasariskul, Plan and Policy Analyst, Bureau of Health Administration, Ministry of Public Health, Nonthaburi, Thailand

Ms. Rattana Nontapattamadul, Social Welfare Officer, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, Bangkok

Ms. Jirawan Phanphuttarat, Office of Women's Affairs and Family Development, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, Bangkok

Ms. Supaporn Konlawit, Social Development Worker, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, Bangkok

Mr. Anuwat Boonpan, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, Bangkok

Mr. Anurak Tossarat, Senior Expert on Foreign Workers System Management, Department of Employment, Ministry of Labour, Bangkok

Mr. Thawatchai Leaksumrit, Senior Professional Level, Labour Office, Department of Employment, Ministry of Labour, Bangkok

Ms. Piengpahd Withyachumnarnkul, Chief, Foreign Relations Section, Department of Employment, Ministry of Labour, Bangkok

Ms. Lupthawan Walsh, Foreign Relations Officer, Professional Level, Department of Employment, Ministry of Labour, Bangkok

Ms. Chalobon Kachonpadungkitti, Labour Technical Officer, Professional Level, Department of Employment, Ministry of Labour, Bangkok

TIMOR LESTE

Mr. Luis Soares Barreto, Chief Inspector of Police and Deputy Director National Service of Migration, Secretary of State of Security National Service of Immigration, Dili

TONGA

Mr. T. Suka Mangisi, Principal Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nuku'alofa

UZBEKISTAN

Mr. Yadgarkhoja Shadmanov, Deputy Head of the Consular Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tashkent

VANUATU

Mr. Lionel Kaluat, Commissioner of Labour, Department of Labour, Port Vila

VIET NAM

Mr. Thanh Thuy Nguyen, Chief, Migration Affairs Division, Consular Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Hanoi

UNITED NATIONS SECRETARIAT

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA (ESCWA)

Mr. Paul Tacon	Associate Social Affairs Officer, Social Development Division, Beirut

UNITED NATIONS BODIES

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP)

Ms. Marta Vallejo Mestres	HIV/AIDS Programme Specialist, Asia-Pacific Regional Centre, Bangkok
Ms. Jennifer Branscombe	HIV/AIDS and Mobility Programme Officer, Asia-Pacific Regional Centre, Bangkok

SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION (UNESCO)

Ms. Krista Clement	Consultant, Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, Bangkok

WORLD HEATH ORGANIZATION (WHO)

Dr. Maureen Birmingham	WHO Representative, Thailand Country Office, Bangkok

RESOURCE PERSONS

Mr. Ghulam Muhammad Arif, Joint Director, Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), Islamabad

H.E. Ms. San Arun, Secretary of State, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Phnom Penh

Mr. Brad K. Blitz, Professor of Political Geography/Consultant, Kingston University London, London

Mr. William Gois, Regional Coordinator, Migrant Forum in Asia, Quezon City

Mr. Min Suk Kim, Coordinator of the ILO/Korea Partnership Programme, International Labour Organization, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok

Mr. Mu–Song Lim, Director-General of Labour Market Policy Bureau, Ministry of Employment and Labour, Seoul

Ms. Sasiporn Mannontarat, Technical Social Worker, Ranong Provincial Social Development and Human Security Officer, Ranong, Thailand (assisted by Ms. Nantaporn Leumwananonthachai, Interpreter)

Ms. Ton-Nu-Thi Ninh, Foundation President, Tri Viet University Project, Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam

OBSERVERS

Mr. Dheeraj Bhaskar, Attaché and Assistant Permanent Representative to ESCAP, Embassy of India, Bangkok

MEMBERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS THEMATIC WORKING GROUP ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION INCLUDING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

JOINT UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME ON HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)	*Mr. Steven J. Kraus,* Director, Regional Support Team Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok
	Ms. Dawn Foderingham, Regional Advisor, Partnerships, Asia Pacific Intercountry Team, Bangkok
UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND (UNFPA)	*Mr. Rabbi Royan,* Regional Advisor (Population and Development), Asia and the Pacific Regional Office, Bangkok
OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR)	*Mr. Jean-Noël Wetterwald,* Regional Representative in Thailand and Regional Co-ordinator for South East Asia, Bangkok
	Mr. Kazutoshi Nagasaka, Senior Regional Programme Officer, Regional Office in Thailand, Bangkok
	Mr. Thomas Vargas, Senior Regional Global Protection Adviser, Regional Office in Thailand, Bangkok
UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND (UNICEF)	*Mr. Mahesh Patel,* Regional Adviser, Social Policy, East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO), Bangkok
	Ms. Amalee McCoy, Child Protection Specialist, East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO), Bangkok
	Ms. Kay Winning, Consultant, East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (EAPRO), Bangkok

Mr. Ron Pouwels, Regional Adviser, Child Protection, Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA), Kathmandu

Ms. Dejana Popic, Social Policy Specialist, Regional Office for South Asia (ROSA), Kathmandu

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN (Part of UN Women)

Ms. Moni Pizani, Representative and Regional Programme Director, East and South East Asia Regional Office, Bangkok

Ms. Deepa Bharathi, Regional Programme Manager, East and South East Asia Regional Office, Bangkok

Dr. Asha Rao, Senior Programme Manager, Migration, IDP and HIV, South Asia Sub Regional Office, New Delhi

Ms. Sharu Joshi Shrestha, Senior Programme Manager, Nepal Programme Office, Kathmandu

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (ILO)

Ms. Thetis Mangahas, Deputy Regional Director, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok

Ms. Panudda Boonpala, Chief Technical Advisor, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok

Mr. Pracha Vasuprasat, Chief Technical Advisor, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok

Mr. Max Tunon, Programme Officer, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok

Ms. Silvia Cormaci, Associate Expert Gender, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok

	Ms. Jenny Bjork, Consultant, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok
	Mr. Nilim Baruah, Senior Migration Policy Adviser, Central Asia, Kazakhstan Project Office, Almaty
UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME (UNODC)	*Mr. Martin Reeve,* Regional Advisor (Human Trafficking), Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok
	Ms. Sonia Bezziccheri, Associate Adviser (HIV/AIDS), Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok
	Ms. Anne Bergenstrom, Coordinator (Expert/Adviser, HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care), Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok
	Mr. Sebastian Baumeister, Expert (Migrant Smuggling Analyst), Regional Centre for East Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok
OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (OHCHR)	*Ms. Hannah Wu,* Deputy Chief, Regional Office for South-East Asia, Bangkok
	Ms. Camaran Pipes, Consultant, Regional Office for South-East Asia, Bangkok

JOINT SECRETARIAT OF THE THEMATIC WORKING GROUP ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION INCLUDING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (ESCAP)

Ms. Nanda Krairiksh	Co-Chair of the Asia-Pacific Regional Thematic Working Group on International Migration including Human Trafficking and Director, Social Development Division

Mr. Donald Clarke	Chief, Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Section, Social Development Division
Mr. Jorge Carrillo-Rodriguez	Officer-in-Charge, a.i., Social Policy and Population Section, Social Development Division
Ms. Cai Cai	Social Affairs Officer, Social Development Division
Ms. Vanessa Steinmayer	Social Affairs Officer, Social Development Division

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION (IOM)

Mr. Andrew Bruce	Co-Chair of the Asia-Pacific Regional Thematic Working Group on International Migration including Human Trafficking and Regional Representative, Regional Office for South East Asia
Ms. Rabab Fatima	Regional Representative, Regional Office for South Asia
Ms. Monique Filsnoel	Chief of Mission, Thailand Office
Dr. Tomas O'Rourke	Chief Migration Health, Regional Office for South East Asia
Mr. Florian Forster	Chief of Mission, Vietnam Office
Mr. Thomas Sinkovits	Director General Special Envoy and Head of Liaison Office, Liaison Office in China
Dr. Jaime F. Calderon Jr.	Regional Migration Health Manager, Regional Office for South East Asia
Ms. Sophie Nonnenmacher	Head, Counter Trafficking, Regional Office for South East Asia
Ms. Yuko Hamada	Senior Regional Programme Development Officer, Regional Office for South East Asia
Ms. Dovelyn Agunias	Regional Research Officer, Regional Office for South East Asia

ANNEX II

Recommendations from the Expert Group Meeting on Strengthening Capacities for Migration Management in Central Asia 20 and 21 September 2010, Bangkok

© IOM/Cole Garside 2009 - MGE0057

© IOM 2007 - MIQ0039 (Photo: Livia Styp-Rekowska)

Recommendations from the Expert Group Meeting on Strengthening Capacities for Migration Management in Central Asia

1. The Expert Group Meeting on "Strengthening Capacities for Migration Management in Central Asia" was organized by ESCAP, with the participation of experts from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, as well as the representatives of ILO and IOM. The meeting was financed by the Russian Federation.

2. The Meeting noted that migration processes played an important role in the socio-economic development in the countries of North and Central Asia.[3] It was viewed that remittances represented a significant ratio to GDP for some countries of origin (up to 50 per cent of GDP); and migrants made significant contributions to the economies of host countries.

3. It was also noted that close economic, historical and cultural ties among the countries of the subregion, a visa-free regime, and presence of numerous diasporas, had promoted active migration among countries of Central Asia.

4. Furthermore, recent improvements in migration policies, as well as bilateral and multilateral cooperation within the CIS region, had resulted in the reduction of irregular migration. However, there were still challenges to be addressed, for example, many migrants were still undocumented. This aspect made migration less effective and increased its social and economic costs.

5. The participants of the Meeting put forward the following recommendations that focused on the three stages of migration, namely, pre-departure orientation and training, employment and stay, and return and reintegration.

6. It was viewed that more focus at the stage of pre-departure orientation and training would be needed for:

   (a) Providing information about, among others, existing vacancies, salaries, work conditions and accommodation;

   (b) Training of potential migrant workers including legal awareness, professional skills, language and cultural aspects of countries of destination;

3 North and Central Asia is an ESCAP subregion comprising the following countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

(c) Undertaking the development of pre-departure centres for the above-mentioned purposes.

7. With regard to the employment and stay phase, the focus should be on:

   (a) Accessing health services;

   (b) Further development and fuller implementation of existing legislation to protect migrant workers, including at the bilateral and multilateral levels;

   (c) Addressing the needs of both women and men migrants in countries of destination by, for example, collaborating with non-governmental and diaspora organizations to set up centres in countries of destination;

   (d) Conducting studies on the impact of migration on the socio-economic development of sending and receiving countries.

8. It was also noted that including the management of remittances, the return and reintegration phase should address:

   (a) The need for services to support reintegration of migrants in the countries of origin, taking into account the newly acquired skills of migrant workers;

   (b) Improving access to financial services;

   (c) Upgrading the financial literacy of migrants.

ANNEX III

Outcomes of Roundtable Discussion

© IOM 2006 - MPH0100 (Photo: Angelo Jacinto)

© IOM 2007 - MPH0168 (Photo: Angelo Jacinto)

Outcomes of Roundtable Discussion

ROUNDTABLE 1: OUTCOMES OF ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ON MIGRATION AND HEALTH

1. Discussion in this roundtable on thematic issues faced in the region and gaps in understanding was based on an examination of the phases of migration, namely, pre-departure, arrival (destination) and return.

2. Among the key issues raised was that migration was regarded as a determinant of migrants' health, while health was a critical enabling factor for positive migration outcomes. It was noted that beyond the traditional management of diseases, migrants' health could be related to broader social determinants surrounding the migration process that could, in turn, result in negative health outcomes for individuals and societies. It was identified that health was a critical asset for migrants and their families, and negative health outcomes affected the migrants and caused social and economic burdens to host communities. Negative health outcomes might also have repercussions on families left behind, or the wider community in the country of origin.

3. With regard to the primary gaps examined through the phases of migration mentioned above, it was deemed that prior to crossing borders, migrants could not readily access social protection mechanisms including health insurance schemes. Further complicating this situation, interventions had not routinely been made by the respective Governments of the sending countries to ensure the physical, mental and psychosocial well-being of families left behind. Particularly, Governments, when acting at the national, bilateral and multilateral levels, generally had not focused on establishing long-term strategies and policies in addressing the health challenges faced by migrants.

4. The roundtable viewed that when migrants arrived at the countries of destination, their vulnerabilities could be exacerbated if their employers were to breach the original contract, make drastic amendments in their job responsibilities, not honour the terms of compensation, or provide sub-standard living accommodation. Employers could also hinder Government interventions aimed at migrants, especially domestic workers, and their families. Financial support for these health-care interventions had presented Governments with ongoing and increasingly complicated challenges.

5. It was also regarded that communication gaps among government agencies, localities and across borders, had limited migrants' accessibility to health-care services. Furthermore, bilateral negotiations to resolve these challenges were frequently impeded when irregular migration was not recognized. Additionally, it was deemed that when migrants returned to their respective countries of origin, initiatives were not often taken to monitor workers' mental and physical health conditions.

6. Ten recommendations were put forward on how migration and health matters could be further linked.

Recommendations

One, reflect international health standards when making pre-departure health assessments related to health and welfare assistance to migrants, facilitate access to portable social protection and services including information on health, and provide migrants with proper management of health conditions, particularly those in vulnerable situations such as female migrant workers, children and victims of trafficking or migrant smuggling.

Two, the ongoing development, implementation and monitoring of bilateral and multilateral agreements should ensure the effectiveness of national, regional and multilateral actions.

Three, regular dialogue and a wider framework of actions are needed to address the health consequences of migration between sending, transit and receiving countries.

Four, greater cooperation is required in formulating guidelines and minimum standards to assist countries of origin and destination to develop health-related financial and social protection schemes for migrant workers and their families.

Five, greater support for multi-country partnerships is necessary to facilitate the continuous management of health-related conditions requiring long-term treatment.

Six, Governments and other stakeholders should identify viable regional and global funding mechanisms to finance services that support the health and the social protection of migrants. Moreover, cross-sectoral and multilateral cooperation among countries of origin, transit and destination are needed for health and migration consultations to be effective.

Seven, international organizations, such as WHO, IOM and international non-governmental organizations, should facilitate, document and evaluate effective practices that enhance access to health-care services for migrants and their families.

Eight, the collection and analysis of data on the health conditions of migrants are vital to provide reference for the development and review of migrant-sensitive health systems and strategies.

Nine, information on best practices or lessons learnt regarding migrant-related health practices should be more accessible and include financing modalities.

Ten, in order to promote the support of key stakeholders, the relevant ministries should review policies, laws and practices to ensure coherence; identify and designate focal entities in ministries to initiate cross-sectoral dialogue; and provide migrants with education and information on health matters through relevant ministries and agencies. The ministries should also develop and enforce national standards for primary health-care systems that are relevant to migrants, expand the depth of inter-ministerial collaboration on education on health care and information dissemination, incorporate migrants' health-related needs in national budgets, and conduct multisectoral advocacy regarding health and labour migration issues.

ROUNDTABLE 2: OUTCOMES OF ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ON MIGRATION, GENDER AND FAMILIES

1. A key concern raised was that, along with the inadequate incorporation of international migration into national development strategies, there was a lack of gender-sensitive development policies. In addition, there was limited adherence to international norms and standards that focused particularly on women migrant workers, especially those in informal labour such as domestic work. The participants were also concerned that women migrants often did not receive the full benefit of remittances, neither as wives left behind nor as migrants. Furthermore, policy frameworks that created barriers for the migration of women were identified as contributing to greater irregular migration and the risk of being trafficked. The presence of undocumented women migrant workers was also viewed as a key challenge that needed to be addressed.

2. There were also concerns about insufficient national capacity to cater to the needs of child migrants and address issues related to the trafficking of children and children in armed conflicts. Additionally, the increasing number of women who migrated for work led roundtable participants to highlight the lack of comprehensive gender-sensitive labour migration policies. The roundtable also thought that prior to departure women migrant workers, especially domestic workers, were insufficiently empowered and comprehensive training programmes, particularly on economic matters and skills, were lacking. In addition, supervision and monitoring mechanisms for recruitment, placement and protection of women migrants were inadequate. Furthermore, the participants were concerned about the relatively high school dropout rate among children affected by migration. Concerns were also raised about the social cost of migration, particularly regarding women left behind, who often faced health vulnerabilities such as the heightened risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases.

3. Among the gaps identified were the absence of detailed data on the migration of women and children, the lack of disaggregated data by sex and age, and insufficient information pertaining to the psychosocial effects of migration on women and children. Another gap that was noted was the lack of long-term approaches to deal with migration, and an appreciation for the role and contribution of women migrants at the policy and societal levels. The degree of financial literacy among women was also low. Furthermore, there were gaps in the implementation of Recommendation 26 on women migrant workers of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

4. Participants recognized that more work needed to be undertaken and outlined a set of nine recommendations.

Recommendations

One, migration and the specific needs of families affected by migration should be integrated into international development plans and national budgets of both countries of origin and destination. Related to this, the significance of fostering bilateral, regional and international cooperation in the sharing of national experiences and good practices should be recognized.

Two, it is necessary to mainstream gender-sensitive, child-sensitive and rights-based perspectives into work on migration, as well as integrate measures for

eliminating stigma and discrimination of domestic workers into migration, labour, population and development policies.

Three, in order to promote consistency with international norms and standards, there is a need to review national laws to ensure that all migrants, as well as women and children affected by migration, have access to legal protection, and social, health and education services in both countries of origin and destination.

Four, there is a need to set up or strengthen, where appropriate, inter-ministerial and inter-agency bodies to address the multi-dimensional issues of migration including the concerns of women and children.

Five, in order to facilitate better policy formulation, there is a need to promote the collection and sharing of information that incorporates sex- and age-disaggregated data, undertake qualitative and quantitative studies, and analyse the impact of migration on families and the contribution of women migrants to economic development.

Six, the image and contribution of migrant workers, especially women, should be enhanced through information dissemination and media campaigns in both countries of origin and destination.

Seven, there is a need to regulate recruitment agencies, share national experiences and promote ethical codes of conduct for migrant workers. In addition, there is a need to provide comprehensive and gender-sensitive training for the pre-departure phase, including the social, cultural and legal aspects of the country of destination, as well as enhance migrant workers' language skills and financial literacy.

Eight, consistent with promoting effective gender-sensitive reintegration policies and programmes for returning migrants, there is a need to mainstream gender issues into future processes of the Global Forum on Migration and Development, including the integration of principles pertaining to gender equality and the rights of women migrants.

Nine, there is a need to address the rights of children left behind after migration through child-sensitive policies in countries of origin and destination, through enhancing children's access to protection services and through family reunification policies.

ROUNDTABLE 3: PARTNERSHIPS FOR MORE REGULAR AND PROTECTED MIGRATION AND STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS IRREGULAR MIGRATION

1. A major issue raised was that, despite the existence of market demand for migrant workers due to regional economic integration and demographic realities, policies had continued to restrict opportunities for legal migration. Additionally, unscrupulous business practices exploited the mismatch between demand for and supply of workers. This aspect, as well as inappropriate migration policies, had increased the opportunities for human trafficking and migrant smuggling. Furthermore, a large number of migrant workers had experienced forced labour, exploitation and abuse, which affected specific groups and economic sectors disproportionately. Migrant groups particularly refugees, stateless persons, women and children lacked special attention and protection.

2. The roundtable also identified key gaps in policy and implementation that affected partnerships on effective and orderly migration processes. For instance, it was thought that there had been inadequate understanding and acceptance of international human rights and labour standards. There had also been a lack of orderliness and equitability in migration processes to meet labour market needs, resulting in skill shortages and a lack of protection of migrants' rights. Furthermore, the participants deemed that there had been inadequate protection from human trafficking, migrant smuggling and abusive migration practices, especially for women, children and stateless persons, and migrants with irregular status. It was also regarded that public attitudes towards migrant workers had been generally unsympathetic, especially given the lack of publicly-available information on the economic and social contribution of migrant workers to the countries of origin and destination. Instead, there had been greater emphasis on the perceived costs of having migrant workers.

3. The roundtable identified successful examples of partnerships in the region and lessons learnt from their implementation. However, it was acknowledged that more work still needed to be undertaken and six recommendations were put forward.

Recommendations

One, there is a need to pursue coherent and comprehensive national policies that are based on and aligned to international human rights and labour standards.

The aim is to manage labour migration more effectively and to protect the rights of migrant workers, particularly those most vulnerable such as women and children.

Two, and related to the above, there is a need to promote understanding, and consider the ratification by both sending and receiving countries, of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (ICRMW), and other relevant conventions and protocols.

Three, there is a need to promote national and regional cooperation in managing labour migration that reflects international human rights and labour standards as reflected in, among others, the Employment Permit System of the Republic of Korea, the Bali Process and the Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative against Trafficking (COMMIT).

Four, it is necessary to explore further cooperation and partnerships with non-State actors, namely the business sector, workers' groups, civil society organizations, women's groups, academia and the media.

Five, discourse should be informed by disaggregated data, which should be collected on a regular basis and enhanced by monitoring and evaluation initiatives.

Six, a human security approach, taking into account GA Resolution 60/1 on the 2005 World Summit Outcome, should be adopted to address the root causes of irregular migration and human trafficking, especially for those groups with special protection needs, through ensuring better access to quality services and enhancing the support of communities so that they can empower themselves and mitigate their vulnerabilities.

ROUNDTABLE 4: OUTCOMES OF ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ON LINKING MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

1. The focus of the discussion was on how migration could achieve specific development goals and enhance development benefits. The themes arising from the discussion were the significance of ensuring that remittances were directed to entrepreneurial, productive or investment-related activities in order to achieve more equitable distribution of benefits from international migration; the importance of formulating strategies that considered and harnessed the potential of diasporas' contribution to development; and the relevance of promoting the empowerment of women.

2. The roundtable viewed that, while the high ratio of remittances to GDP was high in many countries in the region, large amounts were still remitted through informal channels. However, it was noted that an increase in the variety of legal remittance options and the lowering of costs of regular remittance channels had increasingly rendered these channels more attractive to migrants. In discussing the linkage between remittances and economic development, the roundtable commented that migrants had often sent remittances to the same areas they migrated from, and that these remittances did not necessarily relate to the poorest segments of the community.

3. The participants noted migrants often did not capture the full benefit of remittances since discussions on remittances often did not take into account the needs of the recipients in the countries of origin, including those pertaining to education on financial literacy, access to structured financial products and investment opportunities. Migrants who could not access financial institutions in their respective countries of destination were not able to make full use of their remittance potential in terms of savings or investments and, hence, might resort to asset acquisition.

4. The role of remittances in the empowerment of women and socially-exploited groups was also discussed. Among the issues raised was the direct contribution of remittances to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, such as reducing poverty and child mortality, and increasing child enrolment in education. The contribution of women migrants, who remained economically active upon their return, and their reintegration into the country of origin was also noted as a driver of economic development. Additionally, the role of women migrants in the acquisition and distribution of remittances was highlighted as a feature in many countries in the region.

5. The roundtable deemed that the contribution of diasporas to countries of origin was not automatic. Sound policy formulation and a stable macroeconomic environment in the countries of origin were important in order to encourage the return of highly skilled workers. Nevertheless, the participants highlighted the economic and social contribution that diasporas had made to the countries of origin whilst they were abroad, and their role in providing a voice for low-skilled workers in countries of destination.

6. The roundtable also raised the importance of holistic migration strategies in transferring skills and experiences to the countries of origin. The significance of shared responsibility between countries of origin and destination was also

identified as important for establishing effective pre-departure and post-return programmes. It was noted that countries of destination could play a role in the development of countries of origin.

7. It was also acknowledged that there had been gaps in the understanding of the role of remittances for families left behind, and a lack of available data on the scope and practice of philanthropic remittances.

8. The discussion on these issues yielded nine recommendations that further illustrated the link between migration and development.

Recommendations

One, there is a need to expand the possibility for overseas employment and enhance the development impact of migration by reducing the costs associated with migration and remittance flows.

Two, the financial literacy of migrants and their families left behind should be enhanced, with the view to maximizing the impact of remittance flows particularly on the health and education requirements of household members.

Three, regular and irregular migrants should have better access to national services in destination countries, including economic security, social services, birth registration, health care and education.

Four, there is a need to promote dialogue between countries of origin and diasporas in the countries of destination for the social and economic benefits of diasporas and countries of origin and destination.

Five, in order to ensure that the contribution of diasporas to the development of countries of origin is maximized, countries of origin should have a stable macroeconomic environment and sound policies, and establish services to meet the needs of returning diasporas.

Six, there is a need to consider, where appropriate, the introduction of financial instruments that can provide migrants with the opportunity to channel remittances towards longer-term development projects.

Seven, with the assistance of both countries of origin and destination, the promotion of entrepreneurship among returning migrants, particularly women, should be encouraged, by identifying projects suitable for investment, given their level of skills and savings, as well as employment opportunities for decent work.

Eight, there is a need to support the role of migrant women in the development of both countries of origin and destination, and measures to enhance their capacity.

Nine, it is important to integrate effective labour migration management strategies into national development plans and poverty reduction strategies.