



FOR PARTICIPANTS ONLY
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ENGLISH ONLY

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Interregional Workshop on "Strengthening Dialogue to Make Migration Work for Development in the ESCAP and ESCWA Regions"

28-30 June 2011
Beirut, Lebanon

AIDE-MÉMOIRE

I. Organizational arrangements

The Workshop on "Strengthening Dialogue to Make Migration Work for Development in the ESCAP and ESCWA Regions" will take place from 28 to 30 June 2011 in Beirut, in the United Nations House. It is jointly organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).

II. Participation

The Workshop is expected to be attended by key stakeholders related to International Migration and Development from countries of origin and destination of migrants in the Western Asian and the Asia-Pacific Region as well as independent experts. Stakeholders will include government officials from Ministries involved with migration and development planning, such as Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Overseas Employment, Ministry of Social Welfare and others, as well as Associations of Private Recruitment Agencies, Migrant's Welfare Funds, Labour Attaches and Migrant Associations as well as relevant international organizations and non-governmental organizations.

III. Expected outcomes of the Workshop

Participants will have increased understanding of the issues related to managing labour migration from the perspectives of countries of origin and destination, and increased understanding of policy options that could be taken to manage international migration to maximize its positive impact on development while benefitting migrant workers. As an outcome of the Workshop, it is expected that experts will develop a set of recommendations to address some of the key issues related to international migration and development in the Western Asian and Asian region. These recommendations could feed into international

consultative processes such as the Abu Dhabi Dialogue and the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) 2011, which will be held as a series of decentralized, smaller meetings. The papers presented and the discussions will also form the basis of an inter-regional study on migration and development.

IV. Format of the Workshop

The Workshop will use a mix of methods and modalities, among them Secretariat presentations, and the presentations of independent and country experts. Recommendations will be developed through group discussions. Where appropriate, some of these group discussions will be divided between countries of origin and destination, while other group discussions will involve mixed groups to increase mutual understanding of different perspectives. Results of the group discussions will then be presented at the plenary.

V. Logistical arrangements

Air tickets will be arranged by ESCAP by the most direct and economical route. ESCAP staff will contact participants regarding travel arrangements after receiving confirmation of participation. Detailed information regarding other logistical arrangements will be sent to confirmed participants in due course.

VI. Expected substantive contributions by participants

Participants are encouraged to exchange information and experiences on the following issues:

- (a) Migration and development
 - Experience in mainstreaming migration in development strategies
 - Available data sources on migrant in- and outflows and migrant stocks and methods to collect data
- (b) Management of labour migration
 - Management of labour migration: examples from countries of destination on how they manage labour migration; experiences of countries of origin with the different schemes
 - The role of private recruitment agencies and experience in regulating private recruitment agencies
- (c) Protection of migrant workers, especially female migrant workers
 - Experiences of migration for domestic work, and policies to address issues specific to domestic workers
 - Measures by countries of origin to protect migrant workers before, during and after the migratory process

Specific guidelines regarding the content of each session and expected contributions from participants will be sent to participants in due course.

VII. Overall background of the Workshop

International migration is increasingly being considered as a tool for economic and social development. Issues like intra- and inter-regional migration trends; magnitude and dynamics of remittances; participation of women and its impact on gender equality; and migration of

qualified workers were considered as priority matters during the United Nations High Level Dialogue (HLD) on International Migration and Development (September 2006).

As a follow-up to the HLD, the Regional Commissions of the United Nations and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) are implementing a joint inter-regional project on “Strengthening National Capacities to deal with International Migration: Maximizing Development Benefits and Minimizing Negative Impact”. The inter-regional project aims at identifying both the commonalities of international migration across the world’s five regions (Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Western Asia), and issues specific to the regions. Regional Commissions have already conducted regional workshops in order to identify issues pertinent to each region. Given the importance of migration from Asia-Pacific to Western Asia, the present workshop will focus on issues related to international migration and development in both these regions. The recommendations of the Workshop will contribute to an inter-regional study, which will be published at the conclusion of the project.

VIII. Background on substantive issues to be addressed

The accelerating integration of the global economy has stimulated an increase in the volume and types of international migration. Migration has a significant impact on economic and social change both in countries of origin and in host countries.

Migration in Western Asia and Asia-Pacific has undergone dynamic change in recent decades. One major trend is the fast growth in officially deployed migrant workers from Asia-Pacific to Western Asia. Another trend is that more countries in Asia have started officially deploying migrant workers, thereby increasing competition between countries of origin. Thirdly, although the majority of migrants in Western Asia are still men, an increasing number of women are migrating to work in Western Asia, mainly as domestic workers.

Migration benefits both countries of origin and destination. While countries of origin welcome remittances as the most visible outcome of migration, countries of destination benefit by receiving additional labour force at low cost and being able to fill jobs, which may be difficult to fill otherwise. Yet, migration also has a social impact on both sides. The protection of migrants and the high cost to migrate are key areas of concern. Other possible negative effects in countries of origin are the impacts on the families left behind, especially children and older persons. This is particularly the case when women migrate, as they are traditionally the main caregivers. Meanwhile, countries of destination are typically concerned about negative social and cultural impacts, including competition with locals for jobs and reduced wage levels. These benefits and costs can be spread across multiple sectors, requiring a global overview of the impacts in order to formulate, implement and monitor the correct policies to address them.

There is thus value in incorporating migration into national development plans – for countries of origin and destination. Although this process is only in its early stages, there is great benefit in bringing together countries to share their experiences in mainstreaming migration into their development strategies, and in managing migration more generally. ESCAP and ESCWA, as Regional Commissions, have already provided such a platform for dialogue for their member States in the past.

While historically there have always been linkages, especially through trade, between Western Asia and Asia-Pacific, these linkages have increased since the 1970s through international migration. Migration from South and South-East Asia to Western Asia has become one of the major migration corridors in the world.

ESCAP and ESCWA countries have also engaged in broad, informal and non-binding dialogue through Regional Consultative Processes such as the Abu Dhabi Dialogue between Asian countries of origin and GCC countries of destination. In the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, areas such as data and information, protection of migrant workers, and managing migration have been identified as key areas for cooperation. The Workshop will therefore build on results of earlier workshops and meetings and will further continue this dialogue. Recommendations from the Workshop will feed into these consultative processes.