



8 September 2020

1:30–4:30 pm Manila/Beijing time

12:30–3:30 pm Bangkok/Hanoi/Phnom Penh/Vientiane time

12:00–3:00 pm Nay Pyi Taw time

DIALOGUE ON LABOR MIGRATION IN THE GREATER MEKONG SUBREGION

I. Overview

The inaugural ADB-IOM Dialogue on Labor Migration in the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) covering Cambodia, the People's Republic of China (specifically Yunnan Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region), Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam aims to strengthen cooperation through enhanced labor migration management. The joint virtual dialogue organized by Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) will be held on 8 September 2020.

The dialogue will break down the multidimensional links between migration and development, with a particular emphasis on responding to the socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Presentations will focus on the need to ensure intraregional labor mobility is gender responsive and fuels economic recovery in communities of origin and countries of work, while also integrating health and social protections. Focus will be on how key initiatives such as IOM's Poverty Reduction through Safe Migration, Skills Development and Enhanced Job Placement (PROMISE) project can be adapted to respond to medium and long-term impacts of the crisis and also support the community and human resource development priorities of the GMS Program Long-term Strategic Framework 2030.

The discussion is expected to expand participants' knowledge of labor migration trends with projections for pandemic-related impacts; take stock of the implications of migration costs and debt as well as remittance reductions and their impact on socioeconomic recovery; explore ethical recruitment pathways through recruitment industry reform, regulation and government-to-government agreements; and explore integrated approaches for sustainable reintegration in response to economic contraction. It is envisaged to guide future discussions on opportunities for action and coordination, as well as lay the foundation for potential cooperation in the future through a multi-stakeholder approach among the GMS, international organizations, civil society, employers, and related partners.

II. Background and Context

One of the world's fastest-growing regions, the GMS has experienced rapid economic development and demographic shifts. While migration can benefit individuals, families, businesses, and states, it can also exacerbate pre-existing inequalities resulting from unethical recruitment, exploitation, and acute indebtedness. Women migrant workers face additional challenges in accessing safe and legal migration pathways, with the type of work typically available to them often paying less and providing fewer legal protection mechanisms due to lack of formalization. All of these tensions have been exacerbated due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The labor migration dialogue will explore challenges and opportunities in improving migration governance and sustainable development outcomes, in light of the Global Compact for Migration and the socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19.

1. Sustainable development outcomes of migration

This session will unpack good practices in creating vertical and horizontal policy coherence for migration and sustainable development. With the recognition that migrant workers are impacted by policies from a range of sectors, the concept of mainstreaming migration emerges as a process to insert migration across different policy areas. By integrating migration into national development planning, migration becomes embedded in the broader development context at national and subnational levels. The session will explore how the socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19 (loss of remittances, re-entry of migrant workers into domestic labor markets, costs of recruitment post-crisis) affect the attainment of the Sustainable Goals.

2. **Opportunities for Coordination and Action to Support Labor Migration in Response to COVID-19**

The session will identify post-crisis migration challenges and explore ways to mitigate negative impact through multi-stakeholder engagement and coordination with government, international organizations, civil society, TVET and employers. The session aims to discuss engagement and coordination not only in equal participation, accountability and transparency, but also help to ensure that the voices of migrant workers are incorporated into the policies and programs that affect them directly. This session will dive deeper into issues faced by migrant workers due to unethical recruitment practices, lack of protection and remedy mechanisms, ineffective policies and regulations to uphold the rights of migrant workers and highlights community engagement leaving no one behind.

III. Objectives

1. Share information on the emerging trends within the GMS relating to labor migration and COVID-19 socioeconomic recovery, and discuss the multi-dimensional linkages between migration and sustainable development to help the subregion “Build Back Better”.
2. Stock take the potential challenges associated with labor migration in relation to skills development, unethical recruitment, debt, recruitment fees, and reintegration.
3. Explore opportunities for cooperation and action to collaborate effectively in a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach.

IV. Invited Participants

Participants will encompass senior officials from relevant GMS ministries such as the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Labor and Foreign Employment, ADB, IOM, and other international organization representatives including ILO, UN Women, civil society organizations, TVET, and employers.

V. Agenda

<p>1:30 – 2:00 pm (Manila time)</p>	<p>Open webinar line to join Moderator: Ms. Sashini Gomez, IOM</p>
<p>2:00 – 2:10 pm</p>	<p>Welcome and opening remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADB – Mr. Alfredo Perdiguero, Director • IOM – Dr. Nenette Motus, Regional Director
<p>2:10 – 2:15 pm</p>	<p>Launch of ADB-IOM Memorandum of Understanding followed by group photo <i>(via screenshot)</i></p>
<p>2:15 – 3:15 pm</p>	<p>Session 1: Sustainable Development Outcomes of Migration</p> <p><i>Facilitated by Mr. Alfredo Perdiguero, ADB</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>How can labor migration contribute to development of the subregion and support attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and objectives of the Global Compact for Migration (GCM)?</i> ▪ <i>What are the implications of COVID-19 on the realization of the SDGs with respect to migration costs and debt and loss of remittances?</i> ▪ <i>What are some potential gender impacts for labor migrants due to COVID-19?</i> <p><i>Presentations: 2:15 – 2:40 pm</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Cécile Riallant, Head, Migration and Sustainable Development Unit, IOM • Ms. Aiko Kikkawa Takenaka, Economist, ADB <p><i>Discussant Responses: 2:40 – 2:50 pm</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Than Aung Kyaw, Director General, Foreign Economic Relations Department, Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, Myanmar; GMS National Coordinator • Ms. Nansiri Iamsuk, Programme Specialist-Migration, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific <p>Open discussion</p>
<p>3:15 – 4:15 pm</p>	<p>Session 2: Opportunities for Coordination and Action to Support Labor Migration in Response to COVID-19</p> <p><i>Facilitated by Ms. Anna Olsen, ILO</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>How can governments collaborate with each other and entities in areas related to labor migration to “build back better”?</i> <i>(e.g., promotion of regular migration, government-to-government agreements)</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>How can the private sector, civil society organizations and trade unions support labor migrants? (e.g., need for ethical recruitment, recruitment industry reform, regulation, integrated approaches to reintegration)</i> <p><i>Presentations: 3:15 – 3:40 pm</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. William Gois, Regional Coordinator, Migrant Forum in Asia • Ms. Sally Barber, Head of Labour Mobility and Human Development, IOM (PROMISE) <p><i>Discussant Responses: 3:40 – 3:50 pm</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Helga Nagy, Director, EHT Paul Dubrule Hospitality and Tourism School • Mr. Ukrish Kanchanaketu, Advisor, Employers' Confederation of Thailand <p>Open discussion</p>
<p>4:15 – 4:25 pm</p>	<p>Wrap-up of day's discussions Ms. Lara White, IOM</p>
<p>4:25 – 4:30 pm</p>	<p>Closing remarks Mr. Alfredo Perdiguero, ADB</p>