

Open Working Group on Labour Migration & Recruitment Partners Meeting
13-14 August 2015 — Bogor, Indonesia

REPORT



Summary

To take stock of the progress of the work of the OWG since its second meeting in Jordan, Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA) in cooperation with the Global Coalition in Migration and with the support from Migration and Development Civil Society Network (MADE) had its third meeting in Bogor, Indonesia from August 13-14, 2015. The two day meeting discussed updates on the OWG campaign priorities:

1. Zero Fees for recruitment: No worker should have to pay recruitment fees to secure decent work.
2. Zero tolerance for contract substitution
3. Human rights in Government to Government Agreements on recruitment
4. Ethical Recruitment

During the two day program, the OWG research on gaps in policy & practice in regulating the recruitment of migrant workers in Asia was also presented. The OWG members also discussed strategies how to implement the working group priority campaigns. The OWG members also discussed other initiatives on recruitment reform such as the ILO's Fair Recruitment Agenda, IOM's IRIS, CDM's contratados and the new accreditation system MFA is proposing for recruiters.

Before the meeting, a global conference on worker rights and shared prosperity organized by Solidarity Center on 10-12 August, 2015 in Bogor, Indonesia in which MFA was an active organizer and participant in the program. The conference was a good avenue to talk about the global issues of migration. The global conference gathered 200 participants from trade unions, migrants CSOs, regional and international organizations all around the world which are involved in the migration issues. The participants of the conference talked about the global migration issues including recruitment and rights violation towards migrant workers.

Following after the global conference, the MFA secretariat also convened 35 members of the open working group (OWG) on recruitment from around the globe to talk about the updates of the recommendations collated from the previous meeting and again plan for the next step that the working group will set forth as they go forward. The program ran for two days from 13-14 August 2015 with participants that vary from CSOs, Trade Unions, Academe, Global Activists, Lawyers and recruitment Agency. An internal meeting among the members of the OWG who have been engaged in the research on gaps and challenges of the migrant workers took place after the day one of the OWG meeting on August 13, 2015.

After the two day conference, recommendations on recruitment fees, ethical recruitment, contract substitution and government to government negotiations on recruitment were collated from the OWG members.

Background

Recruitment of migrant worker plays a very significant role in the bigger scope of migration issue. Recruitment is the foundation of the migrant workers in working abroad. Recruitment agency becomes the bridge of the employees from the country of origin of seeking employment opportunities overseas and vice versa for the employer. This process goes a

cycle everyday thus urging the government to regulate and manage the process of recruitment flows for migration. Migrant labour recruitment policies are in place by both the countries of origin and destination with reference to some UN and ILO Conventions, but problems occur on the process of implementation that puts migrant workers into distress.

Seeing this issue on a global spectrum, Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA) and the Global Coalition on Migration (GCM) held a series of meetings on recruitment during the Civil Society Days of the Global Forum on Migration and Development and the parallel People's Global Action on Migration, Development, and Human Rights in Stockholm, Sweden in May 2014. Among the outcomes of these meetings was the decision to establish the Open Working Group on Labour Migration & Recruitment, with MFA serving as the secretariat with funding from the European Commission via the MADE Project.

The third meeting of the open working group was held in Amman, Jordan on 16-17 December 2014 with recommendations including zero tolerance for recruitment fees and engaging the private sector on ethical recruitment standards, and on the need to enhance knowledge within the working group on the various recruitment regimes in place internationally.

Global Conference on Worker Rights and Shared Prosperity

Prior to the regional meeting of the OWG on 13-14 August, 2015, Solidarity Center organized the Global Conference on Worker Rights and Shared Prosperity in Bogor, Indonesia from 10-12 August 2015 held at the Novotel Hotel and Convention Center. The international conference brought together more than 200 participants, including Solidarity Center partners from unions and migrant worker associations and NGOs, academics, other experts, government officials, funders and foundations, from at least 25 countries around the world. With such a diverse group of participants, the conference set forward a theory of change that empowers migrant workers and their advocates to promote migrant worker economic, social, and political rights, where all workers, regardless of status or nationality, are treated equally; and provide alternative and innovative responses to the predominant development paradigm that promotes remittances over rights.

Workshops and plenary sessions were also held during the two day conference. The workshops and sessions largely focused on current issues of migration such as labour recruitment reform, migrant worker organizing, challenges of transnational approaches, access to justice, political participation, and use of technology.

The 12 MFA members and 3 MFA Secretariat Staff from South Korea, Bangladesh, Thailand, Philippines, Jordan, Nepal, Bahrain and India participated in the Solidarity Centre program and also created a space to discuss relevant issues on migration as some of them presented during the workshops that were organized by other civil societies present in the conference.

Tatcee Macabuag from MFA Secretariat presented the issue of migrant workers paying fees to secure decent job in the workshop on how to eliminate worker fees in labour recruitment during the workshop sessions two-strategic workshop A. Sumaiya Islam from Bangladeshi Ovhibashi Mohila Sramik Association (BOMSA) was one of the presenters in the session Beyond Pre-departure-Exercising through collective action during the Workshop sessions two-Strategic workshop C.

Misun Kim from Joint Committee with Migrants in Korea presented the Employment Permit System (EPS) on recruitment process in the workshop Building Governance into Recruitment Process: The Opportunities and obstacles of Alternative Models of Recruitment Regulation during the Workshop Sessions three-Strategic Workshop A. Saiful Haque from Welfare Association of Repatriated Bangladeshi Employees (WARBE) and Preeda Tongchumnum Human Rights Development Foundation (HRDF) were two of the presenters in the workshop on Migration Crisis in South East Asia during the Workshop Sessions 3-Strategic Workshop E.

Colin Rajah from Global Coalition on Migration (GCM) and Tatcee Macabuag shared their experiences, opportunities and challenges during the past GFMD and how the migration CSO community can prepare for this year's upcoming GFMD meeting in October on the fourth workshop sessions-Strategic Workshop A. Linda Al-Kalash of Tamkeen in Jordan also

presented the work of their organization in assisting migrant workers to access justice in times of crises on the session beyond pre-departure - pursuing access to justice Workshop sessions four-Strategic Workshop D. Rhodora Abano from Center for Migrant Advocacy in the Philippines discussed the Overseas Absentee Voting of the Overseas Filipino Workers and how their organization worked to achieve the campaign during the Workshop sessions four-Strategic Workshop E.

One of the highlights of the conference was the fifth workshop session. There were 5 groups that were divided namely South Asia-Middle East/North Africa Group, South East Asia (Intra-Asia) Group, Americas Group, Europe and Central Asia Group and Africa Group. The last session was intended to group the participants into their regional representation to forward regional advocacy and partnerships towards the protection of migrant workers in the regional level.

The conference also discussed on-going campaigns and action to alerts of partners. Misun Kim of JCMK requested for support for the on-going campaign of the Migrant Trade Union Korea calling for the recognition for the trade union of undocumented migrant workers in Korea.

MFA Workshop/Session

Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA) was invited by Solidarity Center to organize a workshop session on recruitment reform specifically on policy gaps in international labour recruitment regulations – towards national, regional and international advocacy. MFA used the workshop as an opportunity to present the research of the OWG on gaps in policy & practice in regulating the recruitment of migrant workers in Asia. The session was facilitated by Tatcee Macabuag with Rex Varona from MFA Secretariat and Bassina Farbenblum from University of New South Whales as the presenters. The objective of the session is to identify the gaps in the governance in recruitment process and to come up with strategies on how to engage in the recruitment process.

Bassina discussed the governance on migrant recruitment. The presentation of Bassina focused on the recruitment governance challenges on the countries of origin. She explained how the gaps and challenges can be addressed through Rights-based governance of recruitment in origin countries.

The first presenter shared 4 possible ways to ease the gaps and challenges on recruitment governance. (1) Incorporation of international human rights and labour rights standards was in place because migrant protection does not just qualify in a licensing process of recruitment agencies, it follow through international standards. (2) Establishment of rights-holders and duty-bearers in law and practice helps define duties of government ministries, recruitment agencies, sub-agents and other private actors and consequences for non-fulfillment also this inform and train responsible actors that are role players in the recruitment processes. (3) Enforcement of rights and responsibilities means to enforce available policies that detect violation, it also ensures accountability, non-repetition of violations and Respond to evolving recruitment business practices. (4) MW empowerment and participation that address structural and multi-layered vulnerability and exclusion, and enable participation of prospective, current and returned migrant workers and their families in (a) Individual recruitment process: address power & information asymmetries between MWs and recruitment actors that create conditions for abuse (b) Recruitment governance.

Rex presented the research on gaps in policy & practice in regulating the recruitment of migrant workers in Asia. The said research study was meant to have an evidence based advocacy in addressing the rights and welfare of the migrant workers. With the data that was gathered, it would be translated into identifying that violations on recruitment process are true and existing among the migrant workers. The research was conducted in Bangladesh, India, Philippines, Nepal and Indonesia as countries of origin and Taiwan, Thailand, Bahrain, Lebanon, Malaysia, and Singapore as the countries of destination. The questions from both the origin and destination countries vary and the research was conducted through survey interviews with migrant workers.

The research revealed that migrant workers are paying exorbitant fees to recruiters both in countries of origin and destination. In order to pay for fees, migrants loan a huge amount of money therefore putting them in situations of debt bondage. Another major issue surfaced in the research was the issue of contract substitution. The research also revealed

that almost 50% of the respondents had their documents (passports, contracts, etc.) are confiscated by employers or recruiters.

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- There is a need to highlight the sub-agents as an issue that exist in the recruitment process. These sub-agents are the people who are known in the community or to the migrant workers that drive them to believe and accept scrupulous job offers.
- As asked by the Elizabeth Frantz on when the research will be available to public, the research will be published in the regional level as soon as the research is cleaned and verified. A deeper study on some countries who have submitted a number surveys for the country focused results.
- Adaption of the core standards will help regulate the moving around of migrant workers in the garments in the race to the bottom.
- In terms of the migrant workers on a personal capacity, government has the obligation to regulate and protect them regardless of the status.
- MFA's role in the ASEAN declaration on the protection of the rights of the migrant workers involves discussions among the OWG and on the processes to how we can engage to the ASEAN to push for a binding instrument on the protection of the rights of the migrant workers.
- The issue of corruption is not a new one. In every country there are good people that exist and it is our duty to work with them to surface honesty and development simultaneously.

Open Working Group on Recruitment Reform Meeting

The Open Working Group on Labour Migration and Recruitment Reform had its third meeting in Bogor, Indonesia on 13-14 August 2015. The meeting provided updates on the progress of the working group in each of its five priorities on Zero Fees for migrant workers, Human Rights in government to government agreements, zero tolerance for contract substitution, support for ethical recruitment initiatives and research and data gathering. The meeting also engaged in a priority-setting discussion for the next step of the recruitment reform campaign in preparation to the civil society engagement during the October Global Forum on Migration and Development in Turkey. The meeting also presented partial the results of the research on gaps in policy & practice in regulating the recruitment of migrant workers in Asia.

The meeting brought together 35 members, partners and observers of the Open Working Group on recruitment reform from South Korea, Taiwan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Bahrain, Lebanon, Jordan, Switzerland, Australia, USA and Canada.

Reflections from the Solidarity Center Meeting

The first session of the OWG meeting focused on reflections from the Solidarity Center Global Conference on Migration as many of the discussions in the global conference also touched on recruitment. Colin Rajah, the co-founder and Coordinator of the Global Coalition on Migration facilitated the session.

Since some of the participants in the meeting attended the conference, they were requested to share their insights on the program. Mehru Vesuvala, from Migrant Workers Protection Society in Bahrain shared that the conference has a very intensive discussion on different issues of migration. She said that the conference included the south-south migration that currently is the pattern of migration in the present. She realized that workshops held during the conference were beneficial to the works of her organization and also to others.

Misun Kim from Joint Committee with Migrants Korea in South Korea shared that there were a number of workshops in recruitment issues. It was a good thing to include recruitment issues in the conference to further understand the factors that greatly affect migrant workers in their course of migration. And the solidarity meeting was important to hasten the bond of working together between the CSOs and the Trade Unions.

Charlie Fanning, from American Federation of Labour-Congress of Industrial Organization (AFL-CIO) in the USA shared that he realized that there is a need to dialogue more with the governments, involve more labour ministries and push government to be more accountable with regards to recruitment.

The sharing was cut short after three participants talked about their experiences. The session was then opened for question and intervention. Erwin Puhawan from the Philippines asked if where and when the term ethical recruitment was first used. Rex Varona from the MFA secretariat answered that it was first used in in the ILO multilateral framework.

John Bingham from MADE asked if the different stakeholders moving in the same direction unity, power. Colin answered that some are in sync and collaborating but others are not willing to collaborate. It was therefore a good venue to discuss how CSOs and Trade Unions can start working together and in areas where there is collaboration, how to strengthen collaboration.

Charlie noted that the solidarity center conference was a good avenue to present the issues on migration and come up solutions on each of the issues. Andy Hall from Migrant Workers Refugee Network in Thailand asked if was there consensus in the SC conference of who is the most important actor or mechanism to move the issue forward. Colin said that conference was focused on the workers e.g. organizing MWs into unions. Bassina from the University of New South Wales responded that there was a strong focus on supply chain as a point of accountability to development legal framework, legal accountability of TNCs. They creatively think other means on how to move value around to ensure protection at the point of recruitment and point of suppliers. Tatcee from MFA secretariat said that there was recognition of massive abuses raised by workers but not much solution.

Taking Stock of the OWGs Accomplishments since Jordan

The next session focused on presenting the progress of the work of the OWG since the Jordan meeting. Tatcee discussed the developments that were moved forward after the meeting in Jordan last year. She presented the campaigns launched by the workshop group:

- Zero Fees: No workers Should Have to Pay Recruitment Fees to Secure Decent Work
- Zero Tolerance for Contract Substitution
- Ethical Recruitment
- Human Rights in Government to Government Agreements on Recruitment

She also presented the OWG glossary which is an on-going work/collaboration among OWG members. The glossary is not simply to define the terms, but to demonstrate how they are used and understood in different contexts. She also said that through MFA, the OWG was able to conduct training on ethical recruitment and consultations on recruitment in South Asia.

Presentation of the OWG research results

Rex Varona, lead researcher of the Open Working Group's research on gaps in policy & practice in regulating the recruitment of migrant workers in Asia presented the said research. He said that the research should not be generalized as this doesn't cover all migrant workers and did not use scientific methods of sampling.

The main objectives of the research are the following:

1. To identify and understand overseas recruitment and labor migration problems and issues in countries of origin and destination, based on migrant workers' perspectives/experiences;
2. To analyze policy and practice weaknesses, gaps or failures at the international, regional, bilateral and/or national levels that result in recruitment problems and abuses.
3. To recommend reforms, action agendas – policy, practices, mechanisms, redress – to address the problems at the national, bilateral, regional/international levels.

There were 807 respondents from 5 countries of origin (Bangladesh, India, Philippines, Indonesia and Nepal) and 1079 respondents from 6 countries of destination (Taiwan, Bahrain, Lebanon, Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia). Sample size is 100 or 400 on the condition it is randomized. Some of the countries asked to have a higher number of respondents to reach a greater level of accuracy. The results indicated that intra-Asia migration is prevalent and the top destination is in the GCC and mostly the migrants that go there are from SEA. The majority of the respondents were female for both the origin and destination countries. The average age is from 31-34 years old and works in an elementary kind of job (service, labourer and not high paying job).

The results and findings of the research were discussed in parallel with the possible solutions for each. It was found out that most of the recruitment agencies collect a big amount of money from the migrant workers as service charge or simply the recruitment fees. There are unsafe or illegal placements due to problems with contract. This problem is rooted from contract substitution and/or false/invalid contract. The research also showed that there are a big percentage of incidents that migrant workers are denied from accessing the right information in terms of their basic/labour rights and it was proved that documents of the MW are being withheld by the employers. There are also licensing, regulation and accountability of recruiters for violations. Additionally, there are issues on the recruitment channels or modalities and the regulation of international standards and recruitment mechanisms are problematic.

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The floor was then opened for question and answer on the topic discussed by Rex. Peck Hoon Tam from Humanitarian Organization for Migration Economics (HOME) in Singapore asked the question on which are the data taken from and how are they collected in the country of origin. Saiful from Welfare Association of Repatriated Bangladeshi Employees (WARBE) in Bangladesh said that mostly of the respondents that they have interviewed are return migrants. According to him, WARBE has a list of households (11 areas) that has a number of migrant workers and it is the prerogative of the interviewers already to choose their concentrations. Nilambar Badal from Migrants Center in Nepal answered that they have contacted 3 agencies to help them with the respondents and covered 45 out of 75 districts.

Nikke from Migrant care asked if how he measured correlation of good or bad recruitment process with work conditions. Rex responded that in statistics, there are processes that university accepted (e.g. z-score, correlation) re linkages being statistically significant and is happening consistently. Limitation is for the set of 2000 respondents that we have in the 10 countries. Therefore, it cannot be ignored because it is happening.

John Bingham expressed that this survey is very powerful. Even if limited, are some results/experiences/concerns and advocacy imperatives are global and quite clear. Marie Apostol asked if what kind of info can we provide that is solid, grounded and very specific to a particular recruitment agency so it becomes a basis for procurement criteria and tendering. For a lot of employers, how will they do that? Rex responded that ethics and standards was used in research can be a powerful driver to make them believe that the information is legitimate.

Elissa lauded the research as a great work and she also shared that CDM published a relatively similar survey a couple of years ago that is also statically imperfect but was very useful for our advocacy. Saiful said that we have to emphasize that there is a big rating on illegal recruitment by their relatives need to be addressed.

Workshop: Implementing the recommendations of the OWG policy briefs

The workshop was facilitated by Rex Varona. The participants were divided into four groups to give recommendations on the policy briefs of recruitment reform by answering 3 questions:

- What policies are needed at the national/regional level to implement the recommendations?
- What implementing mechanism will be needed?
- What redress and accountability mechanisms will be needed?

For question number one, the groups' responses are as follows:

Group 1 (Recruitment Fees)

- Come up a regional accord on fees
- Come up a multilateral agreements among countries of origin and destination
- Organize a public awareness on MOUs
- Government to Government agreements should be rights based
- Promote direct hiring
- Start-up public procurement to eradicate fees in the supply chain
- Require an employer bonds in countries of destination
- Come up an employer pays model

Group 2 (Ethical Recruitment)

- Put in place existing standards on ethical recruitment (UN and ILO)
- Ratification of ILO and UN Standards

Group 3 (Contract Substitution)

- Contract should be compliant to laws of origin and destination countries
- Standard clauses in MOUs should be observed

Group 4 (Government to Government agreements)

- MOUs/Government to Government agreements should be legally binding, transparent and rights based
- Labour laws should be applicable to both local and migrant workers

For question number two, the groups' responses are as follows:

Group 1 (Recruitment Fees)

- Collaborate with trade unions
- Targeting multinationals and suppliers for the supply chain campaign
- Whitelisting of recruiters
- Making information available to workers when the government is blacklisting companies and recruiters
- Inclusion of fee bans in collective bargaining
- Engagement with regional process (SAARC, Abu Dhabi Dialogue and Colombo Process)
- Enforcement of trade agreements

Group 2 (Ethical Recruitment)

- Agency must not charge any fees; all fees associated with the workers' recruitment and deployment are to be borne by employers
- Employment contract must be provided in a language the worker can understand and the worker must be given a hard copy of the contract
- Transparency in wages and deductions must be at all times being observed
- The agency must not confiscate any documentation of the workers
- Organize migrant workers to educate with their rights

Group 3 (Contract Substitution)

- Looking at India's e-migrate system a good practice in ensuring that valid contracts are made accessible to workers
- Contract should be made in the language of the worker
- All terms and conditions should be explained to the workers
- Contract should be explained to the worker at the airport labour desk
- Contracts should be made available online and accessible to workers
- Pre departure orientations should include explanation of contracts
- Governments should have a copy of the contract

Group 4 (Government to Government agreements)

- Monitoring and implementation should be under the ministry of labour
- CSOs and trade unions should be consulted in the development and implementation of Government to Government agreements/MOUs
- Training for employers about the new policies and rights of workers should be done by the government of the receiving country
- There should be Government and CSOs consultations in implementing Government to Government Agreement in the receiving country
- It is the government of the origin country to develop the economy and provide employer for its citizens

For question number three, the groups' responses are as follows:

Group 1 (Recruitment Fees)

- Joint accountability for recruiters and employers
- Ensure access to legal services
- Establishing welfare funds
- Ensure employer insurance for fees
- Put up a grievance reporting mechanisms
- Issuance of visas for trafficking victims
- Conducting exit interviews
- Embassies should be conducting interviews before the worker's departure

Group 2 (Ethical Recruitment)

- Set up a criteria/standards that will make sure that the recruitment agency is following the ethical way of recruiting the migrant workers
- The agency must be aware of and disclose any risks associated with the job for which the worker is being hired and should have safety related training to be conducted

Group 3 (Contract Substitution)

- In cases where the worker signs several contracts, the most favourable contract should be followed in cases of disputes
- If the worker has no contract, it should be considered as trafficking

Group 4 (Government to Government agreements)

- Redress should be accessible to workers and should be under the ministry of labour
- Make the parliamentarians to engage in agreements

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- Standards on recruitment processes have to be met before we can call a recruitment agency as an ethical recruiter. (Marie Apostol)
- It is idealistic to think that we call for a zero recruitment fees but we have to look at into the ground if this is really happening and study how we can entice recruitment agencies to follow this since this is a business venture (Peck Hoon tam)
- We have to look at other fees that also constitutes in the recruitment process.
- On zero fees, Nepal has a new policy on zero fees. Government to government will not eliminate fees but will only regulate fees and minimize fees. (Nilambar)
- All standards say no fees if you are an ethical recruiter. It should be for all workers. On the different fees, I think we should take all that we can in terms of defining fees; it should be as broad as it should be. (Charlie)
- We have to make governments liable of the negotiations between two states and make them act on the issue that correlates to it. (Erwin)

Presentation of other initiatives on recruitment reform

The next session focused on presenting other initiatives of organizations working to reform the recruitment process. This also intends to introduce other processes that CSO can engage and work into achieving the reform on recruitment. There were three initiatives that were presented. First was the ILO fair recruitment initiatives discussed by Tatcee. ILO fair recruitment initiatives is a multi-stakeholder initiative is implemented in close collaboration with governments, representative employers' and workers' organizations, the private sector and other key partners. It is based on a four-pronged approach, which puts social dialogue at the centre. The initiative aims to help prevent human trafficking and forced labour, protect the rights of workers, including migrant workers, from abusive and fraudulent practices during the recruitment and placement process and reduce the cost of labour migration and enhance development outcomes for migrant workers and their families, as well as for countries of origin and destination.

International Recruitment Integrity System (IRIS) is an IOM initiative that was discussed next by John Bingham. He said that IRIS is an international voluntary "ethical recruitment" framework that will benefit all stakeholders in the labour migration process. IRIS will provide a platform for addressing unfair recruitment and bridge international regulatory gaps governing labour recruitment in countries of origin and destination. The IRIS initiative was emerged during the global meetings in 2011, 2012 and was pushed in 2013 during the GFMD in Sweden. The primary objectives of the initiatives are to create a public-private alliance of like-minded governments, employers, recruiters and other partners committed to ethical recruitment, develop a voluntary accreditation framework so that its members can be recognized as bona fide fair recruiters and distinguish themselves from unscrupulous intermediaries. Accreditation will be based on adherence to common principles for ethical recruitment and a code of conduct which will include; No fee charging to job seekers; No retention of workers' passports or identity documents; A requirement for transparency in their labour supply chain. With IRIS, Job seekers will have better information regarding ethical recruitment through an information portal and publicly available roster of accredited IRIS members internationally and administer a complaints and referral mechanism to assist victims of unethical or illegal recruiters to file grievances with the appropriate authorities.

Another initiative from one of the partners in Mexico was presented by Alissa Escarce of CDM. This initiative was from their organization's work on recruitment and labour justice. She shared how they have helped migrant workers who have been deceived by the recruitment agencies on false jobs and collection of excessive fees from the hopeful. The website that CDM is running until now has the capacity to make migrant workers report the violations of the recruiters and employers on the abuses that they are getting from them. The online platform also allows migrant workers to share their experiences with how they work and of the violations that other migrant workers are getting from the perpetrators. The website of the online platform is www.contratados.org and she said that the website is very friendly and easy to use.

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Andy Hall asked the question on how OWG can engage with the process of ILO and Erwin Puhawan asked if what initiatives should be the priority of the OWG. Tatcee responded that OWG through MFA can be involved in the process.

ILO constantly consults MFA on how to develop the initiative and ILO invited MFA to consultations that are vital for the initiative to move forward. MFA also invited ILO as resource persons to trainings on ethical recruitment and other activities on recruitment reform.

OWG members were key informants in their recent research recently published by the ILO on recruitment. ILO mandate is for TUs but CSOs should also engage with TUs for better collaboration. TUs are important as OWG invited them because the issue is massive and we have to work together with TUs, private sector including corporations and as we discuss this with government with possible collaboration.

One of the participants asked a question if how IRIS is going to be implemented, who will take care of accreditation system and who will monitor the implementation. Mehru asked if MFA or any other organization is consulted or involved in the processes of ILO and IOM. Tatcee responded that MFA is engaging to the process of ILO and was invited for a consultation to the IRIS but IOM is not engaging with the OWG, MFA don't have much interaction with IRIS.

A question was raised from one of the participants if the voice mechanism (reporting) is also a complain mechanism. Alissa answered that we are still developing the platform in terms of the pros and cons and making sure that the information will be kept well anonymous. The organization is still developing the technology. There was a question on the scale /impact of the project (hits, involvement). She answered that there was 16 thousand visitors that was recorded that have visited the website and has 500 users who registered online. Sumitha said that this is a good initiative and can make a change to the society, and is worthy to be tried. CSO can open a door for change and using technology for the better good of the migrant workers.

Planning session – OWG work plan going forward

The last session of the program focused on planning and follow up work of the Open Working Group. The partners developed a work plan in line with the campaign priorities of the open working group as well as targeting other areas for advocacy in line with the campaign on recruitment reform. Please find attached separate file of the OWG's work plan.