

MIGRANT FORUM IN ASIA NEWSLETTER

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION FOR ADVANCING MIGRANTS STRUGGLE FOR RIGHTS AND JUSTICE



Volume 10, Issue IV
October-December 2012

Strong showing of solidarity at the 5th World Social Forum on Migrations



WSFM delegates at the opening rally along Katipunan Avenue in Quezon City, 26 November 2012

The 5th World Social Forum on Migrations (WSFM) was a perfect culmination of the year 2012 for MFA. It was by far the biggest process the MFA network has organized. Asia witnessed the biggest and most diverse convergence of peoples, alternative ideas and solidarity in to one space in one week, for the first time.

The 5th WSFM ran from 26-30 November 2012 at Miriam College, Quezon City. Apart from social movements from Africa, Europe, North and South America, the largest delegation came from all over the Asian continent, with considerable participation of fellow advocates from the

Middle East, Palestine, Burma and Australia. Close to two thousand foreign and local delegates joined the week-long forum.

The 5th WSFM opened with a thousand WSFM participants from the world over joining in the solidarity march, stopping the Katipunan Avenue traffic with human rights chants resonating and campaign banners flying high, showing that an alternative rights-based process to migration discourse has begun.

The overarching theme of the 5th WSFM plenaries was Mobility, Rights, Global Models: Looking for Alternatives. Through the use of lively question and answer sessions,

Inside this issue:

7 Asian Parliamentarians **8** Dialogue with missions and consulates **8** Training on the human rights of migrant workers in Qatar **9** Migrants Campaign Month **11** UN HLD **12** Unwavering engagement and advocacy for rights-based policies at the 6th GFMD **13** 9th AEPF **14** Workshops and resources on Indian labor migration

WSFM resource persons at the plenary sessions were challenged by the moderators and audience members to answer tough questions on the four subthematic areas: Critique, and Consequences of Global Migration; Migrant Rights are Human Rights; Re-imagining Migration, Proposing Alternatives, Exploring Models; and Resistance, Organization, and Action. The plenary sessions were complimented by workshops and poster sessions that explore various themes on mobility, rights, global models, and alternatives.

A total of 64 workshops and poster session were organized at the forum. Topics covered included: Alternative Migration Models: Africa; Circular Migration: Rights of Temporary Migrants; Climate Justice; Domestic

plenaries, workshops and poster sessions. The 5th WSFM also hosted A Memorial Exhibit that commemorated and honored the lives of migrant workers and activists who have sacrificed, struggled, and died for the human and migrants' rights movement.

The 5th WSFM also became the first assembly to gather together and provide more organized meetings of the women's caucus, trade unions, climate justice movement, the peasant movement, West Asia and South Asia Task Forces of MFA, Pan-African network, and the faith-based caucus.

Since the 5th WSFM 2012 was held in Manila, not every member of all the organizations and groups in the host country were able to attend the event. MFA partner and



From top left: opening of the WSFM; first plenary on critique and consequences of global migration; second plenary discussing migrants rights are human rights; third plenary on re-imagining migration, proposing alternatives, exploring models; in a workshop with La Via Campesina; and WSFM declaration being discussed at the closing plenary.

Workers; Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights: The Right to Health; Migration Governance, Movement Building; Movement Building Across Social Movements: Women Workers; Movement Building: Domestic Workers; Movement Building: Labor, Cross-Border Campaigns; Movement Building: Migrants; Remittances, Reintegration, National Development; Right to Decent Work: Rights at Work; Right to Development; Rights and Access to Health; Rights of Refugees: Right to Return; Role of Faith-Based Groups; Social Movements Response; and Women Migrants' Rights.

Participants to the WSFM had the opportunity to join field visits to Bulacan, Batangas, Manila, and Pampanga on 28 November. This was quite unique and the first time that this was done in the WSFM. Each of these locations allowed the international audience to explore the various dimensions of migration in the Philippine context.

Food, books, cultural exhibits and cultural evenings further enlivened the days and nights at the forum that were packed with stimulating deliberations in the

PWG member Kaagapay organized two pre-WSFM processes in Mindanao that consolidated and unified migration issues, concerns and action points. Various civil society groups from the areas of Cotabato City, Davao City and provinces of Cotabato and Maguindanao, gathered for the first session on 7 November 2012 in Cotabato City, while the second session was held on 16 November 2012 in Iligan City, in which civil society groups came from Pagadian City, Zamboanga del Sur, Iligan City, Marawi City, and provinces of Lanao del Sur and Lanao del Norte.

MFA also facilitated a pre-WSFM process, the "Asian Inter-Parliamentary Caucus on Labor Migration." [see section on strategizing]. From November 23-26 2012, MFA, Friedrich-Ebert- Stiftung (FES), and the Congressional Committee on Overseas Workers Affairs (COWA), Philippines hosted this meeting with parliamentarians who explored strategies to ensure social security coverage for all informal sector workers. Right after the caucus, the parliamentarians had the opportunity to join the opening plenary of the 5th WSFM

on 26 November. A declaration coming out of the Caucus was read out at the plenary (see article on Parliamentarians on page 5).

Africa, next host of the WSFM

The closing plenary on 29 November consolidated the four days of insightful plenaries, workshops and poster sessions into a Manila Declaration:

<http://www.wsfm2012.org>

After the reading and final deliberations on the Declaration, Africa was announced as the next host of the 6th WSFM, scheduled to happen in 2014.

On 30 November, the WSFM officially closed through the participation of the WSFM delegates in the Andres Bonifacio Day mobilization organized by NAGKAISA, an

MOBILITY, RIGHTS, GLOBAL MODELS: LOOKING FOR ALTERNATIVES

Manila Declaration
29 November 2012

We are more than 1,800 international and local delegates coming from over 50 countries worldwide, gathered as an assembly of social movements at the 5th World Social Forum on Migrations (WSFM) held on 26-30 November 2012 in Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines.

More than half of the delegates are women; and many come from migrant, worker, peasant and other grassroots groups. We are joined by 6,000 more trade unionists from the NAGKAISA alliance in the Philippines and



Members from civil society and trade unions from Africa gathered on stage after the announcement of the next host of the WSFM.

alliance of the biggest trade unions in the Philippines. From Welcome Rotunda, thousands marched and shouted in unison protest chants of the workers. The march ended in historic Mendiola, and the international delegates of the WSFM gave their votes of solidarity with the workers. 30 November ended on concert night, provided free for the public courtesy of the local government unit of Quezon City.

A 5th WSFM report is currently in the works and will be published in mid-2013. This report captures the essence of the Forum and will be a very useful documentation and reference for advocacy. #

You can listen and watch recorded webcast of the WSFM plenaries at <http://www.wsfm2012.org>

international federations, migrants and dependents from communities, youth, and students in public actions and cultural events during the 5th WSFM.

The 5th Forum is a milestone in our journey together as social movements. This year, our recommendations for a better world directly incorporate the inputs of participants from each of the four days of workshops. Daily plenaries allowed us to explore complex themes and led us to multi-faceted recommendations.

We achieved another milestone with the interlinking of the migrant and social movements in Asia and throughout the world—refugees, anti-trafficking, workers and trade unions, peasants, women's rights, faith-based, environmental justice, indigenous peoples, domestic workers, progressive academics, trade and development, anti-racism and human rights advocates.

This convergence is necessary because by ourselves and separated, we cannot change the current economic model that exploits migrants. The participation from all regions of the world allowed us to see the global nature of migrant and labour class struggles and provided inputs for collective and strategic actions.

Crisis, critique and consequences of neoliberal globalization: the migration and labour question

1. Like never before we are facing a humanitarian crisis that threatens civilization. The current international scene is undergoing a profound multi-dimensional

4. A main engine of neoliberal globalization is the global tendency of lowering of labour costs by any and all means, and the exacerbation of uneven development as well as social inequalities.

5. In this context, decent jobs are rapidly giving way to a low wage, precarious employment economy. The resulting massive oversupply of labour and widespread uneven development magnifies the pressure for people to emigrate internally and/or internationally under conditions of extreme risk.

6. Women make up half of global migration flows. The



From top left: one of the performances at the cultural evening; participants at the Bulacan field visit; MFA delegation at the 30 November rally; MFA staff and volunteers; "Migrants Rights Now!" action at Miriam College. Photos courtesy of Nicole Fernley, K. Rejimon, and Migrants Rights International.

financial, overproduction, environmental and global social crisis.

2. This crisis is a consequence of a strategy of imperialist domination led by multinational corporations in search of low cost and flexible labour, as well as natural resources from the Global South.

3. The rules of neo-liberal globalization persist. Outsourcing, sub-contracting, importing temporary labour are the new mantra for capital to secure its profits. The costs are increasingly borne by families, workers and our environment. Those with privilege and power are the minority – yet they continue to benefit unfairly.

UN Secretary-General notes that "International migration can be an empowering experience for women: women may leave situations where they have limited options for ones where they exercise greater autonomy over their own lives, thereby benefiting themselves as well as their families and communities." However, many other women migrants are subjected to particular and gender-based forms of abuses in the migration process.

7. Human trafficking continues to be a major global form of abuse and violence against migrants, both men and women, and children. In the context of neo-liberal globalization and modern technology, it also assumes new and pernicious modalities.

8. Wars and conflicts are among the most dangerous causes of migration, refuge, and displacement. Voices have been raised to condemn and oppose those who encourage or foment war and conflict through the supply arms and money, and who offer political support to the perpetrators.

9. Ninety percent of migrants are workers. The migration and labor questions are two sides of the same coin, whose currency translates into unbearable conditions of systematic oppression against the working class promoted by neoliberal globalization and its current profound and multi-dimensional crisis.

10. The root causes behind why people are forced to move continue to be overlooked by governments and international agencies that profit from the current neo-liberal model.

Migrants' rights are human rights

11. Compelled by the need to simply live—large segments of our world are being forced to migrate. It is disproportionately women, children, ethnic groups, racial minorities, asylum-seekers, climate-displaced communities, and people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities, who are in situations of forced migration. They endure multiple risks and vulnerabilities. They are persistently exposed to labour insecurity, precarious citizenship, undocumented status, criminalization, discrimination, marginalization and social exclusion. Too often, in managing migration, governments of receiving countries resort to repressive measures, border militarization, persecution, deportation, and other forms of violence against the migrants, especially against women.

12. Safeguarding human rights is still a pending issue for all governments in countries of origin, transit and destination. No nation is exempt from this responsibility.

13. Too many countries of origin or transit use a double-standard: governments denounce violations to the rights of their citizens in destination countries, while the rights of migrants in their own land are systematically violated.

14. Although migrants have some legal protections, such as the 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and ILO instruments—these tools remain un-ratified by major receiving countries and implementation measures remain a distant reality.

15. Migrants are neither powerless nor passive victims in the migration process. Migrants and migrant communities are not just objects of corporate-led policies, but are increasingly stakeholders and becoming primary actors for social transformation. For decades, they have organized, unionized, campaigned and intervened at local, national and international levels. Many local and international victories have been won through their struggles.

16. It is therefore imperative to support in every possible way the organizing processes of, and by, migrant communities. The best way to ensure that migrants and communities are prepared to defend themselves and achieve new victories in their struggle for a better world and the respect of all their rights is by ensuring a steady and ever stronger organizing capacity that enables them to impact all policy areas that affect their lives. “Nothing about us should be decided without us” is a social movement slogan that eloquently asserts this. Freedom of association, expression and assembly must be guaranteed for all, including migrants.

17. We re-assert the WSFM declaration from Quito that calls on the right to free and unconditional movement and settlement, that may be advanced through the concept of universal citizenship.

Re-imagining migration, proposing alternatives

18. The relationship between migration and development is a topic of growing interest among international organizations, academics and civil society organizations. National governments and international organizations such as the World Bank, International Organization for Migration, and the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) are promoting the idea that maximizing remittances and managing migration will lead to development.

19. This perspective overlooks historic forces of unequal development in which contemporary migration is embedded. It conveniently disregards human and labour rights as central and intrinsic elements of coherent migration and development policies. It masks fundamental contributions made by migrants to the destination countries, and ignores the costs of migration for the countries of origin and the burden that is borne by sending communities—costs that are far greater than the “positive” impacts of remittances to sending countries.

20. The GFMD is of particular concern. Despite the strong push by civil society groups at the 2006 UN High Level Dialogue for a global migration governance mechanism firmly rooted on international human rights principles, governments created the GFMD instead as an informal, non-binding forum outside of the UN. The GFMD is not acceptable because it is not rights-based and has no accountability. In limiting the space for civil society and migrant communities to voice their critique, it marginalizes the voices of migrants. The GFMD serves as a “free market” forum for governments and corporates to further exploit migrants in the context of the neo-liberal model.

21. In line with the corporate restructuring strategy underlying neo-liberal globalization, mainstream migration policies follow similar patterns: they essentially are corporate driven public policies. Temporary or “guest” worker programmes is a prime example. Another is the cultural exchange program – such as the au pair program – which is used to recruit cheap labour (e. g. domestic workers) and escape the application of employment laws. Dubious terms like “circular migration” are equally suspect. What is clear is that these programmes and terms favour corporate elites primarily in receiving countries.

22. These policies rationalize a new form of slavery.

Struggle, organization and action

23. The pursuit for sustainable human development is a process of social emancipation through collective participation and popular empowerment.

24. Social transformation capable of fuelling a counter-hegemonic social power is urgently needed. Our collective knowledge and experience in concert with the working class, and social movements and organizations must be united.

25. It is time for direct democracy. This means democratizing access to power, encouraging social organization, and promoting instruments of participation, including protecting the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining for all migrant and informal sector workers, and encouraging full and meaningful participation in the trade union movements in both sending and host countries.

26. A symbiotic relationship between people and nature — one that goes beyond radical conservationism, should

be encouraged. The rights of nature should be promoted alongside human rights, and the stewardship and responsibility of governments to these must be upheld.

27. A strategy for sustainable human development requires social control of foreign investment, equitable and fair trade, scientific and technological development, and the elimination of all forms of unequal exchange and surplus transfer.

28. Labour sovereignty is essential in promoting decent jobs and wages, occupational safety and health, universal social security, freedom of association and collective bargaining.

29. There must be a radical change in the dominant paradigm in order to grant precedence to human rights across economic, labour, social, political and cultural realms. We will continue to broaden our alliances and solidarity with other social movements in our common struggle for social transformation.

30. Towards this end, we call on the upcoming UN High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development to substantively incorporate proposals by civil society and social movements for a rights-based, people-centered migration governance and development agenda. Any post-2015 development agenda and action plan must firmly advance the protection of the human rights of all migrants, and affirm the right to migrate and remain at home with decent work and human security.

31. Finally, the right not to emigrate should be in place in the countries of origin. This implies creating the necessary conditions that transform migration into a choice rather than a necessity.

We look to the 2013 World Social Forum in Tunisia to continue this journey together as social movements in the struggle for the realization of alternative global models, committed to the principle that Another World is Possible – a world that we must forge together. #

Asian Parliamentarians gathered for the 6th caucus on labor migration organized by MFA



Parliamentarians, MFA members and partners huddled for a photo. Photo courtesy of FES, 2012.

Since 2007, Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA) and network partners, with the support of Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), have been facilitating a parliamentarians program aimed at identifying the role for parliamentarians on the issues of labor migration and migrants' rights, enhancing participation of MPs in that role, and identifying key issue areas to take on. Past programs were organized in Manila (2007), Singapore (2008), Thailand (2009), Vietnam (2010), and Cambodia (2011). In Phnom Penh, Cambodia (2011) the Asian Inter-Parliamentary Caucus on Labor Migration was formalized by a resolution of the assembled MPs to foster collaboration and encourage a pro-active role for parliamentarians with respect to advancing the rights and welfare of migrant workers across Asia. MFA was designated the Secretariat that would act as the primary coordinating body for the Caucus.

The 2012 Caucus meeting on 23-25 November 2012 in Pasig City, Philippines was co-hosted by MFA, the FES Regional Office in Singapore, and the Philippines' Congressional Committee on Overseas Workers' Affairs, which is chaired by Cong. Walden Bello.

In 2012, FES' partnership with MFA was elevated from FES' country office in the Philippines to its regional office,

based in Singapore. This demonstrates FES' strong commitment to this process and its long-term vision.

Migrant workers from the Philippines participated in this program for the first time, joining the parliamentarians in informal sessions to offer their testimonials and critiques of existing social protection regimes, and to articulate their interests.

This was the first meeting at which parliamentarians from Myanmar were able to join the Caucus, with four parliamentary representatives participating. It was also the first time that the Caucus hosted representatives from Pakistan and the Palestinian territories.

This Caucus meeting took place in Manila immediately prior to the 5th World Social Forum on Migration WSFM, with MFA as the technical secretariat. Four parliamentarians from the caucus were able to join the opening plenary of the WSFM, bringing forward a message of solidarity for this crucial civil society process.

In the final Caucus statement, the parliamentarians agreed to "establish a steering committee to liaise with the technical secretariat and to ensure the implementation of this resolution and subsequent Caucus activities." This steering committee will be made up of

Caucus members and will give direction to the technical secretariat. One representative from each country will be invited to serve on the steering committee.

The Caucus has focused on social protection for the last few years, as this is a very important issue for migrant workers in Asia. Social security is based on national systems, often explicitly excluding non-nationals from coverage. In addition, many migrant workers (especially migrant women) are employed in the informal sector, traditionally falling outside of social security system coverage. The parliamentarians and invited experts explored the challenges of establishing bilateral and multilateral social security agreements, considering good practices and potential plans of action. They also discussed the need for gender-responsive social protection measures that take into account the specific vulnerabilities confronting women who migrate. #

MFA organized dialogues with missions and consulates in Jordan

From 2-3 October 2012, thirty nine participants representing various Missions and Consulates, government agencies, national human rights institutions (NHRIs), civil society groups, unions, legal support institutions and research centers convened for the "Dialogue with Foreign Missions and Consulates in Jordan" held at the Landmark Hotel in Jordan's capital city Amman.

The dialogue aimed to raise common understanding of the issues and concerns of migrant workers in Jordan and receiving countries in general; learn about the programs and assistance provided by the different missions to their nationals in Jordan and other receiving countries; draw attention to and bring further awareness on the significance of ratification and implementation of international labor treaties such as ILO C189 Decent Work for Domestic Workers, C87 Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize and C98 Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining, and ILO Multilateral Framework on Labor Migration; highlight advocacy issues in relation to migrant workers in the West Asia region on a) reference wage, and b) reforms to the Kafala System, and standardized contract for migrant (domestic) workers; and ultimately explore ways to strengthen mutual support and collaboration among the missions and consulates, civil society organizations, national human rights institutions and international organizations in sending countries and in Jordan that work for the promotion and protection of the rights of migrant workers.



MFA members and partners at the dialogue in Amman, Jordan

MFA and the ILO together facilitated this strategic dialogue that specifically engaged diplomatic and consular officials of the following countries: Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and the United States. The dialogue provided a significant space for sharing of experiences and building and strengthening the capacities particularly of diplomatic and consular representatives of countries sending migrant workers to Jordan. This process also allowed relevant stakeholders to impart their work and advocacy for the promotion and protection of the rights of migrant workers in Jordan and in other regions. #

Training on the human rights of migrant workers successfully held in Doha

With the World Cup coming to State of Qatar in 2022, it is predicted that approximately one million migrant workers will be moving to the country to take part in multiple infrastructure projects that will be happening in the next 10 years (The Peninsula, 2012). With this in mind, a collaborative effort between all stakeholders is imperative to ensure fundamental human rights are respected for all migrant workers.

The program held in the NHRC Qatar Building in Doha, Qatar (14-18 October 2012) was organized by MFA, DTP, the Asia-Pacific Forum, and the National Human Rights Committee (NHRC) Qatar. This occasion represented the first training program on migrant rights in a Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) country. The training program in Doha on migrants' human rights was diverse in terms of participation: NHRIs from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Jordan, Nepal, Oman, Qatar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. Civil society, trade unions, media and government were also represented and the countries where these participants came from were Australia, Bangladesh, India, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Nepal,



DTP participants pose for a group photo after the week long Diplomacy Training Program in Doha, Qatar, 14-18 October 2012.

Qatar, Pakistan, the Philippines, and UAE.

Trainers and delegates worked together to discuss international human rights standards and understand the various intergovernmental processes that can be utilized in their advocacy efforts. Participants worked with each other to develop their own advocacy network between governments, trade unions, CSOs, and embassies in sending and receiving countries. #

MFA members commemorated the struggles for migrants rights at Migrants' Campaign Month

Marking its 12th year in 2012, the Migrants Campaign Month allowed the MFA network to particularly and more visibly highlight migrants' rights issues and universal ratification of international human and labor rights instruments on the following dates:

25 November – 10 December – 16 days of Activism to Combat Violence against Women

1 December – International HIV/AIDS Day

10 December – International Human Rights Day

18 December – International Migrants' Day

MFA released a statement on International Migrants' Day that can be read at the MFA website, and was also published in the Times of Oman.

In Taiwan, Hsinchu Migrants and Immigrants Services Center (HMISC) in cooperation with the Hsinchu Catholic Diocese Agape Center for AIDS Awareness and Education, organized an AIDS Awareness and Education campaign for the Filipino migrant workers on 1 December

2012. HMISC plans to translate the AIDS awareness and education materials into Bahasa, Indonesian and Vietnamese. On International Migrants Day, Migrant Empowerment Network Taiwan (MENT) organized a press statement and demonstration in front of the Executive Council in Taipei. The Executive Council oversees the Council of Labor Affairs (CLA). The new chairperson of the CLA proposed that migrant workers should be delinked from the minimum wage policy and that migrant workers who work in free trade zones should not be protected by the Taiwan Labor Standards Law. If this happens Taiwan will be going back to the early 1980s when there was no labor law. The Labor Law was promulgated in 1984. The situation in Taiwan is very tense for migrant workers and civil society has to lobby with the help of friends in the media to oppose the neoliberal thinking of the present government.

In Bangladesh, WARBE DF held several discussion meetings and awareness raising programs in Dhaka and other districts of the country from 25 November to 20 December 2012. Discussions specifically focused on "Ratification of ILO Convention 189 and its Proper Implementation: Ensuring Domestic Workers Rights and Dignity," "Migrant Domestic Workers Rights and Dignity," and the significance of International Migrants Day. Press conferences, television appearances, rallies, cultural programs and job fairs complemented these workshops and conferences.

Also in Bangladesh, ACD organized media campaigns, rallies and street theater from 24 November to 18 December 2012 which included : Rally to "Say NO to violence against women, be a real man" Theatre for Development (TFD) show on violence against women and child protection; Rally for World Aids Day; Rally for Rokeya Day; Rally, gathering and cultural program on "Engaging men and boys- promoting gender justice;" and street theatre for International Migrants Day (and campaign for ILO Convention 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers).

MFA members and partners in India commemorated the month by launching pre-migration information campaigns in different districts in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

The campaigns took place in the form of road shows, street theaters and conferences to: raise awareness on the realities of labor migration; work together with panchayats and the community in the promotion of

informed migration; and promote the well-being and rights of intending emigrants, migrant workers, returnees and members of their families, especially semi-skilled and low-skilled migrant workers who form the majority of emigrants from the panchayats.

International human and labor rights laws like the UN Convention on the Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers and their Families, ILO Convention 189 Decent Work for Domestic Workers were explained to the communities and how these laws protect their rights as workers. Intending emigrants and members of their families were encouraged to plan their work overseas with a view to returning to their families and communities, use their savings earned abroad to create jobs and invest in local livelihood projects and micro enterprises.

POURAKHI in Nepal on 7-20 December 2012 organized a “sharing program on the WSFM with concerned stakeholders and government ministries;” orientation on ‘Nexus between Migration and Trafficking;’ Interaction on the recruitment process of women migrant workers; rally in 15 districts in collaboration with all organization working on migration issue; welcome and farewell to migrant workers at the airport; Workers’ Hearing jointly with National Women Commission; and Consultation on the recruitment process of women migrant workers also with National Women Commission.

In Indonesia, on 18 December 2012, Migrant CARE held a media briefing on its yearly report on the situation of Indonesian migrant workers. This was held in cooperation with ILO Jakarta and the National Commission on Violence Against Women. Also, Migrant CARE, in cooperation with Indonesian Journalist Alliance and ICMC provided a journalist award in appreciation for the contribution of media in Indonesia in highlighting the protection and promotion of the rights of Indonesian migrant workers.

In the Philippines, in celebration of International Migrants Day, Kanlungan and the City Government of Caloocan entered into a Memorandum of Agreement that will create programs and policy for the advancement of migrants’ rights and welfare. The MOU is part of the organization’s strategic agenda for the advancement of the social movement and part of building structures of care and governance.

Center for Migrant Advocacy (CMA) on 5 December 2012

organized a public forum on UN MWC’s LOIPR (list of issues prior to reporting) on the Philippines for its second periodic report to the Committee. This was jointly organized by the Commission on Human Rights. CMA celebrated its 10 anniversary and spent the day on 7 December 2012 in a caucus, “a decade of migrants rights advocacy -- CMA reflects on the state of affairs of Filipino migration.”

The Technical Working Group (TWG) in the Philippines celebrated the milestones in the ratification of C189 and passing of the Kasambahay Bill, through a benefit concert, “Journey towards realizing Decent Work for Domestic Workers in the Philippines.”



A roadshow in Andhra Pradesh, raising awareness on migrants rights in the villages. Photo courtesy of NDWM-AP

Finally on 18 December 2012, A National Forum on Migration was organized by the Inter-Agency Committee for the Month of Overseas Filipinos, and Philippine Migrants Rights Watch (PMRW) . Migrant Forum in Asia sits on the Committee and Philippine member CMA is part of PMRW.

TWC2 in Singapore organized on 16 December 2012 a sports day for migrant workers: volleyball and futsal games with leagues for male and female workers. On 18 December 2012, TWC2 co-hosted a documentary film showing and photo exhibit of “Beyond the Border, Behind the Men.” Three young Singaporeans showcased a rarely seen side of Bangladeshi migrant workers.

In Lebanon, Caritas Lebanon Migrant Center (CLMC) commemorated Migrants’ Month by holding activities with migrant workers living in the shelters: exhibitions to sell the handicrafts of the migrant workers, spiritual day; and



Posters from the activities in Singapore

violence against women awareness session for the migrant workers. On 15 December 2012, CLMC was interviewed by Radio 1812 partner Radio Rotana Delta. A documentary, "Strangers in the country of Hospitality – Migrant Women in Prison," was shown in the migrant communities in Lebanon. And On 17-18 December 2012, CLMC conducted a training for the recruitment agencies on the code of conduct for further protection of the migrant domestic workers. #

MFA network preparing for the second UN High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development

The second UN High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development (UN HLD) is scheduled to happen on 3-4 October 2013 at the UN headquarters in New York City.

As early as 2012, MFA made preparations for the capacity building of its members so that they would be able to engage the UN HLD process and advocate for rights-based policies and programs related to the four themes of the second HLD:

1. Assessing the effects of international migration and sustainable development and identifying relevant priorities in view of the preparation of the post-2015 development framework
2. Measures to ensure respect for and protection of the human rights of all migrants, with particular reference to women and children, as well as to prevent and combat the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons and to ensure orderly, regular and safe migration
3. Strengthening partnerships and cooperation or international migration, mechanisms to effectively integrate migration into development policies and

promoting coherence at all levels

4. International and regional labor mobility and its impact on development.

A series of consultations in MFA member and partner countries were launched in 2012 and will run throughout 2013 until the MFA network joins the global migrants' rights movement in New York in October 2013 for the main forum on migration and development.

A two day consultation on the UN HLD kick-started on 8-9 October 2012 in Dhaka, Bangladesh. MFA members and partners in Bangladesh attending the consultation identified 3 major advocacy topics namely stranded migrants, undocumented migrant workers, and the rights of women migrants and migrant domestic workers. At the 5th World Social Forum in Manila on November 2012, members from Bangladesh participated in workshops and poster sessions as resource persons on the topic of stranded migrants.

The second UNHLD is much anticipated by the global migrants' rights movement. In this momentous space, governments, international organizations, labor unions, civil society, migrant workers and members of their families and other relevant stakeholders will gather for an ultimate discussion on the current situation and future governance of migration and development.

The Global Coalition on Migration (GCM—where MFA is a member) and its labor union and social movement partners released the "5-points for a strong civil society contribution in the 2013 UN High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development." The 5-points were originally drafted to call the attention of states for a meaningful participation of civil society and inclusion of a rights-based agenda at the negotiations in the UN High Level Dialogue in 2013. The document underwent a series of refinement and endorsements by a vast number of human rights and migrant rights-oriented organizations and unions worldwide. It was presented at the Second Committee of the United Nations General Assembly on 15 November 2012 in the UN Headquarters in New York and at the 6th GFMD in Mauritius. The 5 points will be tabled in the forthcoming meetings in the UN leading up to the High-level Dialogue.

The "5-points for a strong civil society contribution in the 2013 UN High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development" was further refined and strengthened into a "A civil society proposal for a negotiated outcome in the form of a 5 year action plan at the 2013 UN High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development." Civil society proposes seven key outcomes, to be achieved over five years, comprising of:

1. Identification or creation, and implementation, of effective standards and mechanisms to regulate the migrant labor recruitment industry, an outcome that civil society is convinced is within reach thanks to a growing convergence towards reform among countries of origin, transit and destination and among private sector actors and funders as well as NGO, trade unions and migrants themselves.

2. Reliable, multi-actor mechanisms to address the assistance and protection needs of migrants stranded in distress, beginning with those trapped in situations of war, conflict or disaster (natural or man-made) but with the same logic and urgency with respect to migrant victims of violence or trauma in transit.

3. Integration of migration into the post-2015 development agenda to address not only the contributions that migrants make to development in countries of origin and destination, but the possibilities for better policy planning and coherence that can make migration more genuinely a choice and not a necessity, and greater gain than drain.

4. Mechanisms to guarantee labor rights for migrant workers equal to the rights of nationals, including the rights to equal pay and working conditions, to form and organize in trade unions, to ensure portability of pensions and to have paths to citizenship for migrant workers and their families.

5. Models and frameworks that address the needs and rights of migrant women in their specificity, including policies and programs that enable women workers to have the choice whether to migrate or remain in home countries, and legislation that enables migrant women, regardless of status, to have access to basic services; recourse to the justice system; and protection against all forms of violence.

6. Benchmarks for promoting the exchange of good practices and enactment and implementation of national legislation to comply with the full range of provisions in international conventions that pertain to migrants even outside the labor sphere, with particular concern for rights in the context of enforcement policies, rights to basic social protection and due process.

7. Redefinition of the interaction of international mechanisms of migrants' rights protection, which recognizes the roles of the GFMD and the Global Migration Group, albeit limited, revives emphasis of the distinct mandate of the ILO for worker protection, and more coherently aligns protection activity of agencies including the ILO, IOM, UNHCR, OHCHR and UNODC. #

Read the 7-point agenda in full here:

<http://gcmigration.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Civil-Society-Proposal-for-HLD-Nov-30.pdf>

Unwavering engagement and advocacy for rights-based policies of MFA network seen in the 6th GFMD

The MFA network has been actively involved in the GFMD process since it was first held in Brussels, Belgium in 2007. MFA was among the organizations recommended to be part of the International Steering Committee of the official Civil Society Days (CSO) days of the GFMD. MFA members have also participated in the official CSO days of the GFMD from 2007 to 2012. Due to MFA's active engagement with the GFMD process, the MFA regional coordinator, William Gois, was chosen to chair the CSO days of the 2011 GFMD in Geneva, Switzerland.

Direct participation in government-led spaces like the GFMD is crucial to the migrants' rights advocacy initiatives of MFA. In these spaces, voices and concerns of migrant workers and members of their families are heard and placed at the center of the migration and development agenda of states. Besides bringing up migration issues to the highest echelons of inter-governmental and tripartite deliberations, migrant workers, their families and advocates are enabled by their participation in the GFMD and parallel processes to emphasize and re-emphasize the need for collaborative, fair, and rights-based approaches to making and implementing migration and development policies.

The advocacy efforts of MFA were exemplified in a string of activities in 2012 around the GFMD. The network took part as an observer in the International Migrant Domestic Care Workers at the Interface of Migration and Development: Action to Expand Global Practice in the Asian Region in Manila, Philippines on 15-16 October 2012. This pre-GFMD regional event was organized by the Philippine Government.

This activity of MFA was one of the resulting recommendations from the capacity building program on domestic work on July 2012 [see section on capacity building]. Four MFA members and the Secretariat, presented policy briefs, case studies and advocacy recommendations to government representatives during session breaks. Among the recommendations tabled to Asian governments include the providing for the protection of the rights and well being of migrant domestic workers in receiving countries through labor policies that recognize them as workers and treat them with full dignity; supporting reforms on the Kafala system, reference wage and standardized contract for domestic workers; and sustainable reintegration programs for returning migrant workers, including migrant domestic workers.

On 19-20 November 2012, more than 800 representatives from civil society and governments from some 160 countries gathered in Port Louis, Mauritius for the sixth Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD). MFA joined the MRI delegation and engaged in direct talks with governments and partner civil society organizations and trade unions.

At the common space on 21 November, the co-chairs of the Civil Society Days, Mr. George Joseph of Sweden and Clariste Soh Moube of Mali presented governments with a set of key recommendations, mechanisms for action and benchmarks to measure progress that civil society participants had developed together the past two days. In the remarks of the civil society statement, “We are here today—governments and civil society—not for ourselves. We are here for change.” The statement stressed the protection of migrant rights especially in the areas of labor recruitment and humanitarian crisis situations. #

MFA represented at the 9th AEPF

The 9th Asia-Europe People’s Forum (AEPF) was held in Vientiane, Laos on 16-19 October 2012. The 2012 theme was, “People’s Solidarity against Poverty and for Sustainable Development: Challenging Unjust and Unequal Development, Building States of Citizens for Citizens.” MFA and network partners in Europe RESPECT Network, Transnational Migrants Platform, Kasapi Hellas, DIWATA, Commission for Filipino Migrant Workers, Platform of Filipino Migrants in Europe, Transnational Institute organized a workshop at the AEPF, “Migrants as Transnational Social Actors- Challenges & Strategies of migrants in reclaiming a Just & Participative Development.”

In the forum, Sr. Lissy Joseph of National Domestic Workers Movement / Migrant Forum India represented the MFA network and spoke about the Asian perspective on migrant campaigning in the context of crisis.



MRI's and MFA's William Gois reads civil society 5 points for 2013 HLD at the Civil Society Days, 20 November 2012, Port Louis, Mauritius. Photo courtesy of MRI

Read the civil society statement in full here:

[http://www.gfmdcivilsociety.org/downloads/2012/programme/results/GFMD%202012%20CSD%20Statement%20\(final\)%20-%20EN.pdf](http://www.gfmdcivilsociety.org/downloads/2012/programme/results/GFMD%202012%20CSD%20Statement%20(final)%20-%20EN.pdf)

AEPF “is an interregional network of progressive civil society organizations across Asia and Europe. For the past fourteen years, AEPF has remained the only continuing network linking Asian and European NGOs and social movements. It has assumed the unique function of fostering people's solidarity across the two regions and has become a vehicle for advancing the people's voice within Asia-Europe relations.”

A final declaration was produced at the closing of the AEPF that highlighted a call to action with recommendations on the following: Universal Social Protection and Access to Essential Services; Food Sovereignty and Sustainable Land and Natural Resource Management; Sustainable Energy Production and Use; and Just Work and Sustainable Livelihoods. The AEPF9's participants also noted that the peace, security and people's solidarity are the preconditions for Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development. #

Series of workshops on right to health, case management and media organized in India and Oman

Muscat, Oman : On 20-21 September 2012, the Charity Wing- Indian Social Club and MFA conducted a workshop on the right to health of migrant workers. This workshop held in Muscat brought together different stakeholders to discuss migrant workers' access to health; specifically by identifying and exploring how best to address the barriers to accessing healthcare and information for migrant workers both in the sending country, India and their receiving countries in the Gulf region.

Around 40 participants attended the workshop including: migrant workers; doctors from different countries in the Gulf region; migrant support groups, lawyers, social workers, government representatives from India and Oman; sending countries' Embassy representatives; international organizations; insurance companies and the media.

The workshop informed a position and agenda for future international advocacy on migrant worker's right to health to promote migrant inclusive health policies and systems in the Gulf region. It established momentum for development of strategies for sustainable clinical intervention in both countries of origin and destination to address protection gaps in health provision for migrant. A declaration outlined the importance of the realization of migrant workers' right to health in the Gulf, inclusive of key recommendations.

Kerala, India : The capacity building workshop held in the High Court Auditorium in Kochi, Kerala on 29 September 2012 built on the two previous workshops held in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu in 2011 and 2012. The workshop in Kerala sought to increase or improve capacities of CSOs/migrant support groups in



Judge Nair of KELSA inaugurating the Pravasi Lok Adalat

documenting case histories, investigation of complaints and grievance redress.

Over fifty people took part in the Pravasi Lok Adalat. This workshop was a first in India where a venue in high court (through the Kerala State Legal Services Authority) heard the problems faced by migrant workers and members of their families. Advocates, lawyers and experts in law, particularly of the laws in the GCC countries discussed and left their verdict on different migrant case studies. It was a giant leap that a high seat of justice lent its ear to the issues of migrants. Law students who took part in the tribunal saw the process as an eye opener on migrant issues and would perhaps enable them to take on such cases in the future.

There were ten cases presented in the workshop and they were examined and discussed in consultation with Indian lawyers practicing in India and abroad (Oman). It was decided that KELSA will send the petitions with opinions to the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA). NALSA would then get in touch with the foreign affairs department to get the grievances redressed through the respective embassies.

Chennai, India : A media workshop on the rights of Indian migrant workers was held in Loyola College in Chennai, Tamil Nadu on 15 November 2012. This process was aimed to strategize with people working in journalism to highlight the situations of migrant workers, not just to raise the public's awareness but also to influence policy and advocacy. Speakers for the workshop included Ms. Shanthini Moses of the Charity Wing Indian Social Club who is based in Chennai, Mr. Jai Sankar – Protector of Emigrants – Chennai, Mr. Rejimon, journalist for the Times of Oman, Dr. Bernard Swami of Arunodhaya Initiatives for Migrants and Professor at Loyola College and rights advocate Mr. K.S. Ram.

Workshop discussions included:

- a background on Indian labor migration to the Gulf;



A session at the media workshop

- sharing of experiences in reporting labor migration related stories;
- discussion of human interest stories/migrant workers' cases; and
- responses from civil society and government.

The workshop reached out to 44 members of the media and civil society on the challenges faced by migrant workers and members of their families. The participation of a journalist based in Oman was quite notable as he shared his experiences in writing human interest stories in a country where such news are either not allowed to be published or not being given much space for publication. The regular presence of the POE in Chennai also signified the continued collaboration between civil society and specific government agency focusing on migrant workers concerns. #

Resources on Indian labor migration

Predeparture information manual : MFA members and partners in India and Oman released new editions of the *Pre-departure information manual for intending emigrants to Oman*. Translated in to Malayalam, Telugu and Tamil, the revised the 2012 edition contains updated contact information of agencies working with and providing services to migrant workers and members of their families.

To download copies of the manual, and share with your own networks, please visit the following links:

English

https://www.dropbox.com/s/41qh8kds5ivtict/English_predepartureinfomanual_2012.pdf

Malayalam

<http://www.mfasia.org/component/simplifiedownload/?task=download&fileid=MjAxMy9tYWxheWFsYW1fcHJIZGVwYXJ0dXJlaW5mb21hbnVhbF8yMDEyLnBkZg%3D%3D>

Tamil

<http://www.mfasia.org/component/simplifiedownload/?task=download&fileid=MjAxMy90YW1pbF9wcmVhZXBhc nR1cmVpbmZvbWVudWFsXzlwMTlucGRm>

Telugu

<http://www.mfasia.org/component/simplifiedownload/?task=download&fileid=MjAxMy90ZWx1Z3VfcHJIZGVwYXJ0dXJlaW5mb21hbnVhbF8yMDEyLnBkZg%3D%3D>

A skit on the realities of labor migration to the Gulf (in Malayalam)

NDWM/MFI in Kerala facilitated community activities in Trivandrum from 17 November until 22 December 2012 including a play performed by Loyola College students. This performance depicts the realities of labor migration to the Gulf. It was presented to different communities in Trivandrum for the occasion of Migrants Campaign Month.

Watch the skit here (in Malayalam):

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ofrTXg-pTUM> #

MIGRANT FORUM IN ASIA MEMBERS



EAST ASIA

Hong Kong: Asian Migrant Center (AMC), Coalition for Migrants Rights (CMR), Indonesian Migrant Workers Union (IMWU); Japan: Solidarity Network with Migrants in Japan (SMJ); Korea: Joint Committee with Migrants in Korea (JCMK); Mongolia: Center for Human Rights and Development (CHRD); Taiwan: Hope Workers' Center (HWC); Hsinchu Catholic Diocese Migrants and Immigrants Service Center (HMISC)

SOUTHEAST ASIA

Burma: Federation of Trade Unions (FTUB); Cambodia: CARAM Cambodia, Cambodian Women for Peace and Development (CWPD), Legal Support for Children and Women (LSCW); Indonesia: Center for Indonesian Migrant Workers (CIMW), Jarnas Pekabumi, Konsorsium Pembela Buruh Migran Indonesia (KOPBUMI), Migrant Care, Seri Buruh Migran Indonesia (SBMI), Solidaritas Perempuan; Malaysia: Tenaganita; Philippines: Atikha Overseas Workers and Communities Initiative, Inc., Batis Center for Women, Inc., Center for Migrants Advocacy (CMA), Kanlungan Center Foundation, Inc., Kapisanan ng mga Kamag-anakan ng mga Migranteng Manggagawang Pilipino (KAKAMMPI), Unlad Kabayan Migrant Services Foundation, Inc.; Singapore: Humanitarian Organization for Migration Economics (HOME), St. Francis Workers' Center, Transient Workers Count Too (TWC2); Thailand: Human Rights and Development Foundation (HRDF)

SOUTH ASIA

Bangladesh: Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK), Association for Community Development (ACD), Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU), WARBE Development Foundation; India: Center for Education and Communication (CEC), Center for Indian Migrant Studies (CIMS), Migrant Forum India (MFI), Migrants Rights Council, National Centre for Labor; Nepal: All Nepal Women's Association (ANWA), POURAKHI, Women Rehabilitation Center (WOREC), Pravasi Nepali Coordination Committee (PNCC); Youth Action Nepal (YOAC); Sri Lanka: Action Network for Migrant Workers (ACTFORM), Migrant Services Center (MSC), Women and Media Collective (WMC)

WEST ASIA

Israel: Kav La'Oved

MFA SECRETARIAT

85-C Masikap Extension, Central District
Diliman, Quezon City 1100 Philippines

Tel: (63-2) 928-2740
Fax: (63-2) 433-3508
E-mail: mfa@mfasia.org
Web: www.mfasia.org