

18 December 2024
International Migrants Day
Statement

**SUSTAINABLE
AND DECENT
SOCIAL
PROTECTION
FOR ALL
MIGRANT
WORKERS**





SUSTAINABLE AND DECENT SOCIAL PROTECTION FOR ALL!

Migrant Forum in Asia Statement

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The year 2024 marks the 30th year anniversary of Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA), 30 years of advancing the rights of migrant workers and members of their families. The MFA network has been at the forefront of migrants rights advocacy for many years. On the occasion of International Migrants Day, MFA joins migrant workers and migrants rights advocates across the globe in calling for the advancement of the rights of migrant and their families in a shifting migration landscape and for the implementation of decent and sustainable social protection for all.

Decent and Sustainable Social Protection for Migrants and Families

At its core, social protection encompasses a range of policies and measures designed to provide migrant workers and their families with a basic level of economic security, healthcare, education, and other essential services. For migrant workers, the lack of access to social protection can result in precarious living conditions, exploitation, and vulnerability to various forms of abuse. Many migrant workers find themselves in low-paying jobs with limited or no access to healthcare, social protection, and legal protections, leaving them exposed to risks that undermine their well-being and dignity.

MFA calls on governments to implement the following in relation to facilitating access to decent and sustainable social protection for migrants and their families:

- Ensure access to social protection for all migrant workers in particular access to healthcare in countries of destination;
- Create an enabling environment that will facilitate multi-stakeholder partnerships among stakeholders from civil society, private sector, government ministries and migrant communities in line with information dissemination on available social protection programs in both countries of origin and destination;
- Establishment of a firewall between public services and immigration control in order to allow undocumented migrants to access social protection programs;
- Simplify registration processes for migrants to access social protection and remove discriminatory eligibility criteria;



- Provide tailored social insurance schemes for migrants, including informal sector workers;
- Include access to social protection information in all pre-employment, pre-departure and post arrival orientation programs for migrant workers;
- Ensure that migrant domestic workers and other low-wage earners are explicitly included in social protection frameworks;
- Mandate employers to provide insurance coverage for workplace injuries and illnesses; and strengthen enforcement mechanisms for workplace safety and compensation laws; and
- Foster inter-agency collaboration between labor, health, and social welfare departments to facilitate easier access to social protection for migrant workers.

Access to Justice

Access to justice continue to be a major challenge for migrant workers. Migrants have a general lack of awareness of legal procedures and services, including in their own country. They have limited information on where to seek remedy and live in fear of the police/system due to a lack of social support. Filing complaints becomes difficult due to language barriers, lack of knowledge on the process, fear of reprisal from employers.

Access to justice must be accessible, affordable, and efficient for migrant workers in the country of destination. MFA calls for the following recommendations in relation to facilitating access to justice for migrant workers:

- Facilitate accessibility of grievance mechanisms for migrants through technology and provisions of language interpretation;
- Facilitate dissemination of information on the available mechanisms to claim the worker's rights and register their grievances;
- Set up a platform for government and non-government stakeholders to coordinate the grievance redressal of repatriated workers and returnees; and
- Facilitate bilateral frameworks to allow repatriated workers to claim unpaid wages.

MFA, its members and partners are celebrating International migrants day across the Asia by organizing a number of activities with migrant communities and members of their families. To know more about the activities of MFA and its partners for International Migrants Day please check our social media page: <https://www.facebook.com/migrantforuminasia>