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RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TRIPARTITE SEMINAR ON STRENGTHENING SOCIAL PROTECTION IN ASEAN

**17-18 NOVEMBER 2014
BANGKOK, THAILAND**

Preamble

The tripartite seminar on strengthening social protection in ASEAN was held on the 17 – 18 November 2014, Bangkok, Thailand. The representatives of the Senior Official Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWD), Senior Official Meeting on Labour (SLOM), employers' and workers' organizations of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam, together with representatives of the ASEAN Secretariat, ASEAN Confederation of Employers, ASEAN Trade Unions Council, ASEAN Social Security Association, civil society organizations and United Nations agencies, namely the International Labour Organization (ILO), World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF participated in the Seminar.

Recalling the collective commitment of the ASEAN Member States to build an ASEAN Community comprising of the ASEAN Economic Community, ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community and the ASEAN Political and Security Community by 2015,

Recalling the commitment of the ASEAN Member States to give effect to the ILO Recommendation on Social Protection Floors adopted in 2012 (No.202),

Guided by the principles embedded in the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection adopted at the 23rd ASEAN Summit, 2013, Brunei Darussalam and the ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendations, 2012 (No.202),

We, participants, urge the forthcoming ASEAN inter-sectoral consultation, 8-9 December 2014, Siem Reap, Cambodia, to consider and take into account the following recommendations in the development of the ASEAN Plan of Action for the implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection:

A. Extending social protection coverage

Area of Action 1. Support national policies, strategies and mechanisms to strengthen the implementation of social protection programme, as well as effective targeting systems to ensure social protection services would go to those most in need;

1. Develop or enhance national social protection policies and strategies in line with the ASEAN Declaration on Strengthening Social Protection and ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202), based on evidence-based research and empirical data, to be accessible and applicable to all beneficiaries;

2. Review national Early-Child Development policies and programmes focusing on the first 1,000 days of life in the ten ASEAN Member States and make recommendations for improving such policies and programmes;
3. Establish a policy or scheme for young graduates to undertake internships or apprenticeships in government agencies and private companies aimed at increasing their interest in some jobs available in the labour market;
4. Develop specific programmes that will link social protection with labour market inclusion i.e. vocational training for the vulnerable groups including occupational-based rehabilitation of persons with disabilities and skills development of older persons, supporting job creation with the provision of loans, credits and public work programmes;
5. Conduct legal reviews and assessments of migrant workers' coverage under existing social protection systems; based on this review, encourage reciprocity for protection of migrant workers and establish coordination standards;
6. Organize tripartite workshops on strategies for extending social protection coverage and access to basic services by migrant workers and their families in ASEAN;
7. Organize capacity building, training, and workshops for the stakeholders on issues related to the extension of social protection at national and regional levels.

Area of Action 2. Advocate strategies that promote the coverage, availability, comprehensiveness, quality, equitability, affordability and sustainability of various social protection services, including the expansion of social insurance to the informal sector; strengthening social assistance programmes for persons with disabilities, elderly, children and other vulnerable groups; greater access to social protection programmes and services, including vocational trainings as part of active labour market interventions and human resource development;

8. Include in the ASEAN Post-2015 vision the extension of social protection coverage;
9. Design and implement awareness raising and advocacy programmes for increasing social protection coverage; including through the involvement of workers' organizations and employers' organizations, and exploring possible partnership with the civil society to better reach informal and rural workers;
10. Provide information to people about their social protection rights and existing schemes through mass media, community-based organizations, and cooperatives;
11. Develop, expand or strengthen the social insurance for the informal sector, including old-age pension, when needed, after due research and studies on the sustainability and affordability of the schemes in consultation with social partners.

Action 7. Collectively accelerate the progress towards Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in all ASEAN Member States by strengthening capacity to assess and manage health systems to support UHC through sharing of experiences, information and experts;

12. Advocate for the achievement of Universal Health Coverage (UHC), and establish specific targets for and plan with adequate resources the progressive extension of universal social health protection coverage (by 2015);
13. Raise awareness among beneficiaries of social health protection schemes on their rights and entitlements (by 2015);
14. Develop capacities for managing health systems at all levels (from policy to planning and delivery of health care services and social protection benefits) (by 2020);

15. In view of high cost of medical care and treatment, levy be imposed on global medical companies.

B. Facilitating policy-oriented research, evidence-based assessment and monitoring framework

Area of Action 3. Promote results-based and evidence-based national assessments and benchmarking of social protection delivery services in ASEAN Member States that would contribute to the progressive implementation, effective monitoring and evaluation, as well as optimum impact of social protection;

16. Conduct evidence-based national assessments on social protection for the remaining ASEAN Member States using social dialogue between government, employers and workers within a specified time frame, in order to establish the baseline information on the current needs of the population, identify missing laws and policies, demand-side and supply-side issues, estimate the cost, assess the fiscal space, and determine possible allocations of budget resources to social protection;
17. Annually update information of the existing evidence-based national assessments on social protection that have already been conducted by the UN agencies and government, in consultation with social partners, for the seven Member States, and encourage the three remaining Member States to conduct assessment based-national dialogue on social protection;
18. From the national assessments, develop and biennially update an ASEAN report on social protection that will be used as common and synchronized baseline information to measure progress in extending social protection.

Area of Action 4. Explore and develop assessment tools and regional statistical indicators where appropriate to measure the impact of social protection to the holistic development of vulnerable groups for future planning towards available accurate baseline data collection;

19. Define, through the national inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms and with the social partners, national tailor-made monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework, that will include specific targets and indicators (e.g. coverage and target group, level of benefits, qualifying conditions, and cost estimate) for measuring the effective implementation of social protection policies and programmes;
20. Build, through the national inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms and with the social partners, a common assessment and monitoring framework, with targets and a timeframe, to regularly measure the progress in extending social protection;
21. Select core regional targets and statistical indicators which are common across all Member States to measure progress on social protection;
22. Compile and update biennially regional statistical database on social protection, prepare and disseminate monitoring and evaluation reports;
23. Conduct impact studies of social protection on, but not limited to, poverty, productivity, employment and economic growth;
24. ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) to monitor the outcomes of the child's development and family support programmes across the ASEAN Member States.

C. Ensuring good governance, effective coordination and delivery, efficient use of resources, and social dialogue mechanisms at national and regional levels

Area of Action 5. Allocate adequate financial resources for social protection in line with national targets and subject to the capacity of each Government;

25. Conduct analysis of the State's financial capacity and fiscal space in each of the ASEAN Member States to assess affordability of social protection floors and propose recommendations for extending social protection;
26. Estimate the needed budget by each agency for implementing and sustainability the social protection programmes through for instance a Social Protection Expenditure Review (SPER).

Area of Action 6. Strengthen the capacity of government officials, communities, service providers, and other stakeholders for better responsiveness, coordination and effectiveness of social protection and delivery services at regional, national and local levels;

27. Ensure availability of social protection-related services (i.e. health, education, employment services), with specific attention to remote and rural areas;
28. To optimize transparent and cost-efficient delivery of social protection services and benefits, adopt a single-window-service or one-stop-shop approach, including integrated information system and beneficiaries database;
29. For delivery of social protection benefits and services, build on and enhance services already provided by employers', workers' organizations and government agencies;
30. Consolidate public-private partnership with service providers who are also involved in delivering social security services;
31. Improve identification mechanisms for beneficiaries of social protection programmes (i.e. up-to-date databases, generation of individual identification number and/or social security numbers), in both formal and informal economy, irrespective of nationality (by 2025);
32. Conduct training and capacity building courses at national and regional levels for people who manage and implement social protection schemes (i.e. good governance) by developing a common training toolkit across schemes; adopting a training of trainers approach; adjusting the training content according to people's capacities and needs; phasing training courses in several sequences; evaluating and constantly improving training content;
33. Appoint competent team for the administration of the schemes; regularly train and inform members of the national social security tripartite board, where applicable;

Action 8: Build and strengthen the networking and partnerships within and among ASEAN Member States as well as with Dialogue Partners, UN Agencies, civil society, private sectors, development partners, and other stakeholders in supporting adequate resources and effective implementation of the commitments reflected in this Declaration.

34. Establish or strengthen institutional coordination mechanisms across ministries implementing social protection policies and programmes, for both policy formulation (national level) (by 2015) and programme implementation (local level) (by 2020);
35. Establish, institutionalize and reinforce social dialogue mechanisms at the national and regional level to better involve social partners in the design, implementation, monitoring

and evaluation of social protection programmes (for instance, national tripartite committee on social protection issues);

36. Promote the link of social protection and sustainable economy in the post-2015 ASEAN economic agenda;
37. Facilitate and organize South-South exchange on specific issues related to social protection between ASEAN Member States and beyond ASEAN when relevant;
38. Explore avenues for possible bilateral social security agreements that will facilitate relevant portability of social security rights of migrant workers across countries; those bilateral agreements will then develop into a regional agreement in the long-run;
39. Compile and regularly update a compendium and database of good national and regional practices of social protection (online facility) among ASEAN Member States and from other relevant countries;
40. Establish a platform and mechanism at the ASEAN level to share information and good practices among ASEAN Member States receiving technical assistance from ILO, other international organizations, and bilateral aid;
41. Set up an ASEAN committee to promote the rights and social protection of older people.
42. Increase technical cooperation, exchange of expertise and information-sharing between ASEAN Member States, ILO, the ASEAN Social Security Association (ASSA), social partners and other relevant international organizations.

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Canada



Tripartite Seminar on Strengthening Social Protection in ASEAN

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