



Global Action Programme on Migrant Domestic Workers and their Families

Report on the Steering Committee Meeting ILO HQ, 24 October 2014

1. Meeting background and objectives

1.1 Meeting background

The purpose of the Steering Committee is to provide guidance and orientation to the work of the project management team in order to ensure the successful implementation of the Project. Considering that the Project combines global advocacy, country-based interventions and includes a research component, the establishment of the Steering Committee has proven to be an effective strategy for plan implementation. Through discussion of the main achievements and challenges, the Steering Committee gives guidance on further execution of the action plan and coordination the projects activities. Members of the Steering Committee are representing Project's partners, managing team and funding institution. (See Members of the Steering Committee and List of participants in the Annex 1).

1.2 Meeting objectives

The main objective of the Steering Committee is to reach a consensus through formal discussion in order to ensure the effective implementation of the Project and its long-term sustainability. During the Second meeting the emphasis was made on evaluation of achievements in each of the migration corridors and discussion of the milestones for the upcoming year.

The specific objectives of this meeting were (See the Terms of Reference and Agenda of the meeting in the Annexes 2 and 4):

- to discuss the main achievements, challenges, opportunities and partnerships established;
- to review and provide policy guidance for activities aimed at promoting decent work for migrant domestic workers;
- to advise on priority areas in each corridor;
- to agree on further implementation strategies;
- to review and evaluate the activities of the Project in each corridor;

- to ensure that the synergies with other parallel initiatives of related organizations in the target corridors are created and to advise on their further amplification;
- to discuss the integration of the Project in ILO Domestic Workers strategy and Forced Labour combat strategy;
- to agree on the milestones for the next 12 months;
- to discuss and approve the outline of the Global Report on Migrant Domestic Workers’;
- to ensure the Project’s adoption of an integrated approach with other similar activities taking place in the target migration corridors, funded by the EU and other donors and implemented by the partner agencies or associates.

2. Discussed agenda items:

2.1 Opening remarks

Michelle Leighton, Chief of ILO Labour Migration Branch opened the meeting highlighting the broader set of ILO priorities where the project fits in, among them the Fair Migration ILO agenda, Domestic Workers and Combat to Forced Labour strategies. Being also a key issue for different stakeholders, it was highlighted in high level meetings such as the High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development in October 2013 and during ILO’s Presidency of the GMG during 2014. She underlined the contribution of the Global Action Programme on Migrant Domestic Workers during the last 12 months to bring decent work to MDWs. The project has provided spaces for social dialogue agreements have been reached to improve MDWs working conditions. It is also testing new methodologies to address relevant issues such as skills recognition and policy coherence in such areas as social security and pension rights portability. Legislative change in line with C189 has also been supported with promising results. Ms Leighton highlighted the importance of EU contribution to advance in such relevant areas.

Inês Maximo-Pestaña, European Union representative, addressed the group confirming the European Commission’s priority to support migrant domestic workers rights and the inclusion of migration in the UN post 2015 agenda. Ms Maximo-Pestaña emphasized the necessity to keep promoting Convention 189 and informed that another EC funded project on MDWs implemented by International Red Cross Federation has just started, stressing the importance of creating synergies between the two projects. She highlighted the relevance of this project’s outcomes, which inputs will be taken for the future establishment of a flagship program on migrant domestic workers by the European Commission.

2.2 Overview of the main achievements, challenges, opportunities and partnerships established in the last 12 months

Maria Elena Valenzuela, CTA of the Project, has set an aim to discuss migration flagship report and achievements of the main three components of the GAP, giving an overview of the main activities conducted (See the List of conducted activities in the Annex 5):

- The high-level events were organized in NY, Stockholm and Geneva to promote global level visibility on decent work for MDWs; alliance and synergies with associates, civil society and other projects were promoted;
- Two regional knowledge sharing forums on Domestic Workers, one in Africa and another in Latin America, have identified MDWs as a key issue in the regions' discussion on migration;
- On the national level the main achievement was the ratification of C189 by 3 out of 10 Programme countries; another important change is incorporation of Lesotho into the project owing to strong support of South Africa.

Ms Valenzuela has also highlighted a valuable contribution to the process of strengthening Domestic Workers' organizations and Trade Unions, mentioning among the main achievements the establishment of the DW founding committee in Lebanon with a perspective of union creation, conducting bi-national Argentina-Paraguay, tri-national South Africa-Zimbabwe-Lesotho meetings as well as national policy consultation meetings in the target countries. The concept notes for countries to get political endorsement from stakeholders have been prepared, informational passports are being finalized and ToRs for the baseline studies have been approved and adapted to the situation in each migration corridor in order to strengthen the side of policy making. Validation workshops are being prepared for recommendations and participation of stakeholders aiming at promotion of national capacity and knowledge development. The third component of the Project contains the pilot activities, the main challenge of which is a different level of domestic workers' organization.

2.3 Block 1: Research and practical knowledge

Maria Gallotti, Labour Migration Specialist, MIGRANT, presented the main achievements under Objective 1 of the Project "To enhance research and practical knowledge on migration and trafficking in domestic work across global care chains" (See PPT presentation in the Annex 7).

Ms Gallotti emphasized the project intention to produce research relevant for policy making and for this purpose, standard baseline country profile terms of reference were prepared and studies in all ten countries are underway or have been finished.

In addition to the baseline studies, quantitative research has also started in the four selected countries and thematic research on selected issues has started to be conducted. As for regional desk review, terms of reference were developed and the project is in the process of identifying potential consultants.

The main challenges identified to reach outputs of this component are: unstable political situation in selected countries has prevented consultations and public events; difficulties to obtain information and quality control of consultancies that have produced delays regarding the original work plan, among others.

Follow-up discussion

Sarah Gammage, UN Women, highlighted the importance of adding a module on abroad labour migration to LFS, a practice that should be replicated. She also emphasized the need to collect information on employers, as the project is also doing. Ms Gammage also stressed the need to incorporate care policies and transactions costs in the analysis.

Marieke Koning, ITUC, asked if the gender dimension in the Kafala system would be analysed, since it has concrete implications on MDWs life, due to the fact that they live in their employer's houses.

Inês Maximo-Pestaña, EU, asked if there were plans to conduct a comparative analysis of country profiles. (Comparative analysis will be conducted and country reports will provide inputs for the Global Report)

2.4 Block 2: Knowledge sharing and advocacy in collaboration with workers' movements

Claire Hobden, technical specialist, INWORK, provided a brief overview of the main achievements of the Objective 2 of the Project "To enhance the capacities of relevant organizations and practitioners to advocate for MDWs access to decent work and human rights and increase the recognition of their role in economic and social development" (See PPT presentation in the Annex 8).

Ms Hobden informed about main activities conducted in the framework of ITUC 12+12 campaign as well as the contribution of the project to the founding Congress of the IDWF and to the establishment of joint -trade unions-domestic workers organizations- action plans in selected countries.

Elizabeth Tang, IDWF, provided an overview of the IDWF Knowledge Sharing Platform/Community of Practice initiative (KSP/CoP), being developed with the contribution of the Project (cost-shared with other ILO projects and different donors). Regional workshops have been conducted in Asia, Africa and Latin America (the latter jointly organized with the ITUC) and the participation of 134 domestic workers and trade unions representatives. The KSP/CoP aims at supporting DWs organizations' strategies and promoting DWs organizing efforts. In Africa it was agreed to create a database on wages collecting information from DWs along all countries. Their goal is to reach 1,000 DWs by the end of 2014. Launching of the KSP/CoP is planned on "Human Rights Day", December 10.

Ms Tang also identified several challenges, among them lack of access to internet and communication barriers due to different languages.

Carolina Hernández, OHCHR, emphasized the importance of including MDWs with an irregular status as a target group, as it is a group with limited or zero access to essential services in their host countries. The OHCHR is preparing under the auspices of the Project the publication of a study and a short video on MDWs in irregular situation. A global seminar on MDWs in irregular situation will be conducted in April 2015.

Follow-up discussion

Inês Maximo-Pestaña, EU, asked about the criteria to select the countries where the film is being shot (Zurich, New York and Kuala Lumpur). Ms Hernández informed that originally the third city was Delhi and it was changed to Kuala Lumpur due to low response of the target interviewees. Plans to shoot in Lebanon were cancelled due to high insurance costs.

Sarah Gammage, UN Women, asked about the technological platform the IDWF is using to create the KSP/CoP. Elizabeth Tang gave a brief explanation about their plans to set an electronic platform to create a space of communication and exchange among domestic workers, also open to DWs rights advocates and practitioners. The platform is in a pilot test phase, aimed at measuring how effective and practical it is for DWs. Practical recommendations will be given by the end of the year, feedback from affiliates has been already positive.

Marieke Koning, ITUC, reinforced the importance to use new ITs and to learn from successful experiences. As an example she mentioned the facebook page of SINTRADOP President (domestic workers union) and she also informed about the ITUC's initiative to set up in the coming future an online *Trip advisory* for migrants.

Leanne Melnyk, SAP/FL, informed about different initiatives to prevent forced labour using cell phones and gave an example of a cell company in Jordan promoting among employers of DWs a package that allows international calls while restricting local ones.

2.5 Block 3: Pilot interventions at country level

Leanne Melnyk, Technical Specialist, SAP/FL, gave an overview of the achievements under Objective 3 “To pilot test national capacity building approaches to protect, support and empower migrant domestic workers at all stages of the migration cycle”, that covers three of the five corridors (See PPT presentation in the Annex 9).

Ms Melnyk identified two main areas of work under this component, the first targeting mainly policy makers and employers of DWs and the second focusing on workers organizations and practitioners. She stressed that, as a result of the consultation process with stakeholders at national level and with ITUC and IDWF at regional and global level, different focuses were prioritized in each corridor, while facilitating social dialogue was a common goal. In Nepal and the corridor Paraguay-Argentina –however facing a very different reality– the emphasis was made on workers' skills trainings. In the first case a pre-departure training curriculum was developed and in the second one authorities from both countries have started a dialogue in order to reach the recognition of skills. In Paraguay and Malaysia a priority has been set on law change, the former to adapt national legislation to the C189 (ratified by Paraguay) and the latter to prepare a draft bill on DW. In Lebanon the priority has been given to support the founding Committee of the Domestic Workers (DWC) for the creation of the Domestic Workers Union, to be affiliated to the National Federation of Employees and Workers in Lebanon (FENASOL).

Marieke Koning, ITUC, informed about the ITUC campaign 12+12 and highlighted the potential of the project to give more visibility to MDWs issues through rights-based approach research and tools development. She also underlined the relevance of pilot activities that can be eventually multiplied, giving as examples the impact in the region that can have the creation of the DWs union in Lebanon and the possibility of creating a DWs union in Lesotho, as a result of the tripartite workers meeting recently held in South Africa. She also stressed the importance of framing advocacy activities in the global debate of the care economy and the right of DWs and MDWs to organize and have unions.

Follow-up discussion

Elizabeth Tang, IDWF, raised the issue of women's leadership and the need to develop specific measures and tools to help them to face different forms of gender discrimination and barriers in such positions. *Marieke Koning* informed about the ITUC's global project on Women in Leadership and *Maria Elena Valenzuela* informed about the contribution the project is planning to make through the development of tools targeting MDWs leadership.

Inês Maximo-Pestaña, EU, raised the issue of men's engagement in the debate of the care economy and domestic work. *Marieke Koning* said that men have started to participate in this debate and that the project provides an opportunity to do it.

2.6 Integration of the Project in ILO Domestic Workers strategy and Forced Labour combat strategy

Philippe Marcadent, Chief, INWORK branch, presented the ILO strategy for making decent work for MDWs, discussed by the Governing Body in November 2011, highlighting that the strategy intends to serve as a unifying framework for coherent and integrated approaches to make decent work a reality for domestic workers worldwide, envisaging the support to countries in order to take measures aimed at improving the protection and working conditions of domestic workers. He stressed that the C189 provides a specific framework on domestic work permitting interventions that target specific groups, like migrants or child domestic workers, mobilizing competences in different areas, allowing simultaneous involvement of various technical departments and the field. He stated that it is within this wider framework the project is located.

Mr Marcadent underlined also the need to strengthen social dialogue and knowledge development and recognized an increasing demand for support. Finally, referring to the direct relation of informality and MDWs, he mentioned the need for corresponding reforms in order to formalize the economy.

Leanne Melnyk, SAP/FL, presented the ILO strategy to combat forced labour, referring to the Forced Labour Protocol and Resolution of 2011 International Labour Conference. She highlighted the importance of international standards being updated to modern era, e.g. trafficking and exploitation being modern realities. Even though adopted in 1930, the Protocol is still relevant to tackle prevention, access to remedy and protection issues.

Having defined domestic work as a structural area to focus at the ILO, Ms Melnyk provided examples on domestic servitude in 2012 and on risks and violations of rights MDWs face in several countries. The strategy has established several priority areas, among them the regulation of recruitment and placement agencies and promotion of the Fair Recruitment initiative. On the other hand, awareness rising and pre-departure training is another focus area in order to reach out workers before they leave their country of origin and even at crucial stages before they take the decision to migrate.

Follow-up discussion

Sarah Gammage, UN Women, asked about the lessons learned and availability of the ILO tools on DWs. She was told that a wide range of tools and research reports could be found on the ILO webpage. She also stressed the UN Women's interest to collaborate in the elaboration of a cell phone application to promote MDWs rights. The need to confront barriers MDWs face in some countries to keep their cell phones was also raised.

Marieke Koning, ITUC, stated the best way to reach the most vulnerable is 'person to person', especially if groups are illiterate, however she welcomed the initiative to create a phone application for MDWs. On another note, Ms Koning stated that the government needs to be more proactive in providing information in order to enforce rights. *Philippe Marcadent*, INWORK, in support of the previous statement proposed the mobilization of resources, such as labour inspectors, in order to link social security with policy implementation using incentive approach.

In addition to the previous suggestions, *Maria Elena Valenzuela* underlined the necessity to document the good practices, bearing in mind the differences of the countries' context.

2.7 The way forward: milestones for the next 12 months

Maria Elena Valenzuela, CTA, presented the milestones for the next 12 month under the three main objectives of the project (See PPT presentation and List of planned activities in the Annexes 10 and 6):

Objective 1 "To enhance research and practical knowledge on migration and trafficking in domestic work across global care chains":

- Eleven baseline country reports will be published and endorsed by stakeholders in the 1st semester of 2015;
- Three quantitative studies (Lebanon, Zimbabwe and South Africa) to be finished by the 2nd quarter of 2015; The SC was requested to decide on the incorporation of a Migration Module to the LFS in Nepal, whose field work will be conducted along 2015;
- Regional desk reviews and thematic studies to be conducted (background for the Global report);

- 1st draft of the Global Report to be prepared by September 2015 (launching of the report will not meet deadline established in the project Document);

Objective 2 “To enhance the capacities of relevant organizations and practitioners to advocate for MDWs access to decent work and human rights and increase the recognition of their role in economic and social development”:

- Support to the ITUC Campaign 12+12 will be provided;
- Capacity of relevant organizations and practitioners are expected to be strengthened and trainings on capacity building are to be finished;
- Community of Practice of the IDWF will be working as a learning process reaching DWs and MDWs;
- Global Conference on irregular migration organized by the OHCHR is expected to be held in March 2015;
- Bi-national workshops to share research findings, collect good practices and to develop action plans and policy recommendations to be conducted; the emphasis will be made on helping workers to build their own strategies to reach MDWs.

Objective 3 “To pilot test national capacity building approaches to protect, support and empower migrant domestic workers at all stages of the migration cycle”;

- Guidelines/codes of conduct addressed to employers to be elaborated (Lebanon and Malaysia, possibility to develop cell phone application);
- ToT on identification and prosecution of forced labour and protection of victims in a synergy with the Special Programme on Forced Labour to be conducted;
- Training workshops to be organized with private and public employment agencies;
- Consultations with TUs and Domestic Workers’ organizations to be held after they clearly define their priorities and action plans;
- Good practices on organizational process as well as all the initiatives undertaken are to be identified and documented;
- Services provided to MDWs enhanced and improved;
- Close collaboration with the project of the IFRC to be established.

Ms Valenzuela pointed out that there is a delay regarding the implementation plan established in the Project Document mainly due to issues out of the control of the project (such as political events in some countries) and also due to the complex character of a multi-partner initiative that requires consultation and at the same time provides sustainability to action.

She also underlined that the project will seek collaboration and synergies avoiding any duplication of current initiatives.

Follow-up discussion

Marieke Koning, ITUC, highlighted the importance of concentrating activities and resources in few countries, in order to test methodologies and reach measurable results.

Ms Koning has expressed her strong support to the initiative with recruitment agencies, especially in the context of decent wage for MDWs.

Inês Maximo-Pestaña, EU, underlined the importance of exploring the whole process of recruitment and placement under employment agencies, a priority issue also shared by the other members of the Committee. She also raised the issue of model legislation, to be adapted to regional or national context, and model contracts as a support tool. *Sarah Gammage* and *Marieke Koning* shared their concern of model contracts being rather formal and frequently abused agreements. Even more, they said that incremental initiatives to formalize though model contracts can be detrimental to reach better legislation. *Maria Gallotti* draw a conclusion suggesting if model contract is attached to the bilateral agreement, it is great as a tool to exchange the existing legislation, but not to replace it.

2.8 Knowledge development and research agenda

Maria Elena Valenzuela, CTA, presented for consultation the outline of the Global Report on Migrant Domestic Workers adopted by the Research Advisory Board. The outline was approved by the Steering Committee (See Outline of the Global Report in the Annex 3).

Sarah Gammage, UN Women, provided a brief overview of the key issues and existing synergies, giving an example of the EC funded project on *Promoting and protecting the rights of women migrants in Moldova, Philippines and Mexico*. The project intends to strengthen national and international human rights mechanism and accountability; it will also contribute towards strengthening migrant women's organizations and in addressing social issues as a result of women's migration. The main challenge related to the research agenda was identified as the diversity of countries and lack of common methodological framework.

Follow-up discussion

All members of the Steering Committee expressed their interest to establish a mechanism to exchange information: to provide information on research being conducted that might be useful for the project and to receive draft research reports produced by the project for the feedback. It was agreed that with the help of the interns collaborating with the project a data base covering tools, studies and other relevant information will be created and made available through the web page.

2.9 Final remarks

Manuela Tomei, Director of Conditions of Work and Equality Department, restated that the project has interesting developments and a clear sense of direction as well as an important challenge to meet: to what extent the project will be able to jump from pilot initiatives to a real, sustainable and long term change.

Ms Tomei highlighted the contribution of the project to mainstream the ILO Decent Work agenda, connecting the global debate with real people and real situations. The project tackles priority issues for the ILO, areas of critical importance such as unacceptable forms of work and the Fair Migration agenda. It has been instrumental in contributing to the protocol on

forced labour and it is also closely connected to the priority issue of the 100th ILO anniversary Women at Work initiative: the care economy.

The project has been trying an innovative modus operandi that if proven successful will be a model for future initiatives. The project has the challenge to organize global and local partners and agencies, and at the same time to coordinate the work with several ILO technical departments and field offices and reach results. The documentation of this process is highly necessary.

Ms Tomei also said that the project demands ourselves to review our practices regarding the way we communicate and disseminate knowledge as well as the way to democratize knowledge. There is a need to create effective ways to measure the impact of policies and law reforms, and to assess the impact of policies at different stages of maturity. In this framework, an important challenge is to help policy makers to prioritize.

Ms Tomei finally thanked all members of the Committee for their strong support and wished Ms Máximo Pestaña success in her new post.

Annexes

1. List of participants
2. Steering Committee Terms of Reference
3. Outline of the Global Report on Migrant Domestic Workers
4. Agenda of the meeting
5. List of main activities conducted (September 2013-September 2014)
6. List of planned activities (October-December 2014)
7. PPT presentation of the Block 1
8. PPT presentation of the Block 2
9. PPT presentation of the Block 3
10. PPT presentation of the milestones for the next 12 months



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