



No. 52101/ 606

PERMANENT MISSION OF THAILAND
5, Rue Gustave-Moynier
1202 GENEVA

4 September B.E. 2558 (2015)

Madam,

I have the honour to inform you that on 27-28 August 2015, the Royal Thai Government hosted the Regional Workshop on Migrants' Health, in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The concept paper and programme of the meeting are enclosed hereto.

The objective of the meeting was to take stock of developments and identify challenges in the area of migrants' health among participating countries, especially on policies, mechanisms and services available for migrants, as well as to raise awareness and mutual understanding of the issue among GFMD members in the region and to provide a forum for exchange of experiences and best practices, including an effective framework to ensure access to health care and sustainable financing of migrants' health system.

In this connection, I have the further honour to transmit herewith the Chair's Summary of the said meeting and to kindly request the Turkish chair of the GFMD to share the above-mentioned outcome document with all GFMD members.

Accept, Madam, the assurances of my high consideration.

(Thani Thongphakdi)

Ambassador and Permanent Representative

Ms. Esen Altuğ,
Deputy Director General for Migration, Asylum and Visa,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey,
ANKARA.

Concept Paper
Regional Workshop on Migrants' Health
27 - 28 August 2015, Bangkok and Samut Sakhon Province, Thailand

Background

1. In 2008, the World Health Assembly (WHA) adopted the resolution on migrants' health. Since then, the discussion of migrants' health has mainly focused on migration management or rights of migrants, including the perspective of social and economic rights. With over 214 million migrants globally today, addressing the needs for health care of all migrants is a global challenge. Many of the discussions on this topic have tended towards migrants who need immediate protection, while other groups at risk, especially irregular migrant workers, women and girls, remain vulnerable due to inaccessibility to health services. This calls for a more holistic and inclusive health system.

2. A survey of countries offering Universal Health Coverage, many of which are developing countries, shows that the success of providing universal access to health services lies not with the level of economic development, but with efficient and sustainable management of financial resources. Financial burden and inadequacy of funds are not insurmountable challenges in providing migrant-sensitive health system.

3. Migrants are agents of change who contribute to the socio-economic development of both origin and destination countries. Minimizing migrants' vulnerability can also safeguard recipient societies from various health and related social and economic problems. Therefore, providing migrant-inclusive health care is a long-term investment for comprehensive growth at both ends. This requires not only political will but also a long term commitment from all stakeholders.

4. It is time to start the discussion on migrants' health as a standalone issue to explore overall improvement in providing healthcare for migrants and also identify challenges. There is a need to address the gap between migration management policy and existing healthcare system. Ensuring migrants' access to health care as well as sustainable financing of the system are key factors for a successful migrants' health policy and constitute a core component of post-2015 development agenda.

Objectives

1. To take stock of developments and identify challenges in the area of migrants' health among participating countries, especially on policies, mechanisms and services available for migrants.

2. To raise awareness and mutual understanding of the issue among GFMD members in the region and to provide forum for exchange of experiences and best practices, including effective framework to ensure access to health care and sustainable financing of migrants' health system.

3. To contribute to the discussion of protection of the rights of migrants at the 8th GFMD (14 - 16 October 2015 in Istanbul, Turkey).

Expected Outcomes

Chair's summary

Types of Activity

Day 1: Expert panel discussion (multi-stakeholder approach) and group discussion

Day 2: Site Visit to hospital and public healthcare facility in an area with a high density of migrant workers

Date and Venue

Thursday 27 August 2015: Sukosol Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand

Friday 28 August 2015: Samut Sakhon Province, Thailand

Participants

60 - 80 participants responsible for national health policy and migration management policy from GFMD member countries in the Asia-Pacific region and Human Security Network member countries, as well as from civil society, academia, and relevant international organisations.

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Draft Programme
Regional Workshop on Migrants' Health
27 - 28 August 2015
Bangkok and Samut Sakhon Province, Thailand

Time	Agenda		
Thursday, 27 August 2015 Meeting Venue: The Sukosol Hotel, Bangkok			
09.00 - 09.20	Opening - Introduction by Ms. Pornprapai Ganjanarintr, Director General, Department of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand - Opening Remarks by Mr. Piriya Khempon, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Acting Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand		
09.20 - 09.30	Keynote Speech on "Investing in Health of Migrants: Benefits of an Inclusive Health System" - Dr. Suriya Wongkongkathep, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Public Health of Thailand (MOPH)		
Group Photo			
09.30 - 10.00	Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perspectives from a non-state benefactor and migrant beneficiaries of the migrants' health system in Thailand - Mr. Promboon Panitchpakdi, Secretary General, Raks Thai Foundation - Ms. Mon Mon, Representative of migrant workers in Thailand 		
10.00 - 10.15	Coffee Break		
10.15 - 12.00	Panel Discussion on "Challenges in Improving Migrants' Health at the Global and Regional Levels" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Examine current states, challenges, and aspired models in providing inclusive health services for migrants at the global and regional levels - <u>Panelists</u> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dr. Davide Mosca, Director, Migration Health Department, International Organization for Migration (IOM) - Mr. Mohammad Harun Al Rashid, Regional Coordinator, CARAM Asia Berhad - Dr. Nima Asgari, Acting World Health Organization Representative to Thailand - Ms. Jintana Sriwongsa, Senior Officer, Health and Communicable Diseases Division, ASEAN Secretariat - <u>Moderator</u>: Dr. Rabab Fatima, Regional Coordinator and Advisor for South and South West Asia, IOM 		
12.00 - 13.00	Lunch		
13.00 - 14.30	Panel Discussion on "Policy Design and Practices on Migrant's Health" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Compare migrants' health policies and practices of sending and receiving countries from different regions around the world to draw on good practices - <u>Discussants</u> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dr. Joel Hernandez Buenaventura, Chief Health Program Officer, Department of Health of the Philippines - Dr. Hettiarachchige Suhashini Rasanja Petra De Silva, Director Organization Development, Ministry of Health of Sri Lanka - Mr. Viktor Vavricka, Chargé d'Affaires, Embassy of Switzerland in Thailand - Mr. Joaquin Rubio, Technical Advisor, Ministry of Health of Spain - <u>Moderator</u>: Mr. Kerkpan Roekchamnonng, Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva 		
14.30 - 14.45	Coffee Break		
14.45 - 16.15	Group Discussions		
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> Group 1: Access to an Inclusive Health System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explore ways to improve access for migrants to health services in different national contexts - <u>Moderator</u>: Dr. Supakit Sirilak, Senior Adviser (Preventive Medicine), MOPH </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> Group 2: Financing a Sustainable Migrant Health System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explore ways to mobilise funds ▪ Exchange fund management strategies to finance a sustainable system to ensure long-term migrants' access to healthcare - <u>Moderator</u>: Assistant Prof. Chalermopol Chamchan, Assistant Professor, Institute for Population and Social Research, Mahidol University </td> </tr> </table>	Group 1: Access to an Inclusive Health System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explore ways to improve access for migrants to health services in different national contexts - <u>Moderator</u>: Dr. Supakit Sirilak, Senior Adviser (Preventive Medicine), MOPH 	Group 2: Financing a Sustainable Migrant Health System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explore ways to mobilise funds ▪ Exchange fund management strategies to finance a sustainable system to ensure long-term migrants' access to healthcare - <u>Moderator</u>: Assistant Prof. Chalermopol Chamchan, Assistant Professor, Institute for Population and Social Research, Mahidol University
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16.15 - 16.45	Coffee Break
16.45 - 17.15	Report of Group Discussions - Representative from Group 1 - Representative from Group 2 Conclusion and Closing
19.00	Dinner hosted by Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the Sukosol Hotel
Friday 28 August 2015: Site Visit Samut Sakhon Province	
08.00 - 09.30	Depart the Sukosol Hotel for Samut Sakhon Province
09.30 - 12.30	Visit Samut Sakhon Hospital - Briefing by Hospital's Director / Operational team - Discussions with representatives from local NGOs and private sector - Meeting with Migrant Health Workers and Volunteers - Site Visit
12.30 - 14.00	Lunch
14.00	Depart for Bangkok

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Chair's Summary
Regional Workshop on Migrants' Health
27th August 2015, Bangkok, Thailand

The Regional Workshop on Migrants' Health was held on 27th August 2015, in Bangkok, Thailand, followed by a study visit to Samut Sakhon Province on 28th August 2015. The meeting was jointly organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Public Health of Thailand, in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The workshop successfully served as an important opportunity for the various stakeholders from 23 countries from Asia, Europe, Americas, and Australia, including international development partners and civil societies to raise and address salient issues related to migration and their health challenges.

The objective of this workshop is to share experiences and good practices in exploring ways to strengthen access to and ensure sustainable and inclusive health services for migrants. The Workshop began with introductory remarks by Mrs. Kanchana Patarachoke, Deputy Director General, Department of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, and was officially opened by Mr. Piriya Khempon, Acting Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, followed by a keynote speech by Dr. Suriya Wongkongkathep, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Public Health of Thailand, reiterating the significance of migrant health protection. Some examples from Thailand, which extends the universal health coverage to migrants and dependants, were noted.

Participants heard from Mr. Promboon Panitchpakdi, Raks Thai foundation, about the role of non state actors in filling the gaps in migrant health services. Then, Ms. Mon Mon, a migrant worker in Thailand, shared the experience of her family with Thai health care system.

The first panel discussion was moderated by Dr. Rabab Fatima from IOM. Panelists offered insights into the regional and global trends and challenges of migrants' health situation while stressing the urgency for collective and sustainable solutions to the problem. In detail, Dr. Davide Mosca from IOM highlighted the seriousness and urgency of migrant health in the health system arena, requiring a strong commitment from all partners. Mr. Mohammad Harun Al Rashid from CARAM Asia Berhad also reiterated the gaps between policy formulation and implementation. Ms. Jintana Sriwongsa from the ASEAN secretariat pinpointed the progress within ASEAN to address migrant health issues and noted that the vast diversity among ASEAN member states can be both challenges and opportunities. Dr. Nima Asgari from the World Health Organization (WHO) presented experiences and lessons learnt from managing migrant health insurance in certain member states in ASEAN, as well as the cooperation among WHO, ASEAN member states and other partners.

The second panel discussion was moderated by Ambassador Krerkpan Roekchamnon from the Permanent Mission of Thailand in Geneva. Discussants elaborated on policy designs and practices of

both sending and receiving countries. Some key messages were discussed, for instance; how the Sri Lankan government incorporated migrant health issues into its national political agenda; good practices from the Philippines that protect health benefits of overseas Filipino migrants; how the Spanish government successfully provided essential health care for undocumented migrants under certain conditions; and how the Swiss government engages the private sector to take part in providing health insurances for migrants regardless of their immigration status.

After that participants had an opportunity to engage in two group discussions, which explored in more detail the issues of (1) access to inclusive health services and (2) sustainable financing of health system for migrants.

During the entire workshop, participants actively discussed possible ways forward to promote health and well being of migrants and their dependants throughout the migration path as follows:

THE WAY FORWARD

At the national level:

1. Strongly encourage mainstreaming migrant health into national and sectoral policies in order to promote better coherence amongst various policies that may affect migrants' health and their ability to access services;
2. Increase participation of relevant domestic and international agencies, civil society, private sector, migrants, as well as other beneficiaries of migration, in the policy formulation and implementation, which aim to protect health and well being of migrants and their dependents, through inclusive policies, national strategies and action plans;
3. Strengthen mechanisms and collaboration amongst various government agencies that protect the right to health of both inflow and outflow migrants, which include the development of national strategies and action plans with sufficient budget and supportive measures, as well as identifying a national focal point to facilitate the implementation of the policies;
4. Encourage the provision of medical assessments at both pre-departure and upon arrival while ensuring compliance with international standards with proper consideration to confidentiality and counseling;
5. Provide health education for migrants and dependants through relevant government and non-government agencies to ensure the proper implementation of public health measures;
6. Promote inclusive health coverage for migrants and dependants with acceptable standard of care and essential benefit packages at all levels of care;
7. Develop a national standard within the primary health care system that includes migrant sensitive services to address cultural and language barriers;
8. Promote better understanding of migrant health concerns, including barriers to accessing health services throughout the migration path and migration related health problems, amongst all stakeholders;

9. Introduce an effective monitoring system which adequately and accurately records important migrant profiles, while ensuring confidentiality and proper use of the data;
10. Explore ways to assist irregular migrants and dependants to enter the regularization mechanism;

At the bilateral, regional, and international levels:

11. Encourage bilateral agreements that ensure social protection for migrants and portability of health insurance throughout the entire migration path;
12. Promote multi-sectoral collaboration between health and non-health networks to establish inclusive health policies for migrants;
13. Encourage legal channels of migration and ensure that health of migrants and their dependants are protected through health insurance schemes that provide essential benefit packages without causing catastrophic expenditure on migrants and their dependants;
14. Maximize the use of existing regional mechanisms to address migrant health issues in a collaborative manner;
15. Explore regional information-sharing mechanisms that can be accessed by member states in order to identify good practices of health services for migrants and their dependants;
16. Support multi-country partnerships to facilitate uninterrupted management for conditions necessitating long-term/continuing treatment; and
17. Encourage the inclusion of health of migrants in the broader international agenda, inter alia, at the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), under the theme "Strengthening Partnerships: Human Mobility for Sustainable Development" in Istanbul in October 2015, and maintain the momentum throughout the 2016 GFMD under the theme, "Migration that Works for Sustainable Development for All".

CONCLUSION

The participants expressed their appreciation to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, the Ministry of Public Health of Thailand, and IOM for taking the key initiative to organize the Regional Workshop on Migrants' Health, which served as a platform for information and experience sharing. Outputs of this workshop will contribute to the discussion of the upcoming 8th GFMD. Of note is that regular dialogues are needed to promote better understanding and strengthen collaboration on migrant health issues.