

**Press Release**  
**Department of Labor and Employment**  
**Bureau of Working Conditions**  
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## **RESPONDING TO HIV AND AIDS IN MIGRATION, THE ASEAN WAY**

“No stone was left unturned” in the preparation for ASEAN HIV and AIDS in the Workplace and Migration Forum 2018 held last November 8-9, 2018 at Diamond Hotel, Manila. The forum was hosted by the DOLE through the Bureau of Working Conditions with funding support from the Government of Japan through the ASEAN-Japan Fund for Building Social Safety Nets.

The event gathered technical experts from the eight out of the ten ASEAN member states (AMS), namely, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, People’s Democratic Republic of Lao, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines and Thailand. Regrettably, Singapore and Vietnam failed to send their respective representatives to the meeting.

The forum identified some gaps and commonalities in the ASEAN country’s practices on how they handle HIV and AIDS of migrant workers. The meeting’s objective was to review the current practices on HIV and AIDS in migration, recruitment policies and mandatory testing in the workplaces of AMS and identify concrete steps the Region can undertake to enhance cooperation and collaboration of ASEAN member states to strengthen their capacities in addressing HIV and AIDS issues in migration.

The following were the meeting recommendations made by the group that will be transmitted to the Senior Labour Officials Meeting, Senior Officials Meeting on Health and Development and other relevant ASEAN sectoral bodies for consideration:

1. Mainstream and expand the protection of rights of migrant workers living with HIV and AIDS in the Action Plan [2018-2025] to implement the ASEAN Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers;
2. Strengthen the individual national health and labor policies of AMS to ensure protection of basic human rights addressing migrant workers’ access to health and HIV and AIDS related services;
3. Conduct research on HIV and AIDS related policies, programs and services for migrant workers in the AMS including a situational analysis, inventory of services in the sending and receiving country and financing of such services;
4. Document and provide a platform for sharing of good practices on HIV and AIDS and migration in the workplace;

5. Strengthen intersectoral collaboration within AMS involving relevant agencies and other partners involved in addressing HIV and AIDS related issues of migrant workers;
6. Facilitate interministerial collaboration among AMS to ensure continuity of HIV and AIDS care from one AMS to another;
7. Develop an ASEAN guidelines on the management, notification and referral systems of migrant workers living with HIV and AIDS to ensure access and continuity of care throughout the migration cycle; and
8. Capacitate healthcare providers to be culturally sensitive in handling HIV and AIDS among migrant workers.

The forum was a picture of unity amidst diversity as it sought to move beyond mere tolerance of other ethnic, cultural and religious divisions as it pursued to promote the idea that each country plays a valid contribution in strengthening the ASEAN response on HIV and AIDS in migration.

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