

# Human Rights Advocacy and Migrant Workers in the Middle-East

Report on  
Capacity  
Building  
Program

Qatar, November  
2013

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Migrant Forum Asia (MFA)  
Diplomacy Training Program (DTP)  
*Hosted by the National Human Rights Committee - Qatar*

10-14 November, 2013



## 1. Summary

This is a report of a special capacity building program hosted by the National Human Rights Committee of Qatar (NHRC), focussed on promoting and protecting the rights of migrant workers in the states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Middle East and North Africa. The report provides background to the program and a description of its content, and concludes with some reflections for future directions for capacity building work.

This was the second capacity building program on the rights of migrant workers organised in Qatar by the Diplomacy Training Program (DTP) and Migrant Forum Asia (MFA) and hosted by NHRC. The program brought together representatives of civil society and national human rights institutions (NHRIs) as well as government officials. Over 40 participants came from Asia (countries of origin for migrant workers) and the Middle East (countries of destination<sup>1</sup>) – and from Egypt, a key country of origin, transit and destination for migrant workers.

The program focused on the challenges of implementing agreed international human rights and labour rights standards to ensure migrant workers are treated with respect for their dignity and rights. Millions of migrant workers, men and women, travel from Africa and Asia to work in the GCC States<sup>2</sup> – in construction, manufacturing and service sectors – and as domestic workers<sup>3</sup>. They work under the Kafala (sponsorship) system, which is attracting growing international criticism for the vulnerability it creates.

A highlight of this program was the interaction with [Professor François Crépeau](#), the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants, at the conclusion of his first official country mission to [Qatar](#) – his first mission to any GCC country. The Special Rapporteur emphasised capacity building of migrant workers and their advocates as a key strategy of empowerment and lasting change.

GCC States are responding in various ways to the rapid growth in the numbers of migrant workers – and to growing reports of a range of abuses these workers experience. Some governments have established or are establishing NHRIs to promote human rights education, understanding and compliance. Some have recognised the rights of workers to form and join trade unions and/or committed to reforming the Kafala system.

This program took place at a critical time for Qatar as it comes under the spotlight of international attention as host of the FIFA 2022 World Cup. The Qatar NHRC's willingness to host a regional training program that looks at these sensitive issues is acknowledged with appreciation.

The responsibilities of governments in countries of origin were also highlighted during the program – as the problems for migrant workers begin with the recruitment process, and inadequate pre-departure training and orientation programs.

The training program included sessions on international human rights and labour rights standards and mechanisms relevant to the rights of migrant workers (such as the Kafala system). Expert resource persons included Mr Azfar Khan from the ILO's Beirut office, Ms Miriam Boudraa from the

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<sup>1</sup> In relation to terminology, the ILO preference is to use the neutral language of Countries of "Origin" and Destination". Advocacy groups including Migrant Forum Asia prefer the language of "Sending" and "Receiving" countries as it emphasises the way both countries use migration as part of economic development strategies. Both are used in this report.

<sup>2</sup> There is also internal movement in the Middle-East with Egyptians and others working in the Gulf, Syrians moving to work in Lebanon

<sup>3</sup> Recent estimates put the number at 25 million migrant workers in the Middle-East – constituting over 90% of the workforce of Qatar as an example.

ILO Training Centre in Turin and William Gois from Migrant Forum Asia. There were sessions on the role of the media, alliance building, advocacy and lobbying. There was also a field trip to build knowledge of the living conditions of migrant workers.

Another highlight of the program was the presentations from participants who are working in different ways and contexts for migrant workers. These presentations provided a compelling illustration of just what can be achieved - and a vital opportunity for learning and inspiration.

Building on the previous year's program there was a much greater representation of participants from GCC countries, the Middle-East and North Africa – and from the NHRC and from different government departments in Qatar, including the Ministry of Labour, the Interior Ministry and the Ministry of Justice. These participants were welcomed to a program that is usually comprised of civil society advocates. The opportunity to share views and to build understanding and relationships between civil society and government, and across borders was one of the program's key values.

The course was held in Arabic and English with simultaneous translation. On the final day participants were asked to evaluate the program. These evaluations were both thoughtful and positive and will help with future planning. This report draws on those evaluations.

The program was made possible with funding from the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) agency. Their support is gratefully acknowledged and appreciated. It was also made possible by the generous in-kind support of the National Human Rights Committee of Qatar which hosted the program. The pro-bono contributions of the trainers are also acknowledged with appreciation. Particular thanks are offered to the participants whose willingness to share and to listen enriched the program.

## **2. Background and Overview of the Program**

Since 2004, MFA and DTP have collaborated on regional capacity building programs on human rights advocacy and the rights of migrant workers. In these programs DTP and MFA have also worked with the Asia-Pacific Forum (APF) of National Human Rights Institutions to build collaboration between these institutions and civil society actors.

These capacity building programs recognise the abuses experienced by migrant workers and their families as one of the key human rights challenges of our time.

These programs have developed the knowledge and skills of participants – and provided opportunities for them to build their networks and mutual support within their countries, and between sending and receiving countries. While individuals have been trained, the benefits have been to their organisations, to their work for migrant workers, and to migrant workers themselves.

Migrant workers are a vital part of the economies of Middle East and North Africa – and of the countries they leave to work there. As an example, nearly 25% of Nepal's GDP comes from remittances – mostly from the Middle-East. The promise of work drives the movement of millions of workers, and increasingly women workers, to leave South and South-East Asia for the Middle East. Women migrant workers are a particularly vulnerable group, because of their isolated position as domestic workers, and wider issues to do with recognition of women's rights and participation in public space and life.

The human costs of labour migration are high, and are a significant concern within and between countries. Migrant workers are vulnerable to abuse by both employers and government officials, in sending and receiving countries. Abuses of labour and human rights include discrimination, hazardous working conditions, forced labour, debt bondage, extortion, arbitrary detention and

deportation, as well as violence, including rape and murder. Negative public attitudes, language barriers, restrictive immigration regimes, poor legal protection, lack of awareness and political will, weak rule of law and impunity all contribute to patterns of abuse and restrict access to effective redress for victims. Where policy and practice deny the rights of migrant workers, human traffickers are more likely to step in.

While the human rights issues affecting the growing number of migrant workers are pressing, the responses of governments indicate a lack of knowledge of relevant international standards and/or a lack of political will or institutional capacity to apply these standards to policy and practice. The international standards most relevant to migrant workers are among the least understood of any of the core human rights treaties and ILO Conventions.

The DTP/MFA programs respond to the relative lack of knowledge and understanding of employers, governments, recruitment agencies and advocates themselves of the human rights standards that are most relevant to ensuring that migrant workers are treated with dignity.

Perhaps most significantly these capacity building programs recognise the vital role of civil society in driving change, and in holding governments accountable. The assumption underpinning these programs has been the value in building the knowledge, skills and networks of the individuals and their organisations committed to making a difference for migrant workers.

From 2009 these capacity building programs began to attract participants from destination countries in the Middle-East where many of the abuses occur. In 2012 these programs were held in the Middle-East for the first time – in Beirut and in Doha.

Asian civil society advocacy on migrant issues has built up significant momentum, and migration is rising up the regional and national agendas. This is an important moment for building civil society advocacy capacity in and between Asia and the Middle East, and ensuring that Arab civil society groups are as well equipped as possible to effectively advocate for the protection of migrant workers. Within the GCC States there is new openness by some in government to reform.

MFA and the NHRC have established a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and see the value of organising this program in Qatar, contributing to the knowledge base and networks in the region.

### 3. Program Partners

**Migrant Forum Asia (MFA)** is a regional network of NGOs, associations and trade unions of migrant workers, and individual advocates in Asia who are committed to protect and promote the rights and welfare of migrant workers. It is guided by a vision of an alternative world system based on respect for human rights and dignity, social justice, and gender equity, particularly for migrant workers. The **Diplomacy Training Program (DTP)** is an independent NGO seeking to advance human rights and empower civil society through quality education and training and the building of skills and capacity in NGOs. It was established by the Nobel Peace Laureate, Jose Ramos-Horta in 1989.

### 4. Program Location

The program was hosted by the National Human Rights Committee (NHRC) of Qatar.

The states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) attract millions of migrant workers from across the world, with most coming from other countries in Asia. The treatment of migrant workers, who in some cases, make up the vast majority of the population in these states, is a central concern to GCC states and makes the GCC an important location for this regional capacity building program.

Qatar is in the international spotlight as host of the 2022 FIFA World Cup. It will require an estimated 1.3 million workers to construct facilities and to staff the services to support them. The challenges it faces are the challenges of the wider GCC.

Qatar has the longest established, and most recognised national human rights institution in the GCC states. Qatar's NHRC has played a leadership role in both the International Coordinating Committee (ICC) and APF. The NHRC is committed to promoting human rights education and implementation in Qatar. The NHRC has actively taken up the issues of migrant workers, including through action on individual cases.

While Qatar does not recognise in its laws the human right to free association – the right of workers to form and join trade unions – there is evident commitment of the NHRC, the Qatar Foundation and others in Qatar to act to address the issues facing the growing number of migrant workers. The opportunity to learn from, and engage with these initiatives also makes Qatar an important location

## **5. Participants**

Participants for this program came mainly from a range of civil society organisations working in different contexts in Asia and the Middle-East – in countries of origin and destination. There were also participants from governments working as labour attachés and in different government departments in Qatar.

Some participants worked with NGOs, others with trade unions and national human rights institutions (NHRIs), while others work in expatriate/community associations. Most of the participants were nominated by MFA and organisations in its network. The NHRC also nominated participants from its staff and from relevant government departments in Qatar.

Participants were asked to complete an application form that sought information on their experience and capacity to apply the training to their work.

Please see the individual biographies attached as an appendix to this report.

## **6. Program Methodology**

DTP's training approach is based on the belief that building knowledge and skills can help fulfil the potential of individuals working together to effect change. Program design reflects a deep respect for the knowledge, experiences and perspectives that participants bring to the program. DTP places emphasis on the practical application of knowledge on human rights and advocacy skills, and encourages trainers to use participatory training methods such as role-plays and exercises wherever possible. The program balances development of knowledge and skills in an integrated way. Its teaching methodology fosters interaction and participation and encourages participants to share their own experiences.

DTP worked closely with MFA and facilitators to make sure that the training was rooted in the local Arab context, and would be useful for practitioners from the Middle East and Asia.

At the start of the program participants are divided into groups to help manage the program each day. This approach helps to emphasise the participatory nature of the program, and begins the process of collaborative working and experience sharing. Each participant is also asked to make a presentation during the program and participants are also encouraged to keep a daily diary. Other activities such as dinners, a solidarity night and a field trip are also designed to encourage collaboration and networking among participants in a less formal setting. Wherever possible, DTP

seeks to include real life advocacy exercises, focussed on those (e.g. officials/diplomats) with a formal responsibility for human rights promotion and protection.

## 7. Program Materials

Participants were provided with extensive reference materials together with some short chapters on relevant issues. Most resources were provided in Arabic and English. A soft copy compiling all materials and output developed in the program as well as the reference materials are also produced for distribution to participants at the end of the training.

## 8. Program Overview and Schedule

The early part of the program concentrated on developing knowledge and understanding of UN human rights and ILO standards and frameworks and complaint mechanisms. The latter half of the program had more of an emphasis on skills development in relation to different aspects of advocacy for migrant workers. Interspersed through each day of the program were presentations from the participants – a sharing of reflections and lessons learned from their work for migrant workers in their specific context. These presentations served to help ground and enrich the training - as well as to enable the building of links between participants.

## 9. Daily Highlights

### Day 1: Opening Ceremony and Introduction to Human Rights

The official **Opening Ceremony** was chaired by **Ellene Sana** (Director of CMA, Philippines) and included opening remarks from **Patrick Earle** (DTP), **Azfar Khan** (ILO Expert – Beirut), **Shk. Johara Mohamed Al-Thani** (NHRC Qatar), His Excellency, Mr Martin Aeschbacher, Swiss Ambassador to Qatar and **William Gois** (MFA).<sup>4</sup>

It was noted that the program was itself an example of the kind of collaboration that needed to be developed within countries and across borders if change was to be achieved. DTP and MFA have been bringing together civil society, trade unions, NGOs, NHRI staff, the ILO and OHCHR to build collaboration on these issues for nearly 10 years.

Azfar Khan highlighted the importance of ILO standards that balanced the rights of employees and employers and encouraged good management and good governance. He noted that migrant workers, as humans, shared the same rights as other humans – as well as specific rights that addressed their particular situation and vulnerability. The ILO's tri-partite processes bring workers, employers and unions together. There was a brief Q & A session.

Following morning tea, there was a more informal session of participant introductions – discussion of expectations, a review of the schedule and agreement of *house rules* to establish a safe learning space. Participants identified the key challenges facing migrant workers in countries of origin and destination.

### ***Migrant Workers Rights as a Key Human Rights Concern – Setting the Scene***

This first substantive session of the training was led by Ms Hala Al-Ali (who works as an educator and expert with the Qatar NHRC). Hala provided a background to key human rights principles and standards, such as indivisibility and universality and government obligations to respect, protect and

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<sup>4</sup> Biographies of the key trainers are provided separately

fulfil human rights and explored the roots of these values of human dignity in the religion and cultures of the region.

In her presentation Hala Al-Ali emphasised that understanding of, and commitment to human rights, ensures that migrant workers are put at the centre of migration policies – that the process of labour migration is seen as a movement of people not commodities. The benefits of labour migration to countries of origin and destination will be enhanced by respect for the rights of migrant workers.

Differences in perspectives on the principal human rights concerns, and who has responsibility to address them in countries of origin and destination were evident. Intense discussion included the following issues:

- The responsibilities of countries of origin – to provide decent work and a decent standard of living for their nationals, to train and educate workers before they leave
- The difference between what is promised to migrant workers in the country of origin and the reality when they arrive in country of destination
- The value of a standardised contract
- The challenge of implementing standards – including lack of capacity/understanding of governments about what international standards mean for policy
- Uncertainty about the relationship between national laws and international standards
- The term migrant worker is a disputed, or unused one among host populations in the Middle-East - because of cultural traditions
- The Kafala system – how can it be reformed/is it realistic to ban it, would that solve the problems
- Fears that recognising rights, banning the Kafala system will lessen control over large and potentially destabilising migrant populations
- The concerns of employers who pay for workers who they then find lack the necessary/promised skills
- The need to raise awareness of human rights standards with governments, employers, recruitment agencies and employees/migrant workers
- The need for better monitoring of recruitment agencies in country of origin and country of destination
- The possibility of banning employers of domestic workers where they have a history of violence against women

In his first contribution, **Azfar Khan**, the ILO's Regional Expert on Migration, went back to basics – why rights are important and the context in which they became codified into standards. Azfar linked the rights in standards to the needs each of us have as humans to live dignified lives – our needs for shelter, food, health and to express ourselves freely and to develop personally. Work is central to the realisation of all of these needs.

The development of the modern state has been accompanied by the recognition of rights, and the responsibilities of the state in relation to these rights – recognising the need to constrain the power of the state, particularly in the aftermath of the Holocaust. Denying rights to individuals, preventing them from addressing these needs, is to violate their rights.

The need for individuals to work to address these needs for food, shelter etc has been constant in human society, and is the driving momentum behind labour migration. The reality of today's world is the limited opportunities that exist for decent work in some countries and the perceptions of opportunities that exist in other countries.

Recognition of the need for, and right to, decent work and conditions of work led to the creation of the ILO in 1919 in the aftermath of the First World War. Even then, in what was a very different world, there was recognition that in drafting minimum labour standards, there was the need to address the rights of migrant workers.

Labour standards and the ILO and other international agencies address the power imbalance between workers and employers – and to ensure that the benefits of economic development benefit society more broadly. Migrant workers are particularly vulnerable to exploitation, even while their work often benefits two societies simultaneously. Standards have been developed that respond to the more recent patterns of labour migration, including in the GCC countries.

### **The UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants:**

**Professor François Crépeau**, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants, joined the program at the end of the day - at the end of his first official country mission to Qatar – and his first mission to any GCC country. He had just made his “end of mission statement” presented at a media conference. These contained his preliminary findings and recommendations – which he was able to share and talk to with the participants. He was also able to make some more general points.

Professor **Crépeau** explained that among his other duties he was expected to conduct two country missions/visits per year and to produce two thematic reports - for example on the particular situation of undocumented migrants. While their reports are often critical, François **Crépeau** emphasised that his role is not as a prosecutor, but as an advisor assisting in the process of ensuring rights are respected and protected.

Some of the discussion focussed on the findings of the Special Rapporteur’s first mission to Qatar. He highlighted the possibility of Qatar taking a more active role in ensuring that the recruitment process in the country of origin was consistent with its own standards and international law, for example by opening a labour office in Nepal – and ensuring there was a single contract<sup>5</sup>, training and education/orientation.

The complexities of the situation in different countries were brought out – the private and state actors involved in labour migration and placement in each country is different.

How human rights can be applied in these different contexts was canvassed. In Kuwait, migrant workers can now join trade unions – but cannot form their own. Reference was made by a number of the participants to the new ILO Convention 189 on the rights of domestic workers and to the UN Migrant Workers Convention.

#### *Migrant rights and human rights*

- Migrant workers are humans and have the same human rights as other humans.
- Citizens of a state may have particular rights – such as the right to vote – but otherwise all human rights apply to all human beings everywhere, all the time.

#### *Migrant workers, territorial sovereignty and the rights and obligations of governments*

- States have the responsibility to ensure their territorial sovereignty

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<sup>5</sup> A significant issue of concern is that the contract that migrant workers receive in the country of origin is substituted with another contract in the country of destination – with reduced wages/conditions and possibly for a different job – and the individual is then in debt and has little option but to accept.



- States have the right and responsibility to determine who enters their territory and who stays – although their right to expel individuals is subject to their obligation not to expose an individual to the risk of torture, and possibly to other commitments they have made including in relation to children, and families
- States have the responsibility to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of all within their borders – and not to discriminate against non-nationals

### Migration is here to stay

- Labour migration responds to the real needs and demands of different economies – these differential needs will continue to drive labour migration even where specific patterns change – how many of us today live in the same town/city as our four grandparents?
- Migration will take place, and barriers to safe and orderly migration are likely to increase irregular migration, and crime and to increase the vulnerability of migrants as attempts are made to overcome and undermine barriers to migration
- Migration policies that recognise the rights of the individuals are more likely to result in a debt-free, more motivated, more appropriately skilled workforce and productive economies

### Terminology and Language

François highlighted the need to think about the language one uses, and the way that language can shape thinking and policies.

- Actions can be illegal – people can't be. You can do something illegal – but you cannot be illegal. If people are without the relevant paperwork or permits to be in a country it can have a variety of causes and it is best to refer to them as *irregular* or *undocumented*.
- Smuggling and trafficking are different. Smuggling can assist individuals who chose to leave a situation; perhaps of great physical danger (people smugglers enabled many Jews to escape Nazi Germany and the Holocaust). He referred to the film *Casablanca* as an evocative portrayal of people smuggling – one where we have considerable sympathy for smuggler (Humphrey Bogart) and smuggled (Ingrid Bergman) alike. People can be both agents and victims – and if we look only at victims we can disempower the individuals. Trafficking is something done to someone else, without their free will or informed consent, and is usually exploitative.

### Challenges in promoting and upholding the rights of migrant workers

- Public perceptions – anti-immigration sentiments have grown over the last 30 years. Issues of identity have become more politically sensitive. It was noted that those migrants who died in a terrible tragedy off the Italian island of Lampedusa were granted posthumous nationality – while the survivors were detained as “illegal” migrants.
- Political systems are geared towards satisfying the needs/interests of citizens and their representative groups (trade unions/business associations etc) first and foremost
- Migrants don't vote – they don't represent a domestic political constituency – and action to address their rights can be seen as unpopular/without political benefit for ministers/parties
- Lack of knowledge/technical capacity in government
- Systems of labour inspection and monitoring need to be adapted to the situation of domestic workers, and the private home as a workplace
- New ways of regulating/certifying/monitoring recruitment agencies
- NHRIs, Courts and Tribunals have a particularly important role to play

### Empowerment

- There is a need to celebrate diversity – in all its richness
- Empowering people to claim their own rights is the most important strategy. Migrants themselves should be involved in debate and discussion on policy and practice
- The knowledge and skills of advocates should be built so that the issues become visible and the voices of migrants themselves can be heard
- If we recognise the private home as a workplace, we need to recognise domestic workers as workers with rights that need to be respected and protected

### Challenges in seeking redress

- lack of data
- lack of contracts
- migrant workers unaware of their rights
- issues of language and lack of translation services
- not knowing where to seek help
- the costs of lawyers and legal action

## **Day 2: Human Rights Standards – An Introduction**

### Snapshot: Oman – Indian Social Club

The Indian Social Club focuses on the needs of Indian migrant workers in Oman. It works with associations of other migrant communities too. Members visit individuals in detention, and works to seek their release and repatriation. Health issues and access to health services are a particular concern and issue – and an acute one for undocumented workers who cannot go to hospitals or other official health service providers. Diabetes and hyper-tension are common among migrant workers. The remoteness of many migrant workers who are far from the capital Muscat makes responding and providing services more difficult. Seeking compensation for lack of payment of wages and for workplace injuries and providing shelter and counselling for migrant workers places heavy demands on the volunteers in the association.

The introductory sessions on human rights were led by Hala al Ali of the NHRC. Hala emphasised some of the reasons it was important to learn about human rights standards.

- Knowledge of the standards enables advocates and representatives to be in an authoritative position to speak with government officials on how to improve government policies
- Knowledge of the standards enables more effective collaboration between countries to defend the rights of citizens from/in all countries
- Effective case management requires knowledge of standards and mechanisms

Hala picked up the point made by the UN Special Rapporteur that the human rights of migrant workers are addressed in all human rights agreements. She introduced participants to the International Bill of Rights and the nine core UN human rights treaties. Emphasis was also placed on the fact that all governments have ratified one or more of these agreements and have therefore agreed to be bound by them. There was a particular focus on the obligations of governments to address discrimination – a requirement of all of the treaties. It was acknowledged that migrant workers are particularly vulnerable to discrimination.

Hala emphasised that human rights violations can take place directly and indirectly – by the state through its officials and by private individuals such as employers. She emphasised the responsibility of the state to *respect, protect and fulfil* human rights. The responsibility to protect includes taking action in relation to employers of migrant workers.

Farid Hamdan from the UN's Information Office in Qatar then introduced participants to the 1990 UN Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers which came into force in 2003. It recognises and responds to the particular vulnerabilities of migrant workers and has been ratified by a number of important countries of origin for migrant workers. Like other treaties there is a treaty body consisting of independent experts that monitors implementation and seeks to develop greater awareness and understanding of the rights.

When states (governments) ratify treaties they agree to regularly report to these committees on their progress in implementing the rights in the treaties. NHRIs and NGOs also take part in this process and their views and perspectives are seen as very important. This reporting process can be an important accountability mechanism, but it can be labour intensive – particularly for civil society organisations.

Farid and Hala also focused on the human rights procedures developed under the UN Charter that have more universal application to states. These are the **Universal Periodic Review** and the UN's **Special Procedures on Human Rights** – such as the *UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention*, and the *UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Migrant Workers* and the *UN Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Slavery*. They are individuals who are selected on basis of their expertise and reputation and are independent.

These UN Special Procedures can receive and communicate individual complaints to governments, they make country visits and reports (which include dialogue with government officials) and make thematic reports. Their reports go to the UN Human Rights Council and to the UN General Assembly. They rely heavily on credible information they receive from NGOs and civil society and are generally very open to dialogue.

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process ensures that all governments have their human rights records reviewed continuously in a 4 year cycle. The process complements the other monitoring and accountability mechanisms of human rights treaty bodies and special procedures, and has the potential to be informed by and influence the work of the UN's Specialised Agencies. All of the countries of the MENA Region have now been through the UPR process once, and some have been through the second cycle already. NHRIs play a key and formal role in each stage of the process.

Hala, Farid and William explained the practical experience to date and lessons learnt from the process. Participants also shared insights on how UPR recommendations can form the basis of collaboration between civil society, NHRIs and government.

Beyond the formal monitoring and accountability processes, Farid also emphasised the value of human rights in developing and guiding policy and practice – for a human rights based approach to labour migration.

The afternoon began with presentations from participants on the situation in Nepal and for Filipino Migrants in the Philippines. Devendra Chandra Rai highlighted that the problems for migrant workers begin at home with high recruitment fees (often requiring debts owed to loan sharks), double/false/contracts provided on departure, and lack of access to justice. They continue in the destination country when documents (passports) are confiscated. Merrilyn Ramos who works at the

Philippines Embassy in Cairo highlighted the problems for domestic workers in particular – of forced labour, and mistreatment/physical and psychological abuse by employers.

The afternoon sessions focussed on the International Labour Organization's Report, *Tricked and Trapped*. The first practical session, led by ILO's **Hélène Haroff-Tavel**, and **William Gois** focussed on the situation in the countries of origin, the abuses that occur there and the way the current migration process increases the vulnerability of migrant workers in countries of destination. The facilitators conducted a group activity, which asked participants to discuss in groups a series of questions on the why and how labour migration from countries of origin occurs. How and why are people deceived? The exercise and report back generated a good exchange.

It was noted that migrant workers are mostly young and (not exclusively) from low income (and often large) families, with low levels of literacy/education, in economically and sometimes physically vulnerable situations, including being in debt. Some are escaping recent or continuing conflict; some have been made more economically vulnerable by processes of climate change.

The vulnerability of migrant workers to being deceived so that they find themselves in situations of debt bondage or forced labour include a lack of accurate sources of information (including on labour laws in destination countries), naivety, lack of effective regulation of recruitment agencies, misplaced trust in agents/brokers as agent is close to family, is family, or from local community and a sense of desperation for some to escape their circumstances.

#### Snapshot: Migrant Workers Advocacy in Lebanon

NGOs are involved in providing shelters to victims of abuse by employers – particularly domestic workers. They are also involved in providing counselling and rehabilitation services and legal representation and mediation between workers and employers – and access to schooling for children. The influx of refugees from the conflict in Syria has placed a heavy demand on all. There has been a lot of advocacy around issues of the Kafala system, discrimination experienced by migrant workers and also the need for labour law to cover domestic workers.

The second practical session, led by **Azfar Khan**, and **Hélène Harroff-Tavel**, focussed on the situation in the countries of destination and the responsibilities of receiving governments – and what options there were to hold employers accountable. Another group activity asked participants to look at the dimensions of exploitation and why migrant workers were not able to leave abusive employers.

Some of the aspects of exploitation that the participants discussed included:

- withholding of personal documents
- withholding of wages
- forced to work overtime
- inability to resign (terminate contract)
- Kafala – no easy change of employer
- sponsor refuses to release worker and/or charges high price for release
- limited freedom of movement (particularly for domestic workers)
- limited communication inside or outside the workplace (particularly for domestic workers)
- lack of freedom of association
- constant surveillance – cameras pick up groups of 4 or more and immediately alert police
- threat or actual denunciation to the authorities - possible imprisonment and deportation
- lack of rest periods

- degrading living conditions
- physical, psychological and sexual violence

There was a sense that the options for accountability are currently limited. Recruitment/placement agencies were recognised as having a role to play, including through professional associations/syndicates (examples from Jordan/Lebanon) that can adopt and promote codes of conduct, minimum membership criteria and self-regulation. The role of prosecutors and the court system was also seen as important, although there are currently many practical hurdles to this. Tactics of naming and shaming, and using the media were also seen as valuable – although limited particularly in circumstances where there was a lack of freedom of the press, although social media was opening new opportunities.

### **Day 3: International Frameworks, Practical Exercises and a Field Trip**

**The day began with presentations from Lebanon and Egypt.** Trade Unions in Lebanon are increasingly taking up the issues of migrant workers – both in Lebanon and of Lebanese migrant workers abroad, in Saudi Arabia for example. They are seeking to build confidence with domestic workers and migrant workers as past experience and patterns of exploitation have led to a lack of confidence and mistrust. Some of their work focusses on employers, but also on the Lebanese government.

Egypt is a country of origin, destination and transit for migrants and refugees. The movement is generally from the west, overland from Libya. There are 50,000 refugees registered – excluding refugees from the conflict in Syria. Between 7 – 10 million Egyptians are living abroad. The situation of migrant workers in Egypt, or of Egyptian migrant workers has not to date been the focus of much NGO or legal advocacy – it is just beginning to be an issue. There is a need for further legal and policy research, to expand service to migrants to connect up with others in the region.

- ***New Global Policy Agenda on Migration***

The first formal session of the day was structured around the New Global Policy Agenda on Migration, Development and Human Rights.

This is an eight point agenda for action produced during the recent UN High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development (October 2013). The agenda is part of a set of recommendations provided by the UN Secretary-General for a human rights based approach to migration. The first point in the agenda is human rights.

Participants were invited to analyse the extent to which the agenda can guide the different actors/stakeholders going forward, and the different roles that will need to be played by governments, international agencies and civil society. The key concern was how the High Level Dialogue can be harnessed to more effectively promote the rights of migrant workers. The session was facilitated by **Azfar Khan**, representing the ILO's perspective, and **William Gois**, providing the perspective of civil society (as coordinator of Migrant Forum Asia).

Both Azfar and William noted that the challenge was to connect the global agenda with the standards that have been adopted and the issues and challenges on the ground. There is concern that the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) has been taken out of formal UN processes and therefore lacks the normative framework of international standards.

Advocates could use the outcomes of the UNHLD to reinforce the need to apply human rights standards and ILO agreements to all relevant aspects of labour migration. Azfar emphasised that in

the MENA region most migrants are migrant workers and therefore the ILO standards had particular relevance.

- ***The ILO and Migrant Workers***

Following this, **Miriam Boudraa**, from the ILO Training Centre in Turin, ran two sessions on the standards and processes of the International Labour Organisation. Participants learnt about the core ILO standards (that underpin its Rights Based Approach to Migration) and its unique tripartite monitoring and complaints processes.

In addition to their human rights, migrant workers are entitled to labour rights as workers.

The Eight Core Labour Standards of the ILO are seen as binding on all members states whether or not they have ratified an individual treaty. They apply to migrant workers as much as to other workers.

The ILO's Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration is non-binding but emphasises the relevant standards that are. It provides a valuable basis for dialogue between all the parties involved. For Trade Unions, NGOs and NHRIs it provides a sound normative framework for engagement with governments - and for policy advocacy. The framework has particular value in situations if countries of origin or countries of destination have not ratified key ILO standards.

The ILO Conventions with a specific focus on migrant workers are C97 and C143 and Miriam gave some of the interesting historical context for development of both (WWII and 70's Oil Crisis) respectively. She also highlighted the relevance of C189 on Domestic Workers, as so many domestic workers are migrant workers. This is the most recent ILO Convention – adopted in 2011. Its adoption symbolises the way that standards have developed in response to the changing global economy and world of work.

There is a regular monitoring and reporting process for implementation and compliance with the Conventions. Miriam outlined the ILO's representation procedure – and the ILO complaints procedure. These processes bring together workers (represented by trade unions), employers (represented by their associations) and governments. As with the human rights procedures the power lies partly in the process of governments being held up to scrutiny in front of other governments.

One country can make a complaint about another if it has ratified a Convention about another country that has also ratified the same convention. A commission is appointed, then reports and may recommend that the government change legislation or take other steps.

NGOs can't make complaints in the ILO, but they can work with relevant trade unions, governments and employers. NGOs can submit parallel reports on issues that the ILC is considering.

To consolidate the key learning points, participants were invited to discuss in groups how trade unions and NGO advocates can collaborate together in using these standards to engage with the ILO's tri-partite system as part of their advocacy. The focus was on Conventions that have particular applicability to the situation of migrant workers in the Middle East and Gulf – including the new C189 and R201.

Miriam's sessions were particularly well received by participants.

Snapshot: Migrant Workers in Bahrain - **Migrant Workers Protection Society** -

The society focuses its work providing a shelter for migrant workers who are homeless or at risk, or fleeing abuse. Many migrant workers live in private accommodation, sometimes sleeping in shifts and sharing space to save money. Some of the housing is very crowded, and there are increased risks of fire because of unsafe cooking facilities/arrangements (gas/kerosene gas), narrow staircases and no fire escapes. They have engaged with government to press for inspection of privately rented accommodations. They have been successful in building collaboration with some authorities on some issues, but there can be a fine and sensitive line re engagement in what is seen as advocacy.

**Field Trips:**

For the second part of the day participants were divided into two for field trips. This was an opportunity for participants to develop a better understanding of the realities facing migrant workers in Qatar, and to witness first-hand the human rights issues involved.

- *Field Trip 1 – Ras Laffan*

One group was taken to **Ras Laffan Industrial City**, an industrial hub located 80 kilometres north of Doha, administrated by Qatar Petroleum. Between 45,000 – 60,000 migrant workers are accommodated at Ras Laffan. A private contractor runs the accommodation services. The workers are overwhelmingly male and are employed on contracts of generally 2-3 years. There are different levels of accommodation provided according to professional/occupation category of the worker. Unskilled manual labourers are accommodated 4 or 6 to a room and have a locker for personal belongings.

The rooms are all in cabins that stretch out along a grid of streets – and attempts are made to create “a village-like” atmosphere with streets named “Palm Tree Drive” and “Elm Avenue”. All services on site are apparently provided for free. Participants were given the opportunity to walk through the labour camp, to visit rooms and to talk with residents/workers. A presentation emphasised the sports programs and facilities that are on offer. Information about medical services was provided and there was a question and answer session. The impression was one of a clean, professionally run facility for workers where efforts are made to ensure the provision of adequate and culturally appropriate food and access to leisure facilities. These are seen as model facilities for workers and compatible with the standards in the more recently developed Qatar Foundation’s Mandatory Standards (see below).

- *Field Trip 2 – The Industrial Zone*

The other field trip involved participants visiting a company and engaging in dialogue about some of the issues involving skilled labour migration from the perspective of the hiring company. Participants also had the opportunity to visit Doha’s Industrial Zone – this is an area of Doha that consists of mostly light industry, with migrant workers often located very close to their workplaces in crowded and unsanitary accommodation. It is this kind of accommodation that has attracted the attention of human rights organisations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch and led to negative and critical publicity.

**Day 4: Strategic Approaches to Protecting Rights - Qatar Foundation’s Migrant Workers Welfare Initiative and Mandatory Standards - Ameena Ahmadi and Aakash Jayaprakash**

### **Migrant Workers in Qatar – A Snapshot**

- Currently estimate of 1.2 Million Migrant Workers – will double in years ahead
- 12:1 ratio of low wage MWs per working Qatari national

#### Some Challenges

- Increased demand for land
- Increased stress on infrastructure
- Increased negative impact on urban landscape
- Overcrowded and unhealthy living conditions
- Recruitment debt
- Low salaries and long working hours
- Excessive travel time to and from work
- Inadequate skills and safety training
- Deaths of workers

The Qatar Foundation (QF) has recognized the need to address the human costs of labour migration and has invested significantly in researching and developing a set of mandatory standards guided by international standards to address the rights and welfare of migrant workers through all stages of migration cycle from recruitment through to repatriation and reintegration on their return home. A multi-disciplinary team engaged with migrant workers themselves, to develop the standards on issues transport to and from work, safety at work, accommodation and food. The standards, based on national law, apply to all contractors and sub-contractors engaged by the QF and must apply across all the contractor's operations.

These standards are believed to be the first major attempt in the region to address the responsibilities of the private sector – and their reach is potentially significant – in Qatar, with corporations operating in the Gulf and in countries of origin.

Ameena and Aakash were both centrally involved in the development of the Mandatory Standards and are involved in their promotion and application.

Qatar Rail has adopted the standards, which were launched early in 2013 and QF is collaborating with multiple stakeholders including governmental agencies. 20 contractors have completed a self-audit on application of the standards – which are in nine sections.

The ninth section recommends steps for contractors/sub-contractors to establish in order to ensure the implementation of the Standards.

The standards aim to shift employers to an ethical model of recruitment to ensure that migrant workers do not pay a fee (or bribe) for their job and that only approved recruitment agencies are used by contractors. Finding recruitment agencies that do not charge fees is a major challenge – they seek to keep a list of those that charge high fees. There are compliance and monitoring issues in country of origin – some of them related to corruption and it is hard for QF and its contractors to always address these. Contractors are given a grace period to comply.

The Qatar Foundation has set up the Worker Welfare Department and is actively engaged in the implementation of the standards - auditing contractors to ensure adherence to these standards.



This session generated considerable interest and discussion – with some debate over the respective responsibilities of employers and government officials in countries of origin and destination. There was also interest in whether the approach taken by QF through the Mandatory Standards could be taken up by the Ministry of Labour and others.

### **Strategic Approaches to Protecting Rights - Human Rights Promotion and Protection at the National Level – migrant workers and the role of NHRIs - Hala al-Ali**

National human rights institutions (NHRIs) are independent institutions established by governments to promote human rights, to be an independent watchdog at the national level, to hear complaints and provide an avenue of redress where human rights are abused. They exist in an increasing number of countries of origin and destination. Their independence and integrity is intended to be assured through adherence to the [Paris Principles](#). They have an as yet unfulfilled potential to promote and protect the rights of migrant workers – including through greater cooperation between NHRIs in countries of origin and destination. Their role is particularly significant in Asia and the Middle East given the lack of any regional human rights instrument/mechanism.

In the case of Qatar anyone in the borders of Qatar can submit a complaint to the NHRC. Most of the complaints the NHRC receives are from low wage workers, 90% of them – about their delay in receiving salary, exit visas, option to get another job. The NHRC also has a responsibility to monitor and inspect detention places – including through visits without notice.

NHRIs also have a recognized role to play in engaging with UN human rights treaty bodies and in the UPR process. There is scope for practical cooperation between civil society organizations and NHRIs – including through the provision of information, meetings and requests for action on particular cases or in the holding of enquiries.

The role of NHRIs in promoting and protecting the rights of migrant workers is still emerging – and depends partly on the quality of their interaction with civil society. There is increasing scope for collaboration between NHRIs in different countries – and this has particular significance for migrant workers. The APF produced a [Manual on the Role of NHRIs in Promoting and Protecting the Rights of Migrant Workers](#) – which has some practical examples of what can be done by NHRIs.

### **Strategic Approaches to Protecting Rights – Developing Skills in Practical Advocacy for Change**

In this session the role of civil society advocacy in influencing governments and decision makers to fulfil their obligations under human rights standards was explored. Good advocacy begins with analysis of the problems, context and actors/stakeholders. The need to have clear specific, time-bound objectives was emphasised – and the best strategies to reach these objectives could then be weighed up and decided on.

There was a brainstorming session in which the participants shared their experience of campaigning and advocacy techniques. People identified media, including social media, as being particularly important – partly because of the negative perceptions of migrant workers.

The second part of this session focused on lobbying and sharing lobbying tips and techniques. It was noted that effective lobbying is generally done over time, with specific individuals and may involve the establishment of positive relationships based on trust and a level of confidentiality. Those lobbied may be government officials or elected members of parliament or religious leaders – or anyone who is seen as having influence in addressing the human rights concern that is the focus of the advocacy.

There was a very good sharing among participants from across the region that included successful lobbying to withdraw draft laws (Egypt), to get a draft law on domestic workers (Lebanon); freedom of movement (Jordan) and persuading the media to cover difficult/sensitive issues.

The need for a clear timetable for action, and for good preparation before lobbying meetings and activities was emphasized – including preparing necessary materials/supporting evidence etc.

### **“Developing Strategic Approaches & Alliances for promoting and protecting migrant workers – in MENA”**

The importance of alliance building was the focus of the final session of the day. The partnership between DTP and MFA and the collaboration with the NHRC was cited as one example of different organisations finding ways to work together to achieve a common goal.

Migrant workers are a vulnerable and marginalised community in many societies – in countries of origin and countries of destination. For their voices to be heard, to have influence, their organisations need to connect with others, to find common ground with organised labour, with the movement for women’s rights – to seek the engagement of NHRIs and international NGOs, to engage with lawyers who have a commitment to upholding the rule of law. In many societies the media plays a key role in reflecting and shaping community attitudes and often influencing government policy on particular issues. In some cases the media, or sections of it and particular journalists can be key allies in promoting the rights of migrant workers, exposing violations etc.

Effective alliances draw strength from the different expertise, mandates and constituencies of their members. It is important to have clear objectives – and for those in the alliance to be clear about their roles and responsibilities. Alliances can be short term and very specific, or long term and be based on a more general understanding of shared goals and interests. Some principles and common factors important to effective alliances were identified – such as trust, accountability, clear purpose, recognition and accommodation of different interests. It was a very practical session that encouraged participants to think about what kind of alliances they needed to build, and how they can be built and sustained. Participants were organised into break-out working groups to focus on particular issues and areas of collaboration.

### **Day 5: Migrant Workers and the Role of the Media**

The final morning of the program looked at the role of the media in promoting the rights of migrant workers in the Gulf and Middle East. Media work is vital to many advocacy strategies - for building awareness, shaping attitudes, gaining legitimacy, building government’s will to act, as well as naming and shaming strategies for change. There are both advantages and disadvantages in seeking media coverage, depending on other options available for achieving change and particular circumstances. The internet/social media and other technologies have also opened up new opportunities for bypassing mainstream media outlets – to build awareness and support among communities/key target groups.

There are particular reasons why the media may be an even more important element in advocacy strategies for migrant workers rights. Advocates for migrant workers, particularly in migrant destination countries, report that negative public perceptions of migrants, including negative stereotypes are one of the major factors that they have to contend with. Negative perceptions of migrants lead directly to discrimination and abuse in the community and by officials. They can also affect the willingness of government to fulfill their human rights obligations to migrant workers –

and the willingness of migrant workers to seek the protection of the state. One of the challenges for human rights advocates is to look at the role of the media – and how targeted media strategies can be integrated into broader advocacy strategies. The media in Lebanon has played a significant role in building awareness of the treatment of domestic workers.

The presenter of these sessions had particular expertise in online and social media, where her media organisation had taken the initiative in trying to change public perceptions of migrant workers. The use of terms and language is important. A complicating factor is the level of sensitivity that exists – and of censorship and self-censorship that results from this.

Advocates need to identify the journalists that they think will be interested, and they need to ensure that they have good, reliable data to provide. They also need to understand that often the journalist is not the decision maker – and they should seek to build relationships with the Chief of Staff and editors. These need to be persuaded that the treatment of migrant workers is a serious story of national interest – even where the story is focussed on a non-national. Personal stories can help – in many GCC and Middle East societies there is a strong emphasis on family and the value of family life. Care needs to be taken to ensure that the individual focus of a story is not subsequently victimised.

Advocates also need to think about how best to reach a particular audience. Professional, trade and company journals and magazines are less censored and may be a good avenue to raise issues about the Kafala system, for example – especially as these issues affects all foreign workers from highly paid expats to low-paid manual workers. There are negative perceptions of lower-skilled workers – yet their labour is vital to the economies and societies of destination countries and there is a need to give dignity to their work and contribution and to recognise their agency rather than simply portraying them as victims.

In the final session facilitators drew on the views and experiences of participants in relation to future capacity building priorities in the region. There was recognition that the needs in NGOs, NHRIs, trade unions, the private sector and government are different. Participants provided useful guidance for where future priorities should be –in terms of content (standards/skills/collaboration) and sectors.

Participants also identified some priority further areas for action. These included:

- Governments of countries of origin to do more to prepare workers before they leave their countries – educating them in their rights and responsibilities
- Embassies/missions to be more active in representing the interests of their nationals
- Government agencies in destination countries to be more actively engaged in ensuring the rights of migrant workers are respected
- NHRIs to take up more cases of migrant workers
- Corporations and governments need to know about human rights standards and obligations before they can start implementing them

## **10. Participant Evaluations and Feedback**

Participants were asked to anonymously complete a written individual end of training program evaluation. Most of the participant's written evaluations rated the program good or very good in a series of questions. Participants were then also invited to share any final comments and feedback on the program in a shared oral reflection.

Some of the points raised in this session were:

- More success stories of advocacy were expected

- Wanted larger margin to share experiences, success stories and solutions for participants to apply to other situations and contexts
- Need more on women's rights and mechanisms to support and protect female migrant workers
- Want more on women and gender issues
- Protecting female migrant workers needs more elaboration
- The theoretical information came together in a more comprehensible way in the last couple days with the focus on advocacy strategies
- The program provided a valuable opportunity to network and share information and experiences with others
- There were very different perspectives, good depth to the discussions and everyone was very honest about their views which was helpful to the program
- The differences and discrepancies of opinions and perspectives was helpful to understanding the issues
- Understanding the intergovernmental systems (UN, ILO, ) and standards was very helpful

## 11. Conclusions and Next Steps

This program built on the previous year's ground-breaking initiative of Qatar's National Human Rights Committee, Migrant Forum Asia and the Diplomacy Training Program of bringing together key stakeholders to address the rights of migrant workers in the GCC and MENA region. Part of its value lay in continuing conversations between participants from the Middle-East and Asia – between countries of origin and countries of destination of migrant workers that began in the 2012 program.

This diversity enabled the program to keep a very practical focus, to be grounded in the realities of the region – and the different perceptions of those who must find ways of working together if agreed international standards are to be adopted in practice.

One aspect of this continuing exchange and dialogue was the opportunity to learn more about the Qatar Foundation's Mandatory Standards and their implementation. They are significant initiatives. The increasing involvement of Qatar's National Human Rights Committee in taking up the cases of migrant workers was another.

The program enabled a sharing of views and perspectives – from countries of origin and destination, from governments, NGOs and trade unions and enabled the voices of migrant workers themselves to be heard. This is essential to advancing respect for the rights of migrant workers. In this year's program there was significantly greater representation of government officials in Qatar, and the participation of labour attachés. A lack of knowledge of "the other" can serve to divide and be a real barrier to solutions. Responsibility for the abuses experienced by migrant workers is often seen as the responsibility of "the other" rather than a shared responsibility requiring cooperation and action from both.

It is evident from the evaluations that participants found the information on international legal frameworks (human rights and ILO standards) very useful. These standards provide a common reference point for those in government, NHRIs, NGOs, Trade Unions and Employers. The presentations of participants and their active participation in small group work ensured that the human perspective, the situation of migrant workers themselves was never lost in the technical language of the law.

The UN Special Rapporteur emphasised his role in assisting governments to implement human rights standards, and the essential role of capacity building. There is a pressing need to build

understanding of key standards among decision makers, if they are to inform and guide policy and practice. In a program such as this it is really only possible to provide an introduction to the standards and frameworks. It is the role of the ILO and the UN Information Centre and UN agencies to provide more comprehensive technical assistance to the officials charged with implementing standards. This program is for some a first step toward gaining more knowledge and understanding that international standards can be a helpful guide rather than a basis of criticism and condemnation for failings.

A key value of this program is in the range of organisations and individuals it brings together, the networks and relationships it contributes to building and the understanding that common ground can be found and change achieved. A number of participants raised the value of perhaps having a separate program for government officials – recognising they face different challenges to civil society and with the sense that the presence of government officials in a training program like this can inhibit discussion and exchange among other participants.

This program is therefore part of a longer term process involving many other actors – a process that involves building the political will and momentum to tackle sensitive and pressing human rights issues in the GCC and wider MENA region. This will needs to be built within government, but those outside government have key roles to play.

One of the conclusions that DTP and MFA draw from this program is the need to continue to run such introductory courses that bring this diversity of participants together, but also to develop more specialist in-depth programs that build the capacity to engage more effectively with UN/ILO processes, and with the private sector.

#### Annexes

1. Program Schedule
2. Participants' Biographies
3. Trainer Biographies

	Sun 10	Mon 11	Tues 12	Weds 13	Thurs 14
<b>Morning 1 8:30 to 10:30</b>	8.30 – 9.00: Registration 9.30: Opening ceremony	<i>Feedback session / Participants' presentations</i> 9.00-10.30 Human Rights Standards and The framework of international human rights law related to migration:	<i>Feedback session / Participants' presentations</i> 9.00-10.30 The New Global Policy Agenda on Migration, Development and Human Rights – What Does it Mean for Migrant Workers and Their Rights	<i>Feedback session / Reflections on Field Trip</i> 9.00-10.30 Migrant Workers in Qatar – An Introduction to the Mandatory Standards of the Qatar Foundation - What are They and Challenges of Implementation	<i>Feedback session / Participants' presentations</i> 9.00-10.30 The role of the media in promoting the rights of migrant workers in the Gulf and Middle East
<b>Facilitator(s)</b>	<b>NHRC /MFA/DTP</b>	Hala Al-Ali (NHRC)/Farid Hamdan - OHCHR	ILO –Azfar Khan, William Gois	Ms. Aameena Ahmadi, Qatar Foundation	
<b>Tea 10:30-10:45</b>					
<b>Morning 2 10:45-12:45</b>	Participants' introduction Training outline / identification of key issues	Using Human Rights Standards – Practical Exercise Using Standards – The Universal Periodic Review	Migrant Workers, ILO Conventions and the Rights Based Approach to Migration	Advocacy Strategies and Lobbying – Developing Skills in Practical Advocacy for Change	The role of the media in promoting the rights of migrant workers in the Gulf and Middle East
<b>Facilitator(s)</b>	<b>DTP/MFA</b>	Farid Hamdan/Hala Al-Ali/ William Gois	ILO - Miriam Boudraa	Helene Harroff-Tavel, William Gois and Patrick Earle	
<b>Lunch 12:45-1:45</b>					
<b>1.45 – 2.00pm</b>		<b>Participants' presentations</b>	<b>Participants' presentations</b>	<b>Participants' presentations</b>	<b>Participants' presentations</b>
<b>Afternoon 1 2.00 - 3:30</b>	Migrant Workers Rights as a Key Human Rights Concern – Setting the Scene	<b>Tricked and Trapped</b> – Migrant Workers Rights in Origin Countries - Practical Exercise	Practical Exercise – ILO Standards and Migrant Workers Rights - Consolidating	Developing Strategic Approaches & Alliances for promoting and protecting migrant workers – in MENA	Identifying the Priorities for Capacity Building – What, Who and How -- Participant evaluations
<b>Facilitator(s)</b>	Hala Al-Ali (NHRC) and Farid Hamdan (OHCHR)	Helene Harroff-Tavel and Alix Nasri with William Gois	Miriam Boudraa	William Gois, Ellene Sana, Helene Harroff-Tavel	Hala al Ali , William Gois, Ellene Sana, Patrick Earle MFA/DTP
<b>Afternoon Tea 3:30-3:45</b>					
<b>Afternoon 2 3:45-5:30pm</b>	Understanding Labor Migration as a Human Rights Issue – A Panel & Discussion	<b>Tricked and Trapped</b> - Human Rights and the Kafala System – Migrant Workers Rights in Destination Countries - Practical Exercise	Field Trip –	Human Rights Promotion and Protection at the National Level - Migrant Workers and the Role of NHRIs	Closing Ceremony – Certificates <b>NHRC/ MFA /DTP</b>
<b>Facilitator(s)</b>	<a href="#">Mr.François Crépeau</a> Hala Al-Ali, Ellene Sana, Azfar Khan	Azfar Khan, Alix Nasri and Helene Harroff-Tavel		Hala al-Ali	
<b>Evening Exercises</b>	Diary Exercise	Diary Exercise	Diary Exercise	Diary Exercise	
<b>Evening Events</b>	Dinner	Dinner –	Solidarity Night /Dinner	Dinner	

**Capacity Building Program on**

**Human Rights Advocacy and Migrant Workers in the Middle-East:**

**Organised in partnership with Migrant Forum Asia (MFA)**

**Hosted by National Human Rights Committee, Qatar**

**10-14 November 2013 Doha, Qatar**

**Participants' Biographies**

**BAHRAIN**

***Beverly Hamadeh (F), Migrant Workers Protection Society***

Beverly holds the post of General Secretary on the society's elected Executive Committee. She is very involved, not only in the general administration of the society, but also in all other aspects of its work. This includes involvement in casework for both the female migrant domestic workers housed in the society shelter and for other migrant men and women experiencing work related problems. Beverly also takes responsibility for writing reports and recommendations based on these and other cases and, together with the Chairperson and occasionally with other committee members, she presents these to government officials. She regularly advocates for migrant workers at the Ministry of Labour, the Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA), the Immigration Directorate, embassies and police stations. Frequently, Beverly attends court cases and meets Public Prosecutors and officers from the CID Trafficking Unit. Beverly arranges Press Conferences and writes Press Releases, she has prepared and given presentations about the society's work in schools, university and clubs. She also initiated the launch of the society's new website in 2012, supervised the design and wrote most of the content used.

**BANGLADESH**

***Selim Reza (M), Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU)***

Selim is currently working as a Research Communications Officer for the *Migrating out of Poverty Research Programme Consortium* coordinated by the University of Sussex, of which RMMRU is a consortium partner. Selim's duties include conducting fieldwork through focus groups, doing interviews to collect data, supervising research assistants in data analysis and drafting research projects. He is also responsible for managing media relations to promote the key developments of the work of RMMRU and its partners. In particular, he was recently involved in a regional research project that examined the impact of migration on poverty for construction workers in India, Nepal and Bangladesh, and has also assisted in drafting the "Overseas Employment and Migrants" Bill 2013. As migration is currently Bangladesh's most prolific and important sector, Selim strongly believes this training program will further enrich his knowledge and understanding of migration and human rights within a broader perspective. He believes it will also enable him to use internationally agreed standards and mechanisms more effectively in RMMRU.

**EGYPT**

***Sally El Tanani (F), The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)***

Sally works in the Cairo office of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation in the role of National Programme Officer. This position requires the preparation, assessment, formulation and monitoring of new projects and participation in professional networks which are relevant to the programme. She deals with the various actors involved in Egypt's migration framework in the context of Egypt as a country of destination, origin and transit. She undertakes field visits to refugee detention centres, liaises with local civil society actors and service providers, and networks with relevant international organisations. She is responsible for identifying the current needs of target groups and designing interventions, as well as writing credit proposals. It is integral to her position that she has an up to date and informed understanding of the legal mechanisms available at an international level and relevant advocacy tools and methods in order to effectively implement interventions that will protect the rights of migrant workers, Diaspora communities and returnees. The

possibility of reform to migration policies by the Egyptian government provides Sally with a forum in which to apply the skills she hopes to acquire during the DTP training.

***Cherine Maher (F), Arab Council Supporting Fair Trial (ACSFT)***

Cherine is a lawyer, and is currently a Chairman of the Arab Council Supporting Fair Trial (ACSFT), and the main legal consultant of UNHCR for legal aid. Her work involves providing free legal assistance to refugees, immigrants and the poor in Egypt. She also conducts research and writes concept notes for project proposals. Cherine considers the lack of awareness of official authorities and migrant workers themselves of the human rights and migrant workers' rights as a considerable challenge for protecting migrant workers' rights in Egypt. She consequently believes this course will be extremely beneficial for her through exchanging experiences with the other participants and developing ideas for projects aimed at protecting refugees, migrants and the poor.

***Dr Hesham Issa (M), Africa And Middle East Refugee Assistance (AMERA)***

Hesham is the Country Director of the Africa and Middle East Refugee Assistance (AMERA), a UK-registered charity operating in Cairo, which aims to promote the development of pro bono legal aid and psychosocial support for refugees and migrants in countries where such services do not exist. As Country Director, Hesham provides strategic direction and leadership to the organisation; in particular, he manages legal and psychosocial programs, donor relations and monitors and evaluates AMERA services provided to migrants and refugees. For the past seven years, he has been managing programs working with refugees, illegal migrants and counter-trafficking issues in Egypt and the Middle East region, in order to support these vulnerable groups to mobilise themselves and develop self-help initiatives. He would like to participate in this training program as he believes it is crucial to understand labour migration as a human rights issue and to subsequently be able to develop relevant strategies to address labour migration. He is particularly interested in practical exercises and exchanging experiences and best practices with other participants.

***Veronika Valentikova (F), Egyptian Foundation for Refugee Rights***

Veronika is the Project Coordinator of the EFRR- EU proposal in the Egyptian Foundation for Refugees Rights. She provides interim and final reports during the project cycle to the European Union as an active nexus between the EFRR and the EU. She prepares reports from detention centres, police stations, refugee meetings, trainings for lawyers and reports considering the legal aid cases in EFRR. At a community level, Veronika supports the refugee community and involves them in the Foundation's workshops and activities in order to spread the information about the refugee situation throughout Egypt. At the national level, Veronika hopes that within three years, new draft legislation regarding refugees will be finalised in the Egyptian Constitution.

***Mr AbdelGawad Ahmed (M), Arab Council Supporting Fair Trial (ACSFT)***

Abdel is the Vice President of the Egyptian Bar Association, a Chairman of ACSFT and main legal consultant of UNHCR for legal aid. His responsibilities consequently include providing free legal assistance to the poor, immigrants and refugees in Egypt, writing concept notes for projects and representing ACSFT at official and non-official events. He has been a legal aid adviser and main partner of the UNHCR's office in Egypt since 2009 and is also currently responsible for international relations at the Egyptian Bar Association. As his work concerns refugees, migrants and the poor, this program will benefit Abdel through gaining new skills in handling migrant workers' cases and developing ideas for projects aimed at protecting and empowering migrant workers in the Middle East to protect their rights.

***Osama Khalil (M), Hisham Mubarak Law Center***

Osama currently works as a lawyer, Legal Unit Manager, and the Cairo branch director of the Hisham Mubarak Law Center. As a lawyer, he has worked with several victims of human rights violations and has also participated in training sessions and workshops as both a trainer and trainee and has thus shared his experience with many leading figures of Egyptian civil society and human rights organisations. He considers a lack of alliances between NGOs a particular challenge in protecting and promoting the human rights of migrant workers. Osama consequently expects this training program will assist his advocacy work by enhancing his capacity in dealing with migrant workers cases, assist him in developing a vision on how to create a network of NGOs in the Middle East concerning migrant cases, and also building connections and alliances with NGOs in the region.



***Merrelyn Ramos (F), Philippine Embassy, Cairo, Egypt***

Merrelyn works as an officer for the Assistance-to-national unit and attaché for the Philippine Embassy in Cairo. Her primary task is to provide immediate assistance to distressed Filipino nationals; such as undocumented workers, trafficked household service workers, detained nationals; who are visiting, living and working within the Embassy's jurisdiction, which includes Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Eritrea. Her work includes documentation, reporting, counselling, mobilising funds, case monitoring and negotiations with agencies and employers for entitlements and support. Merrelyn would like to participate in this program in order to gain more knowledge on fundamental principles, international legal framework, best practices and approaches which will be beneficial to her personally and professionally. Further, she believes the program will broaden her perspective and understanding of her responsibilities, and thus enable her to be a more effective worker.

**INDIA**

***Tom Wilson Hubertson (M), Migrant Forum Asia***

Tom Wilson works in India as Assistant Field Coordinator for Migrant Forum Asia. This involves a wide area of advocacy for migrants, linking legal and labour issues with several areas of government at the district, state and national levels, including but not limited to the Prime Minister's Office and the President's Secretariat. This has also involved working with CSOs, trade unions and government officials for case management, concealing and legal aid among other things and has also involved lobbying for better protection through legislation of migrants' rights. There is also a strong research element to the position as a source of information. Tom hopes the DTP can broaden his understanding of the issues as well as develop further skills in being able to advocate more effectively, particularly in relation to bringing the rights of migrants in line with international standards.

***Riji Joy (F)***

Riji is a paralegal and assists General Counsel in carrying out day to day activities and ensuring that the company is complying with all the government and regulatory authorities. Her experience in the field of human rights began with her association with a group in a church in Dubai. The charitable group also undertook legal cases in regards to immigration, employment and partially of human rights. In that role, Riji came across a variety of cases including those of maids tortured by and labourers harassed by their employers. The role she played involved taking down details and doing the preliminary investigation, then passing the relevant information on to the concerned people.

**JORDAN**

***Kefah Al Jaber (F), Jordanian Women's Union***

Kefah is a social worker, her work includes receiving calls from the hotline and receiving and meeting with domestic workers and women who require social and legal assistance. She also organises social consultation sessions to assist women with their problems, and refers cases to other organisations. For three years she has worked with a domestic workers program and trafficking program. She would like to participate in this program as she is very interested in human rights and workers' rights; she would also like to learn how organisations from all over the world help protect the rights of workers. In particular she would like to learn about international campaigns and agreements concerning human rights and workers' rights.

***Mahmoud Al Aqtash (M), Tamkeen Fields for Aid***

Mahmoud works for Tamkeen as a lawyer, providing legal aid for migrant workers in Jordan. In his role, Mahmoud receives complaints from migrant workers, decides their status and files a case if necessary. From there, he follows cases up according to Jordanian law and compiles reports which are sent to management. Mahmoud hopes the DTP training will provide him with an insight into how international conventions can operate at a domestic level.

***Maysoon Qara (F), Jordanian National Commission for Women***

As a previous member of the Jordanian trade union (head of the women's committee) and member of the Jordanian commission for women, Maysoon has worked to change the labour laws to include domestic workers under the umbrella of Jordanian law. Now that the new legislation is in force, the act has given domestic workers the privilege of social security so that they are equal to Jordanian workers in this respect. As a result, migrant workers can become a member of unions depending on the sector they are working in.

## **KUWAIT**

### ***Khaled Al Ajmi (M), Kuwait Society for Human Rights***

Khaled is the Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Kuwait Society for Human Rights. He oversees all activities that relate to human rights in Kuwait and recently attended the West Asia Civil Society Consultation on the 2<sup>nd</sup> High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development in the Arab Region Network Meeting in Amman, Jordan in July 2013. He also participated in the Interactive Hearings of the High Level Dialogues on International Migration and Development at the UN in New York, July 15 2013. These conferences have provided the impetus for his desire to expand his knowledge regarding the mechanisms available for the protection of migrant workers' rights. He hopes that the DTP training program will present him with ideas of how to assist the government of Kuwait in ratifying the UN Treaty on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.

### ***Elham Ashnaei (F), Kuwait Society for Human Rights***

Elham is currently the External Relations Officer for the Kuwait Society for Human Rights, a position she holds in conjunction with her volunteer duties at Kuwait Women's Society. She is primarily responsible for correspondence with other organisations and creating networks of communication between her organisation and relevant stakeholders. Elham attended the West Asia Civil Society Consultation on the 2<sup>nd</sup> High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development in the Arab Region Network Meeting in Amman, Jordan in July 2013. She anticipates that the DTP training program will present her with strategies and skills that her organisation can employ in order to assist the government of Kuwait to sign and ratify the UN Treaty on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.

### ***Catherine Bautista (F), Center for Migrant Advocacy***

Cathy acts as both the HR Coordinator and Contact person in Kuwait for the Center for Migrant Advocacy. She assists in the planning and organisation of recruitment activities, is a point of contact for those in distress and prepares correspondence on behalf of the Center. She has previously worked as a case officer in an NGO in the Philippines (the Association of Families of Migrants) which equipped her with the necessary skills to deal with cases of migrant workers. She would like to expand on these skills through her participation in the DTP training program, which she hopes will enable her to develop relationships with other overseas foreign workers and gain a greater understanding of human and migrant rights. She wishes to be actively involved in initiatives that address the problems associated with labour migration and welcomes the opportunity to share her own experiences as an overseas foreign worker.

## **LEBANON**

### ***Rana Boukarim (F), Anti-Racism Movement***

Rana is Programmes Director for the Anti-Racism Movement, Lebanon. In this role, she decides, manages and executes around half of the organisation's activities, projects and programmes. Her work concerns advancing the rights of migrant workers, and consequently, advocacy and lobbying form a significant part of her work. She was also involved in a media campaign about the Khafal system led by 5 NGOs in Lebanon. She believes this training program will equip her with more knowledge and a wider skill set, which will in turn allow her to have a more informed and sensitive approach to lobbying, advocacy and other activities.

### ***Sarah Chreif (F), KAFA (enough) Violence & Exploitation***

Sarah is a Community Developer for KAFA (enough) Violence & Exploitation. She assists in developing materials and conducting awareness raising sessions and training on the rights of MDWs, targeting different groups as needed. Sarah is also involved in planning and organising advocacy activities and events and works closely with migrant community leaders in order to build on their capacity to identify demands and solutions. Sarah facilitates networking and cooperation with migrant communities and other civil society organisations, as well as liaising with the media, civil society and relevant stakeholders regarding the projects and the work of the unit.

### ***Nisrin Debya (F), Insan Association***

Nisrin is an Assistant Project Manager working for the Insan Association, whose projects provide social, psychological and legal support in addition to educational support to children of migrants and refugees. It also organises awareness campaigns and advocacy events in collaboration with other NGOs and stakeholders. On a

daily basis, Nisrin meets with migrant domestic workers who seek assistance, she then directs them to the relevant service within or outside of Insan. She also participates in coordination meetings with other NGOs regarding awareness campaigns and the advocacy of migrant domestic workers. She believes training received at the program will be very beneficial for her work to be more effective and professional, especially as Insan began advocacy work three years ago and thus needs to learn new methods and skills.

***Ghassan Hijazi (M), FENASOL***

Ghassan works as Youth Secretary General for FENASOL. He is interested in basic human rights and advocacy training courses as in his work at FENASOL, he constantly works with international treaties related to human rights and updates concerning them. Ghassan considers the exploitation of migrant workers, and the lack of mutual agreements between sending and receiving countries, as particular challenges concerning the rights of migrant workers. He would consequently like to participate in this program in order to be up to date on the latest developments in human rights and migrant workers' rights and how to apply and enforce them effectively within his organisation.

***Wissam Tannous (M), Caritas Lebanon Migrant Center***

Wissam is a legal counsellor and currently works for Caritas Lebanon Migrant Center (CLMC). He has been involved in several projects concerning trafficking, migrants, refugees and prisoners. In particular, since September 2012, he has been involved in a UNHCR project for Syria, where his responsibilities include meeting migrants for consultancy and advice and researching and reviewing formal papers. Wissam considers this program a significant opportunity for him to further enhance his understanding of the international system and the global mechanisms available to him. He believes he will benefit considerably from the experience of the trainers and participants and that the training will allow his work to be more in touch with international standards and expectations.

**NEPAL**

***Dev Chandra Rai (M), Asian Human Rights and Culture Development Forum (AHRCDF)***

Dev is a Program Officer working for the AHRCDF's Migrants' Center. AHRCDF is a returnee migrant workers' organisation established in 2005, it works for the human rights of migrant workers and their families. Dev's responsibilities within the organisation include developing draft proposals, implementing program activities, counselling potential migrant workers for safe migration and lobbying for the rights of migrant workers. In particular, he provides information to people in the process of going abroad in search for employment and informs them of the legal provisions related to foreign employment. Dev would like to participate in this training program as he is eager to become more aware of the rights and responsibilities of migrant workers in order to further facilitate and support migrant workers, returnees and prospective returnees, and their families.

***Som Prasad Lamichhane (M) Pravasi Nepali Co-ordination Committee***

Som Prasad holds a Bachelors degree in management. He currently works as the General Secretary of the Pravasi Nepali Co-ordination Committee (PNCC). As part of his role, Som Prasad masterminds programs to be run by the PNCC including preparing proposals and documents needed for its successful implementation. He is in charge of handling 'rescue' cases and provides support to families who have lost a family member overseas by ensuring they get access to their rights such as compensation. Som Prasad also conducts counselling sessions pre-departure as well as regarding re-integration. He has over six years experience in the human rights field. Som Prasad spent five years in Saudi Arabia as a migrant worker. During his time there, he actively engaged in Diaspora communities in Saudi as a representative of Pravasi Nepali Sea Samaj. Som Prasad is participating in the DTP program in order to inform himself of how to develop programs strategically to address loopholes in migration issues in the future. He also hopes that he will gain extra knowledge on the international instruments that govern foreign employment problems.

**OMAN**

***Padmini Rania (F) Indian Social Club Charity Wing***

Padmini is the Co-Convenor of the Indian Social Club Charity Wing and is responsible for all of the activities of the social club charity wing. The organisation's main role is supporting the needs of the migrant Indian population in Oman, with a heavy focus on the interests of low income workers. Their activities are currently confined to Muscat but they have plans to extend their operation to the interior of Oman as well. Their activities include assisting the Indian Embassy in the administration of the women's shelter, making prison

visits and connecting inmates with their families in India, providing financial support for low income workers with respect to medical bills (through the Low Income Workers Medical Fund) and fines, as well as conducting training programmes informing relevant people on the challenges faced by low income workers. They have recently implemented an education programme with the aim of teaching English to camp workers in order to create a sense of empowerment and independence. In September 2012, they organised a seminar on the medical challenges faced by low income workers which provided a platform for a variety of people from different areas to engage in a common dialogue. Padmini is looking forward to the developing her understanding of ways in which to liaise with government organisations and domestic human rights commissions in order to allow her organisation to communicate more effectively with such authorities. She would also like to acquire knowledge regarding the use of international instruments which can be applied in the training of social workers within the organisation.

***Sunil Kumar (M) Kairali***

Sunil is a secretariat member of the Oman branch of Kairali, which is an India-based political organisation. He was previously head of the Oman branch, however handed over leadership after completing his term. Sunil is primarily responsible for dealing with blue-collar workers' issues and helps provide solutions in disputes over labour rights and human rights. Sunil is in close contact with the Indian government and communicates with them on a range of levels regarding the rights of Indian workers. Sunil hopes to learn about how he can work to protect the rights of migrant workers on a macro level, as opposed to on an individual case-by-case basis. He believes the DTP program will provide him with skills that may enable him to find a long-term solution to the exploitation of migrant workers and facilitate a greater understanding of labour laws and dispute resolution.

**QATAR**

***Delfin Montenegro (M), Patnubay Advocacy Group***

Ka Delfin work as a Senior Case Officer Volunteer at Patnubay Advocacy Group in Qatar. He handles cases of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) which involves lobbying government officials, advocacy work regarding their rights within the cultural and legal framework of Qatar and networking with the Philippine Embassy, Philippine Overseas Labor Office and Overseas Workers Welfare Administration. Ka Delfin is looking to enhance his skills set through the DTP training program in broadening his understanding of human rights and the potential impact they can have on migrant workers on both a domestic and global scale. He wishes to use the knowledge that he gains from the DTP training to promote human rights in the media and support lobbying campaigns.

**UAE**

***Sathish VM (M) Emirates 24/7, Dubai Media Inc***

VM Sathish is a senior reporter at Emirates 24/7, Dubai Media Inc where he predominantly covers stories involving issues and challenges faced by expatriates in the UAE. He is the author of *Distressing Encounters: Real Life Stories from a Reporter's Diary, Volume One*, which is a compilation of human interest stories from migrant workers living in the Gulf region. He is also involved in campaigns that promote the welfare of the expatriate community in the Gulf and uses the media as an advocacy tool and as a means of informing the people about the human rights violations occurring in the region. VM Sathish has successfully employed media intervention to help low income workers receive medial aid and financial support. He hopes that the DTP training will enable him to enhance his knowledge of using the media to generate public awareness and assist in his advocacy work.

**Capacity Building Program on  
Human Rights Advocacy and Migrant Workers in the Middle-East:**

**Held in partnership with Migrant Forum Asia (MFA)  
Hosted by National Human Rights Committee, Qatar**

**10-14 November 2013 Doha, Qatar**

**TRAINER BIOGRAPHIES**

**Hala Al Ali, National Human Rights Committee (NHRC).** Hala started to work with The National Human Rights Committee as a legal expert in 2006, working on labour issues in the investigations and in the complaints section, and is currently working with the international cooperation unit of the NHRC. She developed a booklet on “Workers’ Rights in Qatar” based on the Qatar Labour Law and other relevant legislation in Qatar, which was written in Arabic and translated in English, Farsi, Hindi, Indonesian, Tagalog, and Nepalese. Together with the American Center for International Labor Solidarity, Hala conducted a series of training seminars, in which leaders and activists from different community groups were trained, based on this booklet of Workers’ Rights. So far, she has trained about 80 trainers from different countries, who on their behalf have trained other people. Hala wants to continue her work to prevent many of the problems of migrant workers, especially those, which are result of lack of knowledge. Furthermore, Hala is a member of a working Group on Women’s Rights, which mission it is to design a profile of Women’s Rights and domestic workers in Qatar.

**Professor François Crépeau, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrant Workers.** François has occupied the position of Special Rapporteur since August 2011. He is a Full Professor at McGill University’s Faculty of Law, where he also holds the Hans and Tamar Oppenheimer Chair in Public International Law. He has previously been a professor at the Université de Montréal (where he held the position of the Canada Research Chair in International Migration Law) and at the Université du Québec à Montréal. Outside of the academic world, François has been the vice-president of the Canadian Human Rights Foundation (now, Equitas), and has participated in observer missions in El Salvador and the occupied Palestinian territories. François is the author of five books, including *Forced Migration and Global Processes – A View from Forced Migration Studies*. His research interests include migrant rights (particularly those of irregular and vulnerable migrants) and the governance mechanisms for global migration.

**Dr Azfar Khan: Senior Migration Policy Specialist, ILO Regional Office in Beirut, Lebano.** Azfar Khan is the Senior Migration Policy Specialist for the Arab States based at the ILO Regional Office in Beirut, Lebanon. He has undertaken many assignments with the ILO, since joining the organisation in 1995. He has served as: a Technical Advisor on Population and Poverty with the ILO’s Development Policy Department (1995-1999); as Development Economist with the In Focus Programme on Socio-Economic Security (2000-2006); and as Senior Migration Policy Advisor in the International Migration Programme (2006-2009). Prior to joining the ILO, he was a Senior Lecturer at the Institute of Social Studies in the Hague, the Netherlands, where he also served as the Convenor of the UNFPA Global Programme of Training in Population and Development (1989-1995). He has written and published widely in the area of social policy, employment and poverty issues, labour migration and on the general interface of demographic and macroeconomic issues. He holds a B.A (Honours in Economics) and a M.A. (Economics) from McGill University, Montreal, Canada and a Doctor of Philosophy from the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex.

**Hélène Harroff-Tavel: Associate Expert, International Labour Organisation.** Hélène Harroff-Tavel holds a Bachelor of Political Science from Georgetown University, and a dual Master’s degree of International Affairs and Public Health from Columbia University. She has worked for the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in Switzerland, the International Rescue Committee in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Save the Children in Nepal. She worked as an Associate Expert on Migration at the International Labour Organisation’s Regional Office for Arab States, based in Beirut, Lebanon. Alix is co-author of the ILO’s

major report on forced labour in the Middle-East - *Tricked and Trapped*. She currently holds a hybrid position between the Labour Migration Branch and the Special Action Programme on Forced Labour and Trafficking, as Programme and Operations Officer.

**Vani Saraswathi**. Vani Saraswathi is a senior journalist who worked in India till 1999 and then moved to Qatar. Her main areas of interest are human rights, women's development and child abuse. In Qatar she has written, and as an Editor featured, several articles on the rights and abuse of migrant workers. She has experience in writing for trade journals print is head of publishing for an online publication.

**Alix Nasri, SDC**. Alix Nasri holds a Bachelor of International Relations from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, and a Master degree of Humanitarian Law and Human Rights from the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights. Alix worked as a Consultant on Human Trafficking and Forced Labour at the International Labour Organisation – and is co-author of its major report *Tricked and Trapped*. Alix currently works with SDC on their programs related to migrant workers in the MENA region. Ms. Nasri previously worked for the NGO Heartland Alliance where she was responsible for implementing several protection programs for vulnerable Iraqi refugees, including victims of human trafficking and survivors of gender based violence.

**Ellene Sana, Executive Director, Centre for Migrant Advocacy, Philippines**. Ellene is the Executive Director of the Centre for Migrant Advocacy (CMA) in Manila. She is also co-coordinator of ICOFVR and coordinator of Philippine Solidarity for East Timor (Phil-Seti). Ellene has over 20 years experience of working to advance respect for human rights in the Philippines and internationally. Ellene is a regular resource person in Congressional meetings and public hearings on migration-related policies and issues in the Philippines; she is also the main spokesperson of CMA regarding migration-related issues. The Centre for Migrant Advocacy engages with policies at various levels - locally, with local government officials and community-based groups; nationally, with policy makers and executive agencies; and regionally, with organisation like ASEAN, ILO, ILC and UNHCR.

**William Gois; Regional Coordinator, Migrant Forum in Asia based in the Philippines**. William Gois is the Regional Coordinator of the Migrant Forum in Asia, a regional network of migrants' organizations, NGOs, advocates, grassroots organizations and trade unions working to promote the rights and well being of migrant workers and members of their families. He also chairs Migrants Rights International (MRI), an international non-government organization with consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Over the last twenty years, he has been at the forefront of international advocacy efforts engaging and influencing international and multilateral organisations to promote equitable and fair migration and development policies. He works closely with UN Treaty Bodies, with the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Committee on Migrant Workers and other special mandates. He also heads a team to the International Labour Conference (ILC) of the International Labour Organization to monitor the development of labour migration issues within the ILO framework. The last such team was during the June 2011 ILC where the Conference adopted ILO Convention 189, a landmark Convention that recognizes domestic workers as workers with the same rights as other workers.

**Patrick Earle, Executive Director, Diplomacy Training Program (DTP)**. Patrick Earle has over 20 years experience working in the human rights movement, both in Australia and internationally. Since 2003 Patrick has been the Executive Director of the Diplomacy Training Program, and in this role has developed and facilitated human rights courses in the region – including new thematic courses focusing on human rights business, human rights and migrant workers and the rights of Indigenous peoples. From 1996 until 2003, Patrick worked with the Human Rights Council of Australia with a focus on its groundbreaking project on the relationship between human rights and development and is co-author of its report “The Rights Way to Development – Policy and Practice” published in 2001. Prior to that Patrick worked for Amnesty International in London and produced their first International Campaigning Manual. Patrick is on the Steering Committee of UNSW’s Initiative on Health and Human Rights, a member of the Human Rights Council of Australia, and Visiting Fellow at the Faculty of Law at UNSW.