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Summary Overview of the Compilation of Checklist of Vientiane Declaration on Skills Mobility, Recognition, and Development for Migrant Workers

**The Twenty First ASEAN Senior Labour Officials Meeting
(21st SLOM)**

21-22 October 2025, Siem Reap, Cambodia

5.3 ASEAN CONSENSUS ON THE PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF THE RIGHTS OF MIGRANT WORKERS

Summary Overview of the Completed Checklist of Vientiane Declaration on Skills Mobility, Recognition and Development for Migrant Workers

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Vientiane Declaration on Skills Mobility, Recognition and Development for Migrant Workers underscores the importance of strengthening regional cooperation to advance skills recognition, mobility, and fair recruitment in ASEAN. To support its implementation, the ASEAN Member States (AMS) were requested to complete a checklist with “Yes (Y)”, “No (N)”, or “Not Applicable (NA)” responses. The checklist aims to:
 - Enable self-assessment of national policies and practices;
 - Identify needs and actions to strengthen facilitative measures; and
 - Establish a baseline for regional monitoring and regular updates.
2. As of the 21st SLOM, all 10 AMS have completed the checklist and submitted their responses to the ASEAN Secretariat, which have been tabulated under three main sections:
 - Skills Mobility Recognition in Admission Policies and Recruitment (11 questions);
 - Skills Development, Assessment, and Certification (13 questions); and
 - Fair Recruitment and Decent Work (5 questions).

The Declaration:

https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/22a-Final_Vientiane-Declaration-on-Skills-Mobility-Recognition-and-Development.pdf

The Checklist:

https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/22b-Final_Checklist-of-Declaration-on-Skills-Mobility-Recognition-and-Development-for-Migrant-Workers.pdf

3. As guided by the Checklist, the ASEAN Secretariat (ASEC) will compile and submit the self-assessment results of AMS to SLOM, ACMW, SLOM-WG and ATC for information. The compilation will be disclosed to them only. ASEC will produce a summary overview and submit it to SLOM for consideration and endorsement. The summary will be submitted by the SLOM Chair to the ALMM for adoption. The summary will be made public and uploaded to the ASEAN website (www.asean.org) following ALMM's adoption.

II. SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

The following provides a summary overview of responses for each section.

Skills Mobility Recognition in Admission Policies and Recruitment

4. Overall responses to 27 questions (including sub-items) by all ten AMS: 132 answers of “Yes”, 60 answers of “No”, 30 answers of “N.A.”, and 52 no answers were reported.
5. All AMS have admission and labour migration policies in place to facilitate inbound or outbound labour migration at all skills levels (Q1: 10 Yes).
6. All AMS have mechanisms in place for skills recognition for all migrant workers in admission policies and recruitment processes (Q2: 10 Yes).
7. Based on the answers of AMS, specific mechanisms had significant variation across countries, notably:
 - Question 2A: AMS reported the recognition of qualifications through the ASEAN Qualification Reference Framework (AQRF) and ASEAN Guiding Principles for Quality Assurance and Recognition of Competency Certification Systems (AGP).
 - Question 2E: Five AMS reported the use of ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs).
 - Questions 2B, 2C, 2D, 2F, 2G: AMS reported the use of mutual recognition of skills arrangements between COO and COD, skills assessment and certification against COD standards, industry-based skills recognition, regional skills certificates, and specified process and licensing for restricted occupations. (Question 2A: 6 Yes. Question 2B: 4 Yes. Question 2C: 2 Yes. Question 2D: 4 Yes. Question 2E: 5 Yes. Question 2F: 2 Yes. Question 2G: 1 Yes)
 - Question 3A: Six AMS require specification of skills, qualification and experience for jobs taken up by migrant workers, reflecting recognition of skills as part of admission processes.
 - Question 3B: Six AMS have review process of migrant workers' skills and experience in the job matching and recruitment process. Question 4A: Five AMS have bilateral labour migration agreements or similar instruments (i.e., Bilateral Labour Agreements (BLMAs), Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs), or Skills Mobility Partnerships (SMPs)) to facilitate inclusive, fair and gender-responsive recruitment and decent employment at all skills levels.
 - Question 4B: Six AMS reported integrating skills development (including career progression and life-long learning), recognition, assessment, and certification explicitly into these agreements while others do not, reflecting a gap in mainstreaming skills into regional/bilateral cooperation frameworks.
 - Question 5A: Seven AMS reported that admission policies consider domestic skills and labour shortages, to inform policies and quotas for admission of migrant workers, negotiation of agreements, and design of training programmes in COO and COD.
 - Question 5B: Six AMS marked “Not Applicable (N.A.),” indicating limited integration of outmigration impacts in admission policy planning. This

suggests that outmigration considerations are not widely embedded in current practices. Only two AMS answered “Yes”.

- Question 6A: Eight AMS collaborate and partner with employers, workers, and civil society organisations to enhance skills mobility, recognition and development for migrant workers, demonstrating strong tripartite or multi-stakeholder involvement in shaping admission and skills recognition frameworks.
- Question 6B: Eight AMS reported collaboration and partnerships at regional level with international organisations and other relevant entities.
- Question 7: Seven AMS exchange labour market information on in-demand skills and occupations with other AMS, supporting evidence-based migration governance.

Skills Development, Assessment, and Certification

8. Overall responses to 13 questions by all ten AMS: 81 answers of “Yes”, 29 answers of “No”, 4 answers of “N.A.”, and 18 no answers were reported.
9. No question that was answered with “Yes” by all ten AMS. There are eight questions with “Yes” answers by seven to nine AMS. The other five questions were answered “Yes” by three to five AMS only.
10. Based on the answers of AMS, specific mechanisms had significant variation across countries, notably:
 - Question 8A: Eight AMS confirmed access to skills development, assessment, and certification for inbound migrant workers.
 - Question 8B: Five AMS have provisions for pre-departure and reintegration support for access to skills development, assessment, and certification.
 - Question 8C: Seven AMS have mechanisms to disseminate information on skills development, assessment, and certification.
 - Question 8D: Eight AMS have mechanisms in place to prevent scam courses and false advertisement for accreditation.
 - Question 8E: Three AMS have incentive structures for employers and skills upgrading for workers specific to COD. The other five AMS answered “No”.
 - Question 9: AMS are divided on whether legal and policy frameworks explicitly facilitate migrant workers’ access to skills development, assessment, certification, career development and life-long learning. This reflects uneven levels of institutional support for inclusion. Only four AMS answered “Yes”.
 - Question 10: Seven AMS have TVET and skills development provisions aligning with the labour market demands which may change due to technological advancements and just transition.
 - Question 11: Eight AMS have inclusive and gender-responsive skills development, assessment and certification services, indicating regional alignment on this principle.
 - Question 12A: Nine AMS ensure that their skills standards, curricula, and assessment criteria available for occupations are open to migrant workers, reflecting efforts to support regional skills mobility.

- Question 12B: Eight AMS actively share information on national skills standards and quality assurance systems with other AMS, which strengthens transparency and comparability across the region.
- Question 13: Seven AMS have mechanisms for recognition of prior learning (RPL) in place, but not yet universal. Some AMS may still lack policies to formally validate skills acquired through informal or non-formal means.
- Question 14: Five AMS have not collected data on usage of skills development, assessment and certification services disaggregated by migrants and non-migrants. Only three AMS answered “Yes”.
- Question 15: Two AMS have mechanisms in place to require and encourage employers to issue an end-of-employment certificate for migrant workers.

Fair Recruitment and Decent Work

11. Overall responses to 5 questions by all ten AMS: 39 answers of “Yes”, 6 answers of “No”, 1 answer of “N.A.”, and 4 no answers were reported.
12. All AMS have policies on decent work regardless of the skills levels of migrant workers, with almost all AMS have monitoring mechanisms on fair and ethical recruitment, employment, and fair wages and benefits, and provisions of skills development and career pathways for migrant workers.
13. Based on the answers of AMS, the significant variation across countries is concerning the party to cover skills training, assessment and certification costs.
 - Question 16: Five AMS reported that the costs of skills training, assessment and certification required by employers as part of the recruitment process are not covered by migrant workers. Two AMS answered that those are covered by migrant workers.
 - Question 17A: Nine AMS have adopted mechanisms in place to ensure that all migrant workers’ wages and benefits are fair and commensurate with their skills, qualification and experience.
 - Question 17B: All ten AMS have policies on decent work regardless of the skills levels of migrant workers, highlighting a shared recognition of its importance in ensuring migrant workers’ well-being and protection.
 - Question 18: Nine AMS have measures in place to provide pathways to career development opportunities for migrant workers, including their right to change employers.
 - Question 19: Nine AMS have established monitoring mechanisms on fair and ethical recruitment and employment as well as provisions of skills development and services, ensuring implementation of policies and accountability.

III. CONCLUSION

14. The overview indicates that ASEAN has made notable progress in aligning policies and frameworks to support skills mobility, recognition, and fair recruitment. Key achievements include widespread recognition of admission policies, availability of training and certification mechanisms, and adoption of fair recruitment standards.

15. However, gaps remain in areas such as:

- Consistent implementation of recognition of prior learning and portability of skills;
- Employer incentives for investing in skills development; and
- Financing mechanisms to reduce costs borne by migrant workers.

16. The overview highlights opportunities for regional cooperation to address these gaps, build on good practices, and strengthen collective monitoring. Establishing a baseline through this checklist provides a valuable reference point for tracking progress and initiating potential regional initiatives to support AMS in addressing gaps and advancing the objectives of the Vientiane Declaration.

Requested Action:

- **This summary is submitted for SLOM's endorsement and subsequent submission to ALMM for adoption.**
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