International Migration in the Asia-Pacific Region

With reference to the Development Account Project: Strengthening national capacities to deal with international migration

Donovan Storey
Chief, Social Policy and Population Section
Social Development Division
United Nations Economic & Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)
The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

- The ESCAP region comprises 62 member states – 58 are regional members
- The region consists of both countries of origin and destination, with several countries serving as both
Major hubs for labour migration: South-South dimensions

1. To West Asia (Gulf Cooperation Council Countries). As much as 2/3rds of total
2. To South-East Asia (Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, Singapore)
3. To North-East Asia (Japan, Hong Kong, Republic of Korea and Taiwan Province of China)
4. From Central Asian countries to the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan
   Also, important flows from the Pacific Islands, especially to Australia, New Zealand, USA
Main activities under the Development Account Project: Strengthening national capacities to deal with international migration

– **Regional workshop on “Strengthening National Capacities to Deal with International Migration”, Bangkok, 22-23 April, 2010**

– **Asia-Pacific Preparatory Meeting for the Global Forum on Migration and Development, Bangkok, 22-24 September 2010**

– **Bi-regional workshop on “Strengthening Dialogue to make migration work for development in the ESCAP and ESCWA regions”, Beirut, 28-20 June 2011**

• In support of these meetings, several research papers on migration were commissioned
Key recommendations resulting from ESCAP activities

• Countries of origin/destination need to develop comprehensive and complimentary policies on international migration
• Remittances can have greater impact by improving regular channels for transfer and investment
• Recruitment and deployment costs must be reduced: including greater attention to the role of private agencies
• Employer-tied work permits should be reformed where they impinge on the rights of migrants
Key recommendations resulting from ESCAP activities

• The gender dimensions of labour migration should be given specific attention
• There is a need to enhance sex-disaggregated data collection, dissemination and analysis to support this
• Irregular migration can be addressed through reducing the cost and processes of regular migration
• The protection and rights of migrant workers must be guaranteed throughout the cycle: recruitment, deployment & return
Present ESCAP activities on international migration

- Co-chair with IOM of the Thematic Working Group on Migration including Human Trafficking
- *Situation Report on International Migration in South and South-West Asia* (Dhaka launch April, 2012)
- The ‘*Saphan Siang*’ (Bridge of Voices) campaign highlights migrant worker experiences in Thailand through all community voices
- Strengthening the online Migration Information System in Asia (MISA) with the Scalabrini Migration Centre, Manila
Future ESCAP activities on international migration

• The Sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference (APPC) (2013)
  – Held every ten years, the APPC has been recognized as a vital forum for the forging and strengthening of partnerships across the region in the field of population and development, including migration
Thank you

http://www.unescap.org/sdd