



Concept Note
Seminar on Labour Rights of Domestic Workers
16 July 2008
Century Park Hotel, Bangkok

Organised by
Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
HomeNet Thailand
Draft as of 16 June 2008

Background

Domestic work is an important source of income for women, especially those from rural backgrounds with low levels of education. Care work done by these domestic workers helps shoulder burden of other working people and allows them to efficiently perform their economic activities. Care and domestic work is a necessary part of the whole economy but has been still undervalued. Most workers working in this sector are one of the most disadvantaged and powerless as they are women, poor, low educated, migrant, etc. Consequently, they are not regarded as workers and are not entitled to labour protection.

According to labour law surveyed in 65 countries conducted by the ILO, only 19 countries provide legal protection for domestic workers. However, their rights provided are relatively lower than those of formal workers. Internationally and regionally, many labour organisations and civil society groups have increasingly recognised on the vulnerability of domestic workers and urged for their labour rights. Progress has been made as the Governing Body of the ILO has agreed to discuss standard setting for this group in its meeting held in 2010.

In Thailand, there is no labour protection for domestic workers such as working hours, holidays, wage, etc. Information on their situation is also limited and very few organisations are working on their labour rights. This seminar; therefore, would like to provide an opportunity through which all stakeholders could come together to share information, make this issue more visible, and discuss further steps in enhancing labour protection of domestic workers.

Objectives

1. To share and exchange information on the situation of domestic workers and their labour rights in international and national context.
2. To help increase visibility of the issue to related organisations in order to gain more of their commitment.
3. To discuss guidelines of further actions in improving labour protection of domestic workers.

Target Group

NGOs working on labour, gender and child rights; Trade unionists; labour officials; academics; and other related organisations and interested individuals, altogether 50 participants.

Date and Venue

16 July 2008 at the Century Park Hotel, Bangkok

Organisers

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
HomeNet Thailand

Draft Programme

08.30-09.00	Registration
09.00-09.30	Opening and introduction
09.30-10.10	The international situation of domestic workers (labour standards for domestic workers, international/regional situation, good practices in other countries) - Mr. Tim De Meyer, ILO Bangkok SRO (req.) - Representative of Committee for Asian Women (CAW) Moderation by Ms. Rakawin Leechanavanichpan, ILO Bangkok SRO (req.)
10.10-10.30	plenary discussion
10.30-10.45	Break
10.45-12.00	The situation of domestic workers in Thailand (overview of the situation in Thailand, movement for legal protection, organising, key problems and needs) - Dr. Sureeporn Punpuang, Social and Population Research Institute, Mahidol University (req.) - Ms. Kanokwan Moratsatian, Foundation for Child Development - Representative of Foundation for the Health and Knowledge of Ethnic Labour (req.) Moderation by Ms. Poonsap Tulaphan, HomeNet Thailand
12.00-12.30	Plenary discussion
12.30-13.30	Lunch
13.30-15.00	Discussion- Guidelines and further actions for labour protection

- Mr. Charit Meesit, labour lawyer
 - Department of Labour Welfare and Protection (req.)
 - MP, Standing Committee on Labour (req.)
 - Ms. Wilaiwan Saetia, TLSC (req.)
- Moderation by

15.00-16.00

Plenary discussion

16.00-16.10

Conclusion and closing