

Session 1.4 : Improving Health Services and Social Protection for Women Migrant Workers

Sponsors: Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA), Migrants Rights International (MRI) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

Schedule: 25 September/ 1:00-3:00pm/ Panay Function Room

Session Abstract

The right to health is a fundamental right for every human being, indivisible from the whole body of human rights and entitled to all without discrimination. For migrant workers and their families, the right to health is provided for and protected by international human rights instruments regardless of the migrant's immigration status.

International laws specifically mandate that migrants are entitled to "the enjoyment of the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health." However the realities migrants face prior to employment and at the workplace are different. Migrant Workers and Members of their families are most often placed in situations where their right to health is violated and/or deprived. Language and cultural barriers, limitations in mobility due to the nature of their work, unfair labour practices, lack of decent working and living conditions are among the challenges that infringe on this particular human right of migrants.

The workshop will explore the various issues that impact migrants' right to health, in particular access to health services, a gendered and rights based understanding of and framework using existing international human rights instruments/standards for migrant workers' health and well being. The workshop will present specific case studies from Europe and Asia.

Session Objectives

1. Develop an understanding of the current trends and issues affecting migrants', especially women migrants' right to health in both countries of origin and destination;
2. Identify obstacles on migrants' access to health in countries of destination using with specific case studies from Europe and Asia;
3. Develop a gendered and rights based understanding of and framework using existing international human rights instruments/standards for migrant workers' health and well being; and
4. Identify good practices in promoting and protecting migrants' right to health and well being in countries of origin and destination with specific case studies from Europe and Asia.