

## Background

SDG indicator 10.7.1 on recruitment cost paid by migrant workers for jobs abroad are among a set of SDG migration-related indicators to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration, including through well-managed migration policies (10.7). Recruitment costs paid by migrant workers to recruitment agents and other actors involved in the recruitment process, on top of the fees paid by the employers, are a major drain on migrant workers incomes and remittances. The ILO General principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment clearly reiterate the principle that “no fees or related costs should be charged to or otherwise born by workers or jobseekers”. The UN Statistical community should endeavour to eliminate recruitment fees born, through reporting data on this indicator.

Not surprisingly, the region where data collection on the indicator has advanced the most is Asia and the Pacific (AP), as labour migration toward destination countries, primarily in the MENA region and other states within the AP region are mostly organized through a complex and well establish system of private recruitment agencies (formal and informal). The recruitment costs for migrant workers in this context tend to be more evident and of greater saliences to its policymakers. Although other regions have not progressed as far in embracing the indicator due primarily to resource constraints (budget and staff), NSOs have generally shown a high degree of interest on labour migration and remittance statistics and in capacity building programmes covering various dimensions of migration, including recruitment costs and its methodology for compilation. This interest has helped the production of labour migration statistics in general. It is envisaged that there will be a renew interest on producing migration data including the statistics on recruitment costs.

The global COVID-19 pandemic is likely to further increase recruitment costs as unscrupulous agencies or agents take advantage of individuals desperate for securing employment and may further increase interest in producing indicators on this important area. Many of the statistical operations which were in the pipeline for the production of this indicator were interrupted by COVID-19 due to lockdown measures. Face-to-face interviews in household surveys are not allowed or respondents are reluctant or afraid to participate since there is need to comply with social distance measures. Therefore, new methods like rapid assessments or other types of surveys will have to be explored, developed and implemented within the framework of the agreed methodology developed for the SDG indicator to the new and evolving scenario. The pandemic has prevented countries from the inclusion of this indicator in their work plans for this year. It is envisaged that once normality resumes, countries will undertake the required field work. However, progress is expected to be uneven across region, since there are regions where the topic is not particularly relevant to them.

## The countries where the recruitment costs survey was/is being conducted using the SDG

### Methodology:

- **Cambodia:** just completed its 2019 LFS, which includes a module on SDG 10.7.1
- **Bangladesh:** A recruitment costs survey conducted and completed in 2020 with the ILO’s technical and financial support. Bangladesh has also agreed to include the SDG 10.7.1 module in their next LFS.
- **Vietnam:** SDG module in the Labour Force Survey conducted in October, November and December 2019. **Average recruitment costs 8.7 w/m**
- **Indonesia:** A short module attached to their February 2020 LFS: results under analysis.
- **Lao PDR:** survey completed. **Average costs: 0.7 w/m**
- **Mexico:** A cross-border survey was conducted in 2018 by COLEF in collaboration with INEGI.
- **Ghana:** The results of a pilot survey using the methodology has just been launched. **Average costs 2 w/m, with significant gender and sector differences.**

The government agencies are enthusiastic to work with the ILO and conduct a full-fledged survey on recruitment cost. The funding issue is being discussed with the ILO's REFRAME project.

- **Philippines:** The recruitment cost measured using the module in their 2019 Survey of Overseas Filipinos (SOF): However, the report and data have not received yet.
- **Maldives:** The recruitment survey was conducted as a module attached to 2019-20 HIES. The report and/or data have not received yet.

The countries planning to conduct recruitment costs survey in the next 2 years. The ILO continue discussions with these countries:

- **Pakistan and Malaysia:** negotiations are undergoing to conduct the survey starting in the fall 2020. Funding has been secured from ILO-REFRAME, KNOMAD and other projects, provided that work can start soon.
- **Myanmar:** A module has been integrated into the LFS Questionnaire and the survey will be implemented in January-March 2021.
- **Brunei Darussalam,**
- **Fiji,**
- **South Korea,**
- **Mongolia,**
- **Samoa,**
- **Thailand**
- **Morocco.**

The following countries have also plan to implement stand-alone LFS with ILO support, and we will include the short module in there when resources are available for the LFS:

- **Solomon Islands,**
- **Timor-Leste,**
- **Vanuatu.**
- **Nepal,** discussions ongoing with ILO to implement the module in Q4 2021.
- **Sri Lanka:** The planned survey to be conducted as a module to the LFS could not be carried out due to staff's heavy involvement in the Census preparation. The ILO has already assisted in developing sampling methodology for the LFS. But they offered to start pre-testing in an effort to try to include the module in 2021, However, this was before Covid\_19

Capacity building trainings took places, where the officials from the NOSs and MOLs were presented the SDG Methodology:

- **National Capacity Building Workshop on Labour Statistics highlighting the 20<sup>th</sup> ICLS on Labour Migration Statistics: Lagos, Nigeria, 18-20 February 2020:** There were about 85 participants from the African countries
- **Workshop on International Labour Migration Statistics in Africa, Tunis, 4-6 November 2019, :** Conducted within the framework of JLM Project with 114 participants from all African countries.
- **The 4<sup>th</sup> Workshop on ILMS by ILO-KOSTAT (30 October ~ 1 November, Daejeon),** 27 Participants from 20 countries in the Asia-Pacific region.
- **The 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of Working group on international labour migration statistics, Turin, 12-14 June 2018:** The methodology was presented to the experts participated in the meeting of the working group.
- **E-Learning Course on Measuring and Analyzing Labour Migration, 26 October – 01 December 2020:** Around 45 participants are to be expected to participate globally.

- **Directrices Medicion Indicador sobre Costos de Reclutamiento ODS 10.7,1, 14 Nov 2019, Santiago, Chile:** The participants were from Paraguay, Uruguay, Chile, Perú, Ecuador, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, El Salvador, Belice, Cuba, República Dominicana and México.
- **Conferencia Regional sobre Migración 2-6 Sep. 2019, Guatemala:** Participants from: Belize, Canada, Costa Rica, El Salvador, U.S, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and the Dominican Republic, were trained on the concepts, definitions and methodology of SDG 10.7.1.
- **Seminar Global Review of the Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) 1 Sep. 2020, South Asia.** Participants from all the world discussed progress on migration data and advocated for prioritization based on the already agreed migration-related SDG indicators. They demanded collection of SDG 10.7.1 indicator since they have observed increase in recruitment costs due to COVID.