

**KNOMAD Thematic Working Group on Low-Skilled Labor Migration
ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific**

**Summary of
Workshop on Migration Cost Surveys
Bangkok, Thailand
(held on February 9-11, 2015)**

1. This note reports the main discussions of the workshop, jointly organised by the World Bank’s KNOMAD Thematic Working Group on Low-skilled Labor Migration and the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, and held in Bangkok, Thailand on February 9-11, 2015. The workshop brought together local researchers and ILO staff who will be involved in the migration costs surveys in Ethiopia, India, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan and the Philippines as well as experts (see Annex I and II for the workshop agenda and the participant list).
2. The workshop aimed to build the capacity of the researchers to conduct computer-based interviews, and to discuss survey strategies including migration cost survey questionnaire and survey sampling methods. The workshop program was divided into two components: (i) training on how to set up and operate the World Bank’s Survey Solutions –Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing system (CAPI), including “hands-on” exercise on doing interviews using tablets, and (ii) discussion of the sampling framework in each interview country. The workshop/ training was a collaborative effort between the KNOMAD, ILO Asia Pacific and the World Bank DECCT.
3. The overarching goal of KNOMAD’s work on this migration cost is to build a migration cost database that is comparable across migration corridors. This work would help identify the structure of worker-paid migration cost and better understand how workers finance their migration cost. Developing a migration cost database is the first step toward sound policy recommendations to reduce migration costs and setting a migration cost reduction target as a post-2015 development agenda. Reduction of migration cost would benefit all parties involved and is expected to increase the amount of remittances to family members left behind.
4. Three conclusions emerged from this workshop: First, the World Bank’s Survey Solutions – CAPI system is versatile, can improve the quality of surveys, and can significantly reduce the data-processing time. Second, as the system involves various components, training all parties involved in surveys is critical to fully harvest the benefits the system offers – at the very initial stage as well as after field testing. Third, in order to ensure that the data collected through surveys are comparable across the countries, it is important to adopt a sample screening criteria that apply to all survey countries, while a sampling framework can be country-specific with a combination of various sampling methods.
5. Participants learned benefits of using the CAPI technology of Survey Solutions in conducting surveys. CAPI has evolved over time through reflecting lessons learned from field surveys. It aims to be user-friendly, while controlling the quality of surveys at different levels – headquarter and supervisors. Benefits include the following: it reduces errors by establishing relevant conditions and

validations for a given question in the questionnaire, allows for collecting various types of data – including photos, GPS and documentations, and is time and cost effective compared to pen-and-paper surveys. CAPI allows off-line interviews but requires internet connections in order to transmit interview data from an interviewer tablet to a designated server.

6. Participants acquired skills to operate the CAPI system and as a result, are better equipped to undertake the migration cost surveys using the system. Through hands-on exercise, they became familiar with various components of the CAPI system – (a) designing a questionnaire, (b) managing interviews at different levels (headquarter, supervisors and interviewers) and controlling the quality of interviews (including assigning their respective roles), (c) importing questionnaires, undertaking interviews and sending them to a designated server using a tablet, and (d) exporting and processing interview data (in Excel or Stata files). Nonetheless, further training of survey leaders and surveyors may be needed after respective field testing and this need can be somewhat addressed through video conferences.

7. The workshop identified a set of sample screening criteria that apply to all survey corridors. The criteria include the following: (i) low-skilled migrants who performed low-skill jobs (as defined by ILO Skill Level 1; expanding it to ILO Skill Level 2 for surveying workers in the manufacturing sector in Malaysia) in the destination country, irrespective of the level of their education attainment; (ii) it is limited to jobs in the three sectors – construction, agriculture and domestic work, while this can be relaxed to include the manufacturing sector for surveys in Malaysia; (iii) for returnee surveys, returnees refer to those who left the home country in 2011 or after (including those visiting home on vacation); for the surveys at the destination country, sample is restricted to those who arrived within the past one year with a possibility of relaxing it to two years for the Malaysia surveys; and (iv) the survey shall be conducted only with legal migrants who left the home country with a work visa/ permit.

8. A sampling frame can vary by survey country: list-based (Pakistan, Malaysia, Ethiopia), airport-based (India and Nepal), and area-based (the Philippines). Sampling methods would be a combination of stratification, random, systematic and cluster sampling, depending on the country. Snowball sampling might be effective for surveying domestic workers, given limited accessibility to such workers. The workshop noted that the budget constraint may also influence the choice of sampling methods. In identifying the most appropriate method, it will be important to take into account the migration patterns and characteristics, including regional concentration of migrants and cost variations across regions in the country of origin. In order to ensure this, the workshop suggested that the survey teams conduct appropriate preparatory work on reviewing, among others, data related to migration stock and flows and migrant profiles as well as existing literature on migration/ recruitment costs and regimes.

9. The workshop highlighted the need to minimize possible sample selection bias. In this context, the Philippine survey team shall include not only rehires to Qatar but also all other returnees from Qatar in its sample. The work in Ethiopia shall benefit from the ILO's ongoing work on profiling returnees from Saudi Arabia; the team highlighted a potential selection bias in limiting the sample to legal migrants: most legal migrants tend to be women while the majority of male returnees had illegal status in Saudi Arabia.

10. Immediate next steps include the following: (i) the survey teams shall carry out pre-testing of the latest version of the questionnaire, test connectivity between interviewer and the supervisor, and simultaneously train their respective survey team members including interviewers; (ii) the KNOMAD

team will finalize the questionnaire after pre-testing; (iii) once the questionnaire is finalized, the survey teams shall also finalize its translation; (iv) the CAPI team shall advise of the most suitable tablet for data collection; and (v) preliminary country reports should be made available end May. The findings from the surveys shall be presented at a conference in Seoul late June, in collaboration with HRD Korea.

11. The workshop benefited from the participation of the ESCAP statistician who committed to his further engagement with the survey teams, as well as Rapid Asia, a consultancy firm that does surveys.

Annex I: Agenda

February 9, 2015

08:30 Registration

08:45 Welcome

Part I. Training: Survey Solutions – CAPI

09:00 Benefits of using CAPI technology and advantages of Survey Solutions compared to other CAPI products

10:30 Coffee break

10:45 Main components and functionality of Survey Solutions

12:15 Lunch break

1:30 Basics of questionnaire development and testing using Survey Solutions Designer and Tester

3:00 Coffee break

3:15 Survey Management functionality

5:00 Adjourn

February 10.

Part I. Training Continued

8:30 Data exports and data management with Survey Solutions

10:00 Coffee break

10:15 Hands-on exercise in working with various components of the system

12:00 Lunch break

1:30 Hands-on exercise continued

5:30 Adjourn

February 11

Part II. Workshop on sampling framework

09:00 Survey strategy, by Manolo Abella.

10:15 Coffee break

10:30 Sampling framework for surveys in Malaysia and Singapore, by Lim Ai Lee and Ivy Kwek,
PE Research

12:00 Lunch break

1:30 Sampling framework for surveys in India, Nepal and the Philippines, by Prabhu Prasad
Mohapatra, Tara Bhusal, and Carl Rookie Daquio

3:00 Coffee break

3:15 Sampling framework for surveys in Pakistan and Ethiopia, by Anna Engblom and Aida Awel

5:00 Wrap-up and next steps

5:15 Adjourn

Annex II: List of Participants

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