

## **Migrant Workers in a People-Centered ASEAN Community and ASEAN-Japan Cooperation**

*VANNARITH CHHEANG*

MIGRATION IS ONE of the key political, economic, and social phenomena in Asia. Southeast Asia in particular serves as both an outbound and inbound source of migration, and the number of people crossing local and national borders is on the rise. This trend is mainly driven by demographic differences, development gaps, and regional integration. As ASEAN is moving toward becoming a people-based community in which people are the key benefactors of the regional community-building process, it needs to integrate and concretize different aspects of social and economic policies to realize the interests of the people of ASEAN. In that context, clearly “the integration of migration issues and labor and social protection issues is integral to progressing the social dimension of ASEAN.”<sup>1</sup> Currently, however, ASEAN migrant workers are facing numerous difficulties and challenges concerning their rights and dignity.<sup>2</sup>

Being aware of those challenges and difficulties, ASEAN and its dialogue partners have been promoting regional cooperation and institution building to develop a migration policy and an integrated transnational migration governance regime. For instance, the protection of migrant workers is stated as an objective in the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Blueprint and the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers. Similarly, in the ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint, it mentions the need to address human trafficking through regional cooperation. And within the framework of ASEAN-Japan cooperation, there is an ASEAN-Japan Plan of Action (2011–2015) in which the protection of migrant workers is incorporated under the framework of social justice.

This chapter attempts to examine the patterns and characteristics of migration in Southeast Asia and identify the gaps and responses to the issue. It then tries to provide policy recommendations concerning collective and cooperative solutions at both the national and regional levels, especially under the ASEAN-Japan cooperation framework. Given that the nature of and trends in migration are getting more complex and multidimensional, well-coordinated and coherent national and regional migration policies and governance structures are required that include the full participation of all relevant actors (state, market, and civil society). With regard to the existing ASEAN and ASEAN-Japan cooperation framework, more action-oriented policy guidelines are needed to effectively implement the ASCC Blueprint and the ASEAN-Japan Plan of Action 2011–2015 through a holistic approach and from a multi-stakeholder perspective.

## PATTERNS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF MIGRATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Migration within and from Southeast Asia has been increasing over the years in scale, complexity, and dimensionality. It generates significant population redistribution with economic, social, cultural, and political implications. It is argued that “migrants have been central to enduring and significant changes in modern Asian history: to economic and environmental transformations; to the spread of new political ideas and religious practices; to the social and demographic change.”<sup>3</sup> Indeed, migration is one of the most striking and massive transformations that have swept across Southeast Asia.<sup>4</sup>

The first wave of Asian migration started in the 1970s. It involved the migration of millions of short-term contract workers, both skilled and unskilled, from South China, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand to the oil-producing countries in the Middle East. The second wave took place from the 1980s and involved migration from South Asia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Myanmar, and Vietnam to the growing economies of Southeast Asia, such as Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand.<sup>5</sup> The third wave of migration in Southeast Asia is associated with the construction of an ASEAN community-building process, in which the flow of skilled workers is promoted.

The number of international migrants in Asia Pacific in 2010 was estimated to be 31.5 million.<sup>6</sup> There is an increasing trend toward intraregional migration with dynamic and diverse forms. Structural and geographical elements are key factors causing this trend. Structural problems related to the economic and development differential between sending and receiving

countries, and especially the development gap and the uneven progress of the demographic transition across the countries in the region, creates a sharp division between labor-deficit and labor-surplus countries.<sup>7</sup> The lack of job opportunities and the presence of higher incomes in neighboring countries have significantly contributed to the out-migration of hundreds of thousands of people. The major Southeast Asian labor-importing countries rely on guest worker programs to solve their labor-shortage problems. The mismatch between the origin country's labor supply and its economic capacity to absorb them pushes the governments to export their labor forces in order to avoid social and economic difficulties at home. In addition, the need on the part of the receiving countries to provide labor-intensive services and production opens up opportunities for migrant workers from the region to fill in these sectors as well. There are different types and flows of migrant workers, but irregular migration surpasses regular migration.

State policy on migration and development planning, formal and informal institutions and mechanisms in facilitating international migration, social networks, and the immigration industry including labor brokers, contractors, and transporters, all contribute to increase the flow of migrant workers both legally and illegally. Legal recruitment is done through licensed recruitment agencies while illegal recruitment generally utilizes intensive social networking and black market channel. Southeast Asia is home to sources, transit points, and destinations for international migration. There are both pull and push factors shaping migration flows, including economic disparity, poverty, demographic inequality, labor market fragmentation, political and security issues, national and regional policies, and institutions. Significant development gaps within countries and within the region motivates or even forces people from the least developed economies like Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam (CLMV) to find employment opportunities in more developed countries such as Thailand, Singapore, and Malaysia. Singapore has the highest share of migrants, as one third of its workers are foreigners. The Singapore government encourages the entry of professionals and talents, but limits unskilled migrants and domestic helpers. Malaysia has 2 million migrants in a labor force of 10 million, with Indonesians dominating among construction and plantation workers. Thailand is Southeast Asia's third largest migrant destination, with perhaps 2 million Burmese, Cambodian, and Laotian workers.<sup>8</sup>

Intraregional migration is increasing, especially in the context of regional integration, institutional harmonization (e.g., harmonization of visa policy), regional infrastructure connectivity, labor market information and commercialization. The common characteristics of international migration in Southeast Asia are the feminization of labor migration, increasing

undocumented or irregular migration, and labor exploitation. Subregional labor market hubs are being formed on both maritime and mainland Southeast Asia. Meanwhile, protection mechanisms for the migrant workers—both legal and illegal—have been developed at both the national and regional levels. There is an increasing trend toward strengthening regional institutions such as ASEAN to manage intraregional migration, especially when it comes to issues concerning the promotion and protection of migrant workers and curbing human trafficking. In addition, there is an increasing role for civil society organizations (CSOs) in shaping the norms of regional cooperation on migration.

Migration brings with it many issues and challenges. On the migration continuum, it also generates the issues of human trafficking, smuggling, forced labor migration, and other social and health issues. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), in East and Southeast Asia, irregular migration and human trafficking remain significant challenges, particularly trafficking for sexual exploitation and irregular labor migration movements. In addition, migration-related public health concerns such as tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, and malaria need more collaborative efforts and coordination.<sup>9</sup>

Human trafficking is another key issue in Southeast Asia. According to a report produced by the US State Department on trafficking in persons, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, the Philippines, and Singapore are regarded as countries that do not fully comply with the minimum standards as set forth in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, but are making “significant efforts” to do so (tier 2); Brunei, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam are regarded as countries that do not fully comply, that have a very significant or increasing number of victims, and have failed to provide evidence of increasing efforts (tier 2 watch list); and Burma falls into the worst category (tier 3), in which the government does not fully comply and is not making significant efforts to do so.<sup>10</sup>

There are other national and regional efforts to cope with human trafficking as well. State-driven development agendas, interstate relations, nonstate agents, and the border itself shape anti-trafficking programs and agendas. Counter-trafficking efforts have gained momentum in Southeast Asia in the last decade due to the increasing number of victims stemming from human trafficking and forced labor migration. Partnerships between and among state actors, CSOs, and international and regional organizations have played a significant role in managing international migration in Southeast Asia. Civil society organizations and networks<sup>11</sup> have contributed in promoting dialogues, protecting the rights of migrant workers and the victims of human trafficking, and advocating for the enhancement of norms

of protection for the rights of migrant workers at the national, subregional, and the ASEAN levels. And, as a number of scholars have pointed out, it is critical that further efforts be made to engage nonstate actors, including trade unions, migrant advocacy groups, and other CSOs in discussions of ASEAN social standards and policy.<sup>12</sup>

## ASEAN COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

### **Management and Protection of Migrant Workers**

It is difficult to overcome economic and demographic inequality quickly, and governments are reluctant to limit their exposure to globalization. International migration trends thus reflect what Hugo refers to as “the increasing pervasiveness of globalization, namely migrant social networks and the proliferation of an immigration industry, as well as rapid social, economic and political change.”<sup>13</sup> The remaining policy option for managing migration is to adjust to protect and promote the rights and dignity of migrants.

In order to realize a people-centered ASEAN, the ASCC Blueprint emphasizes protecting the fundamental human rights and dignity of migrant workers. It aims to “facilitate data-sharing on matters related to migrant workers, for the purpose of enhancing policies and programmes concerning migrant workers in both sending and receiving states.” Moreover, it also requests the sending states to “set up policies and procedures to facilitate aspects of migration of workers, including recruitment, preparation for deployment overseas and protection of the migrant workers when abroad as well as repatriation and reintegration to the countries of origin.” The ASCC encourages the receiving states to “facilitate access to resources and remedies through information, training and education, access to justice, and social welfare services as appropriate and in accordance with the legislation and of the receiving state, provided that they fulfill the requirements under applicable laws, regulations, and policies of the said state, bilateral agreements and multilateral treaties.” It also obliges sending states to “establish and promote legal practices to regulate recruitment of migrant workers and adopt mechanisms to eliminate recruitment malpractices through legal and valid contracts, regulation, and accreditation of recruitment agencies and employers, and blacklisting of negligent/unlawful agencies.” Finally, the ASCC aims to “promote capacity building by sharing of information, best practices as well as opportunities and challenges encountered by ASEAN Member Countries in relation to protection and promotion of migrant workers’ rights and welfare.”

In 2004, ASEAN adopted the ASEAN Declaration Against Trafficking in Persons Particularly Women and Children (hereafter, the Declaration Against Trafficking in Persons). The declaration was designed to provide a path “to undertake concerted efforts to effectively address an emerging regional problem, namely the trafficking in persons, particularly women and children.” The declaration encouraged, among others, cooperation and information sharing, safeguarding the dignity and human rights of victims, as well taking actions against individuals and syndicates engaged in human trafficking. Furthermore, in 2007 the ASEAN leaders issued an ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers (hereafter, the Declaration on Migrant Workers). It stipulates, “Both the receiving and sending states shall strengthen the political, economic and social pillars of the ASEAN Community by promoting the full potential and dignity of migrant workers in a climate of freedom, equity, and stability in accordance with the laws, regulations, and policies of respective ASEAN Member Countries.” It also requests the member states to closely cooperate to resolve the cases of undocumented migrant workers and respect the rights and dignity of migrant workers and their families. At the same time, the ASEAN leaders also created the ASEAN Committee on the Implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers in order to ensure the effective implementation of the declaration and facilitate the development of an ASEAN instrument to promote and protect the rights of migrant workers.

The Declaration on Migrant Workers requests that member states commit to

- (a) promote decent, humane, productive, dignified and remunerative employment for migrant workers;
- (b) establish and implement human resource development programmes and reintegration programmes for migrant workers in their countries of origin;
- (c) take concrete measures to prevent or curb the smuggling and trafficking in persons by, among others, introducing stiffer penalties for those who are involved in these activities; and
- (d) facilitate data-sharing on matters related to migrant workers, for the purpose of enhancing policies and programmes concerning migrant workers in both sending and receiving states;
- (e) promote capacity building by sharing of information, best practices as well as opportunities and challenges encountered by ASEAN Member Countries in relation to protection and promotion of migrant workers’ rights and welfare;

- (f) extend assistance to migrant workers of ASEAN Member Countries who are caught in conflict or crisis situations outside ASEAN in the event of need and based on the capacities and resources of the Embassies and Consular Offices of the relevant ASEAN Member Countries, based on bilateral consultations and arrangements;
- (g) encourage international organisations, ASEAN dialogue partners and other countries to respect the principles and extend support and assistance to the implementation of the measures contained in this Declaration; and
- (h) task the relevant ASEAN bodies to follow up on the Declaration and to develop an ASEAN instrument on the protection and promotion of the rights of migrant workers, consistent with ASEAN's vision of a caring and sharing Community, and direct the Secretary-General of ASEAN to submit annually a report on the progress of the implementation of the Declaration to the Summit through the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting.

Since 2007, ASEAN has worked closely with the International Labour Organization (ILO) in managing migration issues in the region. In 2008, ASEAN issued a joint ASEAN-UN press statement to highlight a report on joint efforts to cope with the spread of HIV among mobile populations. Among the report's recommendations were that policymakers should "develop gender-sensitive epidemiological data collection mechanisms; strengthen regional cooperation to ensure a continuum of services for migrants; create and fund coordinated, multi-sectoral, cross-border HIV efforts; allocate sufficient financial and human resources to address migrants' needs; and reinforce policies and commitments on HIV/AIDS."<sup>14</sup>

At the Fifth ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labor in October 2012, some concrete actions to promote and protect the rights of migrant workers were developed. It emphasized the promotion of universal human rights and fundamental principles and rights at work; transparency, accountability, and affordability; information sharing and public awareness; effective monitoring and complaint mechanisms; and the meaningful involvement of multiple stakeholders. Migration governance requires effective recruitment practices and regulations in line with international instruments.

## **Addressing Human Trafficking**

As noted above, ASEAN has introduced and implemented a number of legal and policy instruments that address human trafficking, including the ASEAN Declaration Against Trafficking in Persons (2004), the

ASEAN Practitioner Guidelines on Effective Criminal Justice Responses to Trafficking in Persons (2007), and the ASEAN Declaration on Migrant Workers (2007). As noted in a recent report, “All countries of East and South-East Asia are also active participants in the Regional Ministerial Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime (called the Bali Process) initiated by the governments of Australia and Indonesia in 2002, which serve as co-chairs to the process. The Bali Process draws together 40 countries across the Asia-Pacific region to address the transnational crimes of people smuggling and trafficking through convening targeted participatory workshops that contribute to strengthening regional capacities to combat the crimes and fostering improved intra-regional and interdepartmental cooperation.”<sup>15</sup>

At the subregional level, the six Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) countries—Cambodia, China, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam—signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in October 2004 that laid out a comprehensive framework for cooperation on trafficking, known as the COMMIT Process. The MOU contains operational objectives in the following key areas: (1) policy and cooperation; (2) legal frameworks, law enforcement, and justice; (3) protection, recovery, and reintegration; (4) preventive measures; and (5) mechanisms for implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the MOU. Subsequently, the countries have been developing an associated subregional action plan to clarify the next steps to be taken at the national, bilateral, and subregional levels, including the holding of annual senior officials meetings, to advance the implementation of the MOU.<sup>16</sup>

## ASEAN-JAPAN COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

Extra-regional cooperation was one of the key elements inscribed in the ASEAN Plan of Action for Cooperation on Immigration Matters, which was adopted in 2000. The ASEAN member states were encouraged to

- (a) seek technical assistance from ASEAN dialogue partners and relevant specialized agencies of the United Nations and other international organizations, particularly with regards to training;
- (b) enhance information exchange with ASEAN dialogue partners, regional organizations, relevant specialized agencies of the United Nations and other international organizations, particularly towards the sharing of critical information on the identities, movement and activities of criminal organizations involved in trafficking in persons;

- (c) gain the support of the international community for ASEAN initiative on immigration and relevant matters through the participation of ASEAN member states and the ASEAN Secretariat in relevant international conferences; and
- (d) establish working relationship with immigration officials from other more developed countries using advanced immigration systems to ensure ASEAN immigration authorities to promote awareness of latest developments on immigration matters.

In order to cope with the challenges of addressing international migration issues, ASEAN needs support, especially technical assistance, from its dialogue and development partners. Japan has assisted ASEAN in many ways, especially in narrowing the development gap and promoting economic integration and socio-cultural community building. The governments of Japan and ASEAN established the ASEAN-Japan Centre in 1981 in order to promote trade, investment, and tourism. Japan created the Japan-ASEAN Solidarity Fund in 1998, the Japan-ASEAN General Exchange Fund in 2005, and the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund in 2006, with the objective of supporting ASEAN community building and strengthening ASEAN-Japan partnership and cooperation. It is therefore important that ASEAN and Japan continue to work together to build a sustainable and effective international migration regime in order to realize the ASEAN Community.

In November 2011, the heads of ASEAN states and governments and of the Japanese government agreed to implement the objectives laid out in the Joint Declaration for Enhancing ASEAN-Japan Strategic Partnership for Prospering Together through the ASEAN-Japan Plan of Action (2011–2015). Protective measures for migrant workers are included in the section on cooperation on social justice, in which the leaders committed their respective nations to “cooperate on programs that will assist migrant workers and their families in achieving financial stability through training, investment promotion, savings assistance and entrepreneurship development programs” and to “promote dialogues on the adoption of arrangements for the portability of social security benefits for migrant workers and for the harmonization of remittance charges.”

In addition, there are other functional cooperation frameworks that have been established by Japan and ASEAN to promote and protect the interests, rights, and dignity of labor forces including migrant workers. The ASEAN & Japan High Level Officials Meeting on Caring Societies has been held annually since 2003 to develop human resources and promote collaborative relationships between the ASEAN countries and Japan. There is also the ASEAN-Japan Collaboration Programme for

Strengthening the Basis of Human Resources Development in CLMV Countries-Phase II (2008–2011).

Through the ILO, Japan has implemented several projects to support migrant workers in Southeast Asia. For instance, from 2006 to 2010, Japan provided more than US\$2 million to support the implementation of a program protecting migrant workers in Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, and Thailand by “developing a knowledge base on migration issues for policy makers and building up the capacity of governments to manage orderly labor migration. It also advocates sound national labor migration policies, assists with raising migrant workers’ awareness of their rights, facilitates their access to legal systems, promotes low-cost and efficient remittance systems, and supports skills training and enterprise development.”<sup>17</sup>

Japan has also been supportive in addressing human trafficking in the region. In Japan’s 2009 Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons, it emphasized “close cooperation among all relevant government ministries and agencies concerned” as well as enhanced cooperation with international organizations and civil society groups to counter human trafficking.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, there are several bilateral cooperation initiatives between Japan, as a primary destination country, and other countries in Southeast Asia such as Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand to manage international migration and human trafficking.

Within the context of the trend toward increasing migration in the region, Japan can play an important role in assisting ASEAN and its related and supported institutions to harmonize and coordinate regional policy on and approaches to migration. Technical and financial support from Japan is crucial to realizing these efforts. Action-oriented cooperation needs to be emphasized. As Japan is faced with an aging population, maintaining its economic dynamism in the long term will require that Japan attract more labor and talent from Southeast Asia. ASEAN-Japan cooperation on regional human-resource development and migration will be a win-win strategic option for both sides.

## ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Over the last decade, there has been an increase in discussions and negotiations on managing intraregional migration, and that has resulted in a number of regional agreements and policy guidelines. Nevertheless, many issues remain. Some of the key challenges that need to be addressed are the following:

- the lack of standard, reliable, and updated statistics on the state of migrant workers and human trafficking in the region (the information and data on migration remains limited and is not systematically gathered or shared)
- the high cost and complexity of formal or regular migration force some migrant workers, especially unskilled and low-skilled workers, to choose irregular migration
- the existing regional institutions focus only on the movement of skilled workers and professionals; this reflects the lack of protection mechanisms for the irregular and low skilled migrant workers
- women and children remain most vulnerable to labor exploitation and human trafficking
- migrant workers face with labor exploitation and human rights violation
- regional governments and agencies do not have coherent migration policies, as each individual member state of ASEAN has its own national policy on migration (receiving states want to maintain their flexibility and freedom in applying domestic laws and policy guidelines in order to serve their national interests, while sending states want to have measures that are more protective for their people working overseas)
- the remittances from migration have not been used effectively or productively; moreover, there is no systematic mechanism in place to oversee and analyze the application of remittances and their impact on poverty reduction throughout the region
- intra-regional migration has not constructively transformed into a regional community building process through common identity construction
- the lack of resources to implement the ASEAN-Japan cooperation framework and action plan on migration is a key challenge to developing an effective and transparent migration regime in the region

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Migration needs to be addressed holistically. It is important to understand the patterns, characteristics, and complexities of migration so that the negative impacts of migration can be minimized and mitigated.<sup>19</sup> The policies that are going to affect migration are those integral to national development planning and regional community building, and are the result of negotiations between states, the private sector, and CSOs. It will require effective policies to respond to demographic and economic forces and the international division of labor.

There are two main aspects of migration policy harmonization. First, migration policies should be internally coherent based on objectives that are agreed upon at the national and international levels. Second, migration policies should be consistent with the broader social and economic development policies of the country and the region. Most importantly, it is necessary to strengthen international cooperation in order to maximize the positive impacts of migration and minimize the negative aspects. The region needs to find effective ways and means to gradually transform the irreversible trend of migration into a source of sustainable development and regional community building. Third, migration policy needs to include social policy, healthcare, and a rights-based approach to be part of the people-centered ASEAN framework.

ASEAN and Japan need to forge a common understanding and approach to cope with intraregional migration. The harmonization of national and regional policies on migration is an essential first step. They need to work together to strengthen the migration governance regime and transform migration into a source of growth and community building; enhance public-private-CSO partnerships; look for effective measures to transform migration into a source of growth in East Asia; and transform migration into one of the key elements in building an East Asian community based on economic and cultural connectivity.

Japan can assist ASEAN in establishing and supporting regional programs as well as bilateral programs to promote and protect the rights and welfare of migrant workers; creating an independent body to promote migrant worker rights; supporting CSOs working on migrant worker rights; and supporting the establishment of the ASEAN Commission on the Implementation of the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers (ACMW).

To effectively implement the Plan of Action (2011–2015), Japan and ASEAN need to double their efforts in establishing up-to-date, reliable, and systematic data sets and information on migration. They should then conduct mapping exercises to identify the target groups and entry points for policy intervention. The current action plan is vague and does not provide concrete programs to be implemented. Looking forward, it is therefore necessary to develop a policy matrix for the implementation of more specific measures. Table 1 outlines recommendations for a policy matrix, highlighting different and interconnected policies, programs, implementing agencies, and target groups.

For their plan of action beyond 2015, ASEAN and Japan should expand their migration cooperation to include other aspects of the issue, such as the migration-development nexus and the migration–community

Table 1. Proposed ASEAN-Japan migration cooperation policy matrix

Policy	Activities/Programs	Implementing Agencies	Target Groups
Human Resource Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vocational training (necessary skills, cultures, and languages)</li> <li>• short-term training</li> <li>• workshops and seminars</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ILO-Japan</li> <li>• JICA</li> <li>• Other related institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• potential migrant workers</li> <li>• representatives from the public, private, and civil society sectors who are working on labor movement or migration issues</li> </ul>
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• information sharing</li> <li>• rules and regulations</li> <li>• employment and working conditions</li> <li>• benefits and incentives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recruiting agencies</li> <li>• government ministries &amp; agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• future migrant workers and their families</li> </ul>
Pre-deployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• introduction to support networks such as contacts at the company/embassy, police, immigration office, CSOs supporting the rights of migrant workers, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• government agencies</li> <li>• recruiting companies</li> <li>• CSOs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• future migrant workers and their families</li> </ul>
Protection in the Destination Country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• monitoring</li> <li>• consultation</li> <li>• information sharing</li> <li>• social policy</li> <li>• human rights and justice</li> <li>• savings assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• affiliated companies or families (in case of housekeeping)</li> <li>• local authority and CSOs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• migrant workers</li> </ul>
Remittances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• harmonization of remittances in order to reduce cost and time</li> <li>• effective and productive use of remittances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• intergovernmental agencies of the sending and receiving countries</li> <li>• financial institutions</li> <li>• development agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• migrant workers and their families</li> </ul>
Return to Original Country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• re-integration</li> <li>• training &amp; entrepreneurship development</li> <li>• employment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ILO-Japan</li> <li>• JICA</li> <li>• Other related institutions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• returning migrant workers</li> </ul>

building nexus. Migration should become a key element or sector of cooperation, rather than just being one issue under the broader social justice section, as was the case in the Plan of Action (2011–2015). The migration-development nexus, for example, can include different aspects of labor distribution and productivity, productive use of remittances and poverty reduction, women’s empowerment, and knowledge circulation. Similarly, the migration–community building nexus can incorporate cultural exchanges, mutual understanding, and friendship between the migrant workers and the local community. Such programs to support interaction between migrant workers and the local community in which they are working can be extremely important.

Migration will continue to be one of the key issues for ASEAN Community building and for ASEAN’s external relations in the foreseeable future. It presents both opportunities and challenges for regional integration. ASEAN-Japan cooperation must shift from the current broad policy guidelines to more concrete action plans such as those proposed in this chapter in order to provide the effective management needed to establish a healthy migration regime and ensure that migration will be a source of economic growth and community building in the decades ahead.

## NOTES

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