Perspective on Global Skills Partnerships

Presentation by
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Public Services International

• The global trade union federation representing more than 20 million workers, represented by over 700 unions in 154 countries and territories.

• Our members, two-thirds of whom are women, work in social services, health care, municipal and community services, central government, and public utilities such as water and electricity.

• Represents over 7 million workers in the health and social care sectors; touched by the phenomenon of international migration.

• Runs a global programme on migration and refugees, including a project on migration in the health and social care sectors: mapping and participatory research, outreach and worker organising, “migrant desks”, pre-decision kits, capacity-building and advocacy on the WHO Code of Practice using social dialogue, “No Recruitment Fees Campaign” and promoting fair and ethical recruitment.
UN Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

Objective 18(e)

“Build global skills partnerships amongst countries that strengthen training capacities of national authorities and relevant stakeholders, including the private sector and trade unions, and foster skills development of workers in countries of origin and migrants in countries of destination with a view to preparing trainees for employability in the labour markets of all participating countries.”
Paragraph 5.2

“Member States should use this Code as a guide when entering into bilateral, and/or regional and/or multilateral arrangements, to promote international cooperation and coordination on international recruitment of health personnel. Such arrangements should take into account the needs of developing countries and countries with economies in transition through the adoption of appropriate measures. Such measures may include...support for capacity building in the development of appropriate regulatory frameworks, access to specialized training, technology and skills transfers.”
PSI-Commissioned Study on GSP

• In cooperation with the Maastricht Centre for Global Health, Maastricht University

• From the trade union and human rights perspective: involving literature review and actor interviews.

• Work is on-going; report to be presented at the GCM Adoption Conference in Marrakesh in December.

• Examination of the concept of GSPs; the “dual track approach” and various formulations

• Learning from experiences and literature review of past and present bilateral agreements on health workforce migration

• Looking at the governance and policy environment
PSI-Commissioned Study on GSP

Preliminary observations

• GSP’s narrow framing in governance of labour mobility and health workforce development
• Investment case and financial incentives are the dominant discourse
• Emphasis on employability, skills transfer and mobility
• Does not include health impact assessment; perspective of equity; definition of “partnership” and on whose terms?
• Social protection issues, decent work and employment conditions of lesser emphasis
• Mainly designed to facilitate temporary migration or mobility, long-term sustainability is unsure
• Appears to be a short-term solution, while long-term impact depends on broader governance framework
Core Elements to be Considered

- **Tripartism and Social Dialogue** – full engagement of trade unions to ensure protection of human and labour rights and mutual benefits for both countries of origin and destination.

- **Equity** - for both origin and destination countries, the migrant workers themselves and for the users of health services.

- **Sustainability** – that GSPs must not undermine sustainability of the human resources for health of developing countries. GSPs must be accompanied with measures to support and sustain the human resource development plans of participating countries, not to replace or supersede them.

- **Full human and trade union rights** – The GSPs must be fully grounded on international human rights norms and labour standards, in particular the UN and ILO Conventions on Migrant Workers. The *WHO Code of Practice* on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel can provide guidance on the development of GSPs in the health sector, as well as the *ILO Principles and Guidelines for Fair Recruitment*. Under no circumstances could the GSP allow for the derogation of rights and standards, nor can they undermine clauses in collective agreements and labour laws and protections.
Core Elements to be Considered

• **Access to permanent migration** – GSPs should allow for access to permanent migration or citizenship if the worker so chooses. They should not be used merely as an expansion of problematic temporary labour mobility schemes.

• **Sustainable and rights-based return and reintegration** – the GSP should take into account measures and policies for rights-based and sustainable return and reintegration, particularly into jobs in public health services, if the migrant worker so chooses to return.

• **Regulation, accountability and transparency** – GSPs should be fully transparent, government-regulated and accountability is ensured throughout the whole chain of the partnership. Implementation should be through government-to-government, carried out via public-public partnership.
Thank you!

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