RESOURCE KIT FOR THE DESIGN OF LEARNING ACTIVITIES ON LABOUR RIGHTS





Fair Recruitment

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Key selected international labour standards

- C181 the Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181)
- P029 the Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (P029)
- R203 the Forced Labour (Supplementary Measures) Recommendation, 2014 (No. 203)
- the Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97)
- R086 the Migration for Employment Recommendation (Revised), 1949 (No. 86)
- **C143** the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143)
- coss the Employment Service Convention, 1948 (No. 88)
- C189 the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189)
- MLC, 2006 the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC, 2006)

Non Binding Normative Framework

General principles and operational guidelines for fair recruitment and definition of recruitment fees and related costs

Introduction

In today's globalized economy, workers are increasingly looking for job opportunities beyond their home country in search of decent work and better livelihoods. In addition, millions of workers migrate internally in search of employment. Public and private employment agencies, when appropriately regulated, play an important role in the efficient and equitable functioning of labour markets by matching available jobs with suitably qualified workers.

While some cross-border recruitment is facilitated by public employment services (within the framework of bilateral agreement that incorporate arrangements for temporary worker programmes), and social and informal networks, private employment agencies and other labour recruiters play an increasing role in matching labour demand and supply across borders.

The recruitment landscape today is increasingly complex and involves a wide range of actors, both regulated and unregulated. There is a growing concern worldwide about exploitative recruitment practices and unscrupulous employment agencies, informal labour intermediaries and other actors operating outside of the legal framework. These unfair recruiters tend to primarily target low-skilled workers and often place them at risk of human trafficking and forced labour. Both national and migrant workers are at risk of facing abuses during the recruitment phase.

Facts and figures

In 2018, the ILO estimated that 164 million of the 258 million migrants worldwide were migrant workers. In addition, 25 million people are in forced labour and trafficked globally. Of the total 25% are abused outside of their home country. ILO research has found that migrant workers who borrow money from third parties are at heightened risk of being in forced labour.

Common forms of abuse and exploitation that can occur in all phases of the recruitment process:



- Charging recruitment fees to workers;
- Threats and intimidation, including verbal and psychological abuse;
- Deception with regards to contracts, working and living conditions, as well as failure to disclose relevant information;
- Restriction of freedom of movement;
- Retention of identity documents with the aim of controlling jobseekers;
- Physical and sexual violence;
- Recruitment below working age;
- Recruitment of workers into hazardous and unsafe work.

A combination of these fraudulent and abusive recruitment practices could amount to the crimes of forced labour and trafficking in persons if the end result of the recruitment process is exploitation.

Gender-specific risks in recruitment

Women, and in particular migrant women, are at a disproportionate risk of facing abuses in recruitment and placement. They may be subject to financial, physical, sexual or psychological abuse. Exploitative fees may be charged by recruiting agents, which sometimes cause women, who generally have fewer assets than men, to suffer greater financial hardships and make them more dependent, for examples if they need to borrow from family, friends or moneylenders. Women may also face multiple forms of discrimination or exploitation on the basis of their gender, race or nationality. In certain occupations, especially in agriculture or seasonal work, they may encounter difficulties to obtain binding contracts setting out the terms and conditions of work. The lack of a contract may result in them having to work for long hours without payment of overtime.

Legal and normative framework on fair recruitment¹

International labour standards (ILS) on forced labour

The Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930

The Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, along with the Recommendation No. 203, aims to advance prevention, protection and compensation measures, as well as to intensify efforts to eliminate all forms of forced labour, including trafficking in persons. The Protocol promotes access to appropriate and effective remedies, such as compensation and access to justice, for all victims of forced labour, irrespective of their presence or legal status in the national territory.

The Protocol notes that an increasing number of workers are in forced or compulsory labour in the private economy, that certain sectors of the economy are particularly vulnerable, and that certain groups of workers are at higher risk of becoming victims of forced or compulsory labour, especially migrants.

International labour standards (ILS) on migrant workers

The Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97)

Migrant for employment – a person who migrates from one country to another with a view to being employed otherwise than on his or her own account. This term includes any person regularly admitted as a migrant for employment.

The Convention stipulates that each member State must ensure adequate services to assist migrants for employment. It must take

appropriate steps to provide accurate information and combat misleading propaganda in relation to emigration and immigration. It must take measures to facilitate the departure, travel and reception of migrants for employment. Moreover, it must ensure that the services provided to migrants for employment by its public employment agencies are free of charge.

The authorities of States between which flows of migrants are sufficiently large must, whenever necessary or desirable, enter into agreements to regulate matters of common concern arising in connection with the application of the Convention.

The accompanying *Recommendation No.* 86 provides further guidance on recruitment and model arrangements for temporary and permanent migration.

The Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143)

The purpose of the Convention is twofold: it is intended to combat migration in abusive conditions and to promote equality of opportunity and treatment for migrant workers. Both objectives are relevant to the establishment of fair recruitment processes, in view of the high risk of human trafficking associated with abuses in recruitment.

Each member State must systematically seek to determine whether there are illegally employed migrant workers on its territory, and whether any migrants for employment departing from, passing through or arriving on its territory are subjected to conditions violating international instruments or national laws and regulations. It must take the necessary measures to prevent and eliminate these abuses, including prosecuting the authors of manpower trafficking, regardless of the country from which they operate.

International Labour Standards (ILS) on employment policy and promotion

The Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181)

Private employment agency - any natural or legal person, independent of the public authorities, which provides one or more of the following labour market services:

- services for matching offers of and applications for employment, without the private employment agency becoming a party to the employment relationships which may arise therefrom;
- services consisting of employing workers with a view to making them available to a third party, who may be a natural or legal person (referred to below as a "user enterprise") which assigns their tasks and supervises the execution of these tasks;
- other services relating to job seeking, determined by the competent authority after consulting the most representative employers and workers organizations, such as the provision of information, that do not set out to match specific offers of and applications for employment.

The Convention is based on both recognition of the role, which private employment agencies may play in a well-functioning labour market, and the need to protect workers against the risk of abuse.

Each State must determine the conditions governing the operation of private employment agencies. It has to:

- ensure that they treat workers without discrimination in respect of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin;
- adopt all necessary measures to provide adequate protection for and prevent abuses of migrant workers recruited or placed on its territory by private employment agencies;
- take measures to ensure that child labour is not used or supplied by private employment agencies;

ensure that adequate procedures are in place to address and investigate complaints and alleged abuses and fraudulent practices committed by private employment agencies.

Private employment agencies, for their part, must respect workers' privacy in relation to the processing of their data, and must not charge any fees or costs to workers, subject to certain limited exceptions.

The Convention provides for cooperation between private and public employment services, sets forth general principles for protecting jobseekers against unethical or inappropriate practices, and affords protection to workers employed under subcontracting arrangements, as well as workers recruited from abroad.

The Employment Service Convention, 1948 (No. 88)

The Convention details the measures to be taken by employment services in order to ensure effective recruitment and placement; it provides guidance on the organization of public employment services.

Sector-specific International Labour Standards

The Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189)

As concerns the recruitment of domestic workers, the Convention requires member States to take measures to ensure that domestic workers are informed of their terms and conditions of employment. The Convention lists specific matters on which information must be provided, such as usual workplace, remuneration, normal hours of work, and periods of daily and weekly rest. This information must be communicated to the domestic worker in an appropriate, verifiable and easily understandable manner, preferably in the form of a written contract.

Convention covers all domestic workers, including migrant domestic workers.

Member States are obliged to regulate the activities of private employment agencies by ensuring that complaints mechanisms are

available to domestic workers and by adopting measures to adequately protect them from abuse.

The MLC, 2006 - Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC, 2006)

The Convention sets out in one place seafarers' rights to decent conditions of work, covering almost every aspect of their working and living conditions.

With regard to recruitment and placement, the Convention sets out detailed conditions for fair employment contracts, which should be clear and legally enforceable, and should incorporate collective bargaining agreements where applicable. It also stipulates that the States should inspect labour agencies supplying maritime workers to ensure that they apply the terms of the Convention. It explicitly recognizes the private organizations ('recognized organizations') that often carry out inspection and certification functions in the shipping sector on behalf of national maritime administrations. The Convention sets out mandatory standards with respect to the expertise and independence that these organizations must have before a government can authorize them to carry out labour inspection and certification on its behalf.



Guidance from nonbinding normative framework on fair recruitment

The General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment and Definition of Recruitment Fees and Related Costs

The ILO's General Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment (2016) consolidate the core principles associated with fair recruitment and lay out the responsibilities of the various actors involved in the recruitment process.

The definition of recruitment fees and related costs recognizes the principle that workers shall not be charged directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, any fees or related costs for their recruitment. This comprehensive definition is guided by international labour standards and should be read together with the principles and guidelines. The definition was adopted by a Tripartite Meeting of Experts, held in Geneva in November 2018.

The principles and guidelines are derived from a number of sources, in particular International Labour Standards and related ILO instruments. They apply to the recruitment of all workers, as well as migrant workers, within or across national borders and cover the recruitment either directly by employers or through intermediaries, including temporary employment agencies. The principles and guidelines cover all sectors of the economy.

Who are the main actors involved in establishing fair recruitment?

The word cloud below illustrates the realm of actors involved in establishing fair recruitment. The larger the actor the more significant the role of that actor.



Overview of the ILO General principles for fair recruitment

1. Respect for human and labour rights

Recruitment should take place in a way that respects, protects and fulfils internationally recognized human rights, including those expressed in international labour standards, and in particular the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining, and prevention and elimination of forced labour, child labour and discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

2. Respond to established labour market needs and promote decent work

Recruitment should respond to established labour market needs, and not serve as a means to displace or diminish an existing workforce, to lower labour standards, wages, or working conditions, or to otherwise undermine decent work.

3. Recruitment laws and policies that apply to all

Appropriate legislation and policies on employment and recruitment should apply to all workers, labour recruiters and employers.

4. Efficiency, transparency and protection of workers

Recruitment should take into account policies and practices that promote efficiency, transparency and protection for workers in the process, such as mutual recognition of skills and qualifications.

5. Enforce recruitment regulations through labour inspection

Regulation of employment and recruitment activities should be clear and transparent and effectively enforced. The role of the labour inspectorate and the use of standardized registration, licensing or certification systems should be highlighted. The competent authorities should take specific measures against abusive and fraudulent recruitment methods, including those that could result in forced labour or trafficking in persons.

6. Respect and enforcement of national laws and collective agreements

Recruitment across international borders should respect the applicable national laws, regulations, employment contracts and applicable collective agreements of countries of origin, transit and destination, and internationally recognized human rights, including the fundamental principles and rights at work, and relevant international labour standards. These laws and standards should be effectively implemented.

7. No recruitment fees and costs are charged to workers

Recruitment fees or related costs should not be collected from workers by an employer, their subsidiaries, labour recruiters or other third parties providing related services. Fees or related costs should not be collected directly or indirectly, such as through deductions from wages and benefits.

8. Clear and transparent employment contracts

The terms and conditions of a worker's employment should be specified in an appropriate, verifiable and easily understandable manner, and preferably through written contracts in accordance with national laws, regulations, employment contracts and applicable collective agreements. They should be clear and transparent, and should inform the workers of the location, requirements and tasks of the job for which they are being recruited. In the case of migrant workers, written contracts should be in a language that the worker can understand, should be provided sufficiently in advance of departure from the country of origin, should be subject to measures to prevent contract substitution, and should be enforceable.

9. Workers' freedom from deception and coercion

Workers' agreements to the terms and conditions of recruitment and employment should be voluntary and free from deception or coercion.

10. Access to free, comprehensive and accurate information

Workers should have access to free, comprehensive and accurate information regarding their rights and the conditions of their recruitment and employment.

11. Freedom of movement and no retention of identity documents

Freedom of workers to move within a country or to leave a country should be respected. Workers' identity documents and contracts should not be confiscated, destroyed or retained.

12. Freedom to terminate contract, change employer, and safely return

Workers should be free to terminate their employment and, in the case of migrant workers, to return to their country. Migrant workers should not require the employer's or recruiter's permission to change employer.

13. Access to free dispute resolution and effective remedies

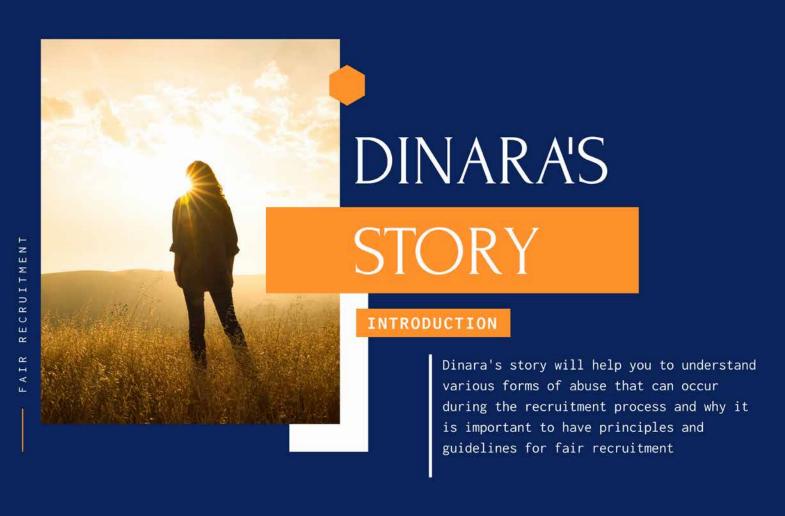
Workers, irrespective of their presence or legal status in a State, should have access to free or affordable grievance and other dispute resolution mechanisms in cases of alleged abuse of their rights in the recruitment process, and effective and appropriate remedies should be provided where abuse has occurred.

4.3 Guidance implementing principles

- Governments
 - https://www.ilo.org/webcommon/charts/migrant-fair-recruitment/doc/governments.pdf
- ► Employers
 https://www.ilo.org/webcommon/charts/migrant-fair-recruitment/doc/employers.pdf
- ► Labour recruiters

 https://www.ilo.org/webcommon/charts/migrant-fair-recruitment/
 doc/recruiters.pdf
- ▶ Definition of recruitment fees and related costs see General principles and operational guidelines for fair recruitment and definition of recruitment fees and related costs, page 28 - https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/fair-recruitment/ WCMS_536755/lang--en/index.htm

Infographics: Dinara's story





Dinara, aged 20, lives in a small village in rural area of Travaliland with her family. She has five siblings who are still at school. Since there are not many work opportunities in the village, her parents are mainly employed in seasonal work in agriculture.

This year crops were not abundant and in order to sustain the family, her younger siblings have to work in the fields. Dinara decides to go abroad for work to send back the remittances to help her family. This way her siblings could attend school instead of working.



Recruitment Across Borders



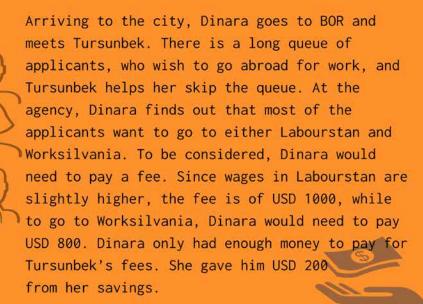


She decides to go to one of the neighbouring countries, Labourstan or Worksilvania, where wages are significantly higher than in Travaliland. Dinara addresses one of the members of the community Qariya, very respectful and influential woman, who advises her to go Better Opportunities Recruitment (BOR) agency in the city. She gives her a contact of her friend Tursunbek, who works there. To thank Qariya for help, Dinara brings gifts.

Prohibition of charging fees and costs to workers

Consult, inter alia:
C97 (Art. 7(2) and Art. 4
of Annex I and Annex II)
MLC, 2006 (Regulation
1.4(1) and Standard
A1.4(5))
C181 (Art. 7)
C88 (Art. 1)

Definition of recruitment fee: the term recruitment fee or related costs refer to any fees or costs incurred in the recruitment process in order for workers to secure employment or placement, regardless of the manner, timing or location of their imposition or collection

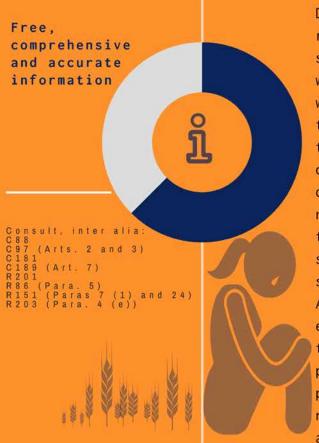


Tursunbek manages to arrange a contract for her that foresees a 40% deduction to cover the occurred expenses. Dinara also finds out that she needs to pay USD 80 for the visa, USD 100 for the pre-departure medical test, which also serves to confirm that she is not pregnant, and USD 400 for her air tickets. She does not have money left and none of her family members or friends have such amounts, so she asks Qariya to lend her the missing sum, promising to pay her back with 20% of interest.

Clear and transparent contracts



One week later Tursunbek called her and asked to come to BOR. Dinara received her contract, but could not read it as it was in Labourstanee, which she does not speak. Tursunbek tells her that it is a standard contract and if she does not sign it today, she will lose all the money she has spent. He added that it is a one-year contract, which foresees a salary of USD 1200 and also includes accommodation and lodging provided by her employer. Dinara signs the contract and soon thereafter departs for Labourstan.



Dinara starts working on a farm, which is situated in a remote area. Every day she is taken to the field and spends at least two hours to get there and come back. She works 14 hours per day and does not have a day off. She was promised she would be given a language course, but there is no public transport to take her to the nearest town for classes. Her employer will not drive her. After one month Dinara's enthusiasm to learn Labourstanee has disappeared as she does not have enough time for rest, not to mention other activities. She lives in a room with ten other workers, where they all sleep on the floor and share common space for personal belongings. There is one shower in the courtyard, which does not have hot water. All the workers pack their lunches to eat in the field, even though there are no sanitation facilities, where they can wash their hands, or cooking facilities to prepare or preserve their food. Several workers had food poising and were not taken to see the doctor. These are not the conditions she was expecting or aware of before accepting the job.

Termination of employment and permission to change employer.
Access to grievance and disput resolution mechanisms.

Consult, inter alia:
C143 (Arts 5,6 and 9 (2))

Consult, inter alia:
C143 (Arts 5,6 and 9 (2))
C97 (Annex I, Art. 8 and Annex II, Art. 13)
R151 (Paras 32-34)
C181 (Arts 10 and 14)
R188 (Para 15 (c))
P29 (Art. 4)
MLC, 2006 (Standard A1.4 (7))
C189 (Art. 15 (b, c), Arts 16-17)
R203 (Paras 8, 11-13)

When it is time for payment of the first salary,
Dinara receives only USD 320. She is reminded of
the 40% she has to pay back to the agency and
additional deductions to cover her lodging and
meals. Dinara found out that there are other
employers in the area, who offer better conditions.
However, her employer would not let her go until
she repays all the agency fees. He also has her
passport, so she cannot come back to Travaliland
until her contract has ended. Dinara has to also
repay Qariya. She does not have anyone she can
complain to or ask for advice. She does her best to
repay all the loans and to send money back home so
that her siblings can attend school.





Sample session 1:

Fair recruitment and decent work



OBJECTIVES

- 1 To become familiar with the ILO General principles and operational guidelines for fair recruitment
- To analyse the applicability of the principles at different recruitment stages



SETTING

- 1 Divide participants into small groups of four or five.
- I Ensure that each group member has diverse expertise and background, contributing to highly participative group dynamics and initial brainstorming.



DURATION

- 1 20-30 minutes to exchange views in groups.
- 10 minutes to present the results in plenary.



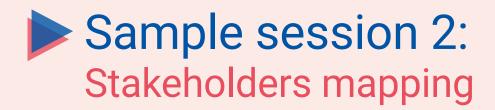
TASK

- 1. Having carefully read the ILO General principles and operational guidelines for fair recruitment, each group is invited to analyse and discuss which of the guiding principles would have enabled decent work as an outcome.
- 2. The results of the discussion are then shared in plenary



TIPS FOR TRAINERS

- Invite each group to designate a note taker, moderator for the discussion and spokesperson to present the results in plenary;
- 1 To prompt the discussion and ensure fruitful exchange of ideas in groups, consider a collective brainstorming defining decent work; this preparatory exercise could also be used as an ice-breaker;
- Prepare guiding questions to facilitate discussions in groups, e.g.:
 - 1. What are the signs of unfair recruitment?
 - 2. What are the major risks and at which recruitment stages?
 - **3.** Analysing guiding principles one by one, how each of them contributes to achievement of decent work?, etc.
- Think of examples reflecting national realities or having a sectoral focus to contextualize the discussion.





OBJECTIVES

- To map different actors involved in the recruitment process, identifying their roles and responsibilities at different stages;
- 1 To understand the complementarity of various actors and how they can work together to promote and ensure fair recruitment;



SETTING

- 1 Divide participants into small groups of four or five.
- Ensure that each group member has diverse expertise and background, contributing to highly participative group dynamics and initial brainstorming.



DURATION

- 1 30-60 minutes to exchange views in groups.
- 1 30 minutes to present the results in plenary.



TASK

- 1. Identify all the actors directly or implicitly involved in the recruitment process.
- **2.** Use sticky notes for brainstorming and consequently mapping out the stakeholders.
- **3.** Indicate different roles each actor plays in the recruitment and relations/interactions between the actors.

- 4. Using the ILO General principles and operational guidelines for fair recruitment as well as International Labour Standards, discuss which actors play a crucial role in ensuring ethical recruitment in line with ILS and specific guiding principles.
- 5. Discuss specific examples and widespread practices.



TIPS FOR TRAINERS:

- Invite each group to designate a note taker, moderator for the discussion and spokesperson;
- To ensure positive group dynamics, introduce the tasks gradually, beginning with a brainstorming of main actors, creating a stakeholders map and allowing for enough time to discuss each actors' role;
- Prepare examples of stakeholders' maps as a visual guidance;
- 1 Make sure each group refers to the ILO General principles and operational guidelines for fair recruitment as well as relevant ILS; provide copies of the texts, if needed;
- Balance the discussion between the across the border migration for work and national recruitment practices, e.g. in terms of attracting skilled workers to booming sectors of the economy, where investment is observed.



Further references

- ► ILO Portal on Fair Recruitment https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/fair-recruitment/lang--en/index. htm
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