

Supervisors from different factories gather to learn about the Cambodian Labour Law



Ms. Sreng Meng Ly, holding a guidebook on Cambodian Labour Law, discusses issues happening in a factory with her members in a preparation to challenge another group in a role play outside the class.

Group discussions, debates, and role play featuring workers and supervisors took place in classes where nearly 500 supervisors from 20 garment factories attended a Sunday training at the National Technical Training Institute on the 18th of September 2011.

Standing in a group near a pond, Ms. Sreng Meng Ly and her group members were instructed to discuss the issues amongst themselves before challenging another group on dispute resolution in a role play.

Ms. Sreng Meng Ly, a supervisor working in charge of a factory's sewing section, said that throughout the training she had learned the role and responsibility in supervising her fellow workers.

“In the past, I was so bad tempered because of my role as a supervisor. Now I can reflect on my past behavior. I have become aware of the role and the responsibilities of the supervisor in order to supervise workers effectively and productively.”

A cutting section supervisor, Mr. Ouk Theang was inspired by a session on dispute resolution as he notices that disputes often happen at every factory.

“In learning how to handle disputes, I can help solve problems personally and also for my workers when there are disputes between workers and employers.”

Ms. Chhorn Sineat, a Quality Control supervisor, said that she could share her experiences and learn from other supervisors coming from different garment factories in addition to what she had been taught.

ILO-Better Factories Cambodia organizes a wide-ranging training programme on Cambodian Labour Law entitled “Garment Supervisors’ College 2011” for 2500 supervisors from 125 garment factories. The training is held for five different Sundays, starting from 18 September until 6 November. Every Sunday, 500

supervisors from 25 factories will attend the training. Labour contracts, working conditions, Occupational Safety and Health, dispute resolution, and roles and responsibilities are featured in these Sunday training sessions.

The participating supervisors are provided with transportation, lunch, snack, T-shirt, photos, and certificates. Notably each participant is given a guidebook on the Cambodian Labour Law printed by ILO-*Better Factories Cambodia* and an additional five copies to give to their colleagues.

Mr. Nov Dara, Senior Training Officer of ILO-*Better Factories Cambodia*, praised the participating supervisors for taking part in despite Sunday and for their active interaction with trainers and amongst themselves in order to absorb the knowledge.

“The Cambodian Labour Law training for supervisors has come from a similar training organized for 2000 workers in the early 2011. Even though we cannot offer this opportunity to all supervisors, the participants can help share the knowledge they have acquired with their colleagues and workers. The Cambodian Labour Law guidebooks they receive, in particular can be a reference for them to make use of.”

Mr. Lay You Hong, a trainer from ILO-*Better Factories Cambodia*, stated that the roles of supervisors are essential because they supervise many workers, and even up to more than a hundred workers and can handle any problems in peaceful and cooperative ways. “Within one day, we cannot equip them with details of the Cambodian Labour Law, but at least they learn the basic knowledge,” added Mr. You Hong.



Participating supervisors listen attentively to Mr. Lay You Hong, a trainer from ILO-Better Factories Cambodia, during a session on role and responsibilities.

Supported by the garment factories, this training’s main aim is to help supervisors understand more about their rights and responsibilities at work and their roles in transmitting these to workers and subsequently to contribute to the robust growth of garment industry. This training programme is also backed up by its constituents including the Garment Manufacturers Association in Cambodia (GMAC), and buyers such as H&M, New Balance, Gap, PVH, Adidas, Abercrombie & Fitch, Walt Disney and American Eagle. Partner organizations such as Mary Stopes International, CARE, Khmer Women's Cooperation for Development (KWCD), World Education, National Employment Agency (NEA), Reproductive Health Association of Cambodia (RHAC), Social Services of Cambodia (SSC), Agency for Technical

Cooperation and Development (ACTED), Cambodia Business Coalition on AIDS (CBCA), Cambodian Women for Peace and Development (CWPD), Wing, and Crédit Mutuel Kampuchea take the opportunity to disseminate information on reproductive health, access to health care, skills development opportunities, and availability of financial services to the supervisors.

Mr. Leng Mon, a Demand Creation Coordinator of Marie Stopes International Cambodia, said that the training program is a good opportunity for his organization to transmit information on health care and reproductive health to the participants during their lunch break.



“They were curious to know about health. We shared them with leaflets, stickers, calendars and pregnancy test kits. Importantly we gave them a hotline number in which they can call for consultation,” added Mr. Leng Mon.

Participants visit booths to get information on health care, skill development opportunities, and financial services provided by various organizations.

The participating supervisors can also enjoy educational performances covering issues of maternal health, reproductive health and nutrition during the lunch break. They can also win a lucky draw such as sewing machines and bicycles.



“What I have learned include the conditions of fixed duration contracts and undetermined duration contracts, and occupational safety and health. Interestingly, the performances contain key messages on breastfeeding, health and nutrition, especially for children, and HIV and AIDS. When I return to my work, I will share these with my workers, especially the basic tips in order to keep them healthy in a way to have more safety workplace,” said Ms. Sreng Meng Ly, a supervisor.

Young performers send messages on health and nutrition to the supervisors through the entertainment.