

Consultative Meeting on Maternity Protection



In collaboration with the Provincial Department of Labour and Vocational Training, ILO *Better Factories Cambodia* conducted its first consultative meeting on maternity protection on Thursday 26 August in Kampong Speu provincial town.

Representatives from Kampong Speu Provincial Department of Labour and Vocational Training, from four garment factories and three footwear factories participated in the meeting. Following the discussion, the enterprise representatives have developed a practical plan of actions in order to educate garment and shoe workers about the basic maternal protection. Based on the strategy, they will show the existing educational TV spots (on breastfeeding, complementary feeding, and Iron Folic Acid supplementation during pregnancy and in the post-partum period) at their workplaces at least twice a month. Even more, after showing it, they will check with the workers how much they understand.

“Through MDG-F Joint Programme for Children, Food Security and Nutrition in Cambodia (being implemented in Kampong Speu and Svay Rieng), the Royal Government of Cambodia, especially Kampong Speu Provincial Department of Labour and Vocational Training in cooperation with ILO *Better Factories Cambodia*, employers, workers and unions, will continue collaborating with women and men working at the factories in order to ensure working conditions, maternal protection, and providing them with health care,” said Ms. Tim Savath, Deputy Governor of Kampong Speu Province.

The consultative meeting aims to come up with a plan of action to carry out the maternity protection for garment and footwear workers in Kampong Speu province. The plan of action will ensure the workers can take leave prior or and post the birth delivery and after resuming the work, working mothers do light work and can have specific time to breastfeed.

“The plan of action is a good message to change people’s attitude at the workplace,” said Mr. Sin Chhean, Director of Kampong Speu Provincial Department of Labour and Vocational Training.

The Joint Programme for Children, Food Security and Nutrition in Cambodia is a three-year programme being implemented in two provinces: Svay Rieng and Kampong Speu Provinces. Six UN agencies (UNICEF, WHO, FAO, WFP, ILO and UNESCO) have initiated and supported the programme with the financial support from Spain. The implementing institutions such as The Council for Agricultural and

Rural Development, Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and Ministry of Interior, are carrying out the programme.

Mr. Sophal, ILO-BFC National Project Coordinator, said the consultative meeting was a good opportunity for all stakeholders, especially government and the garment and footwear enterprises' representatives to discuss and find solution related to maternity protection so that expected outcomes to ensure good health and nutrition for both working mothers and infants are met.

A similar model of the consultative meeting will be undertaken in Svay Rieng province on the Thursday 2 September. Representatives from Svay Rieng Provincial Department of Labour and Vocational Training, representative of garment and footwear factories as well as from hotels and casinos will take part in it to develop a mechanism of maternity protection for workers in the province.