



DIPLOMACY TRAINING PROGRAM

AFFILIATED WITH THE FACULTY OF LAW AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES
A training program for peoples of the Asia-Pacific region

Migrant Workers and Human Rights Capacity Building Programs in the Middle East and North Africa, 2015 - 2019 Final Operational Report



1. Executive Summary

This is the final operational report of the Diplomacy Training Program (DTP)/Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA) capacity building project¹ on the human rights of migrant workers in the Middle East and North Africa – 2015-2019. The project consisted of 11 capacity building programs in the Middle East –in Qatar, UAE and Lebanon between 2016 and 2019. It was based on understanding the critical role of civil society in demanding governments fulfil their human rights obligations.

Lack of knowledge of rights and lack of political will are two key barriers to the implementation and fulfilment of rights. Investing in building the knowledge, skills and networks of civil society advocates is critical addressing these gaps, to the realisation of human rights, and to their protection. While human rights education is a shared global commitment, relatively few governments make this investment.

The report provides an overview of the project, a summary of activities, partnerships, outcomes, challenges and lessons learned. It draws on the evaluations of program participants and partners,

Thank you for all of the energy, heart, and time you have devoted to this program. It is from your (the facilitators) commitment that we are all leaving, returning to our work, educated, better equipped and energetic to keep on advocating for the vulnerable. The value is immeasurable

Participant Qatar 2017

and on individual program reports.

These programs provided training to over 255 individuals from 15 countries, 43% of them women. There were 34 trainers in the programs of which 44% were women.

This project was implemented at the same time that DTP/MFA were undertaking capacity building programs for migrant worker advocates in South and South-East Asia – key countries of destination for the GCC. While these projects are funded separately, DTP/MFA view them as part of an integrated and innovative approach to building capacity along migration corridors – working to develop the connections and collaboration between advocates at both ends of these corridors and between individual programs.



¹ DTP/MFA would like to acknowledge with appreciation SDC's support

2. Project Overview

DTP and MFA² have been working in partnership to build the capacity of movements for the rights of migrant workers in and from Asia since 2004. This work is based on a shared commitment to the human rights of the women and men who leave their countries to work in other countries – and in the process become vulnerable to a range of human rights abuses and harms.

In 2012, DTP/MFA began to organise capacity building programs in the Middle East, the major destination countries for migrants from South and South-East Asia. The current project grew out of those programs, and were informed by a “lessons-learned” workshop with DTP alumni and key individuals held in UAE in 2014³.

2.1 The immediate project objectives were:

- **Building Knowledge:** To enable more informed and strategic engagement with relevant UN processes, government, private sector and the media.
- **Building Skills:** To enable participants to more effectively engage with their own governments, with the private sector and media, with UN mechanisms, with other NGOs/CSOs and in global and regional policy dialogues on migration.
- **Building Networks:** To enhance collaboration between civil society and trade unions and others within and across borders to better defend the rights of migrants.

2.2 Key project activities:

The project consisted of 11 capacity building programs in the Middle East – held in Qatar, UAE and Lebanon between 2016 and 2019.

The programs included general capacity building programs on human rights and the rights of migrant workers, with a focus on civil society, and specialist capacity building programs focussed on business and human rights and the roles and responsibilities of the private sector⁴.

- 4 regional capacity building programs on migrant workers’ rights in Qatar and Lebanon
- 3 specialised regional training programs on the responsibilities of the private sector in Dubai
- 1 national level specialised capacity building program on business and human rights in Qatar
- 3 follow-up and outreach activities in Dubai and Qatar
- 1 reflection and review program with partners, trainers and alumni in Lebanon

² MFA is the leading network of migrant civil society organisations in Asia, and DTP is the longest established NGO developing and delivering human rights programs in the region.

³ This program was funded by SDC and a report is available on request or at www.dtp.unsw.edu.au

⁴ The decision to focus on the private sector was one of the recommendations of the 2014 MFA/DTP Lessons Learned Program in UAE.

The programs built knowledge of international human rights and labour standards, including ILO Conventions. They developed understanding of the UN's human rights accountability mechanisms and how CSOs can engage with them to promote human rights change. The programs developed practical knowledge and skills on documentation, lobbying, engagement with the government and private sector, media advocacy and storytelling. There was a focus on building networks at national and regional levels and along the corridors of migration

Specialised programs focused on the roles and responsibilities of the private sector – engaging companies directly, sensitising them, and bringing representatives of the private sector together with government and civil society to explore implementation of new standards on Business and Human Rights – including the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

2.3 Program participants:

These programs provided training to over 255 individuals from 15 countries, 43% of them women. There were 34 trainers in the programs of which 44% were women. The individual participants in programs came from a diverse range of key stakeholders involved in the welfare and rights of migrant workers – civil society, the private sector and government.

It was agreed by the program partners that the participants should come from both countries of origin (COO) and destination (COD). This is a key element of the capacity building strategy.

Most program participants are members of MFA's member organisations, and of the newly established Cross-Regional Center for Refugees and Migrants (CCRM). They were selected based



on advice from MFA/CCRM and other program partners/advisors. DTP, MFA and CCRM used the capacity building programs to strengthen and broaden movements, networks and engagement.

2.4 Program partners:

DTP is committed to working in partnership with local organisations and sees this as critical to ensuring local ownership, relevant of program content and sustainability. It is also committed to developing collaborations with other organisations with shared goals and sees capacity building programs as a way of developing valuable collaboration. The programs involved the

International Labour Office (ILO) and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in the delivery of training content

In the current project, DTP/MFA collaborated and partnered with the Middle East Centre for Training and Development⁵ (MECTD) in UAE, with Georgetown University in Qatar (GUQ) and Insan Association (Lebanon).

GU-Q benefited enormously from hosting the course – it not only gave us the opportunity to bring together a number of prominent individuals in the sphere of Migrant Worker Welfare, but also helped us establish closer ties with ILO and Ministry of Labour.

William Hopkirk, GUQ (DTP Partner)

Over the course of the project DTP also developed its partnership with CCRM – as a new emerging NGO network with members across the Middle East, North Africa and the Mediterranean.

“We have had positive feedback from members and partners who participated in the training. The organizations that we have spoken with said that they have benefited from the training and that they think that this is an experience worth replicating.... For us [CCRM] this is at the heart of our capacity building approach and can benefit our outreach efforts.”

Roula Hamati, Regional Coordinator, CCRM (DTP partner and alumna)

DTP also reached out to develop collaboration with key international NGOs/organisations focused on business and human rights – a key strategic focus for the DTP/MFA programs. DTP developed successful collaborations with the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre, the Institute on Business and Human Rights, the NYU Stern Centre on Business and Human Rights and Solidarity Center.

“DTP is the only group providing this type of training with an emphasis on business, human rights and the role of the private sector. By bringing together groups with varying expertise and experience and equipping them with new knowledge and shared understanding, the program provides an important platform for thinking about impact and solutions.”

Mariam Bhacker, Senior Project Manager, BHRRC (DTP trainer and alumna)

⁵ MECTD was established by a DTP alumnus, and Emirati.

3. Changing Contexts

In the background of this project were a number of relevant contextual issues.

- **FIFA 2022 (Qatar) and Expo 2020 (UAE).** These two mega events have acted as drivers of change as increased scrutiny on issues of forced labour, modern day slavery and global supply chains have encouraged multinational corporations and governments to address key issues, including recruitment fees, that contribute to forced labour/modern day slavery.
- **New legislation on modern day slavery and forced labour in global supply chains (EU, France, UK, Australia, US).** New laws with global reach, together with heightened public awareness of the issues is driving some major companies to change policy and practice with impacts through the supply chain.
- **New national legislation on labour laws and domestic workers.** New laws in GCC countries, including on domestic workers, wages, recruitment fees and labour inspection are the result of many factors, including civil society awareness and advocacy.
- **Negotiation of the Global Compact on Safe Migration.** The global negotiations on new governance frameworks for safe, orderly and regular migration have brought into focus some of the human rights issues involved in labour migration to the Gulf and encouraged government engagement.
- **The Qatar Blockade and Division in the GCC.** Attempts by key GCC states to isolate Qatar seemed to have spurred Qatar's commitment to introduce labour reforms, including the establishment of a new ILO technical mission, and inspection regimes re treatment of domestic workers. This was unthinkable in 2015/16. However, Qatar could no longer be the hub for regional MENA human/migrant rights trainings.
- **Changing patterns of labour migration.** A relative increase in the proportion of labour migrants in the GCC from North, East and West Africa was noticeable. These migrant communities are now the most vulnerable to abuse.
- **Increased recognition for the role of civil society in policy dialogue.** In the face of global and regional trends restricting civil society space, new spaces have been opened for migrant NGOs and civil society in the migration discourse. In the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) there is a greater recognition and role for civil society. In the Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD) civil society has also now given space for the first time.



4. Outcomes

Sustained scrutiny, civil society advocacy and strengthened networks in the region have all contributed to some of the changes in context identified above, including reforms to national legal frameworks and increased participation of civil society in key policy dialogues.

The project contributed to the increased and informed participation of civil society representatives from the GCC and Middle East in the consultations developing the Global Compact for Safe Migration (GCM).

Increasingly active civil society contributed to a higher level of engagement by GCC governments in adoption and post-adoption (implementation) phase of the GCM.

The DTP/MFA programs provided training to over 255 individuals in 11 capacity building programs over 36 months. Each of these programs was positively evaluated by their participants. Each of these courses will have increased knowledge and understanding of human rights for the participants. That is a key outcome.

Other outcomes include:

- The DTP/MFA programs in Dubai are seen as a contributing factor in the establishment of the Building Responsibly Initiative (BRI) of major construction firms operating in GCC countries. Members of the BRI have participated in more than one Dubai DTP workshop and their work continues.
- Increased collaboration and networking amongst individuals in COO and COD representing NGOs, NHRIs, trade unions, government (diplomatic missions), lawyers' network, academia and media.
 - Others have commented that DTP has an unusual convening power in bringing together government representatives (COO & COD), the private sector and migrant workers and their organisations – together with relevant UN agencies (ILO and OHCHR).
- Contributed to building and strengthening national and regional networks
 - CCRM and its members a strong foundation for movement building in MENA region.
 - Participants in the 2018 Qatar capacity building program established a Whatsapp group to facilitate ongoing exchange of information and collaboration and members continue to meet to discuss developments/issues.
- Participants reflected that DTP/MFA programs have resulted in more strategic advocacy, more effective engagement with governments and recruitment agencies/businesses.
 - This may have contributed to some of the changes noted above (new laws/policies/openness).

“MECTD sees that key outcomes of these programs in Dubai are the strong networking between the CSO, government organizations and the private sector and the recognition of MECTD’s role by the private and public entities in UAE. MECTD believes these workshops should continue, with more focus being given to post-workshop momentum and partnerships.”

Riji Joy, MECTD (DTP Partner)

- Contribution to opening of new spaces and increased legitimacy for civil society and the influence of migrant voices, e.g in the GFMD/Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD).
- Enabling more effective advocacy and collaboration along migration corridors, including on individual cases.
- Inspiring, affirming and motivating individuals doing sensitive and sometimes dangerous advocacy work with migrants/migrant workers in difficult and sometimes isolating environments.
- Participants have been involved subsequently in representational roles in key regional and global processes such as the ADD, GFMD, and the UN High Participation of DTP alumni in UN Level Political Forum⁶, human rights reporting processes for Universal Periodic Review, the UN Human Rights Treaties.
- Anecdotal evidence that informal networking among diplomats of some countries of origin has continued and enabled the sharing of concerns and good practice.
- Encouraging key collaborations between key international NGOs – the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre (BHHRC), the Institute on Human Rights and Business (IHRB), The Stern Centre (NYU), and Solidarity Center.
- Institutional development - the series of workshops in Dubai have been instrumental in helping build the capacity of MECTD - the only Emirati led organisation working on promoting the human rights of migrant workers in the UAE. MECTD have been awarded contracts in Dubai by the government to provide post-arrival training to migrant workers.

As discussed during the program, it is very valuable to create a network with the participants to keep learning and sharing experiences.

Participant Qatar 2018

⁶ DTP and MFA worked together to document subsequent participation in representation and engagement roles by DTP alumni. The leadership of MFA and of many its members includes DTP alumni.

5. Challenges

The project experienced internal and external challenges.

- In May 2017, Saudi Arabia, UAE (and others) imposed sanctions and a blockade on Qatar. This significantly changed the regional strategic and political context. On the plus side the blockade seemed to have spurred the momentum for change in Qatar and consequently DTP has continued to stay engaged in Qatar with the aim of developing nationally focused capacity building programs contributing to change. The DTP/MFA strategy of seeing Doha as a location for regional capacity building programs and a catalyst for change had to be revised.
- The lack of civil society space in the GCC countries is a challenge to DTP's Theory of Change. It is difficult to identify the right participants – and to be confident of sustainability. Participants came from MWs communities, faith-based organisations (FBO), and media representatives. In Qatar, Qatari students participated in the national level program in 2018 – and DTP had participants from Kuwait and Bahrain where there is some more space for civil society.
- The diversity of participants – and the challenge of meeting the specific knowledge/skills needs of different sectors/participants. This diversity is however a strength in terms of widening and building networks and collaborations, and the transfer of knowledge across generations and along migration corridors.
- The rights of migrant workers, and human rights, remain deeply sensitive issues in the GCC states in particular. This has affected program titles, timing, participation and partnerships.
- It continues to be difficult for many individuals/CSOs to move from service delivery to policy advocacy.
- The values and principles of human rights clearly resonate, but integrating human rights standards and mechanisms into policy advocacy is difficult.
- Engaging with the private sector. There are many challenges in identifying sectors and companies to prioritise for engagement, identifying the contact points, seeking introductions, establishing the value of the training, the needs of the private sector etc. Others such as BHRRC, IHRB and NYU Stern all have reported similar difficulties. New international guidelines and laws are driving some multinational companies to engage. Participants from these companies have highlighted how valuable it has been to be able to learn about the standards – and how they might be applied, to have assistance with interpreting them.
- Adapting programs to the private sector. Getting program length and content right. The prevailing wisdom is that private sector representatives are unlikely to be able to spare more than a day or two. In programs in Dubai DTP/MFA opted for a flexible format – engaging/training with CSOs on the first day and along with private sector and government on the second and third day.
- One of the key issues for the programs was finding the additional funding/in-kind contributions for the programs. SDC was the main funder of work in the region on migrant workers. DTP's outreach to other funders was mostly unsuccessful. It is disappointing that neither Qatar Foundation nor other Qatari organisations co-invested in the capacity building programs. DTP/GUQ trialled a fee-for-service model in Qatar to test the market for capacity building in the changed local context with minimal fees. One of suggestions made by CCRM was to build greater level of collaboration between DTP and the network (CCRM) to organise further capacity building programs in the MENA region and to raise funds jointly.

- **DTP/MFA Capacity.** Both DTP and MFA are small organisations that seek to accomplish a lot. It is a mark of MFA's success that demands on its time to engage in all the different international processes have only increased. Commitments and dates have to be juggled and this can make planning and coordination difficult. The advantage of both organisations' size is flexibility and adaptability.



6. Reflections and Lessons Learned

DTP recognises the extraordinary work of many individuals in civil society, government and the private sector who are committed to addressing the vulnerability and harms associated with labour migration in the MENA region. It is appreciative of the opportunity to work with many of these individuals over recent years. DTP courses emphasise the value of reflection and learning the lessons from past activities, to guide future planning. The following are some of DTP's reflections from this project and the various programs over the last three years.

- **There are some promising signs of change in GCC countries that need to be nurtured.** These are reflected in apparent growing interest from younger generations in these societies, and care and concern in the way that migrants are regarded and treated. It is reflected too in changes in domestic laws. Emphasis should be given to reaching out and supporting these individuals to be engaged.

- **International standards and accountability mechanisms have an important role to play.** For some GCC countries, including Qatar, UN human rights recommendations (UPR/Treaty Body/Special Procedures) have greater potential to drive change, but this requires strategic advocacy and engagement by civil society, governments and UN agencies.



- **The window for influencing policy and practice in Qatar will largely close in 2022 following FIFA 2022.**

FIFA 2022 has proved to be a key driver of change in Qatar, which has been heightened following the blockade. Maximum efforts need to be focussed on Qatar before then to try to ensure lasting changes are made. GUQ and MFA both recommend further/continuing engagement in capacity building with a more national focus. GUQ, BHRRC and IHRB all see value in DTP/MFA continuing engagement with capacity building for the rights of migrant workers in Qatar. GUQ and IHRB are willing and keen to assist with deepening engagement with Qatari officials and institutions and see new opportunities to do so. It is believed that this would assist and support ILO efforts.

- **Expo 2020** provides a key, but more limited, opportunity to engage and influence the hospitality, events and service sectors. Expo 2020 should be approached to engage its contractors and those providing services on site.
- **Engaging the private sector in addressing the harms associated with labour migration will require a coordinated strategy.** Changes in business practice will be driven by legal obligation, tendering processes, consumer demands and direct engagement. Current business models operating in the GCC and wider Middle East are key drivers of harms and vulnerability. In largely autocratic societies there are fewer excuses for government inaction. The partnership with BHRRC helped to break new ground and get greater engagement from the private sector – and this model of partnership drawing on different strengths and mandates has a lot of potential. An effective engagement strategy on the private sector takes dedicated resources, and more follow-up than this project was able to give.
- **DTP's focus on the private sector should shift back to more intensively building the capacity of advocates.** to enable them to engage businesses directly to promote the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and other standards. DTP's partnership with BHRRC and engagement with IHRB has helped to open new opportunities and access for migrant worker advocates to more directly engage and influence the private sector. Building the knowledge and skills of these advocates may be the most strategic intervention – strengthening the voice and impacts of advocates.
- **Building Civil Society Networks in MENA region is critical.** Despite the lack of civil society space in many GCC countries, civil society advocacy is a key driver of change. Spaces need to be made to enable individuals, especially younger individuals from GCC countries, to link up with CSOs/NGOs in the wider Middle East, to share lessons, draw inspiration, gain practical support and solidarity. Building knowledge of human rights is an important part of this process. This is however a slow and labour-intensive process, including the challenge of identifying the right participants and sustaining their engagement.

- **Building Capacity and Collaboration with Migrant Communities is strategic.** Migrant community organisations and advocates in the Middle East play diverse and important roles in the welfare and rights of their communities. They often play a critical (if informal) outreach role for their respective diplomatic missions, adding considerably to the capacities of countries of origin to look after their nationals. They have the potential to influence the policy and practice of governments and the private sector. The established communities (e.g. Kerala) have much to share with newer, less established migrant communities.
- **Building Capacity Along Old and New Migration Corridors.** There is great value in linking advocates in countries of origin and destination – for action on individual cases, for improved service delivery and informed policy advocacy. There is unfulfilled potential for shared advocacy around specific UN processes such as the UPR and treaty body reporting – and potentially implementation of the GCM commitments.
- **WhatsApp is an effective means of communication amongst participants to stay in touch after programs.** Participants of different programs have remained active in the WhatsApp groups and email loop established after the programs.
- **There is value in involving** journalists from media in both COO and COD in these programs. Media reporting on migrant workers is significant in shaping public attitudes and debates and influencing the policy agenda. Journalists who attended the programs not only shared news about the workshop through their media portals but also expressed renewed interest to collaborate with CSOs to share information and raise the issues faced by MWs through their media portals.

In the final reflection and review program held in Beirut, Lebanon with MFA and CCRM, participants emphasised that the DTP courses have provided a strong foundation for movement building in Asia and the Middle East. They highlighted that there was no other comprehensive training program in Asia/Middle East on human rights standards/the labour and human rights of migrant workers.

There was a strong emphasis on the need to continue to build the capacity of advocates going forward and participants discussed the priorities for capacity building, including the potential targets as well content for trainings. Priorities for future training identified by participants in these discussions included:

- **Coalition/alliance building** – a focus on how to build alliances and coalitions, the skills and approaches needed and specific programs to build collaboration on common campaigns, e. g. on corporations/supply chains, etc. There was recognition that the Asian networks were longer established and Middle East networks need to be nurtured and built.
- **Building links between migrant workers' rights and human rights** – to enhance the effectiveness of civil society representatives working to promote and protect human rights in general at a time when these are seen to be at risk and civil society space is being limited by many governments.
- **Developing second/deeper level training** on how to engage more effectively and strategically with the UN human rights system, e.g. UPR/Treaty Body Reporting/Submitting Cases to UN Special Procedures.
- **Exploring train-the-trainer modules/approaches** to better systemise the involvement of alumni in capacity building at national and regional levels including through DTP/MFA trainings.

- **Developing engagement platforms (at sub-regional and regional level) for alumni** to share knowledge and experience.
- **Developing case studies of successful advocacy in Asia and the Middle East** – to educate and to inspire.



Appendix 1: Project Activities 2016 – 2019

In 2016-2019, DTP continued to apply its methodology of participatory human rights advocacy training to the capacity building priorities identified by MFA – building the knowledge, skills and networks of individuals and organisations committed to advancing the rights of migrant workers in the MENA region. While DTP applied its expertise in organising/facilitating capacity building trainings, MFA mobilised its network to create the space and provide the opportunities for alumni to make use of the advocacy tools acquired through the programs.

DTP/MFA strategy and priorities were focused on finding individuals and organisations interested/able to take up the issues and on providing opportunities for them to build knowledge of human rights standards and to build networks and collaborations. The overall objective of DTP/MFA's activities were to improve the work of civil society advocates and their organisations on protecting and promoting the human rights of migrant workers in in the MENA region.



Timeline of the activities conducted in 2016–2019 –

2016	<p>27-29 April 2016 – Regional Workshop on Ethical Business and Recruitment Practices in Labour Migration, Dubai, UAE <i>(Specialised program with a focus on the responsibilities of the private sector)</i> Participants: 32 (9 female and 23 male) from 12 countries</p>
	<p>29 October–3 November 2016 – Capacity Building Program on Human Rights Advocacy and Migrant Workers in the Middle East and Asia, Doha, Qatar <i>(Inter-regional capacity building program)</i> Participants: 31 (10 female and 21 male) from 11 countries</p>
	<p>12-14 December 2016 – Regional Workshop on Migrant Workers and Ethical Business, Dubai, UAE <i>(Specialised program with a focus on the responsibilities of the private sector)</i> Participants: 39 (17 female and 22 male) from 7 countries</p>
2017	<p>21-25 May 2017 – Capacity Building Program on Human Rights Advocacy and Migrant Workers in the Middle East, Doha, Qatar <i>(Inter-regional capacity building program)</i> Participants: 26 (9 female and 17 male) from 10 countries</p>
	<p>26 May 2017 – Follow-up Meeting with Alumni and Partner, Dubai, UAE</p>
	<p>20-21 November 2017 – Roundtable on Human Rights and Business, Dubai, UAE</p>
	<p>22-23 November 2017 – Follow-up and Outreach Activity with Stakeholders and Alumni, Doha, Qatar</p>
2018	<p>10-14 April 2018 – Capacity Building Program for Promoting the Rights of Migrant Workers in the Middle East, North Africa and Asia, Beirut, Lebanon <i>(Inter-regional capacity building program)</i> Participants: 24 (14 female and 10 male) from 15 countries</p>
	<p>23 – 26 September 2018 – Human Rights Capacity Building Program and Migrant Worker Advocacy, Doha, Qatar <i>(Specialised national-level capacity building program)</i> Participants: 35 (14 female and 21 male) <i>expats and migrant community leaders living in Qatar</i></p>
2019	<p>7-8 April 2019 – Reflection and Evaluation Workshop with Alumni, Trainers and Partners, Beirut, Lebanon Participants: 17 (9 female and 8 male) from 11 countries</p>
	<p>9-13 April 2019 – Capacity Building Program for Promoting the Rights of Migrant Workers in the Middle East, North Africa and Asia, Beirut, Lebanon <i>(Regional capacity building program)</i> Participants: 29 (19 female and 10 male) from 10 countries</p>
	<p>23-25 June 2019 – Regional Workshop on Responsible Business and the Rights of Migrants, Dubai, UAE <i>(Specialised program with a focus on the responsibilities of the private sector)</i> Participants: 22 (8 female and 14 male) from 7 countries</p>

Appendix 2: Partnerships and Collaborations

MFA and DTP have been collaborating since 2004 to build the knowledge and skills advocates, to build their networks and wider understanding of the abuses experienced by migrant workers as a key human rights priority. Together we have facilitated 28 capacity building courses, involving over 650 individuals, from over 20 countries. For DTP this collaboration is consistent with its mission to support more effective 'peoples' diplomacy' – to enable advocates to use the available international standards and mechanisms to advance their human rights issues and seek effective peaceful redress for their grievances. For MFA this work is consistent with its commitments to its membership and to its vision of a world where the rights of migrant workers are realised. Since 2009 DTP and MFA have organised activities/capacity building programs in the Middle East drawing participants from the Middle East and Asia. Each program involved a local partner on the ground in the Middle East, and the program also developed collaboration between key international NGOs involved in business and human rights.



The programs in the Middle East have successfully facilitated the engagement and cooperation of civil society advocates, national human rights institutions, the ILO, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the private sector. The programs have been made possible through the following partnerships:

Georgetown University Qatar (GUQ) has hosted the programs in Qatar since 2015. To strengthen collaboration, GUQ suggested that DTP-MFA have additional programs in Qatar. DTP/MFA believe it is strategic to stay engaged in Qatar with the aim of developing nationally focused capacity building programs contributing to change in a new environment. DTP/MFA/GUQ have had discussions to organise follow-up programs at the national level.

Middle East Centre for Training and Development (MECTD) has highlighted that after the second workshop in Dubai in December of 2016, Dubai government has been more engaging and are opening-up to receiving issues and complaints. There was considerable participation of the Dubai government in that workshop in December. Since then MECTD have been awarded contracts in Dubai by the government to provide post-arrival training to migrant workers. The series of workshops in Dubai have been instrumental in helping build the capacity of MECTD staff.

One of the key outcomes of the programs has been strengthening of the network of the Euro Mediterranean and Arab Regions – the **Cross-Regional Center for Refugees and Migrants (CCRM)**. CCRM is a network of active refugee and migrant rights organisations in the Euro Mediterranean and Arab Region. The network is active on promoting the rights of refugees and migrants, and fostering experience sharing, dialogue and cooperation CSOs in Euro-Mediterranean countries and the Arab world. The regional programs in Lebanon supported in building the capacity of the members of the network in 2018 and 2019.

DTP also sees a strong collaboration building with the **Business and Human Rights Resource Centre (BHRRC)**. They see value in the work that DTP-MFA are doing in the Middle East. Through BHRRC network DTP has had wider reach to the private sector in the region. The collaboration and relationship with the **Institute of Business and Human Rights (IHRB)** and the **Solidarity Center (SC)** have strengthened with each program in the region.

I feel I now have contacts who can give me context both in my country and in the region, and I am excited to collaborate with them. A concrete example: I have previously had questions about the operation of an insurance program in Jordan. I now feel I know someone to call to directly ask.

Lebanon 2019

