Recommendation for May Day (1 May 2015)

May Day is recognized worldwide as International Labor Day. In Cambodia, most workers are able to celebrate International Labor Day, however for domestic workers the day symbolizes their plight for labor protections. In Cambodia, domestic workers have been excluded from the protection of Labor laws, despite the great contributions they make to the home and the national economy. In June 2011, the International Labor Conference adopted ILO convention C189 concerning decent work for domestic workers. This convention is fundamental for ensuring the rights and benefits of domestic workers are protected.

Although the convention has been adopted and implemented as international law, it hasn’t been ratified or implemented at the country level by most of the countries around the world, including Cambodia. Such exclusion of domestic workers from labor laws and policies allows for exploitation and abuse within the working environment for domestic workers and migrant domestic workers in Cambodia.

During this May Day, we appeal to the government of Cambodia and the public to:

- Recognize domestic work as work and treat domestic workers as equal to all other workers
- Provide for one day off for domestic workers per week
- Ratify ILO C189 and bring national laws and enforcement into alignment, including extending the Cambodian Labor Code to cover domestic workers
- Establish effective monitoring mechanisms for greater accountability and transparency in the recruitment, placement, and employment of domestic workers
- Ensure effective access to redress, legal remedies and grievance procedures in Cambodia for victims of rights violations and abuse, both in Cambodia and abroad
- Provide enhanced skills training to domestic workers at the pre-departure and reintegration stages of migration, as well as improved access to vocational skills training in other employment sectors for women in Cambodia
- Work through regional mechanisms to adopt a binding ASEAN Regional Framework Instrument on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers that includes minimum standards for domestic workers