

LAWYERS BEYOND BORDERS

Building Partnerships for Justice for Migrant Workers

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1. Are migrant workers protected by the labor law and labor regulations in your country? If so, then which provisions of the labor law are most relevant and useful to lawyers, advocates, and migrant workers? Are there any restrictions on the application of the labor law to migrant workers in your country? Explain.
 - a. [Bahrain](#)
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2. What is the first point of contact for purposes of litigation in criminal complaints? In labor complaints? Compare and contrast. What is the statute of limitations for filing civil, labor, or criminal complaints with the courts on behalf of migrant workers in your country? Provide details.
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3. Do various types of contracts exist for migrant workers in your country? Are migrant workers and their employers obliged to sign a standard unified contract in order to be eligible for a work permit from the Ministry of Labor? Is there a distinction between limited and unlimited contracts in your country? Explain.
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4. Where can migrant workers find legal advice and legal representation in your country? Who currently offers these services and who pays for them?
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1. Are migrant workers protected by the labor law and labor regulations in your country? If so, then which provisions of the labor law are most relevant and useful to lawyers, advocates, and migrant workers? Are there any restrictions on the application of the labor law to migrant workers in your country? Explain.

Bahrain:

Migrant workers in Bahrain are protected by the Labor Law for the Private Sector from 1976 – a copy can be downloaded with the following link:

[http://www.upr.bh/hrbc/The Labour Law for the Private Sector.pdf](http://www.upr.bh/hrbc/The_Labour_Law_for_the_Private_Sector.pdf)

The law is divided into chapters and articles – the most important chapters are the following:

Chapter 2: Employment of Foreigners
Chapter 7: Contract of Employment
Chapter 9: Employment of Women
Chapter 10: Wages
Chapter 11: Working Hours and Holidays
Chapter 12: Conditions of Work
Chapter 14: Termination and Leaving Indemnity

The Labor Law is not applicable to domestic workers. All other workers who are working in the private sector are protected by the labor law.

Jordan:

Labor Legislation (in particular Labor Law No. 8 (1996) and amendments) is recognized as the relevant labor legislation across Jordan. Jordan's Labor Law and its regulations and amendments cover most labor relations in the country.

Jordan Labor Law and legislation apply equally to workers of any nationality, Jordanian or foreign migrant workers. Because the legislation does not distinguish between nationalities, migrant workers in Jordan are given equal labor rights as their Jordanian counterparts. As such, Jordan's labor legislation does not apply any additional restrictions to migrant workers accessing the legal system.

Lebanon:

Lebanon's Labour Laws and regulations protect the rights of migrant workers, with regards to fulfilling certain conditions and requirements. Lawyers and advocates can also rely on the "Code of Obligation and Contracts" to argue in cases, and litigate, on behalf of migrant workers.

Domestic migrant workers are explicitly excluded in Lebanon's Labour Code, Article 7; however, migrant domestic workers can still access the labor courts of Lebanon with the help of a lawyer. Meanwhile, migrant domestic workers are not legally entitled to receive minimum wage in Lebanon.

The Lebanese Labor Law also explicitly excludes agricultural workers, but the Labor Law does not explicitly exclude all migrant workers in all sectors working in Lebanon. For example, public sanitation workers who migrate to work in Lebanon are covered by the Labor Law.

Nepal:

Nepalese labor law and regulations protect migrant workers by giving them equal labor rights as Nepalese workers. Migrant workers gain equal rights under Labor Act 1992, and Labor Regulation 1993 when they are hired by their Nepal-based employer. If the company is unable to fill the position with a Nepalese applicant, they may recruit skilled foreign laborers for a period of up to two years, with permission from the Labor Department of Nepal. According to the Labor Act, every company is required to publish available foreign laborers work positions in the Nepalese national newspapers.

The foreign worker's position may be extended for another three years subsequently. In the case of a senior skilled foreign worker, the worker may get permission for a work period of up to seven years. Once the Labor Department gives a foreign worker permission to fill a vacant work position, the worker gains equal legal labor status as Nepalese workers.¹

Nepalese Labor Laws, however, favor Nepalese workers by giving them priority over foreign laborers to fill local positions. Furthermore, unskilled foreign workers cannot obtain permission to work in Nepal under the Labor Act 1992.

That being said, labor disputes involving foreign workers have been successfully litigated in favor of the foreign worker. For example, a May 2010 verdict in the Nepalese Labor court upheld a pregnant British worker's equality rights.² Her employer, a British School in Kathmandu, dismissed the woman from her position as teacher upon hearing of her pregnancy. The court received her complaint, and gave an order re-instating her position. Citing International Labour Organisation Convention-183, and the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the courts re-affirmed the foreign woman's equal status in the workplace.³

Philippines:

Yes, migrant workers are protected by the labor laws and labor regulations in the Philippines.

The Philippines is a labor sending country. Around 1 million Filipinos leave the country every year for an overseas job. On the other hand, there are also foreign expatriates and a small number of foreign migrant workers working in the Philippines. Thus, the question will be answered in both contexts: the Philippines as a sending and receiving country for migrant workers.

As a labor sending country, the Philippine Constitution guarantees full protection to Filipino migrant workers working overseas. Section 3, Article XIII of the Philippine Constitution states:

“The State shall afford full protection to labor, local and overseas, organized and unorganized, and promote full employment and equality of employment opportunities for all. x x x”

The Philippine Constitution also provides for the right to vote of overseas Filipinos. Congress enacted Republic Act No. 9189 to provide the mechanism for the exercise of voting rights of Filipino citizens abroad. Filipino migrant workers abroad have been able to vote abroad since 2004.

The main domestic laws protecting the rights of the Filipino migrant workers are the following:

¹ See for Nepalese laws information: www.lawcommission.gov.np

² <http://www.ekantipur.com/2010/05/30/top-story/british-school-teacher-sacked-for-being-pregnant/315418/>

³ http://www.gefont.org/activity_detail.php?id=629

- (a) Presidential Decree No. 442 otherwise known as The Labor Code of the Philippines;
- (b) R. A. 8042, as amended by R. A. 10022 and its implementing rules and regulations – this is the main law protecting the rights of overseas Filipino workers ; and
- (c) The POEA Rules and Regulations Governing Overseas Employment.

As a receiving country, there is not much work available in the Philippines for foreign migrant workers. The unemployment and underemployment rates are high.

Foreign workers in the Philippines consist of foreign expatriates working for multinational companies, foreign consultants, or specialized foreign workers. There are also some reports of undocumented workers coming into the Philippines, mainly from mainland China.

The practice of profession is limited to Philippine citizens only. Retail trade is also restricted to Filipino citizens (except when the paid-up capital is at least US\$2.5 million or US\$ 250,000 for stores for high-end luxury products).

The Philippines has ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (MWC), and hence, the Philippines is obligated to respect all the rights of foreign migrant workers as stated in the MWC as well as all international human rights treaties and conventions that the Philippines has already ratified.

The employment of non-resident foreign workers in the Philippines is regulated under Articles 40-42 of the Labor Code. As a general rule, a non-resident alien or applicant employer may be issued an employment permit only if it is determined that there is no competent, able and willing person in the Philippines available at the time of the application to perform services. Foreign migrant workers are required to secure an employment permit from the Department of Labor of Employment under Department Order No. 97-09⁴ as well as the corresponding working visa from the Bureau of Immigration (pre-arranged employment visa - 9(G) Visa or Special Employment Visa⁵).

Qatar:

Employment in Qatar is primary governed by Qatar Labour Law No. 14 (2004) and a series of related Ministerial Resolutions. The restrictions which apply to Labor rights in Qatar are found in Law no-4 for 2009, Regulating the Entry, Exit, Residence & Sponsorship of Foreigners (**the “Sponsorship Law”**). The Sponsorship law regulates the entry and exit of foreigners and also contains the regulations of the sponsorship system. The Sponsorship Law restricts the application of Labor Law No. 14, by creating a legal relationship between sponsor-migrant which causes migrant workers to fear for losing their jobs or having their Visas cancelled.

The Sponsorship Law creates a legal relationship between the sponsor and the visa-holding employee. While the law outlines restrictions that the sponsor has to follow, it fully restricts migrant workers by not allowing them to work for any employer besides the sponsor. For example, under the Sponsorship Law, the sponsor shall not in any case hold the employees passports. However, the Sponsorship Law also provides that the sponsor shall be generally liable for the debts and obligations of those that it sponsors. Therefore, due to potential liability, some sponsors still require that they hold their employees’ passports.

The Sponsorship Law prevents expatriates from working for parties other than those who sponsored them. Similarly, employers cannot employ workers who they have no sponsored. Simply, the Sponsorship Law binds employees to their sponsors, and vice-versa, not allowing for any labour relations with third parties.

⁴ Available at <http://www.dole.gov.ph/fndr/bong/files/DO%2097-09.pdf>

⁵ Available at http://immigration.gov.ph/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=469&Itemid=104

The Sponsorship Law restricts expatriates from gaining a work visa unless they have not resided in the State of Qatar for more than two calendar years. This restriction may be waived by the Minister of Interior or his deputy if the worker is given written approval by his or her previous sponsor.

Labour Law – Minimum Standards

Qatar Labour Law gives a minimum set of entitlements to workers which cannot be waived or limited by any labour agreement. Article 4 provides that the entitlements prescribed by this law represent the minimum entitlements of the work; any contract term contradicting the Labour Law provisions will be void, even if they were made prior to the law's enactment. This does not apply to contract terms that are advantageous to the workers. If the clause is advantageous to the worker, any release, compromise, or waive of the clause by the worker shall be deemed void by the Labour Law.

Employee Protections

- **Minimum Wage** – Qatar has agreements with certain countries in relation to protection of certain low-paid workers. There is however generally no minimum wage.
- **Working Hours/Weekends** – Maximum forty eight hours per week/eight hours per day, excluding lunch break. During Ramadan – thirty six hours per week/six hours per day; one interval or more for prayer/rest/meals of between 1-3 hours; workers shall not work more than five consecutive hours; Friday is the weekly rest day for all workers, except shift workers – if workers are required to work on Friday then they are entitled to day in lieu, and payment of an additional 50% of their daily wage. During the hot, summer months, the Labour Ministry will set out permitted working for those working outside.
- **End of Service Benefit** – After one year's continuous service, employees are entitled to at least three week's salary for each year of service, unless summarily dismissed during the year.
- **Upon End of Service** – Upon the end of their service, the employee shall be returned at the employer's own cost to the place where he or she was recruited, or to any place agreed upon between the two parties. The non-Qatari worker's proceedings of return shall be completed by their employer within a period not exceeding two weeks after the expiry date of the labour contract. If the worker gains employment from another employer before departing the State, the obligation to return the worker to his or her own country is given to the new employer.

2. What is the first point of contact for purposes of litigation in criminal complaints? In labor complaints? Compare and contrast. What is the statute of limitations for filing civil, labor, or criminal complaints with the courts on behalf of migrant workers in your country? Provide details.

Bahrain:

The first point of contact in criminal complaints is always the police station. The police will then forward the case to the public prosecutor

With labor complaints the first point of contact is the Ministry of Labor (MOL). The MOL will bring together the involved parties and try to act as a mediator; the case will be transferred to the labor court, only if mediation does not work.

There are no limitations placed on migrant workers. They have the same rights as Bahraini citizens. Remember, however, that domestic workers are not covered by the labor law of Bahrain; only skilled workers are.

Jordan:

Under the sovereignty of Jordan law, all individuals are to be protected equally, and treated the same. All levels of Criminal courts follow the same procedures whether the parties are Jordan nationals or foreigners. Likewise, all level of Civil courts treat all individuals equally. This equality is also found in labor courts and tribunals.

Lebanon:

The first point of contact for purposes of litigation in a criminal complaint is in general:

- The General prosecutor
- Police agency
- General security
- Judge of instruction

This may vary depending to the nature of the criminal complaint. Criminal complaints are heard in the regular criminal court.

For labor complaints, one has to refer to the Ministry of Labor, or the Labor court. Complaints heard by the labour court involve, but are not limited to, breaches of contract, manipulation of contract terms etcetera.

Statute of Limitations:

- In a labor complain, the limitation period is two years.
- In regards to a criminal complaint, the limitation period is one year for a minor infraction, three years for a misdemeanour, and ten years for a serious crime.

Nepal:

The first point of contact for purposes of litigation in criminal complaints is the Nepal Police.

For labor complaints, the first point of contact is the Nepalese Labor Department, and the Labor courts. Different provisions in the Labor Act govern the complaint process. There is a three month limitation period for labor complaints, which should be directed towards the local labor office. If three months pass, and the complaint is not filed, the complaint will not be valid.

Nepal's Foreign Employment Act 2007, and Regulation 2007 govern the legal status of Nepalese workers working abroad. The act regulates the activities of Nepalese recruitment agencies and Nepalese migrant workers. Any disputes concerning recruitment agencies and Nepalese migrant workers are heard in the Foreign Employment Tribunal. (Foreign Employment Act 2007 Section 64).

Philippines:

A. In criminal cases

In general, the first points of contact for purposes of litigation in criminal complaints are the police, the *barangay*, and the public prosecutor's office.

If it is a crime that is reported to or investigated by the police, the victims, suspects and witnesses will be questioned by the police. If sufficient grounds are found, the police will refer the case to the public prosecutor's office for inquest proceedings. If the public prosecutor determines that probable cause exists, the criminal information will be filed in court.

It is also possible to file a criminal complaint directly before the public prosecutor's office without going through the police. Such complaints will undergo the regular procedure for preliminary investigation in the office of the public prosecutor. If the public prosecutor finds probable cause, a criminal information will be filed in court.

Minor criminal cases (where the penalty is imprisonment for 1 year or less or a fine of P5,000 or less) involving parties actually residing in the same city or municipality are required to undergo amicable settlement proceedings before the *barangay*⁶ before the case may be elevated before the public prosecutor's office. If the parties fail to amicably settle their dispute, only then may the injured party file a complaint before the office of the public prosecutor.

Criminal liability for crimes committed under the Revised Penal Code may be extinguished by prescription as follows:

- (a) crimes punishable by *reclusion temporal*⁷ to death prescribes in 20 years;
- (b) crimes punishable by *prision mayor*⁸ prescribes in 15 years;
- (c) crimes punishable by *prision correccional*⁹ prescribes in 10 years;
- (d) crimes punishable by *arresto mayor*¹⁰ prescribes in 5 years;
- (e) the crime of libel prescribes in 1 year;
- (f) the offense of oral defamation and slander by deed prescribes in 6 months; and
- (g) light offenses¹¹ prescribes in 2 months.

Crimes punishable under special laws may be extinguished as follows:

- (a) crimes punishable only by a fine or imprisonment for not more than 1 month prescribes after 1 year;
- (b) crimes punishable by imprisonment for more than 1 month, but less than 2 years prescribes after 4 years;
- (c) crimes punishable by imprisonment for 2 years or more, but less than 6 years prescribes after 8 years;

⁶ The *barangay* is the basic political unit used for governance in the Philippines consisting of at least 5,000 residents in Metro Manila or at least 2,000 inhabitants elsewhere.

⁷ Penalty of 12 years and 1 day to 20 years of imprisonment

⁸ Penalty of 6 years and 1 day to 12 years of imprisonment

⁹ Penalty of 6 months and 1 day to 6 years of imprisonment

¹⁰ Penalty of 1 month and 1 day to 6 months of imprisonment

¹¹ Penalty of 1 day to 30 days of imprisonment

- (d) crimes punishable by imprisonment for 6 years or more, prescribes after 12 years, except the crime of treason, which shall prescribe in 20 years;
- (e) offenses against laws administered by the Bureau of Internal Revenue prescribes after 5 years; and
- (f) violations of municipal ordinances prescribes after 2 months.

B. In labor cases

Labor complaints (of both overseas Filipino workers and foreign migrant workers in the Philippines) involving termination disputes, money claims, unfair labor practices, disputes concerning terms and conditions of employment and claims for damages arising from employer-employee relations are filed before the Labor Arbiters of the National Labor Relations Commission.

All money claims arising from employer-employee relations prescribes in three years.

Overseas Filipino workers may also file administrative complaints against private recruitment agencies before the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA).

Criminal complaints for illegal recruitment and human trafficking may be filed before the office of the public prosecutor.

C. In civil cases

All civil cases are filed directly before the regular civil courts. Parties actually residing in the same city or municipality are required to undergo amicable settlement proceedings before the *barangay* before the case may be elevated to the courts.

Qatar:

First point of contact:

The first point of contact in Criminal case is the nearest police station, the Capital Police, or the Public Prosecution office. The first point of contact in labour proceedings is the Department of Labour. A migrant worker can also file at the Labour Court.

In criminal complaints, the parties who are fighting the case cannot leave the country until the case is settled. This applies to either the victim or the accused offender. In contrast, a victim filing a labor complaint may leave the country after hiring a lawyer. The process for filing either a criminal or labor complaint is easy and accessible.

With regards to filing civil labor cases, the victim should file the complaint personally and not have someone file on his or her own behalf. In the case of a criminal misdemeanor, the worker must file the case by himself. But in the case of a criminal event, anyone has the right to provide communication to the public prosecution.

In all cases, the court should provide a lawyer to defend those people who are not capable to hire one.

The statutory limitation period in a labour dispute is one year after the expiry date of the labor contract. Regarding compensation for injury or death, the limitation is one year from declaration of disability or death. Suits filed more than one year after the event will not be heard. The limitation periods in other civil or criminal matters varies by legislation. Migrant workers can access all Qatari courts, whether Civil, Criminal or Labour.

According to the establishment law of the Ministry of Labour, the Department of Labour Relations must 1) receive and study labour complaints 2) settle labour disputes amicably, transmitting them through formal application the

Labour Court 3) educate workers and employer to the provisions of Labour legislation, and 4) provide them legal advice on their rights and duties.

Statistics show that the Department of Labour Relations has forwarded 4150 complaints to the specialized labour court in the period of January 2011 to April 2011.

3. Do various types of contracts exist for migrant workers in your country? Are migrant workers and their employers obliged to sign a standard unified contract in order to be eligible for a work permit from the Ministry of Labor? Is there a distinction between limited and unlimited contracts in your country? Explain.

Bahrain:

All employers which employ employees in the private sector are obliged to submit a signed copy of a work contract to the LMRA (Labor Market Regulation Authority).

The LMRA has issued a template which can be used (but does not have to be used)

Basically 2 different types of work contracts exist:

- Contracts of an indefinite term
- Contracts of a limited term

99% of all work contracts are limited term contracts, limited to two years in most cases.

Jordan:

Jordan Civil Law applies to most contract law in Jordan; however, in labor relations, the law states strict and compulsory (required) terms and rules. These rules govern both the legal labor relationship between employer and employee, and their labor contract. The legal obligations and protections outlined in the labor law cannot be overturned, or changed by any written contract.

For example, primary labor hours for workers cannot exceed eight hours a day. A contract that lists primary labor hours as more than eight hours is not permitted by law.

Furthermore, in 2009, the Ministry of Labor issued new regulations for domestic workers. These regulations provide new protection to migrant workers. The regulation demands that all parties sign four copies of a unified labor contract, which protects the relationship between domestic workers and their employers.

The law in Jordan distinguishes between limited and unlimited labor contracts. A limited contract's duration is listed in a written contract between the employer and employee. An unlimited term contract is governed by the mutual will of the parties, or by the labor courts. If an employer breaches an unlimited labor contract, Jordan labor law penalizes the employer for the "arbitrary dismissal of the worker." The penalty requires the employer to pay the worker six month's salary plus an additional one month compensation for lack of notification.

Lebanon:

To be eligible for a work permit from the Ministry of Labour, migrant domestic workers are obliged to sign a standard unified contract with their employers. There is only one such standard contract of this sort in Lebanon, and it has been a requirement since 2009. Unless both parties sign this in front of a notary public, the migrant worker is not eligible for a work permit. All notary publics in Lebanon use this contract when preparing the paperwork required for migrant domestic workers and their employers to apply to the Ministry of Labour for a work permit.

For non-domestic migrant workers, there is a distinction between limited and unlimited contracts in Lebanon. Article 58 of the Lebanese Labour Code states that workers engaged in a limited contract, do not receive the benefit of early notification of job termination. In contrast, workers who have an unlimited contract do receive this benefit.

In the case of contract/work period renewal, if the work period exceeds two years, the (limited) contract turns into an unlimited contract.

Nepal:

Migrant workers in Nepal are protected under the same legislation as local workers. While general priority is given to local workers, employers unable to fill vacant positions with local laborers are allowed to recruit foreign skilled labor (Labor Act 1992)

Philippines:

Contracts of Filipino workers for overseas employment are reviewed and approved by the Philippines Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) before the worker is deployed abroad. The POEA has standard employment contracts for various skills/occupations. For contracts prepared by the employer, the POEA ensures that certain minimum standards (joint and several liability of the employer and recruitment agency; salaries/wages; terms and conditions of employment, etc. are compliant with Philippine laws, rules and regulations.

A copy of the employment contract of a foreign migrant worker in the Philippines is required to be submitted to the Department of Labor and Employment for the issuance of an Alien Employment Permit (AEP). There is no standard or unified contract that is required. There is also no distinction between limited and unlimited contracts. The AEP issued is valid for the position and the company for which it is issued for a period of one year unless the employment contract, consultancy services or other modes of engagement provides otherwise, which in no case shall exceed five years.

Qatar:

There are two types of contracts for migrant workers in Qatar. The first contract contains the same provisions for all migrant workers and employers, it must be approved by the Ministry of Labor. Usually, there are three copies of this contract; one for the employer, employee, and Ministry of Labor respectively.

The second type of contract is one that is signed by the employer and domestic worker, but is not approved by the Ministry of Labor.

Limited, and Unlimited duration contracts:

1. Limited duration contracts have a maximum duration of five years. They are renewable for up to one year. Furthermore, limited duration contracts are deemed automatically renewed on an indefinite term if the parties continue to perform their contractual duties after the original contract expires. It is illegal for either party to separately decide to end the contract after the contracts probationary period ends. If the contract is terminated after the probationary period, the wronged party may sue for damages.
 2. Unlimited duration contracts can be terminated without stating the reason, but employers are required to give notice.
 3. Project specific contracts are renewable.
- Employment contracts shall be made in Arabic. The contract may be accompanied by translations into other languages; however, in the case of conflict the Arabic text shall prevail.
 - Employment contracts may contain provisions subject the worker to probation period agreed upon between the two parties, provided that the period shall not exceed six months. The worker shall not be subjected to more than one probation period with the same employer.
 - The employer may terminate the employment contract within the probation period if it has been proven that the worker is not capable of carrying out the work provided. In such a case, the employer shall notify the worker of their termination at least three days before the date of termination.

Article (38) of the Labour Law stipulates that:

“The service contract shall be made in writing and attested by the Department of Labour and shall comprise three copies, one copy to be delivered to each of the parties and the third copy to be deposited with the Department.

The service contract shall specify the terms concerning the labour relationship between its two parties and in particular shall contain the following:

- The name of the employer and place of his work.
- The name, qualifications, nationality, profession and residence of the worker and the proof necessary for his identification.
- The date of conclusion of the contract.
- The nature and type of the work and place of contracting.
- The date of commencement of the work.
- The period of the contract if the contract is of a definite duration.
- The agreed wage and the method and date of the payment thereof.
- If the service contract is not made in writing, the worker may prove the labour relationship and the rights which have arisen there from by all means of proof.”
- There is a Department of Labour pro-forma labour contract; any alternative requires prior approval.

Non-Qatari workers may not be employed until their work permits are approved and obtained from the Department of Labour of Qatar. Such work permits will be issued subject to following conditions:

- The non-availability of a qualified Qatari worker registered in the registers of the Department to carry out the work in respect of which the work permit is applied for
- The non-Qatari applying for the work permit shall be in possession of a residence permit
- The non-Qatari national shall be medically fit...”

Work permits are obtained from the Department of Labour after fulfilling various immigration formalities with the Ministry of Interior, including production of a local employment contract.

4. Where can migrant workers find legal advice and legal representation in your country? Who currently offers these services and who pays for them?

Bahrain:

The main point of contact is the embassy of the sending country and the Labour Market Regulatory Authority LMRA (which is rarely used making it an inefficient vehicle for migrant workers).

Jordan:

NGO's and Civil service societies in Jordan, such as Justice Center for Legal Aid, Tamkeen, Mizan, and the National Center for Human Rights offer all types of free legal aid to migrant workers.

Lebanon:

In Lebanon, migrant domestic workers can find legal advice/representation with the following non-governmental organizations who generally offer legal services free of charge:

- Caritas Lebanon Migrant Centre*
- KAFA (enough) Violence & Exploitation
- Insan

*Migrant workers may approach the Beirut and Tripoli Bar Association for legal advice. However, according to Joyce Geha's remarks in Bangkok, the Beirut Bar Association now refers legal cases directly to Caritas Lebanon Migrant Center.

Legal services may also be provided to migrant domestic workers by diplomatic missions representing countries of origin. Some embassies/consulates in Lebanon have labor attaches and provide their nationals with varying degrees of legal consultation/representation as well. The Philippines and Sri Lanka have embassy-level diplomatic representation in Beirut. Migrant workers of course can also obtain legal advice from independent lawyers. Unlike the organizations above, lawyers generally do not provide free legal services.

Nepal:

The Nepal Bar Association is one of the main organizations that provides legal representation for migrant workers. The Bar Association offers free legal aid to those who do not have access to justice, and to Nepalese citizens who cannot afford lawyer's fees. This is called the "Access to Justice Project," with aims to uphold Human rights, and promote legal aid, and legal literacy/awareness. There are also numerous NGO's in Nepal working to improve Nepalese migrant workers' rights. These NGOs are also providing legal advice and representation to migrant workers in Nepal. Generally, it is individual who lawyers are working to forward labor problems, labor issues and advance labor rights in Nepal through the Labor Court and Supreme Court.

WOREC Nepal, Youth Action Nepal, PNCC, PAURAKHI, People Forum are a few of the organizations working to increase the legal agency of migrant workers in Nepal.

Philippines:

In cases filed before the NLRC for money claims or termination disputes, the overseas Filipino workers may represent himself/herself without the assistance of counsel. If they so desire, they may hire the services of a private lawyer.

If the complainant is an indigent person, he/she may avail the services of the Public Attorney's Office.

If the complainant does not qualify as an indigent person, he/she may also avail of the free legal aid services provided by NGO's and civil society groups such as the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, Kanlungan Centre Foundation, Inc., Center for Migrant Advocacy Philippines, Inc., etc.

Victims of illegal recruitment are provided free legal assistance by the POEA and other concerned agencies of government.

Legal assistance is also provided by the Philippine Government through its embassies/consulates abroad to overseas Filipinos who are in distress. A Legal Assistance Fund in the amount of P100 million a year is required to be appropriated for the needs of Filipino migrant workers in distress overseas.

Foreign migrant workers working in the Philippines may also represent themselves, without the assistance of counsel, in labor cases filed before the NLRC. If they so desire, they may hire the services of a private lawyer. They may also seek assistance from their respective embassies/consulates in appropriate cases.

Qatar:

Legal advice is available to migrant workers in Qatar, however, free legal representation is almost non-existent. A migrant worker may approach one's country's embassy or Department of Labour. According to Article 10 of the Labour Law, all lawsuits filed by the workers or their heirs claiming the entitlements accruing under the provisions of Labour law or the service contract shall be dealt with urgency and shall be exempted from judicial fees.

Migrant workers can find legal advice and legal representation in the Labor Department, in the National Human Rights Committee(NHRC) and at their nations' Embassies. Usually, the Embassies and the National Human Rights Committee provides free legal advice. The NHRC and Embassies also provide lawyers to the victims / wronged parties. This support arises out of complications in labour disputes. Such services occur on a case by case basis. For example, the NHRC received 731 complaints during the 2011 year. Out of these 731 complainants, they were only able to provide the service of a lawyer to ten, free of charge.

Lastly, workers and labourers in Qatar can submit their complaints directly to the court. The court is easily approachable. Filing a labour complaint requires only a few simple steps.