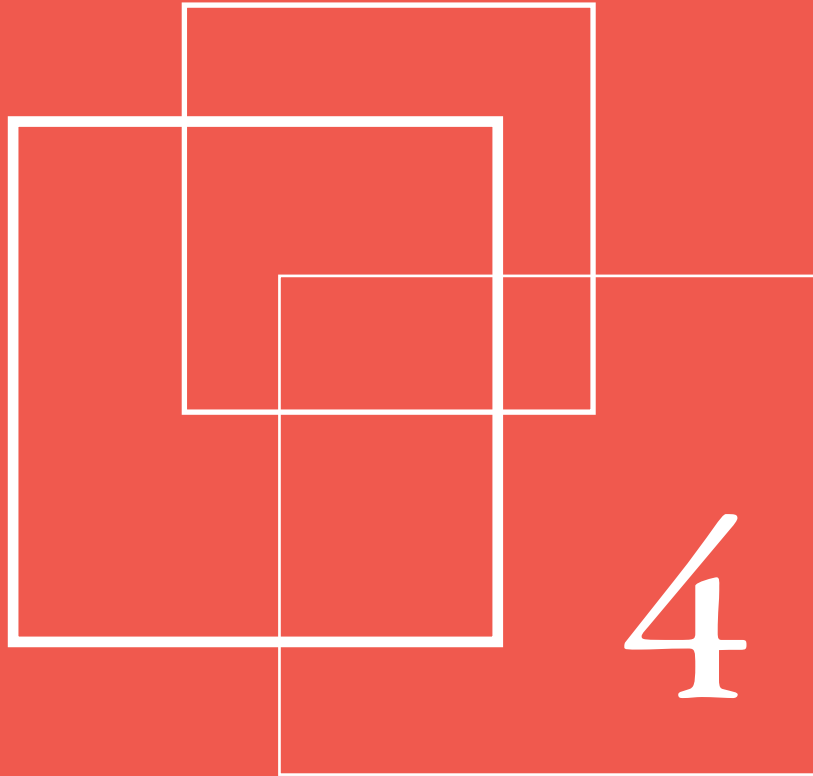


MANUFACTURING SECTOR



CHAPTER 4 : MANUFACTURING SECTOR

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4. MANUFACTURING SECTOR

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In this study, the manufacturing sector is limited to small- to medium-sized textile (garment) factories, which comprises operations employing no more than 50 workers. Manufacturers of other products, such as auto-parts or food products are not considered here. The study is limited to textiles since it appears that significant numbers of migrant workers have been exploited in these types of factories, particularly in Thailand.

Previous studies have focused predominately on large-scale factories, including one carried out in Tak province by Amnesty International.⁴¹ The results showed that migrants were forced to work extremely long hours, and were seldom paid overtime. Working conditions were often poor, with inadequate ventilation and water provided in the factories. Living conditions were also very crowded, regardless of whether accommodation was provided by the factory owner or not .

Over the last three decades, Thai economic policy has promoted the manufacturing sector, particularly the export of manufactured goods. This coupled with declining population growth rates, meant growth in the labour force was less than the increase in the demand for labour. This provided a space for foreign migrants to enter Thailand to work in the manufacturing sector, according to the Ministry of Labour in 2003. The manufacturing sector now

represents a significant component of the Thai economy. In 2005, manufacturing comprised 38% of Thailand's gross domestic product (GDP). In the first quarter of 2006, growth in the manufacturing sector continued, recording 7.6% growth.⁴² In 2004, the textile and garment sub-sector generated US\$6.4 billion, according to the Thai Customs Department, representing approximately 4% of GDP.⁴³ A significant component of the growth was due to higher export demand for textiles and clothing items (apparel). Manufacturing, in particular textiles, is therefore a highly-important sector for the Royal Thai Government, generating significant revenue.

Migrant workers are increasingly employed in the manufacturing sector in Thailand because of the economic boom, both before and after the 1997 economic crisis. Thai employers also seem to prefer Burmese migrant workers as they are perceived as hard working, obedient and patient.⁴⁴

Migrant workers employed in the manufacturing sector are protected under the Labour Protection Act (LPA) of 1998. The main elements of the LPA include:

a) Working hours

Working Hours (section 23) points out that a working day must not exceed eight hours, a week must not exceed 48 hours, and a working day must not exceed seven hours and one working week must not exceed 42 hours.

⁴¹ Amnesty International, 2002.

⁴² *GDP: Q1/2006*, Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, Bangkok, 2006

⁴³ Thailand Investment Review: Focus on Thai Textiles and Garments. "The Textile and Garment Industry Add Value and Increases Quality to Improve Global Competitiveness" BOI:<http://boi.go.th>

⁴⁴ Martin, 2004.

b) Rest period

Rest periods of no less than one hour per day must be provided or at least after the employee has been working for no more than five consecutive hours. Regarding overtime cases, if continued for no less than two hours of normal working hours, the employer must arrange for the worker to have a rest period of no less than twenty minutes before the worker commences the overtime work (Section 27, 24, and 25).

c) Holiday

One weekly holiday must be given, of no less than one day per week. The interval between weekly holidays must be no less than six days. In addition, traditional holidays (governed by section 29) must add up to no less than thirteen days per year. This is inclusive of the National Labour Day as prescribed by the minister in a notification (Section 28).

d) Leave

Sections 32 to 34 of the LPA regulate various kinds of leave, such as leave for medical reasons. Section 32 stipulates that the worker must be allowed to take medical leave to the extent of his or her actual illness. For medical leave of three working days or more, the employer may ask the employee to provide an official medical certificate and an explanation. Days on which a worker is unable to work due to injury or illness arising from work, and maternity leave days under section 41 shall not be considered to be medical leave under section 32. Section 33 provides for leave in order to be sterilized, and section 34 regulates leave for essential errands.

e) Wages

Sections 53 to 55 and 61 to 63 of the LPA govern wages. The law says wages shall be in Thai currency only, at rates no less than of the minimum wage. The

minimum wage rates shall apply to management and workers, regardless of the nationality, religion or sex of either manager or worker.

Section 61 regulates overtime pay. This must be no less than one and a half times the hourly rate on a working day according to the number of hours worked, or according to the quantity of work, or the results of the work performed. Section 62 covers holiday pay. Workers receiving daily wages shall be paid no less than one times the hourly wage rate per working day, of course in accordance with the number of hours normally worked, or according to the quantity of work. Regarding workers receiving a monthly wage, a payment of no less than twice the hourly wage rate on a working day shall be paid in accordance with the number of hours worked, or according to the quantity of work. Section 63 regulates holiday overtime pay, which must be no less than three times the hourly wage rate on a working day.

1.2 Geographical site of research

The manufacturing sector research focussed on Bangkok and its vicinities, including Nonthaburi, Nakhon Pathom, Samut Prakarn, Pathumthani and Samut Sakhorn.

2. METHODOLOGY

In total, 130 migrants were surveyed and in-depth interviews were carried out with 10 of them. Some 80 employers were surveyed and in-depth interviews were carried out with 10 of them. Interviews were also conducted with five key informants. Research was carried out by a research team from IPSR and Mahidol University as was the case for the section on agriculture.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 General characteristics of employers

Within the sample, most employers (62%) were female. Most employers (77%) owned their businesses

and a similar proportion were sub-contractors. Employers had fairly high levels of education, more than a third (35%) of them had graduated from university and almost a quarter had graduated from either lower or upper secondary school as well as primary school. A few (5%) employers participated in formal or informal employers' organizations.

Table 1: Percentage distribution (%) of employers by specific characteristics and background

Selected Characteristics	Percent	Number
Sex		
Male	37.5	30
Female	62.5	50
Total	100.0	80
Subcontracting		
Yes	73.8	59
No	18.8	15
Both	7.5	6
Total	100.0	80
Position		
Manager	11.3	9
Owner	77.5	62
Others	11.2	9
Total	100.0	80
Education level		
None	2.5	2
Primary	21.2	17
Lower secondary	21.2	17
Upper secondary	21.3	17
Tertiary	33.8	27
Total	100.0	80
Participate in employers' organisation		
Yes	5.0	4
No	93.8	75
Not Applicable	1.3	1
Total	100.0	80

3.2 General characteristics of migrants

The majority of workers (64%) in the manufacturing sector were female. Their ages ranged from 15 to 24 years with the vast majority (86%) aged 18 and above, while 14% were under 18 years old.

In terms of ethnicity, a large majority (81%) came from Myanmar. Most migrants (29%) identified themselves as Burman, followed by roughly an equal proportion (25% each, respectively) of Karen and Mon workers. About 16% were Shan.

There were no significant differences when comparing male and female workers from the different ethnic groups, except that there tended to be more female Shan workers than male. The majority of Mon migrants tended to be very young, aged between 15-17 years old. Only a very small proportion came from Lao PDR (4%). There were no Cambodian migrants.

Table 2: Percentage distribution of migrants by selected characteristics

Selected Characteristics	Percent	Number
Sex		
Male	36.2	47
Female	63.8	83
Total	100.0	130
Ethnicity		
Burman	29.2	38
Mon	25.4	33
Karen	25.4	33
Shan	16.2	21
Laos	3.8	5
Total	100.0	130
Country of birth		
Thailand	3.1	4
Myanmar	80.8	105
Lao	13.1	17
Cambodia	3.1	4
Total	100.0	130
Age group		
15 – 17 years	13.8	18
18 – 25 years	86.2	112
Total	100.0	130
Mean age	20.0	130
(S.D.)	(2.4)	

In terms of educational background, most migrant workers (63%) in the manufacturing sector had completed less than seven years of schooling (63%), with little variation between the sexes.

Across the age groups, nearly half could speak some Thai, while only 12% could not speak any Thai at all. Therefore a substantial proportion of manufacturing workers were able to communicate quite well with their employers.

Table 3: Percentage distribution of migrants by selected characteristics, grouped by sex and age

Characteristics	Female	Male	15-17 years	18-25 years	Total %
Ethnicity					
Burman	30.1	27.7	27.8	29.5	29.2
Karen	24.1	27.7	11.1	27.7	25.4
Mon	21.7	31.9	50.0	21.4	25.4
Shan	22.9	4.3	11.1	17.0	16.2
Lao	1.2	8.5	0.0	4.5	3.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(130)
Education (years of schooling)					
None	8.5	4.4	5.6	7.3	7.1
1-6 years	61.0	66.7	77.8	60.6	63.0
7-9 years	19.5	20.0	16.7	20.2	19.7
10 +	11.0	8.9	0.0	11.9	10.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(130)
Speak Thai					
Fluently	4.8	4.3	0.0	5.4	4.6
Good	28.9	14.9	22.2	24.1	23.8
Some	49.4	42.6	44.4	47.3	46.9
Little	7.2	21.3	16.7	11.6	12.3
Not at all	9.6	17.0	16.7	11.6	12.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(130)
Registration status					
Registered	84.3	68.1	72.2	79.5	78.5
Unregistered	15.7	31.9	27.8	20.5	21.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(130)

3.3 Legal status of migrant workers

a) Registration status and other characteristics

A total of 79% of the migrant workers in the manufacturing sector sample were registered. This is a significantly higher proportion than was found in the fishing, domestic work and agriculture sectors.

More female migrant workers (84%) were registered than male migrant workers (68%).

Registration also differed between age groups, with adult migrants tending to register more than child migrant workers. In terms of ethnicity, most Mon workers were registered (88%) whilst a large proportion of Karen migrants had not (46%).

Table 4: Percent distribution of migrants by registration status, ethnicity, sex, age and education

Characteristics	Registered	Unregistered	Total	Number
Ethnicity				
Burman	76.3	23.7	100.0	38
Karen	54.5	45.5	100.0	33
Mon	87.9	12.1	100.0	33
Shan	100.0	0.0	100.0	21
Lao	100.0	0.0	100.0	5
Total	78.5	21.5	100.0	130
Sex				
Male	68.1	31.9	100.0	47
Female	84.3	15.7	100.0	83
Total	78.5	21.5	100.0	130
Age group				
15-17 years	72.2	27.8	100.0	18
18-25 years	79.5	20.5	100.0	112
Total	78.5	21.5	100.0	130
Education level				
No school	66.7	33.3	100.0	9
Primary education	76.2	23.8	100.0	80
Secondary education	88.0	12.0	100.0	25
Higher education	76.9	23.1	100.0	13
Total	78.0	22.0	100.0	130

b) Reasons for not registering

Most of the 21% of migrants who did not register said they did not have time to register or did not know about it. A total of 15% of females said their

employer would not allow them to register, although this was not evident among any of the male migrant workers. A small proportion of male migrants felt they moved around too much to register, but this was not used as a reason by any females.

Table 5: Percentage distribution of non-registered migrants by reasons for not registering, grouped by sex, age and sub-sector

Reasons	Female	Male	11-17 years	18-25 years	Total
Don't know about it	38.5	26.7	20.0	34.8	32.1
Move around too much	0.0	6.7	0.0	4.3	3.6
Employer didn't allow	15.4	0.0	20.0	4.3	7.1
No time	61.5	60.0	40.0	65.2	60.7
Wouldn't improve situation	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Might be sent home	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Number	13	15	5	23	28

c) Migrants' and employers' attitudes towards registration

The vast majority of registered migrants agreed with the statement that registering made them feel more secure in their job and that it helps them find work easily and makes them feel safer when they go out.

Slightly more female migrant workers than male migrants tended to feel safer and, secure more as a result of registration.

“It seems that since I got my card, I do not fear policemen anymore.” (MI, 21 year-old Burman female, manufacturing worker)

Table 6: Percentage distribution of migrants by attitudes towards sex and age*

Reasons for registration	Sex		Age group	
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25
Helps to find job easily	73.5	63.8	66.7	70.5
Makes jobs more secure	81.9	66.0	72.2	76.8
Feels safer when they go out	74.7	66.0	72.2	71.4
Makes life more difficult	12.0	6.4	11.1	9.8
Number	83	47	18	112

* These figures represent the response 'I agree' to the statements.

Still, over a quarter of registered migrants did not agree with the statement that registration had made them feel safer when they venture outside the workplace. The in-depth interviews highlighted the fact that many registered migrant workers still face harassment by police when they venture outside the workplace, despite having their documents and remaining in registered geographical boundaries.

“I want the [Thai] government to help us. Every time we go out, the police threaten us even though we have our work permit cards.” (MD, 19 year-old Lao female, manufacturing worker)

Problems with the police were not confined to migrant workers, with employers also encountering problems at times.

“Police used to charge me 7,000- 8,000 baht per foreign worker when there was trouble. Some people [other employers] got charged no less than 10,000 per migrant worker.” (E, male employer)

A large majority of employers (83%) felt the government should let more migrants work legally in Thailand. Views were generally positive about the migrant registration scheme. Two thirds of employers said registration had improved their business. Less than a third were not satisfied with the process and felt it was better to avoid it.

According to the in-depth interviews, employers accept that the registration process provides benefits

to both employers and workers. Some employers were not supportive of the new criteria, which allow workers to switch employers. Many employers were concerned that registered migrants might leave before the registration fee was recouped through wage deductions. Employers were also frustrated that there was no legal way to replace registered migrants who fled. This highlights the gaps in terms of information regarding registration information, education and communication between employers and government policy as the recent policy announced that employers can hire other migrant workers in the case that they flee, however, employers do have to pay for another registration fee.

Table 7: Percentage distribution (% agree) of employers by attitudes towards registration

Attitudes	Percent	Number*
The registration process has so many problems its better to avoid registration (not to register workers)	28.8	23
The migrant registration process has improved my business	66.3	53
The government should allow more migrants to work here legally	82.5	66
Number		80

* Excluding 'don't know' and employers who did not respond.

About 73% of employers deducted the cost of registration from their workers' wages (Table 7). Registration costs about 3,800 baht per worker. Most employers deducted the entire cost of registration from their worker's salary. Amounts varied, but the

overwhelming majority deducted the full amount to be paid back over time. Only about 10% of employers paid some of the registration costs for the migrant worker.

Table 8: Percentage distribution of employers by money deducted for migrant's registration

Deducted cost of registration	Percent	Number
Yes	72.5	58
No	18.8	15
N/A	8.7	7
Total	100.0	80

Table 9: Percentage distribution of employers by reported amount of money deducted for registration of migrants

Amount (baht)	Percent	Number
1,900	8.7	5
2,800	1.7	1
3,800	87.9	51
4,200	1.7	1
Total	100.0	58
Median (baht)	3,800	

3.4 Indications of exploitation

a) Forced labour

In the current study, 2% of migrant workers (three workers) in the manufacturing sector said they had been forced to work in their previous job by someone who was not a member of their family, compared with one migrant worker (out of 130) in their current job. Therefore the extent of outright forced labour could be described as negligible. All four workers were female migrants aged between 15-17. The worker who said she was currently being forced to work was registered. It could be said that workers might be facing conditions that are tantamount for forced

labour, however, it could not be said outright that the workers were facing conditions of forced labour without looking into a range of other conditions.

b) Constraints on leaving current employment

A third of migrant workers reported that they felt constraints to leaving their current job. Slightly more male migrant workers (40%) felt unable to leave their jobs than females. Older migrant workers aged 18-25 tended to have more constraints (35%) than younger migrant workers (17%). Surprisingly, there was no clear difference on the basis of registration status.

Table 10: Percentage distribution of migrants by constraints on leaving job, grouped by sex and age

Response	Sex		Age group		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	
Yes, can leave	72.3	59.6	83.3	65.2	67.7
No, cannot leave	27.7	40.4	16.7	34.8	32.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(130)

Table 11: Percentage distribution of migrants by constraints on leaving job and registration status

Response	Registered	Unregistered	Total
Yes, can leave	67.6	67.9	67.7
No, cannot leave	32.4	32.1	32.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(102)	(28)	(130)

The main reasons migrant workers felt constraints preventing them leaving their current job related to employers holding their original documents. Also cited was the degree of difficulty in finding other jobs as well as a fear of arrest by the police. A total of 77.8% of unregistered migrant workers fear being

arrested by the police, while an equal number fear deportation. Among registered workers, 42.4% said their employer keeps hold of their original document. Just over a third of registered migrants were also scared that they may be reported to the authorities.

Table 12: Percentage distribution of migrants who can't leave current job by reasons, grouped by sex, age and registration status

Reasons	Sex		Age group		Registration		Total (N)
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	Yes	No	
Employer keeps original document	9.6	12.8	5.6	11.6	42.4	0.0	10.8
Afraid of being arrested by police	7.2	17.0	11.1	10.7	21.2	77.8	10.8
Difficult to find other jobs	7.2	17.0	5.6	11.6	24.2	66.7	10.8
Employer might report to the authorities	6.0	14.9	5.6	9.8	33.3	11.1	9.2
Don't know where to go	3.6	12.8	5.6	7.1	9.1	66.7	6.9
Worried about deportation	2.4	17.0	5.6	8.0	9.1	77.8	7.7
The employer owe me money	2.4	2.1	0.0	2.7	6.1	11.1	2.3
Personal debts	0.0	4.3	0.0	1.8	6.1	0.0	1.5
Number	23	19	3	39	102	28	42

C) Retention of (and control over) identification documents

In theory, registered migrant workers should not be subject to arrest or deportation by the authorities, however, workers found that without an original registration card, they remain vulnerable to arrest. In practice, employers often retain workers’ original ID cards and provide them with a copy.

Only a third of the migrant workers surveyed in manufacturing held all three official cards (a work permit, residence card and health card). A large proportion (22%) held none of the official cards. Many workers hold one of the three cards – 69% a work permit, 57% a health card and 45% a residence card. Females and older migrant workers are much more likely to hold their documents than males and younger workers. Many registered migrants complained that their employer held their documents, yet they were still vulnerable to police harassment despite payment of the registration fees and having the legal right to stay and work in Thailand.

Overall, 22% of registered migrants did not hold an original identity card. Male migrants (25%) and child migrants (28%) were less likely to hold their own cards.

“I’ve got the health card myself but my work permit card is with my employer.” (MD, 19 year-old Lao female, manufacturing worker)

“My employer keeps my card and gives me a copy. He threatened me by saying that if I ran away he would burn it.” (MB, 22 year-old Burman male, manufacturing worker)

Evidence generated through in-depth interviews reveal that employers often hold onto migrant workers’ cards, but give them copies, on the basis that this would protect the workers from being arrested by the police.

“I don’t give them the original card, they get a copy. If they travel and come across the police, they can present their [copy] cards to prove that we’ve paid for their registration” (B, female employer)

However, some workers revealed that their employers let them hang onto their original cards.

“All of the cards are with me.” (MC, 20 year-old Cambodian female, manufacturing worker)

Table 13: Percentage distribution of migrants by type of cards, grouped by sex and age

Type of card	Sex		Age group		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	
None	48.3	51.7	17.2	82.8	22.3
Residence card	67.8	32.2	35.1	33.7	45.4
Work permit	67.4	32.6	66.7	68.8	68.5
Health card	64.9	35.1	16.2	83.8	56.9
All three cards	68.3	31.7	12.2	87.8	31.5
Number	83	47	21	59	130

Table 14: Percentage distribution of migrants according to retention of card, grouped by sex and age

Retention	Sex		Age group		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	
Keep original card	83.1	68.1	72.2	79.5	77.7
Kept by others	16.9	24.6	27.8	20.5	22.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(130)

d) Freedom of movement

A total of 79% of migrant workers said their employer provided them with accommodation, and 72% of migrants lived in accommodation provided by their employer on-site.

Migrants were asked if they felt able to refuse accommodation provided by the employer. Of the 76% eligible to respond, 64% were able to refuse accommodation provided by their employer. Older migrant workers, male migrant workers and unregistered migrant workers felt less able to turn down this accommodation.

Data generated through the in-depth interviews with both migrant workers and employers reveal that many migrant workers were happy to stay at the workplace as their employers have provided them not only with accommodation but also with food, recreation, and

some health services, such as taking migrant workers to see the doctor when they are sick.

“I live at my work site free of charge and my boss also provides me with food” (MA, 17 year-old Burman male, manufacturing worker)

“My boss provides me with accommodation and food without charge. She is also very kind by providing us with a television and when we got sick she took us to see a doctor for free as well.” (MD, 20 year-old Cambodian female, manufacturing worker)

“I provide my migrant workers with accommodation, and they pay nothing. I take them to see a doctor when they get sick. Sometimes I take them out shopping. They have never said they wish to remain outside.” (A, female employer)

Table 15: Percentage distribution of migrants who can refuse to stay in housing provided by employers, grouped by sex, age and registration status

Response	Sex		Age group		Registration		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	Yes	No	
No	10.8	14.9	11.1	12.5	11.8	14.3	12.3
Yes	65.1	61.7	83.3	60.7	62.7	67.9	63.8
Not applicable	24.1	23.4	5.6	26.8	25.5	17.9	23.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(Number)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(102)	(28)	(130)

Migrants were asked about their freedom of movement outside the workplace. This question allows an insight into the level of forced labour within the manufacturing sector. In theory, registered migrant workers are able to move freely outside the workplace within the specific province where they are registered. In reality, however, the fact is that many employers retain the migrants' original work permits. This means migrants are too scared to go out, and this can lead to circumstances that are effectively a situation of forced labour. About 11% of migrants within the manufacturing sector felt they could not go outside the workplace because they were scared of being harassed by the authorities. Many of these

migrants (9%) did not have access to their identity documents, while 2% did not feel comfortable asking their employer if they could go out. Perhaps the most disturbing result was that 64% of employers believe that migrants should be locked in at night to prevent them from escaping. A majority of employers (56%) believe that workers should not have the right to leave the premises without permission outside of work hours. Many employers (59%) also believe that migrant workers did not even have the right under Thai law to leave the workplace without permission outside of work hours. This indicates that employers restrict the freedom of movement of migrant workers because they see it as a duty under the law.

Table 16: Percentage distribution (% agree) of migrants who live on site with regard to their right to go out, grouped by sex, age and registration status

Rights to go out	Sex		Age group		Registration		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	Yes	No	
Never asked the employer whether or not can go out	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
In debt to employer	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Might get in trouble (told by employer)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Someone told them not to go out	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Scared of being harassed by the authorities (no ID card)	63.6	71.4	75.0	64.3	0.0	100.0	9.2
Scared of being harassed by the authorities (have ID card)	9.1	14.3	0.0	14.3	16.7	0.0	1.5
Employer will not allow it	9.1	14.3	0.0	14.3	33.3	0.0	1.5
Number	83	47	21	59	102	28	130

In the interviews, employers said they did not like the behaviour of young female migrant workers when they go out during their day off. Employers were worried that the workers might form sexual relationships with men. While this could just be

understood as being good-natured concern for a worker's welfare, such concern should never translate into preventing or dissuading females from ever leaving the workplace.

Table 17: Percentage distribution of employers by attitudes towards migrants' freedom of movement and sub-sector

Attitudes	Percent	Number
We should lock migrants in at night to prevent their escape	63.8	51*
Number	80	

* Excluding 'don't know' and those who did not respond'.

Table 18: Percentage distribution of employers' opinions on migrant workers' rights

Workers' rights	Should have				Have under Thai law			
	Yes	No	Don't know	Total (N=80)	Yes	No	Don't know	Total (N=80)
Can leave the premises without permission outside work hours	43.8	56.3	0.0	100.0	28.8	58.8	12.5	100.0

e) Violence in the workplace

Levels of abuse in the workplace were relatively high. Almost a third of migrants had experienced verbal

abuse by their employer. Some 7% had experienced physical abuse in the form of punishment by employers or senior workers and verbal harassment by people outside the workplace.

Table 19: Percentage distribution of migrants by experiences of violence at work, grouped by sex, age, and registration

Violence at work	Sex		Age group		Registration		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	Yes	No	
Verbal abuse (scolding) by employers or senior workers	36.2	24.1	27.8	28.6	28.4	28.6	28.5
Verbally harassed by people outside work	7.2	8.5	0.0	8.9	9.8	0.0	7.7
Physical abuse by employers or senior workers	7.2	6.4	5.6	7.1	7.8	3.6	6.9
Physical abuse by people outside work	2.4	0.0	0.0	1.8	2.0	0.0	1.5
Number	83	47	21	59	102	28	130

While many employers express their concerns over migrants absconding and leaving their jobs, some employers continue to act in an abusive manner

towards their workers, and this may indeed be the reason why workers often choose to flee.

f) False information regarding type of work and working conditions

Almost a fifth of migrant workers surveyed indicate that their current job, as well as the working conditions, differed from what they had been told

prior to arriving at the workplace. Overall, female workers and workers aged 18-25 seemed to reflect the greatest difference between what they were told and what the job and working conditions actually entailed.

Table 20: Percentage distribution of migrants by information given about job, grouped by sex, age and registration status

Information about job	Sex		Age group		Registration		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	Yes	No	
Type of job							
Same	69.9	70.2	77.8	68.8	67.6	78.6	70.0
Different	19.3	14.9	5.6	19.6	17.6	17.9	17.7
Not told about job	10.8	14.9	16.7	11.6	14.8	3.5	12.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(102)	(28)	(130)
Working conditions							
Same	83.0	74.7	88.9	75.9	76.5	82.1	77.7
Different	14.9	16.9	5.6	17.9	15.7	17.9	16.2
Not told about job	2.1	8.4	5.6	6.3	7.8	0.0	6.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(102)	(28)	(130)

“I had been told I could work in a garage, but the fact is I have to work in a garment factory. I don’t like to work here, I’m unhappy with the wage but I can’t do anything about it.” (MH, 18 year-old, Karen male, manufacturing)

g) Payment

Since Thailand’s economic meltdown in 1997, employers have exploited migrant workers even more by withholding wages and paying workers below the minimum wage. For example, a 2003 study conducted in Tak found that Burmese manufacturing workers were paid between 50–80 baht per day, well below the minimum wage of 130 baht per day. While the minimum overtime rate stood at 30 baht per hour, Burmese workers were only paid 50 baht per

hour. In addition, migrant workers rarely received compensation if they were injured at work and were not provided with sick pay.⁴⁵

In a comparative study conducted in Bangkok, migrant manufacturing workers were paid 100–120 baht per day, again well below the minimum wage of 180 baht per day. Moreover, female workers usually received lower wages than their male counterparts. Migrant workers also tend to work longer than a standard eight hours per day; the average migrant workday is somewhere between 10–14 hours.⁴⁶

This study confirms that migrant workers employed in the manufacturing sector are being underpaid. In Bangkok and its vicinities, migrant workers employed in manufacturing are routinely paid well below the

⁴⁵ Punpuing and Kittisuksathit, 2003.

⁴⁶ Kerdmongkol, 2003.

local minimum wage when considering the long hours of work, overtime and lack of rest days. Wages vary substantially between migrant workers. About 15% of workers are paid under 3,000 baht per month. The majority of manufacturing workers (59%) are paid between 3,001–5,000 baht per month (equivalent to about 100–167 baht per day).

Overall, most registered workers (40%) earn slightly higher wages - between 4,001-5000 baht a month compared with the majority of unregistered workers, who earn less than 4,000 baht per month. These wages are way below what migrants are entitled to if their rights were protected in line with the LPA.

For example, within the current sample of migrants in the manufacturing sector, the majority work between 9-12 hours per day with only two days off per month. Using the minimum daily wage for Bangkok and surrounding provinces (184 baht [US\$4.60] per day), a worker would earn a base wage of 4,784 baht (US\$119.60) per month based on a standard eight hour day, working six days a week (26 days x 184

baht based on a 30 day month). However, this does not take into account the time and a half rate (35 baht) that a worker should be paid for each hour worked over eight hours, nor a double time payment for work on Sunday.

For the majority of workers in our sample, overtime and holiday work should result in an additional payment of about 3,241 baht (US\$81) per month (based on an average working day of 10.5 hours and an average working month of 28 days, two of which would be on Sundays). The overtime payment calculation is 2.5 hours overtime per day x 26 days x 35 baht = 2,275 and the Sunday calculation is based on 10.5 hours x two days x 46 baht = 966). This would amount to a monthly wage of 8,025 baht (US\$200.65), an amount considerably higher than the median wage of 4,500 baht (US\$112.50) received by workers in the current sample. In other words, the average migrant worker in manufacturing in this sample is only receiving about half of what they are entitled to under Thai labour law.

Table 21: Percentage distribution of migrants by monthly wage, grouped by sex, age and registration status

Wage (baht)	Sex		Age group		Registration		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	Yes	No	
< 3,001	14.5	17.0	33.3	12.5	10.8	32.1	15.4
3,001-4,000	24.1	17.0	11.1	23.2	19.6	28.6	21.5
4,001-5,000	34.9	42.6	44.4	36.6	40.2	28.6	37.7
5,001+	26.5	23.4	11.1	27.7	29.4	10.7	25.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(102)	(28)	(130)
Median	4,628	4,500	4,350	4,500	4,706	4,000	4,500
Mean	4,514	4,665	4,066	4,699	4,803	3,918	4,611
Minimum	1,000	2,000	1,000	2,000	2,000	1,000	1,000
Maximum	7,000	10,000	6,000	10,000	10,000	6,000	10,000

The in-depth interviews also reveal that most migrant workers employed in manufacturing are being paid less than the minimum wage.

“When I started working here I got 160 baht per day and now I get 165 baht per day.” (MJ, 20 year-old Karen male, manufacturing worker)

“I get paid daily and I get 160 baht per day.”
(MI, 21 year-old Burman female, manufacturing worker)

This is supported through in-depth interviews with employers:

“When he [migrant worker] was a construction worker he was paid 140 baht per day, but I pay him more, I pay 160 baht per day. This should cover his travelling costs and some food.” (G, female employer, manufacturing)

Less experienced migrant workers start on very low wages and need to gain experience before gaining access to better wage rates. The starting wages for many migrants are very low and well below the minimum wage rate. However, employers justify this on the basis that the worker is unskilled. Despite the fact that the worker may be receiving skills training, this is certainly no justification for negligible payments which could almost constitute ‘slave labour’ and may be seen as more indicative of forced labour situations.

“You see, she couldn’t do anything when she was first came here, so I paid her 1,200 baht

per month and then when she developed more experience and skills and I paid her 1,500 baht. She has worked here for three years and now I pay her the minimum rate stipulated by the Ministry of Labour.” (B, female employer)

Most workers (58%) were paid monthly or fortnightly (36%). Wages are calculated either on piece rates or by daily rates. Some migrant workers earn additional wages through working overtime.

“I get 130 baht per day and 15 baht per hour for working overtime” (MI, 21 year-old Burman female, manufacturing worker)

“I get about 5,000 to 6,000 baht per month and some months if I work harder I get more.” (MA, 17 year-old Burman male, manufacturing worker)

“I start working at 8.00 am until noon and have lunch for an hour. I start again at 1.00 pm. and stop at 5.00 pm. [(eight hours)]. I start working overtime at 6.00 pm. and stop at 10.00 pm (four hours). I get 130 baht per day and I got 15 baht per hour for working overtime.” (MI, 21 year-old Burman female migrant, manufacturing)

Table 22: Percentage distribution of migrants by payment mechanism, grouped by sex, age and registration status

Payment mechanism	Sex		Age group		Registration		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	Yes	No	
Monthly	61.0	53.2	55.6	58.6	51.5	82.1	58.1
Fortnightly	31.7	44.7	44.4	35.1	42.6	14.3	36.4
Weekly	4.9	2.1	0.0	4.5	5.0	0.0	3.9
Daily	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.0	3.6	0.8
Irregularly	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.9	1.0	0.0	0.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(102)	(28)	(130)

h) Delayed payment and deductions for mistakes

A total of 27% of migrants faced delayed payment and 15% had money deducted for mistakes made in their jobs. Male migrant workers seem to have money deducted for mistakes more often than female migrant workers. Findings generated by the in-depth interviews confirm that financial deductions for serious mistakes, such as damaging stock or being

late constituted unreasonable penalties against the worker.

“When I make mistakes, the boss forces us to pay 180 baht for each pair of trousers. Some people make 10 mistakes so that’s 1,800 baht. Some of the trousers are so cheap, they only sell for 50 baht.” (MH, 18 year-old Karen male, manufacturing worker)

Table 23: Percentage distribution of migrants by experience of payment violations, grouped by sex, age and registration status

Payment violation	Sex		Age group		Registration		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	Yes	No	
Delays in paying wages	27.7	25.5	16.7	28.6	30.4	14.3	26.9
Money deducted for mistakes	10.8	23.4	5.6	17.0	16.7	10.7	15.4
Number	83	47	21	59	102	28	130

i) Deductions and benefits

Some employers may seek to justify payments below the minimum wage on the basis that they provide certain other benefits to workers at no charge. Employers operating small-scale factories, for example, provide reasonable benefits to their workers.

Most employers indicate that they provide the basics of housing, water and electricity, food and healthcare to over 70% of workers. Employers indicated that they prefer workers to stay in the accommodation

provided. During the in-depth interviews, most employers indicated that they provide shelter and food for their workers. Some employers mention that they treat their workers as family members ‘like cousins’ because that way they may stay longer.

A total of 76% of employers say they also provide recreational opportunities for their workers. Some workers residing with their employer have access to their employer’s living room and are able to watch television. The leisure time spent together is said to help build up a good relationship between employers and workers.

Table 24: Percentage distribution of employers providing benefits by type of benefits

Type of benefits	Percent	Total
Registration	92.5	74
Water and electricity	90.0	72
Housing	88.7	71
Recreation	76.3	61
Food	73.8	59
Health care	73.8	59
Advance wages	35.0	28
Remit money	30.0	24
Travel and recruitment costs	6.3	5
Loans	7.5	6
Number		80

Regarding benefits such as accommodation, of the 77% migrants who received housing, 42% had money deducted from their wages to cover the costs. The median amount deducted was 200 baht per month. Nearly all the workers who were provided with

assistance in the registration process were expected to pay back the costs (3,800 baht on average). Some workers also had the cost of their uniforms or work clothes deducted from their pay.

Table 25: Percentage distribution of migrants whose employers deducted money for benefits provided

Type of benefits	Receives benefit (%)	Money deducted (%)	Amount deducted (Median)	Minimum (baht)	Maximum (baht)
Housing	76.6	42.3	200	40	500
Health services	62.0	1.4	200	200	200
Registration cost	68.9	93.9	3,800	1,900	5,500
Food	66.2	3.5	200	100	200
Recreation facilities	30.8	0	NA	NA	NA
Remittances	13.8	6.3	3,800	3,800	3,800
Uniform or clothing	17.1	27.3	160	80	290
Other	3.9	40.0	52.5	5	300

Note: NA refers to 'not applicable'.

j) Working hours and rest periods

i) Hours of work

“I start working at 8.00 am and finish at 5.00 pm. Then I start again at 6.00 pm and stop at 10.00 pm [13 hours in total]. I get 160 baht per day including 30 baht for overtime. I get 190 baht per day in total.” [\(MI, 21 year-old female Burman migrant, manufacturing\)](#)

“When I first started the job, I worked 15 hours a day every day and my monthly salary was only 2,500 baht. Now I work 11 hours a day and my monthly salary is 4,500 baht.” [\(MH, 18 year-old male Burman migrant, manufacturing\)](#)

A total of 84% of migrants work more than a standard eight-hour day. The majority (64%) work

between 9-12 hours per day. Just under a fifth (19%) work between 13 and 19 hours a day. There was no clear distinction between the sexes in terms of working hours. Two thirds of children worked more than eight hours per day. Clearly for children it is not acceptable that they would work longer than eight hours per day, even if they consented to working such long hours. Registration status appeared to have no impact on working hours with 96% of unregistered migrants working more than eight hours per day compared to 80% of registered workers.

The in-depth interviews with employers also confirm that migrants work longer hours in the manufacturing sector.

“Generally, they start working at 8.00 am and finish anywhere between 8 or 10 pm. It depends on the season.” [\(A, female employer, manufacturing\)](#)

Table 26: Percentage distribution of migrants by number of working hours per day, grouped by sex, age and registration status

Working hour	Sex		Age group		Registration		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	Yes	No	
< 9	14.6	19.1	33.3	13.5	19.8	3.6	16.3
9-12	63.4	66.0	44.4	67.6	62.4	71.4	64.3
13-14	13.4	8.5	16.7	10.8	9.9	17.9	11.6
15-16	4.9	4.3	5.6	4.5	4.0	7.1	4.7
17-18	3.7	0.0	0.0	2.7	3.0	0.0	2.3
19+	0.0	2.1	0.0	0.9	1.0	0.0	0.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(102)	(28)	(130)

Some migrants in the in-depth interviews spoke of the long working hours and exploitative working environment.

“I start working at 8.00 am and finish at 1-2 am early the next morning. I have to carry very heavy clothes. I get 2,600 baht per month. One day, my boss asked me to carry a sewing machine, which was very heavy, and I was not being able to carry it myself. My friend very kindly helped me but he

was kicked and shouted at by my boss. My boss did not allow him to help me. I told my boss I could not carry it, as it was too heavy for me to carry alone. Then my boss said, ‘if you can’t do it just get out of here’. So I packed my stuff and let him have a look at my jot book as I recorded my unpaid wages. After he saw my jot book he threw it away and paid me nothing.” [\(MB, 22 year-old Burman male migrant, manufacturing\)](#)

“I get very low wages while working very hard, I feel very unhappy working here, however, I haven’t registered so I am scared to go out as I might be caught by the police. The worst part is I can’t speak Thai so I can’t go and see any friends, just as I can’t find a new job.” (MH, 18 year-old, Karen male, manufacturing worker)

Adult workers are slightly more likely to have a day off every week than child workers, while registered workers are more likely than unregistered to have a day off every week.

While 84% of employers agree that migrants should have regular days off, in fact less than half believe this is a right under Thai law. A third of employers said they disagreed and thought this was not the case, while 20% admitted they did not know. This indicates that more needs to be done to educate employers as to how the Labour Protection Act (LPA) relates to migrant workers.

ii) rest days

All migrant workers employed in manufacturing said they had at least one regular day off per month. The majority (65%) get four days off a month, or the equivalent of one a week.

Table 27: Percentage distribution of migrants by regular days off per month, grouped by sex, age and registration status

Number of days	Sex		Age group		Registration		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	Yes	No	
1 day	7.1	0.0	0.0	5.1	5.3	0.0	4.4
2 days	22.9	41.9	42.9	28.3	27.4	44.4	30.1
3 days	1.4	0.0	0.0	1.0	1.1	0.0	0.9
4 days	68.6	58.1	57.1	65.7	66.3	55.6	64.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(102)	(28)	(130)

Table 28: Percentage distribution of employers’ opinions on migrant workers’ rights

Worker’s rights	Should have				Have under Thai law			
	Yes	No	Don’t know	Total (N=80)	Yes	No	Don’t know	Total (N=80)
Regular days off	83.8	16.3	0.0	100.0	43.8	36.3	20.0	100.0
Voluntary overtime	84.8	9.8	5.4	100.0	65.9	11.0	23.1	100.0

While migrants receive regular days off every month, over three quarters of migrant workers in the manufacturing sector do not receive monthly

paid leave. The remainder can take between one and four paid leave days per month. Only 2% of female workers can access maternity leave with pay.

Table 29: Percentage distribution of migrants by monthly days paid leave grouped by sex, age and registration status

Number of days	Sex		Age group		Registration		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	Yes	No	
None	80.0	73.8	71.4	78.6	78.7	72.2	77.7
1 day	2.9	2.4	0.0	3.1	2.1	5.6	2.7
2 days	4.3	7.1	7.1	5.1	5.3	5.6	5.4
3 days	1.4	2.4	0.0	2.0	1.1	5.6	1.8
4 days	8.6	11.9	14.3	9.2	9.6	11.1	9.8
8 days	2.9	2.4	7.1	2.0	3.2	0.0	2.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(102)	(28)	(130)

Over 72% of migrant workers reported having adequate time to rest, get breaks during work hours, as well as weekends off and monthly holidays.

Two thirds of migrants don't have steady, regular working hours, or access to annual leave with pay. Less than a quarter have access to sick leave with

pay. Half of the migrant workers surveyed had the option of voluntary overtime, that it to say they only did overtime if they wanted to. A total of 85% of employers believed migrant workers should have this right, while two thirds thought it was already their right under Thai law.

Table 30: Percentage distribution of migrants' access to other conditions at work, grouped by sex, age and registration status

Other conditions	Sex		Age group		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	
Breaks during working hours	84.3	95.7	100.0	86.6	88.5
Adequate time for rest	80.7	89.4	94.4	82.1	83.8
Weekends	67.5	80.9	66.7	73.2	72.3
Monthly holidays	66.3	83.0	72.2	72.3	72.3
Voluntary overtime	54.2	48.9	55.6	51.8	52.3
Annual holidays without pay	43.4	34.0	44.4	39.3	40.0
Minimum wage	43.4	31.9	11.1	43.8	39.2
Regular working hours	41.0	31.9	50.0	35.7	37.7
Annual paid holidays	32.5	31.9	16.7	34.8	32.3
Sick leave with pay	25.3	21.3	33.3	22.3	23.8
Written contract	6.0	2.1	0.0	5.4	4.6
(Maternity leave with pay women only)	2.4	0.0	0.0	1.8	1.5
Number	83	47	21	59	130

The discrepancy between what rights are accorded in practice, as described by migrant workers, and the rights employers are actually obligated to provide under the law, indicates that employers are not sufficiently familiar with Thai labour law and its application to migrant workers. About a fifth of employers said outright they did not know whether workers were entitled to these rights under Thai law. This clearly highlights some employers' knowledge

gap regarding workers' rights and could possibly be an area for future interventions.

k) Written contracts

A total of 94% of migrants do not have a written contract in place. No child migrant workers had a written contract. Among employers, 74% believed migrant workers should have a written contract, but only a third felt that this was their right under Thai law.

Table 31: Percentage distribution of employers by their attitudes to and knowledge of migrant rights regarding a written contract

Migrant's rights	Should have				Already have under Thai law			
	Yes	No	Don't know	Total (N=80)	Yes	No	Don't know	Total (N=80)
Written contract with employer	73.8	25.0	1.3	100.0	33.8	47.5	18.8	100.0

3.5 Recruitment

a) Methods used and payment: The employer's perspectives

Within the survey, employers provided information on how they recruit their migrant workers. In accordance with migrants' responses regarding recruitment, the

most popular method is for employers to use their own established contacts. Employers tend to rely on introductions from existing workers (64%), workers coming to their businesses themselves (50%), through their friends (25%) and relatives of existing migrant workers (16%). Few employers use external sources to recruit their workers, only 14% using job placement agencies and 8% recruiters.

Table 32: Percentage distribution of employers by recruitment method used

Recruiting methods	Percent	Total
Introduction by existing worker	63.8	51
Worker came themselves	50.0	40
Friend of employer	25.0	20
Relative of worker brought worker	16.3	13
Job placement agency	13.8	11
Recruiter	7.5	6
Other	6.3	5
Number		80

Table 33: Percentage of employers by thoughts on recruitment method used by other employers in the same sector

Recruiting methods	Percent	Total
Existing worker introduced	50.0	40
Worker came themselves	40.0	32
Relative of worker brought worker	11.3	9
Friend of employer	7.5	6
Recruiter	22.5	18
Job placement agency	5.0	4
Other	3.8	3
Don't know the person who introduced	30.0	24
Number		80

About a quarter of the employers surveyed paid people to help in the recruitment of migrant workers. The amount paid ranged from 100 to 10,000 baht. Out of 19 employers who paid for the recruitment

of migrant workers, more than half paid 2,000 baht or less per migrant hired. About 23% paid between 2,001 and 5,000. Only one employer paid 10,000 baht.

Table 34: Percentage distribution of employers by payment amount for the recruitment of migrant workers

Amount of recruiting method payment	Percent	Total
Yes	16.3	13
No	89.7	67
Total	100.0	80
Amount of payment (baht)		
<=500	53.8	7
600-2,000	23.1	3
2,001-15,000	23.1	3
Total	100.0	13

b) Methods used and payment: The migrant worker's perspectives

Only 14% of migrant workers in the manufacturing sector surveyed in this study arrived in their job through the use of recruiters. Over 76% of migrant workers had found their current jobs through friends and relatives. Female migrant workers were more

likely to seek jobs independently and were slightly more likely to use a recruiter than males. Male migrant workers were more likely to rely on friends and relatives. Unregistered migrants were more likely to rely on contacts when seeking a job, while registered migrants had more freedom to seek their own employment independently.

Table 35: Percentage distribution of migrants by methods used to find their current job, grouped by sex, age and registration status

	Sex		Age group		Registration		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	Yes	No	
Relative/Friend	71.1	85.1	83.3	75.0	73.5	85.7	76.2
Recruiter	14.5	12.8	11.1	14.3	13.7	14.3	13.8
Self	8.4	2.1	5.6	6.3	7.8	0.0	6.2
Other	4.8	0.0	0.0	3.6	3.9	0.0	3.1
Parents	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.9	1.0	0.0	0.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(102)	(28)	(130)

Only 13.8 % of migrants said they had paid for their recruitment. Of this figure, a greater proportion of females, adult workers and unregistered workers paid for recruitment. The majority of the migrants (40%) who paid handed over between 500 and 5,000 baht. Of those who paid, 34% said they had to pay a larger sum of between 10,000 and 20,000 baht.

In-depth interviews reveal that some migrant workers paid a large sum of money for recruitment because it also included their travel costs.

“I paid 6,000 baht to the recruiter who brought me to work here.” [\(MG, 18 year-old male Mon migrant, manufacturing\)](#)

Table 36: Percentage distribution of migrants who paid for job recruitment, grouped by sex, age and registration status

	Sex		Age group		Registration		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	Yes	No	
Yes	30.1	19.1	11.1	28.6	24.8	32.1	13.8
No	65.1	74.5	83.3	66.1	70.2	64.3	6.2
Not answer	4.8	6.4	5.6	5.3	5.0	3.6	3.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(102)	(28)	(130)

Table 37: Percentage distribution of migrants who paid for job recruitment by amount paid in baht

Amount of payment (baht)	Percent	Total
500 – 5,000	40.0	14
5,001 – 9,999	25.7	9
10,000 – 20,000	34.3	12
Total	100.0	35

One surprising result was that nearly half of the migrant workers surveyed had paid the police at some point on their journey toward recruitment in their current job.

Table 38: Percentage distribution of migrants who paid for job recruitment by person used during the recruitment process

Person	Percent	Total
Policeman	45.7	16
Recruiter	2.9	1
No response	51.4	18
Total	100.0	35

“I told my uncle I wanted to try working in Bangkok so he said I could go and he would pay for my recruitment fee and ride which was 6,000 baht. I was able to get from Tah Song Yan [on the Thai side of the border with Myanmar] to Bangkok by riding in a pick-up truck that belonged to a Thai police officer, who was also a recruitment agent. He was not in uniform that day, but he was the one who drove the pick-up truck to take us to Bangkok. There were two other migrants in the vehicle as well. We were squashed into the back seat and whenever we came to a police checkpoint, the police officer had us lay on top of each other in the back seat and put a blanket over us. We ran into many police checkpoints and therefore had to hide like this on several occasions, making the trip extremely difficult.” [\(MB, 22 year-old male Karen migrant, manufacturing\)](#)

According to information generated through in-depth interviews, most migrant workers who used a transporter travelled in a group by van and paid the transporter between 2,000-15,000 baht for travel costs. In addition, many migrants paid about 500 baht each to policeman manning checkpoints.

3.6 Migration and job history

The vast majority (80%) of migrant workers said it was the first time they had visited Thailand. Not surprisingly, this is particularly true (94%) for migrants aged 15-17. Over half of all the migrant workers surveyed were under 18 years old when they first came to Thailand.

Table 39: Percentage distribution of migrants by migration history, grouped by sex, age and registration status

	Sex		Age group		Registration		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	Yes	No	
First time in Thailand							
Yes	78.3	80.9	94.4	76.8	75.5	92.9	79.2
No	21.7	19.1	5.6	23.2	24.5	7.1	20.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(102)	(28)	(130)
Age when first come to Thailand*							
2 – 17 years old	56.1	53.2	100.0	47.7	59.4	39.3	55.0
18 – 25 years old	43.9	46.8	0.0	52.3	40.6	60.7	45.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(102)	(28)	(130)

* One case excluded.

Evidence generated through qualitative research reinforces the fact that most migrants first came to Thailand when they were aged 12–17. Most females initially worked in the domestic sector, while male migrant workers generally worked in the manufacturing, fishing or beverage sectors initially.

Migrants were also asked about the method they used to reach Thailand. The most popular method

(67%) was to use a transporter. Almost 30% of migrants relied on their own networks (either family or friends) to help them reach the country. Only a few differences were noted between the gender of the migrant - male migrants were more likely to use transporters, while females were more likely to rely on parents and their parents' contacts. There were no clear differentials in terms of age.

Table 40: Percentage distribution of migrants by methods by which they came to Thailand, grouped by sex, age and registration status

Methods	Sex		Age group		Registration		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	Yes	No	
Transporter	63.9	72.3	66.7	67.0	59.8	92.9	66.9
Relative/friends	20.5	19.1	16.7	20.5	23.5	7.1	20.0
Parents	10.8	4.3	16.7	7.1	10.8	0.0	8.5
Self	0.0	4.3	0.0	1.8	2.0	0.0	1.5
Other	4.8	0.0	0.0	3.6	3.9	0.0	3.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(102)	(28)	(130)

3.7 Employers' attitudes/preferences for migrants

a) Attitudes towards employment and migrant workers

Employers' views were quite varied within the manufacturing sector, although many expressed stereotypical attitudes regarding migrant workers, including that they are easier to control than Thais (58%) and that they work harder (43%). Only a quarter of employers agreed with the statement, "migrants are good for Thailand because they're

cheap". It seems that employers do not necessarily view migrants as cheaper since they feel they have to pay hefty registration costs up front. A third of employers believed migrants represented a threat to national security.

"I've realised that migrants work harder than Thai workers and we have to pay Thais more than migrant workers even if they do the same work. Thai workers will work when we pay them 170 baht while we pay migrant workers just 160 baht." (Den, female employer)

Table 41: Percentage distribution of employers regarding their attitudes towards migrant workers

Attitudes	Percent	Total
Migrants work harder than Thai workers	42.5	34
Migrants are easier to control than Thai workers	57.5	46
Migrants are a threat to national security	35.0	28
Migrants = good for Thailand as they're cheap	26.3	21
Number		80

Employers were asked a number of questions to ascertain whether they discuss employment issues with other employers. Within the current sample, it appears that employer networks in the manufacturing sector are not particularly strong. Just under half (46%) the employers surveyed would turn to other employers to seek advice regarding problems in the workplace. A third of employers seem to have an

understanding of how other employers within the industry treat and pay their workers. Less than a quarter are likely to follow payment trends within the industry. Thus the impetus for employers' organizations to mobilize on the issue of migrant employment in manufacturing has not been very strong.

Table 42: Percentage distribution (% agree) of employers regarding their attitudes towards and practices on employment

Attitudes and practices	Percent	Total
If I have problems in the workplace, I ask other employers for advice	46.3	37
All employers around here treat their workers in the same way	35.0	28
If one employer gives their worker a pay rise, other employers usually follow	22.5	18
Employers discuss the benefits we give our workers	30.0	24
Number		80

b) Preference for ethnic groups

Employers were asked about the ethnic background of the workers they hired. Lao workers (46%) were

the most popular ethnic group among employers in the manufacturing sector, followed by Burman (36%) and Karen (18%).

Table 43: Percentage distribution (% agree) of employers by ethnicity of migrants they employ

Ethnicity*	Percent	Total
Lao	46.3	37
Burman	36.3	29
Karen	18.8	15
Cambodian	12.5	10
Mon	12.5	10
Shan	6.3	5
Other (Myanmar)	1.3	1
Number		80

* Respondents could choose more than a single response.

A total of 58% employers expressed a preference for Burman workers because they are readily available. Some 80% preferred Lao workers due to the fact that their culture is similar to Thai culture, while 20% of employers cited the same reason for employing

Mon workers. Nearly 17% thought of Shan workers as being logical/responsible, while 24% and 16%, respectively, of employers hired Karen and Cambodian workers due to there being a lack of alternatives.

Table 44: Percentage distribution of employers by reasons for preferring to employ migrants of a particular ethnic group

Reasons*	Ethnicity					
	Burmese	Shan	Mon	Karen	Laos	Cambodian
Hard working/ compliant	35.7	3.6	14.3	7.1	32.1	7.1
Obedient	15.0	0.0	5.0	5.0	70.0	5.0
Have no alternative	28.0	0.0	8.0	24.0	24.0	16.0
Responsible/ logical	50.0	16.7	0.0	0.0	33.3	0.0
Readily available	57.7	3.8	7.7	11.5	11.5	7.7
Honest/nice/clean	15.4	0.0	7.7	15.4	61.5	0.0
Similar to Thai culture	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	80.0	0.0
Pity/cheap/other	25.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	25.0

* Respondents could choose more than a single response.

Some employers expressed a preference for hiring workers of particular ethnic groups during the in-depth interviews.

“I like to hire Lao workers as we can communicate with each other better when compared to Cambodian and Burmese workers. However, the Burmese workers work harder than both the Lao and Cambodian workers. Burmese workers are also very clean but they are too aggressive.” (A, female employer)

Employers found it easier to communicate with Lao workers. Some employers mentioned that they would like to hire Thai workers from the northeast as they also work hard, however, they found it very

difficult to reach these workers since they do not like working in small factories as they feel they do not receive good welfare in such workplaces.

c) Preference by age

Most employers (88%) preferred to employ migrant workers aged between 18 and 25 years because they feel this age group is hard working, more obedient, and have more skills and experience than other age groups. Employers did not generally prefer to employ children, only eight (or 10%) expressed a preference for hiring them. Those who did prefer to hire children gave various reasons, but the main one was that they are more obedient.

Table 45: Percentage distribution (% agree) of employers by reasons for preferring to employ migrants in each age group

	Age of migrants prefer to employ			
	<18	18-25	26-40	40+
Expressed a preference	10.0	87.5	26.3	0.0
Reason for preference				
Work harder	2.5	41.3	8.8	0.0
Cheaper	1.3	3.8	26.3	0.0
More obedient	7.5	38.8	7.5	0.0
More skilled	2.5	42.5	12.5	0.0
More experienced	0.0	22.5	10.0	0.0
Other	5.0	36.3	15.0	0.0

For employers who did not prefer to hire children, the primary reason given for this was that they are too young to work (44%) and because it is against

the law (33%). This was reinforced during the in-depth interviews.

Table 46: Percentage distribution of employers by reasons for not preferring to employ migrants aged under 18 years old

Reasons	Percent	Total (n = 72)
Against the law	33.3	24
Can not do this kind of work	5.6	4
Have to attend school	4.2	3
Too young to work	44.4	32
Not sufficiently responsible	16.7	12
Do not follow commands	4.2	3
Have no choice	4.2	3
Have many problems	2.8	2

d) Attitudes towards migrant rights

Employers were also asked about their views on migrant rights. The majority (56%) indicated that

migrants should have access to the same rights as Thai workers, however, only a fifth felt migrants should have the right to join a trade union.

Table 47: Percentage distribution (% agree) of employers by attitudes towards migrants' equal rights and trade unions

Attitudes	Percent	Total
Migrants should have same rights as Thais	56.3	45
Migrants should have the right to join trade unions	20.0	16
Number		80

3.8 Support mechanisms

a) Who migrants live with

Many migrants live with relatives, friends and/or their employer and co-workers. Only a small number of migrant workers live with their parents (4%), while very few live alone (2.3%). This suggests that migrants may have good support networks at home.

Several trends were observed when examining the sex, age and registration status of migrant workers surveyed. Female migrants were more likely to live with their employers than male migrants, while males were more likely to live with friends and workmates. Child migrant workers were much more likely to live with relatives. Registered workers were more likely to live with their employers, while unregistered workers were not.

Table 48: Percentage distribution of migrants by living arrangements and sex, age, and registration status

Person lives with*	Sex		Age group		Registration		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	Yes	No	
Employer	25.3	10.6	16.7	20.5	24.5	3.6	20.0
Relatives	21.7	29.8	38.9	22.3	32.5	40.8	24.6
Spouse	19.3	8.5	0.0	17.9	18.6	3.6	15.4
Friends	16.9	29.8	27.8	20.5	20.6	25.0	21.5
Workmates	13.3	25.5	11.1	18.8	11.8	39.3	17.7
Parents	6.0	0.0	5.6	3.6	4.9	0.0	3.8
Alone	3.6	0.0	0.0	2.7	2.9	0.0	2.3
Others	0.0	2.1	0.0	0.9	1.0	0.0	0.8
(Number)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(102)	(28)	(130)

* Respondents could select more than a single response.

b) Problems at work

Migrant workers tend to rely on their workmates (32%), relatives (30%), employers (17%) and friends (12%) for support if they have problems at work. None of the migrants surveyed would turn to their recruiter, government labour officials or NGO staff for support. Although similar trends were seen for

both female and male workers, females were more likely (21%) to seek support from their employer than males, while male migrants were more likely than females to turn to relatives.

Child migrants were more likely to rely on family and friends and less likely to turn to their employer than adult migrant workers.

Table 49: Percentage distribution of migrants by type of support when having problems at work, grouped by sex and age

Type of support*	Sex		Age group		Registration		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	Yes	No	
Workmates	31.3	34.0	44.4	30.4	27.5	50.0	32.3
Relatives	26.5	36.2	38.9	28.6	25.0	10.7	30.0
Employer	20.5	12.8	11.1	18.8	21.6	3.6	17.7
Friends	12.0	12.8	16.7	11.6	10.8	17.9	12.3
No one	7.2	2.1	0.0	6.3	6.9	0.0	5.4
Recruiter	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Labour officer	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
NGO staff	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other	20.5	25.5	11.1	24.1	25.0	10.7	22.3
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(102)	(28)	(130)

* Respondents could select more than a single response.

c) Health

Migrant workers were asked about their sources of support when they fall sick. The primary sources of support and care for sick migrants were relatives (40%). Workmates (25%) and friends (22%) were also a key source of support.

A small percentage of migrants (15%) said they turned to their employers for support when ill, however, more than half (60%) of migrant workers said they had received some health services from their employers. Other possible sources of support, such as community health workers, hospital staff and NGO staff were not really utilized.

Registered migrant workers seem to receive better healthcare than un-registered migrant workers. A fairly significant proportion of registered migrants (17%) receive healthcare from their employers when ill, while none of the unregistered workers receive such assistance from their employers.

Employers said they take care of their workers when they have health problems by taking them to hospital or a clinic. One employer expressed her satisfaction with the social security system. Under the scheme, one of her registered workers was able to access free dental care, she claimed. Two workers (out of 129) received healthcare from recruiters.

Table 50: Percentage distribution regarding the type of care received by migrants if unwell, grouped by sex, age and registration status

	Sex		Age group		Registration		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	Yes	No	
Relatives	37.3	44.7	44.4	39.3	40.2	39.3	40.0
Workmates	22.9	29.8	27.8	25.0	21.6	39.3	25.4
Employer	21.7	2.1	11.1	15.2	18.6	0.0	14.6
Friend	19.3	25.5	38.9	18.8	20.6	25.0	21.5
No one	7.2	2.1	0.0	6.3	6.9	0.0	5.4
Labour officer	3.6	8.5	0.0	6.3	4.9	0.0	5.4
Recruiter	2.4	0.0	0.0	1.8	2.0	0.0	1.5
Hospital staff	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.9	1.0	0.0	0.8
Community health workers	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
NGO staff	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other	15.9	4.3	5.6	12.6	13.9	3.6	11.6
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(102)	(28)	(130)

d) Community contacts (outside of work)

Migrants were asked about people they have had contact with while working in Thailand. Two thirds had come into contact with medical personnel.

A significant number had been in contact with labour officials, monks and the police. Very few migrants (8%) had come into contact with teachers, NGO staff (3%) or lawyers (2%).

Table 51: Percentage distribution regarding community contacts, grouped by sex, age and registration status

Person	Sex		Age group		Registration		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	Yes	No	
Medical personnel	68.3	66.0	72.2	66.7	83.3	7.4	67.4
Labour official	44.6	40.4	27.8	45.5	52.9	7.1	43.4
Monks	46.3	29.8	22.2	43.2	0.0	0.0	40.3
Policemen	37.8	42.6	50.0	37.8	48.5	7.1	39.5
Teacher	4.9	12.8	5.6	8.1	0.0	0.0	7.8
NGO staff	4.8	0.0	0.0	3.6	3.9	0.0	3.1
Lawyer	3.7	0.0	0.0	2.7	3.0	0.0	2.3
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(102)	(28)	(130)

e) Communication with families at home

In communicating with family in their home country, about 75% of migrants arranged the communication themselves. The second most popular method was through their relatives (10%), while some workers

used the services of a recruiter (5%) or workmates (5%). More female workers tend to communicate directly with family at home than male migrant workers do. Male migrant workers more often used the service of recruiters than female workers to contact family members.

Table 52: Percentage distribution of migrants by methods of contacting family at home, grouped by sex, age and registration status

Person*	Sex		Age group		Registration		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	Yes	No	
Never contact family	4.8	2.1	5.6	3.6	3.9	3.6	3.8
Self	80.7	66.0	50.0	79.5	79.4	60.7	75.4
Employer arranged	4.8	0.0	0.0	3.6	3.9	0.0	3.1
Recruiter arranged	2.4	10.6	11.1	4.5	5.9	3.6	5.4
Friends	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.9	1.0	0.0	0.8
Relatives	6.0	17.0	33.3	6.3	6.9	21.4	10.0
Workmates	2.4	8.5	5.6	4.5	2.0	14.3	4.6
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(102)	(28)	(130)

* Respondents could select more than a single response.

f) Sending money home

Among the migrant workers surveyed, only 3% had never remitted money home to their families. The most common method used by migrants was through recruiters (60%). Interestingly, about one in ten workers chose to send money through employers.

Similarly, relatives and the commercial banking system were also used.

From the employer's side, approximately one third said they provide financial services to their workers in the form of advancing wages and assisting workers in sending money home.

Table 53: Percentage distribution of migrants by methods of remitting funds, grouped by sex, age and registration status

Methods*	Sex		Age group		Registration		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	Yes	No	
Don't know	0.0	8.5	11.1	1.8	1.0	10.7	3.1
Employer	12.0	0.0	11.1	7.1	9.8	0.0	7.7
Recruiter	56.6	66.0	61.1	59.8	54.9	78.6	60.0
Friends	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.9	1.0	0.0	0.8
Relatives	14.5	14.9	11.1	15.2	16.7	7.1	14.6
Workmate	2.4	0.0	0.0	1.8	2.0	0.0	1.5
Banks	12.0	14.9	11.1	13.4	12.7	14.3	13.1
Post office	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.9	1.0	0.0	0.8
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(102)	(28)	(130)

* Respondents could select more than a single response.

g) Social networks, groups and associations

Only a small number of migrants (5%) belonged to a social group. Factory workers who attempted

to organize into informal unions elsewhere in the country (eg, Mae Sot) had been punished with job dismissals or arrests and deportation from Thailand.

Table 54: Percentage distribution of migrants by participation in groups, grouped by sex, age and registration status

Group participation	Sex		Age group		Registration		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	Yes	No	
Yes	4.8	4.3	0.0	5.4	5.9	0.0	4.6
No	95.2	95.7	100.0	94.6	94.1	100.0	95.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(102)	(28)	(130)

The greatest areas of interest for migrants in the manufacturing sector related to education (70%), Thai language (64%), new work skills (51%) and basic literacy in their mother tongue (49%).

Migrants also expressed a strong interest in learning more about health-related issues and in gaining more information about the registration process.

Table 55: Percentage distribution of workers who want to join some form of group, grouped by sex, age and registration status

	Sex		Age group		Registration		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	Yes	No	
Education	63.9	78.7	77.8	67.9	68.6	71.4	69.2
Health	43.4	55.3	61.1	45.5	47.1	50.0	47.7
Thai language instruction	57.8	74.5	77.8	61.6	61.8	71.4	63.8
Social issues	39.8	53.2	50.0	43.8	41.2	57.1	36.2
Reading and writing mother tongue	39.8	66.0	66.7	46.4	44.1	67.7	49.2
Work skills	37.3	74.5	66.1	49.1	52.0	46.4	50.8
Registration	31.3	66.0	50.0	42.9	44.1	42.9	43.8
Thai law	26.5	53.2	44.4	34.8	35.3	39.3	36.2
Problems in Thailand	22.9	42.6	22.2	31.3	29.4	32.1	30.0
Problems at work	16.9	25.5	11.1	21.4	22.5	10.7	20.0
Ethnic issues	18.1	27.7	16.7	22.3	22.5	17.9	21.5
Other	6.0	4.3	0.0	6.3	5.9	3.6	5.4
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(102)	(28)	(130)

h) Education

A slightly higher proportion of migrants in the manufacturing sector (10%) were currently attending formal or non-formal education than in other sectors, probably because due to the fact that more manufacturing workers had one regular day off per week to attend classes, while transport was easier for Bangkok-based workers than say farm or fishing workers.

The migrants not attending school provided a range of reasons for not being able to participate – the most common reason cited was that the migrants have too much work to do (67%). Some 13% said they did not wish to study, 10% said there was no school nearby, while 9% said it was because they did not speak Thai. Some employers said they encourage migrant workers to seek out informal education, especially Thai language classes.

Table 56: Percentage distribution of migrants currently attending informal education/classes

	Sex		Age group		Registration		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	Yes	No	
Yes	8.4	10.6	5.6	9.8	11.8	0.0	9.2
No	91.6	89.4	94.4	90.2	98.2	10.0	90.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(83)	(47)	(18)	(112)	(102)	(28)	(130)

Table 57: Percentage distribution of type of class attended by migrant workers

	Sex		Age group		Registration		Total
	Female	Male	15-17	18-25	Yes	No	
Thai Language	85.7	80.0	100.0	81.8	83.3	0.0	83.3
English Language	14.3	20.0	0.0	18.2	16.7	0.0	16.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(7)	(5)	(1)	(11)	(12)	(0)	(12)

There is little doubt that education and the acquisition of basic literacy is a virtual necessity for young people’s survival in an increasingly competitive market. Children who lack these basic skills are probably at a greater risk of trafficking and exploitation. Unfortunately, many migrants are not able to attend formal or even non-formal education. Furthermore, many migrant workers are not able to communicate with their employers and others within their broader environment as demonstrated by their lack of Thai language ability in general. This lack of understanding creates problems not only for communication but also for understanding basic human rights and rights at work.

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Indications of labour exploitation

While there are few outright cases of forced labour, 10% of migrant workers in manufacturing feel the fact their employer holds their documents is a constraint preventing them from leaving their job, while 9% feel the threat of the employer reporting them to the authorities also acts as a constraint preventing them from leaving their job.

4.2 Working conditions

The most common form of abuse of migrant workers employed in manufacturing is working extremely

long hours. A total of 7% of migrant workers have faced physical abuse from their employers.

The average migrant worker employed in manufacturing is paid only about half of what they are entitled to when considering the standard minimum wages under the LPA and according to the time they actually work. Migrant workers often feel unable to bargain with their employers effectively or even know whom to contact to inform them about their rights at work because they do not speak Thai. Employers’ associations and officials should address the issue of language barriers faced by migrants.

Many employers do not take responsibility for workers who are badly injured on the job on the basis that the worker does not have a contract of employment. A major concern and challenge for the labour movement concerning migrant workers is the fact that they are not permitted to form unions, and in effect it is difficult for them to join Thai unions or to see the value in joining Thai unions which currently do not protect migrant workers’ rights.

4.3 Legal status/Registration

Employers highlighted a number of problems with the registration process, including the fact that officers responsible for the registration process are ill-prepared and the number of available officers is insufficient. The registration period of one year is viewed as not being long enough. Dissemination of information about the registration process by the Ministry of Labour is not sufficient. Employers waste a lot of their time and their workers’ time going

through the registration process. Many migrant workers continue to fear harassment or be actually harassed by the police even though they have a valid work permit. Employers faced corrupt police officers and in some cases paid up to 10,000 baht per undocumented migrant they hire to police officers in order to avoid prosecution.

4.4 Support mechanisms

Many migrant workers are less likely than Thais to access state-healthcare services due to their isolation, language barriers and a lack of information.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Working conditions

To the Ministry of Labour

- Ensure enforcement of the Labour Protection Act (LPA) with regard to migrant workers and provide periodic updates to the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), trade unions, employers' organizations and international organizations on the action taken in response to violations of the LPA affecting migrant workers
- Inform employers that they have no right to restrict the freedom of movement of their migrant workers under Thai Law
- The government should draft a standard contract of minimum terms and conditions to be used when employing migrant workers in the manufacturing sector.

To workers organizations and NGOs

- Disseminate information about the application of the LPA and Labour Relations Act (LRA) to migrant workers directly.

5.2 Legal status/Registration

To the Ministry of Labour

- Improve the registration process by increasing the number of labour officers at both local and municipal levels.
- Increase the duration of a migrant work permit to three years.
- Disseminate comprehensive, relevant information about registration to workers well in advance of the next registration date. The information should be provided in a range of migrant languages and information should also be provided to employers.
- Work with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Labour of sending countries to enable migrant workers to register their work permit through their national embassies.
- Create a process to ensure workers can change employers without requiring the permission of the employer to halt/prevent exploitation.
- Promote information, education and communication on the rights of employers and migrants to other relevant government offices, such as the Royal Thai Police, and departments of Immigration, Education and Health.
- Ensure a long-term process of legally-managed migration is effective under the Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) that the Royal Thai Government has signed with neighbouring countries.

5.3 Support mechanisms

To the Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Public Health

- Work together to improve the quality of health services to migrant workers.

To the Ministry of Education

- Provide Thai language classes to migrants in communities where they live at a time and on days when they are not working to develop their Thai speaking, reading and writing skills.

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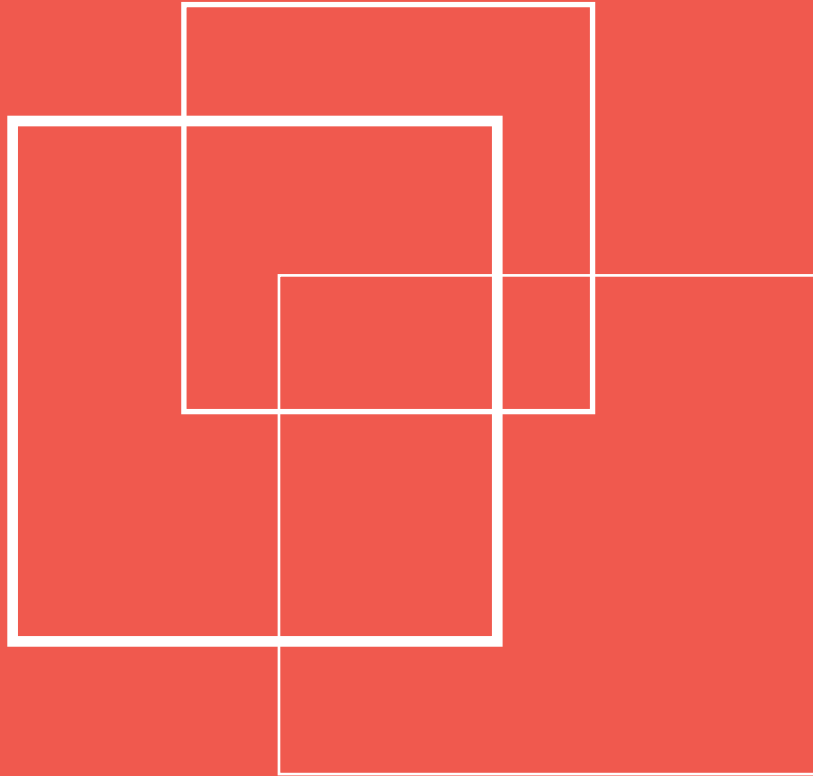
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