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Developing a Profiling Methodology for Displaced People in Urban Areas

Case Study: Mae Sot, Thailand



*Gift of the
United States
Government*



Tufts
UNIVERSITY

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Nutrition Science and Policy

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Cover photo: Man driving rickshaw. Mae Sot, Thailand

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In 2010–11 the US State Department’s Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration funded research by the Feinstein International Center to develop a profiling methodology for urban migrants and refugees. The purpose of the methodology was to capture a range of livelihood, integration and vulnerability data in urban settings, so as to enable comparisons between refugees and other migrant and non-migrant groups living in the same urban districts. The research built on earlier studies by the principal investigator (Karen Jacobsen) and our partners, and sought to make the mixed methodology easily utilizable by operational agencies.

As part of developing the methodology, we conducted case studies in three urban settings in key host countries. In each country we collaborated with the following local partners:

- Aden, Yemen – INTERSOS
- Polokwane, South Africa – African Center for Migration Studies, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
- Mae Sot, Thailand – International Rescue Committee

The goals of the case studies were to test and adapt a profiling methodology, and to gather data that would contribute to urban livelihoods programming for vulnerable migrant groups. Each case includes a contextual background of migration to the urban setting, our methods, demographics and findings on vulnerability, and recommendations. We include maps of the study site and sampling strategy. The full profiling methodology, in the form of a toolkit, can be found here [insert link to other sections]. The toolkit includes:

- An introduction to profiling and why it is useful
- Recommendations for donors to assist in identifying best practices for livelihoods programming.
- Our conceptual framework describing

migrant vulnerability and key indicators.

- The profiling methodology (including the survey, qualitative approaches, and mapping tools, all designed to be easily utilizable by field organizations).
- An outline of a two-day training workshop, and a full description of each of the tools.

In this report, we present the case study of Mae Sot, Thailand.

The following people contributed to this report:

In Thailand:

- The authors would like to thank the IRC team of enumerators for their work conducting the survey and qualitative interviews and for entering data for this report. Their names have been withheld for their security.
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- As a consultant for the Feinstein Center and IRC, Adam Saltsman, oversaw the quantitative and qualitative data collection process.

This report was written by Adam Saltsman. Study design, data analysis and the development

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As a regional hub for migration, light manufacturing, and trade in gems, drugs, and illegal timber from Burma, the smoky, industrial town of Mae Sot, Thailand, epitomizes in many ways life for migrants on the Thai-Burma border, and to some extent elsewhere in Thailand. Over the last year, one in five migrants sampled in this study experienced eviction, one in ten suffered physical assault, and one in six was a victim of theft. More than a third of the migrants live in unsafe or unsanitary housing and six out of ten migrant households are in dangerous locations. In each of these cases, those migrants without any form of work authorization in Thailand are worse off. Undocumented migrants are more likely to experience abusive treatment and to feel powerless to find redress for these injustices.¹

These findings from this study's survey of close to 800 residents of Mae Sot confirm long-held notions about the precarious existence migrants face in this town and elsewhere along the border. (The term "migrants" here is used as an umbrella term in this report to cover all categories of people migrating from Burma, including refugees, asylum seekers, economic migrants and others). This survey also looks into the lives of Mae Sot's Thai residents, comparing their well being with that of their neighbors from Burma. While Thai citizens in Mae Sot generally fare better than Burmese migrants there, many are also susceptible to a number of challenges including theft, unemployment, and insufficient income. By comparing undocumented migrants, those with work authorization in Thailand, and Thai citizens in Mae Sot, this study sheds light on what it means to be vulnerable in Mae Sot.

Within the 772 respondents who participated in the survey, 274 respondents (35%) were undocumented migrants, 180 respondents (23%) were documented migrants, and 318 respondents (41%) were Thai citizens. For the purposes of this research, these three groups were broken down as follows:

Undocumented migrants were those who were born in Burma and who identified as undocumented, with expired documentation, stateless, or with an informal card. In addition, we regarded those with various IDs or documents from UNHCR as undocumented because this is effectively how Thai authorities regard those migrants outside the camp with UNHCR cards or papers.

Documented migrants were those who were born in Burma and had a foreign passport with valid visa, a temporary passport from the Nationality Verification process, a work permit, registration, an ethnic minority card, or permanent residency.

Thai citizens/native Thai residents were those who were born in Thailand, had Thai citizenship, and were either ethnically Thai or ethnically Karen.

The sample for this study leaned heavily towards women, who made up 67% of respondents. The largest proportion of respondents were between 31-45 years old (278 respondents / 36%), while 212 were between 46 and 50 (28%), 107 were 61 and above (14%), and 172 respondents were between 17 and 30 (22%).

In-depth qualitative interviews with 50 town residents and 15 key informants deepen findings from the survey, enabling a more nuanced understanding of the situation in Mae Sot. Analysis of these methods together identifies four major components for measuring vulnerability in Mae Sot:

- Employment security
- Household security/Physical safety
- Community security/Access to Justice
- Assets & housing

A factor analysis supported use of these as a vulnerability index. Each category contains between three and six individual variables. For example the category "Assets and housing" includes the variables: Assets, housing materials, type of housing, housing location, and whether households have their own latrine, among others. All of these indicate one's vulnerability in terms

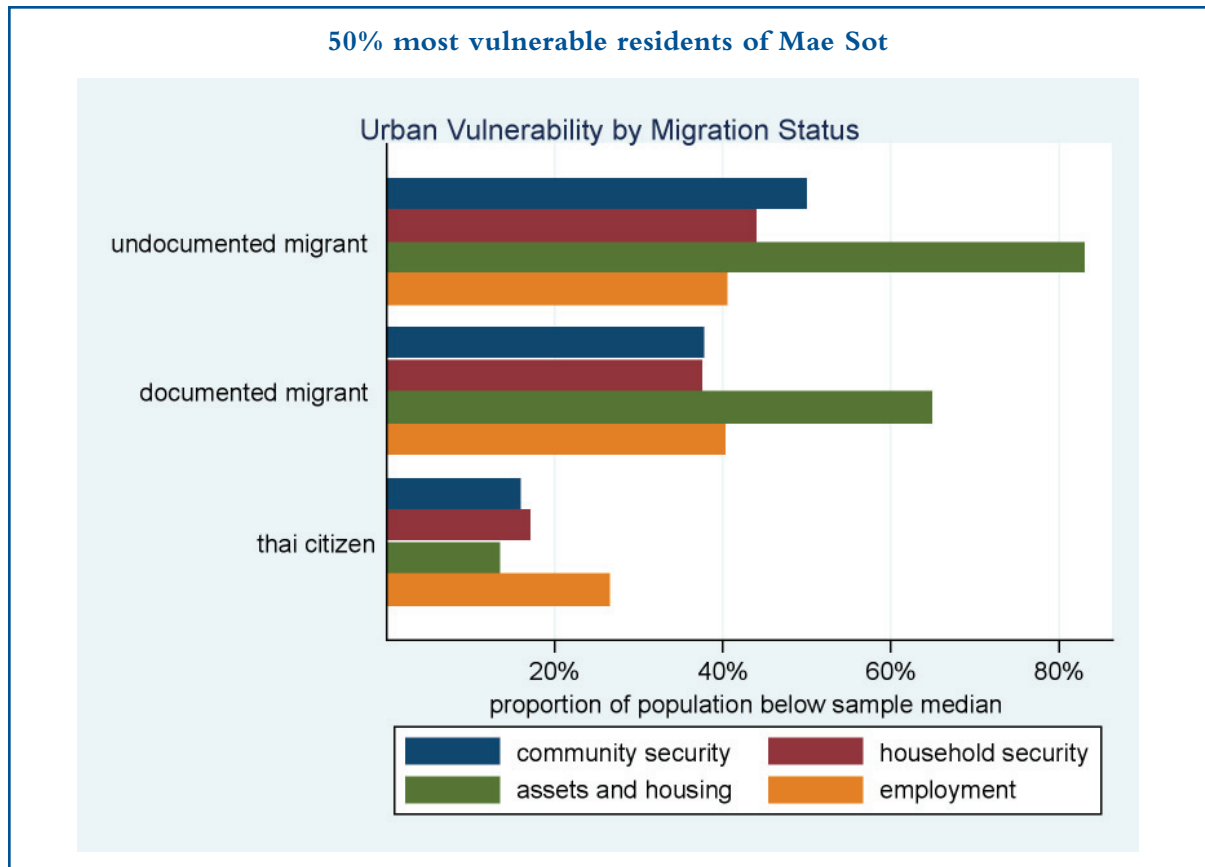
1 Findings are relevant for the sample only and not for Mae Sot overall

of housing and assets. Together, these four vulnerability categories reveal important differences among the three groups, as shown in the chart below:

The graph on page six was constructed by

migrants below the sample median in about equal proportions (about 40% of each group).

Besides employment, there is a consistent pattern for the categories of community security, household security, and assets and housing, with



calculating the median sample value for each vulnerability category (i.e. the score at which 50% of the sampled population scored below or above) as a marker of relative vulnerability. We then looked at what percentage of each migrant category scored below the sample median. For example, the graph shows that just over 10% of Thai citizens scored below the median sample value in assets and housing, compared to more than 80% of undocumented migrants. This implies that more than three-quarters of undocumented migrants were more vulnerable than the median household in regards to assets and housing, compared to only 10% of Thai citizens. Overall, the graph shows that a greater proportion of undocumented migrants, followed by documented migrants, scored below the sample median, compared to only a small fraction of Thai citizens. Only in the employment category were undocumented and documented

undocumented migrants significantly more vulnerable than documented migrants, who are more vulnerable than Thai citizens. Only when it comes to employment do we see that both documented and undocumented migrants are similar in their level of vulnerability. In concrete terms this means, for example:

Nearly twice the percentage (39% vs. 21%) of undocumented migrants compared to those documented responded that they feel they do not have the right to complain to the police if they were the victim of a crime. Only 2% of Thai citizens felt this way.

- Less than half of undocumented migrants feel they know how to safely access justice in Thailand, compared to close to 60% of documented migrants and 88% of Thai citizens.

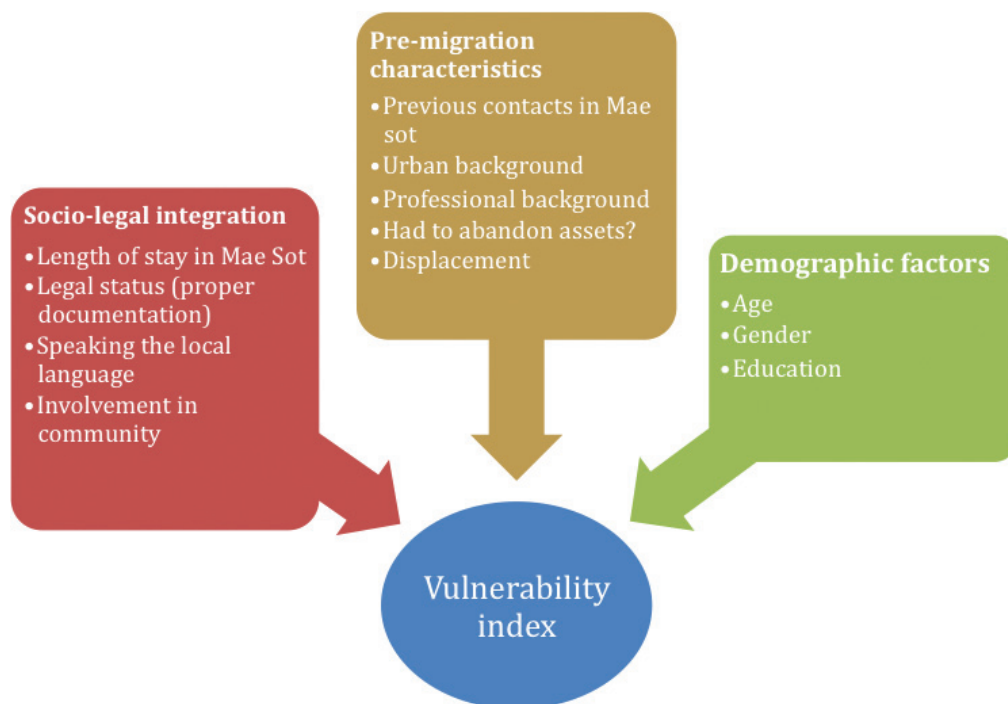
- While 32% of undocumented migrants feel unsafe, only 23% of those with documents, and 5% of Thai citizens feel this way.
- 55% of undocumented migrants, 81% of those with documents, and 92% of Thai citizens had visited Mae Sot General Hospital or another public facility in their lives.
- Thais were most likely self-employed in structured work environments, such as shop owners, market stall vendors, or mechanics (27%, n=85). Close to 12% (n=38) were self-employed in lower-end jobs such as porters or individuals who make and sell food from home. Eight percent (n=25) had their own business and 17% (n=53) were unemployed. Only 3% of Thai citizens were engaged in wage-labor (2%, n=6 as full-time, and 1%, n=4 as part-time).
- Migrants were more likely to work in lower-end jobs (20%, n=55 for undocumented migrants; 31%, n=56 for documented migrants), part-time wage-labor jobs (12%, n=34 for undocumented; 11%, n=20 for documented), and full-time

wage-labor jobs (9%, n=26 for undocumented; 11%, n=20 for documented). Unemployment was significantly higher among undocumented migrants with 14% (n=37) out of work compared to only 4% (n=7) of those with documents.²

While these findings begin to articulate the position of Mae Sot residents vis-à-vis a range of issues, there are other variables that this report analyzes as predictors of vulnerability, or factors that influence; for example, if respondents live in an unsafe housing location or face threats to their safety or the safety of their household. The causal model, below, illustrates how certain variables play an influential role:

This report, then, shows not only who is better off in Mae Sot, but why and what sorts of factors might cause this discrepancy. In addition, qualitative findings reveal aspects of life in Mae Sot that do not emerge in the quantitative analysis. For example, in-depth interviews lay bare mechanisms in migrant communities for accessing justice outside the official Thai legal system; mechanisms that sometimes involve

Causal model: predicting migrant and Thai vulnerability³



² All values cited here are statistically significant.

³ Not all predictors have statistically significant relationships with vulnerability indicators.

groups acting in a vigilante capacity to mediate conflicts or mete out punishment. The director of one such group recalled one exemplary case:

In one case, one Burmese man was beaten and bloody. We said to the other one, “you must pay his medical bill and he can’t work for seven days so... you must pay the wages.” If he doesn’t [pay], we can say, “So first you will be arrested and put in jail and have to answer many questions and then to get out, you have to pay much more money. Can you pay that? If not, the next step is court and the third step is prison. Do you want to go? No? So you must pay now.”

Interviews also demonstrate some of the challenges of accessing healthcare in Mae Sot. While more than half of undocumented migrants and over 80% of those with documents reported visiting Thai government health facilities, interviews evince Thai residents’ dissatisfaction with public health facilities in Mae Sot and the toll that being excluded from the Thai health insurance scheme has on undocumented migrants’ health and finances. Such findings are of paramount importance in a context where migrants’ worksites often fall far below basic health and safety standards and where employers are notorious for preventing employees from claiming worker’s compensation. As one Burmese factory worker put it:

We have to take care of our own health as the factory only gives us Paracetamol. As we work in the wool factory, they use chemicals to dye clothing and some workers suffer from lung cancer and throat cancer. The only thing the boss does is to send the workers to the hospital...[F]or those who don’t have legal status, they have to pay the full amount and some go back to Burma because they can’t afford to pay for the medical expenses.

Data from this report points to numerous entry-points for the Royal Thai Government, international humanitarian agencies, and community-based civil society to improve efforts to safeguard the basic human rights of Mae Sot residents.

Summary of recommendations

Social cohesion

Civil society should collaborate to design initiatives to build greater social cohesion between Thai and migrant community members/leaders.

Improving assets and housing

Civil society should support initiatives to open ways for Burmese migrants to participate in the savings and credit associations in Thai villages.

Mae Sot local administration (*Or Bor Tor and Tessabarn*), the Tak provincial government, and state public works agencies (such as offices for water, power, and telecommunications) should work together to ensure that migrant worker communities have access to basic infrastructure necessary to sustain life.

Child labor and education among undocumented migrants

The Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Education, and Thai and international civil society should collaborate to provide greater access to a wider variety of quality education opportunities that fit migrant youth needs and meet Thai standards.

The Ministry of Labor, through the Department of Labor Protection and Welfare should enforce more vigorously the 1998 and 2008 Labor Protection Acts to monitor and prosecute factories employing children.

Civil society should design interventions targeting undocumented migrants to create safe spaces for discussion around child labor, household livelihood security, and access to education.

Mediation, dispute resolution, and access to justice

Civil society should work with the Mae Sot District office to designate greater numbers of Thai village heads (*Phuyai ban*) as official mediators for village-level conflicts. Civil society should work with key Thai justice agencies to put together a series of trainings for village heads on Thai law regarding migrant workers.

Civil society should engage with CBO/vigilante groups claiming to provide justice on behalf of Burmese migrants and other NGOs and CBOs who regularly give advice to migrants regarding law and access to justice in order to push these groups to advocate that they make sure their work is integrated with and supported by the mediation processes under Thai law described above.

The judicial system should process migrant complaints regardless of legal status, should

regularly provide interpreters and where required by law, qualified and experienced defense lawyers. Justice agencies should translate materials related to accessing justice into Burmese, Karen, and other relevant languages.

The Ministry of Justice and other relevant branches of the local Mae Sot administration should work with civil society to develop the capacity of community members to volunteer from within the migrant and Thai communities and support the local municipal administration in monitoring protection concerns and promoting access to justice.

Access to healthcare

The Ministry of Public Health should adjust Thailand's healthcare policy to universally ensure some form of affordable quality healthcare to undocumented migrants.

To reduce the burden on hospitals operating in border areas, the Ministry of Public Health should push for the development of a healthcare management fund to support the hospitals and health posts in the border region, especially in migrant populated areas.

The Ministry of Public Health should encourage the training of Migrant Health Volunteers in border areas, including public health workers working for migrants.

Protecting physical safety of migrants

RTG should enforce more strongly protections of migrant rights, prosecuting corrupt security officials involved in extortion rackets, physical abuse, or the unlawful employment of migrant workers.

The Office of the National Counter Corruption Commission and the Office of the Ombudsman Thailand should establish a hotline for victims of extortion or abuse by government officials to file complaints in a confidential and anonymous (if desired) manner.

The Office of the National Counter Corruption Commission and the Office of the Ombudsman Thailand should establish a network of volunteers from both Thai and migrant communities to monitor allegations of corruption and misconduct by government officials in Mae Sot and elsewhere.

Reforming registration and Nationality Verification

The cost of registration should be significantly reduced to make it more affordable for migrants seeking to regularize their presence in Thailand.

Migrants should be able to undergo Nationality Verification in every province and they should be allowed to travel freely in Thailand to such locations.

The Ministry of Labour should push to amend the Employment and Job Seeker Protection Act B.E. 2528 (1985) to provide greater regulation of brokers in the Nationality Verification process.

The Ministry of Labour should accelerate the push for regulations that govern employment in the border areas in accordance with Section 14 of the Alien Employment Act, B.E. 2551.

The Ministry of Labour should push to amend the MOUs regarding the employment of migrant workers from Burma, Laos and Cambodia to eliminate the requirement that migrant workers with temporary passports return to their country for three years after staying in Thailand for four consecutive years.

The Ministry of Labor should develop a strategy to give employment authorization to those migrants who attempted to undergo Nationality Verification but who were not recognized as citizens by their government.

The Ministry of Labor should improve the existing mechanisms for hiring and registering migrant labor by reducing costs; providing more interpreters; producing bilingual official documents; more information, education, and communication materials; and opening one-stop service centers for all aspects of registration.

UNHCR should push the Thai government to reinstate refugee status determination for individuals fleeing persecution in Burma and seeking refuge in Thailand's urban areas.

If migrant workers who are detained and processed for deportation express a fear that returning to Burma would endanger them, their case should be passed to UNHCR, the National Security Council, and the Ministry of the Interior for refugee status determination. ■

PART 1: FORCED MIGRANTS AND ECONOMIC MIGRANTS FROM BURMA

Thailand hosts between 1.8 and 3⁴ million migrants from neighboring Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) countries Laos, Cambodia, and especially Burma (Myanmar).⁵ This includes **encamped refugees** from primarily Eastern Burma and **urban asylum-seekers** from across Asia and other locales. The vast majority, however, belong to the group of documented and undocumented **migrant workers** (some of whom may be forced migrants) living in Thailand and often working in the agricultural, manufacturing, construction, domestic work and fishing sectors; jobs that are often “dirty, degrading, and dangerous,” commonly referred to as the “3D’s.”

While historical factors, national policy, and the dynamics of the international community’s involvement in Thailand have led to these three widely recognized categories, they are anything but distinct. As is the case anywhere, migration to Thailand is a function of the circumstances at home that push people to migrate and the situation in host countries that make these locales attractive destinations. While Thailand’s booming economy and GDP are attractive to prospective migrants in comparison to conditions in their home countries, push factors in Burma are often a complex mix of social, economic, and political factors. That is, the extreme poverty that may cause many of the Burmese migrants to seek employment or education in Thailand is often a product of military rule and conflict.⁶

In Thailand, the factors that determine whether

a migrant is considered a refugee, urban asylum-seeker, or an irregular migrant⁷ depend less on the circumstances that inspired them to leave their place of origin and more on when they arrived in Thailand, where they settled (i.e. in a camp or in an urban space), and on the substance of the memoranda of understanding Thailand has with each of its neighboring countries regarding quotas and visas for migrant workers.⁸ In the case of Burma, no migrants settling outside of the nine border camps may be considered a refugee or an asylum seeker; encamped Burmese are “temporarily displaced” and out of camp Burmese are, for the vast majority, irregular migrants.⁹

Because of these inconsistent policies that discriminate based on time, place, and bilateral agreements, it is not surprising that a significant number of those displaced from Burma because of conflict and persecution and who are in Thailand for protection fall into the category of irregular migrant; some as documented and some as undocumented. As Green and colleagues report in a 2006 survey of over 1,700 Burmese migrants living in three Thai provinces outside the camps, over 50% of respondents in two of the provinces surveyed (Chiang Mai and Mae Hong Son) reported leaving Burma due to reasons such as forced labor, forced relocation, appropriation of land or assets, or violent abuse.¹⁰ Other research notes extortion, restrictions on movement, arbitrary taxation by multiple armed

4 Rosalia Sciortina and Sureeporn Punpuing, International Organization for Migration, *International Migration in Thailand* 2009. (Bangkok: IOM 2009).

5 While the country officially changed their name in 1989 to Myanmar, a number of governments in the international community continue to use the older name, Burma. This report echoes this decision.

6 See Inge Brees (2010) “Refugees and Transnationalism on the Thai Burma Border,” *Global Networks* 10(2): 282-299. Regarding decisions on whether to be in or out of camp, Brees writes “the most important reason respondents mentioned was that they wanted to remain master of their own life and work. Other explanations included a desire to trace family and keep in contact with them (which is difficult from inside remote camps), having family in a Thai village prior to arrival, and/or lacking contacts inside the camp. Some refugees were afraid to enter the camps because they belonged to different ethnic, religious or rebel groups” (p. 284). See also Karen Human Rights Group, Abuse, Poverty, and Migration: Investigating Migrants’ Motivations to Leave Home in Burma (10 June 2009).

7 “Irregular migrant” refers to those who enter and remain in countries without official authorization.

8 See Vitit Muntarbhorn, *The Mekong Challenge: Employment and Protection of Migrant Workers in Thailand: National Laws/Practices versus International Labor Standards?* (Bangkok: International Labor Office, 2006), pp. 42-69.

9 Since Thailand is not a signatory to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees or its 1967 protocol, the country determines its own criteria for what is often temporary asylum, giving limited authority to UNHCR to conduct Refugee Status Determination. The Thai government refers to Burmese living in any of the nine border camps as “persons fleeing fighting and the consequences of civil war.” See Department of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, “Second RTG-UNHCR Brainstorming Session, Bangkok, May 15, 1998.

10 In Mae Sot, 30% of the respondents there reported migrating due to conflict and 23% reported migrating as a result of violence (these percentages are not mutually exclusive). See Margaret Green, Karen Jacobsen, Sandee Pyne (2008) “Invisible in Thailand: Documenting the Need for International Protection for Burmese,” *Forced Migration Review*. 30, p. 32.

groups, and forced conscription as additional reasons for flight for predominately Karen groups living in Eastern Burma.¹¹

Thus, however many potential refugees there are in the overall migrant population, to be concerned with the security and protection of forced migrants in Thailand means looking into the well-being of not only those living in recognized camps but also those considered to be irregular. Migrants in Thailand, including those who gained temporary legal status through the migrant worker registration process, lack many of the legal protections to which they are entitled under domestic and international law.¹² This is in part because virtually all enter Thailand irregularly, are therefore in violation of the 1979 Immigration Act, and if they register are stuck with the status “temporary, pending deportation.”¹³ Importantly, for those who seek refuge in Thailand but are in the category of irregular migrant, being in a state of “pending deportation” is to lack any sense of security that they will not be forced back to a place where they may face persecution.¹⁴

Officially, registered workers are entitled to live and work in Thailand, access low-cost healthcare and other social services, and enjoy some freedom of movement (limited to within the province in which they are employed) and labor

rights under Thai law.¹⁵ These freedoms are tempered by the fact that migrants are allowed to work only in unskilled labor industries are extremely limited in their power to change employers or sue for worker’s compensation, and, in certain parts of Thailand, cannot assemble in large groups or own mobile phones.¹⁶

In addition, the convoluted nature of the policies regarding registration, and the ways officials often implement these policies, place both registered and unregistered migrants in Thailand at a significant and systematic disadvantage when it comes to accessing their right to fair wages and workers’ compensation for injuries as well as when it comes to accessing justice for poor working conditions and mistreatment by employers.¹⁷ A 2005 roundtable of migrant workers and representatives from workers’ rights organizations on the Thai–Burma border developed a list of most-frequently experienced problems in the workplace (which often double as living quarters):

(1) low wages and no or very low overtime wage; (2) excessive working hours; (3) are not allowed to hold their ID/work permit (management keeps it and gives workers a photocopy); (3) various indiscriminate deductions by employer; (4) health assistance (almost none); (5) no clean water; (6) no social care; (7) no electricity at night in the dorms; (8) electric shocks while working... (8) sexual harassment on the part of

11 Karen Human Rights Group (2009) *Abuse, Poverty, and Migration: Investigating Migrants’ Reasons to Leave Home in Burma*; Ashley South (2010) *Conflict and Survival: Self-Protection in South-east Burma*. London: Chatham House.

12 See for example, Kritaya Archavanitkul and Andy Hall, “Migrant Workers and Human Rights in a Thai Context,” in *Thailand Migration Report 2011* (IOM: Bangkok, October 2011); Muntarbhorn, *Employment and Protection of Migrant Workers in Thailand*.

13 All those entering Thailand without visas, valid passports, or those who violate Immigration Act B.E. 2522 in any other way are considered illegally in Thailand and are excludable and removable. Section 17 of this act grants the Minister of Foreign Affairs the power, subject to Cabinet approval, to allow individuals or a group of individuals who are illegally in Thailand to stay, under certain conditions. Under the Alien Employment Act, BE 2521 and subsequently the Alien Employment Act, BE 2551, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs temporarily suspends the deportation of migrants who entered Thailand illegally but who register for a worker’s permit. Section 13(2) of the 2008 Alien Employment Act notes that those who entered Thailand illegally but who receive a work permit are allowed “to stay in the Kingdom temporarily pending repatriation.”

14 Regardless of whether the Thai government recognizes an individual as a refugee, deportation of migrants who face a threat of persecution based on their race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion constitutes a violation of Article 33 of the 1951 Refugee Convention, the customary international law against *refoulement*.

15 See Archavanitkul and Hall “Migrant Workers and Human Rights in a Thai Context,” pp. 68–70. See also International Organization for Migration (IOM) “The Registration of Migrant Workers, 2011: Information For Migrant Workers” June 2011.

16 From the beginning of full-fledged migrant worker registration in Thailand in 1996, the Ministry of Labor has sought to protect Thai workers and employers by limiting migrant work by sector and by geography. As part of this regulatory process, the government issues work permits for migrants that are valid only as an employee for the employer indicated at the time of registration, with little exception. In addition, while certain Thai laws, most notably the Thai labor laws of 1998 and 2008, covers migrants as well as non-migrants, the fact that most migrant workers arrive irregularly in Thailand precludes them from many protections. In five Thai provinces (Phang Nga, Phuket, Ranong, Rayong, and Surat Thani), provincial decrees place additional restrictions on migrants, limiting their right to association and their ability to use mobile phones, motorbikes, or cars (see Human Rights Watch, *From the Tiger to the Crocodile: Abuse of Migrant Workers in Thailand* (2010)).

17 Human Rights Watch reported numerous instances in which employers or government officials actually punish migrant workers who have lodged successful complaints for workplace abuses. See Human Rights Watch, *From the Tiger to the Crocodile*; see also Elaine Pearson, Sureeporn Punpuing, Aree Jampaklay, Sirinan Kittisuksathit, and Aree Prohmmo, *Underpaid, Overworked, and Overlooked: The Realities of Young Migrant Workers in Thailand*. The Mekong Challenge, Volume 1, (Bangkok: ILO 2006).

management or authorities; (9) food provided by the factories is not adequate, no food or water is provided on workers' days off; (10) no collective bargaining is allowed; and (11) the MOL [Ministry of Labor, ed.] is not effective.¹⁸

While the situation in the last six years has seen some improvement, particularly in terms of health benefits for registered workers, recent research illustrates that all migrants are still susceptible to the vast majority of these abuses as well as extortion rackets, extrajudicial killing, and violent abuse that implicates private individuals, Thai security officials, Burmese governmental authorities, and other armed groups, such as the DKBA (Democratic Karen Buddhist Army).¹⁹ If registered migrants still face draconian treatment, then what is the true advantage of registering? That is, beyond the official benefit, what protections or opportunities does registration offer that undocumented migrants are precluded from enjoying? Are undocumented workers truly more vulnerable than those with registration, and if so, in what ways? And if registration is not a primary medium of protection, what are the sources of protection for migrants in Thailand?

All this suggests that to truly profile the urban forced migrant population in Thailand, it is necessary to compare the situation of documented and undocumented migrants in terms of their livelihoods and vulnerability. As these populations live amongst members of the Thai population who also struggle to obtain livelihoods and face their own vulnerabilities in a difficult urban setting, it is important also to compare migrants with the urban Thai population with which they live. This study takes the border town of Mae Sot as a case study and, by developing an Urban Population Vulnerability Index, measures the difference between documented and undocumented migrants and Thai citizens in terms of a range of variables associated with economic vulnerability and

security (see Section 1.4 for a detailed justification of Mae Sot as a location for this project).

1.1 Background: profiling migration and displacement in Thailand

Hundreds of thousands of people from the primarily Karen, Karenni, Shan, and Mon ethnic groups have fled to Thailand, starting in the 1980s, drastically increasing in the 1990s, and continuing through the 2000s, as Burmese military campaigns progressively diminished insurgent armies' abilities to hold the border territory.²⁰

Considered refugees by the international community on a prima facie basis, the roughly 150,000 individuals living in nine official camps along the border primarily consist of individuals from the Karen and Karenni ethnic groups, but also include Mon, Shan, Burman, and groups identifying as Burmese Muslim, among others. Over the years this encampment has become a protracted refugee context in which camp residents have grown increasingly dependent on external aid as the government of Thailand restricts their mobility and capacity to be self-sufficient.²¹

When the urban student-led uprising in Burma in 1988—a response to state oppression and drastic devaluing of the currency—was brutally suppressed by the Burmese government, thousands of urban dwellers, many of whom were political activists, fled to Thailand to seek refuge and continue their political work in Bangkok and along the border.²² Concerned about supporting a “pull factor” that would encourage Burmese from throughout the country to stream across the border, Thailand and the UN preferred to consider these asylum

18 Dennis Arnold, *Capital Expansion and Migrant Workers: Flexible Labor in the Thai-Burma Border Economy*. (Bangkok: Mahidol University 2007), pp. 49.

19 Human Rights Watch, *From the Tiger to the Crocodile*; Srithamrongsawat Samrit, Ratanaporn Wisessang, Sarinthorn Ratjaroenkhajorn, 2010 “Financing Healthcare for Migrants: a case study from Thailand,” accessed at <http://whothailand.healthrespository.org/handle/123456789/568> (accessed July 9, 2011).

20 Christina Fink (2008) “Militarization in Burma’s ethnic states: causes and consequences.” *Contemporary Politics*, 14(4): 447–462; Ashley South (2008) *Ethnic Politics in Burma: States of conflict*. London: Routledge; Hazel Lang (2002) *Fear and Sanctuary: Burmese Refugees in Thailand*. Ithaca, NY: Southeast Asia Program Publications.

21 Gil Loescher and James Milner (2005) *Protracted Refugee Situations: Domestic and International Security Implications*, Adelphi Paper 375. New York: Routledge; Susan Banki and Hazel Lang (2008) “Protracted Displacement on the Thai-Burmese Border: The Interrelated Search for Durable Solutions.” In Adelman, H. (ed). *Protracted Displacement in Asia: No Place to Call Home*. Hampshire, UK: Ashgate.

22 Christina Fink (2009) *Living Silence in Burma: Surviving Under Military Rule*. London: Zed Books; Lang, *Fear and Sanctuary*.

claims on a case-by-case basis.²³ Until 2004, UNHCR considered this group an urban refugee population in need of protection, which occasionally came in the form of resettlement to the West.²⁴ In subsequent years, the Thai government mandated that all individuals receiving international protection and assistance must be in the border camps; and that anybody outside the camps was a labor migrant or an illegal migrant.²⁵ All those recognized refugees and asylum seekers who did not move to the camps ceased to receive any protection.

The emergence of the economic migrant category in the context of Burmese migration stems from the early 1990s when, as a result of significant economic changes in Thailand and the country's improved relationship with Burma, the border became increasingly porous for flows of capital, natural resources, and flexible labor.²⁶ In particular, the Thai policy of "constructive engagement" with Burma, instigated at the end of the Cold War to turn "battlefields into marketplaces," initiated a shift towards cross-border trade, increased Thai economic investment in resource extraction projects in Burma, and a source of labor for Thailand's rise towards being a regional manufacturing power.²⁷ Arnold (2007) suggests that the Burma border region in Thailand opened up as a site of mobile capital for production and foreign investment (particularly from, but not limited to East Asian firms) as a means to undercut a somewhat strong organized labor movement there (p. 20) and to give Thailand an economic boost by facilitating a constant supply of semi-skilled and unskilled cheap labor. The border region in Thailand has become an attractive place to open new or relocate existing garment factories and as such,

migration to the region has become increasingly feminized.²⁸

Though Thailand attempted to systematize migration from Burma, Cambodia, and Laos with formal registration processes, starting in earnest in 1996 and continuing through today with over one million migrants registered as of late 2010,²⁹ the country nevertheless increasingly became a locale for a very loosely regulated labor force with extremely limited rights in terms of mobility and association, i.e. the right to collectively bargain for fair treatment.³⁰ As research points out, the exploitation of Burmese migrants has been so possible because this is a population effectively displaced as a result of double-digit inflation, regional economic downturns, conflict, and conflict-related poverty and disenfranchisement.³¹

Comprehensive nation-wide socio-demographic accounts of the migrant population in Thailand do not exist; the 2000 census did not count non-Thais and the 2010 census did not count undocumented non-Thais. Nevertheless, there have been a number of smaller-scale studies, including this research, that provide some basic demographic information.³² Working with data from the Ministry of Labor, Hugué and colleagues report that in 2009, out of one

23 Lang, *Fear and Sanctuary*.

24 Human Rights Watch *Out of Sight, Out of Mind: Thai Policy Toward Burmese Refugees* (New York: Human Rights Watch 2004), pp. 20-30; Jerry Hugué and Sureporn Punpuing *International Migration in Thailand* (Bangkok: IOM 2005).

25 Vitiit Muntarbhorn *Refugee Law and Practice in the Asia and Pacific Region: Thailand as a Case Study* (Research Paper, Thailand: UNHCR, 2004; Human Rights Watch, *Out of Sight, Out of Mind*).

26 Arnold, *Capital Expansion and Migrant Workers*; see also Dennis Arnold and Kevin Hewison (2005) "Exploitation in Global Supply Chains: Burmese Migrant Workers in Mae Sot, Thailand." *Journal of Contemporary Asia*. 35(3): 319-340.

27 Arnold, *Capital Expansion and Migrant Workers*, p. 33; see also MAP Foundation *Migrant Movements 1996-2010*. (Chiang Mai: Migrant Assistance Project Foundation 2010).

28 Pollock, Jackie and Aung, Soe Lin (2010) "Critical Times: Gendered implications of the economic crisis for migrants from Burma/Myanmar in Thailand," *Gender and Development*. 18(2): 213-227; Arnold and Hewison "Exploitation in Global Supply Chains."

29 Jerrold W. Hugué, Aphichat Chamratrithong, Kerry Richter, "Thailand Migration Profile" in Jerrold Hugué and Aphichat Chamratrithong eds. *Thailand Migration Report* (Bangkok: IOM 2011), p. 9.

30 MAP, *Migrant Movements*; Erick Gjerdingen, "Suffocation Inside a Cold Storage Truck and Other Problems with Trafficking as 'Exploitation' and Smuggling as 'Choice' Along the Thai-Burmese Border", *Arizona Journal of International and Comparative Law* v. 26 no3 (Fall 2009) p. 699-737; Arnold, *Capital Expansion and Migrant Workers*, Federation of Trade Unions-Burma and Phil Robertson "Working Day and Night: The Plight of Migrant Child Workers in Mae Sot, Thailand." *The Mekong Challenge*. (ILO 2006); Chantavanich, S., Laodamrongchai, S., Jantapho, A., Srprathum, W., Klumsuar, C., Ruengrojpitak, P., Eksaengsri, N., Wongboonchainan, T., Jitpong, W. *Mitigating Exploitative Situations of Migrant Workers in Thailand*. (Bangkok: The Asian Research Center for Migration, Chulalongkorn University 2007).

31 MAP, *Migrant Movements*; Myat Thein *Economic development of Myanmar*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies; Fink, *Living in Silence*.

32 See for example Aphichat Chamratrithong, "Profile of Migrants in Thailand Analysis of the 2000 Thai Population Census," unpublished paper (2006); Sciortino, Rosalia and Punpuing, Sureporn *International Migration in Thailand 2009*; Inge Brees "Livelihoods, Integration & Transnationalism in a Protracted Refugee Situation-Case Study: Burmese Refugees in Thailand," PhD dissertation, Ghent University, 2009.

million registered Burmese migrants, 55% were male, though other research notes it may be possible that the overall female to male ratio for Burmese migrants in Thailand (registered and unregistered) may be different.³³ This compares with Thai census data reflecting a slight female majority in the general population.³⁴ The Burmese migrant population is generally believed to be younger and less educated than Thais.³⁵ The majority of migrants tend to be concentrated in border provinces, areas with large-scale agricultural production, in the industrial heartland, Bangkok and its environs, and coastal areas with a developed fishing industry.³⁶

According to Ministry of Labor statistics, large numbers of registered Burmese migrants worked in the fish processing, construction, and agriculture sectors, though a large percentage were counted as “other” which includes textile and other factories.³⁷ Estimates from 2005 reflect that a majority of migrants stay in Thailand for three years or more.³⁸ In almost all sectors, research suggests that unregistered migrants make significantly less than those who are registered, and the latter group makes less than Thai citizens.³⁹

1.2 The provision and restriction of rights for Burmese migrants

A number of domestic and international laws govern the treatment of migrant workers in Thailand. Some of these laws, such as the Labor Protection Act of 1998, its 2008 amendments, and Criminal and Civil Codes provide workplace protections for both registered and unregistered migrants, including the right to fair wages, eight-hour workdays, humane working

conditions, equal treatment between men and women, a complaints mechanism, and a number of protections for children under the age of 18.⁴⁰

Others, such as the 1979 Immigration Act and the 2008 Alien Employment Act take steps toward criminalizing undocumented migrants and keeping their status precarious. The 1979 Immigration Act considers all aliens unlawfully in Thailand subject to deportation; it is only through Section 17, which allows the Ministry of the Interior to authorize temporary stay while deportation is pending, that gives some leeway for migrants who entered Thailand illegally to remain.⁴¹ The 2008 Alien Employment Act provides the permission to work for those temporarily allowed to remain pending deportation, but penalizes an illegal presence in Thailand with up to five years of jail time and/or fees up to 100,000 THB (~ \$3,300.00).⁴² This severe treatment applies to those who did not or who could not register for work permits.⁴³ Thai citizens caught employing undocumented migrants are also susceptible to high fines, and the law stipulates that individuals who inform the authorities as to the location of undocumented migrants will be rewarded.⁴⁴

International labor laws to which Thailand is a party include International Labor Organization Conventions on forced labor (No. 29 and 105),⁴⁵ equal remuneration (No. 100),⁴⁶ the worst forms of child labor (No. 182),⁴⁷ and several others.⁴⁸ In addition, Thailand is party to several of the core human rights conventions such as the Children’s Rights Convention (CRC),⁴⁹ the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination

33 Hugué, Chamrathirong, and Richter, “Thailand Migration Profile,” p. 12. This article estimates over one million unregistered migrants and dependents of those who are registered. See also Sciortino and Punpuing *International Migration in Thailand 2009*, p. 62. The authors point out that women are more likely to be employed in the informal sector and in other sectors not included in registration. They also have a tendency to work in more vulnerable conditions than men with employers who are less likely to register them.

34 2010 census, National Statistics Office, Thailand.

35 Pearson et al. *Underpaid, Overworked, Overlooked*, p. 26; Chamrathirong, “Profile of Migrants in Thailand,” Sciortino and Punpuing *International Migration in Thailand 2009*, p. 62.

36 Sciortino and Punpuing, *International Migration in Thailand 2009*, p. 63.

37 IOM “Migration Statistics in Thailand, 2004–2010”

38 Hugué and Punpuing, *International Migration in Thailand*, p. 31

39 Chantavanich et al. *Mitigating Exploitative Situations*, p. 27.

40 See Labour Protection Act B.E. 2551, Section 8, 9, 12, 19 and Labour Protection Act B.E. 2541, Sections 44–49, 51–52, 123, 125. See also Muntarbhorn, *Employment and Protection of Migrant Workers in Thailand*, pp. 14–15.

41 See *supra* note 13.

42 See *supra* note 13. See also Section 51 of the 2008 Alien Employment Act.

43 *Id.*

44 See Alien Employment Act, Section 27 and Section 54.

45 Convention concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour (ILO No. 29), 39 U.N.T.S. 55, entered into force May 1, 1932; Abolition of Forced Labour Convention (ILO No. 105), 320 U.N.T.S. 291, entered into force Jan. 17, 1959.

46 Equal Remuneration Convention (ILO No. 100), 165 U.N.T.S. 303, entered into force May 23, 1953.

47 Convention Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor (ILO No. 182), 2133 U.N.T.S. 161, entered into force Nov. 19, 2000.

48 See Muntarbhorn *Employment and Protection of Migrant Workers in Thailand*, pp. 21–22.

Against Women (CEDAW),⁵⁰ the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT),⁵¹ the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD),⁵² the International Covenant of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR),⁵³ and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).⁵⁴ Many of the rights in this body of international law are guaranteed irrespective of their citizenship status (though in certain instances, such as voting rights, citizens have certain rights that non-citizens do not).

Despite the many protections for non-citizens in these treaties, Thailand has not ratified the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees nor its 1967 protocol.⁵⁵ As a result, there are no formal policies for the protection of refugees or for refugee status determination and all asylum-seekers are fundamentally illegal immigrants if they do not possess some other visa to be in Thailand. Although Thailand is still bound by the customary international law of non-refoulement, security officials have, over the last decades, deported recognized refugees, asylum seekers, and other migrants back to places where they may face persecution.⁵⁶

Thailand's 1979 Immigration Act ensures that

49 Convention on the Rights of the Child, G.A. res. 44/25, annex, 44 U.N. GAOR Supp. (No. 49) at 167, U.N. Doc. A/44/49 (1989), entered into force Sept. 2, 1990.

50 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, G.A. res. 34/180, 34 U.N. GAOR Supp. (No. 46) at 193, U.N. Doc. A/34/46, entered into force Sept. 3, 1981.

51 Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, G.A. res. 39/46, annex, 39 U.N. GAOR Supp. (No. 51) at 197, U.N. Doc. A/39/51 (1984), entered into force June 26, 1987.

52 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 660 U.N.T.S. 195, entered into force Jan. 4, 1969.

53 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, G.A. res. 2200A (XXI), 21 U.N. GAOR Supp. (No. 16) at 49, U.N. Doc. A/6316 (1966), 993 U.N.T.S. 3, entered into force Jan. 3, 1976.

54 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, G.A. res. 2200A (XXI), 21 U.N. GAOR Supp. (No. 16) at 52, U.N. Doc. A/6316 (1966), 999 U.N.T.S. 171, entered into force Mar. 23, 1976.

55 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, 189 U.N.T.S. 150, entered into force April 22, 1954; Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees 606 U.N.T.S. 267, entered into force Oct. 4, 1967.

56 Deportation of Burmese migrants is a regular occurrence, taking place weekly through both official and unofficial mechanisms. The extent to which refugees face persecution upon return is unknown, though accounts do exist, such as those cited in International Rescue Committee, *Threat of Persecution: Refoulement of Burmese Refugees by the Thai Government*, 2008. See also Human Rights Watch "Thailand: Stop Forced Returns of Karen Refugees to Burma," July 18, 2008; BBC "Thailand Departs Thousands of Hmong to Laos," December 28, 2009.

despite the numerous protections ensured by both domestic and international laws, migrant workers will remain in a precarious state, always vulnerable due to the ease with which they can be deported. Furthermore, the convoluted nature of the system for issuing work permits exacerbates a context in which security officials, private individuals, and employers can easily exploit migrants for their own benefit.

1.3 Migrant registration and nationality verification

Unfortunately, the worker registration process is not designed to protect those most vulnerable; nor does it, in practice, serve the national security concerns that drive Thailand's migration policy decisions.⁵⁷ The process of becoming a registered migrant is so fraught with bureaucratic and other sorts of complications that the difference between documented and undocumented is less a matter of compliance with laws and more about who has the resources to navigate registration and pay for it, and what is most profitable for employers (who are tasked with registering their migrant employees).⁵⁸

In 2011, the Thai government announced a 6th round for the registration of previously undocumented migrant workers and the re-registration of those who were unable to acquire permits and those with expired permits. In order to become registered, migrants are dependent upon their employers to apply on their behalf for work permits and health insurance; migrants must also undergo a health check and "profiling," which involves photographing and fingerprinting. In this complicated system,

57 See Dennis Arnold and Kevin Hewison "Exploitation in Global Supply Chains: Burmese Migrant Workers in Mae Sot, Thailand," *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 35(3) 2005, p. 5. Decrees in five of Thailand's provinces that severely restrict migrant rights cite national security as a primary reason to prevent migrants from their right to freedom of movement and association, among others.

58 Andy Hall, "A positive U-turn, but still no real long-term solution," *Bangkok Post*, April 22, 2011. See also IOM Migrant Information Note #11. In the most recent registration period starting in mid-July, migrants were dependent on employers for the entire process, from submitting initial requests for registration to the Provincial/Bangkok Employment office and District/Local Registrar Office to arranging a health check-up for the migrant worker and applying for a work permit. Migrants also often depended on brokers or agents to undergo nationality verification. In some instances, employers faced with this multi-layered bureaucratic process chose instead to merely bribe local police in order to maintain a workforce of irregular migrants.

employers may be required to submit records of their own household registration, employment certificates, maps showing the worksites of employees, photos of workers, IDs, and work permit applications. Many of these are to be submitted at the provincial level and the entire application process costs between 2,980 and 3,880 THB (approx USD \$100–\$130).⁵⁹ For migrants who make the minimum wage (THB 162 per day at the time of writing), the cost of registration represents approximately one month's salary (however, many employers pay migrants below this level).⁶⁰ Once migrants are finally registered, they (and their employers) face numerous requirements for compliance or migrants will face a change in status to “illegally working in Thailand” and will be subject to deportation. Migrants must keep all registration documents and employers must report the registered migrant's employment status on a quarterly basis. Migrants are not permitted to travel outside the province in which they are employed and migrants can only change jobs if:

- The employer dies
- Termination or dissolution of employment
- Employer commits abuse
- Employer does not comply with labor laws
- Consent of the employer for change the job

Making it even more difficult, employers and migrant workers could not miss the narrow window of 15 June to 14 July 2011 to file initial applications for registration. Together, these restrictions drastically limit the freedom of migrants who are registered, and as employers frequently deduct the cost of registration from the wages of migrants, the process is prohibitively expensive to many. Registration itself is valid for one year.

Starting in 2009, the Thai government instituted a requirement that already registered irregular Burmese migrant workers have their nationality verified by their country of origin (this process began in 2006 for migrants from Cambodia and Laos). Until mid-2010, registered Burmese

migrants had no choice but to return to Burma to obtain passports. Presumably, the challenge of doing this and the fear of possible trouble with the SPDC led to only a small percentage of total Burmese migrants applying (in the second half of 2010, Thai and Burmese officials agreed to open a Nationality Verification & Temporary Passport Issuance Center in Ranong in southern Thailand and later in Tachilek and Myawaddy both locations in Burma, but close to the border).⁶¹ Not all Burmese migrants are eligible for Nationality Verification; the SPDC does not recognize members of the Rohingya ethnicity and a number of migrants who were born in or who have lived in Thailand for many years or who lived in insurgent-held territory in Burma do not show up in Burmese government records.⁶² As of August 2011, just over half of migrants considered eligible for nationality verification had completed the process. For Burmese this was more than 450,000 out of 812,984, approximately a quarter of the more conservative estimate of how many Burmese migrants are in Thailand.⁶³ Upon receiving Nationality Verification, migrants are entitled to a longer work visa before being required to return home for a period of time, greater freedom of movement, and access to worker's compensation.⁶⁴

Many have also criticized both the worker registration and the Nationality Verification process for the involvement of brokers and agents who charge migrants exorbitant rates; migrants frequently need to rely on these actors to help navigate language barriers to the process and because their movement is restricted in Thailand. The Thai and Burmese governments have agreed that agents in the Nationality Verification process must not charge more than 5,000 THB in fees as they serve as middlemen in obtaining the required temporary passports for migrants,⁶⁵

⁵⁹ See IOM, Migrant Information Note #11.

⁶⁰ Ko Thwe, “Minimum Wage in Thailand Not Likely to Apply to Migrants,” *Irawaddy*, 26 August, 2011. The minimum wage for Thais was recently changed to THB300 per day (the equivalent of USD \$10).

⁶¹ IOM, “Migrant Information Note #6” July 2010.

⁶² Human Rights Watch, *From the Tiger to the Crocodile*, p. 22. From the perspective of the Royal Thai Government, one must only have a valid work permit to apply for Nationality Verification. The fact that the Burmese government does not recognize certain groups or does not have records for those individuals does not currently relieve them from the requirement that migrants in Thailand undergo Nationality Verification.

⁶³ IOM, “Migrant Information Note #12” August 2011.

⁶⁴ Andy Hall, “Migration and Thailand: Policy, Perspectives and Challenges” in Jerrold Huguet and Aphichat Chamratrithirong (eds) *International Migration in Thailand 2011* (Bangkok: IOM 2011), pp. 17–38.

⁶⁵ IOM, “Migrant Information Note #5” April 2010. See also Andy Hall “A positive U-turn, but still no real long-term solution.”

but there is still room for these brokers as well as those assisting with the registration process to overcharge migrant workers who have little recourse to justice to enforce this rule. In some cases employers also overcharge their employees for registration.⁶⁶ Brokers also sometimes help migrants locate “paper” employers if their real employers refuse to register them and this transgression of the law creates additional opportunities for extortion.⁶⁷

The registration and Nationality Verification processes compromise the security of would-be asylum seekers in a number of ways; those individuals and families who were forcibly uprooted from their homes in Burma may end up without much needed protection in Thailand if they:

- Miss the narrow timeframe for registration;
- Lack the resources or do not have a Thai employer in a relevant industry benevolent or financially secure enough to successfully register employees;
- Succeed in registering, but need to quit and do not get written authorization first;
- Have an unlucky encounter with aggressive or suspicious security officials;
- Lose or have their registration documents confiscated;
- Have employers who abuse the limitations on registered migrant freedoms to impose substandard work conditions;
- Are not eligible for Nationality Verification because they are unrecognized in Burma.

The challenges involved in registration and Nationality Verification, and the room for exploitation in these processes, leave both registered and unregistered migrants without many of the safeguards of Thai and international law. Because of this, registered migrants appear to often be in the same boat as those who are unregistered when it comes to protection. However, the lack of quantitative or qualitative data comparing these groups with each other and with Thais leaves unclear who is better or worse off and in what ways, what the most salient

indicators of vulnerability are, why registration is attractive to some but not to others, and what the repercussions of not registering are for Mae Sot residents.

1.4 Mae Sot as a case study

As an important hub for economic activity and migration, a host to a population that is ethnically diverse, and because Mae Sot represents a microcosm of many of the challenges migrants face in Thailand, the town serves as logical location for this study.

Only four kilometers from the Thai-Myanmar Friendship Bridge, which crosses the Moei River and connects to the Burmese town of Myawaddy, Mae Sot lies adjacent to one of the most porous parts of the Thai-Burma border (see Map 1 below).

The Moei River is so narrow that individuals cross easily, wading, floating on inner-tubes, or ferried across by guides, depending on the season. Unknown numbers of Burmese migrants cross the border each day, many traveling back and forth for day labor, cross-border trade, or longer term stays in Thailand. As a result, while the most recent census states there are 118,107 people living in Mae Sot district (including registered migrants), it is not clear what percentage are migrants.⁶⁸

Recent research notes that there has long been cross-border movement between Mae Sot, which lies in Tak Province and border areas of Burma, particularly Myawaddy, in Karen State, Burma.⁶⁹ However, it is only in the last twenty to thirty years that Mae Sot has transformed from a localized zone of border trade set in a predominantly agricultural region to an industrial hub connected to far away centers of capital as the Thai Government has sought to relocate industry to border areas.⁷⁰

In the late 1990s, the primary imports from

66 Human Rights Watch, *From the Tiger to the Crocodile*, p. 76.

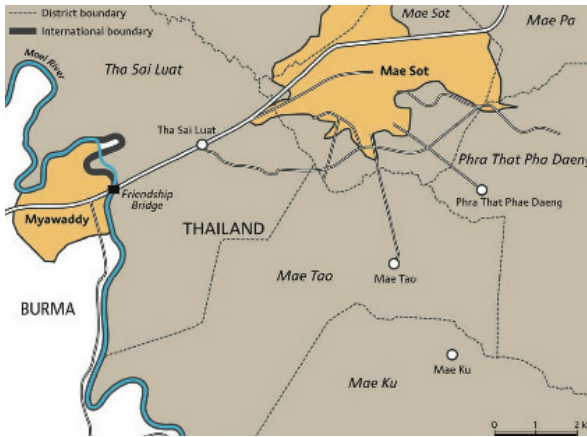
67 *Id.*

68 2010 Census, National Office for Statistics.

69 See for example Arnold, *Capital Expansion and Migrant Workers*; Pongsawat Pitch, *Border Partial Citizenship, Border Towns, and Thai-Myanmar Cross-Border Development: Case Studies at the Thai Border Towns* (University of California, Berkeley, Ph.D. dissertation 2007).

70 Chutathip Maneepong, “Regional policy thinking and industrial development in Thai border towns.” *Labor Management in Development Journal*. 2006, 6(4): 1-29.

Map 1: Mae Sot and the Thai-Burma border



Source: Human Rights Watch

Burma to Thailand were wood and gems and as one of the more developed border towns, much of this traffic—which is semi-legal or completely illegal—passed through Mae Sot.⁷¹ As of 2007, official statistics showed that USD \$360 million of trade passed through Mae Sot (imports and exports), while unofficial estimates are closer to \$1.5 billion.⁷² With investors receiving exemptions from paying taxes on imports, businesses, machinery, raw materials, and equipment, regional capital eagerly clustered in places like Mae Sot.⁷³

Key informant interviews in Dennis Arnold’s 2007 study suggested there were between 200 to 300 factories in Mae Sot as of 2007, a dramatic increase from the estimated 20–30 textile factories in the early 1990s.⁷⁴ Citing Ministry of Labor statistics, Maneepong (2006) reports that factories in Tak Province increased from 370 to 518 between 1993 and 2000.⁷⁵ The vast majority of workers at these factories are from Burma; Arnold estimates that “textile and garment factories employ between 60 and 80,000 (or more) Burmese migrant workers, in addition to over 100,000 Burmese who work in the area in agriculture, shops and restaurants, construction, domestic work and a number of other jobs.”⁷⁶ As noted in earlier sections, growing numbers of

71 Chuthatip Maneepong and CT Wu, “Comparative borderland developments in Thailand” *ASEAN Economic Bulletin*, 2004 21(2):135–166.

72 Sai Silp, “Mae Sot Metropolis Plan.” *The Irrawaddy*, 5 June 2007.

73 *Id.*

74 Arnold *Capital Expansion and Migrant Workers*.

75 Maneepong “Regional policy thinking and industrial development in Thai border towns,” p. 15.

76 Arnold *Capital Expansion and Migrant Workers*, p.47.

Burmese in Mae Sot factories correspond to push factors of war, government persecution, and various other forms of displacement.

Maneepong attributes Mae Sot’s development in part to Thailand’s stated goal of bolstering the economy in rural areas (though she notes the obvious contradiction that this development primarily leads to the employment of an exploitable migrant workforce).⁷⁷ Mae Sot plays a significant role in broader regional development as it represents Thailand’s westernmost point on what is known as the East–West Economic Corridor, part of a development plan for the Greater Mekong Subregion (MS).

Incorporating China’s Yunnan Province, Burma, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam, the GMS is quickly expanding its capacity for regional trade via transport routes that cut across borders and connect trade zones in these various countries.⁷⁸ The East–West Economic Corridor

Map 2: East-West economic corridor through Mae Sot



Source: Asian Development Bank

77 Maneepong “Regional policy thinking and industrial development in Thai border towns.”

78 Asian Development Bank, “Strategy and Action Plan for the Greater Mekong Subregion East–West Economic Corridor,” (Manila: Asian Development Bank 2011).

represents the first and only route connecting the Indian Ocean (the coast of Burma) and the South China Sea (the coast of Vietnam) and is part of ASEAN's and regional financial institutions' (like Asian Development Bank) efforts to better plug the GMS into the circuits of global trade.⁷⁹ As Map 2 above illustrates, Mae Sot, lies squarely on the Asia Highway and represents the gateway to Thailand and territories east.

As the town developed as an industrial hub and economic border zone, the emergence and maintenance of a flexible labor force brought with it the presence of numerous networks of exploitation, which often took on a transnational character.⁸⁰

In terms of wages, Mae Sot's designation as an economic border zone means a minimum wage lower than other parts of Thailand to enable greater competition with other low-paying locales in the region; as of 2011 workers were supposed to receive at least 162 Thai Baht per day (USD 5.30), but most received on average only 80 Baht (USD 2.70) per day.⁸¹ Migrant activists have cited numerous other abuses at the hands of employers, including withholding of pay completely, not being allowed to keep the originals of their ID or work permits, unsanitary conditions in their workplace, and sexual harassment, among other issues.⁸²

The Federation of Trade Unions-Burma and Robertson (2006) documented numerous cases of child labor in their research on Mae Sot for the International Labor Organization, reporting that more than 80% of their sample (313 child respondents) worked eleven and twelve hour days six to seven days a week.⁸³ In their research, Human Rights Watch shared accounts from

migrant workers describing financial relationships between Thai immigration police based in Mae Sot and border patrol and Burmese authorities and militia across the Moei River, with all parties profiting from the deportation and subsequent extortion of migrants.⁸⁴ Workers in Mae Sot often go uncompensated for injuries incurred in dangerous workplaces, are not allowed to leave the grounds of their factory (or face arrest, extortion, and deportation), and many are in a state of semi-bonded labor as they pay agents for the cost of smuggling them from Burma to Thailand.⁸⁵ ■

79 Dennis Arnold and John Pickles, "Global Work, Surplus Labor, and the Precarious Economies of the Border" *Antipode*. 2011 43(3); Asian Development Bank. 2009. East-West Economic Corridor (EWEC) Strategy and Action Plan. Draft for consideration by the 15th GMS Ministerial Meeting, May. <http://www.adb.org/GMS/Economic-Corridors/EWEC-SAP.pdf> (last accessed 10 September 2010).

80 HRW *From the Tiger to the Crocodile*; FTUB and Robertson "Working Day and Night"; Arnold and Hewison "Exploitation in Global Supply Chains."

81 (Lwin 2010 [Irrawaddy Newspaper]).

82 HRW *From the Tiger to the Crocodile*; Arnold *Capital Expansion and Migrant Workers*; FTUB and Robertson 2006 "Working Day and Night."

83 FTUB and Robertson "Working Day and Night" p. 49. It is not clear if this sample was randomly selected.

84 HRW *From the Tiger to the Crocodile*.

85 *Id.*, see also Gjerdengen "Suffocation inside a cold-storage truck;" FTUB and Robertson "Working Day and Night."

PART 2: METHODS

This section is an abbreviated version of a more detailed methods section, which can be found in Annex 3. This study's findings come from both quantitative and qualitative methods. 772 individuals drawn from a stratified random sample of Mae Sot participated in a survey and fifty respondents participated in qualitative in-depth interviews. The study also makes use of nineteen key informant interviews. The preparation and implementation of these methods were conducted in such a way as to build as much as possible off of the expertise of community members and national and international staff of NGOs and UN agencies.

Sample design: Survey

The sample of 772 individuals is derived from the population of Mae Sot residents, including Thai nationals and Burmese migrants. The urban area of Mae Sot spans across the sub-districts of Mae Sot, Phra That Pha Daeng, Mae Pa, Mae Tao, and Tha Sai Luat, the district to the west of Mae Sot that abuts the border with Burma. To ensure a sample that would enable sufficient comparison between the Thai and Burmese migrant populations, this study's researchers generated a random sample stratified according to migrant density. This strategy has the capacity to illuminate migrant communities in areas previously thought to be low density and that had therefore been under-considered by civil society.

Sample design: Qualitative interviews

In addition to quantitative research, this study bases its findings off of fifty in-depth, semi-structured, qualitative interviews conducted with Thai and Burmese respondents. To supplement the quantitative research, it was important to have a sample representative of the Mae Sot population. For this reason, we relied on multiple entry points to construct a purposive sample that would enable comparisons such as: Burmese migrants and Thai nationals; documented migrants and undocumented migrants; forced migrants and voluntary migrants; and men and women. Entry points included:

a) *Community-based organization (CBO) networks:*

This is an ideal way to identify and recruit respondents who fall under the forced migrant category, as CBOs are often primary service providers for displaced people on the border. Relying on CBOs as entry points also increases a sense of trust and familiarity between respondent and interviewer, as it signifies moving from one trusted contact to another.

b) *Survey sample:* During the quantitative survey enumerators asked respondents if they were willing to do follow-up interviews and the qualitative team selected from among those who indicated their willingness.

Data collection

In total the research team interviewed 772 people throughout Mae Sot. Data collection took place between 1 February and 18 March 2011. The structured interview form used in this study was derived from earlier profiling exercises conducted by the Feinstein International Center and adapted to fit the context of Mae Sot, Thailand. Interviews typically took between thirty minutes and one hour with Burmese respondents and twenty to forty minutes with Thai nationals. This is because there are more questions that apply to migrants and not to Thais, e.g. those questions about respondents' migration history.

A qualitative research team carried out fifty interviews for this study. The team consisted of the FIC consultant, two interpreters (one who was also a co-researcher and fluent in English, Burmese, and S'gaw Karen and the other fluent in English, Thai, and S'gaw Karen), and a note taker/transcriber. Interviews typically lasted between forty-five minutes and two hours and questions covered a range of topics, which, like the survey, focused on livelihoods, access to healthcare and education, security, and access to justice in Mae Sot.

Researchers conducted interviews in a location of the respondent's choosing—usually in their home or workplace but not always in private.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data from this study was analyzed

using Stata. The research team analyzed qualitative data using Hyperresearch, a CAQDAS (Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software) program.

Limitations to the methods

As errors or limitations arose during the course of this study, the research team took note of them and determined the best strategy to diminish their negative impact. On a general level, each method used in this study has its own limitations. On the one hand, qualitative methods with small samples cannot generate findings representative of whole populations though their in-depth nature provides a more complex understanding regarding respondents' lives and perceptions. On the other hand, quantitative approaches enable population-wide assertions but lack the capacity to explore key issues in detail.⁸⁶

Perhaps the biggest limitation of the study is that it is not representative of the Mae Sot population in its entirety. In order to generate a sample of Mae Sot that would include an analyzable amount of migrants, it was necessary to create a random sample that was stratified according to areas believed to have a high density of migrant households. However, there are not accurate population figures for Mae Sot that include migrant households, and so it is not possible to re-weight the data, enabling extrapolation.

During the stage of data collection, interviewers encountered a challenge in accessing a representative sample because many prospective respondents were out working. To account for this, interviewers worked in shifts, with some interviewing until 7pm and on Sundays.

In addition, enumerators reported that certain questions in the survey engendered problematic responses. In particular, questions that asked respondents to imagine an unpleasant situation was often met with refusal to answer and such questions were eliminated to the extent possible after the pilot. Other questions proved to be too vague for respondents or seemed to convey slightly different meanings than was intended in the writing of the questionnaire. During the

analysis stage, the responses to such questions were often excluded as they did not provide accurate results.

Finally, this survey did not sufficiently sample to include respondents who not only work but live in factories. Employers often closely monitor "live-in" factory workers, and it proved difficult to find private locations to conduct interviews where respondents could feel free to speak candidly. While interviewers were able to conduct 24 interviews with "live-in" factory workers, these respondents were not randomly selected via the same process as other respondents. As a result, they are not included in the general analysis though some of their findings are presented. ■

⁸⁶ See for example Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber, *Mixed Methods: Merging Theory with Practice* (New York: Guilford Press, 2010), p. 3-9.

PART 3: A CROSS-SECTION OF MAE SOT'S RESIDENTS

Our sample consisted of 772 respondents, randomly selected within three strata: areas of Mae Sot with high, medium, and low density of migrants (see Annex 3: Methods). Due to the stratification the sample has a greater number of migrants than citizens of Thailand.⁸⁷ Fifty-eight percent of respondents were migrants and 41% were citizens of Thailand. An additional 24 respondents who were living and working in factories, as is typical of migrants in Mae Sot, were sampled non-randomly. This report details the response of the 772 randomly selected respondents and will be followed by additional analysis using the factory sub-set. The report also makes use of the fifty qualitative interviews.

3.1 Demographics

To better understand the experience of forced migrants in Mae Sot, we divided migrant respondents into undocumented and documented categories when reporting on the responses to the survey. We compare both of these categories to the experiences of Thai citizens. Given Thailand's complicated registration system and the multiple categories into which migrants may find themselves, we identified numerous status options (Annex 2). The final distribution of the sample is outlined in Table 1 below.

Undocumented migrants were those who were born in Burma and who identified as undocumented, with expired documentation, stateless, or with an informal card. In addition, we regarded those with various IDs or documents from UNHCR as undocumented because this is effectively how Thai authorities regard those migrants outside the camp with UNHCR cards or papers.⁸⁸ Of the sample, 274 respondents (35%) were undocumented migrants.

Documented migrants were those who were born in Burma and had a foreign passport with valid visa, a temporary passport from the Nationality Verification process, a work permit, registration, an ethnic minority card, or permanent residency. Of the sample, 180 respondents (23%) were documented migrants.

Thai citizens/native Thai residents were those who were born in Thailand, had Thai citizenship, and were either ethnically Thai or ethnically Karen. Of the sample, 318 respondents (41%) were Thai citizens. In this sample there were no ethnic Burmese born in Thailand who did not consider themselves to be migrants. The population of Thai citizens/native Thai residents includes Thai citizens who migrated from elsewhere in Thailand to Mae Sot.

Table 1: Distribution of sample

Sub-district	Undocumented		Documented		Thai citizens		Total	
	Freq	Perc	Freq	Perc	Freq	Perc	Freq	Perc
Mae Sot	158	36%	120	27%	162	37%	440	100%
Tha Sai Luat	18	55%	9	27%	6	18%	33	100%
Mae Pa	62	44%	30	21%	50	35%	142	100%
Mae Tao	10	15%	5	8%	50	77%	65	100%
Phra That Pha Daeng	25	27%	16	18%	50	55%	91	100%
Total	273	35%	180	23%	318	41%	771*	100%

*Though the full sample size for the survey is 772, there was one missing case in terms of sub-district

⁸⁷ It is possible that a majority migrant population is actually accurate for Mae Sot. While the official population of Mae Sot is approximately 118,000 key informant interviews suggest that the population may be as high as 250,000 with close to 200,000 migrants present.

⁸⁸ In 2007, the Thai Department of Provincial Affairs, with the support of UNHCR, issued ID cards to all registered camp residents, but as mentioned above, Burmese living in one of the nine official camps are not permitted to be outside the camp without official

permission. The UNHCR card does not provide migrants with protection outside the camp and many note that they leave their UNHCR card in the camp when they sneak out as they would have to pay police a higher bribe if they are caught with it and they may face problems if they are deported to Burma and authorities there find the ID. Similarly, the other UNHCR documents do not provide protection to migrants either as the Thai government ordered all asylum seekers into the camps a number of years ago and as such documents do not confer refugee status.

All respondents were born in either Burma or Thailand. Of those without documents, the majority said the reason they did not possess them was because they did not have enough money (39%), they were not willing to be registered (11%), or they were dependent on another person to help them (10%). A follow-up question asked those without registration how they would prefer to register if they did have an option. The largest percentage of respondents (45%, n=110) answered that they would prefer to register in Thailand with Thai authorities, as opposed to obtaining a temporary passport through the Nationality Verification scheme (15%, n=37) or traveling back to Burma to be reprocessed for entering Thailand through the Government to Government mechanism to import labor (16%, n=39).

The sample for this study leaned heavily towards women, who made up 67% of respondents. This may reflect the highly feminized labor force in the urban area of Mae Sot, with many women working in factories. It may also be a limitation to the study, as mentioned above, in that the demanding work schedules of both migrants and Thai nationals meant that interviewers for this study often encountered those working at home or those left at home as caretakers. Annex 2 shows the gender distribution according to legal status. It is notable that a much higher percentage of women are in the undocumented category than the documented category. This resonates with earlier research, which suggested that population statistics on migrants might be skewed because of the likelihood that many female members of households remain undocumented and would thus be likely avoid being counted.⁸⁹ Nevertheless, our study does not show a male majority in the documented category; there are still 9% more women than men in this category.

The largest proportion of respondents fell within the 31-45 years old group (278 respondents / 36%), while 212 were between 46 and 50 (28%), 107 were 61 and above (14%), and 172 respondents were between 17 and 30

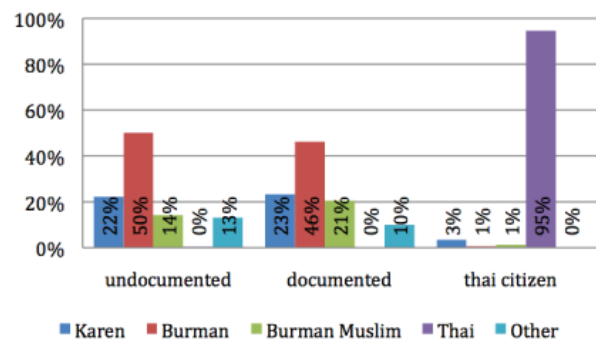
(22%); five respondents were 17 and under (the youngest respondent was 15).⁹⁰

Additionally, 79% of respondents were married, 8% were single, 7% were divorced, and 6% were widowed. 91% of those married were living with their spouses. There were no significant differences between groups when looking at gender, marriage, or living with a spouse.

Burman (29%, n=222) and Thai (38%, n=300) made up a majority of this sample's ethnicities. Among respondents who identified as Karen (15%, n=114), slightly more were Pwo Karen than S'gaw Karen. The term "Burman Muslim" (10%, n=80) refers to the way Muslim respondents self-identified as ethnically distinct; during the training and adaptation of the profiling tool, the research team suggested this be included as a distinct category. Other respondents (7%, n=55) consisted of a number of groups: Shan, Pa-O, Mon, Rakhine, Chin, Bangladeshi, Chinese, and Indian.

Chart 1 below shows how ethnicity breaks down in terms of legal status. It is notable that there are a higher percentage of Burman Muslims who are documented than undocumented as some from this community were actually born in Mae Sot or elsewhere in Thailand, but have not been recognized as Thai residents by government officials.

Chart 1: Ethnicity by legal status



As shown, 95% of Thai citizens were ethnically Thai and the remaining 5% were Karen, Burman, or Burman Muslim. The majority of both undocumented and documented migrants were Karen, Burman, or Burman Muslim.

⁸⁹ Sciortino and Punpuing *International Migration in Thailand 2009*, pp. 61-62

⁹⁰ Despite the fact that this study aimed to interview only those 18 or older, due to sampling error the research team conducted interviews with five individuals below this threshold.

Qualitative respondents:

Out of the fifty qualitative respondents, 28 were women (56%). Seventeen respondents (34%) were between the ages of 18 and 30 years old, 23 (46%) were between 31 and 45 years old, 7 (14%) were between 46 and 60 years old, and 3 respondents (6%) were 61 or older.

Eleven respondents (22%) identified as Thai, and among the other respondents a majority were Burman while others were Pwo Karen, S'gaw Karen, Mon, Muslim, Hindi, Rakhine, and Chin.

Among the migrant population, 24 (48%) did not have any sort of registration. Ten respondents

reported that they had work permits, one had a "10 year" card, and one had an ID valid for 5 years. Two respondents were not sure of their status (for example, one reported having an ID that limited her to the boundaries of the town of Mae Sot and had the information of the factory where she worked on it).

3.2 Migration characteristics

Of our 772 respondents, 576 answered questions about migration (numerous Thais answered questions about migration since these questions probed whether individuals were born in Mae Sot or came from elsewhere). 273 were

Map 3: Migrant respondents' area of origin in Burma



Adapted from Karen Human Rights Group 2005 ©

undocumented migrants, 180 were documented migrants, and 123 were Thai citizens. Results for this section are reported as a percentage of those who migrated to Mae Sot.

Of both documented and undocumented migrants, 85% had lived in Burma just prior to coming to Mae Sot. Fourteen percent had lived elsewhere in Thailand. Of Thai migrants, 95% had previously lived elsewhere in Thailand and 4% had lived in Burma. The latter number should be interpreted as a mix of different ethnic groups who have Thai nationality, including Burman, Muslim, and Karen individuals.

Among undocumented and documented migrants, the average respondent arrived in 2001, with the earliest arrival in 1963 and the most recent in 2011. Twenty-five percent arrived before 1996, 25% between 1996 and 2003, and an additional 25% between 2007 and 2011. Just 5% of Burmese migrants arrived in Mae Sot in the year preceding the survey, in 2010.

Interviewers asked migrants where they were living before coming to Mae Sot, their reasons for leaving that place, whether they had to abandon assets, and what the primary occupation of the household was in that place. The darker circles in Map 3 illustrate the areas with the larger percentages of migrants leaving from Eastern Burma for Mae Sot.⁹¹

Because of a possible response bias (i.e. respondents who may not wish to reveal the true reasons behind their departure or conversely who may want to construct themselves as refugees), this study does not rely on such self-reported information to make conclusions about whether migrants meet refugee criteria. However, responses to these questions are important for what they reveal about what migrants wanted to convey to interviewers about their background and identities. Sixty-seven

percent of undocumented migrants and 72% of those with documents reported coming to Mae Sot for economic reasons; because they aspired to find work in Mae Sot or because they could not find work or make ends meet at home.

If respondents reported that their reason for coming to Mae Sot was economic, interviewers followed up with additional questions requesting that respondents explain the most salient factors that affected their livelihoods in their place of origin.⁹² Over 350 respondents (62% of those answering questions about migration) reported coming to Mae Sot for economic reasons and of these 72% reiterated in the follow up that it was economic reasons that brought them to Mae Sot (e.g. 9% reported not being able to find work in Burma; 4% said that there were insufficient markets to sell their goods; 33% responded that there were no factors affecting their livelihood in Burma, they just wanted to earn a higher income). (See Annex 2 for related chart).

Among migrants, 7% of those without and 11% of those with documents reported coming to Mae Sot for conflict or persecution-related reasons. This includes conflict or violence, forced labor or portering, and persecution based on one's religion, political opinion, membership in a social group, or ethnicity/nationality. This is 9% of the whole sample and 14% of migrant respondents. Of those who reported conflict or persecution-related motivations for migration, 32% (n=21) were Burman, 28% (n=18) were Karen (both S'gaw and Pwo), 28% (n=18) were Burmese Muslim, and 12% were Mon, R'hakine, Chin, or Indian (see Annex 2 for chart).

The boundary between forced displacement and voluntary migration is anything but clear in this context, as it is in many others.⁹³ Beyond military campaigns or sustained persecution of minorities and political activists, the policies of the SPDC regarding development and the economy result in the displacement of tens of thousands. Qualitative interviews revealed the complexity of measuring forced migration in Mae Sot:

91 The percentages should not be interpreted as indicative of overall emigration from Burma. It is not surprising that small percentages of migrants come from other parts of Burma to Mae Sot as they are more likely to migrate elsewhere. Nevertheless, it is revealing about the pull and push factors of migration that there are individuals from the far western reaches of Burma that migrate to Mae Sot.

92 The decision to probe further with respondents who report coming to Thailand because of economic opportunity comes from key information expertise and previous research experience, such as Green et al. "Invisible in Thailand."

93 Those concerned with refugee protection have increasingly reported mixed flows in which asylum seekers are often among the population of irregular migrants. See for example Erika Feller "Asylum, Migration, and Refugee Protection: Realities, Myths and the Promise of Things to Come." *International Journal of Refugee Law* (18)3-4: 509-536.

94 Lakh refers to 100,000 units.

The SPDC and DKBA troops take the land from the villagers and they sell it back to other people. Some of the villagers have to relocate to other places because the SPDC wants to build the road in that place. Some people can buy back their land but some cannot. In the rural areas, many villages have to relocate to another place when the SPDC builds the road. Sometime, other people buy the land from SPDC and sell it back to the owner. For example, the SPDC took the land from the villager that was worth 10 Lakh (US\$153,604) and sell it back to other people for 2 Lakh.⁹⁴ (55 year-old Burmese man Mae Sot).

This excerpt reflects a systematic removal of particular groups or villages, replacing them with others. That this respondent is Muslim should not be surprising given the SPDC's long-standing record of persecution of this minority.⁹⁵ Even responses about failed businesses or agriculture-related problems may actually be a product of conflict or persecution in Eastern Burma:

We have farms in Burma but sometimes we do not have a chance to work in our farms. Sometimes, when they (SPDC soldiers) are there, we are not allowed to go out to work in our farms. The crops are ripening in our farms and it's time to harvest. We have to let cows eat our crops as we could not go out to gather our crops. We have to come work in Thailand and send back money for the fee for portering. (BR28, 30-40 year-old woman, Mae Sot).

The fact that Burmese in Mae Sot—and elsewhere in Thailand—often cite economic reasons for their migration when their motives so often have roots in conflict or conflict-related issues reflects the importance of follow-up questions when it comes to measuring displacement, through the type of extended inquiry that takes place during in-depth interviews.

The pre-migration profile of migrants in Mae Sot reveals that close to half of documented and undocumented migrants and Thais who migrated to Mae Sot come from urban areas and that the majority of each group knew somebody

in Mae Sot before coming. Not surprisingly, Thais identifying as migrants were significantly less likely to have had to abandon assets when leaving for Mae Sot than both documented and undocumented migrants. Respondents had abandoned assets if the items were lost to them now. Of those who abandoned assets, the majority could not reclaim them because they did not have proof of ownership, they had been confiscated by the military, or they had been destroyed due to environmental factors.

Of our 318 Thai respondents, 114 were migrants themselves (the remaining nine Thais who answered this section responded on behalf of their families). Thai migrants:

- Fell in the highest income bracket: 81% made above \$5 a day and 16% made between \$1 and \$5 a day. Only 4% made less than \$1 a day. (Compared to 9% undocumented and 20% documented migrants who make more than \$5 a day; 47% undocumented and 31% documented who make between \$1 and \$5 a day; and 1% of both groups who make less than \$1 per day).
- Had full-time employment: 72% were employed full time. (Compared to 30% of documented and 17% of undocumented households).
- Were more likely to have good housing: 91% had good housing. (Compared to 60% of documented and 50% of undocumented households).
- Came to Mae Sot for education, work, or family: 43% came for family or education, and 36% came for economic reasons. ■

⁹⁵ See Karen Human Rights Group, *Easy Target: The Persecution of Muslims in Burma*. May, 2002.

PART 4: MEASURING VULNERABILITY AND RESILIENCE

In order to measure the difference in circumstances between documented and undocumented migrants and Thai citizens living in Mae Sot, this report assesses vulnerability and resiliency on an indexed scale that we constructed conceptually and which is supported statistically.⁹⁶ We constructed the Urban Population Vulnerability Index, which groups together variables of economic and physical security that indicate levels of vulnerability.

The four categories that make up this index are:

- Employment security
- Household security
- Community security
- Assets & housing

The indicators/variable in each category were taken from our surveys in each of our case studies. We identified those variables that have a clear indication of vulnerability. For example, a social service agency or humanitarian organization can easily identify what is “good housing” vs. “bad housing.” Or, having experienced assault indicates greater vulnerability than not having experienced assault. We made each of the variables binomial, i.e. their values were either “vulnerable” or “not vulnerable.”

To check our conceptual model we ran a factor analysis on several of the possible variables we identified for our conceptual framework. We selected twelve variables for the final model. The factor analysis allowed us to identify groups of inter-related variables by exploring the variability among selected observed variables and estimating how much of this variability is due to a joint variation in response to some unobserved variables.⁹⁷

The result was an identification of four categories, or factors, made up of 2–4 variables

with the lowest degree of variability amongst themselves, which fit with our conceptual model. For each category, we assigned equal weights to the individual variable components creating four indexes each ranging between 0 and 1 (least to most vulnerable). The factor analysis reveals that the variables break into the categories that we conceptually designed. However, it is important to note that the analysis does not comment on the strength of the relationship of these variables to each other.

While the general index is limited to twelve variables across four categories, in Mae Sot we were able to add a number of additional variables that help articulate vulnerability and resilience. Keeping the same categories, the supplemental variables are those that are context-specific; that is, in the case of Mae Sot we can identify them as indicators of vulnerability while that might not be the case elsewhere. The index for Mae Sot appears below:

Category 1: Community Security & Access to Justice

- Safe access to justice
- Access to police
- Perceived neighborhood safety

Category 2: Household/Physical Security

- Experienced assault
- Experienced theft
- Experienced harassment
- Evicted

Category 3: Employment Security

- Dependency-income ratio
- Employment status
- Employer-employee vulnerability

Category 4: Assets & housing

- Assets
- Housing materials

96 Much research points to the importance of assessing vulnerability and resilience as a means to reduce risk for populations on the margins, such as refugees and migrants. Identifying factors that increase vulnerability or strengthen the capacity to be resilient can help identify new areas where civil society or government can intervene to work with communities to increase their access to basic needs and to safeguard the protection of their basic rights. See for some examples, Jorn Birkmann “Measuring vulnerability to promote disaster resilient societies: Conceptual frameworks and

definitions,” in Jorn Birkmann, ed. *Measuring Vulnerability to Natural Hazards: Towards Disaster Resilient Societies* (Tokyo: United Nations University, 2006); Caroline Moser “The Asset vulnerability framework: reassessing urban poverty reduction strategies,” *World Development*, 26(1) January 1998: 1-19.

97 We used the Kaiser criterion (dropped any factor with an eigenvalue below 1.0) and an orthogonal varimax rotation of the factor axes to maximize the variance in order to make it easier to identify each of variables in a single factor.

- Type of housing
- Housing location
- Having own latrine
- Proof of right to residency in house

For a more detailed explanation of how these indicators are operationalized and scored, see Annex 1.⁹⁸ Individually, each of these factors is useful for considering gaps in services for Thai residents of Mae Sot and for migrants. They are also important on their own as they highlight areas for further inquiry, or measures/outcomes to evaluate the program goals of local, state, or international agencies coordinating assistance and social services. Together, these indicators help create a single measure of economic stability, resiliency, and vulnerability for Mae Sot residents for the purpose of comparison.

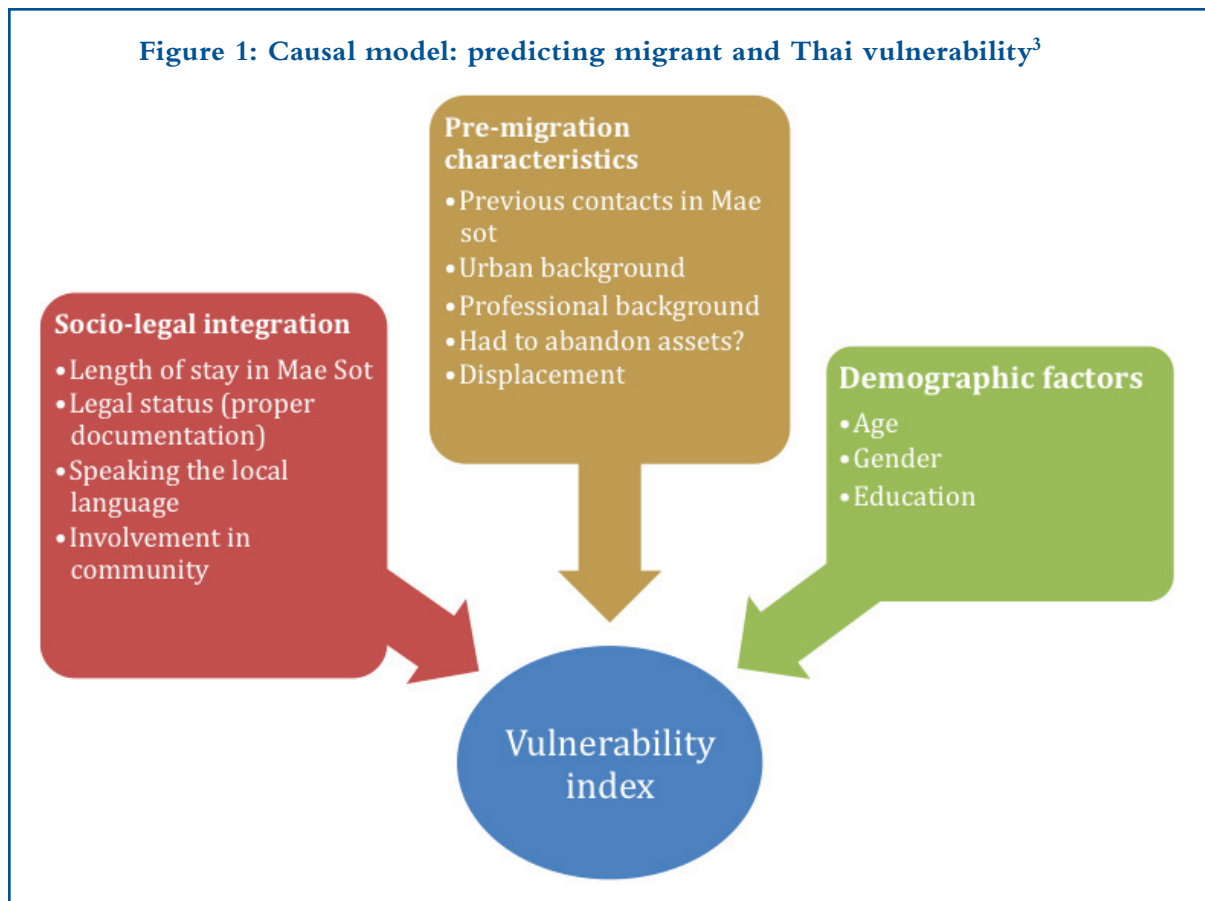
With a measure of vulnerability for residents of Mae Sot, we then introduced a number of

predictors of vulnerability and tested their statistical significance across the categories of documented, undocumented, and Thai citizens. Figure 1 below illustrates this process.

This model suggests hypotheses such as “The longer one stays in Mae Sot, the less vulnerable they are”; “A person who has legal status is less likely to be vulnerable”; and “Those who had urban lifestyles in Burma are less likely to be vulnerable.” The analysis of these hypotheses appears in subsequent sections below.

4.1 Mae Sot’s vulnerability index: Overview

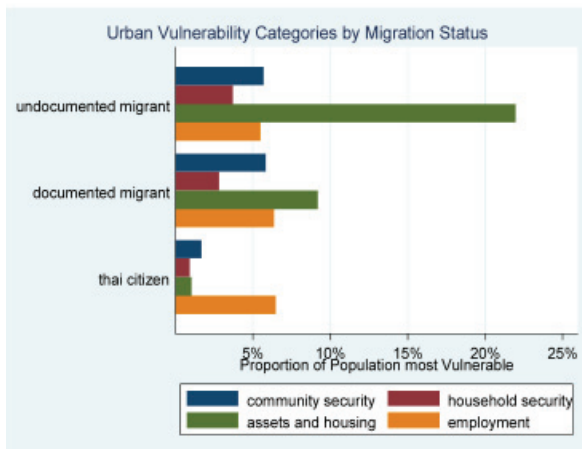
When applying the Mae Sot data to this index, significant differences emerge between documented migrants, undocumented migrants, and Thai citizens. Among the 25% most vulnerable in Mae Sot, both undocumented and documented migrants are at greater risk when it



⁹⁸ There are certainly a number of variables that are indicative of vulnerability or resilience and that were in the survey but that we did not include in this index, such as, for example, income levels or remittances. Some of the reasons such variables did not make it into the index include: lacking sufficient responses, they do not fit

into the index statistically; or by themselves they are not clear indicators of vulnerability (particularly where it was unclear how a given response to a question on its own indicates being more or less vulnerable).

Chart 2: The 25% most vulnerable

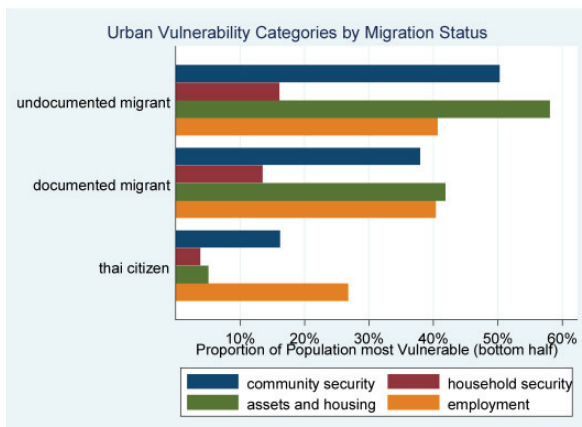


comes to their sense of community security and undocumented migrants are more vulnerable in terms of their household security.

The biggest difference among the most vulnerable, however, emerges in terms of assets and housing. Twenty-two percent of undocumented migrants fall into the “most vulnerable” category in terms of assets and housing, compared with just 9% of documented migrants and only 1% of Thai citizens. As Chart 2 shows, undocumented migrants are more than twice as vulnerable in terms of housing and assets. This means that undocumented migrants are more likely to live in inferior quality and unequipped housing in unsafe areas; are at higher risk of being forced to move as fewer can verify their right to live where they do; and possess fewer assets, including those that are sellable and/or productive.

Among the 25% most vulnerable in Mae Sot, there is little difference when it comes to

Chart 3: The 50% most vulnerable



employment, but when one broadens the lens to look at the 50% most vulnerable, documented and undocumented migrants are significantly more at risk in terms of employment than Thai citizens, as shown in Chart 3. Besides employment, in the bottom half, there is a consistent pattern for the categories of community security, household security, and assets and housing, with undocumented migrants significantly more vulnerable than documented migrants, who are more vulnerable than Thai citizens. Only when it comes to employment do we see that both documented and undocumented migrants are similar in their level of vulnerability.

4.2 Applying the causal model

With figures describing who in Mae Sot is more at risk of harm than others, it is important to look into what factors can affect that vulnerability, or predict it. To analyze this, we conducted binomial regression to measure the significance of relationships between predictor variables and the independent variables of the index categories. Statistical significance here would mean that a predictor variable does affect the vulnerability score (either positively or negatively).

As the analysis demonstrates, some of the independent variables in the causal model proved to be better predictors than others. Looking at Table 2, it is clear that across the board, socio-legal integration is the strongest set of predictors for vulnerability. In particular, having legal status is a significant predictor across all categories; perhaps not surprisingly, having no legal status in Thailand makes one more vulnerable. The less vulnerable one is in terms of legal status, the less vulnerable one is in terms of his or her accumulation of sellable and productive assets and his or her housing (including the stability that comes from having the right to reside in one’s dwelling). Similarly, legal status can predict employment vulnerability and whether one feels protected from physical abuse, theft, or harassment by authorities. The variable “Time in Mae Sot” is also a strong predictor across all of the index categories; the longer one is in Mae Sot, the less vulnerable one is likely to be.

Being able to speak Thai diminishes vulnerability in terms of community security, household security, and assets and housing. Of all

Table 2: Significant predictors of vulnerability

Predictor	Category, significance, and relevant R-Square values			
	Community security	Household security	Employment	Assets & housing
Pre-Migration				
Previous contacts in MS				** R-Square=.29
Urban background				R-Square=.31
Professional background				R-Square=.30
Had to abandon assets		*		R-Square=.29
Displaced			*	R-Square=.42
Socio-legal integration				
Legal status	*	*	**	**R-Square=.43
Knows local language	**	*		*R-Square=.43
Length of time in Mae Sot	*	*	*	*R-Square=.43
Involvement in community				*R-Square=.44
Demographics				
Age			*	*
Education level			*	*
Gender				

* Significant at the $p < 0.05$ level

** Significant at the $p < 0.10$ level

respondents, 47% spoke Burmese as a first language at home, 42% spoke Thai, and 8% spoke S’gaw Karen or Pwo Karen. Thus, a number of those who identified as Karen did not speak either Pwo or S’gaw dialects as their first language—most spoke Burmese—and a 3% of respondents who did not identify as Thai ethnically spoke Thai as their first language.

When looking at the strength of these statistically significant relationships, we relied on the R-square measure of predictive power to assess the amount of change in dependent variables accounted for by the predictors listed above. As a ratio measure, the closer R-square is to 1, the more predictive power the independent variable has. Any R-square over 0.25 indicates that the variable in question is a reasonable predictor; an R-square of 0.5 or higher suggests very high predictive power. Any R-square value below this does not indicate that the predictor variable cannot be used to understand changes in the dependent variable, but that it may only account for a small percentage of those changes and that it must be considered in conjunction with other predictors.

In this study, pre-migration characteristics account for around 30% of the variance in the

assets and housing index category (R-square values of 0.3) and socio-legal integration variables account for around 40–45% of the variance (R-square values of 0.4–0.45). This suggests a very strong predictive power for variables such as “had previous contacts in Mae Sot”, “from an urban background,” “displaced,” “legal status,” and “ability to speak Thai,” when it comes to predicting one’s vulnerability and resilience in terms of assets and housing.

While education is an important variable for predicting vulnerability in any context, in Mae Sot it is an issue that intersects with Burmese integration—or a lack thereof—into Thai society and the distribution of international aid. There are 78 schools in the Mae Sot area that target the migrant community and operate outside of the RTG system, though with limited RTG recognition. These include both primary and secondary schools and many operate with financial support from the international community. Despite the number of migrant schools, significant differences exist between the numbers of migrant children in school as compared with Thai children. Only 70% of school-age children from undocumented families were attending school at the time of the survey, compared to 74% of children from documented

households, and 93% from Thai households. Undocumented migrants were more likely than documented migrants or Thais to report that their children were not in school because “children must work.” Just under 27% (n=14) of undocumented households with school-age children not attending school reported this reason, compared to 6% of documented migrants and 4% of Thais.

Qualitative interviews revealed that barriers to education in Mae Sot include high costs (mostly hidden costs such as uniform fees, the cost of food, and transportation), lack of security (making trips to and from school difficult), and the requirement of some schools, including Thai schools, for what respondents called “recommendations” in order to gain entry into schools (letters vouching for students).

In general, undocumented migrant respondents had received significantly less education; 42% reported that they did not attend or did not finish primary school, compared to 32% of documented households and 14% of Thai households (see Annex 2 for additional statistics on education). For migrants living in poverty in Burma and then traveling with very limited resources, education is often limited, frequently disrupted, sometimes for years at a time.

One’s gender does not significantly affect one’s vulnerability for this sample in Mae Sot. There may be factors that make men more vulnerable and others that affect women to a larger extent in contexts of displacement in urban areas.⁹⁹

Readers may note that “aid” or “assistance” is not a predictor for vulnerability in this study. This is simply because for migrants in Mae Sot, aid often comes in the form of education programs, access to healthcare, and other key social services. There is little direct dispersal of cash or supplies to migrants in Mae Sot and migrants often conceive of much of the education, protection, or health related assistance less as aid and more as a social service. Thus, in this study, we discuss aid in sections on healthcare and education, but it is not in and of itself a predictor of vulnerability.

In order to develop a clearer sense of how the

⁹⁹ See for example Karen Jacobsen “Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Urban Areas: A Livelihoods Perspective,” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 16(3) September 2006: 273-286.

undocumented, documented migrants, and Thais differ from one another in terms of the indexed variables and others that are relevant, the following sections break down each of the four components of vulnerability for a more detailed view.

4.3 Community Security & Access to Justice

As a component of the vulnerability index, community security and access to justice relates to the perceptions of Mae Sot residents about their neighborhood and also about their perceived ability to access basic rights and to officially redress some of the problems they may encounter.

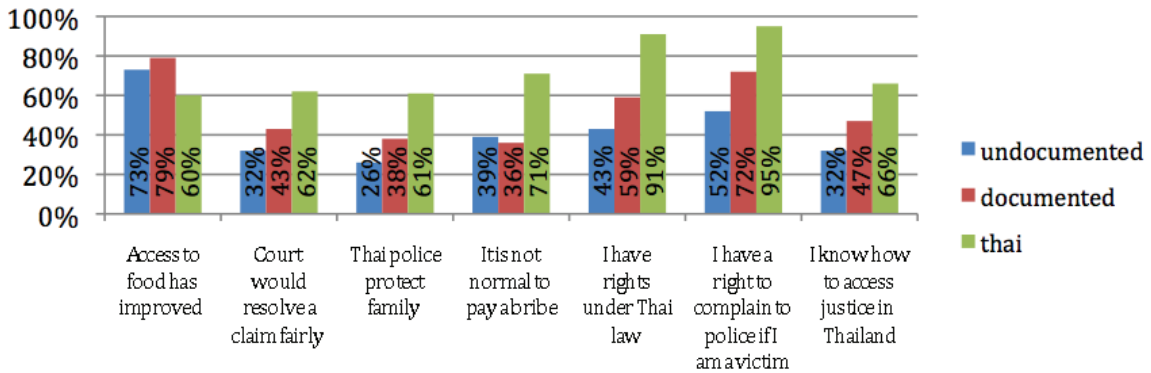
In Mae Sot, there are major differences between undocumented migrants, those with legal status, and Thai citizens when it comes to this category. Undocumented migrants are significantly more likely to feel unsafe in their neighborhood than documented migrants, who in turn, are significantly more likely to feel unsafe than Thai citizens. While 32% of undocumented migrants feel unsafe, only 23% of those with documents, and 5% of Thai citizens feel this way.

Nearly twice the percentage (39% vs. 21%) of undocumented migrants compared to those documented responded that they do not have the right to complain to the police if they were the victim of a crime. Only 2% of Thai citizens felt this way. These differences are all statistically significant.

Less than half of undocumented migrants feel they know how to safely access justice in Thailand, compared to close to 60% of documented migrants and 88% of Thai citizens. These differences are also significant.

Chart 4 shows additional perceptions among respondents regarding their rights and their experience in Mae Sot. For each topic, Thai citizens exert significantly stronger faith in the Thai legal system and in Thai officials. Regarding faith in the court system, Thai police, and the regularity of extortion, documented migrants do not differ greatly in their perception from those without documents. However when it comes to asserting a right to complain to the police or the knowledge of how to find justice in Thailand, these differences are significant.

Chart 4: Perception of rights in Mae Sot



Discussing their answers to questions in the survey about problems experienced in the last two years, nearly 52% (n=77) of those who answered this question said they did not contact or report to anybody to solve their dilemma, and among those who felt their problem went unresolved (160 respondents answered this question), the two reasons most frequently cited for this were: (1) Did not know what to do (20%, n=32) and (2) Did not have enough money (16%, n=26).

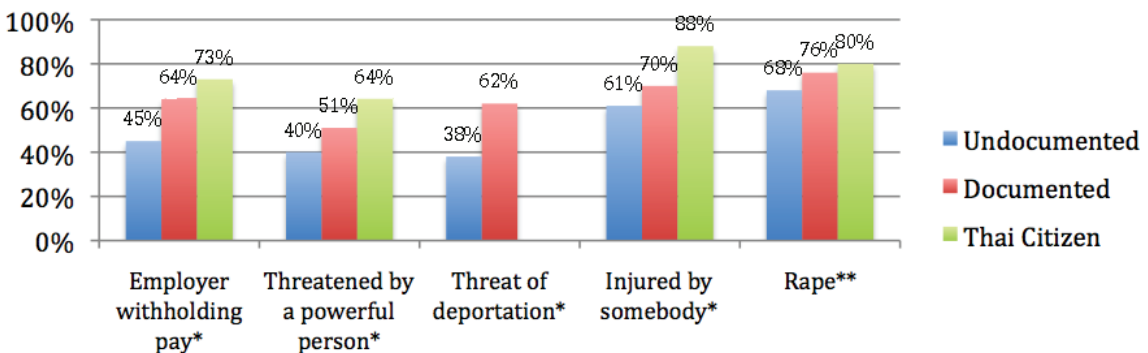
Interviewers asked respondents a series of hypothetical questions to gauge their perception of how possible it would be for them to rely on their own resources and contacts to solve a series of dilemmas. As Chart 5 shows, listing the hypothetical problem on the horizontal axis, undocumented migrants were consistently less confident that they would be able to solve serious problems. In all situations, besides rape,

undocumented migrants were significantly less likely to feel confident that they could solve the hypothetical problem (undocumented migrants' perceived likelihood to be able to solve a problem involving rape is significant at the $p < 0.10$ level, but not at the $p < 0.05$ level).

Qualitative interviews further illuminate the issue of community security and access to justice by bringing a more nuanced understanding of the situation. While the survey examines in particular the official aspects of community security, in-depth interviews reveal that many of the mechanisms in place to maintain order on the community level are informal:

In this community, apart from social and economic problems, the chief of this village will ask the Burmese people who live here a long time to solve the problems between the Burmese people, like

Chart 5: Likelihood of being able to solve problem



*Significant at the $p < 0.05$ level

**Significant at the $p < 0.1$ level

fighting with each other in the community. For example, you are the chief of this village and if I have a fight with another person, you will give advice to the Burmese people who live here for a long time about how to solve the problem and how to give punishment. If the problem is big and if they cannot handle it then they will call the police to solve the problem. (42 year-old Burmese man, Phra That Pha Daeng).

Such village-level strategies are commonplace in Thailand, for migrants and Thai citizens alike.¹⁰⁰ In some Burmese communities, Thai and Burmese residents found protection from local Thai initiatives. In the example below, a 22 year-old Burmese woman in Mae Sot recalled recent gang violence that left one Burmese community member badly wounded. In response:

The Thai people in our community formed a group and they provide the security for special occasions like festivals. So, the gangsters don't have a chance to make problems for the people...[The group] is not the police, but they are a group of people from the community. The police ask some of the people from the different area to volunteer in the group to provide security in the community. They wear pink shirts and if we have any festivals in our area, they sit and wait on the top of the street until morning for security. People call them the Let Wah group.

In this case, the *Let Wah*, also known as *Kyaw Let Wah*—a Burmese moniker for the Thai *Or Por Por Ror* Volunteer Civil Defense group—mobilizes to deal with external threats to community security (the Volunteer Civil Defense group is an official Thai agency made up of villagers who organize to protect their neighborhood, usually from natural disasters). In other communities, Burmese groups provided some level of security and authority. In one semi-rural village in Mae Pa, a 38 year-old woman in Mae Pa explained how her local Burmese security group was actually part of a much bigger, transnational network:

If we have any problems, we have the Karen group...The Karen group has been formed by KNU [Karen National Union]. There are many Burmese people here so if there is any problem occurring

among Burmese people, they come and solve the problem. They are the Karen people who migrated from Burma. They told the Burmese people like, "you should live peacefully while you're in another country and don't fight with each other."

Protection service provided by CBOs was a very common theme during qualitative interviews. Organizations in Mae Sot help migrants solve disputes, file complaints against workplace abuse, offer shelters for victims of gender-based violence, and operate health clinics. They shuttle undocumented migrants in "protected" vehicles and negotiate with police on migrants' behalf to secure their release from detention. This vast network of services reaches many in the broader Mae Sot community, though perhaps most undocumented migrants have only their own personal networks of neighbors, friends, and family on which to rely in working to create a secure community (the survey noted that less than 10% of the migrants there received legal protection or information about protection). For some migrants in Mae Sot, the protection they receive can serve as a substitute for legal status that they do not have:

There is a group, which I have been to before. I have to pay 250 Baht a month and they give us an ID card. It is a kind of evidence and in the card it mentioned that I live according to the Thai law. If the police ask me, I can show this card to them and they will not arrest me. (42 year-old man Phra That Pha Daeng).

Such protection is often essential, especially for those without documents who hesitate to show themselves to Thai officials. But it is also often only semi-effective because of its informality; CBOs can often only offer security to their beneficiaries if they have an informal agreement with Thai security officials.

Thai respondents were not, for the most part, very critical of their police or local authorities. Nevertheless, some recalled experiences that put into doubt any sense of having access to justice. When discussing her hope of resolving through the court system a dispute, a 39 year-old Thai woman explained:

I don't feel I will get justice. If you don't have very good evidence or witnesses then forget it—even with

¹⁰⁰ In Thailand, district offices can designate village heads as official mediators of low-level community disputes, for example related to monetary conflicts. With serious crimes, however, village heads must refer the case to police.

the police—they won't help you. For example, if you have their voice, a picture, and you pay a little money, the work will go smoothly. For example if somebody comes and steals my money I will call the police and they may not come until the end of the day and you may not get anything. The first time somebody stole 20,000 THB and the second time 30,000 THB. The police found fingerprints but they couldn't do anything. My slogan is: "protect myself, save myself, take care of myself."(TR11 39 year-old woman, Mae Sot).

While this respondent's complaint is both about the inefficiency and corruption of local police, the survey and qualitative interviews in general point to less access for migrants to formal channels within the legal system to find recourse for injustice. As an alternative, migrants are able to rely on certain groups identifying as community-based organizations working to "bring justice to be equal," in the words of the director of one such Burmese CBO interviewed for this study. Sometimes these are social service CBOs that administer justice in an informal capacity, just as they provide protection to migrants informally. Other CBOs, like the one quoted above, function more as a source of vigilante justice. As the director of one such organization explains below, his group is motivated by the need to provide adequate access to justice for the Burmese migrant communities in and around Mae Sot, something that is often not available, especially to those without documents:

If we see a problem between villagers and Burmese, then we must inform the village head and get them to deal with the issue without the police because most people don't speak Thai and don't have documents. If it goes to the police, then it will go to the court and this won't be good for Burmese people.

In a sense, this CBO strives to achieve justice on behalf of Burmese migrants in Mae Sot while also ensuring that those migrants—especially those who are undocumented—remain protected from Thai authorities who may cause additional problems. Local dispute resolution or security groups do not always handle all cases; some issues—usually those of a more serious nature—get referred to the police and the local court, sometimes as a follow-up to the verdict issued by informal mediators or adjudicators. During

in-depth interviews, numerous respondents (both Thai and Burmese) noted that most serious crimes must be handled beyond the village level. However, the CBO quoted above, which acts as a vigilante arbiter, reported solving a rape case on their own without the involvement of Thai authorities. By sharing an example, the director of this organization outlined his method of sentencing and enforcement:

In one case, one Burmese man was beaten and bloody. We said to the other one, "you must pay his medical bill and he can't work for seven days so... you must pay the wages." If he doesn't, we can say, "So first you will be arrested and put in jail and have to answer many questions and then to get out, you have to pay much more money. Can you pay that? If not, the next step is court and the third step is prison. Do you want to go? No? So you must pay now."

Proposing an informal tribunal to determine guilt as a means of protection, but then threatening to call the police if the convicted party refuses to pay, amounts to little more than extortion and leaves undocumented migrants susceptible to the predation of multiple stakeholders. When it comes to neighborhood safety and security, being in Thailand without registration makes undocumented migrants a great deal more vulnerable than those with documents even when it comes to those determined to provide migrants with informal protection.

4.3.1 Community interdependence

An additional measure of community security not included in the index includes a sense of solidarity and interdependence among community members. While "community involvement" constitutes one of the variables that is part of the Community Security index category, it is useful to unpack it to look at one of its components in greater detail. According to the survey, only 4% and 5% of undocumented and documented migrants, respectively, reported belonging to a credit and savings association. This contrasts to 43% of Thai respondents who reported that they belong to such groups. During qualitative interviews, Thais indicated that these associations—some village initiatives and others more top down government-instigated

programs—allowed community members to have a financial safety net crucial to their livelihood. But, even when Thais and Burmese live together, these savings and credit associations are not for everybody, as outlined by one Thai respondent:

The Burmese and Karen cannot be part of it because they have no documents here and no house number and because you cannot trust them. Like most people in the association, we know each other and we've all been here for a long time and we can know clearly what they are doing with the money—well for the migrants, they just stay here a short time and then move on.

Despite such low numbers of Burmese belonging to savings and credit groups, qualitative interviews reveal an extensive network of loans and sharing among migrants. As a 38 year-old Burmese woman in Mae Pa describes:

We help each other and we are like brothers and sisters. If I have money and when they need it, I would lend it to them. Sometime, if we don't have rice to cook, we will borrow from them and give them back when we have it. Sometimes, they ask for 5 Baht, 10 Baht or 20 Baht to buy the candles or foods.

Such narratives of informal assistance and community interdependence are extremely common in interviews with both documented and undocumented Burmese migrant respondents. It suggests a less formal system than the savings and credit association the Thai respondent references in the excerpt above, but one that thrives nevertheless through reciprocation. As everywhere, such associations rely on a level of trust fostered by well-established social networks and shared needs, values, cultures, and languages. While the latter respondent paints a somewhat idyllic scenario, other migrant respondents described severe debt from such loan schemes.

While the strong interdependence in Thai and migrant communities remains largely segregated, the resolution of monetary conflicts may be less so:

I have a friend and we have known each other for six or seven years. She has a gold chain and she asked me to keep it for her. I have to give it back to her when she goes back to Burma. They usually go

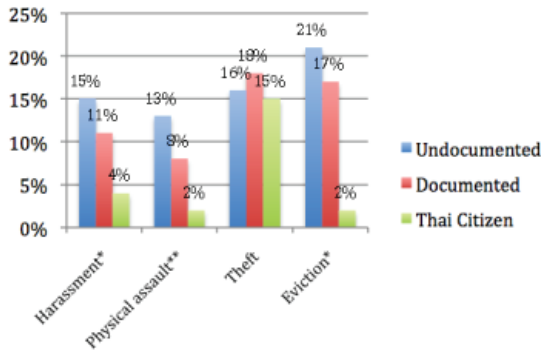
back to Burma once every two years. At that time I needed to money for investing in the field so I sent their necklace to the shop for a while and I took money from the shop. They knew about it and when they were about to go back, I went and loaned 3,000 Baht from the neighbor to get their gold chain back from the shop. But they thought that I couldn't give their gold chain so they inform this issue to the Kyar Let War group. So they came and arrested [my husband] and put him in jail for two days. They also beat my husband. After they learned that my husband was innocent, they released him from the jail but we still had to pay 3,000 Baht for that (45 year-old Burmese woman, Mae Pa).

In this case, *Kyar Let War* (Volunteer Civil Defense group) officials became involved in resolving the debt crisis of two Burmese community members. This is clearly well beyond their mandate and they resolved this issue in a way that involved the physical abuse and arbitrary incarceration of the party that they concluded—at least initially—was guilty. As a group of villagers organized as a sort of rescue force for their community, they amount in this case to little more than Thai neighbors roughing up “misbehaving” Burmese community members. The very actors charged with ensuring community security become involved in the systematic *insecurity* of community life for Burmese migrants.

4.4 Household & Physical Security

In measuring physical security for individuals and their families, this study confirms what earlier, non-representative research posits: in Mae Sot, physical security for individuals and their families very clearly depends on one's legal status. While many in Mae Sot are subject to petty theft, migrants, particularly those without registration, are susceptible to harassment and extortion at the hands of Thai security officials, or worse. When migrants travel throughout Mae Sot, Thai traffic police frequently stop them to check their status; those who do not have registration must pay a small bribe. If they cannot pay, then police typically incarcerate them and the amount to pay as a bribe increases. If they still cannot pay, then these unregistered migrants face deportation and an even heftier bribe to get back across the border into Thailand.

Chart 6: Household security in Mae Sot



*Significant at $p < 0.05$ level

**Significant at $p < 0.1$ level

As Chart 6 shows, all groups in the survey are susceptible to theft, with a variance of only a few percentage points. An average of one in six respondent households experienced theft in the last year. In 2010, the Mae Sot Police Station reported 2,232 crimes for the city, approximately a one in twenty-five ratio, using the official population figure from the 2010 census. Documented migrants are significantly more likely to report theft than undocumented migrants, and are less likely than Thai citizens to report theft to the police. However, while undocumented migrants link their hesitancy to call the police to a fear of being harassed instead of helped by the police, Thai in-depth interview respondents who hesitated to call the police did so more out of a lack of faith.

Theft was the predominant human security issue cited by Thai interviewees; their accounts reflect both a sense of crime's prevalence in Mae Sot and a sense of futility:

Four months ago I lost the motorbike in my house from one of the workers here when I went out and when I came back my worker had stolen my bike. I want to get the motorbike back but I can't do anything so I just have to accept that it's gone. We feel glum jai...we let what happens happen. Nobody else can help us and nobody can solve the problem. Even the police's motorbikes get stolen. (60 year-old Thai man, Mae Sot).

One in five undocumented migrant households experienced eviction. During in-depth interviews, migrants cited a number of reasons

for being told to leave their dwelling. Those most vulnerable were often susceptible to the whim of the landlord. "Because we are migrant workers and we have to move to different places all the time," a 42 year-old Burmese man in Phra That Pha Daeng said, "we will have to move if the landlord comes and tells us that he wants to build a building in this compound."

In what was an extreme example from 2008, a Burmese school-teacher in his 50s explained his experience with eviction:

In the morning...on that day, I was not going to school because I was not so well, but my two children were about to go to school when a police car stopped on my street. We thought, you know, all my family has already got the UNHCR receipt and also I have already got the document from the school so I thought that it was ok...but shortly afterward the police knocked at the door...I showed both documents but they didn't pay any attention to the documents and they pushed me, my wife, and two daughters out of the house and two children were left inside the house...They were not police...People called them like "Taw Chaw Daw"¹⁰¹...They took us to the military base in front of Mae Sot airport, the base guarding the airport. When we got there, they separated us, female and male into two groups. What they told us was "if you are a teacher, you are not allowed to live here. If you live here you will be arrested." At last we gave them money, we gave 900 baht...At night we had to move to my friend's house. (51 year-old Burmese man, Mae Sot).

While such violent eviction may be far from commonplace (i.e. the survey reported on whether or not respondents faced eviction and not how), it underscores the vulnerability of migrants (including forced migrants like the respondent above) without documents, or in this case with documents that do not provide urban refugees with protection.

Migrants were also significantly more likely to be harassed or threatened than Thais and more likely to experience physical assault than Thai citizens. Numbers of those who cited experiencing harassment and assault over the last

¹⁰¹ Meaning "Border Patrol Police," the Taw Chaw Daw is a paramilitary group that operates throughout the Thai-Burma border to provide security.

year reflect that such encounters may not be as widespread as is commonly believed in Mae Sot. Nevertheless the fact that one out of every eight undocumented migrant households has experienced physical assault in the last year alone reflects their extreme vulnerability. Moreover, that those migrants who actually have legal status are still so susceptible to physical assault and harassment is a stark commentary on the failures of the registration process to serve as a safeguard of a more secure life for migrants.

Beyond these numbers, respondents' accounts shed light on the nature of the threats to physical security that they experience. A 20 year-old Burmese man living in Mae Sot sub-district recalled:

One time, I was beaten by the police and they asked me to do pushups 50 times. At that time, I was traveling from Mae Sot to another place and I didn't get the recommendation letter from the organization. At the checkpoint, the police asked me and I told them that I don't have it and if they want it, they will have to go and get it from the office. So the police got angry and he hit my back and asked me to do push up for 50 times. When I was doing pushups, some of them [other police] came and kicked me. (20 year-old man, Mae Sot)

In addition to legal status, the ability to speak Thai and the amount of time one has lived in Mae Sot imply that to some extent one's integration in Thailand can ameliorate abusive encounters. The longer one is in Mae Sot the more time one has to learn how to protect oneself or to build a network of contacts that might help one to avoid abusive interactions or eviction. For example, the migrant respondents who expressed a lack of concern about eviction had been in Thailand for an average of six years.

In many ways, speaking Thai can in and of itself serve as a protection mechanism for migrants. During in-depth interviews, respondents lamented how not speaking Thai affected them. For one 32 year-old woman in the Mae Sot sub-district who had recently experienced harassment by a gang, she felt unwilling to call the police. "I don't know how to do it," she said, "I cannot speak Thai and I am afraid that the problem will become bigger by doing this." In addition to alluding to mistrust of Thai

authorities, this respondent, who is in Thailand without registration, highlights language as one barrier to finding protection from intimidation and threats.

4.4.1 Access to healthcare

Though it does not statistically fit into this study's vulnerability index, access to health care is an important predictor of one's physical safety. In the survey we gathered data on whether respondents had visited Thai government health facilities in Mae Sot and found that there were significant differences between all groups; 55% of undocumented migrants, 81% of those with documents, and 92% of Thai citizens had visited Mae Sot General Hospital or another public facility in their lives. For 2010, Mae Sot Hospital reported 55,287 foreign patients and 257,358 Thai patients, including both inpatients and outpatients. This official number reflects a much greater discrepancy in terms of access to Thai health facilities than this study's findings.

Table 3: Patients at Mae Sot General Hospital

Ratio of Foreigner to Thai at Mae Sot General Hospital	
Survey	1.0
Mae Sot General statistic	0.21

Qualitative interviews reveal important differences in terms of accessing healthcare between undocumented migrants, those with worker registration, and Thai citizens. Key differences emerge in particular between undocumented migrants on the one hand and Thai citizens and documented migrants on the other hand. The primary factor in constituting this difference is documented migrants' ability to participate in the Thai health scheme, a component of the worker registration program. The following excerpt from an interview with a 20 year-old Burmese man illustrates an exemplary experience for undocumented migrants at Thai hospitals:

I have been to the general hospital four times. One time, my friend was pregnant and her husband wasn't there. So she came to me and asked me to send her to the hospital. When we went to the hospital, they asked if we have legal status or not.

We said no and they sent us to place where we had to do the registration in a different department. With the help of the translator, we got the recommendation of the hospital and then we had to go to a different department to get the book from the hospital. At that time we have to pay 562 Baht. I heard that people with legal status have to give only 30 Baht for that but as we don't have legal status, we have to pay more...When we go to the hospital, as we don't understand their language, we have to rely on the translators. They don't discriminate us because of we are Burmese people. They treat everyone equally. If we don't understand about what they are saying, they will send us to talk to someone who can tell us all the information we need.

The primary obstacle to accessing healthcare for undocumented migrants is the cost; respondents did not report discrimination and some complained that interpretation was not always available, though most had positive experiences with health service providers. All undocumented respondents during in-depth interviews noted that they typically go to the Mae Tao Clinic, a CBO health facility serving the IDP, refugee, and migrant community since 1989. Among Burmese respondents, about one in five noted that they go to Mae Sot General Hospital only for urgent situations because those without documents are precluded from membership in the Thai health scheme and must pay the full price for treatment, a cost that few can afford. At the same time, close to half of Thai interview respondents also said that they would only go to Mae Sot General in extremely urgent circumstances. However, their reasoning had less to do with the cost and more to do with their dissatisfaction with the care at this facility:

The hospital here is not very good—they always give you Paracetamol for any problem you have. Mostly I just go to the clinic—also there are a lot of Burmese people [at the hospital] so the service is quite slow and you have to wait a long time. In the clinic I'll go when I've got a little problem like a cold or fever, but if it is a stomach ache, something more serious then I'll go to the hospital. In a sense the hospital is good but the service is slow. Right now with a Thai ID you don't have to pay at the hospital. (20 year-old Thai man, Ban Hua Fai).

For migrants in Mae Sot as throughout Thailand, access to healthcare is often an issue

interwoven with workplace rights. Migrant worker's compensation for workplace injuries is far from adequate, even for those with registration, despite the fact that many of Thailand's manufacturing sectors involve dangerous and dirty work:

In the work place, our health problems are related to the pressure from our boss because we have to work overtime every day and it affected our health. For example, we should get 162 Baht a day but we get less than that. So to get that amount to cover our end needs, we will have to do more work...We have to take care of our own health as the factory only gives us Paracetamol. As we work in the wool factory, they use chemicals to dye clothing and some workers suffer from lung cancer and throat cancer. The only thing the boss does is to send the workers to the hospital. For those who have legal status, they only have to pay 30 Baht when they go to the hospital, but for those who don't have legal status, they have to pay the full amount and some go back to Burma because they can't afford to pay for the medical expenses. Most of the workers will die in Burma. Our boss is very ignorant and he doesn't give any protections related to the health of the workers in the factory. The workers also do not protect themselves. The most common diseases in our factory are tuberculosis and gastric illness.

4.5 Assets & Housing

Differences between Thai citizens, documented migrants, and those without documents are most pronounced when it comes to the category of assets and housing. Both in terms of assets, productive and sellable, and in terms of housing, undocumented migrants find themselves at a significant disadvantage. Variables that emerge in this study as predictors of assets and housing vulnerability include:

- Previous contacts in Mae Sot
- Legal status
- Knows local language
- Length of time in Mae Sot
- Involvement in community
- Age
- Education level

4.5.1 Assets

We asked whether the respondent’s household owned or had access to a list of assets. Later, we determined which of the list could be classified as productive assets based on whether or not it could likely be used to generate income and which assets might be most useful to generate quick cash. While these categories are not mutually exclusive, we list all productive assets, even those easily sellable in the same column. We asked about fourteen different assets, ten of which we classified as productive. We then added total household assets of each respondent, and total productive assets, and took the average number of assets for each group.

Table 4: List of Assets

Productive	Easily sellable
Bicycle	Radio
Mobile phone	Television
Car	
Songtheaw/ bus/ tuk tuk	
Motorcycle	
Electricity	
Tractor/mini-tractor	
Agricultural tools	
Sewing machine	
Access to Internet	

Thai citizens had the highest number of total assets (8) and productive assets (5.7), followed by documented migrants (total=6, productive=4). On average, undocumented migrants had the fewest both total assets (5) and productive assets (3.4). All of the differences between these groups are significant.

Looking at the list of predictors above, the ability to speak Thai significantly impacts the number of assets one has, as does one’s legal status, time spent in Mae Sot, involvement in the community, and one’s age and level of education. These imply that along with education and formal integration in Mae Sot society comes the ability to procure more assets.

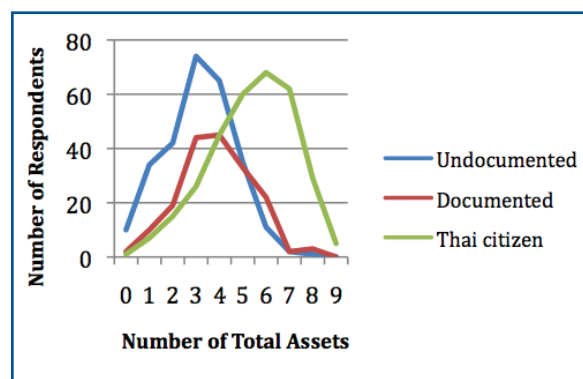
4.5.2 Remittances

Also impacting assets and housing, sending and receiving remittances is part of everyday life in Mae Sot. Remittances and other forms of

external income constitute an additional asset that was not included in the statistical model, but are an important factor for life in Mae Sot. Receiving remittances can be a valuable asset to any household, but it is also not possible to say that a household that is not receiving remittances is more vulnerable than one which is. Moreover, one who receives remittances may be more vulnerable than one who does not if those remittances constitute the only source of income for the recipient. Additionally, the obligation to send remittances is often an expense that can limit a household’s resilience in the face of hardship.

Undocumented migrants are less likely to receive

Chart 7: Total assets across legal status



remittances (35%, n=96) than those with documents (43%, n=77) though this has low statistical significance ($p < 0.1$). However, migrants in general are much more likely to receive remittances than Thais. Only 0.6% of Thai respondents (n=2) reported receiving remittances.

Similarly, the difference between undocumented (14%, n=38) and documented migrants (18%, n=33) who report sending remittances regularly is not significant, while the difference between these two categories and Thais (0.6%, n=2) is very significant.

These two sets of statistics do not give a sense for how much money migrants or Thais are sending or receiving and how it might impact their lives. For some respondents, sending money had a minimal impact on their lives; the difference of a few hundred or thousand baht over the course of a year, while for others in

different circumstances, sending remittances constituted a drastic blow to their finances:

RESPONDENT: I just help my relatives in other provinces. I send them some money.

INTERVIEWER: How would you say this impacts your life?

R: This affects my life because I am poor and I don't have a lot of money, but I send it to them because they need help. But I don't have a lot of money so when I send it to them I feel I will never get rich. I want to make a better shop. Actually, my parents don't ask me for money but when they come to visit, I just give it to them. (29 year-old Thai man, Mae Sot).

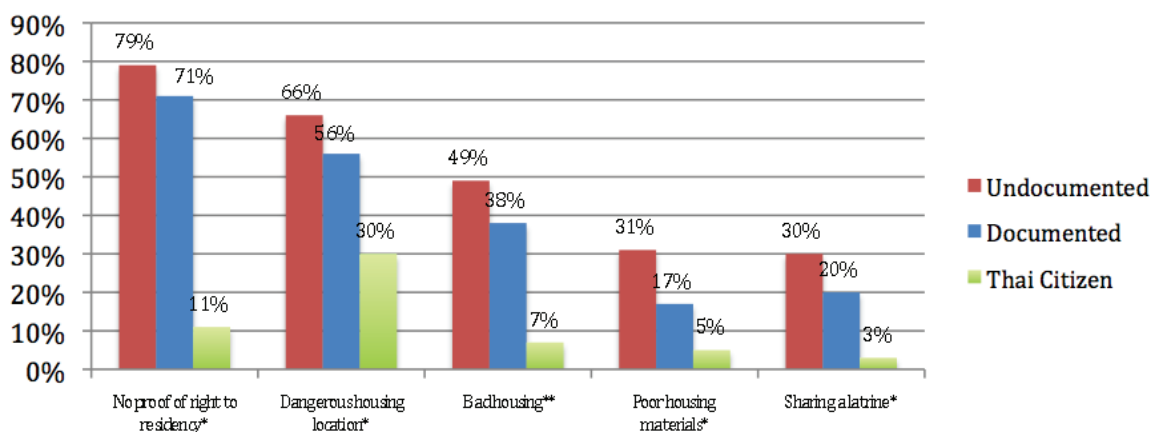
A number of the Burmese in Mae Sot received remittances from family elsewhere in Thailand

terms of the physical material and location of the dwelling as well as how equipped it is to support human resilience and successful livelihoods. Housing vulnerability consists of a number of individual variables such as: proof of right to residency, housing location, type of housing, housing material, and whether or not households have their own toilets.

Chart 8 below groups all of these variables together and measures across legal status categories to show differences.

During the survey, interviewers took note of the types of dwellings in which interviews took place. While they identified a variety of different housing types, these have been condensed for the purpose of comparison in this report into “bad housing” and “good housing.”¹⁰²

Chart 8: Variables of housing vulnerability



*Significant at $p < 0.05$ level
 **Significant at $p < 0.10$ level

and even in Burma. Two of the qualitative interview respondents in this situation were students who were unemployed and living on their own or with siblings. In order to stay in school, they needed money from their parents. Another respondent received funds from his brother who had resettled to the United States. The money from his sibling helped the respondent to secure a new home in Mae Sot.

4.5.3 Housing

As an asset in and of itself, housing is one of the strongest indicators of vulnerability, both in

“Bad housing” is defined as living in a backyard shack, backyard house or room, slum house, hostel or boarding house, hut, commercial building, tent, or shack. These dwellings are similar in that they imply living conditions that are dangerous, uncertain or insecure, made of non-durable materials (often found by respondent), or unsanitary. “Good housing” is defined as living in a freestanding house, row house, apartment, or townhouse. However, these

¹⁰² This dichotomy is based on an assessment by NGO stakeholders and key informant interviews of the available housing options in Mae Sot.

various housing types are not cemented in their categories; there are always exceptions where what in the majority of instances might be a problematic living situation does not in reality contribute to a vulnerable living situation for certain cases. Similarly, respondents living in “good housing” may have actually found their living situation precarious and barely habitable. Nevertheless, as a model, this dichotomy proves sufficiently accurate for comparison, exceptions acknowledged.

Undocumented migrants were significantly more likely to live in bad housing than were documented migrants, who were less likely than Thais. Not surprisingly, the same relationship held for housing materials. Undocumented were significantly more likely than documented and Thai to live in housing constructed of plastic sheets/tarpaulin, bamboo, dirt, or leaf/thatches. Among those living in houses made from poor materials, 22% (n=29) had experienced eviction, while only 10% (n=62) of those living in houses made from solid materials had experienced this. And while 28% (n=52) of those living in “bad housing” had experienced eviction in the past year, only 7% (n=40) of those in “good housing” reported having such an experience.

It is not uncommon for migrants in Mae Sot to live where they work, especially for factory workers. Respondents living and working in factories lived in dormitories or had their own room within the factory compound. One 33 year-old man in Mae Tao sub-district worked in the agricultural sector and traded labor for his family to be able to reside in its home, a small shack in the middle of a field: “The boss let us stay in this land and we have to work for him in the farm.” Another couple lived in a ply-wood row house within the compound of an auto body repair shop in central Mae Sot. Others paid rent to a landlord who had built make-shift rooms on her land:

For me, I live right behind this building and I built a house in the yard of my boss. I have to pay 200 baht per month for the rent. For my children to be able to study, I have to get electricity and what I need to pay depends on how many units that we used. I have to pay 10 Baht per unit. (Burmese woman in her 30s).

As an indicator of difference between Thai citizens and migrants, access to housing reflects both an institutionalized and a circumstantial inequality. The inability to own land puts migrants at a clear disadvantage when considering assets and vulnerability. The low rent migrants pay for shoddy housing offsets to some extent the insecurity and informality of their housing arrangement. While ownership of land does guarantee a certain level of security for Mae Sot residents, it does not convey total stability. One older Thai man living in Mae Sot identified as barely making ends meet:

I am selling pork BBQ and chicken BBQ...my family is really poor. Together between the pension and the work I do, it is not enough as this place is expensive. We just have enough to stay living here...Here this is my land. It is 200 acres—we don't use it for anything.

Other than this man, Thai respondents did not cite housing problems, even when they were tenants and not owners. However, in general migrants expressed having only a tenuous claim to their dwelling. As a 20 year-old Burmese man in Mae Sot put it:

We had to rent a house and we signed a contract with the house owner for one year. In the contract it mentioned that if the landlord doesn't like us, he has to give two months' notice in advance for us to leave. Later on, we had a problem with the toilet and we asked the landlord to repair it for us but he said he couldn't repair it and asked us to leave and we did. When we left from the house he didn't pay back the deposit money of 40,000 Baht and we also have to pay another 12,000 Baht for the toilet.

Those who share latrines may be individuals who share living space with other households or who do not have latrines in their own dwelling and must rely on toilets that are designated for multiple dwellings. To not have access at all to a latrine is an indicator of not only poor housing, but also poor health. A number of huts and temporary settlements are located in the middle of rice paddies, for example, and residents must rely on toilets in other locations or must designate a certain area near their house for human waste. Of those who did not have latrines, 60% lived amidst rice fields or farm areas or in temporary shelters.

Though it did not make it into the vulnerability index, another important indicator for housing is whether respondents had their own space to prepare food. The vast majority of all three groups did have their own cooking space, while 18% of undocumented migrants and 12% of documented migrants reported having no space to prepare food. Notably, for all three groups, very few stated that they shared space for cooking with others.

Just six respondents who said they had nowhere to prepare food also left the latrine response missing, meaning that the majority of respondents have either a latrine (individual household or shared) or a place to prepare food, and very few have neither. Of those who said they had nowhere to prepare food, 52% (n=43) said they shared a latrine, compared with 41% (n=34) who said they had their own latrine.

Seventy-six percent of respondents (n=584) said they had their own latrine and prepared food in their own dwelling. Of these, 52% were Thai citizens compared to 26% of undocumented and 22% of documented migrants. Of those who a) shared a latrine or left the latrine response missing and b) had nowhere to prepare food, 60% (n=29) lived in Mae Sot sub-district. In this same category, 63% (n=31) were undocumented, 33% (n=16) were documented, and just 4% (n=2) were Thai citizens.

Enumerators evaluated whether participants' homes were located in, on, or near (within sight of) a dangerous location. Dangerous locations were defined as landslide areas, flood prone areas, garbage mountain/piles, industrial areas/factory, urban cramped slum, rice field/plantation/farm, construction site, or a temporary settlement. A dangerous location is one that is unsafe, uncertain, or unhealthy. The agricultural setting is listed here as dangerous because in the context of Mae Sot, these are often temporary dwellings or worker quarters located in the middle of fields. These types of dwellings are particularly prone to flooding. As Chart 8 shows, undocumented migrants are significantly more likely to live in dangerous locations than documented migrants, who are more likely than Thais to live in such locations. Perhaps not surprisingly, one is significantly more likely to experience physical assault if living in a

dangerous place. Similarly, of those who have experienced harassment in the last year, nearly twice as many lived in vulnerable housing locations compared with safe locations (63%, n=44 vs. 37%, n=26).

Often these clusters of rooms and shelters were in parts of Mae Sot designated in this study's sampling strategy as low density because they remain largely hidden from view and residents do not venture far and work on the same property. These signify new communities of migrant workers in Mae Sot that are living beyond the scope of assistance or the law for the most part.

As a hub for Burmese community activism, Mae Sot is also a place where migrants may find shelter with any number of organizations:

Our teacher works for the migrant people. He is an old political prisoner...He found funds to open this school. He has connections with the foreign countries and with their help he built a hostel for the migrant students. He has friends from foreign countries that help him to lead this school. All three of us are living in that hostel now. (Burmese man, Mae Sot 20 years old.

Among the Burmese respondents in the qualitative sample who were affiliated with community-based organizations, nine out of fifteen (60%) lived at the organization's office, a shelter run by the organization, or a home or room subsidized by the organization.

Whether living with the support or protection of an organization, with the permission of a landlord, under a work-housing agreement with a boss, in a row house or tenement building, or in a temporary settlement in the forest or a field, there are a variety of informal arrangements that allow migrants to find residence in Mae Sot, albeit with a level of insecurity. For migrants, having the "right of residency" is to have an at least minimal assurance that they are allowed to inhabit their dwelling, but it is almost always informal and comes with a certain level of instability.

4.6 Employment

Employment vulnerability divides sharply between the different respondent categories. Those migrants without work authorization in

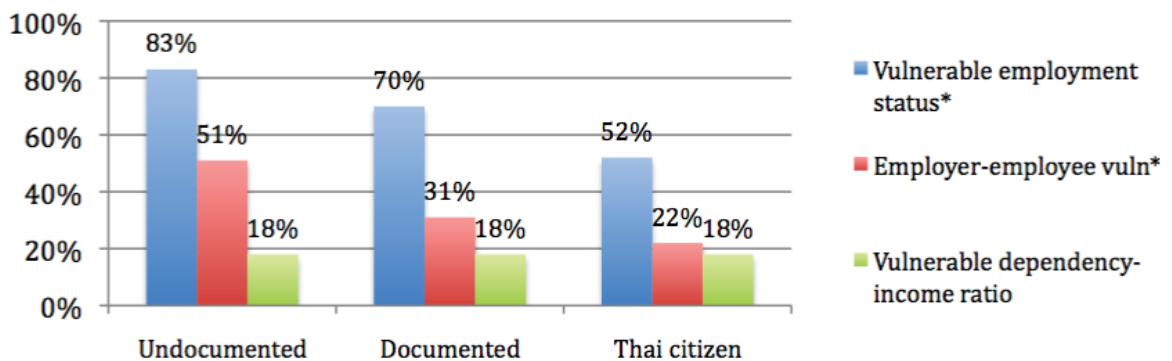
Thailand are highly susceptible to workplace abuses such as withholding of pay or low pay, long working hours, or poor working conditions. Migrants who have already received work authorization permits are still at risk of work environments like this, but much less so, and Thai citizens working in Mae Sot more frequently find themselves within the formal sector of work, though not beyond risk of vulnerable employment conditions.

Among survey respondents, Thais were most likely self-employed in structured work environments, such as shop owners, market stall vendors, or mechanics (27%, n=85). Close to 12% (n=38) were self-employed in lower-end jobs such as porters or individuals who make and sell food from home. Eight percent (n=25) had their own business and 17% (n=53) were unemployed. Only 3% of Thai citizens were engaged in wage-labor (2%, n=6 as full-time, and 1%, n=4 as part-time).

documented). Unemployment was significantly higher among undocumented migrants with 14% (n=37) out of work compared to only 4% (n=7) of those with documents.

We asked respondents about their own employment status and that of other income earners in the household. We used data about other income earners in the household to calculate the highest income earner in the respondent's household. It is important to consider other income earners, as unemployed respondents are more likely to answer the door for enumerators, even though someone in their household may be working. The employment status of the household head often relates directly to vulnerability. The employment variable did not include those who were students or who had retired. The numbers reflect those in each group who are in the labor force.

Chart 9: Employment vulnerability indicators¹⁰³



*Significant at $p < 0.05$ level

By comparison, migrants were more likely to work in lower-end jobs (20%, n=55 for undocumented migrants; 31%, n=56 for documented migrants), part-time wage-labor jobs (12%, n=34 for undocumented; 11%, n=20 for documented), and full-time wage-labor jobs (9%, n=26 for undocumented; 11%, n=20 for

When measuring vulnerability in terms of employment, we collapsed variables into dichotomous indicators, such as vulnerable and non-vulnerable employment status. Vulnerable employment statuses include being unemployed or having lower-end and less secure jobs, informal sector jobs, intermittently paying jobs, or family jobs that do not pay. Chart 9, above shows how the different groups of respondents divide up in terms of employment vulnerability. The difference between each group is significant. In addition, one's education level significantly increases the chances of a less vulnerable

103 The income-dependency ratio consists of the total number of members of the household *not* earning income divided by the total number of household members; thus 1 would be the highest possible level of dependency. As Chart 9 shows, there is no significant difference between the respondent categories as 18% of each group has a "vulnerable" dependency ratio, with the level "vulnerable" set at 0.75 and above.

employment status, as does one's legal status. While the amount of time one has spent in Mae Sot surprisingly does not significantly alter whether one is employed in a less secure job, whether one was displaced in Burma before coming to Thailand does ($p=0.056$). Those Burmese who came to Mae Sot because of direct persecution or conflict-related factors are more likely to find themselves in a vulnerable employment status.

The second variable in Chart 9 is based on respondents' subjective perception of their ability to deal with employers who are withholding pay. To respond that they are unlikely to be able to resolve such an issue suggests a lack of rights in the workplace and a level of susceptibility to workplace abuses. The fact that 20% more undocumented than documented migrants are vulnerable in their relations with their employers is indicative of the effects of registration. Indeed, the relationship between legal status and "employer-employee vulnerability" is statistically significant.

A 24 year-old Burmese woman living and working inside a construction site in Mae Pa articulated one of the ways in which legal status can contribute to workplace insecurity:

A few days ago, we went to the office and protested to get our wages, as we have no money to buy food. Everyone who works here doesn't have any ID. I have to go and sleep at other places at nighttime as the police come here very often. When the police come to the work place, all the men run away to other places...The staffs from the office call [the police] and mentioned to them that the Burmese workers here are threatening them at the work place...They [police] just come here after the incident has occurred. Before that, they come here just only once in a month or once in two months. They come here and check the ID cards from the workers and if they don't have it, then they would be arrested.

By maintaining a workforce of unregistered migrants, employers are able to use police as a threat (or more) to suppress protests against unfair treatment or a lack of pay. Another factory worker concurs that employers are able to prevent workers from leaving or protesting to improve conditions:

Sometimes, the workers want to quit from that job because of the lower salary but the boss didn't allow them to quit from their work. When I was working in that factory, they deducted the food cost and the police fees from every worker.

While she witnessed this at one worksite, she also noted, "I don't need to pay for those things because I make my legal status with another boss." Her legal status serves as a key form of protection against labor abuse.

It is not legal status alone that determines such vulnerability. The same factory worker cited above notes that beyond the fact that she had legal status, it was her training and her network that gave her both protection from abuse and strength to effect change:

I can attend the training at the school and sometimes I ask other workers to go and attend the training. Because of the training, the workers become aware of labor rights and they know what they should ask for their rights. I didn't know anything about labor right in the past but now because of the training I gained knowledge and I am brave enough to ask for our rights.

It was this training that informed this respondent about how she might work to find recourse to justice for what she felt were the exploitative practices of her employer:

We couldn't wait to get our salaries and we got help from the organization. We went and informed this incident to the lawyers' office and the boss made an appointment with us to meet him at the manager's house. That manager was bad and the workers were afraid and said they wouldn't go to see the boss without me. So we went there to negotiate with our boss but he said he would give the salary to us but he didn't. So we go and inform this to Sawadeekan.¹⁰⁴

In addition, the amount of time one has spent in Mae Sot, one's age, and one's education level are also significant. One respondent who works and lives in one of the Mae Sot factories noted that not all of the workers in her factory were of age:

In the factory, some workers are only 13 or 14 years old. They are just children and sometimes as the

¹⁰⁴ This refers to the Thai Labor Protection and Welfare office, which is charged with settling labor disputes and ensuring that employers adhere to the Labor Protection Acts of 1998 and 2008.

nature of the children, they would like to play in their free time. When the chief saw it, she would come and scold them not to play. At that time, I would stand for those children and tell the chief not to scold them as they are still children and they would like to play. They have to come and work here at their age because their parents have hardship in their native place. I also encourage the children to work hard. I told them like it is a good thing to work hard because no person dies because they work hard. If they work hard, they will get money and can buy beautiful clothes and anything they want. I always encourage them like that and stand on their side when the chief come and scold them. (25-30 years-old Burmese woman, Mae Pa).

It is notable that the ability to speak Thai is not a significant predictor of one's sense of employment security. This contrasts with a number of the respondents' in-depth interviews who felt that language was a factor. "I used to help the workers who were dismissed from the factory," a Burmese female factory worker told interviewers, "Sometimes, we have a language barrier and we don't understand everything about what they are saying. The translators didn't interpret sincerely and my friend was dismissed from Pepsi Company." While this is a second-hand account and cannot be used to make strong claims, it should raise concerns that the language barrier is quite possibly an issue.

In qualitative interviews, Thai respondents reported that they experience the struggle of secure income and employment in an entirely different way. Five Thai respondents earned their living through agricultural work and shared the extent to which their work has grown increasingly difficult:

I was a farmer working in the fields and we had enough every year. Now things don't grow well because everything is very expensive at the market and there are many chemicals. To sell goods at the market is hard because there are many people. Like the world is changing; like now it is raining and it is supposed to be summer. I would grow corn or rice and I wouldn't need to use the fertilizer or spray pesticides but now if you don't do that it won't grow (53 year-old woman, Mae Tao).

For those Thai working in the agricultural sector, one of the main challenges they cited was

managing Burmese employees amidst a climate of rapid turnover:

Sometimes it is good and sometimes not so good—if we can speak the same language then it is better. Before there were only a few Burmese people and only Karen people but I don't know where did those Karen people go. Maybe already to another country. With the Karen people, they were good workers. They worked hard and were easy to communicate with—they obeyed well; not like the Burmese workers who may only stay for one year and then leave. I usually let my workers stay at my field, sometimes they have their kids there too (55-year old man, Mae Tao).

Indeed, what emerged on the whole in the narratives of Thai employers interviewed was a sense of a patron-client relationship with their Burmese workers. However, Burmese migrants were more likely to be engaged in full-time employment, though this may be due to sampling bias in that half of the Thai respondents were above 51 years-old. From these interviews it becomes clear that the inequality between Thais and Burmese in Mae Sot is not just between wages, but in terms of how safe and healthy worksites are, the types of employment in which migrants and Thais are engaged, and the amount of authority migrants and Thais have in the workplace. ■

PART 5: RECOMMENDATIONS

Social cohesion

Civil society should collaborate to design initiatives to build greater social cohesion between Thai and migrant community members/leaders. These could involve community health care, waste management, community drug prevention campaigns, and joint-efforts to maintain village security such as neighborhood watch schemes.

Improving assets and housing

Civil society should support initiatives to open ways for Burmese migrants to participate in the savings and credit associations in Thai villages.

Civil society should collaborate with Mae Sot District local administration to provide the resources and training necessary to encourage Burmese migrant communities in Mae Sot to create their own formalized savings and credit associations and solve existing debt problems.

Mae Sot local administration (Or *Bor Tor* and *Tessabarn*), the Tak provincial government, and state public works agencies (such as offices for water, power, and telecommunications) should work together to ensure that migrant worker communities have access to basic infrastructure necessary to sustain life such as electricity, a proper water supply and drainage system, waste management, control of infestation by insects and rodents, communal food storage, and the management of hazardous material. They should also work on reducing crowding in slums and in the migrant worker communities.

Child labor and education among undocumented migrants

Regarding child labor in Mae Sot, the Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Education, and Thai and international civil society should collaborate to provide greater access to a wider variety of quality education opportunities that fit migrant youth needs. To this end, the Ministry of Education should work to not only provide greater access for migrant children into Thai schools, but also formally register migrant schools in Mae Sot and elsewhere. Ministry of Education registration will allow for migrant children and their families to access a range of

education choices that meet their specific needs, reach Thai quality standards, and result in officially-recognized certificates and thus increased opportunities for higher learning.

The Ministry of Labor, through the Department of Labor Protection and Welfare should enforce more vigorously the 1998 and 2008 Labor Protection Acts to monitor and prosecute factories employing children, specifically regarding sections which refer to laws against employment of children under fifteen and the placement of children over fifteen in workplaces that are potentially physically hazardous or that heighten the risk of exploitation.

Civil society should design interventions targeting undocumented migrants to create safe spaces for discussion around child labor, household livelihood security, and access to education.

Mediation, dispute resolution, and access to justice

Civil society should work with the Mae Sot District office to designate greater numbers of Thai village heads (*Phuyai ban*) as official mediators for village-level conflicts, preferably working with the assistance of other Burmese and Thai community represented. This system should be clearly understood by the community and should strictly adhere to the prescribed limits of Thai laws and processes for community level mediation. Key justice agencies, such as the Royal Thai Police, the Provincial Justice Office and the office of the Public Prosecutor office should provide technical support in this regard. As part of this designation process, civil society should work with these stakeholders to put together a series of trainings for village heads on Thai law regarding migrant workers.

Civil society should engage with CBO/vigilante groups claiming to provide justice on behalf of Burmese migrants and other NGOs and CBOs who regularly give advice to migrants regarding law and access to justice in order to push these groups to advocate that they make sure their work is integrated with and supported by the mediation processes under Thai law described above.

The judicial system should process migrant complaints regardless of legal status, should regularly provide interpreters and where required by law, qualified and experienced defense lawyers. Justice agencies should translate materials related to accessing justice into Burmese, Karen, and other relevant languages.

The Ministry of Justice and other relevant branches of the local Mae Sot administration should support trainings on the Thai legal and justice system in Mae Sot communities. These will increase knowledge and understanding of Thai policies and laws will lay the foundation for developing the capacity of community members to volunteer from within the migrant and Thai communities and support the local municipal administration in monitoring protection concerns and promoting access to justice. These activities should be geared toward promoting greater integration and cohesion in handling issues which concern the whole community, regardless of ethnicity or nationality.

Access to healthcare

The Ministry of Public Health should adjust Thailand's healthcare policy to ensure some form of affordable quality healthcare to undocumented migrants. The health insurance migrants receive should be universally valid throughout Thailand and not localized to the province in which migrants are employed.

To reduce the burden on hospitals operating in border areas, the Ministry of Public Health should push for the development of a healthcare management fund to support the hospitals and health posts in the border region, especially in migrant populated areas. The goal would be to reduce the burden on the budgets of these local health facilities so they can provide more quality health care to local Thai residents, documented migrants, and undocumented migrants.

The Ministry of Public Health should encourage the training of Migrant Health Volunteers in border areas, including public health workers working for migrants. This would be an important mechanism in the field of health promotion, disease prevention and the facilitation of increased access to healthcare for all migrant workers.

Protecting physical safety of migrants

RTG should enforce more strongly protections of migrant rights, prosecuting corrupt security officials involved in extortion rackets, physical abuse, or the unlawful employment of migrant workers. The offices of the traffic police, immigration police, and other offices charged with maintaining security or managing migrant worker populations should more strongly enforce the rules set out in their office codes of conduct to penalize government officials who commit the above practices. Additionally, the Office of the National Counter Corruption Commission and the Office of the Ombudsman Thailand should investigate allegations of corruption and abuse by security officials in border areas like Mae Sot. Corrupt state officials should be appropriately penalized according to Chapter XI of the Organic Act on Counter Corruption, B.E. 2542 (1999).

The Office of the National Counter Corruption Commission and the Office of the Ombudsman Thailand should establish a hotline for victims of extortion or abuse by government officials to file complaints in a confidential and anonymous (if desired) manner.

The Office of the National Counter Corruption Commission and the Office of the Ombudsman Thailand should establish a network of volunteers from both Thai and migrant communities to monitor allegations of corruption and misconduct by government officials in Mae Sot and elsewhere. These volunteers should work with government anti-corruption agencies to bridge the gap between agency officers and migrants who might hesitate to reveal themselves (especially if they are undocumented) and share confidential information with Thai anti-corruption officers.

Reforming registration and Nationality Verification

The cost of registration should be significantly reduced to make it more affordable for migrants seeking to regularize their presence in Thailand. Currently, it is prohibitively expensive for many. In addition, the initial phase of the registration process should last more than one month.

Migrants should be able to undergo Nationality Verification in every province and they should

be allowed to travel freely in Thailand to such locations. This would negate the need for brokers or agents and thus mitigate a source of migrant exploitation.

The Ministry of Labour should push to amend the Employment and Job Seeker Protection Act B.E. 2528 (1985) to account for the category of Nationality Verification brokers, who are different than the employment agencies and the licensees mentioned in the law. The Thai Government should also enforce Section 79 of this act, which penalizes those who demand payment in excess of an appropriate service charge.

The Ministry of Labour should accelerate the push for regulations that govern employment in the border areas in accordance with Section 14 of the Alien Employment Act, B.E. 2551. Strengthening border employment mechanisms would create an important alternative to the current worker registration system.

The Ministry of Labour should push to amend the MOUs regarding the employment of migrant workers from Burma, Laos and Cambodia to eliminate the requirement that migrant workers with temporary passports return to their country for three years after staying in Thailand for four consecutive years.

The Ministry of Labor should develop a strategy to give employment authorization to those migrants who attempted to undergo Nationality Verification but who were not recognized as citizens by their government. Otherwise, these migrants remain part of the irregular migrant population.

The Ministry of Labor should improve the existing mechanisms for hiring and registering migrant labor by reducing costs; providing more interpreters; producing bilingual official documents; more information, education, and communication materials; and opening one-stop service centers for all aspects of registration.

UNHCR should push the Thai government to reinstate refugee status determination for individuals fleeing persecution in Burma and seeking refuge in Thailand's urban areas. This is essential to protect urban refugees against arrest and deportation and ensure adequate protection of rights.

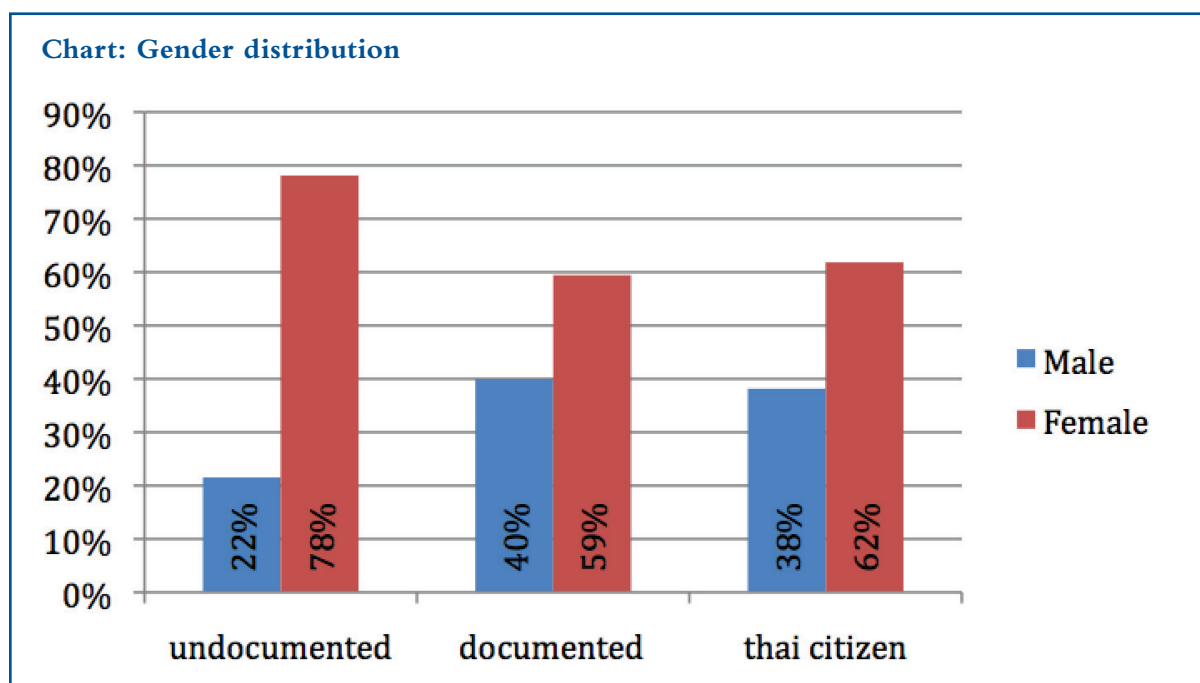
If migrant workers who are detained and processed for deportation express a fear that returning to Burma would endanger them, their case should be passed to UNHCR, the National Security Council, and the Ministry of the Interior for refugee status determination. ■

ANNEX 1: VULNERABILITY SCORECARD

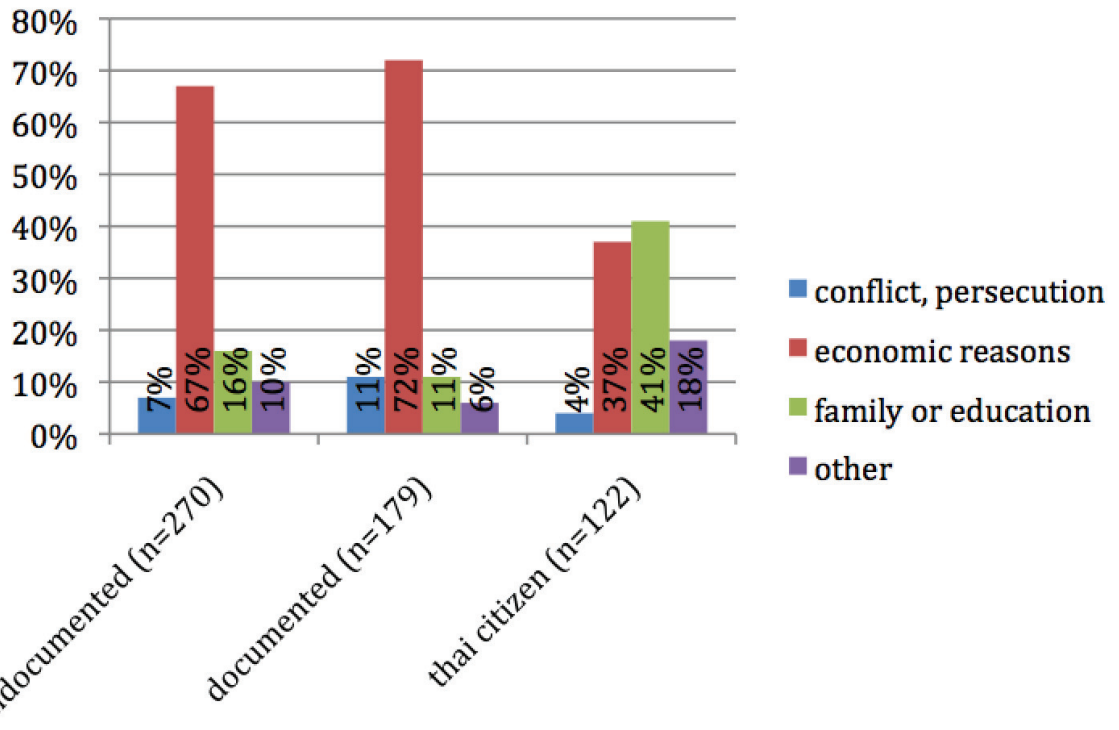
Indicator	Operationalized by	Score
Category 1: Community Security		
Safe access to justice	I know how to safely access justice in Mae Sot	1=Strongly agree/agree 0=Disagree/strongly disagree
Access to police	I have the right to complain to the police if I am the victim of a crime.	1=Strongly agree/agree 0=Disagree/strongly disagree
Perceived neighborhood safety	Do you feel safe where you live now?	1=Yes 0=No
<i>Category score:</i>		(Sum/3)*0.25
Category 2: Household Security		
Experienced assault	In the last year have you or anyone in your household experienced assault?	1=No 0=Yes
Experienced theft	“ ” theft?	1=No 0=Yes
Experienced harassment	“ ” harassment?	1=No 0=Yes
Evicted	Here in Mae Sot, have you ever been evicted from your home?	1=No 0=Yes
<i>Category score:</i>		(sum/4)*0.25
Category 3: Employment		
Dependency-income ratio	a) How many people in your household? ____ b) How many people are not working? ____ Calculate: (# ppl not working/total number in HH) write in ratio: _____eg. 6/8 = .75	ratio score: below .75 = 1 above .75 = 0
Employment status	What is your employment situation?	1=full-time 0=part-time/ unemployed
Employer withholding pay	What is the likelihood you will be able to resolve the problem if your employer withheld pay?	1=very/somewhat likely 0=very/somewhat unlikely
<i>Category score:</i>		(Sum/3)*0.25
Category 4: Assets & housing		
Assets	Does your household have access to any of the following? (read list of assets)	1=Many/good 0=Few/poor
Housing materials	What material is the dwelling made of?	1=Good/durable 0=Bad/not durable
Type of housing	What type of house dwelling does the respondent live in?	1=Good housing 0=Bad housing
Housing location	What is the dwelling near?	1=Safe location 0=Dangerous location
Having own latrine	Does household have its own latrine or share?	1=Own 0=Share
Proof of right to residency in house	Do you have the right to reside in this dwelling? (proof?)	1=Yes 0=No
<i>Category score:</i>		(sum/6)*0.25

ANNEX 2: ADDITIONAL GRAPHS & CHARTS

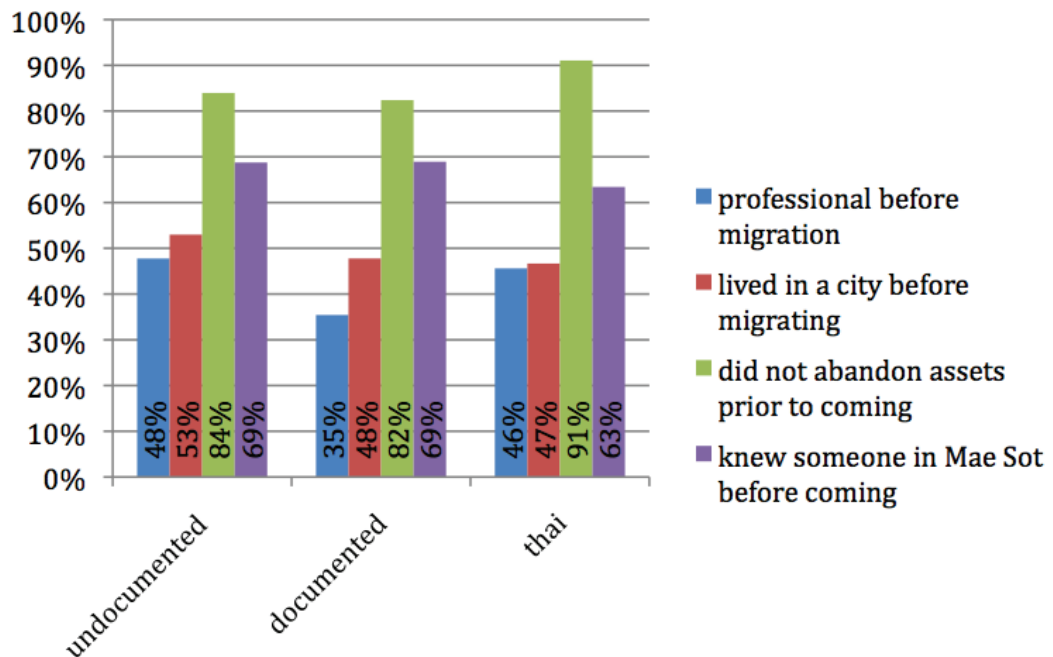
Status categories for Burmese migrants in Thailand
1. UNHCR refugee ID certificate issued for camp resident
2. Person of Concern letter issued by UNHCR
3. UNHCR SLIP holders (NI-5xxxx)
4. Non-Thai passport only (no legal status/visa expired)
5. Non-Thai passport w/ valid visa (has legal status)
6. Temp. passport from Burma for MOU or Nationality Verification
7. Registered with MoI (Tor Ror 38/1 only)
8. Registered with MoI & MoL and having valid documents
9. Registered with MoI and/or MoL before but documents expired
10. Ethnic minority/hilltribe temporary stay permit (13 digits on ID card beginning with 6 & 7)
11. Non-status person card (13 digits on ID card begin with 0)
12. Permanent residency (13 digits on ID card begin with 3, 4, 5 & 8)
13. No status, informal card (Mae Tao card, BMTA card)
14. No document
15. Stateless



Reasons left previous city

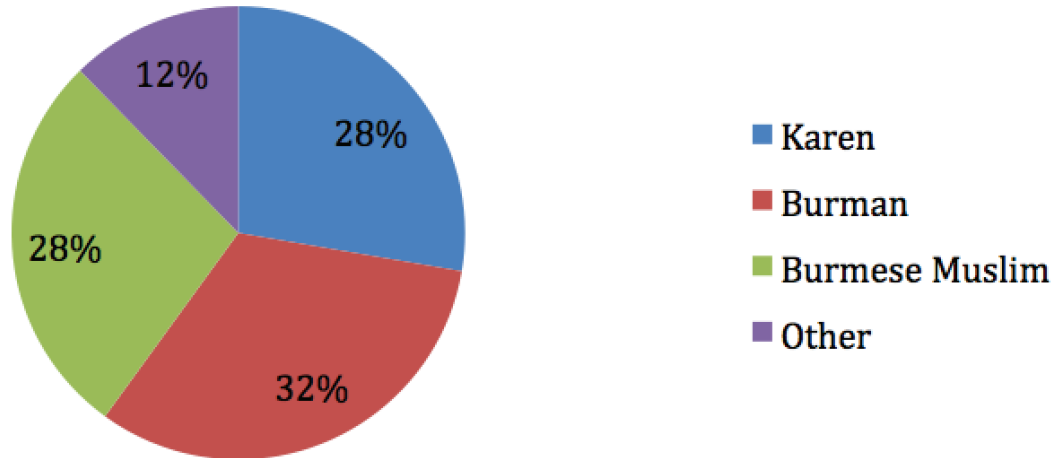


Pre-migration characteristics



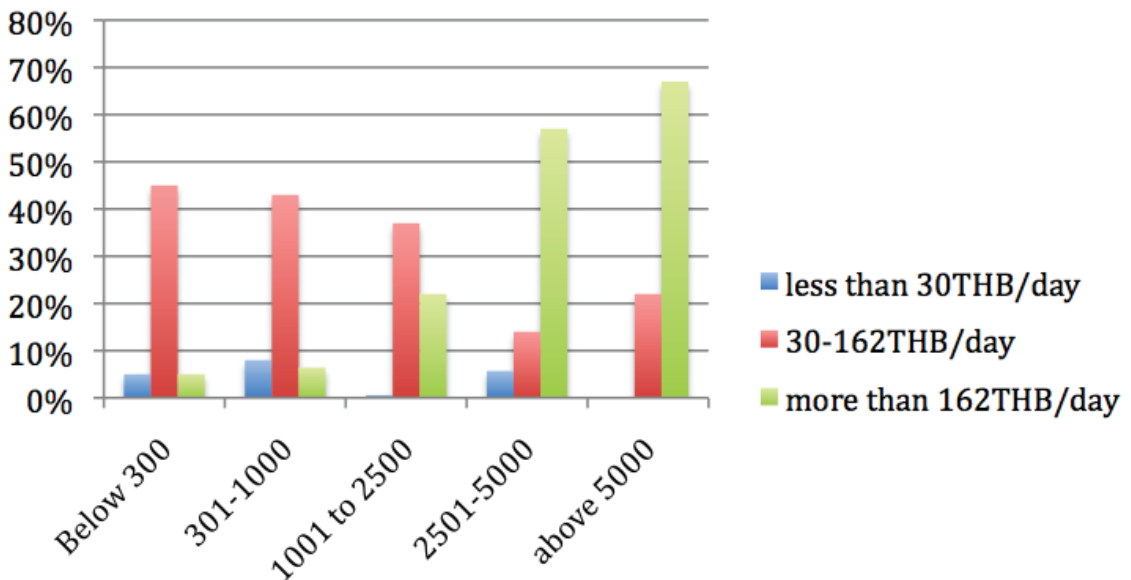
- * Professional before migration: Difference between documented and undocumented, and documented and Thai, is significant. Difference between undocumented and Thai is not significant.
- * Lived in a city: No significant difference between groups.
- * Abandoning assets: Significant difference between Thai and both other groups.
- * Knew someone in Mae Sot before coming: No significant difference between groups.

Ethnic breakdown among forced migrants

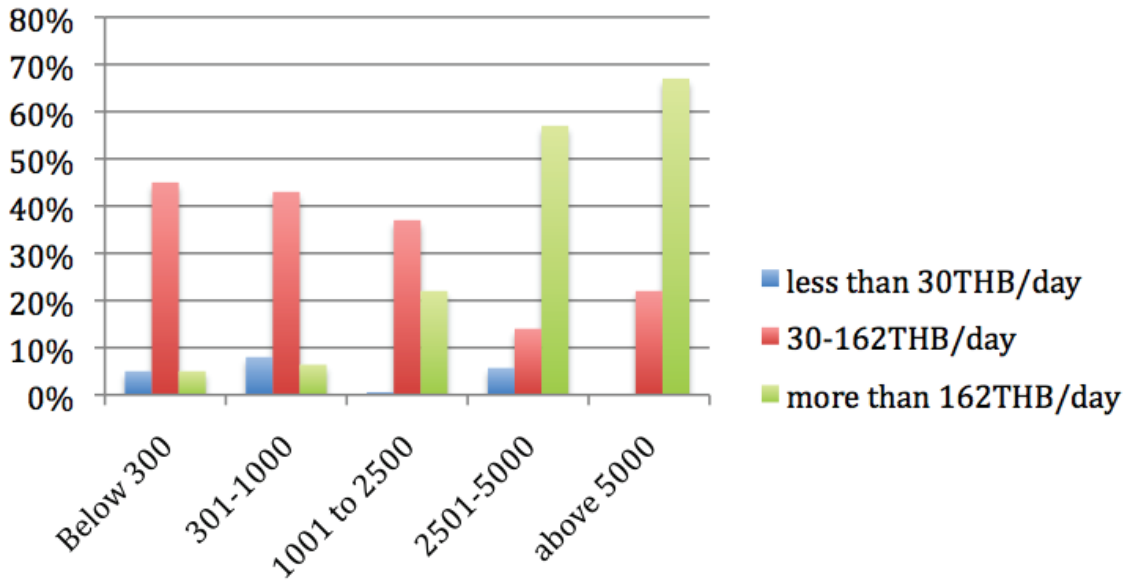


* These percentages refer to proportions of 14% of the migrant population that reported migrating because of conflict or persecution.

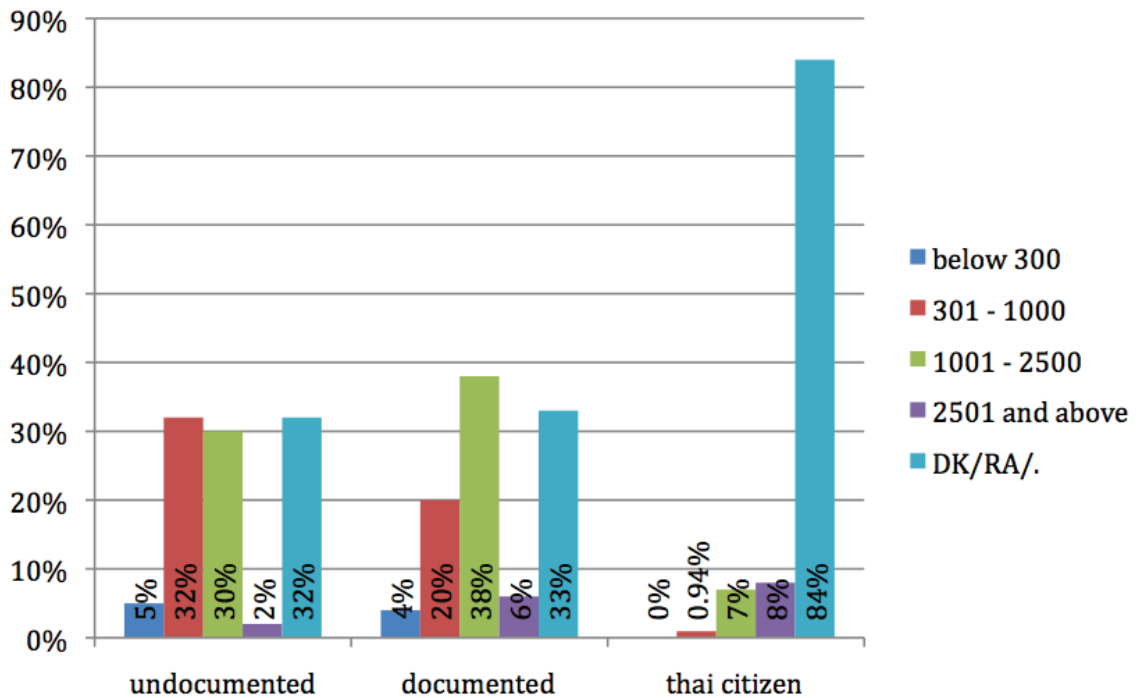
Household Rent



Household Rent

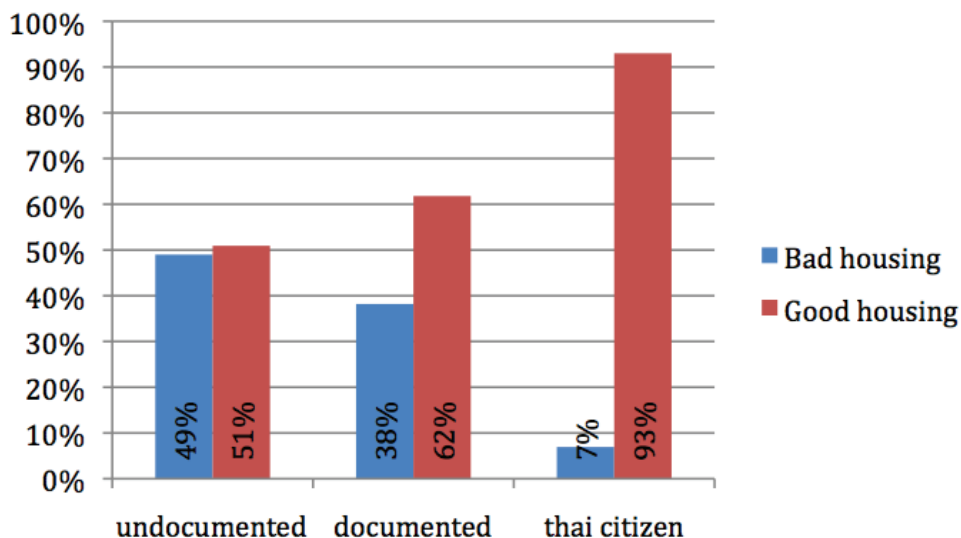


Household rent across status level



*DK=don't know; RA=refused to answer; . =answer was missing

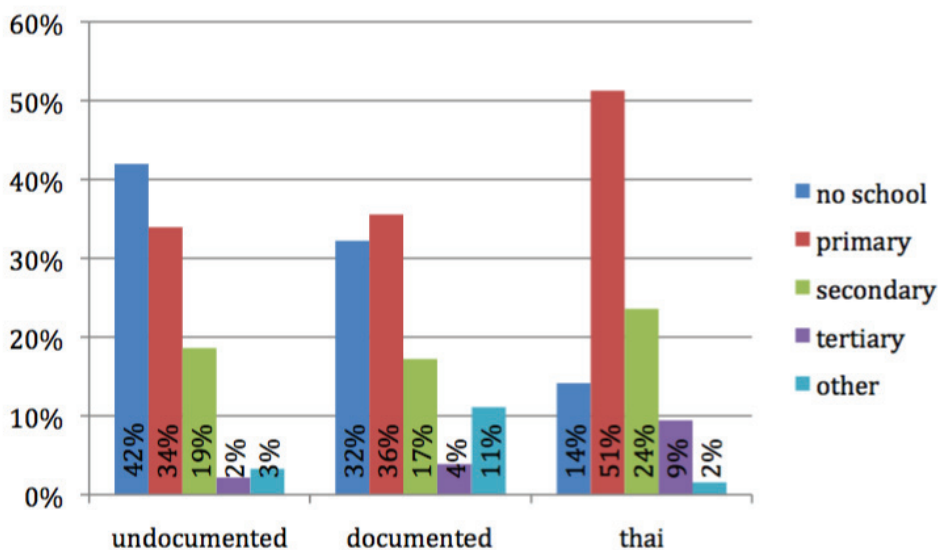
Type of housing



Sig diff between

undoc/doc	undoc/thai	doc/thai
p=.082	p=.00	p=.00

Education levels



* Education differences were significant between Thai and undocumented, and documented/undocumented. Differences were not significant between Thai and documented migrants.

No school: If respondent had no school or some primary school.

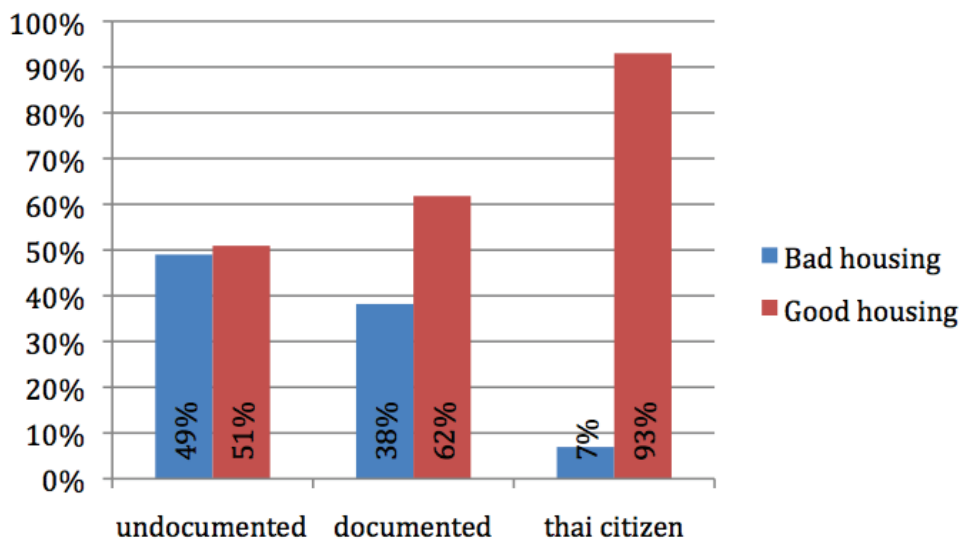
Primary school: If respondent completed primary school or had some secondary school.

Secondary school: If respondent had completed secondary school or had some university education.

Tertiary: If respondent had completed a university degree or had an advanced degree.

Other: If respondent had religious education, vocational training, non-formal training, or other.

Children in school



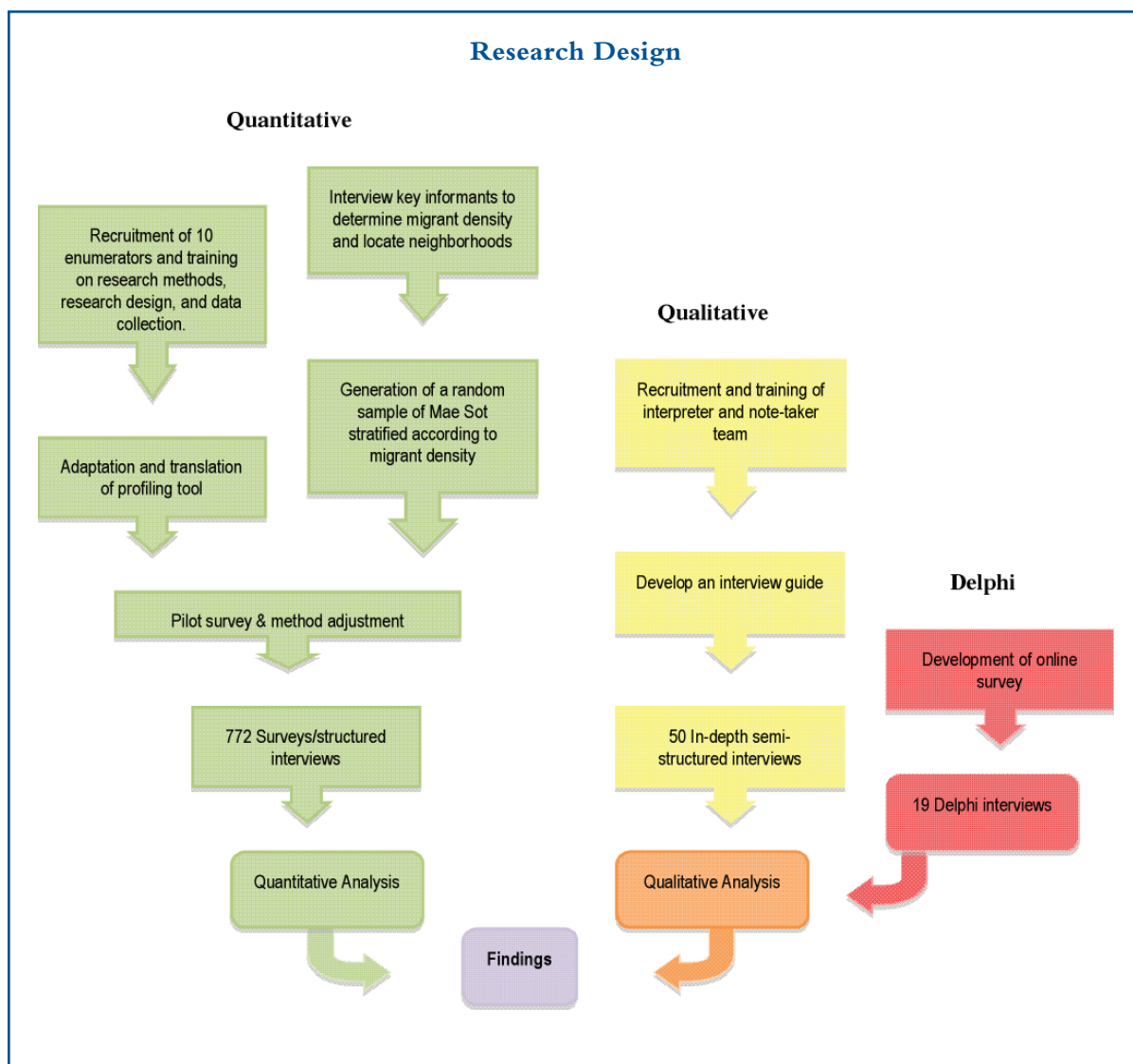
**Differences between all groups were significant.*

ANNEX 3: METHODS

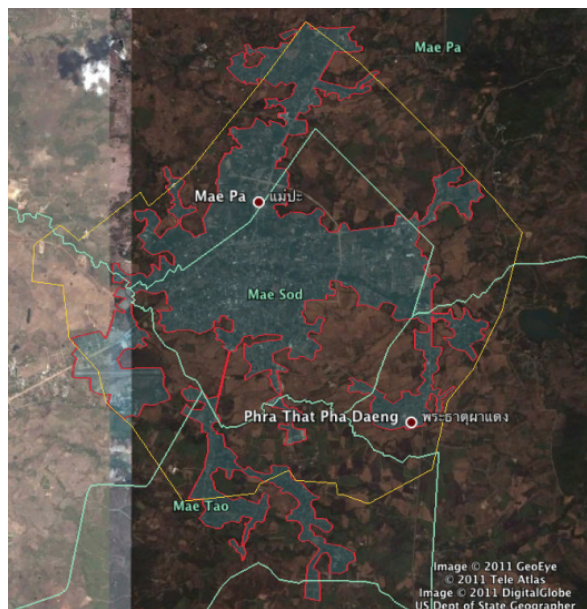
This study's findings come from both quantitative and qualitative methods. 772 individuals drawn from a stratified random sample participated in a survey; 50 participated in qualitative in-depth interviews, and 19 in an interviewing method known as the Delphi method. The preparation and implementation of these methods were conducted in such a way as to build as much as possible off of the expertise of community members and national and international staff of NGOs and UN agencies. From Figure 1 below, which illustrates the design for this study, one can see that the various methods employed in this research triangulate analysis to the extent possible.

Sample design: Survey

The sample of 772 individuals is derived from the population of Mae Sot residents, including Thai nationals and Burmese migrants. The boundaries of this study's sample adhere to an expanded version of the Thai government's boundaries of Mae Sot district, Tak Province. This was necessary in that—as the reader can see from Map 1 above and Map 3 below—the urban area of Mae Sot extends past the district boundary. A similarly-shaped boundary was drawn exactly 1.5 kilometers around the official district line (see Map 1).



Map 1: Extended boundary of Mae Sot with urban areas highlighted



As Map 1 illustrates, the urban area of Mae Sot covers parts of additional sub-districts, specifically Phra That Pha Daeng, Mae Pa, and Mae Tao. In addition, though not shown on the map, is Tha Sai Luat, the district to the west of Mae Sot that abuts the border with Burma.

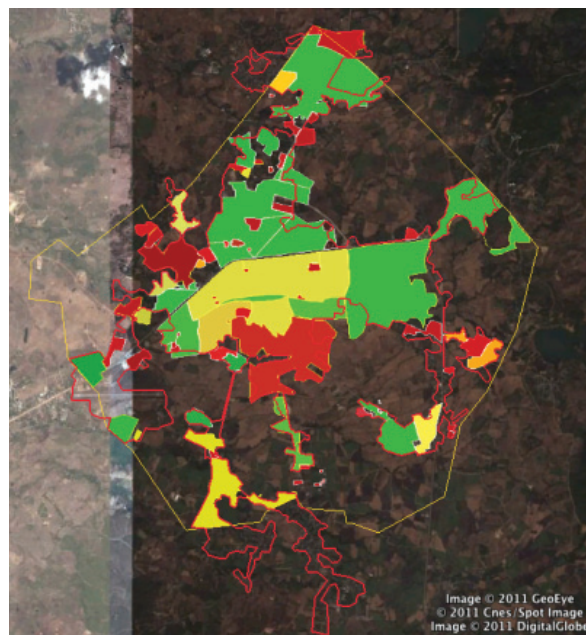
To ensure a sample that would enable sufficient comparison between the Thai and Burmese migrant populations, this study's researchers generated a random sample stratified according to migrant density. In addition, this strategy has the capacity to illuminate new communities that had been under-considered by civil society.

We broke "Migrant density" into three levels: high, medium, and low, corresponding roughly to the proportion of migrants to non-migrants in certain areas. The research team considered an area to be high density when the population was estimated at 2/3 or more Burmese. Medium density, referring to communities that were more mixed Thai and Burmese, implied between 1/3 and 2/3 Burmese migrant residents, and when an area was believed to be only 1/3 migrant, it was considered low density.¹⁰⁵ We determined

¹⁰⁵ Estimates take into consideration the fact that the population of Mae Sot is constantly in flux as for many migrants it is a place of transit from Burma to cities and towns deeper inside Thailand. Nevertheless, we determined that for the most part, neighborhoods and communities designated as Burmese tend to remain so over time, even if the population shifts.

density levels through interviews with key informants, national level staff at international NGOs and staff of Burmese community-based organizations (CBOs) throughout the Mae Sot area who could lend their vast knowledge of their community and surrounding areas to the preparation of this study's sample. In total, we interviewed more than 15 individuals to determine density levels.¹⁰⁶ As map 2 illustrates the urban area of Mae Sot divided by density level. Red is high density, yellow is medium, and green is low density. Those areas that are not highlighted likely still have migrants present, but were perceived to have lower numbers than those in the highlighted zones.

Map 2: Mae Sot with density levels



The prevalence of green and yellow—low and medium density—areas in Map 2 confirms that stratification is a crucial strategy to increase the chances of getting a representative sample. Initially, we planned to weight our sampling towards the Burmese respondents by sampling approximately 450–500 households in high density areas, 200–250 households in medium density areas, and 100–150 in low density parts of Mae Sot. To do this, we used Google Earth to

¹⁰⁶ We recognize that this approach for determining density levels is not an exact method, but by triangulating the perspectives of key informants we were able to be fairly certain that areas we labeled with density levels were accurate according to "expert" knowledge. Thus, in the absence of official statistics, key informant interviews enable us form a hypothesis about migrant density that we then tested through the survey of those areas.

scatter waypoints randomly throughout the areas marked as red, yellow, or green density areas—with 100 points in high density areas, 50 in medium density, and 30 in low density areas. We scattered points using a random number generator to select cells from a 25x25 grid system we had overlaid onto the map of Mae Sot in Google Earth. The waypoints, which correspond to GPS coordinates, reflect points in the center of randomly selected cells on the map of Mae Sot around which the research team planned to randomly select 4-5 households. Table 1 below reflects this initial plan:

Table 1: Mae Sot original sampling strategy

Density level	Waypoints	# Households
Red/high	100	450-500
Yellow/medium	50	200-250
Green/low	30	100-150
Total	180	750-900

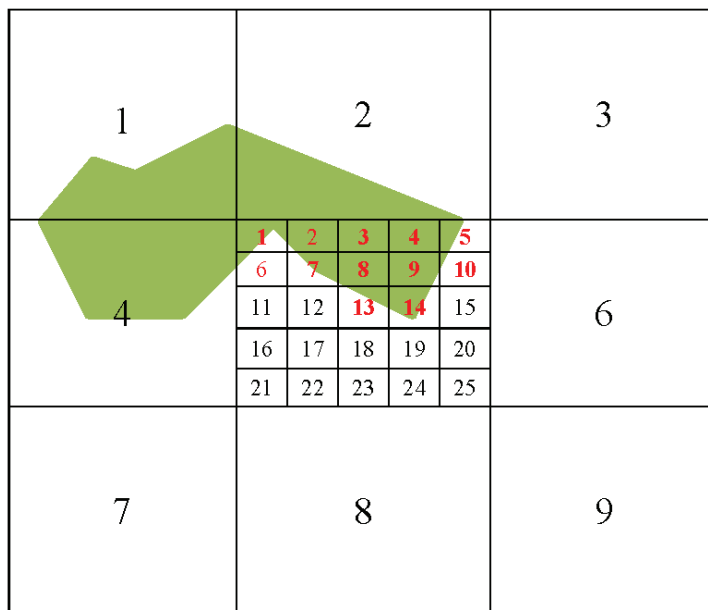
During the pilot phase of the study, the research team found the need to adjust in the following ways:

- 1) Some grid cells covered multiple density levels (for example, with a fraction marked as red and the rest marked as yellow). To adjust, we decided that if a cell had any red, even if it also had green or yellow, it was to be considered a high density cell, even if it had

areas in yellow or green. If a cell had yellow and green areas, it would be considered a medium density cell and those cells with only green were low density.

- 2) Some grid cells covered only a fraction of the sampling area (with less than half of a cell marked as one of the three density levels, for example). Thus, to place the waypoint at the center of the cell often meant sampling households outside of the designated density level, and possibly outside of the marked urban area. To compensate, we decided to add an additional 5x5 grid to each randomly selected cell and randomly choose grid cells within this larger grid cell to place waypoints. We only selected “small grid” cells that fell on one of the three density levels. In Figure 1 below, which serves as an example of this grid sampling strategy, a smaller grid was added to the randomly selected center cell, and one of the small grid cells that touches part of the green polygon (red numbers) will be randomly selected for the placement of a waypoint. This increases the likelihood that waypoints will be placed within areas marked by one of the three density levels. As the reader can see, waypoints are no longer limited to the center of the larger grid cell, but can be in any part as long as it hits an area covered by one of the density levels.

Figure 1: Example of adapted sampling grid strategy



3) Mae Sot, like many urban areas, is unevenly populated with some denser urban spaces and others that appear semi-rural. In the pilot phase of the project, we learned that we might run into logistical problems if we tried to sample 4-5 households per waypoint. Trying to locate five households around the waypoints in the more sparsely populated areas often proved impossible and time consuming. Frequently, waypoints fell in uninhabited areas such as fields or forests, or—given development trends in Mae Sot—within the walls of warehouses and factories where access was prohibited. To compensate for this, we settled for an average of 4-5 households per waypoint instead of exactly this number. If a grid cell (larger 25x25 grid) was more than ½ filled with a density level, we would sample 5 households per waypoint with two waypoints per cell. If a grid cell was between ¼ and ½ filled with a density level, we would sample 3 households per waypoint, two waypoints per cell. Finally, if a grid cell was ¼ or less filled, we would sample only two households per waypoint, selecting two waypoints. Table 2 below illustrates this adapted strategy.

Sot population in the general stratified random sample because of the security risks involved. Factory managers would need to grant the research team permission to enter and there could be no guarantee that the team would be able to conduct interviews out of the earshot of supervisors or managers.

Moreover, while some factories have managers who might be amicable and receptive to our request for entry, others are known in the NGO/CBO communities to not be. Thus, instead of visiting factories when randomly scattered waypoints fell upon them, we decided to separate “live-in” factory workers from the rest of our survey sample and work together with partner NGOs and CBOs who could help arrange visits with a purposive sample of 20 factory workers at 5 factories. Data from this sub-sample is available upon request, although not included in this report since these respondents fall beyond the scope of the random sample.

Once the sampling strategy had been finalized, each week the research team selected a group of cells from the list of those randomly chosen,

Table 2: Adjusted household/waypoint sampling strategy

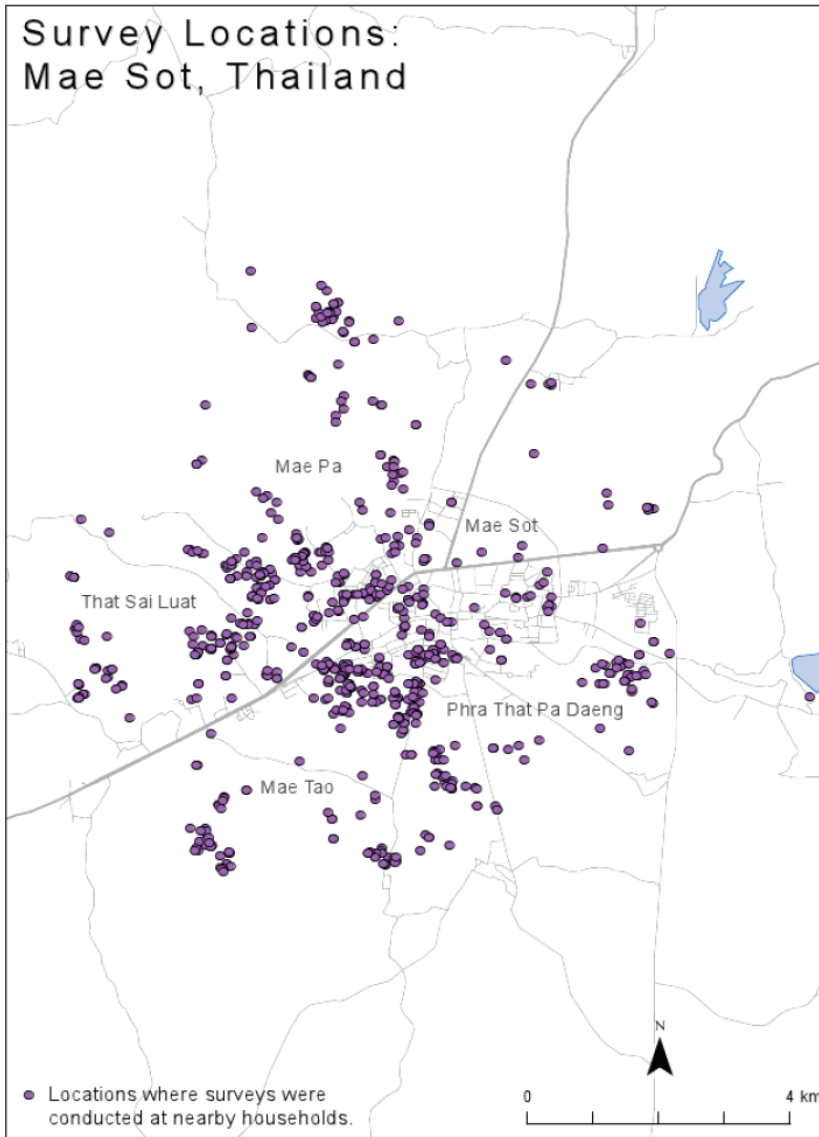
% Of cell filled with density	# HH/WP	# WP/Cell	Total #HH/cell
> 1/2	5	2	10
1/4-1/2	3	2	6
≤ 1/4	2	2	4

4) During the data collection phase, it often proved hard for enumerators to find the required number of households, especially in the outlying areas of Mae Sot. As a result, it became necessary to scatter more than the number of waypoints originally planned. See Map 3 for the locations of waypoints where we sampled.

5) Finally, a significant challenge proved to be including factory workers who worked and lived inside factory compounds. These workers rarely move beyond the walls of the factory, eating in a cafeteria on site or nearby and sleeping in dormitories or row houses within the compound walls. The research team determined that it would not be possible to include this segment of the Mae

determined waypoints and uploaded their GPS coordinates into handheld devices. Once at waypoints, field supervisors spun pens to randomly select the appropriate number of households. Upon approaching dwellings, if it appeared that nobody was home or that residents were unwilling to participate, enumerators moved one house to the right. They repeated this twice for a total of three dwellings and if they were still without respondents, enumerators would return to the field supervisor who would spin the pen once again. If spinning the pen and approaching households in this way proved fruitless three times, enumerators and the field supervisor would move on to another waypoint. The research team did not revisit dwellings later on when it appeared that nobody was home.

Map 3: Survey Locations



When random selection pointed to apartment buildings, field supervisors drew numbers from a bag to select the floor on which to sample, and then again to select the door on the chosen floor on which they should knock.

Sample design: Qualitative interviews

In addition to quantitative research, this study bases its findings off of 50 in-depth semi-structured qualitative interviews conducted with Thai and Burmese respondents. As the purpose of these interviews was to build off of the focus of the survey, i.e. to contribute to the profiling exercise, it was important to have a sample we could consider representative of the Mae Sot population. For this reason, we relied on multiple entry points to construct a purposive

sample that would enable comparisons along the following lines: Burmese migrants and Thai nationals; documented migrants and undocumented migrants; forced migrants and voluntary migrants; and men and women. Entry points included:

- a) **Community-based organization networks:** This is an ideal way to identify and recruit respondents who fall under the forced migrant category, as CBOs are often places of refuge for asylum seekers or those who have generally been uprooted from their place of origin and community network at home. Relying on CBOs as entry points also increases a sense of trust and familiarity between respondent and

interviewer, as it signifies moving from one trusted contact to another.

- b) **Survey sample:** Since we randomly generated the survey sample, respondents recruited from this list for qualitative interviews were also randomly selected from the population of Mae Sot, even though they were not randomly selected from among survey respondents. During the survey, enumerators asked respondents if they were willing to participate in follow-up interviews. For those willing, enumerators recorded their contact information in a separate notebook and the qualitative team later called to arrange an appointment for an interview. Since about 1/3 of the survey respondents were willing to participate in an additional interview, and from this 1/3 many did not list phone numbers (some possibly did not have phones while others were unwilling to give out their number), and of those who did leave phone numbers only about 1/2 were free to meet, the qualitative research team recruited respondents from this entry point simply by moving down the list of willing respondents.
- c) **Factory workers:** To also capture the experience of “live-in” factory workers in the interview sample, the qualitative research team joined the survey enumerators to visit factories. They conducted semi-structured interviews with one respondent at each factory at 4 out of 5 factories.

Sample design: Delphi method

As the Delphi method seeks to harness and build off of expert knowledge, the sample for this

approach consisted of those the researchers deemed to possess a unique command of issues related to migration, livelihoods, and security for residents of Mae Sot. In particular, this study sought to capitalize from the vast knowledge of those working on the frontlines of these issues: members of civil society, including national and international staff of NGOs and CBOs, representatives from the Thai government who work on issues involving migrants, and academics. The research team worked with partner organization IRC and other key informants to identify such experts and sent requests to individuals or heads of agencies for interviews. The following list specifies the groups represented in the Delphi sample:

- Jesuit Refugee Services
- World Education
- International Rescue Committee
- Human Rights and Development Foundation, Labor Law Clinic
- Social Action for Women
- Young Chi Oo Worker’s Association
- Mae Tao Clinic
- Mae Sot Civil Society
- Asian Research Center for Migration, Chulaongkorn University
- Thammasat University
- Institute for Population and
- Social Research, Mahidol University

Table 3: Qualitative sample design

Entry Point	# Burmese respondents	# Thai respondents	Total
CBO Networks	15		15
Survey Sample	19	12* ¹⁰⁷	31
Factory	4		4
Total	38	12	50**¹⁰⁸

107 *This study’s research team did not rely on Thai civil society for qualitative sample recruitment of Thai participants in the way it did with Burmese respondents because the team could not rely on a network of trust with the former in the same way it could with the latter. Having only one entry point for Thai qualitative respondents could, however, be a limitation in this study.

108 **While the initial qualitative sampling plan involved 35 Burmese and 15 Thai respondents, it proved very difficult to

recruit Thais for the in-depth interviews. This could be for a number of reasons including the fact that they already participated in an interview for this project, they feel less invested in the project to the extent that NGOs (like the IRC) are generally believed to be perceived by the Thai as more invested in support for migrants and not Thais, or because Thai respondents are more involved in regular, full-time employment.

- Tak Labor Protection Office
- Tak Chamber of Commerce
- Tak Public Prosecutor Office
- Mae Sot Police Station
- Tak Office of Social Development and Human Security
- Sub-district Administrative Office (Or Bor Tor)

Data collection: Survey

In total the research team interviewed 772 people throughout Mae Sot. Data collection took place between 1 February and 18 March 2011. The following section outlines the various components involved in preparing and implementing data collection.

- ***Adaptation and translation of profiling tool***

Professional translators took the English-language version of the questionnaire and translated it into Burmese, Karen, and Thai. Different professional translators then back-translated the documents into English to test for linguistic equivalency. Then, as an additional measure to ensure that all language-versions of the tool consisted of the same content, IRC staff worked together with enumerators and the research team leader to translate and back-translate the questionnaire. Enumerators broke into three teams by language while the research coordinator worked with the English-language version and everybody moved question by question through the tool.

The structured interview form used in this study was derived from earlier profiling exercises conducted by the Feinstein International Center and adapted to fit the context of Mae Sot, Thailand. The process of adapting the tool to fit the Mae Sot context involved three steps:

- 1) The research team circulated the profiling tool within the IRC Thailand offices to both increase the applicability of the survey to the context of Mae Sot and to elicit feedback from national and international staff working on issues related to health, gender-based violence, protection, advocacy, and education.
- 2) The FIC consultant and head of the research team in Thailand led a 2-week training for

enumerators in collaboration with national staff from the IRC designated to work as part of the research team. The first week involved instruction on research methods, including study design, data collection strategies, analysis, and ethics. The second week consisted of a more focused look at the research plan for this study, with several days spent on adapting the profiling tool. During this period, enumerators—most of whom are from Mae Sot—gave input regarding the extent to which questions fit the local context; during this phase, questions were added, deleted, and adapted significantly although the core elements of the tool remained the same. After enumerators had given input, the research team re-circulated the revised version of the tool to IRC staff and FIC researchers for additional feedback.

- 3) Once enumerators, FIC staff, IRC staff, and the research coordinator arrived at a consensus on a revised version of the questionnaire, enumerators tested the tool out during a 1-week pilot. Enumerators conducted interviews for half the day and then they and the rest of the research team debriefed and discussed sampling, data collection strategies, and possible changes to the questionnaire for the other half of the day. The piloting phase proved critical as it led to important changes to several questions that respondents had a hard time understanding or felt uncomfortable answering.

Implementing the survey

With stratified random sampling, the area for data collection extended across the five sub-districts mentioned above, all within Mae Sot district, and 35 villages/communities. In order to facilitate a smooth process of collecting data, the IRC met with the chief of the district to inform him of the plans for this study. The district chief in turn made an announcement about this project's plans to all of the relevant village heads. Nevertheless, occasionally village heads informed the research team—usually the field supervisors and enumerators when they were in the field collecting data—that they had not been notified about this study. To reconcile this issue, field supervisors began carrying copies of the letter IRC had written to the district chief and

this seemed to mollify wary village heads. While their permission is not required to conduct interviews in the areas under their influence, some respondents did emphasize their concern over whether or not the survey had been cleared first with the village chief. This serves as a reflection of the importance of being inclusive of and transparent with local authorities vis-à-vis the research process.

Enumerators divided into four teams, each with the capacity to conduct interviews in Thai, Burmese, and Karen (primarily the S'gaw dialect). On average the research team was able to conduct 25 interviews per day. Interviews typically took between 30 minutes and 1 hour with Burmese respondents and 20 to 40 minutes with Thai nationals. This is because there are significantly more questions that apply to migrants and not to Thais, e.g. those questions about respondents' migration history. As the reader can see in the Annexes 4 and 5, the profiling tool inquired about respondents' living situations, employment status, migratory history, vulnerability in Mae Sot, and strategies for solving problems and accessing mechanisms for justice.

During the pilot phase, the research team quickly noticed that it was proving difficult to find people at home during working hours and that those who were at home were not a representative sample of the population of Mae Sot; rather they were predominately older women. To compensate for this, the research team decided to diversify the schedule for interviewing. Twice a week, enumerators conducted interviews between 10:00 am and 7:00 pm while the rest of the week they worked from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. The team also divided so that only half the enumerators worked on Fridays while the other half worked on Sundays in order to capitalize on times when they believed a greater number of respondents would be at home. This proved a successful strategy.

Data collection: Qualitative

A qualitative research team carried out 50 interviews for this study. The team consisted of the FIC consultant, two interpreters (one who was also a co-researcher and fluent in English, Burmese, and S'gaw Karen and the other fluent in English, Thai, and S'gaw Karen), and a note-

taker/transcriber. Together the team conducted on average 3 interviews per day between 21 February and 31 March. Interviews typically lasted between 45 minutes and 2 hours and questions covered a range of topics, which, like the survey, focused on livelihoods, access to healthcare and education, security, and access to justice in Mae Sot (see Annexes 4 and 5 for the full interview guide). The team conducted interviews in a semi-structured and in-depth style in a location of the respondent's choosing—usually in their home or workplace and not always in private. The research team began interviews with a series of open-ended questions but were flexible in allowing responses to guide the flow of the interview, making sure that by the end all topics were covered. The FIC consultant and the interpreter/ co-researcher took turns conducting interviews, except for those conducted with respondents who live inside factories. In these cases, because the FIC consultant is a Westerner and did not wish to draw undue attention in an already precarious situation, only the Karen interpreter/co-researcher and note-taker conducted these.

Data Collection: Delphi

The Delphi method is designed to analyze group consensus across groups or categories of respondents through multiple rounds of interviewing. The first series of interviews are exploratory, and subsequent rounds entail presenting respondents with an initial analysis of preliminary interviews to elicit their responses and measure changes in their attitudes when they are faced with the opinions of others in their group. In this study, we conducted only two rounds of interviews. As mentioned above, 19 respondents participated in the Delphi method, however two were unable to participate in the 2nd round.

The research team prepared the Delphi method as a survey that respondents could complete online at their own convenience, or, if they had limited English abilities or computer or internet access, the team conducted Delphi interviews in person and then used the online survey form for data entry. Roughly half of respondents participated online while the research team conducted the other half face-to-face. It is likely that this created some difference in responses;

however, the Delphi was employed primarily as an exploratory method with a small sample and without intentions of maintaining the same methodological rigor as the other methods in this study. In-person interviews lasted between 20 and 90 minutes and often resembled in-depth discussions with key informants as the Delphi's questions sparked a range of reactions. As a result, in addition to analyzing the direct responses to Delphi questions, side comments provided rich data the team recorded and incorporated in this report.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data from this study was analyzed using Stata. The research team analyzed qualitative data using Hyperresearch, a CAQDAS (Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software) program. Researchers randomly selected 12 interviews (8 Burmese and 4 Thai) and conducted line-by-line inductive coding to generate over 200 codes that were then applied to the additional 38 interviews. These codes were then used to frame an analysis that built off of and deepened the quantitative findings.

Limitations to the methods

As errors or limitations arose during the course of this study, the research team took note of them and determined the best strategy to diminish their negative impact. On a general level, each method used in this study has its own limitations. On the one hand, qualitative methods with small samples cannot generate findings representative of whole populations though their in-depth nature provides a more complex understanding regarding respondents' lives and perceptions. On the other hand, quantitative approaches enable population-wide assertions but lack the capacity to explore key issues in detail. Limitations to the methods used in this study include issues that arose in the process of sampling and data collection in particular.

It was commonplace for the research team to have difficulty in sampling the appropriate number of households per waypoint. Most frequently, dwellings were locked and it appeared that nobody was home, but quite often residents declined to participate in the survey. During the

stage of data collection, interviewers encountered a challenge in accessing a representative sample because many prospective respondents were out working. To account for this, interviewers worked in shifts, with some interviewing until 7pm and on Sundays.

Additionally, towards the outskirts of Mae Sot, a number of waypoints fell in uninhabited areas such as forests, industrial spaces, or agricultural fields. Nevertheless, it proved important to visit locations that on maps looked empty in that on numerous occasions the research team would find temporary communities of migrants living in make-shift structures or living inside larger construction projects or developments. These are some of the more vulnerable people living in Mae Sot. What turned out to be a generally low response rate in this study necessitated the scattering of many more waypoints than were originally planned. However, though far more waypoints were involved in this study than intended, the ratio of waypoints between density levels remained similar. One result of the low-response rate in outlying areas was a slightly heavier sampling in more densely populated areas.

Another dilemma that arose in terms of sampling was the lack of availability of population figures, which were needed to reweight results in such a way that would allow for population-wide assertions. There is no known accurate number for the total population of Mae Sot. While the official number was listed as 48,000, this figure is from a census that only included Thai citizens. Many experts believe that there may be up to 200,000 migrants in the district, though no total number is known. Perhaps the biggest limitation of the study is that it is not representative of the Mae Sot population in its entirety. In order to generate a sample of Mae Sot that would include an analyzable amount of migrants, it was necessary to create a random sample that was stratified according to areas believed to have a high density of migrant households. However, there are not accurate population figures for Mae Sot that include migrant households, and so it is not possible to re-weight the data, enabling extrapolation.

Additional errors arose during the process of interviewing and coding interviews. Perhaps

most notably, interviewers appeared to have a difficult time answering the question at the end of the survey, which asks them whether they think the respondent they just finished interviewing is a forced or voluntary migrant. It may have been difficult for interviewers to measure this based on the interview they just had, they may have felt some discomfort in being placed in a position of having to give their perspective on such a matter, or there may have been some confusion over what the question was asking. During the analysis stage, the responses to such questions were often excluded as they did not provide accurate results.

On a few occasions, respondents asked to stop the interview midway through and the rest of the data from these cases appears as missing, though enumerators were unsure as to whether they should mark everything unanswered as “refuse to answer.” In other instances, other people present during the interview interjected their opinions; a couple of times spouses handed the task of answering questions over to each other suddenly in the middle of an interview such that one individual answered the first half of questions while another answered the second or the couple took turns responding to different questions.

It is also possible that results were affected if respondents were busy and took time off to participate; they may have hurried through certain answers. Additionally, respondents may not have always felt comfortable to discuss financial or security matters.

Finally, this survey did not sufficiently sample to include respondents who not only work but live in factories. Employers often closely monitor “live-in” factory workers, and it proved difficult to find private locations to conduct interviews where respondents could feel free to speak candidly. While interviewers were able to conduct 24 interviews with “live-in” factory workers, these respondents were not randomly selected via the same process as other respondents. ■

ANNEX 4

URBAN HOUSEHOLD PROFILING SURVEY: MAE SOT

Z01	Form Number (unique ID)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Z02	Interviewer Code (write name)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Z03	Date of Interview (DD/MM/YY)	<input type="text"/>	/	<input type="text"/>
Z05	Administrative Sub-district (tambon)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Z06	Stratum Code	<input type="text"/>		
<i>GPS Information</i>				
Z07	GPS Unit	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Z08	Way Point	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Z08a	Latitude	<input type="text"/>	Z09b	Longitude
		<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>

Approach to Dwelling

1. Ask to speak to a person who can speak on behalf of the household.
2. If he/she is not available, find out when they are likely to be back or free.
3. Scheduled availability time..... (check with supervisor)

Z09 Status of questionnaire. **Check the box that applies.**

	1. Selected Sample Site	2. 1 st Replacement Site (Alternate 1)	3. 2 nd Replacement site (Alternate 2)
a. Accepted	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Not at home or did not answer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Refused to participate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Other reason for non-selection (<i>write in</i>)			

Oral Consent

[*Greeting*], my name is [*your name*], and I am working on a research project to understand the livelihoods of people in Mae Sot. This survey is being conducted by a research institute based in a US university called Tufts, in partnership with the International Rescue Committee. I would like to ask about your status here, your livelihood activities, your access to services, and a few other questions. We are very grateful for the time you are spending with us today. The information you provide may help us in determining future programs which we hope may benefit your community. We cannot give you anything for participating in this survey, except our appreciation. You are under no obligation to participate, and are free to not answer any question and stop the interview at any time. We will keep

what you say confidential and it will not be given to the government or any other group. Your name will never appear in our research. We will not write your name on this interview form. The interview should take less than 50 minutes. Please stop me and ask me to explain if you do not understand any of my questions.

Do you have any questions? Are you willing to go ahead? Yes No

TO BE FILLED OUT BY INTERVIEWER (DO NOT ASK RESPONDENT)

Z10 Respondent Sex 1 = male 2 = female

Z11 Is the dwelling located in, on or near (within sight) of any of the following: **(list all that apply)**

1 = landslide area/steep hill/slope	6 = urban cramped slum
2 = flood prone area/ river bank/canal	7 = rice field/plantation/farm
3 = garbage mountain/pile	8 = construction site
4 = road/highway	9 = temporary settlement
5 = industrial area/factory	10 = none of the above
	11 = other dangerous site <small>write in</small>

Z12 What type of dwelling does the respondent live in?

1 = freestanding house (house by itself)	6 = slum house
2 = row house (single story row)	7 = hostel or boarding house
3 = apartment	08 = hut
4 = backyard house or room	09= town house (Multiple story block of housing)
5 = backyard shack	10=commercial building
	11 = tent
	12 = monastery
	13=shack
	14 = other <small>write in</small> _____

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Indicate *main* building materials used for the dwelling: **(only one answer for each column)**

		Z13: Walls	Z14: Roof	Z15: Floor
1	wood/plywood			
2	stone/brick			
3	cement			
4	plastic sheet/tarpaulin			
5	artificial wood			
6	tin/corrugated iron, zinc or steel			
7	bamboo			
8	leaf/thatch			
9	dirt/ground			
10	tile			
11	don't know			
12	other <small>write in</small>			

Z16 Who is present in the room at the beginning of the interview? 1 = respondent is alone
2 = spouse is present
3 = other adult(s) present
4 = children are present
(indicate all that apply)

Begin Interview

I DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

D01	Are you the head of this household	1 = yes (IF YES → D02) 2 = No	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D01a	IF NO: What is your relationship to the head of the household?	1 = spouse of head 2 = child of head 3 = parent of head 4 = other relation of head	5 = adopted/fostered child 6 = friend/not related 7 = other ^{write} in _____ 88=DK 99=RA	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
D02	What is your age? <i>(ask them to guess if they don't know)</i>	<i>Write in number of years</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
D03	Where were you born? <i>(Write in name of town/village)</i>	Country code Province/State/Division code Township/District _____ Town/village/sub-district	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
D04	Ethnic Group <i>(use code sheet)</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
D05	What is your marriage status? <i>(Read choices)</i>	1 = married → D06 2 = engaged, in a partnership 3 = single 4 = widowed	5 = divorced/separated (IF WIDOWED OR NOT MARRIED → D07) 9=RA	<input type="checkbox"/>
D06	IF MARRIED: Is your spouse currently living here with you?	1 = yes 2 = no 9 = RA	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D06a	Do you have legal documents confirming your marriage?	1 = yes 2 = no 8 = DK 9 = RA	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D07	What is your highest level of education? <i>(Indicate one only)</i>	1 = no school 2 = religious education 3 = some primary school 4 = completed primary school 5 some secondary school 6 = completed secondary school	9 = advanced degree (Masters, MD, PhD, etc) 10 = vocational training 11 = non-formal (adult, bridge education, accelerated leaning program 12 = other ^{Please write-in} _____ 88=DK 99=RA	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

7 = some university
8 = completed
university degree

D08	Are you a citizen of Thailand?	1 = yes (IF YES → D10) 2 = no 9=RA	<input type="checkbox"/>
D08a	Are you a registered citizen in your home country?	1= Yes 2=No 8=DK 9=RA	<input type="checkbox"/>
D09	IF NOT A CITIZEN OF THAILAND: What is your immigration status in Thailand? <i>(If further clarification is needed, ask to see any immigration documents)</i>	1 = UNHCR refugee ID certificate issued for camp resident 2 =Person of Concern letter issued by UNHCR 3 = UNHCR SLIP holders (NI-5xxxx) 4 = Non-Thai passport only (no legal status/visa expired) 5= Non-Thai passport w/ valid visa (has legal status) 6= Temp. passport from Burma for MOU or Nationality Verification 7 = Registered with MoI (Tor Ror 38/1 only) 8 = Registered with MoI & MoL and having valid documents 9 = Registered with MoI & MoL before but documents expired 10 = Ethnic minority/hilltribe temporary stay permit (13 digits on ID card beginning with 6 & 7) 11 = Non-status person card (13 digits on ID card begin with 0) 12 = Permanent residency (13 digits on ID card begin with 3, 4, 5 & 8) 13= No status, informal card (Mae Tao card, BMTA card) (GO TO D09a & D09b) 14=No document → GO TO D09a & D09b, ALL OTHER → D10 15=Stateless 88=DK 99=RA	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
D09a	IF ANSWER IS #13 (no document), then: why do you not have registration or legal status documents in Thailand? (<i>only one answer</i>)	1 = Do not understand procedure or information on legal status granted by Thai or Burmese government 2 = Do not have a valid document/evidence to prove your genuine legal residency 3 = Are not allowed to proceed by yourself (family member, dependent on another person) 4 = Do not have time to arrange the process 5 = Do not have enough money to pay the fee and related costs (broker, travel, etc) 6 = Do not have enough money to pay bribes 7 = Do not want to share personal information because of fear for family in Burma would face problems 8 = Was not aware when registration was happening 9 = Felt insecure to share information with Burmese government 10 =Felt insecure to share information with Thai government 11 = Unwilling to travel to Burma to obtain documents needed for registration 12 =You did apply for registration but authority refused to register /did not meet the criteria of registration 13 =Not willing to be registered 14=The law does not allow you to access registration 15 =Other <small>Please write in:</small> _____ 88=DK 99=RA	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

D09b IF NO DOCUMENT (#13 FOR D09)→ If you have an option for labour registration, which of the following options do you prefer in order to legalise your entry status? (**Read choices out loud**)

1=Migrant registration with Thai authority
 2=Obtaining temporary passport through national verification process
 3=Seasonal worker registration/border employment
 4=Travel back to Burma and reprocess to reenter Thailand legally through Government to Government mechanism to import labor
 5=Other _____

D10 What are the languages spoken in your household?
List up to three.
See code sheet

1st language 2nd language 3rd language

II HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

H01 How many rooms are in this dwelling? *Write in number of rooms*

I want to ask you only about your household, not about any other households living in this dwelling. By “your household” I mean people you share income and food with on a daily basis.

H02 Does your household have your own latrine, or do you share with other households? 1 = own latrine
 2 = shared with others households

H03 Where do you prepare food? 1 = own dwelling
 2 = shared facilities with other households
 3= No place to prepare food
 4=other
 8=DK
 9=RA

H04 What is the total number of people in your household living here including you? *number of people*

H04a (**Only migrants**) Do you have any immediate or close family (children, siblings, parents, spouse, uncles, aunts, cousins, grandparents) living elsewhere in Thailand [NOT MAE SOT]?

1 = yes, 2 = no, 8=DK, 9=RA

Who? 1= children 2= siblings 3= parents 4 = spouse 5=uncle/aunt 6=cousin 7=grandparents	Where? <i>Write in; put code after</i> ONE PLACE PER ROW	How often in the past two years were you in contact? 1=At least once a month 2=4times per Year or more 3=Once to three times 4=not for past year 5=Never	How do you communicate? 1=I call from my own mobile 2=chat 3=they call me on my mobile 4=internet phone (VOIP) 5=email 6=social network site 7 = phone booth (call centre) 8 = send message through friends 9= SMS 10=Meet each other ONLY WRITE IN FIRST TWO CHOICES	Do you ever send them help? Yes=1 No = 2 They send me help=3 We send each other help=4

H04b (**For migrants only**) Are you in contact with family or friends in other countries, for example in Burma, or further away in Australia, Canada, or USA?

1 = yes, 2 = no , 8=DK, 9=RA

Family member 1= Immed family 2= Extended family 3= friends, others ONE GROUP OF PERSONS PER ROW	Country + province <i>WRITE IN, PUT CODE AFTER</i>	How often in the past two years were you in contact? 1=At least once a month 2=4xYr or more 3=Once , twice, or three times 4=not for past year	How do you communicate? 1=I call them with my own mobile 2=skype or chat 3=they call me on my mobile 4=internet phone (VOIP) 5=email 6=social network site 7 = phone booth 8 = send message with someone 9= SMS ONLY WRITE IN FIRST TWO CHOICES	Do they ever send you help? Yes=1 No = 2 3 = I send them help 4=We send each other help

H05 How many children in this household are under 16? **(IF 00 → H09)** *number of children*

H06 How many school age children go to school? *Write in number (IF ALL GO TO SCHOOL, WRITE IN NUMBER AND → H08)*

H07 **IF SOME DO NOT GO TO SCHOOL, Why do they not go to school?**
(multiple responses allowed)

1 = school fees are too costly	5 = discrimination	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
2 = school materials too costly (uniforms, stationary)	6 = marriage	
3 = transportation cost/too far	7 = pregnancy	
4 = children must work	8 = fear of harassment/abuse	
	09 = illness or handicap	
	10 = no money	
	11 = other ^{write in} _____	
	88=DK 99=RA	

H08 Are any children in your household earning outside income?
If yes, ask how many? If none, write 00 *number of children earners*

H09 How many people in your household are over 65? *number of elderly:*

H10 Are there any disabled or chronically ill persons in your household?
If yes, ask how many? If none, write 00, and → H12 *number of disabled:*

H11 **IF ANY DISABLED:**
What type of disability or chronic illness?
(multiple responses allowed)

1= physical (missing limbs, cannot walk)	3=deaf	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
2= blind	4= mentally disabled	
	5= chronically ill	
	6=other: write-in _____	
	8=DK	
	9=RA	

H12 Do you or a family member living here have the right of residency for house/dwelling?
1 = yes
2 = no **(IF NO → H16)**
88 = DK
99 = RA

H13 **IF YES,**
Do you or a family member living here have a license or proof that you have the right
1 = yes
2 = no
88 = DK
99 = RA

of residency for this house?

H14	Do you own the land?	1 = yes 2 = no (IF NO →H16)	88 = DK 99 = RA	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
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IF YOU OWN THE LAND:				
H15	Do you have a title deed to prove you own the land?	1 = yes 2 = no	88 = DK 99 = RA	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>

H16	How much rent or monthly payment does your household pay each month?	1= Below 300 THB 2= 301 to 1000 THB 3= 1001 to 2500 THB	4= 2501 to 5000 THB 5 = Above 5000 THB 77=NA 88 = DK 99 = RA	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
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Now I want to ask you about any other households that live in this dwelling.

H17	Do other households besides yours live in this dwelling?	1 = yes 2 = no (IF NO →SECTION III)	88 = DK 99 = RA	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
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H18	How many other households live in this dwelling/ structure?		88 = DK 99 = RA	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
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H19	How do you share expenses with the other households living here? <i>(Indicate all - multiple answers allowed)</i>	1= share rent 2= share food costs 3= Share income 4= share bills (medical, water, electricity)	5 = other write in _____ 6= hosted for free 7 = no relationship –each household is on their own 88 = DK 99 = RA	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
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H19a	How else would you define your relationship with the other households living here?	1=relatives 2=friends	3=political association 4=no relationship, just neighbors 5 = business relationship 6=Other (write in) _____ 88=DK 99=RA	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
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H19b	Do you ever feel that it is unsafe for you or members of your household to live with the other households here?	1=yes 88=DK	2=no 99=RA	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
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H20	Did any of these other households come to this place to escape problems? <i>(If they say yes, then ask what kinds of problems. Fill out for maximum two other households. Do not</i>			
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read possible answers. Indicate all responses)

(more than one allowed for each household.)

	a. 1 st household	b. 2 nd Household
1= conflict or violence		
2= land disputes		
3= government evictions/ development projects		
4= environmental problems (drought or floods)		
5= for economic reasons (could not make a living, to find work) (IF they answer 5 → Ask: I see and what were the main factors that impacted their livelihood where they were before?)		
6= for education (own or children's)		
7= to join family in Mae Sot		
8 fleeing fighting		
9 persecution (religious, political, ethnic)		
10 GBV		
11=forced labor, taken as a porter, forced military service		
12= No		
13 = other ^{write in}		
88 = DK 99 = RA		

III HOUSEHOLD ECONOMIC SITUATION

E01 (Indicate current employment situation in top box, and past year's employment situation or additional situation in bottom box)

In the past year, what has been your employment situation? Please tell me first what your situation is now, then if you do other jobs, or have in the past year

		Describe (if necessary)
01	unemployed but looking for work, no income	
02	unemployed and not looking for work (he/she is supported by others, or too old, or any other reason)	
03	student	
04	housewife (includes anyone staying home and looking after children etc)	
05	car washer	
06	beggar	
07	maid	
08	self employed in low-end jobs, offer services, employs no one (casual work: porter, selling home made food)	
09	self employed in more structured activity: for example shop owner, owner of a stall at the market, tailor, taxi driver, mechanic, beauty salon, vendors... (he/she may <u>own or rent</u> the taxi or any assets)	
10	own business, employs at least one person for pay: E.g. owner of a shop, restaurant, mini-bus.	



11	PART-TIME wages, employed by individual/small business (for example shopkeeper, mini-bus driver, mechanic, WORKING ONLY FEW HOURS OR EVERY NOW AND THEN)	
12	FULL-TIME wages, employed by individual/small business (for example sales person, factory worker, English teacher....)	
13	salaried, works for organization or company	
14	salaried, works for government (includes teachers in public school, police and people working in Govt. offices)	
15	works for a family business, no direct wage (ie shop assistant in father's shop, coloring fabric at home with relatives, shopkeeper in the father's shop...)	
16	retired	
88	DK	
99	RA	

E02 How many people, including yourself, are currently earning income in your household? (**IF ONLY INCOME EARNER**→E05) *number of income earners*

E03 Of these income earners, how many are women? *number of women income earners*

E04 **Of other income earners:** How are the other income earners in your household currently earning income? **(indicate all that apply)**

		Describe (if necessary)
01	beggar	
02	maid	
03	self employed in low-end jobs, offer services, employs no one (casual work: porter, selling home made food; NOT CAR WASHER)	
04	self employed in more structured activity: for example shop owner, owner of a stall at the market, tailor, taxi driver, mechanic, beauty salon, vendors... (he/she may own or rent the taxi or any assets)	
05	own business, employs at least one person for pay: Eg. owner of a shop, restaurant, mini-bus.	
06	PART-TIME wages, employed by individual/small business (for example shopkeeper, mini-bus driver, mechanic, WORKING ONLY FEW HOURS OR EVERY NOW AND THEN)	
07	FULL-TIME wages, employed by individual/small business (for example sales person factory worker, English teacher....)	
08	salaried, works for organization or company	
09	salaried, works for government (includes teachers in public school, police and people working in Govt. offices)	
10	works for a family business, no direct wage (ie shop assistant in father's shop, coloring fabric at home with relatives, shopkeeper in the father's shop...)	
11	Remittances	
12	Retired	
88	DK	
99	RA	

E05 From the earners in your household: Approximately how much income does your household get on a good month?

1 = less than 1000	6 = 5001- 6,000	
2 = 1001 – 2000	7 = more than 6,000	
3 = 2001 – 3000	88 = DK	
4 = 3001 – 4000	99 = RA	
5 = 4001 – 5000		

E05a Approximately how much income does your household get on a bad month (low end estimate)?

1 = less than 1000	6 = 5001- 6,000	
2 = 1001 – 2000	7 = more than 6,001	
3 = 2001 – 3000	88 = DK	
4 = 3001 – 4000	99 = RA	
5 = 4001 – 5000		

E06 Does your household own or have access to any of the following? I'm going to read a list.

1 = yes	8= DK
2 = no	9= RA

(Read out loud to respondent one by one for a response)

- | | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| a radio | <input type="checkbox"/> | h electricity | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b television | <input type="checkbox"/> | i computer | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c bicycle | <input type="checkbox"/> | j access to internet | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d mobile phone | <input type="checkbox"/> | k motorcycle | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e car | <input type="checkbox"/> | l tractor / mini-tractor | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f mosquito net | <input type="checkbox"/> | m agricultural tools (machete, hoe, etc) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g Songtheaw/bus | <input type="checkbox"/> | n sewing machine | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- E07 How do you get drinkable water? *(Indicate all that apply)*
- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 = direct water pipe connection | 9=protected well, pond or tank |
| 2 = illegal connection | 10=unprotected well or tank |
| 3 = pond | 11 = other |
| 4 = hand pump | 88 = DK |
| 5 = rain water collection | 99 = RA |
| 6 = water vendors/shop | |
| 7= Water kiosk | |
| 8=river, stream | |

- E14 Have you and/or your family members ever used the Thai Government health facilities (Hospital, Health Center, Vaccination outreach, mobile clinic) 1=yes 2=no 88 = DK 99 = RA

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IV. ASSISTANCE

- A01 In the past year, have you or your household ever received any assistance from the government, or an aid agency? 1 = yes 2 = no → **SECTION V** 8 = DK 9 = RA

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- A01a **IF YES →** Who gave you assistance? 1=CBO, 2=NGO, 3=Religious group, 4=other charity, 5=government 8=DK *(multiple answers possible)*

A02	What kind of assistance was it? <i>(list all responses)</i>	1 = food aid 2 = housing assistance 3 = health services 4 = health information 5 = information about rights, protection, legal matters 6 = legal protection 7=cash for work 8 = voucher 9= basic need grants	10 = social grant 11 = micro-credit/financial services 12 = NFI 13 = education 14 = water 15 = skills training 16=other _____ 17=Gov. financial support 88 = DK 99 = RA	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
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A02a	Where did you receive this assistance from <i>(source of assistance mentioned in A01a)?</i>	1=In a camp 2=In Mae Sot 3=In another urban area 4=In another country	88=DK 99=RA	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
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V. MIGRATION AND HOUSEHOLD MOBILITY

M01	How long have you lived in this city?	1 = since birth 2 = came as a child (before 16) (IF BORN HERE OR CAME AS A CHILD → M01a, OTHERWISE → M02)	3 = more than 8 yrs 4 = 5-8 years 5 = 3-4 years 6 = 1-2 years 7 = 6 months- 1 year 8= less than 6 months 88 = DK 99 = RA	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
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M01a	IF RESPONDENT WAS BORN HERE OR CAME AS CHILD: When did your family (parents) come to Mae Sot?	1= family was born here →SECTION VI 2=family came as children 3 = more than 8 yrs 4 = 5-8 years 5 = 3-4 years 6 = 1-2 years 7 = 6 mo-1 year 8=less than six months 88 = DK 99 = RA	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
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M02	What year did you (or your family) come to this city (the most recent time)? <i>(Year)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
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M03	Where were you or your family living before you (or they) came to Mae Sot? <i>(Write in name of town, or village)</i>	Country code Province/State/Division code District/township name <i>(Write in)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
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M04	Why did you or they leave that place? <i>(Write in first two responses) IF ANSWER IS 5 (economic reasons) GO TO M04a. ALL OTHER ANSWERS SKIP to M05</i>	1= conflict or violence 2= land disputes 3= government evictions/development projects 4= environmental problems (drought or floods)	5= for economic reasons (could not make a living, left to find work) 6= for education (own or children's) 7= to join family in Mae Sot 8 fleeing fighting 9 persecution (religious, political, ethnic) 10 GBV 11=forced labor, taken as a porter, forced military service 12 = other ^{write in} _____ 88 = DK 99 = RA	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
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M04a	IF they answer 5 → what were the main factors that impacted your livelihood where you were before? <i>(Indicate all that apply)</i>	1= land, property or asset confiscation 2=land, property or asset destruction 3=forced portering 4=no ability to find employment 5=No ability to find safe work	6=business failed 7=insufficient markets/nowhere to sell goods 8=arbitrary/excessive taxation 9=no work within easy access 10=crop failure (natural e.g. due to drought) 11=none, higher income in Thailand 12=none, more job security in Thailand 13=none, for seasonal employment 14=Other _____ 88=DK 99=RA	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
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M05	Did you live in a city or village?	1 = city or town 2 = village 3 = neither, rural area	4=other _____ 88 = DK 99 = RA	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
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M06	What was your (or your parents') primary occupation in your home area before coming here? <i>(Indicate who respondent is referring to: Father Mother Self)</i> _____	1 = farmer 2 = construction worker 3 = shop-owner 4 = trader 5 = profession (teacher, lawyer) 6 = student 7 = religious officer 8 = government official	9 = housewife 10 = office worker 11 = factory worker 12 = farm worker 13 = services, retail, beauty, restaurant/bar/café 14 = soldier 15 = NGO/CBO worker 16 = Domestic servant 17 = Other <small>write in</small> _____ 88 = DK 99 = RA	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
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M07	Did you or your household have to abandon any assets when you left your home? I mean things you owned or had access to, but which you think are lost to you now?	1 = no (IF NO → M09) 2 = land 3 = livestock 4 = house	5 = car 6 = business 7 = crops/agricultural products in storage 8 = other <small>write in</small> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
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**Do not read list, but prompt –
“anything else?” (list all responses)**

88 = DK 99 = RA

M08	IF YES: Why would you not be able to reclaim [items mentioned above] if you returned? <i>(Write in first 2 responses)</i>	1 = no proof of ownership 2 = confiscated by military, landlord or others 3 = they are destroyed by military or others 4 = destroyed due to environmental factors 5 = I would be afraid to claim	6= lack of support by authorities/ or law enforcement agencies) 7 = stolen by others 8 = other write in _____ 88 = DK 99 = RA	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
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M09	Why did you or your family come to Mae Sot, and not go to another place? <i>(Write in first 2 responses)</i>	1 = In the hope of finding work here 2 = It was safe here 3 = my family was here 4 = there were people who could help me or my family here 5= I (or my family) was told to come here 6 = I (or my family) was forced to come here	7 = NGO (humanitarian) assistance (MTC etc) 8 = hope for refugee status/move to camp 9= hoped for resettlement to another country 10 = As a transitional point 11 = proximity to home village 12= education for children 13 = other write in _____ 88 = DK 99 = RA	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
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M10	When you (or your family) were considering coming to this city, did you already have relatives or friends living here?	1= yes 2 = no (→ SECTION VI)	88 = DK 99 = RA	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
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M11	If yes, who were/are they?	1 = parents 2 = siblings 3 = wife/husband	4 = children 5 = other relatives 6 = friends/villagers 7=other _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
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VI. EXPERIENCE IN MAE SOT (including displacement within the city)

N01	Here in Mae Sot, have you ever been forced to move because of abuse, intimidation or threats?	1 = yes 2 = no (IF NO → N02)	8 = DK 9 = RA	<input type="checkbox"/>
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N01a	IF YES, who or what was the source of those threats? <i>(indicate all that apply)</i>	1=Thai police/paramilitary 2= Neighbors 3=Other write in _____ 88 = DK 99=RA		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
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N02	Here in Mae Sot have you ever been evicted from your home?		1 = yes 2 = no (IF NO → N04) 8=DK 9=RA	<input type="checkbox"/>
N03	IF YES , why were you evicted? <i>(Write in first 2 responses)</i>	1 = government relocation 2 = private development 3 = could not pay rent	4 = owner did not want us there 5 = other write in _____ 8 = DK 9 = RA	<input type="checkbox"/>
N04	In the next two years, what would you like to do? Stay here or go elsewhere? <i>(Probe for clarity. One response only)</i>	1 = stay where we are now 2 = move elsewhere in Mae Sot 3 = go back to our home area	4 = go elsewhere in Thailand <i>(write in place: _____)</i> 5 = go to another country <i>(write in place: _____)</i> 88 = DK 99 = RA	<input type="checkbox"/>
N05	I am going to read you a list of community groups and organizations. Please tell me if you or anyone in your household is involved with any? Read list.		1 = yes 2 = no	8 = DK 9 = RA
	a. CBO	<input type="checkbox"/>	g. political organization/party	<input type="checkbox"/>
	b. military group	<input type="checkbox"/>	h. youth organization	<input type="checkbox"/>
	c. women's group	<input type="checkbox"/>	i. savings credit association (self help group)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	d. youth group	<input type="checkbox"/>	j. union	<input type="checkbox"/>
	e. neighborhood or street committee	<input type="checkbox"/>	k. PTA (use WE term) or other school group	<input type="checkbox"/>
	f. religious group	<input type="checkbox"/>	l. other <i>(write in below)</i> <input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			m. None	<input type="checkbox"/>
N06	In the last year, have you or anyone in your household suffered from theft or robbery?		1 = yes 2 = no (IF NO → N09)	<input type="checkbox"/>
N07	IF YES , who did you or the person who suffered the theft/robbery report the theft/robbery to <i>first</i> ?	1 = I did not report it (IF NO → N09) 2 = family/ friends/neighbor 3 = community watch or civic organization 4 = vigilante group 5 = local security company	6 = local police station 7 = chief 8 = NGO/CBO 9 = other write in _____ 88 = DK 99 = RA	<input type="checkbox"/>

N08	Were you satisfied with this? Was this productive?	1 = yes DK=8 RA=99	2 = no	<input type="checkbox"/>
N09	In the last year, have you or anyone in your household suffered from physical assault?	1 = yes 2 = no (if no → N12) DK=8 RA=9		<input type="checkbox"/>
N10	IF YES , who did you or the persons who suffered the assault report the assault to <i>first</i> ?	1 = I did not report it (IF NO → N12) 2 = family or friends 3 = community watch or civic organization 4 = vigilante group 5 = local security company	6 = local police station 7= chief 8= local administration officer 9 = NGO/CBO 10=other <small>write in</small> _____	88 = DK 99 = RA <input type="checkbox"/>
N11	Were you satisfied with this? Was this productive?	1 = yes DK=8 RA=9	2 = no	<input type="checkbox"/>
N12	In the last year have you or someone in your household experienced harassment or threats from anyone?	1 = yes 2 = no (IF NO → N14) 8=DK 9=RA		<input type="checkbox"/>
N13	IF YES , who has threatened or harassed you or someone in your household?	1 = individual 2 = chief 3 = vigilante	4 = police 5=army/paramilitary 6 = village elder 7=NGO/CBO 8=other _____	88 = DK 99 = RA <input type="checkbox"/>
N13a	What kind of intimidation or harassment was this? <i>(May answer more than one)</i>	1=Stopped but not detained by authorities while out of home 2=Threatened or harassed by individual (non-authority) 3=Authorities came to home to intimidate/harass	4=Stopped and detained by authorities 5=Made to pay a bribe to authorities 6=Made to pay a bribe to individual (non-authority) 7=Confiscation of IDs/personal documents 8=threat of forced return 88=DK 99=RA	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
N14	Do you feel safe where you live now?	1 = very safe 2 = safe	3 = unsafe 4 = very unsafe 8=DK 9=RA	<input type="checkbox"/>
N15	I am going to read you a list of people, please tell me if you believe that they are trustworthy, if you	1 = In general, can be trusted 2 = In general, have to be careful,	8 = DK 9 = RA	

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| b people from your ethnic group | <input type="checkbox"/> | h staff from NGO/supporter of projects | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c people who are not from your ethnic group | <input type="checkbox"/> | i staff from CBOs | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d village head | <input type="checkbox"/> | j vigilante group | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e family/relatives friends | <input type="checkbox"/> | k religious groups | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f police | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

For each of the following statements please tell me whether you *strongly agree*, *agree*, are *indifferent*, *disagree*, or *strongly disagree*?

1 = strongly agree
2 = agree
3 = indifferent
4 = disagree
5 = strongly disagree

7=NA
8 = DK
9 = RA

- N16 My family's access to food has improved since we moved here.
- N17 If I reported a crime the Thai court would resolve it fairly.
- N18 Thai police here protect my family.
- N19 It is normal to pay a bribe to a government official to access services or avoid harassment/arrest.
- N20 I have rights under Thai law.
- N21 I have a right to complain to the police if I am a victim of a crime.
- N22 I know how to safely access justice in Thailand.

N23 What kind of serious problems have you or your family experienced in the past two years?

(Instructions for N23:

- 1. Wait for respondent to answer**
- 2. If answer not clear, then clarify and code**
- 3. If no answer then read the categories you see below, pausing after each category.**
- 4. If respondent states response, code or clarify and code.**
- 5. If still no response, read individual codes for the chosen category.**

IF 0 (NO PROBLEMS)→ N29

- a. Housing
- b. Financial
- c. Neighbors/community
- d. Labor/job status
- e. Status/administrative
- f. Authority abuse
- g. Violence (including domestic abuse)

How frequently in the last two years?

- 1=At least once every month
- 2=4times per Year or more
- 3=Once to three times
- 4=not for past year
- 8=DK

Family/children

	Other: _____
	Other: _____
	Other: _____
	Other: _____
	Other: _____
	Other: _____
	Other: _____
	Other: _____
	Other: _____
	Other: _____
	Other: _____

N24 From your answer above, which problem was most difficult to resolve?

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N25 When the problem arose did you or member of your household, who did you look for advice? (more than one answer possible)

- 1 Other family members
- 2 Other village residents
- 3 Village Chief
- 4 Other community leader (non-religious)
- 5 Burmese political group/ organisation
- 6 Thai citizen
- 7 Thai police
- 8 Thai army
- 9 NGO/UN
- 10 CBO
- 11 Religious leaders
- 12 Thai Court
- 13 Other _____
- 14 Did not consult anyone → N27
- 88 DK
- 99 RA

N26 Were you able to obtain some/all of the advice/information needed?

1=Yes, completely
 2=Yes, to some extent
 3= No
 8=DK
 9=RA

N27 If the problem was resolved, which person/authority did you contact to solve the problem? (**more than one answer possible**)

1 Other family members
 2 Other village residents
 3 Village Chief
 4 Other community leader (non-religious)
 5 Burmese political group/ organisation
 6 Thai citizen
 7 Thai police
 8 Thai army
 9 NGO/UN
 10 CBO
 11 Religious leaders
 12 Thai Court
 13 Other _____
 14 Did not consult anyone
 88 DK
 99 RA

N28 If you did nothing to resolve the problem, what were the reasons to do nothing ? (**more than one answer possible**)

1 Afraid other party will take revenge
 2 Did not want to worsen relationships with the other party
 3 Did not think it was very important
 4 Did not know what to do
 5 Shame from others
 6 Did not have enough money
 7 Thought it would resolve itself
 8 Other party more powerful
 9 Was uncertain of my rights
 10 Lack of transport
 11 Language difficulties
 12 Did not need to solve
 13 Nobody solves problems for people like me
 14 Would have taken too much time
 15 Was afraid to leave the village
 16 Other
 77 NA
 88 DK
 99 RA

N29 I'd like to read the following statements. Please respond and tell me what you think your chances of success are if such a situation occurred in the future to you. Please choose how

Z21 Was the respondent willing to answer all questions? 1 = no 2 = yes

Z22 Were there any problems during the interview? (*write in box*)

Z23 How does the condition of the household compare with others in the neighborhood? 1 = worse 2 = same 3 = better

Z24 Do you think this person is a forced migrant? 1 = yes 2 = No 88 = DK/unsure

Z25 If yes, why? (*write in box*)

Z26 Other comments? (*write in box*)

Qualitative interview protocols

Interview protocol: NGO staff (interview time: ~45-60 min)

General introductory questions

1. Demographics: acquire whatever information is readily available from partner and other NGOs on known demographics of the migrant populations in these cities and the neighborhoods where they are living.
2. Why do you think it makes sense to conduct this project in this city?
3. What are the different populations of migrants living in this city?
4. What has been your experience working with these migrant populations?
5. What are some of the challenges you have faced in working with these different migrant populations?

Role of government, humanitarian efforts in constraining or supporting migrant well-being and the well-being of non-displaced

6. What is your sense of the government's attitude toward these migrant populations? Different attitude toward different population?
7. How does this attitude compare to the government's attitude toward the non-displaced residents in this (part of the) city?
8. What are some of the protection gaps you have identified regarding the different populations of migrants living in this city?
9. What solutions do you see for these protection gaps?
10. How well do the different humanitarian NGOs and the UN agencies work together on providing protection and/or assistance to these groups? (i.e. what are the politics of coordinating humanitarian support in this context?)

Livelihoods

11. What are the policies that affect these migrants in terms of:
 - a. Housing?
 - b. Employment?
 - c. Identity documents?
 - d. Harassment?
12. What are some gaps in services that you are aware of when it comes to meeting the needs of this population in terms of:
 - a. Housing?
 - b. Employment?
 - c. Identity documents?
 - d. Harassment?
13. Are these policies different from those regarding low-income residents living in the city?
14. Are there complications to implementing some of these policies that you are aware of?
15. What kind of sectors do you find migrants working in most often?
 - a. Is this formal or informal?
 - b. Which groups tend to work in which sector (measure difference across ethnicity, gender, and education/socio-economic background)?

16. How does this differ from the employment patterns you've seen among other urban non-displaced residents living in a similar income bracket?
17. Are the different migrant populations in this city organized cohesively or scattered? (strong community organizing, social capital)
18. What are some of the differences that divide each migrant community?
19. What challenges face the migrant population to the best of your knowledge?
20. Are there gender-specific challenges that these migrants face?
21. How do the migrants in this city cope with these challenges?
 - a. Who do they rely on to cope?
22. How often do you find that you get new beneficiaries?
23. Do migrants in this area tend to remain in their location for long periods of time (more than 5 years) or is there a high rate of mobility (migrants stay seasonally or for a short period of time before moving on?)

Closing questions

24. Are there any other topics we should discuss about this?

Interview protocol: Migrant population (interview time: ~60-90 min)

To be conducted with a sample of participants who already completed the profiling survey at an earlier date.

Initial open-ended questions

1. What has been your experience living in this city?
2. What are some of the reasons you decided to come to live in this city?
 - a. What expectations did you have before coming here?
 - b. How have these expectations been met?
3. What can you tell me about your life before you moved to this city?
4. What was your experience in moving from your previous location to this city?
5. If you lived in other parts of this city before you moved here, can you tell me about your experience where you lived before? Why did you move here?

Questions focused on livelihoods

6. What has been your experience with employment in this city?
7. What can you tell me about interactions you've had with government services in general this city?
 - a. NGO services?
 - b. UN services?
8. What has your experience been with the following services in particular:
 - a. Health
 - b. Education
 - c. Legal/justice
 - d. Welfare/financial assistance?
9. How would you describe your interactions with government security officials, such as police, paramilitary, or the military in this city?
10. How would you describe your relationship or interactions with other residents of this neighborhood?

- a. With residents of other parts of the city?
11. How do you feel about your housing situation now?

Questions on the future/decision-making

12. What kinds of plans do you have for the next 3-5 years?
- a. Why?
13. What are some of the factors that are influencing your decision about where to be in the next 3-5 years?
14. Do you plan to leave your current location for somewhere else?
- a. If yes, where and why?
15. What are some of the challenges you would face if you returned to your place of origin/home town?
16. What information would be useful to assist you in making a decision on further migration, return, or resettlement?

Closing questions

17. Are there any further issues you'd like to discuss with me today?
18. How did this interview make you feel?
19. Are there any recommendations you have for what needs to happen to make your life better?



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