

THAILAND



AMY Map by Boyet Rivera III

A. Total Stock (Number) of Migrants, as of 2005

MIGRANTS ABROAD	
ESTIMATED STOCK: MIGRANTS OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY	
TOTAL	-
a. By visa status	Documented migrant workers*
	Emigrants/residents
	Undocumented migrants**
	Refugees***
	424
b. By sex	Male
	Female
c. Top destination countries	1. Taiwan (98,322) 6. Malaysia
	2. Singapore 7. Hong Kong (28,360)
	3. Israel 8. US
	4. Brunei 9. UAE
	5. Japan (48,055) 10. Libya

MIGRANTS IN THAILAND	
ESTIMATED STOCK: MIGRANTS IN THE COUNTRY	
TOTAL	-
a. By visa status	Documented migrant workers*
	Emigrants/residents
	Undocumented migrants**
	Refugees***
	301,125
b. By sex	Male
	Female
c. Top countries of origin	1. Burma 6.
	2. Vietnam 7.
	3. North Korea 8.
	4. Russia 9.
	5. Lao PDR 10.

* Non-resident, temporary, or contract workers.

** Includes illegal entrants, overstayed or "jumped" visas, trafficked/smuggled people

*** As defined by the government, or in accordance with the UN refugee convention.

B. Annual Socio-Economic Data and Migration Flow

Annual indicators	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
Population (million; mid-year estimate)	65.44	64.87	62.83	62.35	62.90	62.30
% of population living below poverty line		10.00				
% of population living in rural areas			71.4		80.0	68.9
Economic growth: real GDP (%)	4.6	6.1	6.0	4.9	1.8	4.6
Per capita GDP (US\$)			2,305		1,874	1,978
Per capita GDP: purchasing power parity (US\$)	8,300	8,100			6,400	
Inflation rate: CPI (%; annual ave.)	4.8	2.8	1.8	0.4	1.6	1.6
Exchange rate (Baht per US\$; annual ave.)	40.95	40.22	41.49	43.98	43.43	40.11
International reserves (US\$ million; yearend)			41.1	38.8	33.04	32.7
Foreign direct investments: actual (US\$ billion; yearend)				0.49	2.15	3.37
Trade balance (US\$ million; yearend)			(9,343.2)			
Foreign (total external) debt (US\$ billion; yearend)	50.630				69.40	79.675
Foreign (total external) debt as % of GNP						66.1
Budget balance (US\$; yearend)						
Budget deficit as % of GDP						
Labor force (million)	35.36	36.43	34.90		33.40	
Women as % of labor force			45			
Number unemployed (million)		0.54	0.77		1.3	1.1
Unemployment rate (% of labor force)	1.4	1.5	2.2		3.9	3.2
Underemployment rate (% labor force)						
Women unemployment rate (% of labor force)			2.50			
Average income (THB/month; ave. household) - Bangkok/surrounding cities			27,514			
Average income (THB/month; ave. household) - nationwide				13,418		12,167
Average income: women (US\$/month)						
Average expenditure (THB/month; ave. household) - nationwide			10,908			
Adult literacy rate (% of age 15 & above who can read/write)		93	96	92.6	95.7	
Net migration rate (net # of migrants per 1,000 popn)	0.00			0.00		0.00
Annual outflow/deployment of MWs						
% women in the annual outflow						
Annual inflow of MWs						
% women in the annual inflow						
Annual migrants' remittance (US\$ billion/yr)						1.7
Reported # of migrant deaths during the year						
Estimated # deported during the year					120,000	
Jailed/detained during the year						
HIV/AIDS adult prevalence rate (adult PLHA as % of adult popn)		1.50		1.79		
# People living with HIV/AIDS (thousand)			570.0		570.0	
# AIDS deaths during the year (adults+children)			58,000			
Cumulative #: HIV/AIDS cases among migrants (living+died)						

Sources: CIA World Factbook, UNILO/UNDP statistical yearbooks/websites.

AMC Information Bank



Courtesy of FTUB

Migrant workers, who comprise a significant part of the construction and fishing industries in the south of Thailand, carry out construction in Phang Nga.

THAILAND

This report was compiled with the assistance of information provided by the Mekong Migration Network and FTUB.

Political and Economic Update

The period from mid-2004 through the end of 2005 was a turbulent time for Thailand, as the country weathered natural disasters, violent clashes in the South, and a key election. An upsurge in violence in the South of Thailand, where the majority of Thailand's Muslim population resides, began in January 2004 after armed men attacked an army camp. Reprisals continued the violence throughout the year, coming to a head in October 2004 with the deaths of helpless protesters in police custody. The "Tak Bai incident" began when over 1,500 Muslims protested outside

a police station in Tak Bai. In retaliation, over 1,000 people were arrested; 85 of these were killed. Seven of the arrestees were shot, while most of the others died of suffocation in police custody, restrained and stacked on top of each other in trucks. The senseless deaths enraged the Muslim population and horrified the international community. Bomb blasts attributed to Muslims took place after the Tak Bai incident, followed by what is by now becoming Thaksin's trademark combination of swift and brutal action of military presence and economic sanctions.

It was reported that over 600 people died in 2004 as a result of the violence; this number would rise to over 1,000 through the end of 2005. In mid-2005, Thaksin was granted emergency military powers as the government declared the area a state of emergency. The decree allows for detention without trial and criminal immunity for policemen or soldiers.



Courtesy of MIMN

Although Thaksin sent in thousands of troops to the region, it provoked further violence rather than stabilizing the area.

This same region was struck by the Boxing Day Tsunami in December 2004, which caused the deaths of 8,500 people in Thailand along with devastation to the area estimated at THB20 billion. The region's tourism, fishing and real estate industries were all significantly impacted by the tsunami. The tsunami virtually wiped out tourism in the Andaman Sea region temporarily, but construction soon started up again after the government poured money back into the region. Thaksin was seen to take a hands-on approach to relief and recovery efforts, working to rebuild the damaged industries and calling for the development of a tsunami early warning system.

Thaksin's swift response to the tsunami, though criticized by some as discriminatory towards certain groups, was approved by many, and contributed in part to his landslide victory in the February 2005 elections. Thaksin's popularity remained strong, particularly among

the poor, due to his social welfare and economic schemes such as the "30 Baht health scheme" and "Village Fund" loan scheme. Thaksin's 2005 campaign promised continued economic and social incentives. Thai Rak Thai ultimately won 75% of the vote, although Thailand's electoral commission voiced concerns about corruption and reported that vote-buying was rife. Thai Rak Thai party won only one seat in the South, which remained a Democrat stronghold. The overwhelming mandate caused some worry among critics concerned about the lack of checks and balances on Thaksin. Already notorious for his heavy-handed and unapologetic "CEO-style leadership", some feared that a lack of parliamentary control on Thaksin's party could lead to

autocratic rule. In October 2004, for example, Thaksin launched a new campaign against drugs despite intense criticism from human rights groups regarding his last campaign, which resulted in the deaths of over 2,500 people.

Thailand's economy grew 6.1% in 2004, but then slowed to 4.5% in 2005 due to factors such as the tsunami, drought, bird flu, civil unrest, rising oil prices, and lower consumer confidence. Inflation rose to an average of 4.5% in 2005 due to the drought and higher oil prices, but the Bank of Thailand raised interest rates to 4% as of December 2005 to try to slow it down; inflation is expected to lower to 4% in 2006. Private sector investment dropped slightly in 2005 due to low consumer confidence, while land transactions plummeted in the fourth quarter of 2005.¹ Thailand expanded cooperation with other countries in the Mekong region and ASEAN, with the signing of several agreements on combating trafficking, HIV/AIDS, security and economic partnership.

Migration Update

Thai Migrants Overseas

In 2004, a total of 148,596 Thai workers were deployed overseas; while 139,667 were deployed in 2005. The most popular destination by far for Thai workers was Taiwan; following that were Singapore, Israel, Brunei and Malaysia.

As discussed in previous issues of *AMY*, the majority of Thai migrants deployed overseas are generally low-skilled workers, with low levels of education. Men work primarily in manufacturing and construction industries, while women work as domestic workers; workers in these types of jobs are more vulnerable to exploitation and discrimination due to lack of protection. For example, domestic work is not covered under Thai labor law.

The exploitation of Thai migrant workers in Taiwan was brought to the attention of the Thai government in August 2005, when a group of Thai workers rioted in Kaohsiung, Taiwan due to the inhumane living and employment conditions they were forced to endure (See Taiwan Country Report on p.283 for further details). Thai workers are the largest group of migrant workers in Taiwan, and have long been vulnerable to various forms of abuse, including bad working and living conditions, unscrupulous employers, and harsh policies. In response, Thaksin issued a warning to unskilled workers looking for jobs overseas, and Thai authorities issued a temporary freeze on the deployment of 800 workers set to go to Taiwan.² In September, allegations arose that corruption in the Labor Ministry may have contributed to the vulnerability of Thai migrants in Taiwan, due to reports that high-level officials

NUMBER OF THAI WORKERS REQUESTING PERMISSION TO WORK OVERSEAS BETWEEN 1998-2005 BY COUNTRY

Country	Number
Taiwan	656,508
Singapore	115,634
Israel	80,399
Brunei	52,766
Malaysia	39,137
Hong Kong	31,579
US	14,503
UAE	13,472
Libya	12,220

Source: Office of Overseas Employment

may have arranged for Thai workers to be deployed through private agencies rather than the official government entity, the Employment Department.³ Recruitment costs to Taiwan are notoriously high, particularly in proportion to the wages workers receive once there. One NGO in Thailand reported that while the Thai government has a placement fee policy of NTD46,000 (THB56,000), Thai workers are actually paying NTD100,000 to NTD150,000; the Thai workers in Kaohsiung said they paid between NTD100,000 to NTD125,000. Thai household workers pay between NTD80,000 to NTD150,000. Generally, it

can take some migrants six months to repay their recruitment fees, during which time they may be locked into employment whatever the conditions, and also seek overtime to earn more money.

An industrial accident case in South Korea involving five Thai workers also brought attention to the unsafe working conditions migrants face abroad. The five women were diagnosed with polyneuropathy after exposure to dangerous industrial chemicals on the job. (See South Korea Country Report of p.175 for further details). Despite South Korea's new Employment Permit System and MOU with Thailand for deployment of migrant workers, there are still a large number of irregular migrants in the country that are highly vulnerable during the government's crackdown. 11,146, or 6.25% of the total number of irregular migrants, are from Thailand.

Singapore is another popular destination for Thai migrant workers. As of May 2005, there were 53,077 Thais employed in Singapore.⁴ Men generally work in low-skilled industries such as construction and shipyards, while



Courtesy of MMN

At a joint rally, local Thai laborers and migrant workers demand better protection under Thai labor law.

women work as domestic workers; the Thai government is looking to increase the number of semi-skilled and skilled workers to Singapore, including cooks, spa-workers and IT. Thailand worked to increase deployment of Thai workers to Singapore with the August 2005 signing of an employment agreement with Singapore. The agreement focuses on labor skills standards, and provides that prospective Thai workers can take a skills test in Thailand rather than Singapore; passing the test would allow Thai migrant workers guaranteed travel arrangements as well as full welfare benefits entitlement in Singapore.

In Japan, a large vulnerable migrant group appears to be

Thai women forced into prostitution. While the estimates of the number of irregular Thai workers vary, most reports agree that in general, a large portion of the irregular Thai migrants in Japan are engaged in sex work. According to a consular official at the Thai Embassy in Tokyo, in 2005 there were approximately 15,000 irregular Thai migrants in Japan, of whom approximately 6,000 were sex workers. According to the Foreign Ministry, there remain over 100,000 Thai women in Japan, many of whom are reportedly working as sex workers. The official also said there were over 4,000 children of these Thai sex workers who are in a de facto stateless status.⁵

TOTAL THAI WORKERS LEAVING TO WORK ABROAD PER YEAR:

1998	91,364
1999	159,566
2000	177,709
2001	165,047
2002	160,807
2003	147,769
2004	148,596
2005	139,667
Total	1,190,525

Source: Office of Overseas Employment

Thailand Significant Events July 2004 - December 2005

2004

July

(1) Migrant workers from Burma, Cambodia and Lao PDR begin registering for work permits; around 1.2 million migrants registered during the month-long registration period.

August

(24) 18 Burmese migrant workers are awarded THB1.17 million in compensation from their former employer, Nut Knitting Factory for charges of severe exploitation.

October

(25) 85 Muslim protesters die in police custody in the "Tak Bai Incident"; the protesters were arrested and stacked on top of each other in government trucks after a demonstration of over 1,500 protesters was quelled by tear gas, water canons and gunfire. Bombings followed in the days after the incident.

Thaksin announces a new "war on drugs"; a similar campaign in 2003 led to 2,500 deaths and widespread criticism from the international community.

December

(26) Boxing Day Tsunami kills 8,500 on the western coast of southern Thailand; around 2,500-3,000 Burmese migrant workers are said to have been killed and 5,000-7,000 missing.

It is reported that Thai authorities plan to deport more than 9,000 pregnant undocumented workers, many of whom originate from Lao PDR, Cambodia and Burma.

2005

February

Thaksin Shinawatra and his Thai Rak Thai party win elections by a landslide.

May

A Cabinet Resolution is passed, allowing migrant workers who had previously registered for work permits or a temporary ID card to extend for another year

July

(5) Thailand signs MOUs to promote cross-border trade with Cambodia and Lao PDR under the Mekong sub-regional Cross-Border Transportation Agreement.

(14) Thailand and Lao PDR hold two-day talk to discuss the repatriation of over 6,000 Hmong refugees in Thailand.

Thailand and Lao PDR sign an MOU to combat trafficking.

Labor Ministry announces plan to increase a levy on migrant workers; the move is purportedly to help decrease irregular migration. Both human rights NGOs and employers slam the proposition, which is later scrapped in early 2006.

The Thai Cabinet issues a decree granting Thaksin special powers to deal with the conflict in southern Thailand including media censorship and detention without trial.

August

(2) Thailand and Singapore sign an agreement to facilitate Thai workers in specified areas such as restaurant and spa workers to work in Singapore.

Sources: BBC News, Scalabrini Asian Migration News

Migrants in Thailand

During the July 2005 registration, a total of 871,170 migrant workers in Thailand registered for work permits; of these, there were 705,293 Burmese workers, 90,073 Lao workers, and 75,804 Cambodian workers. There are also a

large number of undocumented migrants. As such, the country's need for migrant workers remains strong. Frequent labor shortages are reported, particularly in the industrial, fishing and agricultural sectors; as such, the government is under pressure for its policies to



Courtesy of MMN

Migrant workers gather for a brief lunch break. Mae Sot, Thailand.

ensure a steady population of cheap laborers. Migrant workers from Burma, Cambodia and Lao PDR comprise the majority of migrant workers in Thailand.

The migrant registration procedures that began in 1996 to regularize undocumented Burmese, Cambodian, and Lao workers continued through 2005 (See Thailand Country Report in *AMY2004* for further detail on past registrations and evolving policies). Thailand also cooperated with Cambodia, Lao PDR and Burma to carry out the terms of the MOUs on Employment Cooperation. These MOUs were signed in May 2003 with Cambodia, October 2002 with Lao PDR, and June 2003 with Burma. According to the agreement between the countries regarding the implementation of the MOU, the governments of Burma, Cambodia and Lao PDR must verify the citizenship of migrant workers currently in Thailand in order to issue proper travel documents and to

obtain a Thai work visa. Cambodia and Lao PDR began the verification process in 2005 through interviews with migrant workers. By October 2005, 33,937 Lao workers had been interviewed and received visas, however, it was reported that 28 could not be confirmed as Laotian.⁶ The fate of these workers is uncertain, as they appear to be rendered stateless. In Cambodia, only 75 migrant workers were interviewed in March through April 2005, with the nationality of three workers rejected. In November 2005 through June 2006, the verification process continued, and 37,142 workers were verified and received visas. It was reported in April 2005 that Burma requested the Thai government to force one million Burmese migrants to return to Burma as part of the verification process; SPDC reportedly planned somehow to process all one million migrants within five days.⁷ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand

STATISTICS OF THAI WORKERS BY POSITION 2004

POSITIONS	TOTAL
Professional, Technical and Related Workers	5,005
Administrative, Executive and Managerial Workers	988
Clerical and Related Workers	1,155
Sales Workers	317
Service Workers	14,893
Agricultural, Animal Husbandry, and Forest Workers, Fisherman and Hunters	12,963
Production and Related Workers	10,890
Technical Workers and Transport Equipment Operators	66,434
Labourers Not Elsewhere Classified	35,951
TOTAL	148,596

Source: Office of Overseas Employment

denied this, and to date, no migrant workers have undergone any verification process by the SPDC.

In May 2005 the government passed a Cabinet Resolution allowing migrant workers who had previously registered for work permits or a temporary ID card to extend for another year; under Thailand's 2004 registration policy, all work permits were to expire in June 2005. The resolution also allowed dependents of registered migrants to register. In a new recognition that many migrant workers living along the Thai border cross into Thailand for seasonal or daily work, the resolution permits employers to hire workers with one-day border passes or seasonal work passes; however, this is to be allowed at the discretion of the provincial governor. In addition, employers registered their need to employ migrant workers; under this registration in 2005, employers registered a need to employ a total of 1,881,520 workers, an increase over the 2004 registration, where employers applied to hire 1,591,222 migrant workers.

Similarly to 2004, upon the expiration of the 30 August 2005 deadline, the government threatened a crackdown on undocumented migrants who remained in the country. In 2005,

the government also threatened to take action against employers who employed unregistered workers; the penalty included a maximum of three years' imprisonment and/or a fine of up to THB60,000.⁸

Nonetheless, the need for migrant workers persists, and employers' lobby with the government to allow them to continue hiring migrant workers – even unregistered – remains strong. In August 2005, for example, shrimp producers making their appeal to the government claimed that they would suffer a 30% shortfall in output causing losses of around THB70 billion, if they were not allowed to continue employing undocumented workers.⁹ The government is trying to balance employers' perceived need for migrant workers with its own need to ensure employment for Thai workers. While it has been repeatedly shown in Thailand and many other countries that migrant workers fill jobs undesirable to local workers, often known as “dirty, dangerous and demeaning” or 3D jobs, local and/or national governments continue to take measures to ensure local employment. In Tak province, it was reported that the local government imposed a requirement that businesses must ensure that

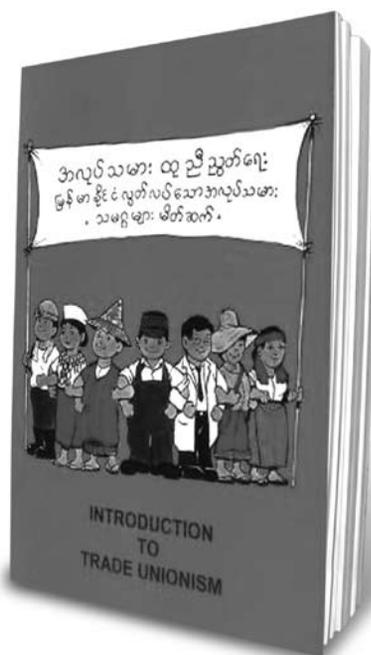


courtesy of FTUB

Workers attend an introduction to trade unionism. Suksamram, Ranong, May 2006.

20% of their workforce must be Thai nationals.¹⁰

Migrant workers' vulnerability makes them easily exploited by unscrupulous employers, as a continuous stream of research and new publications show. Numerous reports of underpayment and nonpayment of wages, of migrants consistently working long hours/overtime, not given days off, and working in dangerous conditions, among others, continue to be documented by INGOs, NGOs, migrants rights networks and groups. (See *Mekong Resource Book, AMY 2004* for detailed report of the quality of life of migrant workers in Thailand as well as *International Migration in Thailand* by IOM). Migrant workers who attempt to enforce the terms of their contracts by demanding payment of owed wages, better working conditions, or attempting to organize continue to be threatened, summarily dismissed, arrested and deported, or worse. In September



if their workers absconded, they would lose the time and money spent acquiring the work permits. When the proposal for the surety was announced, however, it met with opposition by both employers as well as migrants and rights activists. Employers were against the measure, as the proposed THB10,000 surety per worker for those already registered, and THB50,000 for workers who have not



Photo Courtesy of MMN

A number of NGOs in Thailand work to educate migrant workers on health and gender issues, including HIV/AIDS. Chiang Mai, 2005.

yet registered, would represent a significant outlay of money, particularly for larger employers. Migrants and rights activists vehemently opposed the measure; the fees were waived 90 days later. The policy by cabinet resolution also stated that it did not have to be implemented within a human rights framework.

The health of migrant workers continues to be a major issue. Although the new registration system allows registered migrant workers to participate in the “30 Baht health care scheme”, high prevalence rate of disease among migrants continues to be an issue. Migrant workers are vulnerable to malaria, TB, and HIV/AIDS, along with other rare diseases, particularly around border areas. In addition, the Thai government’s worries about the children of migrants have caused repressive policies against pregnant women which surface from time to time. In December 2004, for example,

the government decided to deport over 9,000 pregnant migrant workers; a move that was frozen after human rights groups vocally criticized the decision.¹² The government has yet to take satisfactory action in regard to the issue of the stateless children of migrants – estimated to be growing at around 3,000 per year. Although Thailand does issue birth certificates to children born in Thailand, it does not guarantee Thai citizenship.

Responses

There are a great many international and local organizations that work to address migrants’ issues and needs in Thailand. Generally, these provide a wide range of assistance, from health care, translation research, education and awareness raising to anti-trafficking efforts, direct assistance including counseling

and access to health care, legal assistance and justice. Despite this, attempts to organize migrants to unionize and fight on their own behalf have met with resistance on a number of levels. Some migrant workers have been warned against talking to migrant support groups, and there was also an instance where an NGO volunteer was arrested for volunteering as an interpreter for the MAP Foundation for the Health and Knowledge of Ethnic Labor and the Yaung Chi Oo Burmese Workers' Organization.¹³

As such, a number of international organizations, educational institutions and local NGOs fund and carry out activities on behalf of migrants, although participatory action research is also conducted in many instances. Many research reports on the situation of migrant workers are published on a regular basis. A number of conferences are also sponsored by these organizations to discuss migrants' rights. UNDP, UNIFEM, UNAIDS, UNIAP, ILO, IOM, Amnesty International and many others work to conduct research and raise awareness on various migrants' issues in Thailand.

A number of organizations carry out health programs for migrant workers in Thailand, including fighting the spread of HIV/AIDS. The WHO carries out the Border Health Programme, while IOM works with the Ministry of Public Health on the Migrant Health Project. IOM also carries out the Provision of Health and Social Services in Immigration Detention Centres in Thailand. UNFPA funds IPSR to carry out a research project on the reproductive health situation of international migrants in Phuket and Ranong provinces and the migrants' access to health services, and also funded the WVFT project to expand reproductive health-care services to migrants in areas affected by the tsunami (Phang Nga and Ranong). The Raks Thai Foundation carries out health and social services, including operating a health

information centre in Samut Sakhon Province that provides information on reproductive health, sexually transmitted diseases, etc. MAP Foundation focuses on migrants' issues relating to HIV/AIDS, women's health, family planning, malaria and TB, and works with local health care providers to facilitate interpretation services and resources centers for migrant workers, including libraries.

As can be seen above, many of these efforts are localized in areas where there are large concentrations of migrant workers. In Mae Sot, Dr. Cynthia Maung runs a community health service offering treatment and care in the migrants' languages, assisting over 500 migrants a day. In Ranong, Mae Sot, and Mae Sai, World Vision (Thailand) provides basic medical services to migrants through Burmese doctors. Also in Mae Sai, the EMPOWER foundation runs a community health center for sex workers. In Rayong, Center for AIDS Rights (CAR) runs a community health center for Cambodian migrants. Other NGOs around Thailand provide health education and counseling through outreach, or, in some instances, on the radio. MAP Foundation broadcasts daily in migrants' languages. Other NGOs provide translation services in hospitals.¹⁴ The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), will fund a project to educate sex workers about HIV/AIDS in Prachup Khiri Khan and Trat provinces, in conjunction with the Raks Thai Foundation.¹⁵ Raks Thai Foundation also operates health volunteer system, whereby volunteers provide information and interpretation services to migrants.¹⁶

The Federation of Trade Unions-Burma (FTUB) conducts research, education, organizing and advocacy for the rights of Burmese migrant workers, and also provides direct assistance to the workers and members of their families. FTUB also publishes teaching materials, in a variety of languages,



Courtesy of MMN

These migrant workers are picking oranges in Northern Thailand, where the agricultural industry employs large numbers of migrant workers.

for the concepts of democracy and trade union rights.

Groups such as the Sub-committee on Human Rights of Migrants, Refugees and Stateless Persons, the Law Society of Thailand, Yaung Chi Oo Workers Association, and MAP Foundation, together with the Action Network for Migrants (ANM), provide legal assistance to migrant workers.

ANM is composed of 15 NGOs and community-based organizations working directly with migrant workers from Burma, Lao PDR and Cambodia. These organizations are working directly with migrant workers in the community, in order to improve the understanding and the attitude of Thai society and migrants and enhance the ability of migrant workers to identify and be involved in the problem solving process for their own needs and issues. ANM's vision is for safe migration and fair work in the Mekong Region. The network seeks to advocate for the rights of migrants as workers and their

right to access health and education services. ANM engages in collective advocacy action on numerous occasions to respond to discriminatory policies or media against migrant workers, to develop recommendations to propose to the decision-making bodies on migration in Thailand.

ANM member organizations have vast experience on a wide range of issues relating to migration, including health and HIV/AIDS, labor rights, and include the following organizations: Empower Foundation, Foundation for Child Development, Friends of Women Foundation, Foundation for Women, MAP Foundation, Mekong Sub-regional Project, Organization of Migrant Worker and their Families, Pattanak Foundation, Peaceways Foundation, Raks Thai Foundation, Shan Women Action Network, The Action Committee on Democracy in Burma, Yaung Chi Oo worker association, Center for AIDS Rights, and ADRA.

A group of NGOs formed TAG, or the

Tsunami Action Group, to respond to the needs of migrant workers affected by the Boxing Day Tsunami. Grassroots HRE, HREIB and MAP Foundation have continued to work together to provide emergency relief as needed, health education, counseling and referrals to state hospitals and legal assistance. According to TAG Report Update dated 11 June 2005, the groups decided to continue the joint activities until the end of July to respond to conditions resulting from the tsunami. At the same time, each of the organizations is developing their own long-term programs to empower migrant communities to address issues of well-being and rights.

In addition, FTUB in collaboration with Phuket Federation of Hotel and Service Labour, carried out a project to organize capacity building and educational activities for migrant workers in tsunami-affected areas in Phuket, Phang Nga and Ranong, supported by the ILO. The project introduced migrant workers to trade unionism while conducting a number of workshops and awareness raising activities in the specified regions.

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