

Chapter 2

Research Methodology

2.1 HKDW Baseline Survey

The Hong Kong Domestic Workers Baseline Survey (hereinafter "HKDW Survey") was conducted in Hong Kong, targeting Indonesian domestic workers in Hong Kong. Data was gathered through a survey questionnaire administered to a total of 1,017 respondents.

The sample of migrant workers was conducted through cluster random sampling procedures with clusters based on areas known to have a high density of Indonesian migrant workers. Sampled areas include Victoria Park and vicinity in Causeway Bay, Kowloon Park and Star Ferry areas in Tsim Sha Tsui, the Mong Kok market, Yuen Long Park, Tuen Mun Park and wet market, Ma On Shan plaza, Tsuen Wan MTR plaza area, Tai Po market and Indonesia restaurant area, Discovery Bay plaza and Yung Shue Long on Lamma Island.

Questionnaire administrators consisted of IMWU members, KOTKIHO members and shelter residents, as well as AMC volunteers. Surveys were conducted over a six-month period from June to December 2004, primarily on Saturday and Sundays, and also a few days

during the week. The survey generally required 30-45 minutes to complete.

Limitations of the research: Volunteer administrators were generally only available on the weekends. They found they experienced some difficulties in explaining the purpose and some questions in the surveys, which sometimes took quite a bit of time. Some respondents were reluctant to participate due to the length of time required to complete the survey as well as distrust regarding the purpose of the survey. A number of respondents repeatedly inquired as to whether their privacy would be protected, particularly migrant workers new to Hong Kong who had been warned by their agency not to disclose information. In one area, Yuen Long, employment agencies had staff circulating in the park area and attempted to discourage survey administrators; while those staff were around, migrants were afraid to participate in the survey. Also, some respondents may not have told the truth in the survey due to fear of disclosing that they were underpaid; salary, agency fees, and holiday time allotted were particularly sensitive issues. Originally, 2000

migrants were targeted to complete the survey, but due to time constraints, the final number was 1,017.

Positive impacts of the research: A number of respondents found the questionnaire process to be educational, and learned more about their rights during the process. Several informed the survey administrators about the problems they were facing, and later came to the union to seek redress. In turn, survey administrators experienced positive feelings about participating in the study.

2.2. HK-I Research

The Hong Kong-Indonesia (HK-I) Research was conducted in Indonesia and Hong Kong. Interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with applicants in Indonesia; returnees' migrants; migrants' families, migrant unions and organisations; NGOs and migrants' advocates, IGOs, government agencies, and recruitment agencies.

Data gathering methodologies/techniques

- a. Secondary data: library research; online/internet/web research; newspapers, periodicals; published works, books, studies; reports, statistics, photos, audio-visual materials; government reports (Hong Kong, Indonesia), UN documents, etc.
- b. Primary data: survey, case studies, FGD, interviews, observation, site visit
- c. Data gathering instruments (e.g. interview guide, FGD guide; survey questionnaire for baseline study in HK; case reports/statistics e.g. DMW)
- d. Gender-sensitive information gathering

Methodologies in getting info from key informants in Hong Kong and Indonesia

- a. Information-gathering methods/instruments
 - In-depth interviews; use interview



Asian Migrant Centre conducted Focus Group Discussion (FGD) at Victoria Park, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong, 2004

guide/schedule/questionnaire where appropriate;

- FGDs - do for migrants, NGOs only
- Using schematics/diagrams to trace flow/process/stages of migration

- b. Targeted key informants: Indonesia

- Migrant groups, organisations
- Migrant NGOs, advocates, support groups;
- Pre-departing applicants, recruits, those in agency houses;
- Returned migrants
- Migrants' families
- Indonesian government agencies;
- IGOs, international developmental organi-

- sations in Indonesia dealing with migrants
- Recruitment agencies, companies in Indonesia dealing with migrants
- Other experts on Indonesian FDWs

- c. Targeted key informants: Hong Kong
- Migrant groups, organisations, unions
 - Migrant NGOs, advocates, support groups - in HK or regionally; those involved with Indonesian FDWs;
 - Migrants at large (selected sample for baseline survey)
 - Indonesian Consulate, government agencies in HK;
 - HK government agencies dealing with migrants/FDWs
 - Recruitment agencies, companies in HK dealing with Indonesian FDWs
 - Other experts, academic researchers, etc. on Indonesian FDWs

To collect data from ex-migrant workers, prospective workers, and the families of migrant workers, research was conducted at several villages in ten areas within three regions: East Java, Central Java and Lampung. A Baseline Study conducted by AMC in 2001 showed that around 65% migrant workers in Hong Kong come from East Java, 25% are from Central Java and 10% comes from various regions, such as Lampung, NTB, NTT, West Java and Manado. For this reason, we choose these three regions as research target areas. Aside from these regions, the research was also conducted at the training camps of the employment agencies and Terminal III in Sukarno Hatta Airport (Jakarta). In-depth interviews and focus group discussions were conducted. Additionally, in-depth interviews were also conducted with key researchers, government personnel, NGOs, and unions.

Table 1.7
Number of HK-I Research Respondents

Type of Subject	Number
Prospective Migrant Workers	29
Ex-migrant Workers	69
Family Members of Migrant Worker	51
Village Heads	4
Local Government Labor Officials	6
Immigration Officers	2
Ministry of Social Affairs Personnel	1
Ministry of Women's Empowerment Personnel	1
Ministry of Manpower	1
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	1
NGO	4
International Institution	1
Employment Agencies	2
Association of Employment Agencies	2
Middlemen	6
Total Respondents	180

2.3 HK-I Research Site Profiles

Lampung

During the past few years, Lampung, in the district of Sumatra, has become one of the main destinations for internal migrants. These internal migrants now form a very large segment of the local population. Most come from East and Central Java, with the remainder coming from West Java. The social conditions for residents of Lampung are similar to those across Indonesia. An atmosphere of tolerance and mutual respect between internal migrants and local residents is the norm. In village and rural environments there is a high level of cooperation in community matters. As a result of internal migration, the cultures of many varied parts of Indonesia, especially Java, have combined in Lampung. At the same time, experiences of indigenous culture can be deeply rooted in some areas. For example, the tradition of the marriage party,

which takes several days and a huge amount of money in order to meet the number of requirements needed, is still maintained in several areas.

The influence of local charismatic figures and traditional leaders remains intact, with no abandonment of respect. Government leaders rely on these traditional figures to provide stability and a structural framework in village life; appreciation for them goes undiminished. Traditional village elders are also respected by local residents as they mediate disputes and advise on village issues.

For the most part, local government authorities in Lampung are internal migrants, rather than indigenous people of Lampung. The success of the migrants occasionally creates discrepancies between them and the indigenous people, though many migrants themselves live in small houses in remote farming communities. Agriculture provides a number of jobs for both skilled and unskilled migrants. Despite these opportunities, many find the wages in agriculture low, and prefer to seek industrial jobs with higher pay which are available in Jakarta or overseas. So in Lampung as well as in other agricultural areas in Indonesia, many people choose to leave to become migrant workers overseas, or to work in industrial cities such as Jakarta.

In Lampung, primary field research was concentrated in five regions: East Lampung, Central Lampung, Tanggamus, North Lampung and South Lampung. Secondary data collection took place in Bandar Lampung. While there was no official data available on the population for Lampung, we found there were large numbers of migrant workers going abroad from every region researched, although the number and percentage varied. The destination countries for migrant workers also varied, although our research found that Malaysia and Saudi Arabia

were the most attractive destination countries for Lampung residents.

After finishing their contracts, most migrant workers from Lampung ultimately returned to the region. As many spend money on education fees, the construction of houses, purchasing wet rice fields, the financing of businesses, and even the creation of more jobs for villagers, the migrant workers' contributions to the local economy are seen as extremely beneficial.

Lampung is categorized as a well-developed area in the field of culture, and Lampung residents are generally politically sophisticated with a large, active civil society. There are many NGOs, trade unions, and farmers' unions, indicative of political awareness and contributions.

In 2001, the Lampung government promulgated regulation No. 19/2001. The regulation addresses several issues related to migration, including recruitment procedures, licensing of recruitment agencies, training of prospective migrant workers, and administrative sanctions of agencies. However, there are less training camps and employment agents in Lampung than in other parts of Indonesia, and it is generally believed that most local migrant workers travel to Jakarta to register with employment agencies due to the perceived comparative ease and speed of complying with the myriad requirements, and also because the brokers which recruit them in the villages work for Jakarta employment agencies, and will bring them there. As a result, local government offices are unable to say exactly how many people from Lampung are working overseas.

Central Java

In Central Java Province, the HK-I Research respondents were gathered from the regions of Banyumas and Cilacap. Secondary data were gathered from Banyumas region. Banyumas is

located on the west side of Central Java, and respondents there spoke Banyumasan. Patriarchy is common in Java, and is observed through the relationships between children and parents. Educational priority is placed on the sons, with daughters relegated to domestic chores. For girls, elementary and sometimes junior high school is considered adequate education.

According to the local Department of Manpower and Transmigration (Disnaker), the economic status of people in the region is low. Most live through subsistence and cash farming. Unfortunately, in recent years, much farming land has been sold for housing tracts and warehouses. Mechanization has replaced manpower in many cases, thus increasing unemployment.

Every year, the number of people of working age and ability increases, but there is no employment. Therefore, the unemployment level rises. The standard minimum salary in the region was found to be IDR 380.000 (USD 40.68) per month. Given the constant influx of consumer goods, many residents are unable to provide for their families, which also contributes to the increase in migration.

Data from the local government indicates that the level of migrant workers' remittances is high. The average amount remitted is approximately IDR 5 billion (USD 535,331.9) per month. The Head of Karang Nanas village advised that migrants contributed a substantial amount to the community, which primarily went to the construction of new houses.

Furthermore, children have received more education, as school fees have been paid through remittances. In fact, some students have been able to carry on to higher education, with some graduating from academies or universities. The economic status of entire villages has been raised through remittances which fil-

ter through all economic aspects of village life.

Unfortunately, besides these positive changes, there have also been some negative effects. Many children have gone without mothers for years, being raised by grandparents or fathers. Often the children have received less than adequate attention and guidance, with some becoming involved in negative behavior such as dropping out of school, drinking, hanging out in 'gangs', or using mothers' remittances to buy items such as motorcycles to flaunt their wealth. Moreover, conflicts between husbands and wives have also appeared once migrants return home. Jealousy and neighborhood gossip surrounding the returnees is common.

According to Indonesian research team on the FGD with returnees, prospective migrants, migrants' family members, the Head of Karang Nanas village and the head of the Disnaker of Banyumas, it was found that most Indonesian migrant workers come from poor families. Several migrant workers stated that they had to borrow money in order to fulfill their departure costs. Many said that they chose to be migrant workers because it was difficult to find adequately paid work in Indonesia.

According to the Head of Karang Nanas, people from his village were considered financially disadvantaged farmers with very low incomes before they left to work abroad.

East Java

In East Java the situation in the following four regions was investigated: Malang, Blitar, Kediri and Jombang. Nationally, these four regions provided the greatest number of migrant workers to Hong Kong. The towns of Tulungagung, Ponorogo, Malang, and Blitar in particular provided large numbers of migrant workers. Moreover, many employment agencies are based in East Java.

According to the Disnaker in Blitar, the administration of East Java, having realized the potential for profit, developed a loan scheme for potential migrant workers. The government

the legislated information was so poor that many remain unaware of its existence. A by-product of this legislation was supposed to be the dissemination of information concerning the rights of migrants with regard to both employment agencies and the host countries. This has never been carried out in a systematic manner, and no government mechanism was set up to ensure compliance with the new legislation.

Table 1.8
Departures from Blitar (1994-2004)

Year	Women	Men	Total
1994/1995	438	-	438
1995/1996	1163	-	1163
1996/1997	1370	4	1374
1997/1998	1446	-	1446
1998/1999	1819	-	1819
1999/2000	67	-	67
2001	1465	-	1465
2002	1145	-	1145
2003	1523	-	1523
Up to Aug. 2004	360	-	360

Source: Blitar Disnaker

worked in collaboration with employment agencies in the province whereby those wishing to go overseas could cover the costs through loans. Repayment would be made in installments, paid directly from the future employer to the employment agency.

Some regions have passed their own laws to further protect migrant workers. In 2004, East Java Province promulgated Legislation No. 2/2004, "Service and Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers Overseas", meant to monitor recruitment by ensuring that employment agencies are living up to their contractual obligations and not taking advantage of their clients. In addition, in February 2004, Blitar also enacted legislation titled "Monitoring and Inspection of the Employment Agencies". This legislation was passed to respond to the mushrooming of employment agencies in Blitar. Unfortunately, promotion and distribution of

Additional Research

Finally, HK-I Research was also conducted in employment agency training camps based in Jakarta and with ex-migrant workers from Hong Kong in Sukarno Hatta Airport's Terminal III, which is used for processing and returning migrants.

On the Accuracy of Statistics

Most difficulties in collecting accurate data arise from the common practice of fake documentation (see section 4.4). Name, age, city and region of birth and/or residence; all of these facts have often been altered for the purpose of providing migrant workers with fake documents. Because the Indonesian government's statistical data on migrant workers is mostly collected from travel documents, much of their information, therefore, is subject to distortion.

For this reason, it has become increasingly difficult for rural governments to collect accurate information in regards to departures of local migrant workers. Of ten townships researched, only one local government, that of Blitar, can provide placement data (see table 1.8).