

FDG Reporting Template Consultation with Children and Young People on the Move

Country	Myanmar
Date	May 20-21, 2017
Consultation Location	1. Myawaddy 2. Yangon
Number of Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 18 children and youth ● 10 children and youth
Age Group	16-24
Number of Boys/Girls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 7 males and 11 females ● 1 male and 7 females
Names of the Facilitator and Note-Takers	Main Facilitator: Ye Yint Naung Co-Facilitator: Aung Khant Thu Note takers: Ma Tin Nilar Win, Phyo Zaw Oo, Pyae Sone Aung
Background of children and young people (<i>select the background of the children and young people who participated in the consultation</i>)	<p>Internal Migrants (22 children and youth)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3 Children on the Move ● 12 with family (9 students plus 3 working in factories) ● 7 living away from family (working in a factory) <p>Migrated to Thailand (6 children and youths)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1 trafficked victim ● 2 born in receiving country (student at a migrant learning center) ● 3 living away from parents (working)

Themes of the Focus Group Discussion (*Select the themes you discussed in the Focus Group Discussion*)

Non-Discrimination

Internal

- Students who do not participate and pay for extracurricular activities (where they pay the teacher) are given unequal and unfair treatment by their teacher (they feel as though they are not a priority and their points/marks/exams and assignments are cut)

- Burmese children who migrate within the country reported not being treated well by other children and feel it is difficult to make friends
- Prejudice against internal migrants from different areas based on stereotypes

Labor Migration

- Internal labor migrants face difficulties such as:
 - Being scolded and discriminated against by their supervisor
 - Bullied by other co-workers who are senior or even the same position level
 - Receive a low salary and difficult to support family livelihoods
 - Live in inadequate housing (poor quality)
 - If participate in labor protests, they are under watch by coworkers or supervisors who want to look good at reporting them and will face consequences
 - Even if there is a chance to negotiate for improved labor conditions such as a higher salary, their employer/or manager does not follow through with their promises
 - The migrant workers wish to collectivize with other migrants in similar situations and be able to discuss the issues they are facing with decision-makers (be it their supervisor) to improve their work situation, including salary and increases to accommodation fees (in hostel)

External

- Migrants are scolded or verbally abused by some local members of the community
- Unequal access to health services (fees are higher or lower depending on having identity cards)
- In some local shops (market, restaurant, food court, stores) there are incidents of discrimination against Burmese migrants
 - For example: feeling unwelcome in the shop
- Children born from migrants in Thailand that have a birth certificate can attend Thai schools but are required to pay more school fees than Thai children
- Migrants including children and youth are arrested by police who they believe are undocumented, so the police repeatedly threaten arrest in order to receive money
- When there is conflict between migrants and Thai people, police at times do not follow normal procedures and negotiate under the table with Thai people and does not reach to court – no justice
 - If the police think it is the Burmese who committed the crime, they will be arrested and taken to trial
- Discrimination with lower wages than what is required under the law and work for extremely long hours (as well as unusual hours, for example from 1am – 11am)
- External migrants feel they cannot voice their concerns and violations against them – internalize their feelings of being discriminated against and feel it has become normalized to have this experience
- Migrants feel uncomfortable living in Thailand due to the discrimination but still feel it would be worse to return to Myanmar at this time. However, they have the dream to return.
- Media is normally unbiased however the government sometimes tries to intervene and control the way media reports the news such as stories which portray the government

and police in a negative light. Although, when news is widely spread through social media and the community the government is unable to contain the story.

- Migrants want the Thai government to decrease the costs for applying for a work document or any documents so that they can avoid being arrested by police (migrants do not understand the procedure and pay high costs to agents who profit from helping them with work documents)
- Migrants want equal rights and treatment for working hours, salary and access to health care and other social services

Access to Services (shelter, education and health)

Access to Education

External

- Migrant children, born in Thailand and receive birth registration, can attend Thai schools, but must pay higher fees than Thai children
- Decrease in funding for migrant schools (which are supported by international donors and agencies)
 - As a result, some migrant schools have closed
 - Due to the decrease in funding and donor support, parents and guardians have increased costs to pay for school entrance fees among other costs
- Thailand's Ministry of Education recognizes migrant schools as "Migrant Learning Centers" hindering migrant students' ability to attend college or university as being seen as unaccredited
 - This year, 10 migrants graduating from MLCs can apply and attend a Thai college or university
- Migrants are able to apply to international universities after completing the GED exam and have the opportunity to win a scholarship (however receiving a scholarship is highly competitive)
- Migrant students can attend Thai non-formal education schools as well as college or university after completing high school level
- There is a one and two-year program for Myanmar migrants in grade 9 and 10 to finish Myanmar government high school and complete their examination
 - If the students pass their exams, they can apply to a Myanmar university
 - Migrants face challenges in Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Math subjects as there aren't many specialized teachers in these areas due to low wages

Internal

- There are still informal fees required even though there is a free education system
- Not enough schools and teachers, particularly in rural areas, makes access to education difficult
 - Many schools are located far distances from the students and there is the added cost of transportation
 - Especially during the rainy season, road conditions are poor making it difficult for students to attend classes
- The Myanmar Government provides free education until middle school (including uniforms, textbooks/notebooks, supplies, etc.)
 - However, in some cases school uniforms do not fit or there are not enough supplies provided

- o Insufficient facilities and supplies in classrooms (sometimes teachers or administrators indirectly ask children to donate)
 - Overcrowded classrooms
- General Issues**
- Along the Thai-Myanmar border there are many cases of drug use by students due to easy access/lack of government control

Shelter/detention/children's home

External

- Most migrant schools have their own room/board providing shelter for their students
- Most students in the shelter come from the border just for their education
- Some migrant students are sent to these shelters while their parents work in other districts of Thailand
- Students reported having a sense of community and being able to make friends, as well as feeling more disciplined
- Students who stay in the shelter have access to increased extracurricular activities, learning opportunities and exchanges (due to many activities between Thai schools, NGOs/CSOs, community events, etc.)
- First-aid kits are provided and if students are seriously ill, they are sent to Mae Tao Clinic which provides all medical consultation and treatment for free
- One of the students shared they could only stay in the shelter until they were 18 and when they finish high school, plan to find a job and move outside
- Another student who grew up in the shelter and studied at the school plans to continue to stay at the boarding house and work as a teacher

Health Services

External

- Access to health services/free clinics available in border area (Mae Tao Clinic)
 - o Most of the health workers are community health workers not doctors (they completed a six-month community health training)
 - o Some internationally certified doctors work in the clinic
 - o Health workers clearly explain and instruct how to take recommended medication
- Other clinics and hospitals are available along the border but can be expensive
- Unequal access to health services (fees are higher or lower depending on having identity cards)

Internal

- Poor health services and diagnostic capabilities
- Low income to access health services and medicine
- Lack of care by nurses in some hospitals (only if you give a bonus)
- In one instance reported, abortion occurred due to incorrect medicine given by the doctor
- Lack of health knowledge and poorly trained medical professionals/doctors

Reproductive Health Services

External

- Reproductive health education training provided in schools (by some NGOs)

Internal

- Reproductive health education rarely taught in schools
- One participant reported attending a reproductive health training provided by a young women’s network

For children whose parents have migrated (in addition to any of the above questions)

External

- For 3-10 years children have been away from their families
- Main caregivers are older siblings, aunts, teacher from school/shelter
 - Some take care of themselves and reported feeling independent
- Being away from their family, the children shared feeling as though they have no one looking after their well-being and that parental love is absent
 - The children also said they feel unsatisfied that they cannot stay with their parents even though they want to
- Some children reported needing to work to support their parents even if they are the youngest
 - One child participant said he feels responsible to act as the father to take care of his sisters
- Some shared feeling strange and like a guest when reuniting with parents
- Some shared choosing to move away from family in search of better opportunities (education, employment, etc.)

Internal

- 6 months – 7 years away from their family
- When arrived in Yangon, they feel strange and that everything was unfamiliar
 - Once a year, they can visit their families during Thingyan (Water Festival)
 - But at the same time feel strange when they visit as though they are a guest
 - Even though they have many things they would like to share, they cannot because they feel strange
 - They miss their home especially when they feel sick or have problems at work
 - Are not comfortable with having to cook for themselves

External (organizations that help)

- Some organizations help support out-of-school children and youth to attend schools or vocational trainings
- Negotiation/collaboration with Thai government for migrant students to attend Thai university
- Organization working on registering children (CPPCR)
- Play on Site which organizes sport activities for physical and mental development

Questions for refugee children

N/A

Questions for child victims of trafficking

Interview:

Two years ago, at age 16, this participant shared moving to Myawaddy with her parents and grandmother. Her parents needed to move to Bangkok to work and left her in the care of her grandmother. One day, her friend's sister said to her that she needed to go to Mae Sot to get money back from people she loaned to and asked her to accompany her. This participant thought this was an honest request because she was her friend's sister. However, once they crossed the border into Mae Sot and got into a car that was black with tinted windows, her friend's sister left the car and immediately a guy got in and drove away with her in the vehicle. She was scared and confused as to what was happening and did not know where the guy was taking her. When the car stopped, the man put her in a room where there were many other girls inside. She reported once being threatened with a knife by a Thai man.

One day, she was able to escape and noticed that police were following her. She got into a taxi and was taken to a safe place, and was later able to return to Myawaddy. She reached her friend's aunt's house that event and slept there. At that time, she was pressured by the friend not to tell the truth of what happened to her. Later, her grandmother came with local officials to bring her back. Her grandmother reported to the police to take action. Her friend's sister was sentenced to 10 years in prison for human trafficking. During the court sentencing, the victim was pressured by the friend's sister not to tell the truth (proposed bribes of 10 lakh) but she did not accept and told the truth. One policeman blamed her for what happened to her and shamed her that she was not aware of her surroundings. She received a settlement of 10 lakh and with that money she opened a small shop attached to her home to sell goods. After one year, her parents returned from Bangkok and now they are all living together.

Prevention Questions

- Some participants have joined awareness trainings about trafficking and migration by NGOs
 - Child Care Foundation (CCF)
 - United ACT
 - Burma ACT
 - MAP Foundation (Migrant Assistant Program Foundation)
 - FED (Foundation for Education Development)
 - HWF (Health Without Frontier)
 - Thai Department for Social Welfare
- Participants want increased knowledge on prevention through participating in trainings, social media and campaigns
- Children participants would like free peer-peer discussions during school holiday
- Parent Teacher Association (PTA) quarterly meetings (talk about the issues affecting children especially on trafficking and migration)
- Show a short film to raise awareness to other children and youth
- Share emergency number and address of where to get help

If someone decided to work abroad, what should we know?

- Participants said:
 - Legal documents
 - Having accurate information about the job
 - Be aware of job-related laws in the country you are going to
 - Be aware of the work environment

- A participant recommended to work domestically if possible

What do you wish and request? Free message

Internal

- The government should take responsibility to better care for and protect migrant workers
- Increase the daily wage (because of low purchasing power) and promote greater awareness of labor rights and information
- Community and government should all participate and be responsible for promoting and protecting people's rights
- Laws to protect workers to be effectively implemented
- Be able to enjoy all labor rights (public holidays, health insurance, adequate working hours, adequate wages)
- Be aware of exploitation by foreign companies and know your rights
- Wish for an increase in salary to support family and have family members return from abroad
- Treat everyone with equal rights

Some quotes from participants

One participant said, "I will stay longer in Thailand even though I want to return to Myanmar. It is still a much better situation living here, even though there are some difficulties."

One participant said, "The world has been home for migrants as long as the world existed."

Another participant said, "People look down on us when they see the monastery school symbol on our uniform."

Photos:



*Consultation with children and youth in
Myawaddy, Karen State, Myanmar
(the border of Myanmar and Thailand)*

20 May, 2017



*Consultation with
youth from
different parts of
Myanmar
working in
factories in
Yangon.*

21 May, 2017

