
Introduction

The Mekong Migration Network (MMN), stemmed out of a loose network of the research partners for a 2001-2002 collaborative research project funded by the Rockefeller Foundation and OXFAM-Hong Kong, was officially formed in October 2003 and expanded the areas of its joint action to research and publication, advocacy, capacity building and networking. During the launching, some core issues for the MMN to take up in the subsequent years were identified. Following the conception of the MMN plan of action, the MMN Steering Committee (SC) agreed in early 2004 to conduct research on issues related to arrest, detention, deportation, return and reintegration of migrants in Mekong. It had been a concern of many migrant advocates in the region that migrants in Mekong, particularly those who are undocumented, are subject to arrest, detention and deportation and that the migrants' fear had a serious impact on their mental and physical well-being. Though Thailand, the major magnet of migrants in the sub-region, implemented a policy of allowing migrants to register, migrants who opted to do so were not necessarily free from the risk of being arrested for failing to comply with restrictive condition of stay. Migrants returning to their home countries, either voluntarily or as a result of deportation, faced a number of challenges upon arrival.

As the information available concerning these issues was limited, the MMN SC suggested to hold a symposium inviting policy makers and representatives of IGOs, NGOs and migrants' grassroots organisations to discuss the related issues in preparation for the MMN collaborative research that was to be carried out in 2005-6.

The symposium entitled "Protecting Migrants' Rights When They Leave the Host Country" was then held 30 September – 2 October 2004 with the following objectives in mind:

- 1) To jointly discuss the issues, challenges and responses related to the "exit process" in the context of international human rights principles among policy-makers, among advocates, and among policy makers and advocates across the sub-region.
- 2) To broaden and deepen the understanding of the "exit process", especially regarding MOUs and registration policies from both receiving and sending countries' perspectives.

Around 100 participants ranging from policy-makers and representatives of IGOs to advocates from migrant support NGOs and migrant grassroots organisations participated in the symposium and actively shared their information and perspectives throughout the three-day program.



Mekong Migration Network

(member list as of September 2007)

CAMBODIA

- Cambodian Women for Peace and Development (CWPD)*
- Cambodia Human Rights and Development Association (ADHOC)
- Cambodian Human Rights Task Force
- Cambodia Labour Organisation (CLO)
- Cambodian Women's Crisis Center (CWCC)
- Coordination of Action Research on AIDS and Mobility (CARAM)-Cambodia
- KHEMARA
- Khmer Kampuchea Krom Human Rights Organization (KKKHRO)
- Legal Support for Children & Women (LSCW)
- Overseas Vietnamese Association
- Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH) – Cambodia
- Women and Youth Action

China

- Migrant Workers Education and Training Centre*
- Institute of Contemporary Observation (ICO)
- Ruili Women and Children Centre
- Society of Strengthening Capability of Women and Communities
- Yunnan Floating Population
- Yunnan Reproductive Health Research Association

Lao PDR

- Faculty of Social Sciences, National University of Laos*
- Lao Women Union

Burma/Myanmar

- The National Council of YMCAs of Myanmar *

THAILAND

- Migrant Assistance Program (MAP)*
- Thai Action Committee for Democracy in Burma (TACDB)
- Action Network for Migrants in Thailand (ANM)*
- Asian Research Center for Migration (ARCM), Chulalongkorn University
- National Catholic Commission on Migration
- EMPOWER-Chiang Mai Center
- EMPOWER-Mae Sai Center
- Federation of Trade Unions - Burma (FTUB)
- Foundation For Women
- Institute for Population and Social Research (IPSR), Mahidol University
- Maryknoll Thailand - Office for Migrants at Immigration Detention Center in Bangkok
- Mekong Subregional Program-Christian Conference of Asia (MSP-CCA)
- Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH) - Thailand
- Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN)

VIETNAM

- Center of Research and Consultancy for Development (CRCD), Southern Institute of Social Sciences*
- Education & Psychology Association -Ho Chi Minh City
- Social Work and Community Development Center
- Social Work & Community Development Unit
- Sunflower Vocational Training Unit

REGIONAL

- Asian Migrant Centre (AMC)*

*Members of the MMN Steering Committee

Symposium Program

Thursday, 30 September 2004

- 8:30-9:00**Registration**
- 9:00-9:20**Welcome message**
-Mr. Hans Beckers and Ms. Pranom Somwong, on behalf of organisers
-Ms. Katherine Bond, The Rockefeller Foundation
- 9:20-9:40**Introduction**
- 9:40-10:20**Presentation**
- a) "Overview of Migration in the Mekong Sub-region"
Ms. Jackie Pollock, on behalf of Mekong Migration Network
- b) "Framework on Migrants' Human Rights"
Ms. Christina DeFalco, Asian Migrant Centre
- 10:20-10:30Tea Break
- 10:30-12:00**Plenary 1**
Managing Migration: How Does It Protect Migrants' Rights?
Moderator: Mr. Richard Kaing & Ms. Chaw Ohmar Ei Ei
Panel:
- a) "The Managed Migration Approach: Framework and Principles"
Mr. Hans Beckers, International Organization of Migration
- b) "Protecting Migrant Workers: The MOU Scorecard"
Ms. Thetis Mangahas, Mekong Project to Combat Trafficking in Children and Women, International Labour Organization
- Open Forum**
- 12:00-13:00Lunch
- 13:00-15:45Plenary 1 (contd.) on Managing Migration in the Mekong Sub-region
- c) "Managing Migration in Thailand: Registration and MOUs"
Mr. Nara Ratanarut, Director of Illegal Migrant Workers Division, Ministry of Labour, Thailand
- d) "Managing Migration from a Sending Country's Perspective"
Mr. Bounkham Sihalath, Deputy Chief of Employment Promotion Division, Department of Labour, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Lao PDR
- e) "Implication of MOU for Cambodian Migrants"
Mr. Seng Sakda, Director of Employment and Manpower Department, Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, Cambodia
- Open Forum**
- 16:00-16:15Tea break

16:15-18:00 **Plenary 2**
**How Migration Policies (including Arrest & Deportation) are Affected
by Economic & Security Consideration in the Host Country**

Moderator: Ms. Chou Bun Eng

Panel:

- a) "The Political Economy of Migration to Thailand"
Ms. Alison Vicary, Macquarie University, Australia
- b) "How Economic and Security Concerns Lead to Expulsion of Migrants:
Some Asian Examples"
Mr. William Gois, Migrant Forum in Asia

Open Forum

18:30-20:00 Welcome Dinner

Friday, 1 October 2004

8:30-9:00 **Recap**

9:00-10:15 **Plenary 3**

Health Issues When Migrants Leave their Host Country

Moderator: Mr. Promboon Panitchpakdi

Panel:

- a) "Providing Sustainable Health Care"
Mr. Sutat Kongkhuntod, Ministry of Public Health, Thailand
- b) "Health and Return: Migrants' Perspectives"
Mr. Pawka Wansai, Migrant Health Worker

Open Forum

10:15-10:30 Tea Break

10:30-12:00 c) "Health Issues Faced by Migrants on Return"

Ms. Chou Bun Eng, Cambodian Women for Peace and Development

c) "Health Concerns, Needs & Services for Migrants: Strategies and Partnerships"

Mr. Greg Irving, International Organization for Migration

Open Forum

12:00-13:00 Lunch

13:00-15:30 **Plenary 4**

Arrest, Detention, Deportation

Moderator: Mr. Rex Varona

Speakers:

- d) "Arrest, Detention and Deportation: The Situation and its Challenges"
Mr. Wirat Yonpat, Police Captain, Department of Immigration, Thailand

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- e) "Screening for Trafficking Victims"
Mr. Phil Robertson, United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking

Open Forum

- f) "Screening for Persons of Concern"
Ms. Stephanie Shanler, UN High Commissioner for Refugees
- g) "Social and Health Issues in the Deportation Process"
Ms. Jackie Pollock, MAP Foundation

Open Forum

15:30-15:45 Tea Break

15:45-16:45 h) "Repatriation Procedure and Services Provided for Deported Laotian Migrants"
Mr. Khamsing Phommany, Chief of Children Assistance Section, Department of Social Welfare, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Lao PDR

- f) "Voluntary Return of Migrants: An Alternative to Prevent Arrest, Detention and Deportation:"
Mr. Hans Beckers, International Organization for Migration

Open Forum

16:45-18:00 **Workshop 1 on Plenary 3 & 4: Identify Issues & Challenges**

Facilitators:

G1 (TH-LA): Mr. Adisorn Kerdmongkol

G2 (TH-CM): Ms. Samith Hou

G3 (TH-B/M): Ms. Alison Vicary

G4 (VN-CM): Ms. Mony Tep / Ms. Le Thi My Hien

G5 (CH-VN-B/M): Mr. Saw Shwe Lin

18:30 Dinner

2 October, Saturday

8:40-9:00 **Recap**

9:00-10:00 Group Reporting from the Workshop 1

10:00-11:00 **Plenary 5 Social and Economic Needs of Migrants When They Leave the Host Country Back to Their Country of Origin**

Moderator: Ms. Jackie Pollock

Speakers:

- a) "Returnee Reintegration: Regional Strategy"

Ms. Lee-Nah Hsu, UNDP-SEAHIV

- b) "Reintegration of Returning Migrants"

Ms. Chaw Chaw Ohnmar, World Vision, Myanmar

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- c) "Reintegration of Returning Women and Girls in the Lao PDR"
Ms. Ninpaseuth Xayaphonesy, Lao Women's Union

Open Forum

- 11:00-11:15..... Tea Break
11:15-12:30..... d) "Social and Economic Situation of Returning Migrants"
Mr. Mok Kanel, Deputy Governor of Prey Veng Province (Cambodia)
e) "Migrant Saving and Alternative Investment"
Mr. Rex Varona, Asian Migrant Centre

Open Forum

- 12:30-13:30 Lunch
13:30-14:45 **Workshop 2 on Plenary 5: Identify Issues & Challenges**
Facilitators:
G1 (TH-LA): Mr. Adisorn Kerdmongkol
G2 (TH-CM): Ms. Chou Bun Eng
G3 (TH-B/M): Mr. Richard Khaing
G4 (VN-CM): Ms. Huynh Tuyet Thi Ngoc
G5 (CH-VN-B/M): Ms. Hanjialing & Ms. Le thi My Huong
14:45-15:45 Group reporting
Facilitator:
Ms. Jackie Pollock
15:45-16:00 Tea break
16:00-17:45 **Synthesis & Consensus on Key Issues and recommendations**
(to Address All the Issues Discussed during the Symposium)
Facilitators:
Mr. Rex Varona and Ms. Jackie Pollock
17:45-18:00 Closing remarks, Ms. Chou Bun Eng & Mr. Adisorn Kerdmongkol,
on behalf of organisers
18:30 Dinner

List of Participating Organisations

Government

Cambodia

- Department of Employment and Manpower, Ministry of Labour
- Bureau Chief of International Private Law, a member of Inter-Ministerial Committee on MOU Enforcement
- Deputy Governor of Prey Veng Province

China

- Wenshan Women Federation

Lao PDR

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Department of Social Welfare, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
- Department of Labor, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare

Thailand

- Ministry of Public Health
- Office of Foreign Workers Administration, Ministry of Labor
- Immigration Department

NGOs, CBOs, IGOs, Mass Organisations, Academic Institutes

Burma

- World Vision-Myanmar
- Student Christian Movement
- YMCA-Myanmar

Cambodia

- Cambodian Women for Peace and Development (CWPD)

- CARE International
- Cambodian Women Crisis Centre (CWCC)
- Legal Support for Children and Women (LSCW)
- Cambodian Human Rights Task Force (CHRTF)
- CARAM-Cambodia
- Program for Appropriate technology in Health (PATH)-Cambodia
- Cambodian Human Rights and Development Association
- Women and Youth Action
- KHEMARA

China

- Migrant Workers Education and Training Centre, Beijing
- Society of Strengthening Capability of Women and Communities, Yunnan
- Yunnan Floating Population
- Yunnan Reproductive Health Research Association
- Ruili Women and Children Centre
- Institute of Contemporary Observation (ICO)

Lao PDR

- Lao Women Union
- Faculty of Social Sciences, National University of Laos

Thailand

- Action Network for Migrants (ANM)
- MAP Foundation
- Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH)-Thailand
- Thai Action Committee for Democracy in Burma (TACDB)
- Pattanarak Foundation
- Raks Thai Foundation
- Foundation For Women

- World Vision-Thailand
- Shan Women Action Network (SWAN)
- Ministry to Thai Workers Overseas-Catholic Commission for Migrant Prisoners
- National Catholic Commission
- Maryknoll Thailand
- Young Chi Oo Association
- Friends of Women Foundation
- EMPOWER- Mae Sai
- EMPOWER - Chiang Mai
- EMPOWER – Bangkok
- Christian Conference in Asia (CCA) - Mekong Sub-Regional Program
- Institute for Population and Social Research, Mahidol University
- Asian Research Center for Migration, Chulalongkorn University
- Federation of Trade Unions-Burma (FTUB)
- Center for AIDS Rights (CAR)
- International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- UN-Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking (UNIAP)
- UNDP-South East Asia HIV and Development Project
- International Labour Organization-IPEC
- UN High Commissioner for Refugees (HCR), Regional Office for Thailand

- UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) East and Southeast Asia Regional Office

Vietnam

- Southern Institute of Social Sciences
- Social work & Community Development Unit
- Sunflower Vocational Training Unit
- Social Work and Community Development Center
- Education Psychology Union-Ho Chi Minh City
- Saigon Children's Charity

Australia

- Macquarie University

Philippines

- Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA)

Donor

- The Rockefeller Foundation-South-East Asia Regional Programme

Secretariat

- Asian Migrant Centre
- MAP Foundation