

Migrant Labor Context of Lao PDR

Dr Khamsay Chanthavysouk MD, MSc of TM
Head of Statistic, Planning & Research Division
National Mother and Child Hospital

Overview of Migrant Labor Context

Politic : Socialist Country

Capital: Vientiane

Population (2010): 6.4 million

Area: 236,800 sq km

Languages: Lao, French

Currency: Kip (Lak)

GDP per Capita (2009): USD 2,255

HDI Rank (2010): 122 of 169

Remittances (2009): USD 1 million

Migration Rate (2010-2015): 2.2 /1,000

Immigrants (2010): 0.3%

Women as a Percentage of Immigrants (2010): 48.0%

Population under 15 (2010): 36.8%

Adult HIV Prevalence (2007): 0.5 %



Aspect migrant labor

1. Cross border expatriate migrant:

* Mainly to Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia & China

* Mid-December 2004: 99,352 Lao workers had to register in Thailand

Fishing boats	2,634	2.7%	Fish processing	1,013	1.0 %
Agriculture	16,795	16.9 %	Construction	8,442	8.5 %
Domestic Service	31,449	31.7%	Other	39,019	39.3 %

* MLSW January 2006, 7,521 Lao migrant licensed recruitment in 9 factories

2. Domestic impetrate migrant

Construction labor, factory, garment, driver, damp constructor, electricity network install , road maker etc...

Foreigner labor: casino, highway, constructor , cultivator etc..

Late phase living tourist

Key Issues

Irregular flows: Despite recent efforts to regulate labour migration to Thailand, most migrants opt for irregular channels, which prove to be faster and cheaper. As a result they migrate without adequate information about their destination or proper work contracts, which leaves them vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. Further, it prohibits their access to social and health services from the government.

Neglect of domestic work: Neither Thai nor Lao labour regulations acknowledge and protect the rights of domestic workers. Moreover, the Memorandum of Understanding on Labour Cooperation signed by both countries does not acknowledge the domestic sector. As most women migrate to Thailand for domestic work, this gap forces them to resort to irregular channels and thus greatly increases their risk of being exploited and trafficked into Thailand. However, since 2004 the Thai Government has begun to register Lao domestic workers already in Thailand.

Key Issues

More women migrants

Women comprised over half of the officially registered Lao migrant workers in Thailand, and 90% are domestic workers

While data for undocumented workers is not available, it can be assumed that the actual numbers of women migrants is far higher.

Government efforts

Both Lao PDR and Thailand are establishing policies to regulate labour migration from Laos into Thailand.

Thailand has introduced a process of nationality verification and has officially verified nearly 30,000 Lao workers as of 2007, and issued temporary passports to them.

Moreover, since 2004 Thailand has launched a registration process to grant permits to existing undocumented migrant workers in the country.

Multiple and complex dimensions of migration include as:

1. Labour migration
2. Family reunification
3. Migration & security
4. Combating irregular migration
5. Migration & trafficking
6. Migrant rights
7. Health & migration
(physical abuse, STIs, HIV, mental health, sequels...)
8. Re-integration
9. Migration & development
(Education, vocational training, generate income ...)

Returnee Migrant Cases from Thailand

Who seeking at MCHH

Rational :

- * Lao bordering to Thailand mainly on Mekong river 1.200 km
- * 75% of Lao youth has experienced season working in Thailand (ILO 2006)
- * Almost illegal immigration: liberty worker, domestic work, entertainment dialing to risks of sex abuse, STIs HIV, drugs abuse etc.
- * MoU Lao Thai Phase I & II Year 2009 to 2012
- * RCN linking to Lao Women Union & MLSW
- * Health examination according to SOP

Objectives:

To study the health status, RSHS and certain characteristics of trafficking among returnee migrant who seeks care.

Methodology :

Prospective descriptive study through the head to head interview while counseling taking place to returnee migrant at MCHH during 2008 to 2010.

Results

Demography data

1. Sample size 623

F 620/623 (99.5%), M 3/623 (0.5%)

2. Return channels:

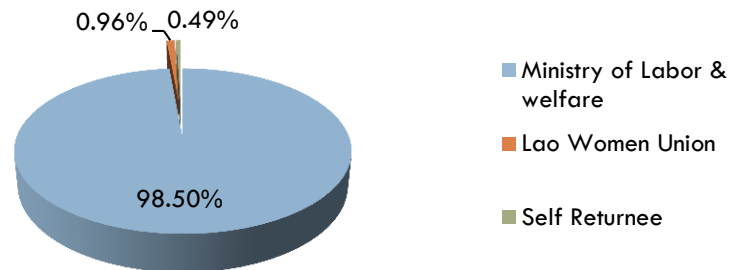
MLSW

614/623 (98.55%),

Lao embassy in BKK & LWU

6/623 (0.96%)

Self organized 3/623 (0.49%)



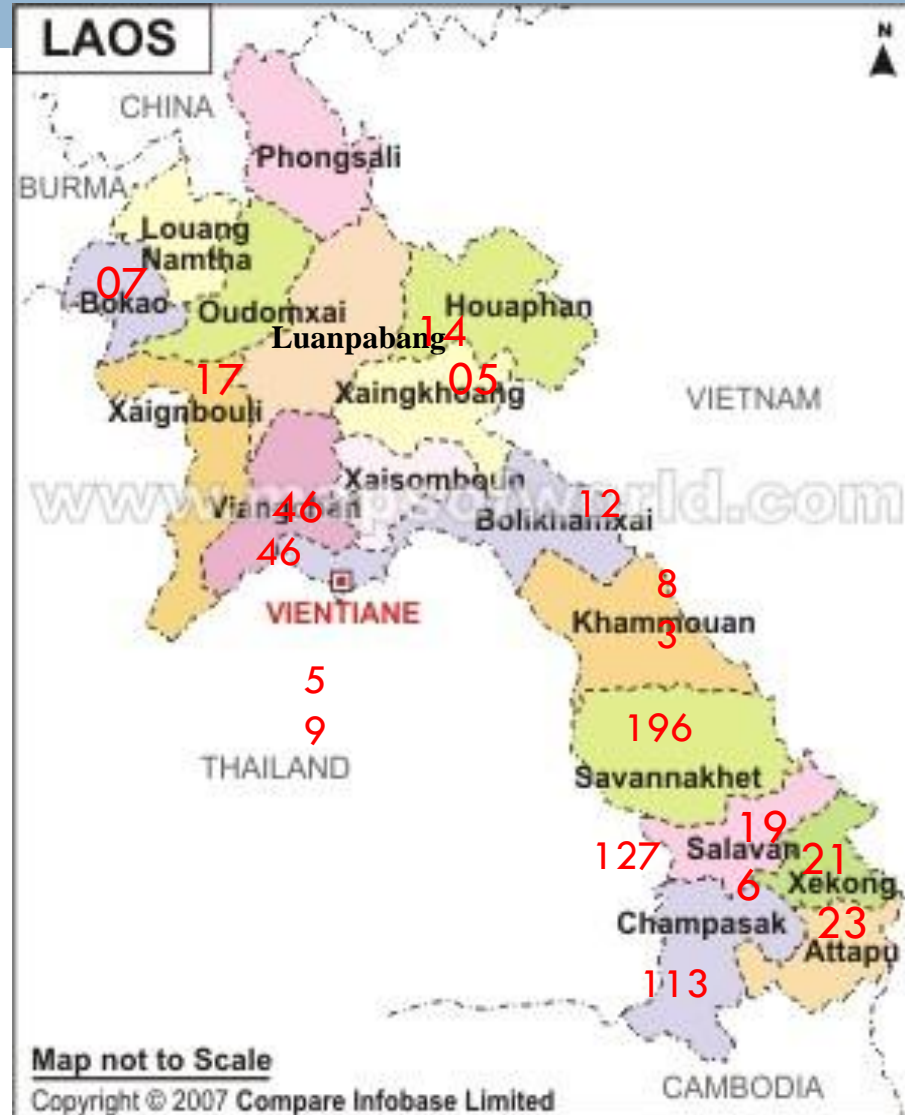
3. Thailand 620/623 (99.5%) & Malaysia 3/623 (0.5%)

4. Children 189/623 (30.33%)

Predominance 15 to 20 Yrs 391/623 (62.76%)

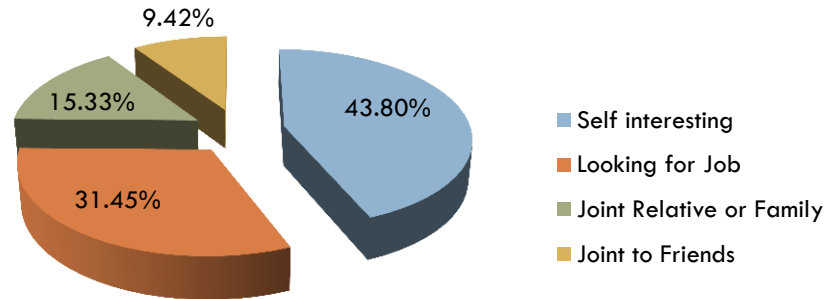
5. Originals

1. SVK	196
2. SRV	127
3. CPS	113
4. VTE city	59
5. VTE Province	46
6. BKX	12
7. KM	83
-8. XYB	17
9. BK	07
10. XK	05
11. LPB	14
12. SK	21
13. ATP	23

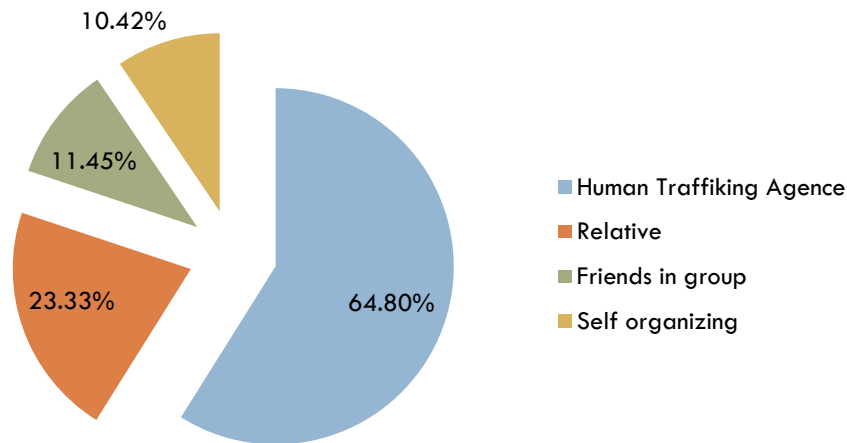


Caused & occasional job

1. Factors



2. Migrant routes



3. Trafficking aspect

Parent recipient 1.500 to 3000 ThB

Agency recipient 1.000 to 5.000 ThB

4. Occasional job

Direct FSW 427/620 (68.87%)

Indirect FSW 58/620 (9.35%)

Domestic 106/620 (17.09%)

Others 29/620 (4.69%)

Health Status during return home country

- 1. Prevalence HIV** **6/608 (0.98%)**
Prevalence Syphilis **4/ 456 (0.87%)**
2. STIs
 8/18 (44.4%) Candida Albicans
 4/18 (22.2%) B Vaginosis
3. Mental health 12/620 (1.93%)
4. Skill diseases 5/620 (0.80%)
5. Serious sequels of physical abuses 8/620 (1.3%)
6. Unwanted children 3/620 (0.48%)

Conclusion:

Initiative result of studied among 623 returnee migrant from Thailand

- * 30% child labor with origin mainly in southern part of Laos SVK, SRV & CPS
- * 64.80 % in aspect trafficking
- * Prevalence HIV 1% Syphilis 0.9 %
- * Affected by mental health (2%) & Serious sequels of physical abused (1.3%)

REFERENCES

1. Report of ILO in Lao Year 2006
2. MoU Lao Thai for migrant workers Phase II 2009 to 2012
3. Thailand reopens registration for illegal migrant workers
4. Task Force on ASEAN Migrant Workers
5. Migrant workers' remittances: Cambodia, Lao PDR & Myanmar
6. Labor migrant in Lao PDR
7. Policy Overview
8. The bilateral MOUs on Cooperation in the Employment of Workers