

Myanmar Youth Migrants in Thailand

STRENGTHENING SKILLS, PROTECTION,
AND ECONOMIC INCLUSION

Comprehensive Labour Market Assessment



Acknowledgment

This report is prepared for Finn Church Aid (FCA), as part of the Youth on the Move: A Regional Approach to Resilience project, with support from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

The Comprehensive Labour Market Assessment aims to assess migration dynamics, labour market participation, and livelihood strategies of Myanmar youth in Thailand, drawing on perspectives from migrants, employers, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, technical and vocational education and training providers (TVET), recruitment agencies, and financial institutions. In addition to documenting labour conditions, the analysis focuses on structural barriers to inclusion—such as documentation systems, access to financial services, entrepreneurship, remittances, and opportunities for skills development.

This assessment would not have been possible without the generous contributions of Myanmar youth and migrant workers, civil society organizations, TVET providers, government agencies, employers, recruitment agencies, and financial institutions who participated in interviews and surveys. FCA Thailand would also like to express special thanks to the Spirit in Education Movement (SEM) for their partnership and support in TVET provider mapping and data collection. FCA Thailand, Myanmar Country Office staff and SEM provided valuable insights throughout the process, and the FCA Myanmar Country Office contributed to the layout design.

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This report has been produced with the financial assistance of Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. The views expressed herein should not be taken, in any way, to reflect the official opinion of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

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List of Acronyms

AQRF	ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework
BEAM	Bridging Educational Access to Migrants Foundation
BOI	Board of Investment
CI	Certification of Identity
DIP	Department of Industrial Promotion
DLPW	Department of Labour Protection and Welfare
DOE	Department of Employment
DOPA	Department of Provincial Administration
EEF	Equitable Education Fund
FCA	Finn Church Aid
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
G2G	Government-to-Government
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point
HCTC	Hospitality and Catering Training Center
HRDF	Human Rights and Development Foundation
HWF	Help without Frontier Thailand Foundation
IB	Immigration Bureau
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KYC	Know Your Customer
LMA	Labour Market Assessment
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MWG	Migrant Working Group
NAP	National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NSO	National Statistical Office
OPEC	Office of the Private Education Commission
OVEC	Office of the Vocational Education Commission
SEM	Spirit in Education Movement
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

Executive Summary

This Comprehensive Labour Market Assessment (LMA), commissioned by Finn Church Aid (FCA), presents an evidence-based examination of the employment landscape for Myanmar youth migrating to Thailand. Its objective is to guide policy, program design, and advocacy initiatives that support safe migration, decent work, and social inclusion.

Labour migration between Myanmar and Thailand has long shaped regional labour mobility in Southeast Asia. For many young people in Myanmar, migration now represents both an economic lifeline and a means of survival in response to ongoing political instability, economic decline, and scarce domestic opportunities. Thailand's diversified industrial and service economy provides significant employment prospects, yet migrants continue to face systemic barriers related to legal documentation, skill alignment, and labour protection.

The study employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating a quantitative survey of 400 Myanmar youth migrants with qualitative interviews involving key stakeholders such as employers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), financial institutions, government agencies, and recruitment agents. Data collection was carried out in Bangkok, Samut Sakhon, Pathum Thani, Nonthaburi, Chiang Mai, and Tak provinces, complemented by focus group discussions with out-of-school youth in Mon State, Myanmar.

The assessment explores five interconnected dimensions of the migration ecosystem:

1. **Labour Supply** – Examines the demographics, motivations, skill profiles, and career aspirations of Myanmar youth migrants.
2. **Labour Demand** – Analyses employer perspectives on workforce needs, recruitment practices, and skill requirements.
3. **Government Role and Policy Perspectives** – Assesses the roles, perspectives, and interventions of Thai government agencies in managing Myanmar youth migrants.
4. **Ecosystem and Services** – Reviews the roles and interactions of NGOs, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions, financial service providers, and recruitment intermediaries.
5. **Legal and Policy Framework** – Assesses Thai labour laws, migration policies, and bilateral mechanisms that shape the mobility and protection of young migrant workers.

Key Main Findings

1. Migration Trends and Drivers

Migration from Myanmar to Thailand has accelerated significantly since 2020, with over 70% of surveyed respondents reporting arrival between 2020 and 2024. The 2021 military coup and enforcement of the conscription law have reshaped migration dynamics—transforming what was once a large economic movement driven by displacement and protection needs.

Thailand continues to serve as the primary destination for Myanmar youth migrants due to its geographical proximity, wage differentials, and established social networks. However, the formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) recruitment system remains underutilized because of its high cost, complex procedures, and long processing times. Consequently, many migrants rely on non-MOU pathways, including Cabinet Resolutions and informal brokerage systems, which offer faster access to work but carry higher legal and financial risks.

Most Myanmar youth are employed in manufacturing, food processing, logistics, construction, and service industries, concentrated in Samut Sakhon and Bangkok. While they are integral to sustaining these sectors, the majority continue to face precarious employment conditions due to irregular legal status, informal work arrangements, and limited opportunities for skill development or upward mobility.

2. Labour Supply and Skills Mismatch

Most Myanmar youth migrants fall within the 18–29 age group and tend to be motivated and comparatively well educated, with 59% having completed a diploma or higher degree. Despite this, 65% are employed in roles that do not correspond to their field of study, indicating a significant mismatch between their skills and the jobs they obtain.

Key challenges include:

- Limited access to Thai language and market-relevant technical training, especially for undocumented workers.
- Weak coordination among TVET institutions, NGOs, and employers, resulting in fragmented upskilling efforts.
- Persistent gender disparities, with women concentrated in lower-wage manufacturing and service jobs.

While youth show high motivation to upskill (over 60%), awareness of formal TVET programs is extremely low (13%). This highlights the need for accessible, modular, and accredited training pathways that align with industry demand and are open to both documented and undocumented workers.

3. Labour Demand and Employer Perspectives

Employers throughout Thailand consistently emphasize that Myanmar youth are critical to maintaining operations in several core industries. This is especially true for sectors dominated by “3D jobs”—dirty, dangerous, and difficult—where persistent labour shortages make Myanmar workers indispensable.

Key obstacles faced by employers include:

- Cumbersome recruitment processes and inconsistent government regulations.
- Language barriers and limited career progression hinder effective worker management, impacting communication and productivity.
- High turnover due to documentation insecurity and lack of formal recognition for migrant skills.

While employers value the reliability of Myanmar workers, few invest in structured training or partnerships with TVET providers. Collaboration between the private sector and civil society remains limited, though some employers express interest in cross-border skill recognition frameworks to facilitate future workforce mobility.

4. Government Roles and Policy Perspectives

This section evaluates the roles and strategic outlooks of Thai government agencies concerning Myanmar migrant youth. Findings are synthesized from interviews with nine key institutions: the Immigration Bureau (IB), National Statistical Office (NSO), Department of Employment (DOE), Department of Labour Protection and Welfare (DLPW), Department of Industrial Promotion (DIP), Office of the Private Education Commission (OPEC), Office of the Vocational Education Commission (OVEC), Equitable Education Fund (EEF), and the Department of Provincial Administration (DOPA).

Key Findings:

- While Myanmar migrant youth are integral to the Thai labor market, state policies prioritize short-term national security and legal compliance over long-term socioeconomic integration. Despite the Immigration Bureau’s role in facilitating legal residency, constitutional constraints, budgetary limitations, and narrow institutional mandates result in a reactive approach rather than proactive strategic planning.
- Coordination across government sectors remains weak. Specifically, the NSO’s macro-level data lacks nationality disaggregation, rendering the economic contributions of Myanmar youth “statistically invisible.” This fragmentation hinders evidence-based policy collaboration between the DOE and the Immigration Bureau.
- The institutional framework remains siloed, with labor, education, and registration systems lacking integration. Most national policies prioritize Thai citizens, leaving migrants to rely on indirect benefits or project-based initiatives. However, specialized agencies provide critical support: OVEC offers certified vocational training for border-area youth; the EEF manages alternative education for

marginalized and stateless groups; and OPEC facilitates short-term, employer-linked training programs.

- Although the Labour Protection Act and the Royal Decree on the Management of Foreign Workers provide a robust legal foundation, significant “enforcement gaps” persist. Undocumented youth, in particular, face barriers related to rights awareness, documentation complexities, and administrative burdens.
- A primary obstacle to effective governance is the lack of interoperability between the datasets of the DOE, DOPA, IB, and the NSO. This disconnect prevents the government from designing evidence-based policies and tracking the migrant population accurately to ensure comprehensive protection and labor management.

5. Financial Inclusion and Remittance Behaviour

A majority of Myanmar migrants lack awareness of formal financial services and depend on informal or semi-formal systems for remittances and loans.

Key observations:

- **Remittances:** Around 60% send money home monthly, primarily via mobile apps (TrueMoney, WavePay, KPay) or trusted informal agents. High banking fees, exchange rate differences, and documentation barriers discourage the use of formal channels.
- **Borrowing and Saving:** Only 12% have accessed formal loans, while 37% rely on informal lenders. Financial literacy remains low, especially among undocumented youth.
- **Opportunities:** The rise of digital financial platforms offers potential for greater inclusion—if products are designed with multilingual access, low fees, and flexible ID requirements.

6. Civil Society, TVET, and Support Ecosystem

Civil society organizations (CSOs) such as Human Rights and Development Foundation (HRDF), Migrant Working Group (MWG), Spirit in Education Movement (SEM), Bridging Educational Access to Migrants Foundation (BEAM), Hospitality and Catering Training Center (HCTC), and Help without Frontiers (HWF) and its Rays of Youth project—hereafter referred to as ‘Rays of Youth’—will be identified as a TVET service provider in this LMA study, play a critical role in filling service gaps for migrant youth, offering Thai language classes, vocational training, and legal counselling. However, the ecosystem remains fragmented, with limited coordination among actors and minimal engagement from the private sector. Community-based TVET models have proven effective at reaching undocumented youth, but face challenges related to accreditation, funding sustainability, and scalability. Closer collaboration among NGOs, TVET providers, and recruitment agencies could improve skills alignment, promote decent work, and foster local integration.

7. Legal and Policy Environment

While Thailand's labour laws broadly comply with international standards, implementation remains inconsistent. Regulations differ across ministries, and administrative processes for work permits and renewals are often cumbersome. The MOU mechanism offers legal migration but is slow and expensive, while Cabinet Resolutions are faster but lack legal permanence.

Government agencies often lack a unified framework for migrant labour management, and the digitalization of processes remains incomplete. Stakeholders highlighted that the main bottleneck lies not in the law itself, but in regulatory culture and bureaucratic practices that deter formal recruitment and service access.

Recommendations for Policy and Programming

Building on the assessment's key findings, the following recommendations outline actionable steps to strengthen Thailand's migration governance and improve outcomes for Myanmar youth. They target gaps in coordination, legal protection, skills development, financial access, and data systems. A more inclusive, youth-focused approach will support safer migration pathways, improve labour productivity, and promote long-term socio-economic integration.

- **Strengthen Multi-Stakeholder Coordination**

Establish a national mechanism that links labour, education, and civil registration systems with participation of civil society, migrant-led organizations, private sector, and local authorities to enable coherent, long-term planning for youth migrants.

- **Expand Skills Development and Education Access**

Align TVET programmes, community-based training, and private sector initiatives with real labour-market needs. Promote flexible, modular, and accredited learning pathways that are accessible to both documented and undocumented youth.

- **Enhance Legal Protection and Rights Awareness**

Reinforce enforcement of labour laws, reduce administrative burdens, and provide targeted outreach, legal counselling, and case management services, particularly for undocumented, out-of-school, or otherwise vulnerable youth.

- **Promote Financial Inclusion**

Expand access to formal financial services through digital platforms, multilingual interfaces, and low-fee products. Improve access to savings, safe remittances, and credit tailored to the needs of young migrant workers.

- **Engage the Private Sector**

Foster structured partnerships between employers, TVET providers, and NGOs to promote on-the-job training, mentorship, and clearer pathways for skills recognition, including cross-border mobility frameworks.

- **Integrate Data Systems for Evidence-Based Policy**

Improve interoperability between datasets from IB, NSO, DOE, DOPA, NSO, and education agencies. Strengthened data integration will support strategic workforce planning, monitor youth labour outcomes, and enable responsive service delivery.

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Labour migration from Myanmar to Thailand has long served as an essential livelihood pathway for young people seeking higher wages, improved job prospects, and better living conditions. Thailand remains a major destination country, relying heavily on migrant labour to fill workforce gaps in manufacturing, construction, services, and agriculture. Despite their economic contributions, young migrants continue to face persistent barriers related to legal documentation, residency status, access to social protection, financial exclusion, and limited opportunities for skills development or career progression.

This LMA was undertaken to generate evidence-based insights into the challenges, labour market dynamics, and opportunities affecting Myanmar youth in Thailand. The research focuses on three core groups:

1. Documented and undocumented Myanmar youth already working in Thailand;
2. Out-of-school adolescents in Mon State considering migration; and
3. Employers, policymakers, financial service providers, NGOs, and training institutions that influence the broader migration ecosystem.

The overall objective is to examine labour market participation, identify constraints to decent work, and highlight opportunities to strengthen legal protection, inclusion, and empowerment for young migrant workers.

As of 2023, Thailand's labour force totalled 40.45 million people, declining slightly to 40.36 million in 2024 (CEIC Data, 2024). National unemployment remained low at 1.0%, though youth unemployment continues to require policy attention (OECD, 2024). The minimum daily wage increased to 400 baht (USD 11.76) in 2024, with a planned rise to 600 baht by 2027 (Reuters, 2024). Based on the nationwide statistics of foreign workers holding valid work permits from Foreign Workers Administration Office, Department of Employment as of October 2025, Thailand currently employs 3,948,355 foreign workers, with the majority coming from Myanmar (2,938,537), followed by Cambodia (407,013) and Laos (305,423).

1.2 Objectives

The study aims to assess migration dynamics, labour market participation, and livelihood strategies of Myanmar youth in Thailand, drawing on perspectives from migrants, employers, government agencies, NGOs, and financial institutions. In addition to documenting labour conditions, the analysis focuses on structural barriers to inclusion—such as documentation systems, access to financial services, entrepreneurship, remittances, and opportunities for skills development.

The research is also situated within the broader political context of Myanmar following the 2021 military coup. Escalating conflict, economic instability, and forced conscription have intensified cross-border

migration, transforming labour migration into a phenomenon intertwined with protection needs. For many young people, migration now represents a strategy for both economic survival and physical safety.

A mixed-methods approach was adopted. Quantitative data were collected from a survey of 400 migrants conducted between July and August 2025, covering demographics, wages, remittances, financial habits, and employment conditions. Qualitative interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) provided further depth, allowing the study to capture perceptions, motivations, and institutional practices. Findings are presented thematically, followed by integrated analysis and recommendations.

1.3 Methodology

Research Design

The study employed a mixed-methods design integrating quantitative surveys, qualitative interviews, and FGDs. This triangulation strengthened the validity of findings and allowed for a comprehensive assessment of recruitment processes, migration pathways, and workplace dynamics.

Sampling Strategy

A purposive and stratified sampling approach was applied to ensure coverage of the main actors shaping youth migration pathways. Access to respondents was facilitated through recruitment agency networks, employer associations, and local NGOs. In total, six broad stakeholder categories were engaged, as presented in Table 1.

1. Myanmar Migrant Workers

In this study, “youth” refers to Myanmar migrant workers aged 18 to 35 years who are currently employed or actively seeking employment in Thailand across key economic sectors.

- Out-of-school adolescents in Myanmar: FGDs with 8 non-enrolled youth in Mon State border areas considering migration.
- Myanmar youth in Thailand (both documented and undocumented): FGDs with five young workers who hold visas, work permits, or residency permits, including those supported by the BEAM, as well as undocumented migrants without legal documentation, reached through NGO networks.
- Mixed-status survey: A large-scale survey (n = 400) covering both documented and undocumented migrants across Bangkok, Samut Sakhon, Nonthaburi, Pathum Thani, Chiang Mai, and Tak. Respondents included job seekers and workers in construction, manufacturing, domestic work, and service sectors.

2. Employers

- Qualitative sample: Seven one-on-one interviews with business owners and HR representatives from major industries including textiles (Nanyang Textile Co., Ltd.), cleaning products (Navasri Manufacturing), electronics (SVI), logistics (DHL), seafood (Thai Union), Deleaf (cosmetics) and a small bakery (Nai Saen Bakery).
- Quantitative sample: 50 employers across diverse industries participated in a structured survey exploring labor demand, recruitment practices, and evaluations of Myanmar youth workers.

3. Policymakers

Nine one-on-one interviews with officials from Thai government bodies responsible for labor, migration, and vocational education policy, including IB, NSO, DIP, DOC, OPEC, OVEC, DLPW, EEF, and DOPA.

4. Financial Service Providers

Six interviews with representatives from major institutions (Kasikorn Bank, Bangkok Bank, Krung Thai Bank, Western Union, True Accend, and Myanmar-owned remittance services) to assess migrant access to financial products and remittance practices.

5. NGOs, Labor Rights Groups, and TVET Providers

Six interviews were conducted with key civil society and advocacy organizations—HCTC, BEAM, Rays of Youth, SEM, MWG, and HRDF—focusing on migrant rights, vocational training, and support services.

6. Recruitment Agencies

Five recruitment agencies were engaged through one-on-one interviews with agency owners, including both Thailand-based and Myanmar-based recruitment firms.

This stratification across *supply, demand, regulatory, and support systems* provided a holistic and multi-dimensional picture of the migration ecosystem, capturing the complex interplay between *migrant youth aspirations and labour market needs*, as well as the *institutional mechanisms* that govern and facilitate mobility. By examining these interconnected layers, the study was able to trace how *individual choices, employer practices, policy frameworks, and support services* collectively shape migration outcomes. This comprehensive approach not only enriched the empirical understanding of Myanmar youth migration to Thailand but also revealed systemic linkages, bottlenecks, and opportunities for enhancing labour protection, skills development, and social inclusion within the broader regional context.

Table 1 Overview of Stakeholder Sampling and Data Collection

Stakeholder Group	Sample Size	Method	Respondents / Examples
1. Out-of-school youth (Mon State border)	8	Focus group	Youths intending to move to Thailand
2. Myanmar youth in Thailand (documented & undocumented)	5	Focus group	Under BEAM supervision
	400	Survey	Migrant job seekers/workers across sectors in Bangkok, Samut Sakhon, Nonthaburi, Pathum Thani, Chiang Mai, Tak
3. Employers	7	One-on-one interview	Thai Union Frozen, SVI, Navasri Manufacturing, DHL, Nanyang, Deleaf, Nai Saen Bakery
	50	Survey	General employers across sectors
4. Policy makers	9	One-on-one interview	IB, NSO, DIP, DOE, OPEC, OVEC, DLPW, EEF, DOPA
5. Financial Service Providers	6	One-on-one interview	Kasikorn Bank, Bangkok Bank, Krung Thai Bank, Western Union, True Accend, Myanmar remittance services
6. NGOs & TVET providers	6	FGD interview	HCTC, BEAM, Rays of Youths, MWG, HRDF, SEM
7. Recruitment Agencies	5	One-on-one interview	Agency owners

Data Collection Instruments

Semi-structured interview guides were used for employers, policymakers, NGOs, and financial service providers. FGDs explored migration decisions, recruitment experiences, workplace conditions, risks, and aspirations. Surveys captured demographic characteristics, employment status, documentation, wages, remittance behaviours, and financial practices. Instruments were piloted and adjusted for clarity.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data were transcribed, translated as necessary, and analyzed using thematic coding. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and cross-tabulations. Triangulation across methods and respondent groups strengthened the reliability of the findings.

Ethical Considerations

Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents. Interviews were conducted in safe, confidential settings, particularly for undocumented youth. No identifying information is disclosed in this report.

1.4 Limitations and Fieldwork Narratives

Several methodological and contextual limitations affected the study and should be considered when interpreting the findings. While the qualitative samples reached thematic saturation, they *may not fully capture the diversity of experiences among Myanmar migrant youth or employers across different regions and sectors*. The heterogeneity of the migrant population—varying by ethnicity, legal status, education background, and duration of stay—means that important nuances may remain underrepresented. Access to undocumented migrants relied heavily on NGO partners and community networks, which, while invaluable, may have introduced selection bias by reaching individuals who are already connected to support structures. Additionally, political instability in Myanmar constrained outreach to certain border communities and limited opportunities to cross-validate findings with youth who remain inside the country. The absence of longitudinal data further restricts the study’s ability to assess long-term labour trajectories, particularly how youth navigate shifts in legal status, skills development, or career aspirations over time.

Fieldwork conditions also shaped the data collection process in meaningful ways. Some employers and workers expressed reluctance to participate due to *uncertainty surrounding labour regulations*, particularly during periods of heightened inspection or enforcement activities. Several Myanmar workers declined interviews out of fear of employer retaliation or concerns that participation could jeopardize their job security or legal status. These constraints were further compounded by time and travel limitations, which restricted access to certain employers and workplaces—especially those operating night shifts, factories with strict security protocols, and remote worksites with limited transportation. As a result, the final sample may lean toward more accessible or cooperative workplaces, which may differ systematically from harder-to-reach sites.

Employer perceptions uncovered during fieldwork revealed systemic tensions within Thailand’s labour market. For instance, when distributing surveys at gas stations, several employers questioned the necessity of research focused specifically on Myanmar youth, reflecting broader misunderstandings about demographic shifts, labour shortages, and the extent of Thailand’s structural dependency on migrant workers. These reactions underscore persistent gaps in awareness regarding the contributions of migrant labour, as well as latent discomfort among some employers about the visibility and rights of migrant youth in their workplaces.

Conversely, perspectives from Myanmar youth painted a sharply different picture. In the FGDs, none of the participating youth expressed interest in long-term employment or building a career in Thailand. Many described Thailand as a temporary refuge—*“a place to survive while continuing our struggle against the military regime”*—emphasizing how migration serves not only as an economic strategy but also as a political necessity. Participants included former teachers, journalists, university students, and skilled workers who are now employed in low-skilled positions due to language barriers, lack of formal recognition of qualifications, and limited opportunities for upward mobility. Their minimal engagement in skills training

reflects a deeply rooted sense of temporariness, driven both by aspirations to return home when conditions improve and by a perception that investing in Thai-based skills may not yield long-term benefits.



Photo 1 Myanmar migrant youth participating in a focus group interview at a local shelter, Photo by Sunida Piriapada

Together, these narratives and contextual challenges illustrate the complex intersection of economic necessity, political insecurity, and constrained mobility shaping the lives of Myanmar migrant youth in Thailand. Their experiences highlight not only the precarity of their current circumstances but also the structural barriers that limit opportunities for advancement—even for those with strong educational backgrounds and prior professional experience. These insights underscore the critical need for more inclusive labour policies, strengthened protection mechanisms, and youth-responsive programming. Such measures should address both immediate vulnerabilities and long-term aspirations, ensuring that migrant youth—regardless of legal status—have access to accurate information, fair working conditions, opportunities for skills development, and pathways that respect their rights, dignity, and future ambitions.

Chapter 2. Thai Legal Provisions Regarding Migrant Workers

This chapter examines the legal framework governing the employment of migrant workers in Thailand, with particular emphasis on Myanmar nationals. While Thailand provides equal labor protections to both Thai and migrant workers once an employment relationship is legally established, many migrants—especially those in low-skilled sectors—lack sufficient awareness of their rights. Additionally, practical implementation challenges, inconsistent enforcement at the local level, and administrative complexities further limit effective protection.

The Royal Thai Government has taken steps to improve accessibility of labor regulations, including the translation of laws into multiple languages through the Ministry of Labour and the Department of Employment. However, significant barriers persist in ensuring that migrant workers can fully exercise their rights in practice.

Undocumented workers face particularly acute risks, as seeking legal remedies may expose them to detention or deportation. Migrants employed outside the formal sector lack protection under key legislation such as the *Labor Protection Act*, the *Workmen's Compensation Act*, and the *Labor Relations Act*, rendering them more vulnerable to exploitation and unsafe working conditions. Entry into the informal sector is often driven by limited skills, inability to meet documentation requirements, or irregular migration pathways.

Consequently, this research focuses not on general labor rights but on legal issues affecting Myanmar migrants' ability to work legally in Thailand and their opportunities for vocational training and skills development.

2.1 Overview of Legal Provisions Relating to Migrant Workers

Thailand's framework for managing migrant labor is primarily established through the *Immigration Act* and the *Foreigners' Working Management Emergency Decree B.E. 2560 (2017)*, complemented by sector-specific legislation such as the *Foreign Business Act B.E. 2542 (1999)*.

Article 37(1) of the *Immigration Act* prohibits non-immigrant visa holders from engaging in employment unless authorized under the Emergency Decree or other relevant laws. These restrictions ensure that migrant employment aligns with national labor market priorities.

For Myanmar nationals, multiple legal pathways exist for entering and working in Thailand. These have evolved in response to labor shortages, policy reforms, and bilateral cooperation. The main categories include:

1. General Work
2. MOU Scheme
3. Seasonal/Border-Pass Workers

4. Necessary and Urgent Work
5. Special Work under the BOI and Petroleum Laws
6. Deportation and Repatriation Workers
7. Lenient Permission (“Pink Card” Workers)

2.2 General Work

Migrants entering under the general work category must follow formal recruitment procedures, obtain a valid work permit, and comply with immigration regulations. Under the Emergency Decree, certain occupations may be prohibited to foreign workers entirely or restricted to specific areas.

The Thai government considers three principal criteria when determining whether to limit foreign labor participation:

- a) National security,
- b) Employment opportunities for Thai citizens, and
- c) Economic demand requiring foreign labor.

This pathway is typically reserved for skilled occupations or positions requiring expertise unavailable in the domestic labor market. Unskilled or manual labor positions are generally excluded.

Work permit approval is subject to labor market necessity and quota systems specified in the *Department of Employment Regulations on Criteria for Granting Work Permits to Foreigners (2025)*. Eligible positions frequently include:

- Financial and technical professionals
- Government-certified occupations
- Employees of registered foreign companies
- Technicians in advanced technology sectors
- Entertainment, academic, and tourism professionals
- NGO workers
- Specialists in government-promoted industries and startups

Foreign workers wishing to apply for a work permit through this channel must first obtain a Non-B visa or entry permit. Once the visa is secured, they may proceed to apply for the work permit. The work permit application must include the following documents, as presented in Figure 1:

- Business Visa (Non-B) or 90-day work entry permit.
- Application Form Bor Tor.25 (บต.25).
- Employment certificate from the employer (บต.46) and related document.
- Copies of educational qualifications and work experience certificates (if any) or use the prescribed forms.
- Copies of professional license

- Copy of passport and residence certificate/alien identification card.
- Medical certificate certifying no prohibited diseases according to law.
- Power of attorney (if not applying in person) with 10 Baht revenue stamp attached and a copy of authorized person's ID card.
- Two photos 3x4 cm. (taken within 6 months)

Applications can be submitted either through the following channels:

- Online channel:
 - Register for the e-Workpermit.doe.go.th system.
 - Submit work permit application and fill in information online.
- In-person channel:
 - Submit applications with documents at the Bangkok Employment Office Areas 1-10 or the Provincial Employment Office where the employer is located.

The fee structure for this category of work permits is as follows:

- Application Fee: 100 THB
- Work Permit Fee:
 - Employment duration under three months: 750 THB
 - Employment duration is between three and six months: 1,500 THB
 - Employment duration is between six months and one year: 3,000 THB
 - Employment duration exceeding one year: calculated proportionally based on the rates above.

Figure 1 Application for a Work Permit on Behalf of Foreign Workers (MOU)

Requesting a work permit for foreign workers from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam who intend to work in the Kingdom in accordance with the law by entering the country with a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between Thailand and foreign governments. In cases where the work permit holder is allowed to work:
Requesting a work permit for foreign workers from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam according to Section 41 (pink card).

Department of Employment, Ministry of Labor

Step-by-step Process

1

- Submit documents
- Check documents
- Pay fees and service charges
- Schedule appointment to receive documents

2

- Record data
- Receive a list of names
- Issue official documents

3

- Foreigners attend training
- Employers register labor
- Receive work permit

Documents required for application

1. Application fee for a work permit according to Section 41, paragraph 4 (Form Bor Tor. 31), 1 set
2. Copy of Passport or Copy of Passport Substitute Document, 1 set
3. Employment contract letter (Form Bor Tor 46), 1 copy
4. Copy of the Permit for Importing Foreign Workers into Thailand (Form Nor Jor 4), 1 set
5. Copy of the Contract for Bringing Foreign Workers to Work with Employers in Thailand 1 set
6. Name list as certified by the country of origin, 1 set
7. Two (2) recent 3 x 4 cm photographs of the worker, front view, without a hat or sunglasses, taken within the past six months
8. Employer's required documents (as specified in the Complete Citizen's Manual)

Service Channel

- Bangkok Metropolitan Employment Office **Zones 1-10**
- All Provincial Employment Offices
- Service hours: Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays)
Operating hours: 08:30 a.m. – 04:30 p.m. (closed during lunch break)

Post-Arrival and Reintegration Centers

Cambodia: Sa Kaeo
Laos: Nong Khai, Mukdahan
Myanmar: Tak and Ranong

For foreign worker training and work permit issuance only

Service hours: Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. (closed on public holidays and during lunch break)

Fees

1. **Application fee:** 100 THB
2. **Work Permit Fee**
 - (a) Work permit fee (valid for up to 3 months): 225 THB
 - (b) Work Permit (valid from 3 months to less than 6 months): 450 THB
 - (c) Work Permit (valid from 6 months to less than 1 year): 900 THB
 - (d) For a work permit valid for more than 1 year, the fee for the period exceeding 1 year shall be calculated according to the rates specified in (a), (b), or (c)

Contact / Inquiry

Foreign Workers Administration Office
Department of Employment,
123 Ratchadapisek Road, Din Daeng District
Bangkok 10400, Thailand
Telephone: 0 2248 7202

Department of Employment Hotline: 1506, Ext. 2
Department of Employment Website: www.doe.go.th

Source: Application for a Work Permit on Behalf of Foreign Workers (MOU) for Cambodian, Lao, Myanmar, and Vietnamese Nationals, in accordance with Section, Digital Government Development Agency (Public Organization); DGA); 41, Paragraph 4, <https://info.go.th/procedure/95ffd336-sfdb-4f7a-bdef-8f2ea61c7908/view?lat=13.7588311&lng=100.5405449>

2.3 MOU System

The importation and employment of migrant workers through the MOU process, or through registration under Cabinet Resolutions, represents another legal channel for bringing foreign labor into Thailand—distinct from obtaining work permits under the Foreigners’ Working Management Emergency Decree. This mechanism applies specifically to workers from four neighboring countries: Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam.

The MOU system is grounded in bilateral agreements between the Thai government and the governments of countries of origin. Its objectives are to ensure stable and transparent employment, provide clear procedures and processes, and maintain reasonable costs for both employers and workers. Upon completion of their employment contracts, workers are returned to their home countries.

As a general principle, Thailand allows migrant workers to enter the country only to fill workforce gaps and address labor shortages. Initially, only the general work channel was available, restricted to skilled workers. However, as labour shortages emerged in certain unskilled sectors—such as construction and domestic work—Thailand began, from 2009 onward, to permit workers from neighboring countries to perform these specific types of jobs under the MOU framework.

This group of workers is subject to specific conditions: they are authorized to work only in designated occupations under the scheme—manual labor and domestic work—and their legal employment in Thailand is initially limited to two years. Upon expiration of this term, employment may be renewed for an additional two years, but the total duration of stay under a single entry cannot exceed four consecutive years. Once this four-year period concludes, workers who wish to continue employment in Thailand must return to their country of origin and remain there for at least thirty days before being eligible to re-enter and begin a new employment cycle.

2.4 Seasonal and Border-Pass Workers

Under the Foreigners’ Working Management Emergency Decree, foreign nationals from Thailand’s neighboring countries may be permitted to enter the Kingdom for short-term or seasonal employment. Entry is typically granted through the use of a border pass or other official travel document issued under bilateral arrangements. The period of stay is strictly limited in duration—which is no more than ninety days—reflecting the temporary nature of such employment.

Furthermore, both the type of work and the geographic area of employment are restricted.¹ This system is designed to provide a legal channel for addressing temporary labor shortages while preventing long-term settlement or displacement of local workers.

¹ Section 64, Foreigners’ Working Management Emergency Decree, B.E. 2560 (2017).

Currently, only workers from Cambodia and Myanmar are allowed to enter Thailand under this channel. Types of work are limited to manual labor and domestic work. Moreover, workers may work only in border provinces adjacent to their home country as follows:

- Cambodian nationals: Permitted to work in Si Sa Ket, Surin, Sa Kaeo, Chanthaburi, and Trat provinces
- Myanmar nationals:
 - Permitted to work in Chiang Rai Province (only Mueang, Mae Sai, and Mae Chan districts)
 - Permitted to work in Tak Province (only Mae Sot, Phop Phra, and Mae Ramat districts)
 - Permitted to work in Kanchanaburi Province (only Mueang district)
 - Permitted to work in Ranong Province (only Mueang district)

2.5 Necessary and Urgent Work

Under the Foreigners' Working Management Emergency Decree, a foreign national who enters Thailand temporarily under immigration law may be permitted to perform *necessary or urgent work* of an exceptional or ad hoc nature. Current legal provisions specify the following types of work that may be considered exceptional and ad hoc in nature²:

- Screening job seekers for overseas employment
- Organizing conferences, training sessions, seminars, exhibitions, or trade shows
- Mechanical repair or installation technician work
- Electric train system technician work
- Aircraft or aircraft equipment system technician work
- Production process inspection or production process improvement work
- Product quality inspection or quality control work
- Technical follow-up inspection and problem-solving work
- Periodic internal auditing
- Inspection or repair of machinery and electrical power generation equipment systems
- Film and still photography work
- Consulting work for machinery repair or machinery control systems
- Government supported event as follow:
 - Organizing mega event or international festival event
 - Music festival event or concert event
- Testing craftsmen's skills for overseas employment
- Special academic lectures

Moreover, such employment must be for a short duration and is limited to *a maximum of fifteen days*. The foreigner may commence work immediately upon *notifying the Registrar in writing*. If the task cannot

² Announcement of the Department of Employment regarding the designation of work that is necessary, urgent, or ad-hoc BE. 2567 (2024).

be completed within the prescribed period, an extension may be requested, but in no case may the total period exceed an additional fifteen days.³ This provision reflects the Thai government's recognition of the need for flexibility in accommodating urgent, specialized, or unforeseen work demands while still maintaining strict time limits to prevent misuse.

2.6 Special Work under the BOI and Petroleum Acts

Certain categories of foreign workers may be admitted under special regimes established by sector-specific legislation, most notably the *Investment Promotion Act* and the *Petroleum Act*. In such cases, once permission has been granted under these laws, the relevant authority must immediately notify the Registrar, who is then required to issue a work permit within seven days of receiving the notification. During this interim period, the foreigner may legally begin working without the need to present a physical work permit to officials.

Work permits issued under these special regimes are governed by distinct criteria and procedures tailored to the specific law and are not subject to the general limitations applied to ordinary migrant workers. The validity of the work permit corresponds to the period authorized under the respective investment or petroleum laws. Typically, this pathway is reserved for skilled professionals, technical experts, and executives, and may also extend to include their family members.

The overarching purpose of this framework is to facilitate the entry of high-skilled talent and specialized expertise deemed essential for Thailand's economic development, technological advancement, and strategic industries. This mechanism reflects Thailand's broader policy objective of enhancing competitiveness by attracting foreign investment and knowledge transfer, while ensuring that such employment aligns with national development priorities.

2.7 Deportation and Repatriation Workers

A distinct category of migrant workers in Thailand comprises foreigners who are either awaiting deportation or repatriation but are granted temporary permission to remain and work. Under Thai law, such individuals may be issued a *work permit valid only for the period of exemption*, which may not exceed one year.⁴ This arrangement reflects a pragmatic response to the realities of irregular migration, where immediate deportation may not be feasible due to humanitarian, logistical, or diplomatic reasons.

In addition to those awaiting deportation, several other groups of foreigners fall under this category and may legally apply for work:⁵

- Individuals whose nationality was withdrawn under the Announcement of the Revolutionary Council No. 337 of 13 December 1972 or subsequent laws.
- Persons born in Thailand but not granted Thai nationality under the same legal framework.

³ Section 61, Foreigners' Working Management Emergency Decree, B.E. 2560 (2017).

⁴ Section 63, Foreigners' Working Management Emergency Decree, B.E. 2560 (2017).

⁵ Section 63/1, Foreigners' Working Management Emergency Decree, B.E. 2560 (2017).

- Foreigners who have been recognized as legal migrants under specific notifications of the Ministry of Interior pursuant to immigration law.
- Foreigners without legal status who have nonetheless been issued identification cards under the regulations of the Central Registration Bureau in accordance with the law on civil registration.

For this group, the issuance of work permits is not subject to the limitations applied to general work categories. Instead, permits are granted under special procedures, conditions, and criteria set forth in the Ministerial Regulations, and may be valid for up to five years. This reflects the government's effort to regularize the status of long-term migrants who are deeply integrated into Thai society yet remain in a precarious legal position. Through this approach, Thailand seeks to promote legal compliance, enhance social stability, and acknowledge the economic contributions of migrant workers who have established sustained livelihoods within the country.

2.8 Lenient Permission and the “Pink Card” System

In parallel, there exists another form of lenient permission often referred to as the “pink card” system. This arrangement applies where the *Minister of Interior*, under immigration law, authorizes a foreigner—or a category of foreigners—to remain in Thailand either by permitting their entry or exempting them from full compliance with immigration requirements. Based on Cabinet resolutions, individuals in this group may be allowed to work in Thailand.⁶

The Cabinet has the discretion to determine the types of work permitted for pink card holders, with an emphasis on occupations that contribute to Thailand's economic and social development. While originally conceived as a temporary humanitarian measure to manage undocumented or irregular migrants, the pink card system has become a significant mechanism for addressing labor shortages, particularly in low-skilled sectors where Thai workers are scarce such as fishing, agriculture, and manufacturing.

2.9 Entry Process for Myanmar Low-Skilled Workers

Although there are several categories under which foreign nationals may enter Thailand for employment, this research focuses specifically on low-skilled, long-term migrant workers from Myanmar, particularly youth. This section addresses two main channels of entry: (1) through the MOU mechanism, and (2) through the use of pink cards.

1. Procedure under the MOU System

Workers may enter Thailand through the MOU system either by (a) engaging a licensed recruitment agent or (b) being directly recruited by an employer.

⁶ Section 63/2, Foreigners' Working Management Emergency Decree, B.E. 2560 (2017).

a) Recruitment via Agent

When an agent is engaged, the agent must be an authorized agent under the *Foreigners' Working Management Emergency Decree*.⁷ The agent must also sign a contract with the employer who will hire the workers. This contract must specify the names and passport numbers of the workers to be recruited. The agent is only authorized to import the workers listed in the contract.⁸

The agent must then submit the list of workers to an officer at the DOE for approval. Once the list is approved, the agent may proceed to request work permits on behalf of the workers.⁹

This process facilitates the importation of workers for employers. The service is provided by private agencies, and service fees vary depending on the agency used. However, the visa fees and work permit fees that workers must pay are the same—1,900 for permit fee and 2,000 for visa fee—regardless of whether they are hired through an agency or imported directly by the employer.

b) Direct Recruitment by Employers

Direct recruitment by employers is permitted under specific conditions. Employers must not operate as dispatch agencies and must submit a request to import foreign workers to the Provincial or Bangkok Employment Office. Required documents include Form Nor Jor 2, a power of attorney, employment contracts, and supporting employer documents. While the application is filed in Thailand, parallel recruitment procedures—such as worker selection, contract signing, and preparation of the workers' list—must be completed in the country of origin through authorized agents. The initial review takes about four working days and is free of charge.

Once approved, employers apply for work permits on behalf of workers, submitting a worker list, application forms, and paying fees of 1,900 THB per worker for a two-year permit, plus a 1,000 THB security deposit if applying directly. Visa issuance costs 2,000 THB per worker. Before employment begins, workers must attend a one-day orientation at designated reception centers and undergo a medical examination.

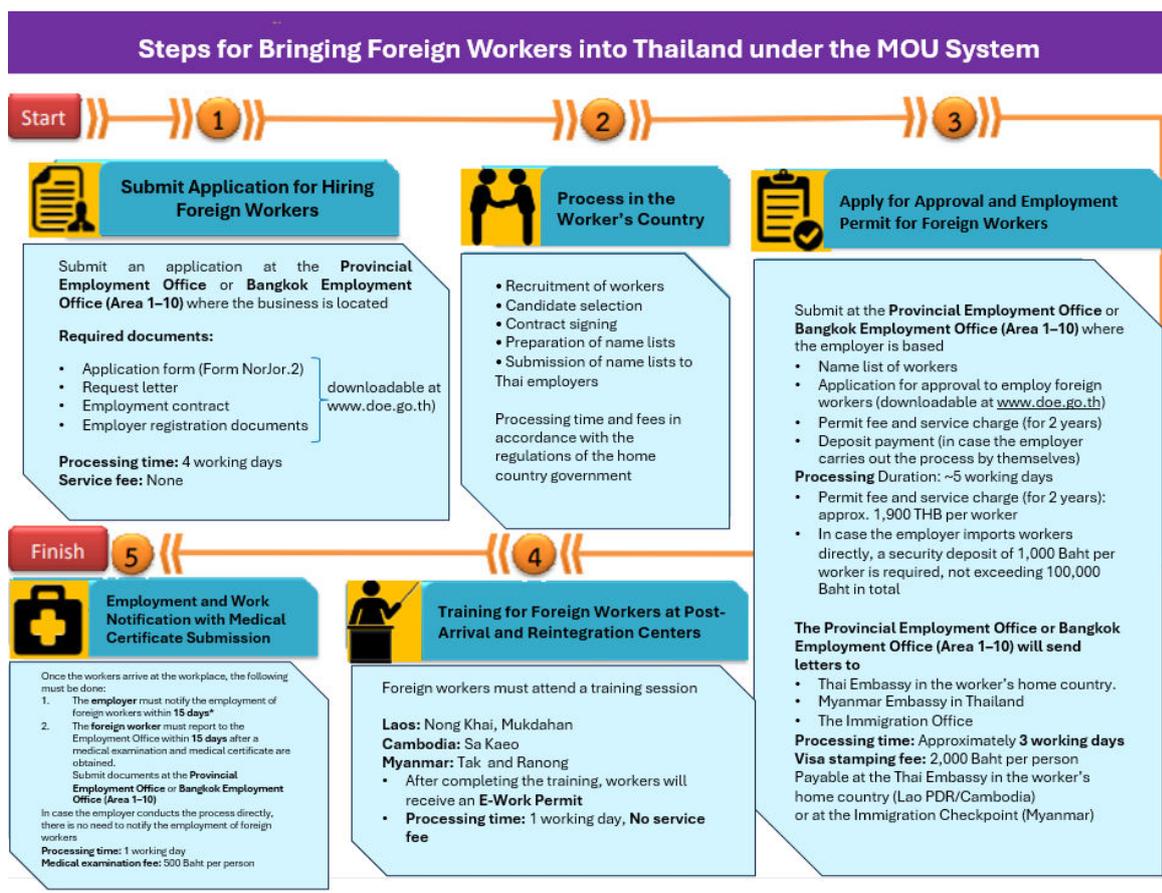
Although the legal timeline is relatively short, the process often takes several months in practice due to the limited number of authorized recruitment agents and high agency fees. These delays make it difficult for employers to respond to sudden labor shortages, leading many to rely on irregular recruitment and later regularization through the pink card system.

⁷ Section 26, *Foreigners' Working Management Emergency Decree*, B.E. 2560 (2017).

⁸ Section 41, *Foreigners' Working Management Emergency Decree*, B.E. 2560 (2017).

⁹ Section 41, *Foreigners' Working Management Emergency Decree*, B.E. 2560 (2017).

Figure 2 Steps for Bringing Foreign Workers into Thailand under the MOU System



Source: Steps for Bringing Foreign Workers into Thailand under the MOU System, Digital Government Development Agency Public Organization (DGA),

https://www.doe.go.th/prd/assets/upload/files/alien_th/670e57cc84a2daa0aa612df9fe2b0a33.pdf

2. Procedure for Workers with A Pink Card

According to the *Ministry of Labour's Notification*, the procedure for work permits for this group of workers follows the same process used under the MOU scheme. In February 2025, the Ministry extended the work period for those authorized under the Cabinet Resolution of 24 September 2024, allowing employers to continue employing them until 13 February 2027 under the same legal framework.

To meet application requirements, employers must submit a complete worker list and pay the required fees: 100 THB per worker for the application and 1,800 THB per worker for the work permit. All applications must be filed by 13 August 2025 to secure the extended permit period.

This arrangement applies when the Minister of Interior authorizes a foreign national who entered Thailand irregularly to remain in the country, either through retroactive entry permission or exemption from full immigration compliance.

Interviews suggest that this has become the most commonly used channel for migrant recruitment. Because the workers are already in Thailand—often with prior work experience—legalizing them through this pathway is faster, safer, and more convenient for employers. Although it often originates from irregular entry, it has become the preferred method for employers seeking efficient and reliable labour recruitment.

2.10 Refugees in Temporary Shelter Areas

The *Minister of Interior* and the *Minister of Labour* have approved employment authorization for Myanmar refugees residing in nine temporary shelter areas, effective 1 October 2025, following Cabinet approval. Permitted employment includes work compliant with migrant worker regulations, skilled occupations not restricted by law, and jobs authorized under the MOU.

To participate, refugees must obtain permission from the District Officer or Deputy District Officer to leave shelter areas for employment, ensuring proper tracking of movement. All applicants must also undergo health examinations at government medical facilities and register for health insurance with the Ministry of Public Health to ensure both personal and public health protection.

The application process has been streamlined through an online system, with a 100-baht filing fee and a waiver of the first-time work permit fee to reduce financial barriers. Approved refugees may work for one year per permit and may be employed by any lawful employer.

The policy is expected to reduce illegal employment and strengthen regulatory oversight. It also enhances security through improved documentation and monitoring. Economically, it enables over 80,000 Myanmar refugees to achieve self-reliance, reduces pressure on public and humanitarian budgets, and helps address labor shortages. Legal employment further improves access to healthcare, workplace protection, and overall living standards for refugee workers.

2.11 Restricted Occupations

According to the 2017 Decree, certain occupations are reserved exclusively for Thai nationals, while others are restricted with specified exceptions. This framework aims to maintain a high level of national security and protect employment opportunities for Thais in particular industries, while also accounting for high demand in specialized work that is necessary for national development and fulfillment of state obligations.

Currently, there are four occupational groups reserved for Thais, each with varying degrees of restriction. Some occupations are strictly reserved for Thais without exception, whereas others are reserved with certain exceptions to allow qualified foreign workers to participate under controlled conditions. *The 27 occupations that are strictly reserved for Thais* are as follows:

1. Wood carving;
2. Driving motor vehicles or vehicles that do not use domestic machinery or mechanical devices, except piloting aircraft internationally or forklift;

3. Auction sale work;
4. Cutting or polishing precious or semi-precious stones;
5. Haircutting, hairdressing, or beauty services;
6. Cloth weaving by hand;
7. Mat weaving or making utensils from reed, rattan, jute, hay, bamboo, bamboo pulp, grass, feathers, coconut stalks, fibers, wire, or other materials;
8. Making rice paper by hand;
9. Lacquer work;
10. Making Thai musical instruments;
11. Niello work;
12. Goldsmith, silversmith, or gold/copper alloy smith work;
13. Stone work;
14. Making Thai dolls;
15. Making alms bowls;
16. Making silk products by hand;
17. Making Buddha statues;
18. Making paper or cloth umbrellas;
19. Brokerage or agency except in international trading or investment;
20. Thai massaging;
21. Cigarette rolling by hand;
22. Tour guiding or tour service providing;
23. Hawking of goods;
24. Thai typesetting by hand;
25. Unwinding and twisting silk by hand;
26. Clerical or secretarial work;
27. Providing legal services or engaging in legal work, except arbitration work or work relating to the defense of cases at the arbitration level which the law governing the dispute under consideration by the arbitrators is not Thai law.

The three following occupations are reserved for Thais unless there is an exception under international agreements or by state obligation.

1. Supervisory, auditing, or accountancy services, except occasional internal auditing or work under the international agreement or state obligation which professional council certifies the qualification;
2. Professional civil engineering concerning consulting, planning, design and calculation, construction or manufacturing controlling, inspection, supervising, systemization, researching, and testing. Except for professionals under the ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA), other international agreements, or obtained license from the Council of Engineers;

3. Professional architectural work concerning project study, design, manage and supervise construction, inspection, or consulting services. Except professionals under the ASEAN MRA, other international agreements, or obtained license from the Council of Architectures.

The following eight skilled or semi-skilled occupations are reserved for Thais unless the migrant workers are working under Thai employers are as follows;

1. Agriculture, animal husbandry, forestry or fishery,
2. Bricklaying, carpentry, or other construction work;
3. Making mattresses or quilts;
4. Making knives;
5. Making shoes;
6. Making hats;
7. Dressmaking;
8. Pottery.

The list of two occupations that are reserved for Thais unless the migrant workers are working under Thai employers and permitted to enter into the country under the Migration Law and international MOUs are as follow;

1. Laborer (construction workers);
2. Front shop sales.

2.12 Vocational Training and Skills Development

In Thailand, the Department of Skill Development (DSD) under the Ministry of Labour was established by the Skill Development Promotion Act B.E. 2545 (2002) to enhance workforce skills and expand access to vocational training. The DSD provides training for individuals entering the labor market and for existing workers seeking to upgrade skills, particularly in areas such as automation, artificial intelligence, hospitality, cooking, and electrical technology.

However, this Act applies exclusively to Thai citizens, reflecting the government's constitutional obligation to provide equal skill development opportunities for its nationals. As a result, foreign workers are not covered under this legal framework and may be denied access to government-operated vocational training programs. In practice, migrant workers typically receive training from recruitment agents or directly from their employers, as no state-run training facilities are designated for foreigners.

Interviews indicate that most sectors employing migrant workers—such as construction, agriculture, domestic work, and fishing—primarily require low- to semi-skilled labor. These skills are generally not covered by formal DSD programs and are instead acquired through short-term, on-the-job training. This approach allows workers to adapt quickly to job requirements despite limited access to formal vocational education.

Chapter 3. Key Major Insights from Labour Supply

This chapter provides an overview of Myanmar migrant youth in Thailand, integrating quantitative data from a survey of 400 respondents with qualitative insights from interviews and field observations. It examines demographics, migration patterns, motivations, employment conditions, and skills, and concludes with synthesized findings that illustrate the evolving labour supply landscape.

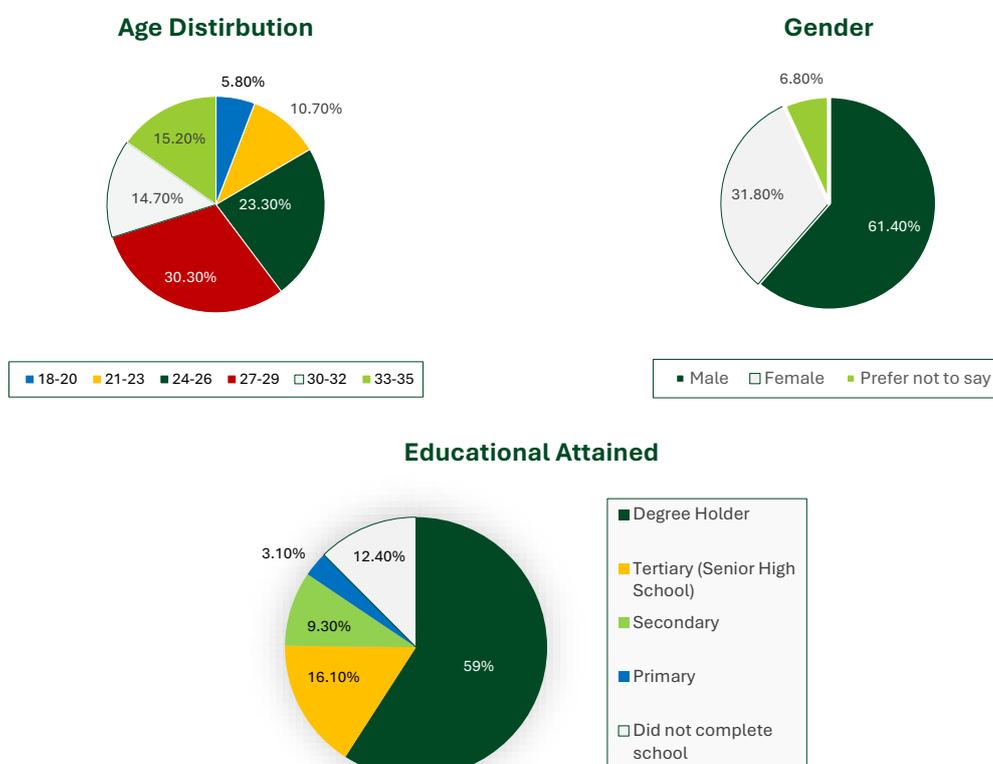
3.1 Quantitative Findings from Myanmar Migrant Youth in Thailand

The survey was conducted both online and offline between July and August 2025. Among respondents, 75% were documented and 25% undocumented. The assessment covers demographics, education, migration history, employment experience, and earnings, providing an evidence base for policies relating to migrant labour supply.

3.1.1 Demographics and Background

Respondents were predominantly young adults: 30.3% were aged 27–29, followed by those aged 24–26 (23.3%) and 30–35 (15.2%). Only 5.8% were under 21. The gender distribution was skewed toward men (61.4%), with 31.8% women and 6.8% who preferred not to disclose. Education levels were relatively high: 59% held a degree, 16.1% had completed senior high school, and 9% had secondary education. About 16% had only primary schooling or no formal education, reflecting a mix of both high-skilled and low-skilled youth, as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3 Demographic Profiles



3.1.2 Migration Patterns and Motivations

Migration has increased sharply since 2020, with 72.1% arriving between 2020 and 2024 and 13.3% in 2025. Only 14.6% migrated before 2020, indicating a largely new labour force. Origins were concentrated in Yangon (58%), followed by Mon (14%) and Kayin (9%). Smaller shares came from Ayeyarwady, Bago, and Mandalay, with under 5.5% from other regions.



Key drivers included conflict and insecurity (37%), economic opportunities (29%), and family reasons (21%). Only 8% migrated for education. Migration pathways varied: 53.8% entered through informal “other” channels, 28.8% held work permits, and only 6.5% used the MOU system. About 12% used irregular or smuggled routes, highlighting persistent governance challenges.

3.1.3 Work Experience and Wages

Most respondents were early-career workers: 74.3% had 0–5 years of experience, and 25.8% had 6–10 years. Daily wages clustered in the 300–400 THB range (34.4%). Notably, 27.8% reported no daily wage—likely informal or unpaid arrangements. Only 24.5% earned above 500 THB, reflecting limited access to higher-earning jobs.

3.1.4 Destination Areas and Employment Sectors

Half of respondents lived in Bangkok, and 23.8% in Samut Sakhon, confirming the concentration of migrants in major urban and industrial areas. Smaller shares were in Nonthaburi, Pathum Thani, Tak, and Chiang Mai, with 0.8% in refugee camps. Employment was concentrated in food production and manufacturing (36.5%), services (28.1%), and mixed informal sectors (22.5%). Construction (6.7%) and domestic work (4.5%) remained secondary employers. Only 1.7% worked in agriculture.

3.1.5 Expected Salary and Job Choice

The survey shows that the largest share of respondents (32.35%) expected salaries of 18,000 Baht or higher. Another 21.18% anticipate 14,000–15,999 Baht, and 19.41% expect 12,000–13,999 Baht. Only small proportions expect below 10,000 Baht. Overall, about 73% expect at least 12,000 Baht, indicating generally moderate to high salary expectation. Job choice did not align with skills for most respondents—67.1% entered jobs unrelated to their previous experience, indicating structural mismatches.

3.1.6 Employment Tenure, Job Exit, and Workplace Challenges

Before migration, job tenure was generally short. About 81% worked less than three years in their previous job, reflecting early exits and high turnover. Main reasons for leaving included low compensation (21.3%),

limited advancement (10.3%), workplace conflicts (8.8%), and poor conditions (8.3%). Safety, health issues, and political instability were less common.

Workplace challenges in Thailand included *language barriers* (22.4%), *heavy workloads* (20.3%), discrimination (13.4%), and lack of training or support (9.5%), alongside job insecurity and unsafe environments.

3.1.7 Skills Alignment and Preparedness

Two-thirds (66.7%) of respondents worked in roles unrelated to their skills. Core skills included vocational or technical abilities (33%), language skills (27.5%), and business or entrepreneurial skills (12.8%). About 22% had no prior skills or training. Although many migrants acquire job skills quickly, gaps in matching, preparedness, and labour market orientation highlight the need for structured pre-departure training and more effective skills-based job placement.

3.1.8 Migration Drivers and Support Systems

Crisis-related circumstances, particularly *political instability and environmental challenges*, influenced the migration choices of 61.4% of respondents, underscoring the significance of security concerns. Meanwhile, 38.1% cited economic or family-driven reasons, showing that mobility decisions are shaped by both pressures and aspirations. Overall, the findings suggest that although livelihood and family considerations remain the primary catalysts, crisis conditions often accelerate or reinforce the decision to migrate rather than solely determining it.

Thailand emerged as the preferred destination largely due to its *employment opportunities* (27.5%) and *the presence of family members* (25%). Safety considerations (16.5%) and existing community networks (11%) also played notable roles, while factors such as cost of living and infrastructure were comparatively less influential. Political motivations—including avoiding conscription—were mentioned by fewer than 1% of respondents.

Over half of respondents (57%) relied on family and friends during migration, confirming the central role of personal networks. One-third (34%) received assistance from agents or recruiters, while institutional support was minimal (3% from government, 1% from NGOs). Only 5% migrated independently. These patterns underscore reliance on informal systems and highlight opportunities to strengthen structured, transparent support mechanisms.

3.1.9 Migration Challenges

Migration entails significant emotional and financial strain. *Nearly 67% reported family separation as their primary hardship. Excessive costs (48%)—including transport, visas, and broker fees—often caused debt or exposure to fraud.* Safety risks were substantial: over 30% encountered physical danger, especially those using irregular routes. Systemic barriers persisted, with 29% reporting documentation problems and 24% noting border checkpoint difficulties due to complex procedures, weak oversight, and limited legal support. Only 3% reported no challenges, indicating that migration remains inherently risky and emotionally burdensome.

The most challenges while living and working in Thailand was the *language barrier (34.8%)*, hindering workplace communication and social integration. Other challenges included discrimination (14.3%), low wages (13.2%), lack of legal documents (11%), limited healthcare access (9.9%), inadequate housing (7.7%), and unsafe jobs (6.6%). Only 1.3% reported no difficulties. These findings highlight the need for improved pre-departure preparation, expanded protections, and better access to essential services.

3.1.10 Training and Skills Needs

Survey findings show strong demand for skills development among migrant workers, particularly in language, technical, digital, and workplace-integration areas. *Language training is the highest priority (35.9%)*, as Thai—and sometimes English—is essential for communication, service access, and understanding rights and safety information.

Nearly one-quarter (23.5%) seek technical or operational training such as machinery operation, construction, or manufacturing, while 16.6% want knowledge of workflow systems, quality standards, and customer service to better integrate into workplace processes. Digital literacy needs are also significant (15.2%), reflecting the growing importance of smartphone use, apps, digital payments, and basic computer skills for work and financial inclusion.

Only 5.5% requested safety training, suggesting limited awareness of occupational risks despite its importance in high-risk sectors. Fewer than 1% reported no training needs, indicating strong motivation to upskill. Overall, language, technical, and digital skills dominate worker demand, while the low emphasis on safety underscores the need for stronger employer and regulatory intervention.

3.1.11 Willingness to Upskill

Survey results show a clear divide in migrant workers' attitudes toward skills development. *A majority (61.4%) expressed strong interest in learning new skills*, indicating high motivation to improve employment prospects, wages, and overall stability. This group forms a core target for workforce development and employer-led training programs.

Meanwhile, *38.6% reported no interest in training*, often due to long working hours, limited access to relevant or affordable courses, legal or documentation issues, doubts about training benefits, or language and literacy barriers.

Notably, there were no neutral responses, suggesting a high level of self-awareness and urgency among workers making decisions about their livelihoods in a challenging migration context.

To engage the reluctant minority, targeted approaches—such as flexible schedules and training aligned with labor market needs—are essential to ensure accessibility, relevance, and clear links to better job opportunities.

3.1.12 Migrants' Training and Skill Priorities

The findings show strong readiness for skills development, with over 60% of migrants motivated to improve their capacities. *Language training (36%)* is the top priority, especially Thai and English, which are

essential for communication, career growth, legal protection, and accessing services. Entrepreneurship training (25%) is also in demand, reflecting ambitions for self-employment. Technical and vocational skills (17%)—including mechanics, sewing, construction, and machine operation—are seen as important for better job opportunities. Digital literacy (14%) and service-sector skills are increasingly valued for workplace efficiency and mobility.

However, *38.6% are not interested in training* due to long working hours, distrust in programs, legal insecurity, and limited perceived benefits. To ensure inclusive upskilling, training should be flexible, trusted by communities, legally accessible, aligned with labour market needs, and supported by incentives and recognized certification.

3.1.13 Awareness of Training Programs

Awareness of vocational training opportunities is extremely low, with only 13% of migrants informed and *87% unaware of existing programs*. Although groups like Rays of Youth, BEAM, Issa Compass, and Suwannimit Foundation offer language, technical, and livelihood training, their visibility and outreach remain limited. Barriers—including weak communication, language difficulties, distrust of institutions, and limited access within informal sectors—further reduce program reach.

Despite *over 60% of migrants expressing interest in skills development, low awareness creates a major gap between motivation and access*. Addressing this requires stronger outreach, trust-building, and clearer visibility of programs, supported by private sector involvement to ensure alignment with labor market needs. Improved coordination and resources across NGOs, government agencies, and employers are also essential.

Overall, migrants show strong willingness to participate in training, but structural and legal barriers—such as documentation requirements and restrictions for irregular workers—can limit access.

3.1.14 Willingness to Participate in Training Programs

Nearly 60% of Myanmar migrants are willing to participate in government- or NGO-supported training, showing strong demand for structured skill development. However, over 40% remain reluctant due to distrust of institutions, fear of deportation, past negative experiences, limited time, and language barriers.

This high motivation contrasts sharply with the *very low 13% awareness of existing programs, indicating a major gap between interest and access*. Most migrants work in low- to mid-wage jobs—many earning 300–400 THB per day, and 27.8% earning no daily wage—highlighting the potential impact of accessible, trusted training in improving employment prospects and reducing skill mismatches. Priority areas include technical, vocational, language, and digital skills.

Perspectives on Youth Training: Nearly 60% of migrants encourage younger peers to pursue vocational training, citing its role in improving employment, income, career advancement, and long-term stability. Many view skills development as essential to supporting families and guiding youth toward better opportunities. A minority remain cautious, pointing to concerns about program quality, weak trust in

outcomes, time and language constraints, and structural barriers such as irregular status or unstable employment that may limit the benefits of training.

3.1.15 Migrants' Interest in Entrepreneurship

The assessment shows a strong entrepreneurial mindset among Myanmar migrants in Thailand, with *nearly 60% interested in self-employment as a route to greater financial independence*. Many hope to move beyond low-wage jobs, secure more stable income for their families, avoid exploitation, and build long-term assets.

Common business ideas include small-scale ventures such as food stalls, retail shops, beauty services, transportation, and online sales—reflecting practical opportunities within local markets. However, migrants face major barriers: limited capital, lack of business knowledge, language difficulties, fear of failure, and legal restrictions on migrant-owned businesses.

Entrepreneurship in Thailand requires proper permits and business registration, which is difficult for migrants, especially those with irregular status or limited legal awareness. Younger migrants and those with relevant skills expressed stronger entrepreneurial ambitions, indicating potential for targeted support.

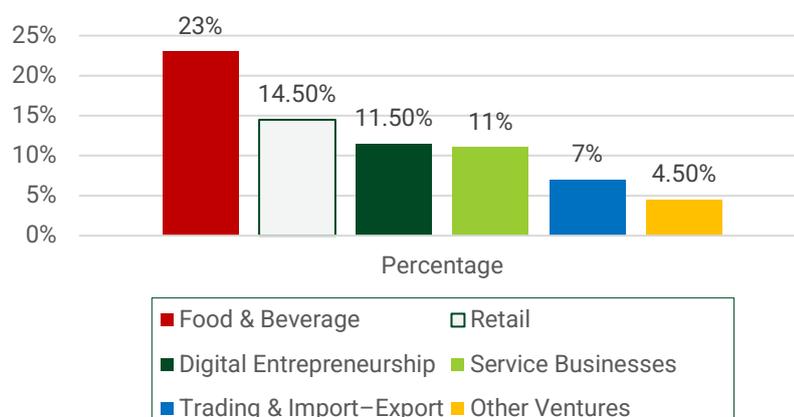
3.1.16 Entrepreneurship Potential

Survey findings show strong entrepreneurial interest among Myanmar migrants, particularly in *low-capital, community-oriented sectors*, as presented in Figure 4.

- Food & Beverage (23%) is the most common pathway, with ideas such as restaurants, cafés, and street-food stalls. These ventures rely on cultural familiarity, strong community demand, and modest start-up costs.
- Retail (14.5%) — including clothing shops, used phone sales, and general merchandise — is the second most cited sector. Together, Food & Beverage and Retail represent nearly half of entrepreneurial aspirations.
- Digital entrepreneurship (11.5%) is growing, especially among younger migrants, with plans for online shops, social media sales, and digital marketing.
- Service businesses (11%) — beauty salons, gyms, IT repair, photography — often build on existing skills or training.
- Trading and import-export (7%) and other ventures (4.5%) such as tutoring, content creation, and franchise ideas show additional diversity.

Despite these ambitions, systemic legal and administrative barriers—including documentation requirements, business registration constraints, and sector restrictions—significantly limit migrants' ability to start or scale enterprises. These challenges restrict access to finance, formal markets, and legal protections, pushing many toward informal, low-margin work.

Figure 4 Strong Entrepreneurial Interest among Myanmar Youth Migrants



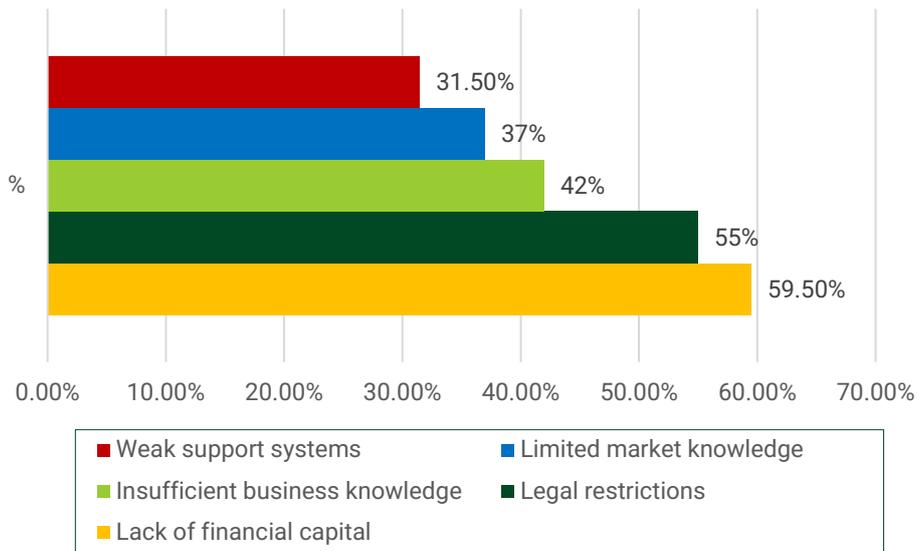
3.1.17 Start-Up Barriers

As illustrated in Figure 5, Myanmar migrants face multiple and overlapping barriers that limit their ability to start small businesses.:

- Lack of financial capital (59.5%) is the most significant challenge. Low wages, irregular income, migration debt, and limited access to banking or credit make it difficult to secure even small start-up funds.
- Legal restrictions (55%) — including lack of work permits, limited eligibility for business registration, and fear of deportation — severely constrain formal entrepreneurship. Although foreign ownership is legally possible, capital and licensing requirements make it unrealistic for small-scale migrant enterprises.
- Insufficient business knowledge (42%) further reduces readiness, with gaps in planning, accounting, marketing, and compliance. Most existing training programs focus on technical rather than entrepreneurial skills.
- Limited market knowledge (37%) adds uncertainty about customer demand, pricing, and competition, especially for migrants unfamiliar with Thai markets.
- Weak support systems (31.5%) — few mentors, limited networks, and low awareness of existing programs — leave migrants without guidance to overcome systemic and informational barriers.

Overall, financial, legal, and knowledge-related constraints collectively hinder migrants' ability to transition from entrepreneurial interest to viable business creation.

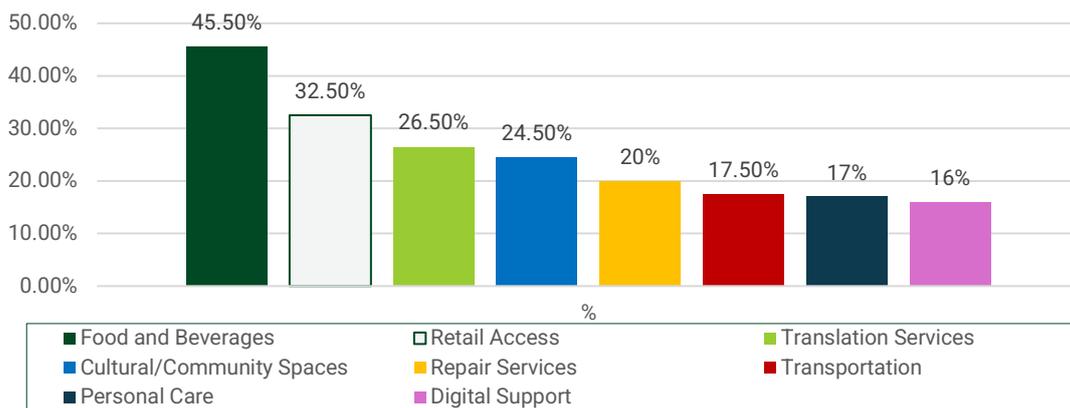
Figure 5 Start-Up Barriers



3.1.18 High-Demand Services and Products

Top needs include food and beverages (45.5%), retail access (32.5%), translation services (26.5%), cultural/community spaces (24.5%), repair services (20%), transportation (17.5%), personal care (17%), and digital support (16%). Needs encompass both practical necessities and social and cultural dimensions, as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6 Top Services and Products in Demand



3.1.19 Constraints and Support Needs for Migrant Entrepreneurs

Migrant youth seeking to start businesses in Thailand face major legal, systemic, and practical barriers. *Over half (55.0%) cite legal restrictions*—limited work permits, difficulty registering businesses, and fear of deportation. Although foreign ownership is legally allowed, high capital requirements, complex licensing, and heavy documentation make formal business entry unrealistic, pushing most migrants into informal, low-margin work.

To address these challenges, migrants highlight several priority support needs. *Financial assistance (59.5%)—microloans, grants, seed funding, and savings groups*—is the most urgent due to limited collateral and restricted access to banking. *Business training (54.0%)* in planning, accounting, marketing, and digital skills is also essential. *Mentorship (52.0%)* is needed for step-by-step guidance and navigating bureaucracy. Legal advice (46.5%) helps migrants understand regulations and avoid risk, while networking opportunities (42.0%) support access to suppliers, markets, and partnerships.

3.2 Insights from Focus Group Discussions with Out-of-School Adolescents and Youth in Mon State

The focus group discussions with eight out-of-school adolescents and youth (4 male and 4 female) from Mon State, aged 18 to 23, who are considering migration to Thailand, reveal a complex interplay of motivations, aspirations, and challenges that influence their decision-making processes. Most participants had completed lower secondary education, while a few had finished upper secondary or vocational training before dropping out or seeking employment.

3.2.1 Migration Motivation and Decision-Making

Participants described a combination of structural *push factors—political instability, insecurity, and limited livelihood options*—and *pull factors in Thailand, including stable income and broader employment opportunities*. Many sought to support their families while pursuing individual aspirations. Preferred sectors included food and beverage, retail, beauty services, and some interest in IT-related roles. Family members were the primary influencers of migration decisions, with teachers playing a secondary role.

3.2.2 Migration Pathways and Preparation

Although legal migration channels under the Thailand-Myanmar MOU framework were preferred, participants acknowledged that *many youths continue to rely on informal or irregular routes due to accessibility constraints*. Most information came from relatives already in Thailand, with limited engagement with formal institutions. Preparatory activities were minimal; only one participant had taken Thai language lessons. The lack of pre-departure orientation and skill readiness presents a substantial vulnerability.

3.2.3 Awareness and Access to Support Services

Participants demonstrated extremely *low awareness of available support services*, including vocational training, financial services, and migrant-support organizations. This knowledge gap heightens risks of exploitation and reduces their ability to navigate Thailand's labour market, legal procedures, and financial systems.

3.2.4 Expectations of Work and Living Conditions

Participants were expected to *work in urban service-sector jobs such as beauty salons, food outlets, or IT services*. Target wages were approximately one million kyat (7,000–7,500 THB). However, understanding

of actual working conditions—hours, employment contracts, and legal requirements—was limited. While city-based jobs were preferred for economic and social mobility reasons, *youth relied heavily on family networks or brokers for job placement*, with little familiarity with formal recruitment or MOU procedures.

3.2.5 Perceived Risks and Challenges

Key risks included language barriers and limited contract literacy, particularly difficulties understanding Thai employment terms. Participants expressed fear of scams and fraudulent recruitment, often involving unlicensed brokers integrated into community networks.

Broader vulnerabilities stemmed from the weakened formal migration infrastructure following the 2021 military coup. Administrative disruptions—slowed passport issuance, suspended verification processes, and reduced labour office operations—have made legal migration more difficult. As a result, many youths who prefer regular pathways felt compelled to consider irregular routes. Some also anticipated discrimination based on language or appearance, noting that Mon speakers are sometimes mistaken for other nationalities, potentially affecting their treatment in Thailand.

3.2.6 Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

Thai language proficiency was viewed as essential for employment. Several youths expressed entrepreneurial aspirations, such as opening food stalls, tailoring services, bakeries, or small trading businesses. However, legal and administrative barriers were substantial. Under the MOU framework, migrant workers must obtain a work permit, non-immigrant visa, and a pink card linked to a registered employer—requirements incompatible with self-employment. High processing costs, limited information, and cross-border administrative coordination further hinder legal status regularization.

3.2.7 Future Aspirations and Support Needs

If unable to migrate, most participants planned to seek similar work within Myanmar, indicating limited alternative pathways. Although they did not explicitly articulate specific support needs, the discussions revealed clear priorities: pre-departure orientation, legal assistance, financial literacy, and vocational training aligned with prospective migration. These supports would help reduce risks associated with irregular migration and strengthen labour market preparedness.

The discussions reveal a fundamental tension between strong aspirations and heightened vulnerability. Youth are motivated by family obligations and personal goals but face structural barriers—including political instability, economic precarity, and weak institutional migration mechanisms—that shape their decisions. Thailand is viewed as a pathway to both income generation and upward mobility; however, reliance on informal networks, minimal preparation, and limited awareness of support systems significantly increase exposure to exploitation. Without targeted interventions, the gap between aspiration and readiness is likely to perpetuate cycles of risk rather than enable sustainable migration outcomes for Myanmar youth.

3.3 Myanmar Youth Migrants in Thailand: Documented vs. Undocumented (FGDs)

This case study draws on in-person interviews conducted on 23 August 2025 at a shelter in Mae Sot, Tak, with four Myanmar male youths aged 18–35. Two participants were documented, while two were undocumented. All migrated independently and several had lost one or both parents, increasing their vulnerability. Their experiences illustrate diverse migration pathways, the risks encountered during transit, and the continuing challenges of settlement and integration in Thailand.

3.3.1 Background and Profiles of Respondents

The respondents represent a small but illustrative cross-section of Myanmar's migrant youth:

- A 22-year-old from Ayeyarwady Region with education up to Grade 6.
- An 18-year-old who left Myanmar following conscription announcements, having completed lower secondary school.
- A 21-year-old from Ayeyarwady Region with limited schooling and no prior work experience in Thailand.
- A 35-year-old with upper secondary and vocational training, who met the others only after arrival, reflecting how migrant networks often form post-migration.

Migration timelines varied: some arrived in 2024, while others migrated in early 2025.

Key push factors included military conscription, insecurity, and limited livelihood options. One respondent had previously attempted to migrate to Singapore but ultimately entered Thailand after returning home.

3.3.2 Migrating, Living, and Working in Thailand

Participants described *irregular and precarious migration journeys*. Those without documents paid brokers approximately 30,000 THB, though fees varied with route and security conditions. Some transited through Bangkok before moving to Mae Sot; others arrived with assistance from contacts at Mae La refugee camp who referred them to BEAM.

Several had experienced violence or harm en route and sought support from BEAM after arrival. Access to stable work remained limited, especially for undocumented participants.

3.3.3 Shelter and Living Arrangements

Upon arrival, respondents were housed in *gender-segregated shelters*. At the time of the interviews, around 13 young men were residing in the Mae Sot shelter, though numbers fluctuated and had previously reached up to 30. Women stayed in facilities connected to the Mae Tao Clinic. Lengths of stay varied: those who found employment moved out, while *most remained unemployed due to documentation gaps and limited Thai language proficiency*.

3.3.4 Education and Aspirations

Most youths expressed interest in both working and learning Thai. BEAM offers Thai language classes, but limited capacity restricts participation to about one month per student. Low Thai proficiency at arrival hindered daily communication and integration. Long-term aspirations were unclear for many, though some expressed interest in music, agriculture, handicrafts, baking, and other vocational fields. Documentation barriers—particularly the pink card, work permit, passport, or Certificate of Identity (CI)—were the primary obstacles to accessing formal training or employment.

Some had heard of opportunities linked to the HCTC passport, which allows access to vocational programs when combined with the “10-year card.”¹⁰ However, these pathways require group registrations and often depend on personal networks, making them inaccessible to newly arrived youth.

3.3.5 Safety, Protection, and Legal Risks

Respondents consistently felt safer in Thailand than in Myanmar, particularly due to the threat of conscription. However, insecurity persisted. Undocumented migrants risked arrest and fines of 30,000–40,000 THB, severely limiting their mobility. Most avoided leaving the shelter unless necessary. Healthcare access followed a two-tiered informal system: initial treatment at Mae Tao Clinic and referrals to Mae Sot Hospital for more serious conditions. While functional, access remained limited by cost, distance, and fear of detection.

3.3.6 Documentation Challenges

The documentation process was described as slow, costly, and confusing. Migrants must wait for Thai Cabinet-approved registration rounds, often subject to delays. Some were scammed by brokers who collected fees without providing documents. Lack of financial resources compounded the challenge.

Confusion around the CI was widespread. Many did not know that a legitimate employer was required to validate the document. Some were registered under employers who did not provide work, putting them at risk of double fines if discovered. Local organizations such as SEM and HRDF were critical sources of accurate guidance.

3.3.7 Language and Integration

Basic Thai language skills were considered essential for safety, daily life, and communication with authorities. In some cases, being able to state one’s name, age, residence, and employer could support release during police checks.

BEAM provides six-month Thai courses, though capacity limitations restrict enrollment. At the time of interviews, the organization supported over 30 youths. Staff emphasized that language proficiency should precede any job placement. Some youths may later pursue the General Educational Development (GED) program to improve English and broaden future opportunities.

¹⁰ An identification card issued by the Department of Provincial Administration to people who are not Thai nationals but have the right to reside in Thailand

3.3.8 Policy Environment and Structural Challenges

Thailand's regulatory environment offers limited avenues for irregular migrants to regularize their status, leaving many in prolonged legal and social uncertainty. Frequent policy changes further complicate planning for both migrants and support organizations, while the absence of comprehensive labour market data restricts effective matching of migrant workers to sectoral needs and hinders evidence-based policy design. NGOs and community groups provide essential services—including education, cultural orientation, and basic support—but remain constrained by limited resources and operate within politically sensitive conditions surrounding irregular migration.

For Myanmar migrant youth, physical safety generally improves upon arrival in Thailand, yet legal vulnerability persists. *Many enter through irregular channels, incur substantial broker fees, and face risks throughout their journey.* Once in Thailand, the lack of documentation significantly limits access to employment, healthcare, and education and heightens the risk of arrest. With few formal pathways to integration, these youths depend heavily on overstretched NGOs for basic support.

Despite these constraints, participants expressed strong aspirations for skills development, secure livelihoods, and eventual contributions to Myanmar's democratic future. However, existing Thai migration policies do not adequately align with their lived realities, leaving many young migrants trapped in cycles of survival rather than enabling meaningful economic and social participation.

3.4 Myanmar Youth in Transition: Migration, Work, and Vulnerability among Newly Arrived Undocumented Migrants in Thailand

This case study explores the experience of *a 20-year-old male Myanmar youth engaged with a local support organization for migrant youth in Thailand.* The participant migrated to Thailand primarily to avoid forced military conscription, persistent insecurity, and worsening poverty in Myanmar. His entry into Thailand occurred through irregular channels, facilitated by brokers, with a total migration cost of approximately 36,000 THB for both the youth and his immediate family members.

Upon arrival, he received initial support from a Myanmar-speaking teacher or community mentor, who assisted in securing accommodation in a Safe House and connecting him to potential employment opportunities. While the participant had previously served as a teaching assistant in Myanmar, his current involvement consists of informal support roles in vocational and community-based activities, such as sewing classes. He has not yet secured formal employment.

3.4.1 Mixed Migration Pathways and Early Support

The youths' migration trajectories reflect a mixed pattern—irregular entry followed by formal assistance from local organizations upon arrival. This pathway is increasingly common among Myanmar migrants fleeing political instability and economic hardship. Conditions within the Safe House are modest yet stable: residents receive food, basic necessities, and limited transportation support, providing a temporary buffer against the acute vulnerabilities typically faced by newly arrived undocumented migrants.

Healthcare needs are primarily supported by Mae Tao Clinic, with referrals to Mae Sot Hospital for more serious conditions. This arrangement offers partial but uneven access to essential health services.

3.4.2 Legal Vulnerability and Barriers to Documentation

Although the participant understood the legal requirements for obtaining documentation needed for employment, he remained undocumented. Key barriers included high processing fees, complex administrative procedures, and the inability to access Myanmar government offices due to ongoing political instability. As a result, he faced heightened vulnerability to arrest, fines, and other legal risks. Despite these challenges, the participant did not report any experience of bullying or workplace discrimination.

3.4.3 Livelihoods, Financial Management, and Aspirations

Financial transactions are conducted through local money transfer services. The participant hopes to enroll in a GED program to enhance future employment prospects. His long-term goals include providing financial support to his mother and purchasing a vehicle in Myanmar.

Skills development is ongoing through sewing courses; however, he remains unsure about the skills demanded in the Thai labor market. He also expressed interest in entrepreneurship and self-employment, particularly in creative and performing arts. These aspirations, however, are constrained by his irregular legal status, limited financial resources, and insufficient information about viable market opportunities.

This case highlights the complex interplay of *migration precarity, legal marginalization, and skill mismatches experienced by undocumented Myanmar youth* in Thailand. While informal networks and NGOs provide critical safety, education, and initial livelihood support, structural barriers—such as irregular migration routes, restricted access to documentation, and unclear employment pathways—continue to hinder long-term integration, economic independence, and social inclusion.

Case Study 1 Challenges Faced by Newly Arrived Undocumented Myanmar Youth in Thailand



Background

Each year, thousands of young migrants from Myanmar arrive in Thailand seeking better livelihoods. Many come without documents, entering a labor market that offers opportunities but also significant risks. This case study, based on qualitative interviews conducted in Tak and Samut Sakhon provinces, illustrates the challenges and coping mechanisms of newly arrived undocumented Myanmar youth.

Key Findings and Challenges

Undocumented youth face substantial legal and employment vulnerabilities that limit access to stable work and formal training. Most rely on low-wage, informal jobs where exploitation risks are high, and job security is minimal. Their experiences reveal a clear skills mismatch — while many possess basic skills and strong motivation to work, they lack information, guidance, and access to market-relevant training opportunities available to documented workers.

In the absence of formal protection and state support, NGOs and informal networks play a critical role in providing shelter, education, and initial livelihood assistance. However, fear of arrest or deportation further constrains their mobility and access to essential services, deepening their social and economic exclusion.

Coping Strategies and Support Systems

Despite these challenges, undocumented youth demonstrate resilience through community-based coping mechanisms. NGOs and migrant networks facilitate informal learning, skills development, and small livelihood projects that help them gain confidence and stability in a new environment. Peer networks often provide crucial information on job opportunities and safe migration routes, even though these are typically informal and short-term.

Implications for Policy and Programming

This case underscores the urgent need for policy and program interventions that promote safe migration pathways, simplified documentation processes, and inclusive vocational education. Strengthening coordination among government agencies, employers, and CSOs can enhance access to decent work, reduce vulnerability, and support the long-term integration of Myanmar youth in Thailand's labor market.

Chapter 4. Key Insights from Labour Demand

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a comparative analysis of employer perspectives on the recruitment, integration, and management of Myanmar youth within the Thai labour market. The findings draw on qualitative interviews with seven enterprises operating across manufacturing, logistics, seafood processing, and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

The assessment is organized around three thematic areas:

- (i) demand for Myanmar youth labour,
- (ii) skills development and training practices, and
- (iii) regulatory and administrative challenges in cross-border recruitment.

Employers report sustained—and in several sectors increasing—dependence on.

The chapter concludes with policy recommendations aimed at improving regulatory efficiency, expanding skills development opportunities, and strengthening decent work outcomes for Myanmar migrant youth. The analysis draws on interviews with a diverse set of employers, including: *Nanyang Textile Co., Ltd.* (textiles), *Navasri Manufacturing* (cleaning products), *SVI* (electronics), *DHL* (logistics), *Thai Union* (seafood), *Nai Saen Bakery* (SME bakery services), and *Deleaf* (cosmetics), the latter of which employs Myanmar youth in white-collar roles—indicating emerging diversification in labour demand.

4.2 Demand for Myanmar Youth Labour

Thailand continues to rely heavily on migrant labour to sustain key industries. According to the International Organization for Migration (2024), an estimated 2.3–3 million migrant workers are currently employed in Thailand, concentrated in *labour-intensive and low-skill sectors* such as agriculture, construction, manufacturing, and services. These sectors remain central to Thailand's economic competitiveness but continue to face worker shortages, high turnover, and persistent decent-work challenges.

1. Agriculture, Aquaculture, and Fisheries (Including Seafood Processing): High Concentration and Persistent Gaps

Agriculture and fisheries remain among the largest employers of migrant workers from Myanmar and Cambodia. The fishing and seafood processing industries are especially dependent on migrant labour and face chronic shortages and ongoing concerns related to recruitment, working conditions, and occupational safety (IOM, 2024; Freedom Fund, 2023). Seasonal demands, physical intensity, and rural labour shortages continue to drive reliance on young and mobile migrant workers. Increasingly, the sector requires technical and safety skills such as food handling, hygiene, and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) compliance.

2. Manufacturing and Food Production (Including Processing and Packaging): Large Employer with Skills Mismatches

Manufacturing—especially food processing and packaging—employs one of the largest shares of migrant workers in Thailand (IOM, 2024). Many migrants work below their qualification level, pointing to persistent skills mismatches between available migrant labour and industrial needs. Demand remains strong for machine operators, technicians, and quality-control personnel, particularly in SMEs. Youth with TVET backgrounds or short technical training programs fit well into these demand patterns.

3. Construction: Consistent Demand for Manual and Semi-Skilled Labour

Construction continues to attract large numbers of Myanmar migrants, especially in urban and peri-urban areas. The sector demands manual and semi-skilled workers, including carpenters, masons, electricians, and general labourers (IOM, 2024). Because sectoral activity follows infrastructure investments, demand for young workers remains steady. Targeted upskilling and safety certification programs could enhance productivity and support formalization.

4. Domestic Work and Caregiving: High Demand with Protection Gaps

Domestic work remains a significant employment sector for migrant women, covering childcare, eldercare, and household management. However, most domestic workers remain informal and are excluded from labour law protection (ILO, 2024). Expanded access to caregiving training, language skills, and workers' rights education—and efforts to formalize domestic work—would strengthen both job quality and worker protection.

5. Services, Hospitality, and Retail: Expanding Urban Demand

Growth in the services sector—hospitality, restaurants, and retail—has accelerated following Thailand's post-pandemic tourism recovery. The World Bank (2024) notes shortages of frontline service workers in Bangkok, Phuket, and Chiang Mai. This creates opportunities for migrant youth in customer service, food handling, and digital retail, particularly for those with basic Thai language and digital communication skills.

6. Logistics, Transport, and Warehousing: Emerging Demand in a Digital Economy

Thailand's expanding e-commerce and logistics sectors have sharply increased demand for warehouse staff, drivers, and delivery personnel (OECD, 2024). Migrants often fill these roles due to flexible hours and physical demands. As the sector modernizes, competencies in inventory management, digital logistics systems, and workplace safety are increasingly valuable.

7. Health, Education, and Skilled Occupations: Emerging Shortages

Thailand faces shortages in professional and technical fields, including healthcare, information and communication technology (ICT), and education (OECD, 2024). Although migrants currently have

limited access to these roles, they represent potential avenues for upward mobility if qualification recognition, licensing frameworks, and language proficiency support are strengthened.

4.3 Thai Entrepreneur Perspectives on Migrant Youth Employment: Survey

Findings

To complement youth perspectives, the study also gathered insights from *50 Thai employers of Myanmar migrant workers* across multiple provinces. Conducted in August 2025, the survey examined labour demand, sectoral distribution, employer characteristics, and key operational constraints. The findings provide a clearer understanding of the degree to which Thai businesses rely on migrant labour and the challenges they face in sustaining a stable and sufficient workforce.

4.3.1 Demographic Profile

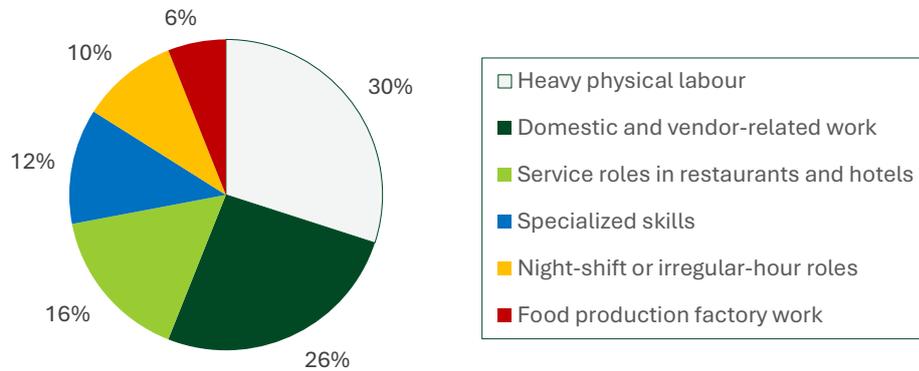
The survey findings show:

- Sectoral distribution: *Manufacturing accounts for the largest share* of employers (26%), followed by services such as retail and hospitality (24%). Domestic work (20%), agriculture (10%), and construction (4%) follow. The remaining 16% fall into transportation, logistics, small-scale entrepreneurship, and informal trading.
- Geographic distribution: *Bangkok is the primary hub* (46%), followed by Chiang Mai (16%) and Pathum Thani (10%). Smaller shares were recorded in Mae Sot, Samut Sakhon, and Nonthaburi (4% each).
- Workforce size: Most employers hire small numbers of Myanmar workers; *54% employ 1–10 workers*, 36% employ 11–50, and only 10% hire more than 50.
- Labour shortages: *While 70% of employers reported no shortages*, 30% face persistent gaps—particularly in agriculture, construction, food processing, and tourism-driven service sectors.

4.3.2 Thailand's Job Demands and Workforce Constraints

Figure 7 reports the most difficult positions to fill with Thai workers are concentrated in roles that are physically demanding, low-status, or require irregular hours. *Heavy physical labour (30%) and domestic or vendor-related work (26%)* were the hardest to staff, followed by service roles in restaurants and hotels (16%). Positions requiring specialized skills (12%), night-shift or irregular-hour work (10%), and food production factory jobs (6%) also faced persistent shortages. These findings indicate that migrant workers play a critical role in sustaining sectors where working conditions, workload intensity, and limited career progression reduce interest among domestic labour.

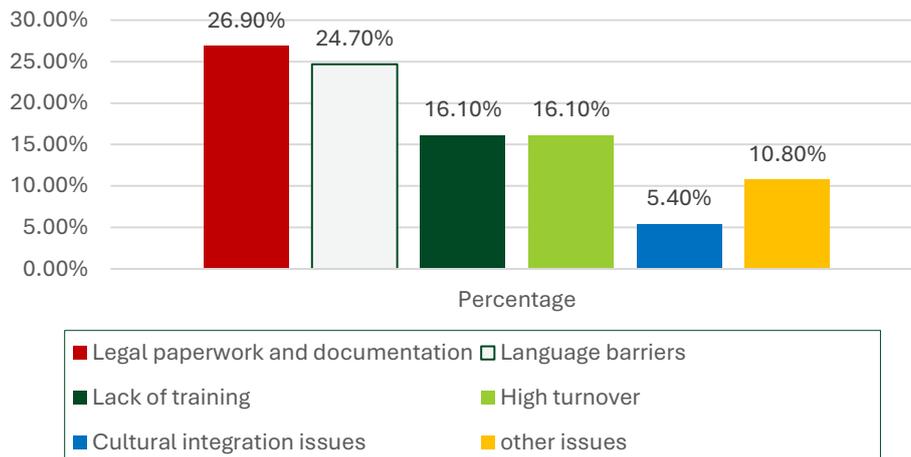
Figure 7 Positions that are Most Difficult to Fill with Thai Workers



4.3.3 Employer Challenges in Hiring and Retention

The survey of Thai employers highlights several obstacles in hiring and retaining Myanmar migrant workers. The most frequently cited challenges are *legal paperwork* (26.9%) and *language barriers* (24.7%), followed by lack of training and high turnover (16.1% each). Smaller shares mentioned cultural integration (5.4%) and other issues (10.8%). These findings suggest that administrative, communication, and skills-related barriers are the main concerns, underscoring the need for supportive policies, language training, and workforce development initiatives.

Figure 8 Top Challenges Reported by Employers



4.3.4 External Impacts and Future Concerns

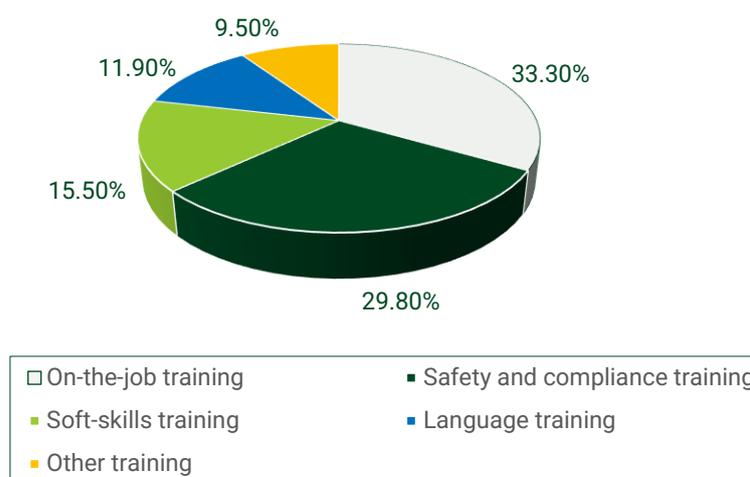
While 74% of employers reported no immediate external disruptions, 26% experienced impacts related to political instability, climatic conditions, or economic pressures. Reports from the IOM (2024) and the World Bank (2024) corroborate these findings, noting that migrant labour flows are highly sensitive to shocks.

Looking ahead, 54% of employers expressed moderate concern about future labour supply, 10% high concern, and 36% little to no concern—emphasizing growing awareness of workforce volatility.

4.3.5 Training and Workforce Development

Employer-provided training primarily focuses on *on-the-job training* (33.3%) and safety and *compliance training* (29.8%). Additional areas include soft-skills development (15.5%), language training (11.9%), and other specialized training (9.5%), as presented in Figure 9.

Figure 9 Types of Training Provided by Employers



Employers expressed strong interest in hiring youth with *vocational and digital skills* (46%), though they showed considerably less demand for entrepreneurship or business skills (18%). Their hiring decisions are shaped by several key factors, including the availability of skilled workers (20.1%), cost-effectiveness (17.1%), and the proven track record of trainees (15.2%).

Support for collaborative training initiatives is also notable: while 46% of employers are willing to participate, *the remaining 54% indicated conditional interest*. Their potential contributions range from offering internships (32.1%) and hiring programme graduates (25.6%) to supporting curriculum development (23.1%) and providing mentorship (19.2%).

4.3.6 Entrepreneurship Opportunities

Employers identified potential gaps in small businesses that could be filled by Myanmar migrants, with the most frequently cited opportunities in *food stalls/restaurants* (12.9%), *Myanmar cultural/community services* (12.1%), and grocery or mobile/internet services (10.8% each). Additional opportunities include repair and tailoring (9.9%), beauty/personal care, childcare, translation (8.6% each), and transportation (7.8%).

Legal context: Current *Thai labour laws restrict most forms of migrant self-employment*. Migrants may only operate legally through Thai-registered businesses, joint ventures, cooperatives, or approved pilot schemes. Any entrepreneurship recommendations must therefore align with existing regulations.

Support for youth-led entrepreneurship is cautious: 16% of employers expressed support, 26% were unwilling, and 58% *undecided*. Potential contributions include mentorship (20.8%), market access (20.8%), procurement (18.1%), training (18.1%), and shared resources (11.1%).

4.3.7 Financial Inclusion and Support

Between 55% and 70% of employers assist workers in opening payroll bank accounts. However, most migrants continue to rely on *informal financial networks (80%)*, with only 20% using formal banking services. Employers reported limited visibility into workers' financial challenges, but noted that barriers to formal banking remain common and differ significantly across bank branches. These findings underscore the need to *standardize migrant-friendly banking services* and expand *financial literacy support*.

For Thai employers, Myanmar youth are not a temporary or supplementary labour source but a core component of Thailand's competitiveness in labour-intensive and service-oriented sectors. While employers value their contributions, they continue to face structural constraints, including complex documentation procedures, language barriers, high turnover, and shortages of adequately trained workers.

4.4 Key Insights from Thai Entrepreneurs: Findings from In-Depth Interview

4.4.1 Sectoral Patterns and Recruitment Criteria

All interviewed employers express a *clear preference for Myanmar youth*, citing higher levels of discipline, physical resilience, and job retention compared to Thai nationals. This preference is especially pronounced in sectors involving repetitive, physically demanding, or environmentally challenging work.

- Labor-Intensive Sectors (Nanyang, DHL, Navasri, SVI, Thai Union)

These firms rely on Myanmar workers for production line operations, warehouse logistics, and fishing. Recruitment emphasizes *physical fitness, age (18-45), and health*, with some preference for prior experience in machine operation or safety procedures. At Nanyang Textile, over 50% of a 400-worker workforce is composed of Myanmar nationals, with plans to increase this share due to perceived lower motivation and higher turnover among Thai workers.

- White-Collar and SME Roles (Deleaf, Nai Saen Bakery):

Deleaf (deleafthanaka.com) represents a notable exception, hiring Myanmar youth for international marketing and office-based roles, prioritizing *Thai language proficiency, fast learning, and communication skills*. Nai Saen Bakery, while operating at a smaller scale, employs Myanmar youth through trusted civil society organizations, valuing *trustworthiness, loyalty, and attitude* over technical experience.

Case Study 2 Migrant Workforce in Office-based Roles

The case studies present two models of migrant workforce integration in Thailand, illustrating how businesses of different sizes can leverage the skills and reliability of Myanmar youth while maintaining legal compliance and promoting workforce development.

Deleaf, a mid-sized skincare company with regional export operations, employs Myanmar youth in *marketing, digital content, and cross-border communications roles*. The company benefits from their *Burmese–Thai–English language skills, digital literacy, and adaptability*, which help fill positions that are difficult to recruit for locally. Through formal employment with valid work permits, targeted training in Thai business practices, and mentorship from Thai supervisors, Deleaf demonstrates how SMEs can integrate skilled migrant youth into professional roles, supporting both business growth and employee development.

Myanmar staffs provide valuable linguistic and cultural competencies, enhancing communication with partners and customers across the Mekong subregion. Deleaf's recruitment model emphasizes Thai language proficiency, adaptability, and strong communication skills, integrating Myanmar youth into mixed Thai–Myanmar teams to strengthen cross-cultural collaboration and regional competitiveness.

Case Study 3 Nai Saen Bakery– Community-Based Recruitment for Micro-Enterprises



Nai Saen Bakery, a small enterprise in Tak, hires Myanmar youth for its handcrafted baked goods operations through *partnerships with NGOs and community organizations*. The bakery prioritizes trust, loyalty, and reliability over formal technical experience, providing **on-the-job training** to ensure workforce competence.

By collaborating with a local migrant support organization, Nai saen bakery identifies suitable candidates through a referral and vetting system, ensuring that employees are both competent and trustworthy. This trust-based recruitment model minimizes legal and operational risks, fosters long-term employment stability, and promotes inclusive employment practices in the local SME sector. The bakery's rationale for hiring Myanmar workers is based on their demonstrated diligence, loyalty, and positive work ethic, which align with the company's values and operational culture. This hybrid approach demonstrates how micro-enterprises can ethically and effectively engage migrant workers, balancing legal compliance with workforce reliability.

Key Insights from Both Models

The case studies 2 and 3 demonstrate that both formal employment and community-based approaches can successfully integrate Myanmar youth into the Thai labor market, with success dependent on aligning skills with business needs, ensuring legal documentation, providing training and mentorship, and leveraging trusted networks, showing that SMEs and micro-enterprises can access a reliable, skilled workforce while promoting inclusive and legally compliant employment practices.

4.4.2 Workforce Trends and Future Outlook

Employers report stable to increasing demand for Myanmar labour across multiple sectors. Hiring priorities are shaped by operational needs, the feasibility of automation, and the availability of skills. Across industries, migrant labour continues to play a central role in sustaining productivity, particularly in labour-intensive and semi-skilled positions.

DHL (Logistics and Warehousing)

DHL plans to *expand its Myanmar workforce from 35 to approximately 70–80 employees* to meet growing logistics and e-commerce demands. Employers emphasize the reliability, adaptability, and discipline of Myanmar workers, particularly in warehouse operations and last-mile delivery. Because logistics work remains highly labour intensive, automation is not expected to replace manual sorting, packing, or delivery tasks in the near term.

Priority: Workforce expansion to support business growth; automation is secondary.

Nanyang (Footwear Manufacturing)

Nanyang anticipates *gradually replacing Thai workers with Myanmar labour*, citing greater work discipline, willingness to perform repetitive tasks, and stronger long-term retention. Myanmar workers show lower turnover rates and higher stability in shift-based production lines. While mechanization has been introduced in cutting and assembly, automation remains limited by cost and the need for production flexibility.

Priority: Migrant labour remains essential; automation complements but does not replace human labour.

Deleaf (Natural Cosmetics and Skincare)

Deleaf employs skilled Myanmar youth in white-collar roles—including marketing, logistics coordination, and administration. Their *multilingual abilities and cross-cultural competence* support regional trade and digital marketing operations.

Priority: Skills-based hiring for human-centered, non-automatable roles.

SVI (Electronics Manufacturing)

SVI maintains steady demand by balancing technical automation with manual assembly. While surface-mount technology and precision testing processes are automated, *manual labour remains essential for*

inspection, rework, and packaging. Myanmar workers are valued for attention to detail, productivity, and rapid learning.

Priority: Dual approach—automation for high-precision processes, continued reliance on migrant labour for semi-skilled functions.

Navasri (Household Consumer Product Manufacturing)

Navasri continues to *rely on migrant labour for packaging and quality control.* Expansion is constrained by rising production costs and regulatory burdens. Automation is applied selectively where precision or hygiene is required, but human labour remains critical for maintaining production volumes.

Priority: Maintaining a reliable migrant workforce while implementing selective automation.

Key Insights

- Across sectors, employers consistently prioritize hiring Myanmar workers over full automation, due to high capital costs and the need for operational flexibility.
- Medium and large manufacturers (e.g., SVI) adopt hybrid strategies combining mechanization with migrant labour.

In the near term, Myanmar youth will remain central to Thailand's labour-intensive and semi-skilled industries, with technology adoption complementing—rather than replacing—their roles.

Summary of Demand Trends

- DHL plans to double its Myanmar workforce (35 → 70–80 employees).
- Nanyang foresees increased reliance on Myanmar workers due to stronger work ethic and retention.
- Deleaf, SVI, and Navasri anticipate stable, moderate demand without immediate expansion.

4.4.3 Skills Mismatch and Opportunities for Skills Development

While employers express generally positive views of worker performance, several skills gaps limit productivity and advancement. The most significant and consistent gap is Thai language proficiency, which affects:

- workplace communication (e.g., safety instructions at Navasri and SVI),
- customer service (e.g., responding to online inquiries at Nai Saen Bakery), and
- supervisory coordination (e.g., team leadership at Nanyang).

Additional skills gaps include:

- customer service and communication,
- digital literacy, and
- basic problem-solving skills in roles requiring interaction with Thai colleagues, management, or clients.

These mismatches present clear opportunities for targeted language training, foundational digital skills, and soft-skills development.

4.4.4 Training Modalities and Institutional Engagement

All employers reported providing on-the-job training for newly hired Myanmar workers, typically lasting 7–30 days. These induction programs focus on occupational safety, production processes, quality control procedures, and basic equipment operation. Workers who demonstrate strong performance can progress to more advanced roles, including team leader and regular salaried positions.

Limited Formal Engagement with TVET Institutions

Despite the strong demand for skilled migrant labour, *formal partnerships with TVET institutions remain limited.*

- Nanyang has shown interest in collaborating on curriculum alignment and hosting structured internships, signalling future potential for public–private partnership.
- Deleaf and Nai Saen Bakery rely on NGO intermediaries—such as Rays of Youths, HCTC, and HRDF—for pre-screening, soft-skills support, and basic pre-employment orientation.
- Thai Union stands out for providing comprehensive, standardized training aligned with international frameworks, including ILO conventions and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

Overall, employer engagement with formal training institutions remains ad hoc and primarily NGO-driven, highlighting an untapped opportunity to strengthen skills pipelines for migrant youth.

Promotional Pathways and Worker Retention

Several employers offer advancement opportunities that support motivation and retention among Myanmar workers:

- Supervisory progression: Companies such as Nanyang and SVI promote high-performing Myanmar workers to team leader or section supervisor positions, enabling them to support production coordination and mentor incoming staff.
- Contract formalization: Employers like Nai Saen Bakery and SVI transition reliable workers from daily-wage arrangements to monthly-salaried contracts, providing income stability, benefits, and long-term incentives.

These advancement pathways not only improve retention but also deepen trust and reduce turnover—key priorities for sectors facing persistent labour shortages.

Access to Social Protection

Employers, including SVI and DHL, report providing legally mandated forms of social protection, such as:

- enrolment in the national social security system,
- overtime compensation, and
- employer-sponsored health benefits.

Ensuring access to these protections strengthens legal compliance, promotes safer working conditions, and supports the overall dignity and rights of migrant workers.

Case Study 4. Thai Union’s Vessel Improvement Program (VIP) and the Ulula Platform

Thai Union demonstrates one of the region’s most advanced models for migrant workforce management, integrating structured capacity-building with digital transparency mechanisms.

The Vessel Improvement Program (VIP) provides systematic training on occupational safety, labour rights, and responsible fishing practices, supported by onboard mentoring that reinforces correct procedures. The program includes regular vessel assessments to ensure compliance with labour, safety, and ethical standards.

The Ulula digital feedback platform strengthens worker voice by offering an anonymous reporting channel, mobile-based learning modules on rights and grievance procedures, and real-time case routing to managers. Aggregated data from the system supports continuous improvement and informs policy-aligned reforms.

Together, the VIP and Ulula platforms enhance operational transparency, empower migrant workers, and promote alignment with international labour standards.

Despite these demonstrated benefits, such advanced practices are not yet widespread. *Adoption remains limited due to resource constraints among SMEs, weak enforcement mechanisms, low employer awareness of responsible recruitment tools, and fragmented coordination among government, employers, and civil society.*

These systemic barriers highlight the need for scalable and cost-effective models that can be more broadly adopted across migrant-dependent industries. Strengthening multi-stakeholder collaboration will be essential to expand high-quality training, enhance worker protections, and promote ethical recruitment and employment practices nationwide.

4.4.5 Regulatory Constraints and Institutional Framework

Employers face significant operational challenges navigating Thailand’s labor migration regulations. As shown in Table 2, administrative burdens, inconsistent enforcement, and procedural delays regarding work permits and visas impact both employers and Myanmar workers.

Table 2 Employers’ Regulatory Experience

Employer	Regulatory experience
Nanyang, Deleaf, Navasri, SVI	Smooth compliance; recruitment agencies manage documentation; minimal operational impact.
DHL	High administrative burden; time-consuming MOU processes hinder urgent hiring.
Nai Saen Bakery	Complex paperwork (e.g., 10-year card, pink card); reliance on NGOs to navigate systems.
Thai Union	Managed compliance with amnesty programs during pandemic; addressed human rights risks.

MOU-Based Recruitment System: Current Functionality and Constraints

The MOU-based recruitment system remains operational and continues to provide a formal pathway for documented Myanmar migrants to work legally in Thailand under bilateral agreements. However, its effectiveness has been significantly constrained by ongoing conflict and political instability in Myanmar. These conditions affect the system in several ways:

- Delays in documentation processing: Administrative disruptions in Myanmar have slowed or rendered irregular the issuance of passports, Certificates of Identity, work permits, and related documentation.
- Reduced labour supply: Potential migrants from conflict-affected regions may be unable or unwilling to travel safely to designated processing centres.
- Greater reliance on informal channels: To address urgent labour shortages, some employers turn to non-MOU recruitment pathways, increasing risks for workers.

While the MOU framework is the legal standard, its rigidity and unpredictability hinder employers and migrants, especially in seasonal industries. Frequent policy shifts further disrupt workforce planning and recruitment cycles.

4.4.6 External Risks and Systemic Barriers

Employers highlighted several external risks and structural barriers that influence workforce stability and recruitment outcomes:

- Political instability in Myanmar: Cited by companies such as Nanyang and Thai Union as a more significant constraint than Thai domestic regulations, instability affects cross-border mobility, documentation validity, and worker return patterns.
- Worker mobility and retention: Approximately 20–30% of Myanmar workers temporarily return home during February–March for home leave. Most re-engage with their employers upon return, but this cyclical movement affects production planning.
- Documentation costs: Workers often shoulder a portion of expenses for permits, work authorization, and housing registration (e.g., 10-year residency cards), creating financial burdens and logistical challenges, especially for newly arrived migrants.

4.4.7 Human Rights and Ethical Recruitment

Thai Union represents a leading example of systematic human rights due diligence and responsible recruitment within the Thai labour market. Key components of its approach include:

- Partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2023) to assess recruitment risks across the supply chain.
- Remediation of recruitment fees, providing compensation of THB 15,000 to more than 5,000 Myanmar workers for past recruitment-related costs.

- Third-party audits and monitoring, including electronic oversight covering 97% of vessels in 2024 and structured remediation programs to address violations.

These practices align with international standards, including the *UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights* (United Nations, 2011) and the *ILO Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930*. Thai Union's model sets a benchmark for responsible recruitment and labour governance within global supply chains.

However, such practices remain the exception. Most migrant workers continue to navigate informal or exploitative recruitment pathways. This underscores the need for strengthened regulatory enforcement, systematic monitoring, and promotion of ethical recruitment models across industries that depend on Myanmar migrant labour.

Chapter 5. Key Insights from Policy Interviews

Between August and September 2025, interviews were conducted with key government and quasi-government agencies responsible for policies affecting Myanmar youth and migrant labour in Thailand. The discussions reveal a fragmented yet interconnected institutional landscape, with each agency contributing to specific dimensions of migration governance, labour regulation, skills development, and education access.

5.1 Government Oversight of Migrant Labour and Youth Skills Development in Thailand

This section summarizes the mandates and policy approaches of agencies involved in managing foreign workers and supporting skills development for migrant youth. Their roles collectively illustrate how Thailand regulates migrant labour, protects workers' rights, and provides education and upskilling opportunities for Myanmar youth.

1. Immigration Bureau (IB)

The Immigration Bureau serves as a pivotal mechanism in driving the Cabinet Resolution of September 24, 2024, regarding the management of migrant workers from four nationalities (Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam), which facilitates the transition of undocumented workers into the legal system. The Bureau balances national security priorities with domestic labor demands by overseeing more than 435,000 documented workers while addressing the administrative complexities involving approximately 700,000 individuals with incomplete documentation.

By streamlining the utilization of Certificates of Identity (CI) for Myanmar nationals and implementing biometric data registration, the Bureau aims to transition workers from irregular entry or tourist status into a formal, monitored framework. Ultimately, the agency advocates for mandatory registration and strict visa compliance as primary instruments to enhance transparency, prevent human trafficking, and ensure the legal protection of foreign youth within the Thai workforce.

2. National Statistical Office (NSO)

The National Statistical Office (NSO), via its Labour Statistics Group, functions as the principal authority for monitoring Thailand's aggregate labor market. Its mandate focuses on the generation of macro-level statistical indicators at national and provincial scales, rather than the acquisition of granular demographic data regarding specific migrant subpopulations. While the NSO tracks longitudinal trends through monthly and quarterly Labour Force Surveys administered at the enterprise level, existing data collection methodologies lack disaggregation by nationality or migratory status. Consequently, Myanmar youth remain "statistically invisible," subsumed within the broader labor pool. To enhance the granularity of foreign labor analysis, the NSO advocates for the integration of administrative registration records from the DOE, as the NSO's primary objectives continue to prioritize cross-sectoral variables such as educational attainment and industrial employment status within the broader Thai economy.

3. Department of Employment (DOE), Ministry of Labour

The DOE is the primary agency responsible for managing foreign workers under the Royal Decree on the Management of Foreign Workers' Work B.E. 2560 (2017). It ensures that migrant workers enter and work in Thailand through legal channels and are protected under Thai labour law. The DOE *oversees all major entry pathways—including regular work permits, MOU-based recruitment, and irregular entry—and administers a demand-driven system* in which work permits are issued according to employer needs rather than nationality-based quotas. Its work requires close coordination with the Ministry of Interior and the Cabinet Committee on Foreign Workers' Work Management Policy. Overall, the DOE's operational approach remains largely responsive to labour shortages and shifting private-sector requirements.

4. Department of Labour Protection and Welfare (DLPW), Ministry of Labour

The DLPW is responsible for *enforcing Thailand's labour protection laws for all workers, including women, children, and migrant workers*. The Labour Protection Act B.E. 2541 (1998) applies universally, covering workers regardless of their nationality or legal status. Labour inspections focus on high-risk sectors such as fisheries and manufacturing, particularly in provinces with large migrant worker populations, including Tak, Chonburi, and Ayutthaya. The DLPW prohibits the employment of children under 15 and enforces strict limitations on hazardous duties and overtime work for those under 18. Undocumented workers are permitted to file labour complaints, demonstrating partial alignment with international labour standards; however, gaps in outreach and enforcement continue to hinder consistent application of protections.

5. Department of Industrial Promotion (DIP), Ministry of Industry

The DIP under the Ministry of Industry *focuses on strengthening entrepreneurship and industrial workforce development, with a mandate primarily targeting Thai nationals*. DIP provides a wide range of training programmes in areas such as business management, productivity improvement, and technology adoption, including IoT applications and environmental management. Although dedicated budgets for migrant worker training are limited, some employer-driven initiatives extend participation to Myanmar workers. DIP works closely with specialized institutes—such as the Thai-German Institute and the Thailand Automotive Institute—to address critical skill shortages in fields like welding and machining. In addition, international collaborations, including Mekong-Lancang cooperation and JICA-supported programmes, occasionally incorporate migrant participants. Overall, DIP's contributions support enterprise-level capacity development that can indirectly benefit Myanmar workers, even as its core mandate remains focused on the Thai workforce.

6. Office of the Private Education Commission (OPEC), Ministry of Education

The OPEC under the Ministry of Education *oversees private education institutions ranging from early childhood to secondary levels, including international and out-of-system schools*. While there is no dedicated policy for Myanmar migrant children, enrolment in both public and private schools is possible for families able to meet tuition requirements. OPEC also authorizes short-term vocational courses—such as Thai language, Thai cuisine, and elderly care—subject to safety standards and instructor qualification criteria. In addition, the agency promotes industry-aligned short courses and Thai language programs

within international schools. OPEC recognizes the opportunity to enhance alignment between private training institutions and labour market needs, including those of employers hiring migrant workers.

7. Office of the Vocational Education Commission (OVEC)

The OVEC plays a central role in *providing vocational training for migrant and refugee youth*, with a strong presence in Thailand's border provinces. OVEC delivers a range of programmes in areas such as mechanics, garment production, computer programming, and electronics, offering practical skills that enhance employability. The agency also supports skills recognition initiatives that enable youth to return to Myanmar with certified competencies and potentially re-enter Thailand with Thai-recognized qualifications. At the same time, OVEC continues to seek additional resources to strengthen training facilities and expand access to digital learning tools within refugee camps. Overall, OVEC represents Thailand's most direct institutional engagement in skills development for Myanmar youth.

8. Equitable Education Fund (EEF)

The EEF works to *reduce educational inequality among disadvantaged youth, including children of migrant workers*, in line with Article 54 of the Thai Constitution. The EEF supports alternative education pathways for undocumented and stateless children and collaborates with partners such as OBEC, the Ministry of Education, and UNESCO on initiatives including the Learning City framework. Its programmes aim to reintegrate approximately 10,000 out-of-school children each year, helping them return to formal or non-formal education. Through these efforts, the EEF strengthens the connection between social protection and future employability for marginalized young people.

9. Department of Provincial Administration (DOPA), Ministry of Interior

The DOPA under the Ministry of Interior is responsible for *civil registration and identity documentation for foreign nationals and their dependents*. Its functions include issuing birth certificates for children of migrant parents, providing Pink Cards for identification, and facilitating the inclusion of foreigners with valid passports in Thailand's house registration system. DOPA coordinates closely with the Ministry of Labour, law enforcement, and national security agencies to support migration management and regularly revises policies in response to irregular migration linked to regional political crises. By ensuring legal identity, DOPA plays a foundational role in enabling access to education, healthcare, and formal employment for migrant populations.

Summary of Key Institutional Insights

Overall, government officials acknowledged the essential contribution of Myanmar workers to Thailand's economy. However, *constitutional limitations and budgetary constraints* restrict the government's ability to prioritize foreign labour issues or allocate dedicated resources. As a result, support for migrant workers remains largely indirect and is shaped more by private sector labour demand than by proactive government policy.

Officials also highlighted *the absence of official studies and systematic data collection on Myanmar labour*. Existing knowledge is fragmented and relies heavily on findings from externally funded projects, leaving policymakers with limited evidence to inform decision-making or advocate for system-level reforms.

Under current regulations, most government agencies lack the authority to provide direct support to foreign workers. Consequently, private sector actors—such as the Chamber of Commerce and industry associations—often exert greater influence over operational practices than frontline government implementers.

These findings underscore the need for stronger institutional coordination, improved evidence systems, and more inclusive policy frameworks that acknowledge the vital contributions of Myanmar workers while remaining consistent with Thailand’s legal mandates.

Table 3 synthesizes insights from interviews and agency documents, summarizing policy mandates, institutional practices, and their implications for migrant labour and youth skills development. It offers a structured framework for identifying systemic gaps, opportunities for coordination, and priority areas for enhancing the integration, protection, and skills development of Myanmar youth within Thailand’s labour and education systems.

Table 3 Cross-Cutting Insights

Dimension	Findings Across Agencies	Policy Implications
1. Legal Framework	Thailand maintains a comprehensive legal structure via the Royal Decree on Managing the Work of Foreigners (2017) and the Labour Protection Act (1998). The IB and DOPA manage legal identity, while the DOE issues demand-driven work permits. The DLPW enforces universal protection; however, practical enforcement remains inconsistent.	Current policies prioritize short-term reprieves over long-term integration. There is a need to design dedicated migration pathways for youth and expand protections to cover informal and undocumented workers.
2. Skills Development	OVEC and the DIP are primary actors in vocational training, while the EEF supports educational access for vulnerable groups.	"Brain Waste" occurs when skilled youth are restricted to low-skilled labor. Integrating migrant and youth skill-building into the National Human Resource Development Strategy is urgent. Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) should be leveraged to enhance training efficacy.
3. Education Access	OPEC and the EEF provide complementary mechanisms for alternative and private education pathways.	Promote policy alignment to ensure continuity of learning for migrant youth, particularly those residing in border zones and industrial clusters.
4. Data & Information	The NSO, DOE, and DOPA maintain valuable datasets; however, these remain siloed and lack inter-agency integration.	Develop a unified migrant data system that links registration, employment history, and educational outcomes.
5. Cross-Ministry Coordination	Fragmented operations persist between the mandates of the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Interior, and Ministry of Education.	Establish a National Inter-Agency Mechanism specifically focused on the integration of migrant youth labor and education.

5.2 Synthesis of Key Findings

This section synthesizes the major insights emerging from the study, highlighting cross-cutting themes across legal frameworks, institutional arrangements, skills development, and protection mechanisms for migrant youth in Thailand. The findings illustrate areas of progress, persistent gaps in policy and practice, and opportunities to enhance coordination, inclusion, and equitable access to education and labour protections for both documented and undocumented Myanmar youth.

Key Themes

Legal and Institutional Fragmentation

Migration governance remains distributed across multiple agencies with overlapping responsibilities but without a unified framework. This fragmentation affects policy coherence, implementation efficiency, and long-term planning.

Prioritization of Thai Nationals

Core policies—including public training budgets, education subsidies, and workforce development initiatives—primarily target Thai citizens. Migrant workers and youth often benefit only indirectly or through employer-led or donor-supported programs.

Role of International Cooperation

Development partners such as the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and European NGOs play a critical role in expanding access to education, training, and protection services for Myanmar youth, particularly in border regions and underserved communities.

Protection and Rights

While Thailand's labour protection laws apply to all workers regardless of nationality or status, enforcement challenges persist. Undocumented workers and migrant youth remain the most vulnerable to exploitation due to limited awareness, complex complaint mechanisms, and inconsistent enforcement capacity.

Skills Development and Education Access

The OVEC and the EEF are central actors in expanding vocational and alternative education pathways for migrant and stateless children. These programs support both immediate employability and longer-term reintegration for youth who may return to Myanmar.

Data and Coordination Gaps

Strengthening data integration across key agencies—such as the IB, NSO, DOPA, DOE, and the DLPW—would significantly enhance evidence-based policymaking and service delivery for migrant youth. The current operational silos act as a major barrier to long-term strategic planning and effective interagency responsiveness.

As summarized in Table 4, the findings from policy-level interviews with government agencies illustrate each institution's mandate, its relevance to Myanmar youth and migrant workers, and the operational gaps or challenges that influence policy implementation and service provision.

Table 4 Summary of Policy-Level Interviews

Agency / Institution	Mandate & Core Functions	Relevance to Myanmar Youth / Migrant Workers	Key Gaps & Observations
1. Immigration Bureau (IB)	Manages national security, border control, visa administration, and biometric data collection	The primary authority for legal stay permits, issuance of Certificates of Identity (CI), and residency permit extensions	Focuses more on law enforcement than integration. Complex administrative procedures often force over 700,000 undocumented workers to rely on high-cost brokers
2. National Statistical Office (NSO)	The lead agency for labor market surveys in Thailand through monthly Labor Force Surveys	Collects macro-level data on employment and education trends, where Myanmar youth are included in general labor force data	Lack of nationality-disaggregated data makes it impossible to determine the specific economic impact of Myanmar youth, leaving them as a 'statistically invisible' population
3. Department of Employment (DOE), Ministry of Labour	Manages registration, work permits, and employment of foreign workers under the Royal Decree on the Management of Foreign Workers' Work B.E. 2560 (2017)	Central authority for legal migration management. Allows employment through MOU system, regular permits, and nationality verification. Policies are adjusted based on labour demand	Policies are demand-driven, not developmental; limited long-term planning for youth skills; weak coordination with education and social protection agencies
4. Department of Labour Protection and Welfare (DLPW), Ministry of Labour	Enforces the Labour Protection Act B.E. 2541 (1998) for all workers in Thailand. Conducts labour inspections and ensures fair working conditions	Protects rights of both Thai and foreign workers, including women and children. Investigates wage, safety, and child labour violations	Enforcement uneven in informal sectors; migrant awareness of rights remains low; no tailored programs for young or undocumented workers
5. Department of Industrial Promotion (DIP), Ministry of Industry	Supports SMEs, entrepreneurship, and industrial workforce development through training and consultancy	Provides training for industrial workforce, sometimes including Myanmar workers indirectly through employer programs or donor-funded projects	Thai-centric training schemes; lacks dedicated migrant skills programs or data; potential to link with private sector for inclusive training
6. Office of the Private Education Commission	Regulates private schools and learning centers nationwide. Oversees international,	Private schools may accept migrant children; OPEC allows short-term vocational or Thai language	No systemic policy for migrant access; financial and documentation barriers persist; lacks integration

(OPEC), Ministry of Education	bilingual, and non-formal schools	programs relevant to migrant youth employability	with MoL labour data for workforce alignment
7. Office of the Vocational Education Commission (OVEC)	Oversees vocational and technical education nationwide; promotes cooperation with international and private partners.	Provides vocational training for migrant and refugee youth in border provinces; collaborates with NGOs like Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED); offers skills certification recognized in both countries.	Resource and infrastructure constraints in border schools; needs stronger recognition of prior learning (RPL) mechanisms for returnees and migrants.
8. Equitable Education Fund (EEF)	Public funds under the 2017 Constitution to reduce education inequality for underprivileged children and youth.	Implements alternative learning models for poor and stateless youth; works with OBEC and UNESCO to bring out-of-school children back into education	Migrant inclusion not explicitly targeted; limited coverage outside pilot provinces; data gaps hinder policy design for migrant education access
9. Department of Provincial Administration (DOPA), Ministry of Interior	Manages civil registration, identity documentation, and residence records of Thai citizens and foreign residents	Issues birth certificates, Pink Cards, and manages registration of foreign workers with legal stay	Data systems not linked with labour or education databases; irregular migrants remain invisible; need stronger cross-ministry coordination

5.3 Overall Policy Observations

Thailand demonstrates a well-established and mature institutional framework for the management of foreign workers, supported by clear mandates within the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Interior. The existing system allows for regularized migration through bilateral MOUs, provides legal protection under the Labour Protection Act, and extends identity registration and documentation through the Department of Provincial Administration.

However, despite these institutional strengths, the youth-focused and cross-border dimensions of policy implementation remain limited. Current mechanisms primarily address the management of adult, low-skilled labour migration, while insufficient attention is given to the specific needs, vulnerabilities, and aspirations of young migrant workers—particularly those from Myanmar, who often enter the Thai labour market through informal or education-linked pathways. Fragmentation across agencies—where education, labour, and registration databases remain unlinked—further constrains evidence-based policy coordination. Although agencies such as the OVEC, the EEF, and the DOE each play important roles, their

interventions are often implemented in isolation, without a unified national strategy for youth migration and skills development. As a result, there is limited integration between education-to-employment pathways, and few mechanisms exist to support transitions from training to formal work for migrant youth.

Looking forward, Thailand has significant opportunity to build on its institutional foundations by strengthening inter-agency coordination, harmonizing data systems, and fostering collaboration between government, private sector, and development partners. Integrating youth migration into the country's human capital development agenda would enable the recognition of skills, enhance labour productivity, and reduce informality among young migrant workers. Aligning these efforts with ASEAN labour mobility frameworks—such as the ASEAN Consensus, ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (AQRF), Mutual Recognition Arrangements, and the ASEAN TVET Council—promote fair recruitment, protect migrant workers, and support cross-border skills recognition and mobility across the region and emerging regional qualifications systems could further position Thailand as a regional leader in fair, inclusive, and future-ready labour migration governance.

Chapter 6. Ecosystem Surrounding Myanmar Migrant Labour

This chapter aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the ecosystem surrounding Myanmar labour working and living in Thailand. It explores the various structures, actors, and processes that shape the experiences of Myanmar migrant workers, highlighting both opportunities and challenges they encounter. The chapter is organized into *four main thematic areas: financial services, civil society organizations, TVETs, and recruitment agencies*. Each section examines the roles, interactions, and contributions of relevant stakeholders, drawing on quantitative and qualitative data collected during the study. The findings presented below offer insights into how these components collectively influence access to services, protection mechanisms, skills development, and employment pathways for Myanmar youth and adult migrants in Thailand.

6.1 Financial Services

This section examines the financial services available to Myanmar migrant workers—especially youth—in Thailand, based on interviews with six providers (KBank, Krungthai Bank, Bangkok Bank, Western Union, TrueMoney, and Su Su, an informal broker). Despite their major economic contributions, many migrants, particularly undocumented youth, remain excluded from formal financial systems due to *documentation rules, language barriers, low financial literacy, and regulatory constraints*. Although digital platforms have expanded payment and remittance options, informal channels still dominate, exposing migrants to higher risks and costs.

6.1.1 Financial Services Landscape

Myanmar migrants access a mix of formal and informal services. Commercial banks offer savings accounts and transfers but primarily serve documented workers with passports and work permits. Fintech services such as TrueMoney are increasingly popular among youth, providing mobile wallets, fast cross-border transfers, and Myanmar-language interfaces. Money transfer operators like Western Union remain important for those who prefer agent-based services. Informal providers such as Su Su continue to play a major role, offering simple cash transfers but without regulatory protections or product diversification.

6.1.2 Access and Barriers

Access remains uneven due to key barriers:

- Documentation restrictions: Strict Know Your Customer (KYC) and Anti-Money Laundering (AML) rules exclude undocumented migrants from formal banking; partial access may be granted with employer certification but remains limited.
- Language gaps: Few services offer Myanmar-language support, creating major obstacles for workers unfamiliar with Thai or English.

- Digital literacy: Younger migrants use mobile apps more confidently, while older or less-educated workers rely heavily on physical agents.
- Regulatory and security risks: Concerns over account freezes, fraud, and surveillance—along with currency instability in Myanmar—drive continued dependence on informal remittance channels.

6.1.3 Financial Behaviors and Needs

Myanmar migrant workers consistently prioritize remittances as their primary financial activity, *sending a significant share of their income to support family members in Myanmar*. Although many migrants engage in some level of saving, these savings are generally modest and oriented toward short-term needs such as emergencies, education expenses, or small-scale business plans for their eventual return home.

Access to formal credit and investment products remains limited, constrained by regulatory barriers and the absence of financial services tailored to migrants. Financial activity also varies seasonally, with notable increases in remittances during major cultural holidays—including Songkran, Thingyan, and year-end festivals. Younger migrants increasingly adopt digital financial platforms, whereas older migrants continue to rely predominantly on traditional, cash-based remittance agents.

6.1.4 Financial Literacy and Support

Financial literacy initiatives vary widely across service providers. Some commercial banks, including Krungthai Bank and Bangkok Bank, collaborate with NGOs and government agencies to deliver training on digital banking, fraud prevention, and money management. These programmes are often conducted in the Myanmar language to enhance accessibility, comprehension, and trust among migrant users.

Fintech companies such as TrueMoney invest in Myanmar-language materials, community-based workshops, and in-app guidance to strengthen users' financial capability. Similarly, Western Union leverages its extensive agent network and frequently partners with NGOs to provide in-person support.

In contrast, KBank and informal remittance operators like Su Su offer limited or no structured financial literacy support, leaving migrants more exposed to misinformation, fraud risks, and costly errors in financial decision-making.

6.1.5 Product Innovation and Inclusion

Product innovation and multilingual support continue to play a central role in expanding financial inclusion for Myanmar migrants. *KBank, TrueMoney, and Krungthai NEXT provide Myanmar-language interfaces*, while Krungthai Bank and Bangkok Bank offer low-fee savings accounts and insurance products designed to meet migrant workers' needs. TrueMoney and Western Union frequently reduce transaction fees through promotional campaigns, helping to lower remittance costs. Cross-border partnerships—such as KBank's integration with KBZ Bank, which enables real-time transfers to KBZPay wallets—further enhance accessibility and convenience.

However, persistent political instability in Myanmar, strict currency controls, and rising online fraud significantly erode trust in digital financial services. As a result, informal remittance channels, despite their

risks, remain essential for many undocumented workers who face barriers to accessing formal financial systems.

6.1.6 Cross-Border and Regulatory Challenges

Cross-border financial operations are significantly shaped by Myanmar's currency regulations and foreign exchange controls, which periodically disrupt formal remittance channels. Ongoing political instability further contributes to service delays, account freezes, and intermittent system shutdowns.

On the Thai side, stringent KYC and AML requirements continue to limit access for undocumented workers, reinforcing their dependence on informal remittance providers. Exchange rate volatility and comparatively high transaction fees also influence migrants' decision-making, often prompting a shift toward unregulated brokers perceived as faster, cheaper, or more flexible.

6.1.7 Key Findings

- Remittances remain the top financial priority, highlighting the need for fast, affordable, secure services.
- Documentation barriers, language constraints, and uneven digital literacy significantly limit financial access.
- Fintech platforms such as TrueMoney are strengthening financial inclusion through multilingual apps and low-cost transfers (TrueMoney, 2024). Western Union complements these efforts through agent-based, NGO-supported services (IOM, 2023).
- Commercial banks provide credibility and stability but remain constrained by regulatory requirements.
- Building a more inclusive financial ecosystem requires tailored financial products, multilingual support, flexible regulatory frameworks, and sustained financial literacy initiatives delivered through NGOs and community organizations (Horizon Asia, 2023).

6.2 Civil Society Support for Migrant Youth

Civil society organizations (CSOs) play a vital role in supporting young Myanmar migrants, particularly those excluded from formal labour, education, or protection systems. Organizations such as MWG, HRD, and SEM provide advocacy, outreach, and direct support. By bridging gaps between migrant youth, employers, and state institutions, these organizations enhance social protection, provide crucial information, and empower young workers. Their interventions contribute not only to migrant well-being but also to a more stable and productive Thai labour market. However, they illustrate a range of approaches in rights protection, legal assistance, and youth empowerment. These are non-exhaustive examples and do not represent a full mapping of all actors.

6.2.1 Organizational Roles, Objectives, and Key Barriers

Migrant Working Group (MWG)

Established in 2006, MWG is a coalition of organizations advocating for migrant rights across labour, education, health, and safety domains. MWG relies on migrant service centers, labour hubs, learning

centers, and Myanmar-speaking educators to identify and support at-risk youth. Despite its extensive reach, MWG's effectiveness is limited by the Thai Government's preference for government-to-government (G2G) labour frameworks and inconsistent coordination across member organizations.

Human Rights and Development Foundation (HRDF)

HRDF provides *legal assistance and engages in policy advocacy* with a strong focus on labour rights. While not exclusively targeting youth, HRDF frequently supports young migrants facing legal vulnerability, employer restrictions, or fear of deportation. Its services include rights education, confidential counseling, hotline services, and after-hours legal support. HRDF identifies long delays in legal processes, limited rights awareness, and fear-driven underreporting as major barriers (Human Rights and Development Foundation, 2022; 2023).

Spirit in Education Movement (SEM)

SEM focuses on *empowerment and leadership development for young migrants*, particularly those newly arrived or affected by labour exploitation and political instability. Through participatory training, cultural exchange, and safe spaces, SEM enhances young migrants' confidence, legal awareness, and ability to navigate education and social systems. Its work underscores the importance of equipping youth not only with protection mechanisms but also with agency and leadership skills.

Common Barriers Across Organizations

Across MWG, HRDF, and SEM, recurring challenges include:

- lack of legal documentation,
- fear of arrest and deportation,
- limited Thai language proficiency,
- low rights awareness,
- restricted access to justice mechanisms.

The efforts of these organizations highlight both the importance and the limitations of civil society support in a constrained policy environment.

6.2.2 Collaboration and Networks

The three organizations operate through distinct yet complementary collaboration models:

MWG: Functions as a multi-stakeholder coalition of over 30 organizations, including NGOs, academic institutions, and international partners such as IOM and ILO. Collaboration focuses on systemic, policy-level coordination with national authorities.

HRDF: Engages in practical alliances with provincial labour offices, immigration authorities, juvenile detention centers, and local schools to deliver case-based legal protection.

SEM: Works primarily at the community level, connecting with youth through local leaders, workshops, and participatory activities.

Together, these partnerships create a multi-layered support ecosystem—combining policy coordination through MWG, legal enforcement through HRDF, and community-level empowerment through SEM.

6.2.3 Policy Advocacy

Each organization contributes uniquely to policy advocacy:

MWG leads systemic reform efforts, submitting policy proposals and advocating for youth protections, flexible education access, and non-discriminatory labour registration mechanisms.

HRDF advances case-based advocacy through litigation, rights documentation, and engagement with institutions such as labour courts and the National Human Rights Commission.

SEM elevates youth voices in public discourse through storytelling, exhibitions, and creative media to ensure youth perspectives inform policy conversations.

Together, these approaches create a multi-level advocacy model that aligns structural, case-based, and community-driven perspectives.

6.2.4 Projects, Employer Benefits, and Impact

MWG – MitrThai.com.

MWG collaborates with IOM, UN Women, Quizrr, and MOVE to operate *MitrThai.com*, a multilingual platform offering migrant workers information on labour rights, healthcare, language, and complaint mechanisms. While the platform addresses key information gaps, systematic evaluation of employer use and impact remains limited.

HRDF – Legal Protection and Advocacy

HRDF provides critical legal protection for young migrants facing arrest, detention, or deportation, including those at risk of forced conscription upon return to Myanmar. Successful legal cases have recovered unpaid wages and strengthened rights protections (HRDF, 2022). Thailand’s National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (NAP) reflects a government commitment to migrant protections, though enforcement challenges persist (UNDP, 2024; HRDF, 2023).

SEM – Education Access via Temple-Based Pathways

SEM supports youth access to education through innovative pathways, including coordination with temple-based schooling systems where young migrants can ordain as novice monks. This approach provides education, safe housing, meals, and community support—particularly valuable for undocumented or vulnerable youth excluded from formal schooling.



Photo 2 Novices aged 6–19 at an SEM-supported temple, guided by monk leaders in education and development, Photo: Sunida Piriypada, Source: Spirit in Education Movement (SEM) (2024)

Across sectors, employers highlighted that youth exposed to these initiatives tend to be more reliable, adaptable, and loyal, which directly reduces recruitment costs and labor turnover.

6.2.5 Gaps and Challenges

Despite progress, major barriers persist. MWG reports that undocumented youth continue to fear arrest and lack appropriate registration pathways. HRDF highlights the absence of youth-friendly, multilingual reporting mechanisms, which discourages complaints due to fear of retaliation. SEM notes limited safe learning spaces and culturally competent mentors for youth empowerment. Overall, legal insecurity and inaccessible complaint systems continue to weaken protection efforts and reduce long-term impact.

6.2.6 Comparative Reflections

A comparative view shows complementary strengths among civil society actors. MWG leads policy engagement, HRDF works closely with enforcement agencies, and SEM focuses on community-level support. Their advocacy spans structural reform (MWG), legal enforcement (HRDF), and youth voice amplification (SEM). For employers, MWG improves access to information, HRDF enhances legal stability, and SEM strengthens soft skills. Together, they illustrate that protecting migrant youth requires coordinated interventions at policy, legal, and community levels.

MWG, HRDF, and SEM fill critical protection gaps for migrant youth through coordinated policy advocacy, legal aid, and empowerment programs—roles that government systems alone cannot fully provide. Their work has produced tangible outcomes, including accessible information platforms, successful rights litigation, and safe spaces for learning. Employers also benefit from improved worker reliability and motivation. However, key challenges remain: undocumented youth face heightened risks, reporting systems are often inaccessible, and NGO efforts are strained by limited funding and inconsistent state coordination. Strengthening these actors is essential for building an inclusive environment where migrant youth can work safely, access education, and contribute to Thailand's economy.

6.3 TVET Services for Myanmar Migrant Youth

Myanmar migrant youth face barriers to formal schooling and employment due to undocumented status, financial constraints, and language limitations. Community-based TVET providers therefore play a vital role by offering *vocational training, life skills, and employment pathways*. This section reviews three key providers—BEAM, HCTC, and Rays of Youth—and their approaches and challenges.

6.3.1 Training Programs and Services

BEAM delivers *vocational and academic programs*, including ICT, tailoring, handicrafts, GED preparation, and language training. Through partnerships with Chiang Mai Polytechnic College and 30 learning centers, BEAM offers accredited short courses (3–6 months) and academic preparation (6–12 months) using a blended learning model.

HCTC provides a *two-year residential hospitality and culinary program* with Mae Sot Technical College. Training includes hotel operations, bakery, housekeeping, IT, and life skills, supported by internships in partner hotels and restaurants that prepare students for professional employment.

Rays of Youth provides *short- and long-term training in food and beverage, barista skills, baking, tailoring, computer literacy, and graphic design*. Short-term courses (1–3 months) focus on specific vocational skills such as barista training, baking, or tailoring, while longer programs (6–9 months) combine multiple skill areas with leadership and community engagement components. The organization emphasizes employment opportunities in Mae Sot and surrounding areas, integrating local orientation, leadership, and community involvement into its program.



Photo 3 Pastry and bakery demonstration shop activity for Myanmar migrant youth at Hospitality and Catering Training Center, Tak, Thailand, Photo: Sunida Piriypada



Photo 4 Leadership training for Myanmar migrant youth at Rays of Youth in Tak, Thailand, Photo: Sunida Piriypada

Across providers, programs incorporate essential life skills—financial literacy, communication, leadership, and health awareness—to equip youth for both employment and broader social engagement.

6.3.2 Access, Barriers, and Support

Myanmar migrant youth encounter persistent barriers, including undocumented status, financial instability, limited Thai language proficiency, and psychosocial stress linked to displacement.

BEAM addresses these challenges through scholarships, stipends, counseling, safehouse arrangements, and assistance with legal documentation (pink card/CI card).

HCTC provides full scholarships, on-site accommodation, mentorship, and psychosocial support, requiring only a small student contribution (THB 3,000/semester) or equivalent work.

Rays of Youth offers housing, transportation, mentorship, and partial documentation support, using flexible program designs for youth balancing work, study, and family obligations.

Holistic support—including accommodation, financial aid, counseling, and documentation assistance—is consistently identified as essential for student retention and success across all three providers.

Table 5 summarizes how BEAM, HCTC, and Rays of Youth recruit and engage migrant youth through trusted community networks, local partners, and institutional collaborations. These models demonstrate the importance of peer outreach and coordinated partnerships in reaching vulnerable and out-of-school migrant youth.

Table 5 Youth Program Recruitment and Partnerships

Organization	Recruitment Approach	Key Channels & Partnerships
BEAM	Recruit youth through community-based networks and migrant learning centers (MLCs). Many learners are referred by MLCs or local organizations supporting Myanmar migrants. Outreach also uses word-of-mouth and social media to attract youth seeking GED or vocational skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 30 partner MLCs in Chiang Mai and surrounding areas - Local NGOs and migrant associations- Online and peer networks within migrant communities
HCTC	Selects participants through a structured application and interview process, targeting 16-22-year-old migrant and disadvantaged youth interested in hospitality careers. Recruitment occurs annually in coordination with schools, community organizations, and technical colleges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaboration with Mae Sot Technical College and secondary schools - Local NGOs and hospitality sector employers - Annual recruitment drives and school visits
Rays of Youth	Uses a community-driven, grassroots approach. Participants are often referred by local leaders, peers, or NGOs. Recruitment is continuous to accommodate youth who combine work and study. Programs are promoted via community centers, migrant networks, and social media.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partnerships with local employers and NGOs - Community-based outreach and word-of-mouth - Flexible intake to match youth availability

6.3.3 Partnerships and Outreach

All three providers rely extensively on partnerships to deliver services and expand their reach:

BEAM collaborates with NGOs, universities, and technical colleges to provide accredited certification and pathways to higher education.

HCTC partners with NGOs, international development organizations such as the Institut européen de coopération et de développement (IECD, France), and private sector employers (e.g., Accor Onnix, and Escoffier) for funding, training, and internship opportunities.

Rays of Youth works with local NGOs, youth networks, and industry partners to support outreach, documentation, and curriculum adaptation.

Recruitment for all programs primarily occurs through community networks, alumni, NGOs, and learning centers, with targeted outreach to out-of-school and highly vulnerable youth in border communities.

6.3.4 Certification and Employment Outcomes

Certification and recognition differ significantly across the three providers:

HCTC graduates receive diplomas recognized by Thai technical colleges, enhancing employment prospects.

BEAM alumni may earn GED credentials or recognition from the Thai Ministry of Education, enabling access to universities in Thailand and abroad.

Rays of Youth issues foundation-level certificates that are not formally recognized by the state; although limited in portability, these certificates support access to local labor markets.

Employment outcomes vary accordingly:

HCTC historically achieved approximately 90% employment in the hospitality sector prior to COVID-19; current rates exceed 50%.

BEAM graduates advance to higher education or small business activities, particularly in ICT and tailoring.

Rays of Youth alumni commonly secure local positions in hospitality, food and beverage, and creative sectors; undocumented youth remain reliant on informal labor markets.

6.3.5 Training–Labor Market Mismatch

A persistent challenge among youth training providers is the misalignment between program offerings and employer demand. Course selection is often driven by donor priorities and youth interests rather than systematic labor market analysis. Consequently, high-demand occupations—such as welding, childcare, domestic work, and elderly care, identified through Myanmar recruitment agency data—are frequently underrepresented. Popular fields such as hospitality, food and beverage, handicrafts, and digital skills attract learners but do not consistently align with actual labor needs.

This mismatch is most evident in northern provinces such as Chiang Mai, Mae Sot, and Tak. However, national shortages, especially in elderly care and domestic work, persist (Satimanon, 2017). Evidence from TVET provider interviews, program documents, and labor market studies reinforce the need for better alignment between training programs and both provincial and national labor demands.

Businesses in shortage sectors continue to experience recruitment challenges, and employers hiring TVET graduates often need to provide substantial on-the-job training to meet operational requirements. Although interest-driven training programmes can enhance motivation and retention, they do not guarantee stable employment outcomes. Graduates remain vulnerable to underemployment or drifting into precarious sectors, while more secure opportunities in less popular industries persistently go unfilled.

Addressing this mismatch requires regular labour market assessments conducted by TVET institutions, provincial labour authorities, and NGOs to identify skills shortages at both local and national levels. Employers should be systematically engaged in curriculum design through advisory committees, apprenticeship schemes, and structured feedback mechanisms. Targeted incentives—such as stipends,

scholarships, job guarantees, and transparent career pathways—can encourage youth to pursue high-demand yet undervalued occupations. Routine monitoring of graduate employment outcomes and employer satisfaction is essential to ensure programmes remain responsive and relevant.

6.3.6 Key Observations

Analysis of youth-focused programs by BEAM, HCTC, and Rays of Youth yields several key insights:

1. Holistic support—including housing, psychosocial mentoring, and life skills training—is essential for program success and smooth transition into employment.
2. Flexible and modular learning formats are particularly effective for youth balancing work, family responsibilities, and irregular schedules.
3. Certification gaps, especially in community-based initiatives such as Rays of Youth, limit access to formal employment and upward mobility.
4. Strong employer partnerships enhance curriculum relevance, practical learning quality, and job placement outcomes.
5. Legal documentation barriers significantly restrict access to formal employment, vocational certification, and financial services, emphasizing the need for systemic policy reforms.

6.3.7 Comparative Analysis

Although all three TVET providers share a mandate to empower marginalized youth, their institutional models and sustainability approaches differ:

HCTC functions similarly to a formal TVET institution, offering a structured two-year model, accredited certification, and strong employer linkages.

BEAM combines vocational training with academic preparation, emphasizing ICT and regional mobility with wide reach through migrant learning centers.

Rays of Youth delivers flexible, community-responsive, short-term programs but lacks formal recognition and long-term financial stability.

A consistent systemic barrier across all providers is the exclusion of migrant youth from Thailand's formal TVET and labor systems due to legal restrictions, language requirements, financial constraints, and non-recognition of foreign credentials.

6.4 Myanmar-Based Recruitment Agencies

This section examines the role of recruitment agencies in facilitating the migration of Myanmar youth to Thailand. Based on interviews with five agencies operating in urban centers, border regions, and within Myanmar, the analysis explores business models, migration patterns, and structural challenges. Recruitment agencies serve a dual function: they can protect workers from exploitation, yet they also

contribute to costly and restrictive migration systems. Findings highlight the need for harmonized policy reform, zero-cost recruitment practices, and stronger accountability mechanisms.

6.4.1 Business Models and Agency Functions

Recruitment agencies in this corridor follow three broad operational models:

1. Urban-based agencies provide full-cycle services—candidate screening, documentation, health checks, pre-departure orientation, and coordination with Thai employers and authorities.
2. Border-based intermediaries mobilize workers from conflict-affected and economically marginalized areas, often assisting with transit before formal processing.
3. Myanmar-based agencies prioritize legal compliance and transparency, avoiding undocumented cases to mitigate reputational and trafficking risks.

These agencies support Thai employers—particularly Board of Investment (BOI)-privileged factories—where labor reliability is essential for global supply chains. High-demand sectors include manufacturing, construction, plastics, and electronics, while agriculture is generally avoided due to low wages and unsafe working conditions.

Although official Thai government fees for documentation and work permits amount to approximately THB 2,000–4,000, workers often incur much higher costs. The Thailand Migration Report 2024 estimates total recruitment costs at THB 11,000–18,000, with some workers—especially those using brokers—paying THB 30,000–50,000 (UN Network on Migration in Thailand, 2024; ILO, 2024; Five Corridors Project, 2021). These figures highlight weak enforcement of the Employer Pays Principle and expose migrants to debt burdens and exploitation (ILO, 2022).

6.4.2 Migration Patterns of Myanmar Youth

Migration from Myanmar has accelerated due to armed conflict, economic instability, and mandatory military conscription for individuals aged 18–35. Agencies report increasing reliance on *irregular routes as youth attempt to avoid conscription*, entering Thailand without documentation and later seeking employment.

Key sending regions include Mon and Kayin States, as well as Upper and Central Myanmar. The MOU migration system offers *formal protections, but it is slow, costly, and significantly disrupted by Myanmar's ongoing conflict*. In contrast, irregular migration is faster and cheaper but exposes workers to significant risks, including exploitation and unsafe conditions.

Employers often prefer younger workers for their stamina and adaptability. However, hiring practices are influenced by social and cultural factors such as visible tattoos, height, and basic technical skills. Cambodian workers maintain an advantage in some sectors due to stronger Thai language skills and cultural familiarity, while Myanmar's ethnic and linguistic diversity occasionally creates workplace communication challenges.

6.4.3 Recruitment Processes and Structural Constraints

Although intended to regulate labour migration, the MOU system is constrained by *bureaucratic inefficiencies and frequent policy revisions*. Recruitment agencies experience prolonged delays in passport issuance, medical examinations, security clearances, and worker list approvals. Limited coordination between labour offices in Myanmar and Thailand further disrupts deployment processes, occasionally leading to cancelled job orders.

Agencies also shoulder significant financial risks, as they must often cover transportation, accommodation, and other upfront costs for workers. Digital registration platforms remain unreliable, contributing to data inaccuracies and duplicated records. Conflict-related restrictions in Myanmar add another layer of difficulty by limiting safe travel to border checkpoints.

Accountability challenges persist even after deployment. When Thai employers violate contracts, Myanmar agencies may face sanctions or blacklisting despite limited control over workplace conditions. Meanwhile, unethical practices by some competing agencies—such as inflating labour demand or misrepresenting job conditions—undermine trust and weaken system integrity. Agencies consistently highlight the need for joint grievance mechanisms and more predictable, coordinated processing timelines between the two governments.

6.4.4 Job Mobility Restrictions and Documentation Barriers

Thailand's restrictive job mobility rules ("job lock") further constrain both workers and employers. Migrants are tied to a single employer for two years unless they meet one of six legally defined conditions. The Kyant Or, issued by Myanmar's Ministry of Labour, allows legal employer changes under the MOU system but involves a slow, bureaucratic process requiring approvals from both governments.

In practice, processing often takes weeks or months, exacerbated by disrupted communication with Myanmar's labor authorities. As a result, workers frequently resort to informal job changes, risking loss of legal status, while employers face persistent labor shortages. The rigidity of this system undermines labor market efficiency and integration.

6.4.5 Employer Demand and Perceptions

Demand for Myanmar workers remains strong across major firms such as DHL, Big C, HomePro, and Singha—especially in logistics, warehousing, cold storage, and manufacturing. Employers commonly describe Myanmar workers as hardworking, loyal, adaptable, and fast learners, although Cambodian workers are sometimes preferred in customer-facing roles due to language proficiency.

Emerging opportunities exist in logistics, cold-chain management, and e-commerce retail (Sathapongpakdee, 2025). However, restrictive work permit regulations and bans on self-employment limit upward mobility and entrepreneurship among Myanmar youth.

6.4.6 Ethical Recruitment and Emerging Good Practices

Despite progress toward ethical recruitment, exploitative practices—including inflated fees, non-transparent deductions, and contract misrepresentation—remain widespread, often resulting in debt bondage (ILO, 2014 Protocol to Convention 29).

Promising reforms include zero-cost recruitment, where employers bear all hiring expenses. A landmark case occurred in 2019 when Cal-Comp Electronics reimbursed nearly USD 10 million to over 10,000 Myanmar workers who had been charged illegal recruitment fees (Electronics Watch, 2021). Investigations by the Migrant Workers Rights Network (MWRN) and Electronics Watch found workers had paid 500,000–1,500,000 Kyat (USD 290–860), in violation of Myanmar labor law and international standards. This reimbursement sets a regional precedent and demonstrates the viability of employer-led ethical recruitment.

6.4.7 Government Efforts to Improve the MOU Process

The Thai government has initiated several reforms:

- **Extension of Work Permits:** Work permits for migrant workers from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam were extended until February 13, 2025, to promote workforce stability (Global Law Experts, 2024).
- **Relaxation of Temporary Stay Rules:** Proposed reforms aim to simplify temporary stay regulations and employer-change procedures (Global Law Experts, 2024).

While promising, these reforms' impact depends on effective implementation. Ongoing monitoring by civil society and coordination with recruitment agencies are essential to meet labour needs and protect migrant rights. Together, these measures can create a more responsive and equitable migration system.

Chapter 7. Overall Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter synthesizes the overarching conclusions from the comprehensive labour market assessment of Myanmar youth migrating to Thailand. Drawing upon evidence from policy reviews, quantitative surveys, and qualitative interviews with migrants, employers, and institutional stakeholders, it outlines the structural, institutional, and behavioural dynamics shaping migration outcomes. The findings demonstrate both the critical economic contributions of Myanmar youth to Thailand's labour market and the persistent barriers they encounter in securing protection, legal recognition, and opportunities for upward mobility.

Building on these insights, the chapter presents strategic recommendations to advance fair migration, inclusive skills development, and cross-border policy coherence. These recommendations target multiple levels—policy reform, institutional practice, and community engagement—to foster a more equitable, efficient, and youth-responsive migration ecosystem between Thailand and Myanmar.

7.1 Ecosystem of Labour Migration and Employment Pathways of Myanmar Youth in Thailand

Figure 10 illustrates the complex and interconnected ecosystem shaping the migration and employment pathways of Myanmar youth in Thailand. The diagram presents the full continuum of the migration journey—from drivers and decision-making in Myanmar to workplace outcomes in Thailand—showing how structural, economic, and institutional factors influence labour mobility.

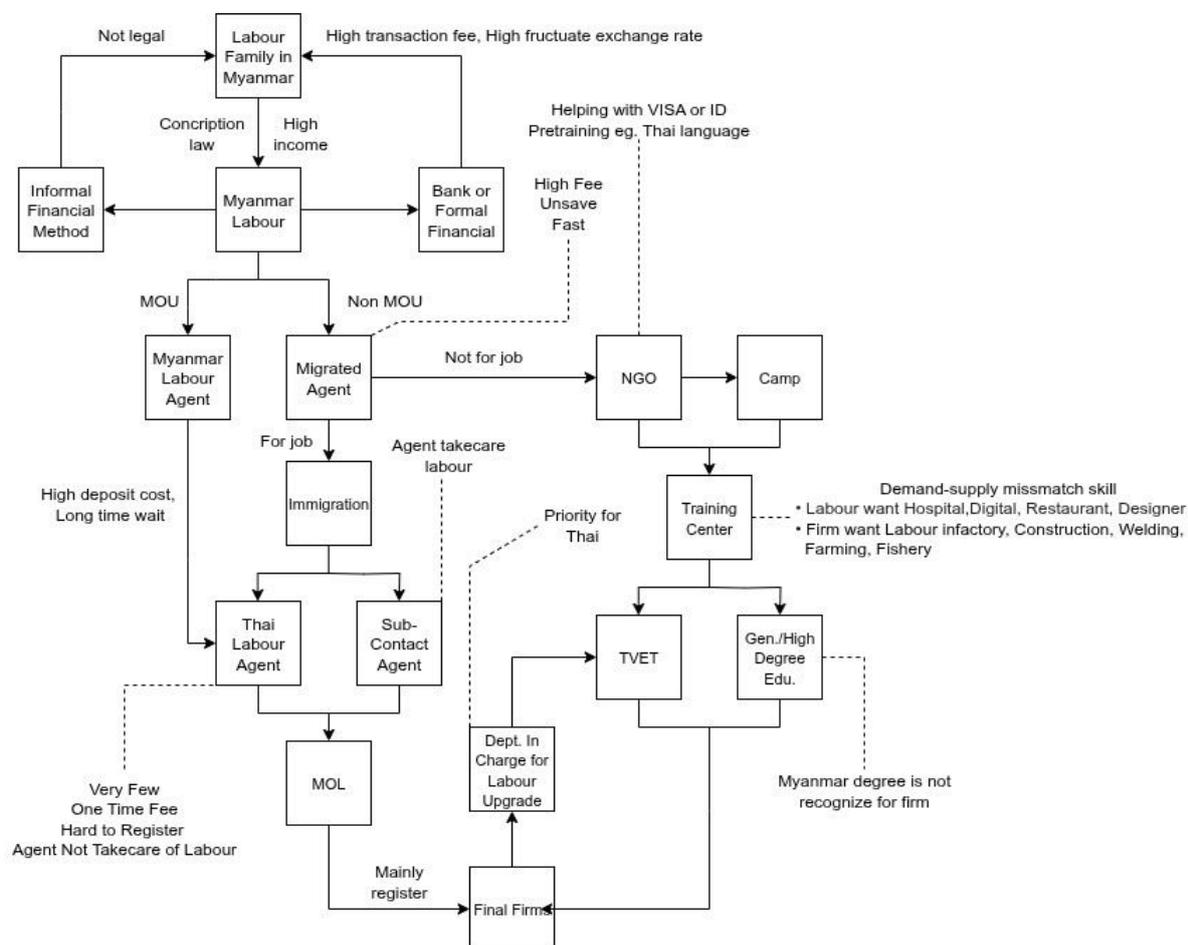
The ecosystem covers both formal and informal migration channels, capturing how youth navigate fragmented information sources, recruitment intermediaries, community networks, and policy frameworks. It highlights key push factors in Myanmar—economic hardship, limited job opportunities, political instability, and educational disruptions—alongside strong pull factors in Thailand, including labour demand, wage differentials, and social networks.

The figure also maps the layered financial systems surrounding migration, such as remittance practices, access to digital and cash-based services, and the reliance on informal brokers among undocumented workers. Recruitment processes—whether via the MOU system, licensed agencies, or informal channels—shape costs, documentation status, and vulnerability to exploitation.

Training pathways, especially TVET institutions and workplace-based learning, influence skill development, job matching, and long-term career prospects. Persistent gaps in labour market information and weak employer–TVET coordination contribute to ongoing skills mismatches.

Institutional and regulatory factors—including border governance, work permits, labour inspections, and social protection—further shape employment outcomes. By depicting these interconnected elements, the diagram highlights the systemic challenges facing Myanmar youth and identifies leverage points where policy and programmatic interventions could strengthen decent work pathways.

Figure 10 Ecosystem of Myanmar Labour Migration and Employment Pathways in Thailand



Migration decisions among Myanmar youth are shaped by interconnected social, economic, and institutional factors. As illustrated in Figure 3, the ecosystem includes migration drivers, recruitment and documentation systems, financial flows, training pathways, and employer practices—each shaping opportunities and vulnerabilities across the migration journey.

1. Migration Drivers and Financial Dynamics

Political instability, limited job opportunities, and wage disparities in Myanmar continue to push youth toward Thailand. Remittances remain essential to household survival. However, limited access to formal financial services forces many migrants to rely on informal channels, increasing risks of fraud, financial loss, and exploitation.

2. Migration Channels: MOU and Non-MOU

- MOU migration offers legal protection and regulated recruitment but remains slow, costly, and administratively complex.
- Non-MOU migration is faster and more affordable but exposes migrants to greater legal and protection risks.

Most youth enter via non-MOU routes, highlighting the need for systemic improvements in formal migration pathways.

3. Support and Training Ecosystem

CSOs, community learning centers, and selected TVET institutions offer Thai language courses, vocational training, legal support, and counselling. However, access to formal education, accredited skills training, and recognition of prior learning remains limited due to documentation barriers, restrictive regulations, and misaligned curricula.

4. Labour Market Outcomes and Skills Mismatch

Myanmar youth predominantly work in hospitality, services, and light manufacturing, while employers face shortages in industrial, construction, and agricultural sectors. Weak skill validation, limited career pathways, and inconsistent employer engagement contribute to mismatch and underutilization of labour potential.

5. Institutional and Policy Challenges

Government agencies focus primarily on regulation and documentation, with limited mandate to provide direct support to migrants. Fragmented roles, limited data sharing, and complex administrative procedures create inefficiencies affecting migrants, employers, and service providers.

6. Key Systemic Issues Identified

- High costs and delays in the MOU pathway
- Legal vulnerability in non-MOU migration
- Fragmented stakeholder coordination
- Barriers to education, skills development, and certification
- Limited financial inclusion
- Lack of integrated labour migration information

7. Implications

A youth-responsive migration governance system is essential to streamline documentation processes, strengthen skills development pathways, expand protection mechanisms, and enhance coordination among government agencies, the private sector, and civil society organizations.

From the key findings, several recommended actions can be proposed. Table 6 provides a corresponding suggestion for each finding. It should be noted that these suggestions are “*pre-staged*” and should be explored further through additional studies and/or follow-up projects.

Table 6 Summary of Key Challenges and Strategic Recommendations

Key Findings	Suggested Actions
1. The MOU recruitment process, while legal and transparent, remains slow and costly, discouraging both workers and employers from using it. In contrast, Cabinet Resolution mechanisms are more popular but lack full legal clarity and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streamline the MOU process through digitization, bilateral coordination, and administrative simplification • Conduct an in-depth policy review comparing MOU and non-MOU channels to inform future migration governance reforms
2. NGOs effectively engage and support Myanmar youth, providing language, rights, and basic skills training, but often lack updated information on employer needs—leading to limited job alignment and occasional skills mismatches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen coordination and information-sharing platforms between NGOs, TVET institutions, and employers • Facilitate joint curriculum design between NGOs, TVET institutions, and employers that reflects current labour market demand
3. Recruitment agents possess strong links to employers but limited access to migrant communities and youth networks, reducing their ability to identify or prepare suitable workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a national or provincial coordination mechanism that connects agents, NGOs, and community groups. • Conduct annual labour market and skills mismatch assessments at provincial and national levels to guide recruitment and training
4. Upskilling and reskilling opportunities for Myanmar youth exist but are constrained by limited inclusion in government programs, which often prioritize Thai nationals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for inclusive TVET policies allowing migrants to access short-term modular courses • Develop special licensing and certification schemes for migrant workers through public-private partnerships
5. While Thai labour laws align with international standards, bureaucratic regulations and administrative procedures make implementation slow and inconsistent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a comprehensive review of regulations to identify procedural bottlenecks • Introduce e-government systems and e-registration platforms to streamline migrant documentation and reduce corruption risks
6. Connectivity and coordination between NGOs, recruitment agencies, and training providers remain weak, resulting in fragmented service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a formal coordination and referral network among NGOs, employers, and agents. • Promote labour clustering initiatives or regional partnerships to strengthen collaboration and scale good practices
7. Many NGOs demonstrate high potential but lack sufficient technical capacity and funding to expand their services sustainably	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide capacity-building support, including technical training and institutional strengthening. • Offer targeted funding and in-kind assistance to enhance program delivery and sustainability

This chapter synthesizes the key findings from the labour market assessment of Myanmar youth migrating to Thailand. Drawing on policy analysis, quantitative surveys, qualitative interviews, and institutional

mapping, the chapter outlines the structural and behavioural dynamics shaping migration decisions, labour participation, and youth employment pathways. It concludes with strategic, multi-level recommendations for governments, employers, training providers, civil society organizations, and development partners to strengthen safe, fair, and productive migration systems.

7.2 Strategic Recommendations

The following recommendations outline coordinated actions for all stakeholders involved in supporting Myanmar migrant youth.

A. Recommendations for Myanmar Migrant Youth in Myanmar

Strengthening support at the pre-departure stage is critical to reducing risks, improving job readiness, and enabling safer, more informed migration. The following actions focus on equipping youth with accurate information, relevant skills, and proper documentation before leaving Myanmar.

1. Strengthen Pre-Departure Preparation

Provide accessible, youth-friendly guidance on labour rights, recruitment procedures, financial literacy, and realistic employment expectations to reduce vulnerability to exploitation.

2. Improve Access to Skills Training

Expand market-driven vocational training programmes aligned with Thai labour demand—particularly in hospitality, services, and manufacturing—to enhance employability and earning potential.

3. Expand Access to Accurate Information

Leverage schools, youth groups, digital platforms, and civil society networks to counter misinformation, prevent fraud recruitment, and ensure that youth receive reliable, up-to-date advice.

4. Enhance Documentation Processes

Advocate simplified and decentralized procedures for issuing passports and national IDs to reduce pre-departure costs, delays, and administrative barriers.

5. Strengthen Cross-Border Coordination

Develop clear referral pathways that link pre-departure training and counselling in Myanmar with reception, orientation, and support services in Thailand to ensure continuity of assistance throughout the migration journey.

B. Recommendations for Myanmar Migrant Youth in Thailand

Targeted support for migrant youth is essential to strengthen their economic mobility, improve protection outcomes, and expand opportunities for long-term integration. The following

recommendations focus on enhancing documentation, skills development, and access to essential services.

1. Strengthen Documentation and Legal Status

Improve coordination among NGOs, employers, and government agencies to reduce costs, processing times, and administrative barriers related to registration, work permits, and visa renewals.

2. Expand Access to Education and Training

Scale up Thai language instruction, bridge and GED programmes, and employer-aligned vocational upskilling to broaden learning pathways for both in-school and out-of-school youth.

3. Increase Access to Protection and Support Services

Expand healthcare access, psychosocial support, worker hotlines, shelters, and legal assistance to ensure timely and effective protection and crisis response.

4. Promote Youth-Centric Policy Advocacy

Support opportunities for youth participation in policy discussions and advocacy aimed at improving job mobility, simplifying administrative processes, and expanding access to skills assessment and recognition.

C. Recommendations for Employers

Employers play a pivotal role in shaping fair, productive, and sustainable employment pathways for Myanmar migrant youth. Strengthening workforce development, retention, and compliance systems can improve productivity while reducing turnover and operational risks.

1. Invest in Workforce Development

Provide structured onboarding, bilingual communication, and ongoing upskilling programmes that equip young workers with essential technical and soft skills.

2. Strengthen Retention Strategies

Develop clear career progression pathways, implement mentorship and supervision systems, and introduce welfare initiatives that support worker wellbeing and long-term engagement.

3. Improve Administrative Efficiency

Adopt digital HR and documentation systems and work collectively through employer networks to advocate for more streamlined and predictable government processes.

4. Promote Decent Work Standards

Ensure full compliance with labour laws, guarantee fair wages and safe working environments, and establish transparent grievance and dispute-resolution channels.

5. Adopt Ethical Recruitment Practices

Commit to zero-fee recruitment, align hiring practices with IRIS/ILO ethical recruitment standards, and use third-party monitoring to ensure transparency and prevent exploitation.

D. Recommendations for Civil Society Organizations

CSOs are essential in bridging service gaps, empowering migrant youth, and strengthening protection systems. The following recommendations support stronger coordination, service delivery, and evidence-based advocacy.

1. Strengthen Multi-Organization Coordination

Develop shared referral pathways, joint case management protocols, and collective advocacy platforms to improve service coherence and reduce fragmentation.

2. Enhance Accessibility of Services

Expand youth-friendly spaces, multilingual support services, and peer-led outreach networks to reach both documented and undocumented migrant youth.

3. Scale Rights Education and Awareness

Deliver rights-based education through participatory, community-driven approaches that build confidence, agency, and awareness among youth.

4. Advance Evidence-Based Advocacy

Systematically document cases, trends, and structural challenges to inform national and regional policy processes and strengthen accountability.

5. Ensure Program Sustainability

Diversify funding sources and build organizational capacity through partnerships, resource sharing, and long-term institutional strengthening.

E. Recommendations for TVET and Training Providers

TVET and training providers have a central role in widening access to skills development and improving labour-market outcomes for migrant youth. The following recommendations aim to strengthen the relevance, accessibility, and recognition of training programmes for Myanmar youth in Thailand.

1. Recognize and Strengthen Community-Based Training

Develop accreditation pathways for NGO- and community-delivered training and link them to national qualification systems to broaden access for undocumented and out-of-school youth.

2. Align Certification with Labour Market and Regional Standards

Harmonize training curricula with Thai industry needs and ASEAN qualification frameworks to ensure skills recognition and mobility across sectors and borders.

3. Improve Documentation Requirements for Trainees

Advocate for flexible learner permits and facilitate employer-supported documentation processes to reduce administrative barriers to participation.

4. Deepen Public–Private Partnerships

Engage employers systematically in curriculum design, apprenticeships, job placement, and labour market forecasting to enhance alignment with industry demand.

5. Ensure Stable Long-Term Financing

Establish multi-year funding partnerships with government agencies, employers, and development partners to support programme continuity and scale.

F. Recommendations for CSOs Working with Recruitment Agencies

CSOs play a critical role in strengthening ethical recruitment, improving access to accurate information, and protecting migrant youth from exploitative practices. The following actions can enhance collaboration with recruitment agencies and support safer, more transparent migration pathways.

1. Strengthen Partnerships with Employers

Engage employers regularly to capture real-time labour demand and align recruitment pathways with actual workforce needs.

2. Provide Pre-Employment Vocational Preparation

Deliver job-readiness and vocational training programmes that are directly linked to placement pipelines and industry requirements.

3. Advocate for Temporary Work Permits

Promote policy measures that expand access to temporary or short-term work permits, reducing reliance on informal or non-MOU migration channels.

4. Monitor Recruitment Practices

Conduct oversight, document cases, and collaborate with authorities to prevent excessive fees, contract substitution, and other exploitative recruitment practices.

5. Build Transparent Information Channels

Develop multilingual, youth-friendly information platforms that provide clear guidance on safe, legal, and affordable migration pathways.

G. Cross-Cutting Advocacy Priorities

Effective migration governance requires strategic reforms that cut across multiple systems—recruitment, labour mobility, social protection, and cross-border procedures. The following advocacy priorities reflect

areas where coordinated action by government, development partners, and the private sector can generate high-impact, system-level improvements for Myanmar migrant youth in Thailand.

1. Recruitment System Reform

Promote zero-fee recruitment models, stronger regulation of intermediaries, and transparent, enforceable employment contracts.

2. Labour Mobility and Job Matching

Advocate for clearer job mobility rules, improved labour market information systems, and enhanced mechanisms for skills matching across sectors.

3. Social Protection and Rights Enforcement

Strengthen migrant workers' access to social protection schemes and reinforce workplace monitoring, compliance, and accessible grievance mechanisms.

4. MOU System Improvement

Support digitized procedures, lower administrative costs, and deeper bilateral cooperation to make documentation and recruitment under the MOU system more efficient and worker-centered.

H. Recommended Actions for Development Partners

Development partners have the potential to play a catalytic role in strengthening migration governance and improving outcomes for Myanmar youth. Their contributions can support system-building, expand the evidence base, and enable community-led initiatives that enhance protection, skills development, and economic mobility.

Priority Actions for Development Partners

1. Facilitate Multi-Stakeholder Coordination Platforms

Strengthen collaboration among government agencies, employers, civil society organisations, and migrant communities by supporting regular coordination mechanisms and structured dialogue forums.

2. Support Employers in Implementing Decent Work Practices

Provide technical assistance, tools, and capacity-building that promote fair recruitment, safe working conditions, and youth-friendly employment standards across key sectors.

3. Generate and Disseminate Evidence to Inform Policy Dialogues

Invest in research, monitoring systems, and data-sharing platforms so that national and regional policy discussions are informed by reliable evidence and reflect the lived experiences of migrant youth.

4. Strengthen Youth Leadership and Peer Networks

Empower youth-led groups and peer educators to expand outreach, improve rights awareness, and drive community-based solutions within migrant communities.

5. Document and Promote Scalable, Rights-Based Models

Identify, evaluate, and disseminate effective models of migrant support that can be replicated and adapted across provinces and sectors to improve consistency and impact.

I. Government Roles and System-Level Priorities

Interviews conducted with nine Thai government agencies reveal a shared recognition of the critical role Myanmar workers play in sustaining Thailand's economic growth. Despite this acknowledgement, officials highlighted that constitutional mandates, regulatory limitations, and constrained public budgets continue to restrict the extent to which targeted support for migrant youth can be provided. Nevertheless, agencies identified several system-level priorities that could strengthen labour migration governance and improve outcomes for young migrant workers.

Government-Identified System-Level Priorities

1. Strengthen multi-stakeholder coordination

Establish a national mechanism that links labour, education, and civil registration systems with participation of civil society, migrant-led organizations, private sector, and local authorities to enable coherent, long-term planning for youth migrants.

2. Develop Integrated Labour Migration Data Systems

Establish interoperable, cross-agency data platforms that improve information sharing and support evidence-based planning, monitoring, and policy decision-making.

3. Enhance Bilateral Cooperation with Myanmar

Deepen cross-border collaboration on documentation processes, recruitment oversight, skills recognition, and joint labour governance to facilitate safer and more efficient migration pathways.

4. Streamline Administrative Procedures

Simplify and harmonise administrative steps at both local and national levels to reduce delays, lower processing burdens, and improve service accessibility for migrant workers and employers.

5. Align Policy Frameworks with Labour Market Realities

Ensure regulatory approaches better reflect actual workforce needs—particularly in sectors dependent on migrant labour—while maintaining compliance with constitutional requirements and labour standards.

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Annex A: List of Stakeholder Participation

Organization / Company	Description	Specific Business / Programs Supporting Myanmar Youth	Service Location
Employers			
DHL Express (Thailand) Ltd.	Logistics and Warehousing Website: https://www.dhl.com/th-th/home.html	The company employs Myanmar workers in logistics and warehouses, providing social security, overtime, and health benefits. DHL plans to double its Myanmar workforce to 70-80 to meet rising logistics and e-commerce demand	Bangkok
SVI Public Company Limited	Electronics Manufacturing Services (EMS) Website: https://www.svi-hq.com/	Large-scale EMS operations provide migrant youth with jobs in assembly, production, and semi-skilled manufacturing.	Pathum Thani
Navasri Manufacturing Limited	Cleaning products, detergents, and household chemical goods Website: https://www.nmtlimited.com/th/	The company hires migrant workers for factory roles, offering transport, bonuses, and health insurance, creating entry-level opportunities for Myanmar youth.	Pathum Thani
Nanyang Textile Group	Thai footwear manufacturer Website: https://www.nanyangtextile.com/th/apparel-th/	Nanyang hires Myanmar workers for manufacturing, stitching, and assembly, offering training, welfare support, and stable entry-level opportunities for young migrants.	Bangkok
Civil society organizations			
Human Rights and Development Foundation (HRDF)	HRDF, founded in 2000, is a Thai NGO promoting and protecting the rights of marginalized groups, including migrant workers, refugees, and stateless persons. Website: https://hrdfoundation.org/	HRDF provides legal assistance and policy advocacy for migrant populations, with a strong focus on labor rights. HRDF also offers rights education, counseling hotlines, and after-hours legal support to vulnerable migrants.	Bangkok, Chiang Mai and Mae Sot
Spirit in Education Movement (SEM)	A civil society organization promoting education, youth leadership, and community empowerment for marginalized and migrant communities. Website: https://semasia.org/	SEM provides leadership training, life-skills workshops, safe learning spaces, mentorship, and youth empowerment programs tailored for Myanmar migrant youth. Programs emphasize confidence-building, community engagement, and creating pathways to education and advocacy	Chiang Mai, Thailand

Civil society organizations			
BEAM	<p>A nonprofit expanding educational access for marginalized and migrant communities through academic, vocational, and community-based programs.</p> <p>Website: https://beamedu.org/</p>	<p>BEAM offers vocational training, GED prep, language courses, and accredited short courses, while supporting migrant learning centers with scholarships, stipends, legal aid, and psychosocial support.</p>	Chiang Mai, Tak
Hospitality & Catering Training Centre (HCTC)	<p>A nonprofit vocational training institution providing professional hospitality and culinary education for marginalized and migrant youth through a residential, practice-oriented training model.</p> <p>Website: https://www.facebook.com/checkpoint/advanced_protection/?next=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fhctcm_aesot%2F#</p>	<p>HCTC offers a two-year accredited hospitality program with scholarships, accommodation, mentorship, psychosocial support, and internships in hotel operations, culinary arts, bakery, housekeeping, IT, and life skills.</p>	Mae Sot, Tak Province
Sunfuji (Thailand) Manpower Co., Ltd.	<p>A licensed recruitment firm placing Myanmar, Cambodian, and Lao workers in Thailand</p> <p>Website: https://www.sunfujithai.com</p>	<p>Sunfuji supports young Myanmar workers entering Thailand via MOU or regular channels, handling recruitment, pre-employment preparation, work permits, documentation, and employer coordination for legal placement.</p>	Across industrial zones in Thailand



Annex B: List of Questions in Questionnaires for Myanmar Migrant Youth

[Burmese Version]



Survey No. / Date / / 2025

မြန်မာလူငယ်များ ထိုင်းနိုင်ငံသို့ ရွှေ့ပြောင်းအလုပ်လုပ်ကိုင်မှုဆိုင်ရာ သုံးသပ်ချက်များ

မင်္ဂလာပါ။

ယခုတွေ့ဆုံမေးမြန်းမှုတွင် ပါဝင်ပေးသည့်အတွက် ကျေးဇူးအထူးတင်ပါသည်။

- ကျွန်ုပ်အမည်မှာ _____ ဖြစ်ပြီး **မြန်မာလူငယ်များ ထိုင်းနိုင်ငံသို့ ရွှေ့ပြောင်းအလုပ်လုပ်ကိုင်မှုဆိုင်ရာ သုံးသပ်ချက်** သုတေသနလေ့လာမှုတွင် ပါဝင်နေသူဖြစ်ပါသည်။
- ဤစီမံကိန်းကို FCA Foundation (Thailand) မှ ရန်ပုံငွေထောက်ပံ့ထားပါသည်။ FCA သည် ထိုင်းနိုင်ငံရှိ အားနည်းသောအုပ်စုများအတွက် ငြိမ်းချမ်းရေး၊ ပညာရေးနှင့် ရေရှည်တည်တံ့သောဖွံ့ဖြိုးရေးကို လူမျိုးမရွေးဘာသာမရွေး၊ နိုင်ငံရေးယုံကြည်ချက်များမရွေးအကျိုးအမြတ်မယူကြိုးပမ်းဆောင်ရွက်နေသော သောအဖွဲ့အစည်းတစ်ခုဖြစ်ပါသည်။
- သင့်၏ အလုပ်အတွေ့အကြုံများ၊ အလုပ်အမျိုးအစားများ၊ အလုပ်လုပ်ကိုင်ရာတွင် ကြုံတွေ့ရသော အခြေအနေများ၊ ကျွမ်းကျင်မှုများ၊ ငွေကြေးနှင့် အထောက်အပံ့ဆောင်ရွက်မှုများရရှိမှု၊ အနာဂတ်အတွက် ရည်မှန်းချက်များအကြောင်း ကျွန်ုပ်လေ့လာလိုပါသည်။
- ဤလေ့လာမှုသည် ထိုင်းနိုင်ငံသို့ အလုပ်အကိုင်ရှာဖွေရန် ရွှေ့ပြောင်းလာသော မြန်မာလူငယ်များ၏ အလုပ်အကိုင်အခြေအနေများ၊ စိန်ခေါ်မှုများနှင့် အခွင့်အလမ်းများကို နားလည်ရန် ရည်ရွယ်ပါသည်။
- သင့်၏အဖြေများသည် ကျွမ်းကျင်မှုများ၊ အလုပ်နှင့်ကိုက်ညီသော ဝန်ဆောင်မှုများနှင့် ရွှေ့ပြောင်းလုပ်သားလူငယ်များ၏ ဘဝများတိုးတက်စေရန် မူဝါဒများကို ပိုမိုကောင်းမွန်အောင် ပံ့ပိုးပေးနိုင်မည်ဖြစ်ပါသည်။

သင့်၏ပါဝင်မှု

ဤလေ့လာမှုတွင် ပါဝင်ခြင်းသည် မိမိဆန္ဒအလျောက်ဖြေဆိုရန်သာ ဖြစ်ပါသည်။ မည်သည့်မေးခွန်းကိုမဆို မဖြေလိုပါက ဖြေဆိုရန် မလိုအပ်ပါ။ မိမိသဘောဖြင့် မဖြေဆိုလိုပါက ရပ်တန့်နိုင်ပါသည်။ ဤတွေ့ဆုံမေးမြန်းမှုသည် ခန့်မှန်းခြေအားဖြင့် ၁၅ မိနစ်မှ ၂၅ မိနစ်အထိ ကြာမြင့်နိုင်ပါသည်။

လျှို့ဝှက်မှု

သင့်မှပေးအပ်သော အချက်အလက်အားလုံးကို ကျွန်ုပ်တို့မှအလွန်လျှို့ဝှက်ထားမည်ဖြစ်ပါသည်။ သင့်နာမည် သို့မဟုတ် သင့်ကိုထင်ရှားစေနိုင်သော အချက်အလက်များကို မစုဆောင်းပါ။ သင့်အဖြေများကို အခြားသောသူများ၏ အဖြေများနှင့် ပေါင်းစပ်ကာ သုတေသနအတွက်သာ အသုံးပြုမည်ဖြစ်ပါသည်။ ဤလေ့လာမှု၏ ရလဒ်များကိုသာ ကျွန်ုပ်တို့က ဖော်ပြမည်ဖြစ်သော်လည်း တစ်ဦးချင်းစီ၏ ကိုယ်ရေးကိုယ်တာအချက်အလက်များကို ဖော်ပြမည်မဟုတ်ပါ။

အန္တရာယ်နှင့် အကျိုးကျေးဇူးများ

ဤလေ့လာမှုတွင် ပါဝင်ခြင်းကြောင့် သင့်အတွက် အန္တရာယ်များ မရှိနိုင်ပါ။ အချို့မေးခွန်းများတွင် ကိုယ်ရေးကိုယ်တာ သို့မဟုတ် လုပ်ငန်းဆိုင်ရာ စိန်ခေါ်မှုများကို ဆွေးနွေးနိုင်ပါသည်။ သင့်အတွက် စိတ်မသက်မသာဖြစ်စေသော မေးခွန်းများကို ကျော်သွားနိုင်ပါသည်။ သင့်အတွက် တိုက်ရိုက်အကျိုးကျေးဇူးမရှိသော်လည်း သင့်အဖြေများသည် ရွှေ့ပြောင်းလုပ်သားလူငယ်များအား ပံ့ပိုးရန် ဝန်ဆောင်မှုများနှင့် မူဝါဒများကို ပိုမိုကောင်းမွန်စွာ ပြုလုပ်ပေးရာတွင် အထောက်အကူဖြစ်စေမည်ဖြစ်ပါသည်။

သဘောတူညီချက် ထုတ်ပြန်ချက်

ကျွန်ုပ်တို့သည် အထက်ဖော်ပြပါ အချက်အလက်များကို ဖတ်ရှုနားလည်ပါသည်။ ကျွန်ုပ်တို့ မေးခွန်းများမေးမြန်းခွင့်ရှိပြီး ကျွန်ုပ်တို့၏အဖြေများကို သုံးနိုင်ပါသည်။ ကျွန်ုပ်တို့သည် ဤလေ့လာမှုတွင် စိတ်ဆန္ဒအလျောက်ပါဝင်ရန် သဘောတူပါသည်။

ကျွန်ုပ်တို့သည် တွေ့ဆုံမေးမြန်းမှုတွင် ပါဝင်ရန် သဘောတူပါသည်။

အပိုင်း ၁: လူမှုစာရင်းနှင့် နောက်ခံအချက်အလက်များ

- 1. အသက်: _____
- 2. လိင်: ကျား မ ဖြေလိုသည်မရှိ
- 3. အမြင့်ဆုံးပညာအရည်အချင်း: _____
ဘာသာရပ်: _____
- 4. ထိုင်းနိုင်ငံသို့ ရွှေ့ပြောင်းသည့်နှစ်: _____
- 5. မြန်မာနိုင်ငံတွင် မည်သည့်နေရာမှ လာသနည်း?
(မြို့နယ်/တိုင်း): _____
- 6. ထိုင်းနိုင်ငံသို့ ရွှေ့ပြောင်းသည့်အချိန်:
နှစ်: _____
- 7. တစ်နေ့လုပ်ခလစာ: _____

အပိုင်း ၂: ရွှေ့ပြောင်းမှုပုံစံများနှင့် ရွှေ့ပြောင်းရသည့် အကြောင်းရင်းများ

1. ထိုင်းနိုင်ငံသို့ ရွှေ့ပြောင်းရခြင်း၏ အဓိကအကြောင်းရင်းမှာ အဘယ်နည်း? *(သက်ဆိုင်ရာတိုင်းကိုရွေးချယ်ပါ)*

- စီးပွားရေးအခွင့်အလမ်းများ
- ပဋိပက္ခ သို့မဟုတ် မလုံခြုံမှု
- မိသားစုအကြောင်းရင်းများ
- ရာသီဥတု သို့မဟုတ် ပတ်ဝန်းကျင်ဆိုင်ရာ အကြောင်းရင်းများ
- ပညာရေး သို့မဟုတ် လေ့ကျင့်မှု
- အခြား: _____

2. ထိုင်းနိုင်ငံသို့ မည်သို့ရွှေ့ပြောင်းခဲ့သနည်း? *(သက်ဆိုင်ရာတိုင်းကိုရွေးချယ်ပါ)*

- ရာသီအလိုက် အလုပ်သမား
- တရားဝင် အလုပ်ခွင့်ပြုချက်ဖြင့် ရွှေ့ပြောင်းလာခြင်း
- သဘောတူညီချက် (MOU)
- အခြား: _____

3. ထိုင်းနိုင်ငံတွင် အဓိကရောက်ရှိသည့်နေရာ: *(တစ်ခုရွေးချယ်ပါ)*

- ဘန်ကောက်
- ချင်းမိုင်
- တက်
- စမုတ်စခွန်
- နွန်ထားဘူရီ
- ပထုန်ထာနီ
- အခြား: _____

4. လက်ရှိအလုပ်လုပ်ကိုင်နေသော အလုပ်: *(တစ်ခုရွေးချယ်ပါ)*

- ဆောက်လုပ်ရေး
- ကုန်ထုတ်လုပ်မှု (အစားအစာထုတ်လုပ်မှု)
- အိမ်တွင်းအလုပ် (ဈေးရောင်းဝယ်ရေး)
- စိုက်ပျိုးရေး
- ဝန်ဆောင်မှု (ဥပမာ၊ ဟိုတယ်)
- အခြား: _____

5. ဤအလုပ်အတွက် မျှော်မှန်းလစာပမာဏ: *(တစ်ခုရွေးချယ်ပါ)*

- ၈,၀၀၀ ဘတ်အောက်
- ၈,၀၀၀ - ၉,၉၉၉ ဘတ်

- ၁၀,၀၀၀ - ၁၁,၉၉၉ ဘတ်
- ၁၂,၀၀၀ - ၁၃,၉၉၉ ဘတ်
- ၁၄,၀၀၀ - ၁၅,၉၉၉ ဘတ်
- ၁၆,၀၀၀ - ၁၇,၉၉၉ ဘတ်
- ၁၈,၀၀၀ ဘတ်နှင့်အထက်

6. ဤအလုပ်ကို သင့်ကျွမ်းကျင်မှု သို့မဟုတ် ယခင်အတွေ့အကြုံအပေါ်အခြေခံ၍ ရွေးချယ်ခဲ့ပါသလား?

- ဟုတ်ပါသည်
- မဟုတ်ပါ

7. သင့်ယခင်အလုပ်တွင် မည်မျှကြာမြင့်စွာ အလုပ်လုပ်ခဲ့သနည်း?

- ၁ နှစ်အောက်
- ၁ - ၃ နှစ်
- ၄ - ၆ နှစ်
- ၆ နှစ်အထက်

8. သင့်ယခင်အလုပ်မှ မည်သည့်အကြောင်းရင်းကြောင့် ထွက်ခဲ့သနည်း? *(သက်ဆိုင်ရာတိုင်းကိုရွေးချယ်ပါ)*

- လုပ်ခလစာနည်းပါးခြင်း
- အလုပ်လုပ်ကိုင်ရန် အခြေအနေမကောင်းခြင်း
- အလုပ်တိုးတက်မှုအခွင့်အလမ်းမရှိခြင်း
- အကြီးအကဲ သို့မဟုတ် အလုပ်ဖော်များနှင့် အဆင်မပြေခြင်း
- အလုပ်သည် ယာယီဖြစ်ခြင်း သို့မဟုတ် ကာလပြီးဆုံးခြင်း
- နေရပ်ပြောင်းရွှေ့ခြင်း သို့မဟုတ် မိသားစုအကြောင်းရင်းများ
- ပိုမိုကောင်းမွန်သော အလုပ်အခွင့်အလမ်းရှာဖွေတွေ့ရှိခြင်း
- ကျန်းမာရေးအကြောင်းရင်းများ
- ကုမ္ပဏီပိတ်သိမ်းခြင်း သို့မဟုတ် အလုပ်သမားလျှော့ချခြင်း
- အခြား (ကျေးဇူးပြု၍ ဖော်ပြပါ): _____

9. ထိုကာလအတွင်း မည်သည့်စိန်ခေါ်မှုများကို ကြုံတွေ့ခဲ့ရသနည်း? *(သက်ဆိုင်ရာတိုင်းကိုရွေးချယ်ပါ)*

- အလုပ်ဝန်များခြင်း / အလုပ်ချိန်ကြာမြင့်ခြင်း
- လေ့ကျင့်မှု သို့မဟုတ် အထောက်အပံ့မရှိခြင်း
- ဘာသာစကားအခက်အခဲ သို့မဟုတ် ဆက်သွယ်ရေးပြဿနာ
- မလုံခြုံသော သို့မဟုတ် ကျန်းမာရေးနှင့်မညီသော အလုပ်ပတ်ဝန်းကျင်
- ခွဲခြားဆက်ဆံမှု သို့မဟုတ် မမျှတသော ဆက်ဆံမှု

- အကြီးအကဲ သို့မဟုတ် အလုပ်ဖော်ကိုင်ဖက်များနှင့် ဆက်ဆံရေးခက်ခဲခြင်း
- အလုပ်နှင့် ကိုယ်ရေးကိုယ်တာဘဝကို မျှမျှတတထိန်းညှိရန် ခက်ခဲခြင်း
- အလုပ်လုံခြုံမှုနည်းပါးခြင်း
- အလုပ်လုပ်ရန် လိုအပ်သော ကိရိယာများ သို့မဟုတ် အရင်းအမြစ်များ လုံလောက်မှုမရှိခြင်း
- အခြား (ကျေးဇူးပြု၍ ဖော်ပြပါ): _____

10. သင့်လက်ရှိအလုပ်သည် သင့်ယခင်အတွေ့အကြုံ သို့မဟုတ် ကျွမ်းကျင်မှုနှင့် သက်ဆိုင်ပါသလား?

- သက်ဆိုင်ပါသည်
- မသက်ဆိုင်ပါ
- သက်ဆိုင်ပါက ရှင်းပြပါ: _____

11. ရွှေ့ပြောင်းမလာမီ မည်သည့်ကျွမ်းကျင်မှုများ သို့မဟုတ် လေ့ကျင့်မှုများ ရှိခဲ့သနည်း?

(သက်ဆိုင်ရာတိုင်းကိုရွေးချယ်ပါ)

- အသက်မွေးဝမ်းကျောင်းပညာ/အတတ်ပညာ
- ဘာသာစကား (ဥပမာ၊ ထိုင်း၊ အင်္ဂလိပ်)
- စီးပွားရေး/စွန့်ဦးတီထွင်မှု
- မရှိ
- အခြား: _____

12. ထိုင်းနိုင်ငံရှိ သင်အဓိကရောက်ရှိရာနေရာကို မည်သည့်အကြောင်းရင်းများကြောင့် ရွေးချယ်ခဲ့သနည်း?

(သက်ဆိုင်ရာတိုင်းကိုရွေးချယ်ပါ)

- မိသားစုဝင်များ ရှိနေခြင်း
- အလုပ်အကိုင်အခွင့်အလမ်းများ
- လုံခြုံမှု
- နေထိုင်စရိတ်နည်းပါးခြင်း
- အခြေခံအဆောက်အအုံကောင်းမွန်ခြင်း (အိမ်ရာ၊ သယ်ယူပို့ဆောင်ရေး)
- လူမှုရေးကွန်ရက် သို့မဟုတ် လူထုအသိုင်းအဝိုင်းရှိခြင်း
- အခြား: _____

13. သင့်ရွှေ့ပြောင်းမှုခရီးတွင် မည်သည့်အဖွဲ့အစည်းမှ အကူအညီပေးခဲ့သနည်း?

- အစိုးရအဖွဲ့အစည်း
- အစိုးရမဟုတ်သောအဖွဲ့အစည်း (NGO)
- ကိုယ်စားလှယ်/ပွဲစား
- မိသားစု/သူငယ်ချင်း
- မရှိ

အခြား: _____

အပိုင်း ၃. အခက်အခဲများနှင့် အန္တရာယ်များ

1. ရွှေ့ပြောင်းမှုခရီးတွင် မည်သည့်အခက်အခဲများ ကြုံတွေ့ခဲ့ရသနည်း? *(သက်ဆိုင်ရာတိုင်းကိုရွေးချယ်ပါ)*

- ခရီးသွားရာတွင် အန္တရာယ်
- တရားဝင်မှုဆိုင်ရာ စာရွက်စာတမ်းပြဿနာ
- ငွေကြေးအလွန်အကျွံသုံးစွဲခြင်း
- မိသားစုမှ ခွဲခွာခြင်း
- နယ်စပ်စစ်ဆေးမှု
- အခြား: _____

2. ထိုင်းနိုင်ငံတွင် နေထိုင်စဉ် သို့မဟုတ် အလုပ်လုပ်ကိုင်စဉ် မည်သည့်အခက်အခဲများ ကြုံတွေ့ခဲ့ရသနည်း? *(သက်ဆိုင်ရာတိုင်းကိုရွေးချယ်ပါ)*

- ဘာသာစကားအခက်အခဲ
- ခွဲခြားဆက်ဆံမှု
- မသန်ရှင်းသော သို့မဟုတ် မလုံခြုံသော နေထိုင်ရာနေရာ
- တရားဝင်စာရွက်စာတမ်းမရှိခြင်း
- မလုံခြုံသော သို့မဟုတ် မတည်ငြိမ်သော အလုပ်
- လုပ်ခလစာနည်းပါးခြင်း
- ကျန်းမာရေးစောင့်ရှောက်မှု သို့မဟုတ် အထောက်အပံ့မရရှိခြင်း
- အခြား: _____

3. မြန်မာနိုင်ငံရှိ နိုင်ငံရေး သို့မဟုတ် ပတ်ဝန်းကျင်ဆိုင်ရာ (ရာသီဥတုနှင့်သက်ဆိုင်သော) အဖြစ်အပျက်များသည် သင့်ရွှေ့ပြောင်းမှုဆုံးဖြတ်ချက်ကို လွှမ်းမိုးခဲ့ပါသလား?

- လွှမ်းမိုးပါသည်
- မလွှမ်းမိုးပါ
- လွှမ်းမိုးပါက ရှင်းပြပါ: _____

4. မြန်မာနိုင်ငံရှိ နိုင်ငံရေးအဖြစ်အပျက်များသည် သင့်ငွေလွှဲမှု အပြုအမူ သို့မဟုတ် ထိုင်းနိုင်ငံတွင် ဆက်နေရန် ဆုံးဖြတ်ချက်ကို မည်သို့သက်ရောက်မှုရှိခဲ့သနည်း?

- ငွေလွှဲမှုတိုးမြှင့်လာခြင်း (ပိုမိုငွေပို့ရန် ဖိအားများခြင်း)
- ငွေလွှဲမှုလျော့နည်းလာခြင်း (ဝင်ငွေနည်းပါးခြင်း သို့မဟုတ် အလုပ်လုပ်ရန် မလုံခြုံခြင်း)
- မြန်မာနိုင်ငံသို့ ပြန်လာရန် အစီအစဉ်ပြောင်းလဲခြင်း
- ထိုင်းနိုင်ငံတွင် ပိုမိုကြာရှည်စွာနေထိုင်ရန် ဆုံးဖြတ်ခြင်း

- သက်ရောက်မှုမရှိ
- အခြား: _____

အပိုင်း ၄: ကျွမ်းကျင်မှုနှင့် လေ့ကျင့်မှုများ

1. သင့်အလုပ်တွင် လုပ်သားစွမ်းဆောင်ရည်တိုးတက်စေရန် မည်သည့်လေ့ကျင့်မှုမျိုး လိုအပ်သနည်း?

(သက်ဆိုင်ရာတိုင်းကိုရွေးချယ်ပါ)

- ဘာသာစကား
- နည်းပညာဆိုင်ရာ
- ဘေးကင်းလုံခြုံမှုဆိုင်ရာ
- စီးပွားရေးလုပ်ငန်းစဉ်ဆိုင်ရာ အသိပညာ
- ဒီဂျစ်တယ်ကျွမ်းကျင်မှု
- အခြား: _____

2. အလုပ်အကိုင်အခွင့်အလမ်းများ တိုးတက်စေရန် ကျွမ်းကျင်မှုအသစ်များ သင်ယူလိုပါသလား?

- သင်ယူလိုပါသည်
- မသင်ယူလိုပါ

သင်ယူလိုပါက မည်သည့်လေ့ကျင့်မှုမျိုး အသုံးဝင်မည်နည်း? *(သက်ဆိုင်ရာတိုင်းကိုရွေးချယ်ပါ)*

- ဘာသာစကား (ထိုင်း/အင်္ဂလိပ်)
- အသက်မွေးဝမ်းကျောင်းပညာ (ဥပမာ၊ လက်သမား၊ စက်ချုပ်ပညာ)
- ဒီဂျစ်တယ်ကျွမ်းကျင်မှု
- စီးပွားရေးကျွမ်းကျင်မှု
- အခြား: _____

3. ထိုင်းနိုင်ငံတွင် ရွှေ့ပြောင်းလုပ်သားများအတွက် သက်မွေးပညာသင်တန်းကျောင်းများ သို့မဟုတ် ကျွမ်းကျင်မှုဖွံ့ဖြိုးရေးအစီအစဉ်များ ရှိကြောင်း သိပါသလား?

- သိပါသည်
- မသိပါ

သိပါက အမည်(များ): _____

4. အစိုးရ သို့မဟုတ် NGO မှပံ့ပိုးသော လေ့ကျင့်မှုအစီအစဉ်တွင် ပါဝင်လိုပါသလား?

- ပါဝင်လိုပါသည်
- မပါဝင်လိုပါ
- ဖြစ်နိုင်သည်

5. အခြားရွှေ့ပြောင်းလုပ်သားလူငယ်များအား သက်မွေးပညာသင်တန်းများတက်ရောက်ရန် အကြံပြုလိုပါသလား?

- အကြံပြုလိုပါသည်
- အကြံမပြုလိုပါ

အကြံပြုလိုပါလျှင် အဘယ်ကြောင့်နည်း?

အကြံမပြုလိုပါလျှင် အဘယ်ကြောင့်နည်း?

အပိုင်း ၅: စွန့်ခွာမှုအလားအလာ

1. ထိုင်းနိုင်ငံတွင် ကိုယ်ပိုင်စီးပွားရေးလုပ်ငန်း စတင်ရန် စဉ်းစားဖူးပါသလား?

- စဉ်းစားဖူးပါသည်
- မစဉ်းစားဖူးပါ

2. စဉ်းစားဖူးပါက မည်သည့်လုပ်ငန်းမျိုး စတင်လိုပါသနည်း? _____

3. စီးပွားရေးလုပ်ငန်းစတင်ရာတွင် မည်သည့်အခက်အခဲများ ကြုံတွေ့နေရသနည်း? *(သက်ဆိုင်ရာတိုင်းကိုရွေးချယ်ပါ)*

- ငွေကြေးအရင်းအနှီးမရှိခြင်း
- တရားဝင်ကန့်သတ်ချက်များ
- အထောက်အပံ့မရှိခြင်း
- ဈေးကွက်အသိပညာမရှိခြင်း
- စီးပွားရေးအသိပညာမရှိခြင်း
- အခြား: _____

4. သင့်နေထိုင်ရာဒေသတွင် မည်သည့်ဝန်ဆောင်မှုများ သို့မဟုတ် ကုန်ပစ္စည်းများ အများဆုံးလိုအပ်နေသနည်း?

- အစားအသောက်ဆိုင် သို့မဟုတ် စားသောက်ဆိုင်
- ပြုပြင်မှုဝန်ဆောင်မှု (ဖုန်း၊ လျှပ်စစ်ပစ္စည်း၊ ယာဉ်)
- အလှအပနှင့် ကိုယ်ရေးကိုယ်တာစောင့်ရှောက်မှု
- စက်ချုပ်ပညာ သို့မဟုတ် အဝတ်အစားပြုပြင်မှု
- ကုန်စုံဆိုင် သို့မဟုတ် အလွယ်တကူဝယ်ယူနိုင်သောဆိုင်
- မိုဘိုင်းဖုန်းနှင့် အင်တာနက်ဝန်ဆောင်မှု
- သယ်ယူပို့ဆောင်ရေးဝန်ဆောင်မှု
- ကလေးထိန်းနှင့် အိမ်တွင်းဝန်ဆောင်မှု
- ဘာသာစကားပြန်ဆိုဝန်ဆောင်မှု
- မြန်မာယဉ်ကျေးမှုဆိုင်ရာ သို့မဟုတ် အသိုင်းအဝိုင်းအခြေပြုဝန်ဆောင်မှု
- အခြား: _____

5. ထိုင်းနိုင်ငံတွင် စီးပွားရေးလုပ်ငန်းစတင်ရန် မည်သည့်အထောက်အပံ့များ လိုအပ်သနည်း?

(သက်ဆိုင်ရာတိုင်းကိုရွေးချယ်ပါ)

- ငွေကြေးအထောက်အပံ့
- စီးပွားရေးလေ့ကျင့်မှု
- လမ်းညွှန်မှု
- တရားဝင်အကြံဉာဏ်
- အဆက်အသွယ်နှင့်အခွင့်အလမ်း
- အခြား: _____

အပိုင်း ၆: ငွေကြေးဆိုင်ရာဝန်ဆောင်မှုများနှင့် ငွေလွှဲမှု

1. မြန်မာနိုင်ငံသို့ ပုံမှန်ငွေလွှဲပါသလား?

- ငွေလွှဲပါသည်
- ငွေမလွှဲပါ

2. မကြာခဏ ငွေလွှဲပါသလား?

- လစဉ်
- သုံးလတစ်ကြိမ်
- နှစ်စဉ်
- တစ်ခါတစ်ရံ

3. မည်သည့်လမ်းကြောင်းမှတစ်ဆင့် ငွေလွှဲလေ့ရှိသနည်း? *(သက်ဆိုင်ရာတိုင်းကိုရွေးချယ်ပါ)*

- ဘဏ်လွှဲ
- မိုဘိုင်းငွေလွှဲ
- လူကတစ်ဆင့်ငွေသွား
- အခြား: _____

4. ထိုင်းနိုင်ငံတွင် ချေးငွေယူဖူးပါသလား?

- ယူဖူးပါသည်
 - မယူဖူးပါ
- ယူဖူးပါက မည်သည့်နေရာမှ ယူဖူးပါသနည်း? _____

5. ထိုင်းနိုင်ငံတွင် ရွှေပြောင်းလုပ်သားများအတွက် တရားဝင်ငွေကြေးဝန်ဆောင်မှုများ သို့မဟုတ် ချေးငွေရွေးချယ်စရာများ ရှိကြောင်း သိပါသလား?

- သိပါသည်
- မသိပါ

6. ထိုင်းနိုင်ငံတွင် အောက်ပါ မည်သည့်ငွေကြေးဝန်ဆောင်မှုများကို အသုံးပြုဖူးပါသနည်း?

(သက်ဆိုင်ရာတိုင်းကိုရွေးချယ်ပါ)

- ဘဏ်အကောင့်ဖွင့်ခြင်း
- ငွေလွှဲခြင်း
- ဒီဂျစ်တယ်ငွေပေးချေမှုဖြင့် လစာရရှိခြင်း
- ချေးငွေယူခြင်း
- ထိုင်းဘဏ်များ/မိုက်ခရိုဖိုင်နန်စ်တွင် ငွေစုခြင်း
- အခြား: _____

7. မည်သည့်ဘဏ်များ သို့မဟုတ် အသေးစားချေးငွေအဖွဲ့အစည်းများနှင့် အများဆုံးဆက်သွယ်လေ့ရှိသနည်း?

(သက်ဆိုင်ရာတိုင်းကိုရွေးချယ်ပါ)

- Kasikornbank (KBank)
- Bangkok Bank
- Krung Thai Bank
- Government Savings Bank
- CIMB Thai Bank
- အသေးစားချေးငွေအဖွဲ့အစည်းများ (ဥပမာ၊ AFS, VisionFund, Kiatnakin)
- ဒီဂျစ်တယ်ပိုက်ဆံအိတ်များ (ဥပမာ၊ PromptPay, TrueMoney, Rabbit Line Pay)
- တရားမဝင်ငွေစုအဖွဲ့များ
- မရှိ
- အခြား: _____

[English Version]



Survey No. / _____ Date _____ / _____ / 2025

Comprehensive Labour Market Assessment for Myanmar Youth Migrating to Thailand

Mingalaba / Sawadee kha/khrap,

Thank you very much for agreeing to speak with us today.

My name is _____, and I am part of a research team conducting a study titled “Comprehensive Labour Market Assessment for Myanmar Youth Migrating to Thailand.” This project is granted by FCA Foundation (Thailand), a non-profit organization committed to promoting peace, education, and sustainability for vulnerable groups in Asia, particularly in Thailand, regardless of religion, ethnicity, or political beliefs. This study aims to better understand the employment conditions, challenges, and opportunities faced by young migrants from Myanmar who have migrated to Thailand for work.

We are interested in learning about your work experiences, job types, working conditions, skills and training, access to financial and support services, and your goals or aspirations for the future. Your responses will help inform better support systems, including training programs, job-matching services, and policies to improve the livelihoods of migrant youth.

Your Participation

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may choose not to answer any question, and you may stop the interview at any time without any negative consequences. The interview will take approximately 15 to 25 minutes.

Confidentiality

All information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. We will not collect your name or any information that can personally identify you. Your responses will be combined with others and used for research purposes only. The results of the study may be published, but individual identities will not be disclosed in any way.

Risks and Benefits

There are no foreseeable physical risks to participating in this study. Some questions may involve discussing personal or work-related challenges; you may skip any questions that make you uncomfortable. While there may be no direct benefit to you, your input will help improve understanding and design of services that support young migrant workers.

Consent Statement

I have read and understood the information provided above. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and all of my questions have been answered. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

I agree to participate in the interview.

Section 1: Demographics and Background

1. Age: _____
2. Gender: Male Female Prefer not to say
3. Highest level of education completed: _____
Majoring: _____
4. Year of migration to Thailand: _____
5. Where are you originally from in Myanmar?
(Township/Region): _____
6. When did you migrate to Thailand?
Year: _____
7. Wages per day: _____

Section 2: Migration Patterns and Motivations

1. What motivated you to migrate to Thailand? (Select all that apply)
 - Economic opportunities
 - Conflict or insecurity
 - Family reasons
 - Climate or environmental issues
 - Education or training
 - Other: _____
2. How did you migrate to Thailand? (Select all that apply)
 - Seasonal worker
 - Cabinet resolution
 - MOU
 - Other: _____
3. What was your main destination area in Thailand? (Select one)
 - Bangkok
 - Samut Sakhon
 - Nonthaburi
 - Pathum Thani
 - Chiang Mai
 - Tak
4. Which sector are you currently working in? (Select one)
 - Construction
 - Manufacturing (Food production)

- Domestic work (Vendor Work)
 - Agriculture
 - Services (e.g., retail, hospitality)
 - Other: _____
5. What is your expected monthly salary range for this job? *(Please select one)*
- Less than 8,000 THB
 - 8,000 - 9,999 THB
 - 10,000 - 11,999 THB
 - 12,000 - 13,999 THB
 - 14,000 - 15,999 THB
 - 16,000 - 17,999 THB
 - 18,000 THB and above
6. Did you choose this job sector based on your skills or prior experience?
- Yes
 - No
7. How long did you work in your previous job?
- Not applicable (please proceed to Question 9)
 - Less than 1 year
 - 1- 3 years
 - 4- 6 years
 - More than 6 years
8. Why do you quite your previous job? (Select all that apply)
- Low salary / inadequate pay
 - Poor working conditions
 - Lack of career growth / promotion opportunities
 - Conflict with supervisor or coworkers
 - Job was temporary or contract ended
 - Relocation or family reasons
 - Found a better job opportunity
 - Health reasons
 - Company closed or downsized
 - Other (please specify) _____
9. What challenges did you face during this time? (Select all that apply)
- Heavy workload / long working hours
 - Lack of training or support
 - Language barrier or communication issues
 - Unsafe or unhealthy work environment
 - Discrimination or unfair treatment

- Difficult relationship with supervisor or colleagues
 - Difficulty balancing work and personal life
 - Limited job security
 - Inadequate tools or resources to do the job
 - Other (please specify) _____
10. Is your current job related to your past experience or skills?
- Yes
 - No
- If yes, please describe: _____
11. What skills or training did you have before migrating? (Select all that apply)
- Vocational/technical
 - Language (e.g., Thai, English)
 - Business/entrepreneurship
 - None
 - Other: _____
12. Why did you choose your main destination in Thailand? (Select all that apply)
- Family or relatives are there
 - Job opportunities
 - Safety and security
 - Low cost of living
 - Better infrastructure (housing, transport, etc.)
 - Social network or community presence
 - Other: _____
13. Have you received any assistance or support during your migration journey?"
- Government agency
 - NGO
 - Private agent/broker
 - Family/friends
 - None
 - Other: _____

Section 3: Challenges and Risks

1. What challenges did you face during your migration journey? (Select all that apply)
- Travel risks
 - Legal or documentation issues
 - High financial cost
 - Separation from family

- Border checks
 - Other: _____
2. What challenges have you experienced while living or working in Thailand? (Select all that apply)
- Language barrier
 - Discrimination
 - Poor or insecure housing
 - Lack of legal documents
 - Unsafe or unstable work
 - Low wages
 - Lack of access to healthcare or support
 - Other: _____
3. Have political or environmental (climate-related) events in Myanmar influenced your decision to migrate?
- Yes
 - No
- If yes, please explain:
- _____
4. How have recent political events in Myanmar affected your remittance behavior or decision to stay in Thailand?
- Increased remittances (more pressure to send money)
 - Decreased remittances (less income or job insecurity)
 - Changed plans to return to Myanmar
 - Made me decide to stay longer in Thailand
 - No effect
 - Other: _____

Section 4: Skills and Training

1. What kind of training would improve worker performance in your job? (Multiple choice)
- Language
 - Technical
 - Safety/compliance
 - Business process knowledge
 - Digital skills
 - Other: _____
2. Are you interested in learning new skills to improve your job opportunities?
- Yes
 - No
- If yes, what kind of training would be most useful? (Multiple choice)
- Language (Thai/English)

Vocational (e.g., carpentry, sewing)

Digital skills

Business skills

Other: _____

3. Are you aware of any vocational training centers or skill development programs in Thailand for migrant workers?

Yes

No

If yes, name(s): _____

4. Would you consider participating in a government or NGO-supported training program?

Yes

No

Maybe

5. Would you recommend vocational training to other migrant youth?

Yes

No

If yes, why?

If no, why not?

Section 5: Entrepreneurship Potential

1. Have you ever thought of starting your own business in Thailand?

Yes

No

2. If yes, what kind of business would you like to start?

3. What barriers do you face in starting a business? (Select all that apply)

Lack of capital

Legal restrictions

No support network

Market knowledge

Lack of business knowledge

Other: _____

4. What local services or products are in high demand in your area?

(Open-ended or multiple choice)

Food stalls or restaurants

Repair services (phone, appliance, vehicle)

Beauty and personal care services

- Tailoring or garment repair
 - Grocery or convenience stores
 - Mobile phone and internet services
 - Transportation services
 - Childcare or domestic services
 - Language translation services
 - Myanmar cultural or community-based services
 - Other: _____
5. What support would help you start a business in Thailand? (Select all that apply)
- Access to finance
 - Business training
 - Mentorship
 - Legal guidance
 - Networking opportunities
 - Other: _____

Section 6: Financial Services and Remittances

1. Do you send money back to Myanmar regularly?
 - Yes
 - No
2. How often do you send money?
 - Monthly
 - Quarterly
 - Annually
 - Rarely
3. Through which channel do you usually send money? (Multiple choice)
 - Bank transfer
 - Mobile wallet
 - Cash through person
 - Other: _____
4. Have you ever taken out a loan in Thailand?
 - Yes
 - No

If yes, from where? _____
5. Are you aware of any formal financial services or credit options available to migrants in Thailand?
 - Yes
 - No
6. Have you used any of the following financial services in Thailand? (Multiple choice)
 - Opening a bank account

- Sending remittances
 - Receiving salary via digital payment
 - Taking a loan
 - Saving in Thai banks
 - Microfinance
 - Other: _____
7. Which banks or microfinance institutions do you usually interact with? (Select all that apply)
- Kasikornbank (KBank)
 - Bangkok Bank
 - Krung Thai Bank
 - Government Savings Bank
 - CIMB Thai Bank
 - Microfinance institutions (e.g., AFS, VisionFund, Kiatnakin)
 - Digital wallets (e.g., PromptPay, TrueMoney, Rabbit Line Pay)
 - Informal savings groups
 - None
 - Other: _____

Annex C: Questionnaires for Employer

Section 1: Business Profile

1. Name of organization (optional): _____
2. Sector/Industry:
 - Construction
 - Manufacturing (Food production)
 - Domestic work (Vendor Work)
 - Agriculture
 - Services (e.g., retail, hospitality)
 - Other: _____
3. Location(s) of operation:
 - Bangkok
 - Chiang Mai
 - Mae Sot
 - Samut Sakhon
 - Nonthaburi
 - Pathum Thani
 - Ranong
 - Other: _____
4. How many Myanmar migrant workers are currently employed in your business?
 - 1-10
 - 11-50
 - Over 50

Section 2: Labour Needs

5. What types of roles are most difficult to fill with local labor?
(Open-ended or multiple choice if known)
6. Salary range paid for Burmese Labourers
 - Less than 8,000 THB
 - 8,000 - 9,999 THB
 - 10,000 - 11,999 THB
 - 12,000 - 13,999 THB
 - 14,000 - 15,999 THB
 - 16,000 - 17,999 THB
 - 18,000 THB and above

7. Are you currently experiencing labor shortages?

Yes

No

8. What are the main reasons for hiring Myanmar migrant workers? *(Select all that apply)*

Labor shortage

Lower cost

Specific skills

Work ethic/reliability

Other: _____

9. What skill sets are most needed in your industry? *(Select all that apply)*

Technical/vocational skills

Language skills (Thai)

Literacy and numeracy

Physical strength/endurance

Digital literacy

Other: _____

10. Do you see any mismatch between the skills of migrant workers and your business needs?

Yes

No

Not sure

If yes, please explain:

Section 3: Challenges and Workforce Stability

11. What challenges do you face when hiring or retaining migrant workers? *(Select all that apply)*

Legal paperwork

Language barrier

Lack of training

High turnover

Cultural integration

Other: _____

12. Have changes in regional politics, climate, or economic conditions affected your ability to hire or retain migrant workers?

Yes

No

If yes, please explain:

13. Are you concerned about future labor supply due to global or regional disruptions?

- Yes
- No
- Somewhat

Section 4: Skills Gaps and Training

14. Have you provided any training for migrant workers?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what type of training?

- On-the-job
- Safety and compliance
- Language training
- Soft skills
- Other: _____

15. Are you open to hiring migrant youth with training in entrepreneurship or business?

- Yes
- No
- Depends on business type

16. What kind of training would improve worker performance in your business? *(Select all that apply)*

- Language
- Technical
- Safety/compliance
- Business process knowledge
- Digital skills
- Other: _____

17. Would you be open to collaborating with TVET centers or NGOs for training programs?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

18. Are there any formal vocational training programs you currently partner with or recommend for migrant workers?

- Yes
- No

If yes, name(s): _____

19. Would you consider hiring trained youth (e.g., those who completed vocational or digital skills training) for future roles?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

If yes, please specify which types of trained youth you would prefer:

- Vocational/technical skills
- Language skills
- Digital literacy
- Entrepreneurship/business skills
- Financial literacy
- Other: _____

20. What factors would influence your decision to hire trained youth? *(Select all that apply)*

- Availability of skilled workers
- Cost-effectiveness of hiring trained workers
- Government incentives or support
- Referral from training institutions
- Performance track record of trainees
- Industry demand for specific skills
- Other: _____

21. Would you support or participate in a program that trains Myanmar youth for employment in your industry?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

If yes, how could you contribute?

- Provide internships
- Offer mentorship
- Support curriculum design
- Hire graduates
- Other: _____

Section 5: Entrepreneurship and Market Gaps

22. In your opinion, what types of small businesses or services are currently missing in your area that could be filled by migrant entrepreneurs? *(Select all that apply)*

- Food stalls or restaurants
- Repair services (phone, appliance, vehicle)
- Beauty and personal care services
- Tailoring or garment repair

- Grocery or convenience stores
- Mobile phone and internet services
- Transportation services
- Childcare or domestic services
- Language translation services
- Myanmar cultural or community-based services
- Other: _____

23. What kind of small businesses do you think are most needed in your area?
(Optional open-ended response or select from above)

24. Would your business support youth-led entrepreneurship (e.g., supplier partnerships)?

- Yes
 - No
- If yes, how? (Select all that apply)*
- Mentorship
 - Procurement contracts
 - Training
 - Shared resources
 - Other: _____

Section 6: Perspectives on Migration and Entrepreneurship

25. What challenges do you observe migrant workers facing in your industry? *(Select all that apply)*

- Language barriers
- Legal/documentation issues
- Workplace integration
- Productivity gaps
- Limited access to financial services
- Other: _____

26. Would you consider supporting a program that helps migrant youth start small businesses (e.g., as suppliers, service providers)?

- Yes
 - No
- If yes, in what ways? (Select all that apply)*
- Mentorship
 - Providing market access
 - Financial partnerships
 - Business training
 - Other: _____

Section 7: Access to Financial Services

27. Do you assist workers in accessing financial services (e.g., payroll bank accounts)?

Yes

No

28. Have you observed any challenges your employees face regarding savings, loans, or remittances?

Yes

No

If yes, please specify:

29. Which financial institutions do your employees typically use? *(Select all that apply)*

Local banks (e.g., KBank, Bangkok Bank, Krung Thai, Government Savings Bank)

Microfinance institutions (e.g., AFS, VisionFund, Kiatnakin)

Digital wallets (e.g., TrueMoney, Rabbit Line Pay)

Remittance companies

Informal networks

None

Other: _____

30. Have you partnered with any financial institutions to support your workers' access to services like loans or remittances?

Yes

No

If yes, which ones: _____

Annex D: Interview Topics and Key Questions in Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

For Out-of-School Youth Considering Migration

1. Migration Motivation and Decision-Making

- What are the primary factors motivating your consideration to migrate to Thailand? (e.g., income, work experience, opportunities, welfare, political situation, safety)
- How do you anticipate migration will impact your personal life and your family's well-being?
- Who do you consult or depend upon when making decisions about migration?
- Before coming to Thailand, did you have a specific plan or career goal for the kind of work you wanted to do here? If so, what was your goal and what motivated it?

2. Migration Pathways and Preparation

- What migration channels do you plan to use? Are you aware of formal or informal pathways?
- What information or support have you received regarding safe and legal migration?
- Have you undergone any training or skill development in preparation for working abroad?
- Who did you reach out to for assistance or information when you were planning your move to Thailand for work?

3. Awareness and Access to Support Services

- Are you aware of any vocational training or educational programs available to youth like yourself?
- What knowledge do you have about financial services in Thailand, such as bank accounts or remittance options?
- What organizations or community groups do you know that provide support or assistance to migrants?

4. Expectations of Work and Living Conditions

- What type of employment do you expect to secure in Thailand?
- What are your expectations concerning wages, working hours, and overall working conditions?
- What are your anticipated living conditions, including accommodation, healthcare, and general welfare?

5. Perceived Risks and Challenges

- What do you consider the greatest risks or challenges for young migrants like yourself?
- Have you heard any positive or negative experiences from others who have migrated?
- How do you plan to safeguard yourself against potential risks or exploitation?

6. Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

- What skills do you believe are necessary for your employment in Thailand, and are you interested in receiving skill training?

- Do you have plans or aspirations to start your own business or engage in entrepreneurship while in Thailand? If so, what kind of business?
- If you were to start a business in Thailand, what concerns or challenges would you anticipate?

7. Future Aspirations and Support Needs

- If migration does not materialize or is unsuccessful, what alternative plans do you have for your future?
- What types of support or services would be most helpful to you before and after migration?
- How can government agencies or organizations better assist youth who plan to migrate for work?

For Employees (Myanmar Youth Migrants)

1. Migration Patterns and Motivations

- What are the primary motivations for migrating (e.g., income generation, employment opportunities, skills development, political instability, personal safety, or welfare access)?
- Through which formal or informal channels do youth migrate to Thailand?
- What processes do they follow to secure employment upon arrival?
- What were the expenses involved in moving to Thailand? How much did it cost in total, and what did those costs cover? Who paid for or supported these expenses?
- When you first arrived in Thailand, who was the first person or group you contacted? Where did you stay?
- Were there any organizations that supported you during your move to Thailand? If so, how did you find out about them?
- What was your first job after arriving in Thailand? Have you changed jobs since then? If yes, how many times have you changed jobs, and what types of work have you done? What is your current job, and what were the reasons for changing jobs?

2. Living and Working Conditions in Thailand

- How do working conditions in Thailand compare to those in Myanmar, particularly regarding wages, rights, social protection, training opportunities, and leave entitlements?
- What is the quality and affordability of essential living arrangements—such as accommodation, food, recreation, transportation, and shopping?
- What access do migrant youth have to healthcare services?
- How effectively can they access public administration services, including documentation, permits, and official support?
- Have you ever been told or accused by Thai people that you are taking their jobs? If yes, can you describe what happened and how you felt about it?
- Have you ever faced discrimination or unfair treatment at work while in Thailand? What actions did you take? Did anyone assist you? If so, in what way?
- If any organizations have supported you, how did you first learn about them or get in contact with them?

- What concerns or worries do you have about working in Thailand? Which issue is the most difficult or stressful for you right now?

3. Regulatory Barriers and Legal Frameworks

- Have you ever received any information or training to prepare you for working in Thailand? If yes, who provided it or which organization was involved?
- What official documentation, fees, or approvals are required for migrant youth to live and work legally in Thailand?
- How do legal or regulatory frameworks facilitate or obstruct safe migration and access to services?

4. Financial Landscape and Inclusion

- How do migrant youth manage their finances, including depositing or withdrawing funds, sending remittances, borrowing/lending, and dealing with currency exchange?
- What is their access to formal financial institutions, and what types of insurance (if any) are available or utilized?

5. Skills Mismatch and Opportunities for Skill Development

- While working in Thailand, have you ever participated in any vocational training or received further education to improve your job skills? If yes, what type of training did you receive and who provided it?
- To what extent is there a mismatch between existing skills and labor market demands in Thailand?
- What opportunities exist for youth to access vocational training or skill upgrading programs, either before departure or once in Thailand?

6. Entrepreneurship and Self-Employment Potential

- Which types of self-employment or small business activities do you think you could pursue while living in Thailand?
- What conditions enable or hinder youth from starting their own businesses in Thailand?
- What regulatory, financial, or support mechanisms are in place (or lacking) for youth entrepreneurship among migrants?

For Employers

1. Demand for Myanmar Youth Labor

- What is the current level of demand for Myanmar youth labor in your sector?
- What are the key criteria or qualifications you consider when hiring Myanmar youth (e.g., age, education, language skills, experience)?
- Approximately how many Myanmar workers do you currently employ, and do you anticipate increasing or decreasing this number?

2. Skills Mismatch and Opportunities for Skill Development

- What are the essential technical and soft skills required in your business or sector?

- Do you observe a gap between the skills that Myanmar youth bring and the skills required for the job?
- Are workers generally trained before employment, or do you provide on-the-job training?
- What is your preference for recruiting into white-collar vs. blue-collar roles, and how do these roles differ in skill requirements?
- Are there any partnerships or interest in collaborating with training providers or TVET institutions to address skill shortages?

3. Regulatory Challenges in Hiring and Operations

- What rules, policies, or administrative procedures affect your ability to hire and manage Myanmar workers?
- Have you encountered any regulatory barriers that complicate recruitment, documentation, or compliance with labor laws?
- How do changes in migration policy or labor regulations (e.g., MOU agreements, seasonal worker policies) impact your business operations?
- What improvements or support would you recommend to make the recruitment and employment process more efficient and compliant?

For Government Agencies

1. Institutional Role and Objectives Toward Myanmar/Foreign Youth Labor

- What is the mandate or role of your organization in managing or supporting foreign labor, particularly youth from Myanmar?
- Are there specific strategies or policies in place that address the needs of migrant youth or promote youth integration into the labor market?
- How does your organization collaborate with other agencies (e.g., labor departments, immigration, education ministries) to support Myanmar youth workers?
- Do you have any targeted programs or initiatives that focus on skills development, safe migration, or protection for young migrant workers?

2. Policy Outlook and Regulatory Change

- Are there any ongoing or planned changes in labor migration policy that could affect Myanmar youth seeking employment in Thailand?
- How have recent events (e.g., COVID-19, political changes in Myanmar, economic shifts) influenced your department's labor or migration strategies?
- What opportunities exist for improving current regulations to better support youth in accessing legal, safe, and fair employment?
- Are there discussions around improving the MOU process, seasonal labor schemes, or other legal pathways for youth migration?

For Financial Services Providers

1. Financial Services Offered to Migrant Workers

- What types of financial services do you currently offer to migrant workers in Thailand (e.g., remittances, savings accounts, mobile banking, loans, insurance)?
- Are these services designed specifically for foreign workers, or are they part of general product offerings?

2. Access and Barriers for Myanmar Youth

- What are the common challenges faced by Myanmar youth in accessing your services (e.g., documentation requirements, language, digital literacy)?
- Do your services cater to undocumented or irregular migrant workers, and if so, how?
- How do financial regulations (e.g., KYC rules) affect access to accounts or remittances for migrant youth?

3. Financial Behavior and Needs of Migrant Youth

- What are the typical financial habits or behaviors observed among young Myanmar migrant clients (e.g., saving, remitting, borrowing)?
- What are their main reasons for using financial services (e.g., sending money home, saving for education or business, emergency expenses)?
- Do you observe seasonal variations in financial activity, such as during festivals or remittance peaks?

4. Financial Literacy and Client Support

- Does your organization provide any financial education or literacy programs for migrant clients?
- Are there partnerships with community organizations, NGOs, or employers to improve migrant youth's financial knowledge and access?
- What forms of outreach or communication are most effective in engaging migrant communities?

5. Product Innovation and Inclusion

- Have you developed or considered developing financial products tailored to migrant youth (e.g., low-fee remittances, micro-insurance, business loans)?
- Are there any digital platforms or mobile applications designed to make financial services more accessible to migrants?
- What innovations could further support the financial inclusion of Myanmar youth in Thailand?

6. Cross-Border Financial Services and Regulation

- What is your perspective on the ease or difficulty of providing cross-border financial services to Myanmar (e.g., remittances, cross-border transfers)?
- Are there regulatory or operational challenges in facilitating safe, affordable, and transparent remittance services?

- How do currency exchange rates and transaction fees impact your migrant clients?

For NGOs, Labor Rights Groups, and TVET Service Providers

1. NGOs Supporting Migrant Youth

Organizational Role and Objectives

- Can you describe your organization's mission and objectives related to Myanmar and other foreign youth labor?
- What key roles does your organization play in supporting migrant youth, particularly those from Myanmar?

Outreach and Identification

- How do you identify and reach out to migrant youth, especially undocumented or vulnerable individuals?
- What are the main challenges migrant youth face in accessing your services?

Collaboration and Partnerships

- Do you collaborate with other NGOs, government agencies, or community groups to enhance support for migrant youth? If so, how?

Advocacy and Policy Engagement

- How does your organization advocate for the rights and welfare of Myanmar youth laborers at local, national, or international levels?
- What recommendations would you make for policy or regulatory changes to better protect and support Myanmar youth in labor migration?

Program Impact and Gaps

- Can you share any successful programs or interventions your organization has implemented?
- What gaps or unmet needs exist in the current support system for migrant youth?
- What additional benefits do employers gain by hiring young people from Myanmar?

2. Labor Rights Groups

Organizational Role and Objectives

- What are the primary roles and objectives of your group regarding Myanmar and foreign youth labor rights?
- How does your organization engage with youth migrant workers to safeguard their labor rights?

Labor Rights Challenges and Monitoring

- What are the major labor rights issues faced by Myanmar migrant youth in Thailand?
- How does your organization monitor and document labor violations affecting youth migrants?

Reporting and Legal Assistance

- What mechanisms exist for migrant youth to report abuses or access legal support? How effective are these channels?

Enforcement and Advocacy

- How effective is the enforcement of labor laws in protecting Myanmar youth migrant workers?
- What advocacy strategies does your group employ to promote improved labor protections?

Stakeholder Engagement and Policy Recommendations

- How do you engage with employers, government agencies, or international organizations to advance labor rights?
- What policy or regulatory reforms would you recommend to enhance protections for Myanmar youth migrant laborers?

Barriers and Challenges

- What specific barriers hinder protection of undocumented or irregular migrant youth workers?
- What are the biggest challenges that Myanmar youth face when working in Thailand?

3. TVET Service Providers

Training Programs and Services

- What types of vocational training programs does your organization offer specifically for Myanmar migrant youth?
- How do you identify the skill needs of migrant youth when designing your training programs?
- Are your training programs adapted to meet the labor market demands in Thailand, particularly for migrant workers?

Access and Barriers

- What challenges do Myanmar migrant youth face in accessing your TVET services (e.g., language barriers, documentation, financial constraints)?
- How does your organization address these access barriers?

Partnerships and Collaboration

- Do you collaborate with other organizations, such as NGOs, employers, or government agencies, to facilitate training or job placement for migrant youth?
- How are these partnerships structured and what roles do different partners play?

Referral and Outreach

- What referral mechanisms exist to connect migrant youth to your training programs?
- How do you reach out to out-of-school youth or those living near border areas who may benefit from your services?

Curriculum Relevance and Quality

- How do you ensure that your training curriculum is relevant to the current and future labor market needs?
- What quality assurance measures are in place to maintain the standard of your TVET programs?

Outcomes and Impact

- How do you track the employment or entrepreneurial outcomes of youth who complete your training programs?
- Can you share any success stories or challenges regarding the integration of trained youth into the labor market?

Support Services

- Beyond training, do you provide or facilitate additional support services (e.g., career counseling, job placement assistance, financial literacy)?
- How do you support migrant youth in overcoming challenges related to migration and work?

For Labor Recruitment Agencies

1. Business Model and Role in the Myanmar Labor Market

- Can you describe your agency's business model and core services related to labor recruitment?
- What is your role in the recruitment process for Myanmar workers migrating to Thailand?
- Do you focus on specific sectors (e.g., agriculture, construction, manufacturing), and why?
- How do you ensure ethical recruitment practices and compliance with both Myanmar and Thai regulations?
- Are there any mandatory fees or expenses you had to pay to legally work in Thailand? If so, how much did they total?

2. Migration Patterns

- What trends have you observed in labor migration from Myanmar, particularly among youth?
- What are the most common regions or communities from which you recruit workers?
- Are there differences in migration patterns between documented and undocumented pathways?

3. Ease of Hiring and Deploying Myanmar Labor

- What are the main challenges in the recruitment and placement of Myanmar workers in Thailand?
- How long does it typically take to complete the recruitment process under the MOU or other schemes?
- Are employers generally open to hiring young workers, and what preferences do they express?

4. Regulatory Constraints and Impacts

- What legal or administrative barriers affect the recruitment, migration, or placement of workers?
- How do current policies (e.g., documentation, fees, processing time) impact the flow of Myanmar workers to Thailand?

- Are there any aspects of Thai labor law or migration policy that hinder long-term employment or integration of Myanmar youth?

5. Employer Demand

- What types of jobs are most in demand by Thai employers seeking Myanmar labor?
- Are employers increasingly seeking skilled, semi-skilled, or unskilled labor?
- What feedback do you receive from employers regarding the quality, reliability, or skill readiness of Myanmar workers?
- Are there emerging sectors or business opportunities where youth employment could be promoted?
- Which types of jobs do you believe Myanmar migrants excel at and should be encouraged to pursue in Thailand?

