

Experiences of Myanmar Migrants



CSO-NET

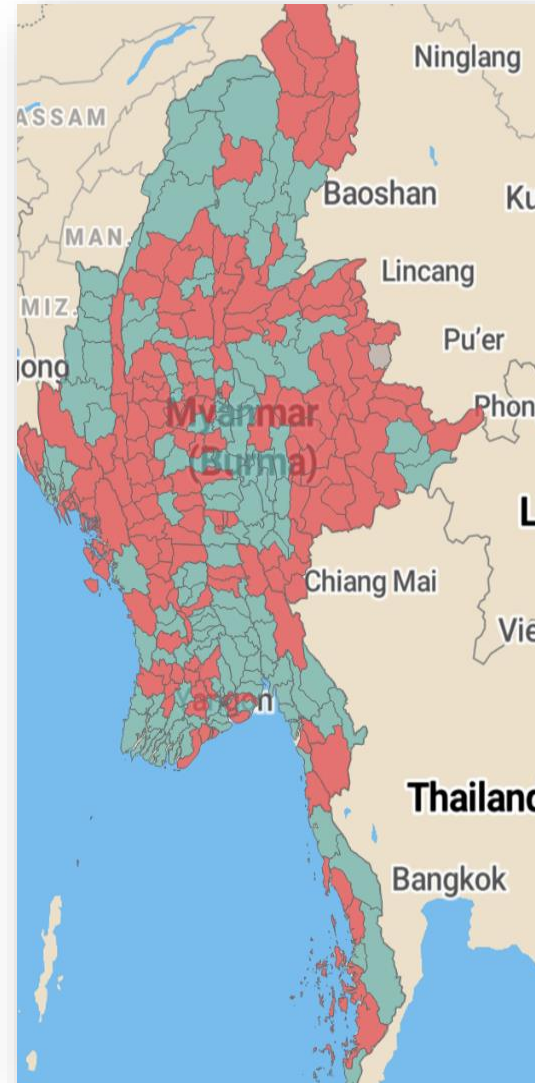
(CSO Network to End Human Trafficking)

Background of CSO-NET

- ✓ Formed since March 2016 after the capacity building training on Case Management and Counseling for Trafficking Survivors
- ✓ Aiming to address issues relating to migration and human trafficking in a timely and coordinated manner
- ✓ A growing network of 24 CSOs empowering job seekers and exploited returnees
- ✓ Conducting training workshops and monthly meeting for better coordination and networking

Geographical coverage of CSO-NET

- outreach activities conducted in 53 townships across 12 states and regions
- Over 6000 job seekers received safe migration information and many referred to progressive recruitment agencies and safer jobs
- Over 500 community educators/ ambassadors identified and trained



Jobseekers Outreach and Education



Remediation for exploited workers



Networking & Capacity Building



Coordination with MOEAF and recruitment agencies on Ethical Recruitment



Why migrate?

- Limited job opportunity
- Low and irregular income level
- Better job opportunity and higher income in neighboring countries
- Being pushed by parents and family to migrate
- Peer pressure
- Persuasion of brokers

How they find job?

- Local brokers
- Influential and trusted persons
- Current migrants (family members and friends)
- Returned migrants becoming brokers and offering jobs as they are being asked by employers to look for new workers
- Facebook and social media advertisement (including Facebook pages run by illegal brokers)
- Empowered job seekers contacting recruitment agencies by phone, Facebook, in persons
- Contacting CSOs and CSO ambassadors
- Labor offices

Challenges faced by job seekers

- Not understanding legal/MOU process and cost breakdown
- Not having information of registered/blacklist recruitment agencies
- False promises by brokers (eg. high OT, easy job, changing job)
- Lack of required documents, knowledge and skill
- Accessibility of updated information, documentation, legal channels
- Lack of confidence towards themselves and the legal process
- Lack of trust to recruitment agencies
- Lengthy process – too long to wait so being cheated by brokers
- Debt with high interest rate – many paid high amount up front
- Being controlled and treated badly by brokers
- Payments are being made without any evidences
- Pre-departure training: not having complete and useful information such as, working condition, required skills, salary/OT, accommodation, rights and responsibilities, etc.

Experiences in destination countries

- Language barriers and not having professional translators/ translations at the workplace to understand the job requirements, rules, nature of job, announcement, payment system/ pay slip, deductions, etc.
- Violations of (bilateral) employment contract (piece rate, forced to work in other, changing job locations, probation period)
- Delayed and incorrect payments, and illegal deductions
- Higher vulnerability at remote workplaces such as, fishing vessels, farms, rubber plantations, construction
- Document retention and being destroyed so become undocumented
- Lack of effective complaint and grievance mechanism of factory, recruitment agencies & MOEAF, and government
- Frequently changing government regulations

Return Process

- Workers not understanding return process
- Bilateral agreement states that return costs to be covered by employer but it is not happening in reality
- Very few returns facilitated by employers and recruitment agencies hence, workers faced a lot of issues and challenges (eg. cheated by broker, arrested on the way)
- Workers do not know the return process so using illegal channel without knowing the consequences

Recommendations

- Incentivizing ethical recruitment agencies and responsible suppliers/employers
- Direct recruitment and engagement between recruitment agencies and employers
- Effective skill training and pre-departure session
- Certification for skilled workers for better job opportunity
- Solutions and actions based on worker voice and worker feedback, and CSOs' experiences on the ground
- Continuous support and ongoing sharing between different stakeholders (global brands/buyers, suppliers, recruitment agencies, INGOs/CSOs, governments)

THANK YOU...