



Photo by Isabel Ball

MAP Foundation Annual Report 2017



Our Vision

Migrant workers from Myanmar (Burma) are able to fully access their rights and services without discrimination and have a decent quality of life.



Article 64
of the Special Economic Zone law allows border residents to enter Thailand and work for 3 months at a time. This makes migrants even more temporary and exploitable. It gives employers an easier option than complying with the Royal Ordinance on Foreign Worker Management.

“We got the temporary passports. My temporary passport was valid for another 7 months but they told me to change it to a pink card. The pink card costs 7,500 baht and the employer didn’t help. The employer asks us to apply with the broker. We’ve still not paid back that 7,500 baht and we have been told we have to get a Certificate of Identity (C.I.). So now we’re applying for a C.I. Then they say we must apply for a work permit 50 days after we get the C.I., if not the C.I. will be invalid.

To get a work permit we have to get a document from the employer, but he didn’t give me the original, only a copy. So now I’m tired, and on Monday I’m not sure if I have to contact the broker. It’s expensive. To apply for the work permit costs 100 baht if we do it ourselves, or 2500 baht through the broker.”

Khin Ma Soe, Women Exchange Leader.

1,798,799 migrants had registered under the “Pink card for 3 nationalities” and the bilateral agreement between Thailand and neighbouring countries (MOU) by December 2017:

Pink card: 1,248,611
(707,361 men; 541,250 women)

MOU: 582,726
(330,857 men; 251,869 women)

Migrant Policy

Despite challenging new policies and laws, MAP continued its work promoting migrants’ rights and protecting migrants from unfair working conditions and other rights violations.

The major change in the policy environment was at the end of June 2017, when the National Council for Peace and Order issued a Royal Ordinance on Foreign Worker Management. This was the third change in migrant policy since 2014. This royal decree called for strictly enforcing fines and jail terms for employers who hire undocumented migrants and imposed similar penalties for undocumented or improperly documented migrants. Over 60,000 migrants fled back to Myanmar out of fear of arrest. Many did not receive their last wages or severance pay. Soon after, in part due to public outcry, the government suspended the ordinance with a royal waiver and extended the Certificate of Identity registration process until the end of the year. This policy change yet again forced migrants to focus on document registration and gave a free pass to employers to terminate their undocumented workers without penalty

Due to the centralized policy decision making process and the current military government, the ability to affect policy is limited. Nevertheless, MAP used its local, regional, and national networks to raise migrants’ voices and experiences to advocate for migrants’ rights and policy change ■

Migrants waiting at registration broker office, Chiang Mai. Photograph by Matthew Sherwood.





Labor Rights for All

Migrant workers receive labour rights protections equal to Thai workers without discrimination and are able to access recourse mechanisms.



Raising Awareness

1,250 migrant workers attended five different advocacy events, including International Women's Day, May Day, International Domestic Workers Day, a seminar on Occupational Safety and Health, and International Migrants' Day in Chiang Mai and Maesot. These advocacy events were organized by MAP and the "Northern Labour Network," which has fifteen partner organizations including migrant worker groups. The network acts as an advocacy body to the provincial government, amplifying migrant workers' voices.

Through activities and social media, migrant domestic workers reported to MAP that they had increased awareness of their rights and felt more confident. Some domestic workers even demanded increased wages but were rebuffed by their employers; some were even fired with the response, "If you don't like it, there are more waiting in line behind you", which is something migrants are often told. Attitudes like this need to be addressed but must be supported with policy change. MAP, along with a CSO contingent, raised the issue at the ASEAN Forum on Migrant Labour in the Philippines entitled, "Towards Achieving Decent Work for Domestic Workers in ASEAN", where recommendations on how to improve domestic workers' rights through policy reform were made.

As part of MAP's mission to build evidence based advocacy, MAP conducted research on the following issues: the perception of domestic worker's value to society, and the health effects on migrant workers exposed to pesticides in agriculture. As another part of MAP's advocacy strategy, MAP participates in informal networks. In Maesot, there are case management meetings with local officials and employers' associations every six months or so, while in Chiang Mai, along with members from the Northern Labour Network, MAP participates in a similar advisory committee led by the Provincial Ministry of Labour.

The "Safe Migration" network of local organizations was initiated by MAP and developed with our partner Mawk Kon in Shan State. The collaboration resulted in the set up of a drop-in center at Tachilek which reached out to 200 migrants or potential migrants over just a couple of months. The network is awaiting the next round of funding to continue the TOT and related activities, and expand the reach of the network.



The LRA programme keeps workers up to date and broadcasts on MAP Radio regularly. 1,105 calls were received during this programming in 2017.

Outreach

161 workers (61% women) called the Migrant Line, MAP's hotline in Shan language, to ask for advice, clarification on policies, and legal assistance.

LRA uses activities which are designed to provide increasingly specific information as migrant community members involvement increases over time through outreach visits, Labour exchanges and Labour appointments. These activities were conducted in Chiang Mai, Maesot, Bangkok, Ranong, Phuket, Surat Thanni, and Songkla. The topics covered included labour rights, migrant policy updates, safe migration/ anti-trafficking, domestic workers rights, and occupational health and safety. In 2017, LRA reached 3,971 migrants employed in the construction, factories, domestic work and agriculture with activities.

Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) activities were rejuvenated in 2017. The Chiang Mai chapter focused on construction workers, while the Mae Sot chapter focused on factory workers. The Mae Sot project bolstered the capacity of three local partners, including migrant workers groups, to be able to promote OHS among garment factory workers. The partners received training of trainer activities and then disseminated this information to workers in garment factories. A POSH (Promoting Occupational Safety and Health) corner was established successfully in a migrant community in Mae Sot, but was unsuccessful in Chiang Mai. Another attempt will be made in Chiang Mai supported by peer educators.



Photo by Matthew Sherwood

Peer Educators, Paralegals, and Legal Assistance

After 312 migrant domestic workers underwent training to become peer educators, there are now four domestic worker groups and leaders in key locations. These groups discuss policy changes amongst themselves and with MAP, and give advice to other migrant domestic workers on dealing with employers and officials. In Mae Sot, 191 men and 26 women migrant workers participated in peer educator training activities on anti-trafficking/safe migration/migrant rights. One group also attended a training given by the Legal Assistance to Victims of Trafficking Coalition (LAC). Peer educator training activities on OHS among construction workers included 63 men and 101 women participants.

MAP helped migrants recover 1.6 million Baht in unpaid wages.

MAP continued to give a series of paralegal trainings to build first line responders in the community – a step beyond simply being a peer educator. This year in Mae Sot, 23 men and 42 women migrants received training as paralegals. In Chiang Mai, 16 men and 30 women migrants completed paralegal training facilitated in collaboration with Chiang Mai University Faculty of Law. Not only can paralegals provide advice, they can assist in preparing cases and filing them directly to officials. As necessary, they can also request assistance and refer cases to MAP or our legal network affiliates if legal assistance is needed from a lawyer.

In 2017, MAP gave legal advice to 1,024 migrants in Chiang Mai and in Mae Sot. Through MAP's direct legal assistance, more than 13 cases were brought before the courts on labour rights violations, assisting 935 complainants. Most cases related to wage theft or being laid off without forewarning or severance pay. Most complainants were from garment factories, and were women. Five cases were resolved paying out a total of 1.67 million Baht to over 85 workers.

LRA in action

"We found out MAP helps migrant workers when we attended a Labour Appointment activity. When I faced trouble, I decided to go to MAP. After MAP gave me legal advice about criminal law and legal processes, I felt confident that if I was to use a legal process, I had to fight all the way. I knew that MAP did not take on criminal cases so MAP took me to another migrant workers assistance centre. I have never met a lawyer in my life, but there was a lawyer that helped for free. Meanwhile MAP helped with transportation to the police station, to the court, and supported me during each steps of the case procedure. If MAP had not helped, we would have been sent to prison for a long time without having done anything wrong. The three other people and I are very satisfied with the service we received because without MAP our families would have faced hardship. This experience taught us about the law, and even if we don't know everything, we know enough to be able to advise others."

Mr. Yasin, Maesot.

After receiving training by MAP, a group of 20 migrants formed their own team of paralegal to provide assistance to workers in Maesot area.



May Day march at Chiang Mai City Hall.

Workers painting building in Chiang Kian, Chiang Mai. Photograph by Matthew Sherwood.





Rights For All

Migrant women, children, youth, and migrants in crisis have knowledge & capacity on how to receive their rights and access health, education and legal status services.



Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

Adolescent migrants, youth and their parents in the Mae Sot area received sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) information on Adolescent Health, Reproductive Health, Family Planning, HIV/AIDS and STIs. MAP gave activities at Thai public schools and migrant learning centres and targeted migrants working in garment factories and in the local prison. In total, MAP reached 1,032 male and 1,731 female migrants between the ages of 10 and 25, of which two thirds were young women. MAP shifted from drop-in center based counselling to counselling services by volunteers, with 211 migrants receiving counselling on SRHR and 2,905 packs of birth control packages and 1,600 condoms distributed. These activities contributed to a discernable drop in the numbers of unwanted teen pregnancies.

Youth volunteers were given training and now broadcast a weekly program on adolescent sexual and reproductive health on MAP Radio 102.5 in Mae Sot. This year, the adolescent health program broadcasted 65 times. Topics ranged from standard SRHR issues to women's health, contraception practices, body changes at adolescence, and more sensitive issues, such as gay health, delayed menstruation, miscarriage symptoms, and condom use. There were over 119 calls received during broadcasts with questions.

In Mae Sot, MAP also had activities with parents to discuss the relationship they had with their children, how they talk with and listen to their children, and how they discuss SRHR among the family. Parents shared that they know the consequences of having sex without protection and the risks of abortion, and as a result have increasingly allowed their children access to our activities. This year, MAP reached 217 men and 988 women migrants in the community who are parents with interventions on adolescent SRHR.

MAP reached 200 migrants in prison by providing activities on SRHR. Through this intervention MAP helped connect prisoners with their families. Many more migrants in prison need to be reached with support services.



Pictured: Women Exchange meeting, Mahachai.

WE in action

Ma Htwe is a mature woman who worked as a domestic worker in Bangkok for 18 years. She attended multiple Women Exchange events and became a community leader in Bangkok.

After saving up her money, Ma Htwe returned home to Taunggyi, a city in southern Shan state. She used the skills she had learned as a migrant in Thailand to start her own ice cream business. Now she supports her family and has broken the cycle of migration.

As she transitioned back into life in Burma, she desired to use the leadership skills that Women Exchange had taught her. She started volunteering for the Red Cross and the Southern Shan State Women's Organization Network. As one of the first members of Women Exchange, Ma Htwe's story is an inspiration for other migrant women.



Pictured: Women preparing to march on International Women's Day, WE Annual Get Together event, Chiang Mai.

Migrant Women's Empowerment

MAP supported 12 migrant "Women Exchange" (WE) groups throughout Thailand. These Women's Exchange groups are women-only spaces where migrant women learn about their rights, share experiences and problems, and solve them together. The Women's Exchange Program has provided migrant women with knowledge about their rights and crisis management and has linked them with a network of organizations in their communities in case they need assistance. The WE program reached over 1,300 women in 2017 alone. Topics discussed included sexual and reproductive health and rights, living wage, women's economic rights, and labor protection law — as requested by each WE group. Leaders of the different groups attended two Training of Trainers which included topics on leadership, facilitation and counseling skills, stress management, and speaking as a representative of the group. As a result, nine new women leaders emerged in the WE groups.

The Women's Exchange Program also teaches women to resist domestic and sexual violence, including how to use the Automatic Response Mechanism (ARM). ARM outlines ten steps in response to a case of sexual and/or domestic violence in the migrant community and covers how to report incidents and access appropriate services for support regardless of documentation status. In 2017, MAP assisted 6 cases of domestic violence and 1 rape case.

MAP held its annual WE Get Together in March 2017, which brought together over 100 women from WE groups from around Thailand and from within Myanmar. The theme was "Women Own the Change" and included skills-building workshops on a variety of topics. Participants from the WE Get Together joined in solidarity with the "Chiang Mai Women's Organizations Network" to march on International Women's Day in Chiang Mai. The network includes a range of groups, from indigenous peoples, to differently-abled women, sex workers, PLHIV, LGBT, and ethnic minority groups. It is an empowering action for migrant women to demonstrate their strength publicly in this way and builds their confidence as leaders.

The Women Exchange program has a cross-border network with women's groups in Myanmar called WE+. This year the MAP team, along with two WE leaders living in Thailand, visited a number of organizations in Myanmar to find out more about their services and how they assist women in Myanmar, and to build linkages with them. They also visited women in Dtawei and Taunggyi who previously participated in WE but have returned home and organized their own activities.

MAP also completed a Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR) on "A Living Wage for Migrant Women." A video and policy brief in various languages which shows how women's documentation status undermines their security and the ability to even secure a minimum wage will be released early 2018.



Firehandling training at a Migrant Learning Center

1,460

Migrant women received information on womens' rights and health

2,963

Youths accessed information on Sexual Reproductive Health Rights

489

Children received scholarships from kindergarten up to university level

1,205

Parents received information about adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health Rights



Education, Identification, and Disaster Preparedness

By awarding small scholarships, MAP assisted 489 migrant students to attend school at various grade levels. These included 437 children (approximately 50% girls) in kindergarten and primary school; 28 children in secondary level, 22 students in vocational school, and 2 students in University, one of whom graduated in 2017. In order to ensure migrant children stay in school, MAP encourages parents to form support groups, and acts as a bridge between migrant parents and Thai schools. This builds better understanding, acceptance and integration of migrant children. In collaboration with a partner organization, MAP also met with directors from Thai government schools in the Mae Sot area and encouraged the schools to continue enrolling migrant students.

Together with an extensive network of partners working on child rights and protection, we organised Children's Day events and held activities for youth and children on internet safety in Maesot and Chiang Mai. Through the network, MAP is also able to refer cases and receive capacity building on topics such as Gender Based Violence and Child Protection.

As part of the Safe School project, which aims to increase disaster preparedness in schools, MAP has been working with students and teachers in three Migrant Learning Centers (MLC) in Mae Sot to assess and prepare for natural disasters. This year, a game to learn about risk mitigation was translated into Burmese and distributed to two different MLCs. Posters on earthquakes, forest fires, landslides, drought and natural disasters, were produced in Burmese and distributed. MAP also teamed up with the Mae Sot Fire Department to teach children and teachers about fire and what safety protocols to follow in the event of a school fire.

Crisis Support

Our Crisis Support program assisted 209 individuals (50% women), of which 145 were of working age, 50 were children, and 14 were over the age of fifty-five. Half had no health coverage, and 45 had no identity documents. There were 27 victims of traffic accidents in which 4 people died, 5 victims of work accidents, and 12 who suffered from other health conditions such as cancer, stroke, skin diseases, HIV, and injuries from violence. Because accidents often leave families without main breadwinners, MAP assisted 36 people who were previously disabled in accidents by supporting them and their dependents with basic necessities. Crisis support also accompanied migrants to register births and deaths.



Injured worker putting on back brace, construction camp, Chiang Mai.

Bottom left and right: Photo by Matthew Sherwood



Community Health and Empowerment

Migrant workers of all occupations and documentation status are able to prevent and access treatment for HIV, Tuberculosis and other infectious diseases according to their health rights without discrimination.



Advocacy

As part of local advocacy, MAP negotiated with local hospitals in Chiang Mai province to provide anti-retroviral treatment to undocumented migrants. On World AIDS Day, MAP joined events with networks in Mae Sot and Chiang Mai to decrease stigma and discrimination against vulnerable communities.

At the international level, MAP, representing CARAM Asia, attended the second Global Consultation on Migrant Health in Colombo where issues of non-discrimination, access to anti-retroviral treatment (ART) regardless of documentation status, and migrant-sensitive health testing were raised.

As the co-chair of JUNIMA (Joint UN Initiative on Migration, Health and HIV in Asia), MAP also attended the UNESCAP “Asia Pacific Meeting on the Global Compact on Migration,” in Bangkok and spoke at a side meeting to promote the inclusion of migrant health into the Global Compact.

“Even though MAP staff are not my family, they care for me and encourage me to fight to get a better life”. When this 49 year old positive woman from the Hi-Exchange group became seriously sick, MAP assisted while her Thai husband booked her funeral at the temple in advance. She has outlived him.

“Had I not met MAP, I might be dead now.” This 49 year old HIV positive man intended to return home to die. His condition was dire. MAP secured treatment and at present his health has improved and he is able to work again as normal.



Pictured: Voluntary HIV testing Mobile clinic at Mae Teng Elephant Camp, Chiang Mai

HIV & Tuberculosis Testing and Treatment

MAP significantly increased awareness in the migrant community about HIV and tuberculosis (TB) and provided testing and referral to treatment. The team focused on reaching migrants in construction and factories in 15 districts of Chiang Mai province. HIV prevention outreach activities reached 3,580 migrants (56% women), and distributed 106,973 condoms. Through the mobile HIV clinic, in partnership with local hospitals and the Provincial Public Health Office, 975 migrants tested for HIV (58% women). Another 237 migrants tested at our Health Testing Centre, which has rapid and highly accurate HIV testing equipment and tests for syphilis, hepatitis B and C. This year, a total of 11 new cases of HIV and 7 cases of syphilis were found.

MAP outreach to raise awareness on TB reached 2,041 migrants (57% women), while over 7,956 migrant workers were screened for recent symptoms through our mobile TB clinic. Ten people with TB symptoms were then sent for further clinical testing, and 4 new cases were identified and referred for treatment. All mobile clinics and anything clinical was done in cooperation with local health authorities, namely, the Center for the Control of STI and Tuberculosis, and local hospitals.

As part of the supportive environment to access health rights, MAP developed Migrant Health Volunteers (MHV) in the community. These volunteers help with follow-up of individuals on treatment, help coordinate mobile clinics, and assist with outreach activities. This past year, 54 MHVs received training.

MAP also meets with a group of migrant PLHIV (Persons Living with HIV) to provide emotional support, check on members' well-being and promote adherence to treatment. The group has 60 members, mostly women, three of whom are new members. This year they started their own savings group to act as a financial resource in case of emergencies.



Pictured: Filling forms for patient at Tuberculosis Center, Chiang Mai.



MAP Multimedia

Migrants are able to access up-to-date news and accurate information on their rights in migrant languages through various media channels.



Radio and Communications

	Maesot 102.5 FMHz	Chiang Mai 99 FMHz
Weekly Programmes	44	41
Languages	Majority in Burmese, some in Thai, Arakan, and Karen.	Majority in Shan, some in Thai, Northern Thai and Burmese
DJs	41 (21 men and 20 women)	36 (16 men, 20 women)
Radio Listeners	13,310	97,480
On line listeners	2,237	16,457
Call ins	2,400	19,496

MAP Radio has been part of the migrant community in Chiang Mai and Mae Sot for over 14 years. It's a source of information, news and entertainment which is easily accessible in migrant languages. The radio is accessible on FM, online and on facebook. It's interactive and listeners can write or call-in. Some ask for clarity on issues and share their experience, others request songs. MAP also uses the radio to connect people in need, back home and in the community. This past year our listenership was estimated to 155,515 listeners in Chiang Mai and 15,591 in Maesot. Maesot radio received 44 letters which were read and answered weekly on live broadcast.

Through outreach feedback sessions called "listener panels," many listeners indicated they use phones to listen to the radio stream, and many listen while at work. MAP in Chiang Mai also continued its Shan language broadcasts on the National Public Radio Thailand channel AM 1476 KHz, which reaches into Shan State. Daily views on Facebook live were between 2-3,000 views each time.

Reflecting the nature of being a community radio these programmes are broadcasted by 77 DJs, from MAP staff, other local CBOs and NGOs, migrant workers, some Thai nationals, and an immigration officer. Some highlights this year in our programming included the addition of a youth led program and live music. Another highlight was entering into a partnership with BBC Media Action in Myanmar / Burma to broadcast the "Yay Kyi Yar" program about migration.

At the very end of 2017, MAP secured new transmitters, stabilizers, microphones, and mixers for our two radio stations. It was the first time the original equipment was replaced since the radio stations first opened. It was essential to get the new equipment before the inspection and licensing at the beginning of the year.

MAP Multimedia produced and distributed the last in its series of magazines called "Daily Living," in Shan and Burmese languages. Each version printed 1,000 copies. Contents covered information related to integration and rights. In Mae Sot, MAP started a small library called the "102.5 library" for migrant workers at the Moi River Thai-Myanmar border where publications from local organizations are available, as well as information from the Tak Immigration and Social Security offices. The highly prized "Migrant Diary" in Burmese and Shan languages was widely distributed including by mail to partners in Shan state.

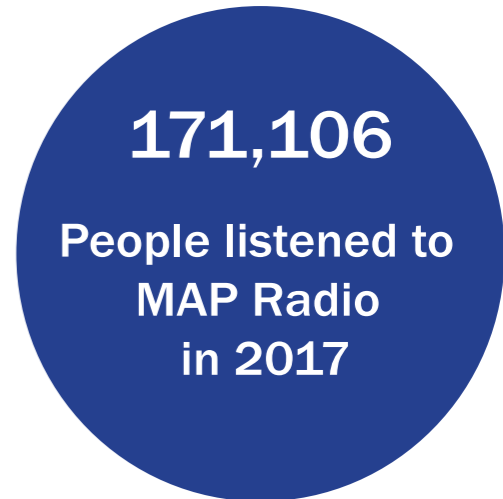


Capacity Building

"MAP radio is like our best friend"; listening to MAP Radio is "like reading a book - it's our source of knowledge" said Maesot listeners.

MAP constantly supports its volunteer DJs through capacity building trainings in both locations. This year, Mae Sot's capacity building training included a presentation by the famous writer Saya Soe Nay Line on writing skills. MAP also conducted a training workshop on basic radio skills and news summary in Mong Shu, Shan State in Myanmar, for 28 broadcasters (57% women) at an independent station which broadcasts in Shan language.

The Shan Media Group was formed during this past year and MAP was a key initiator. In June, a "Shan Media Network Consultation Meeting" was held in Chiang Mai with 34 participants from different news agencies in Burma and Thailand. At the consultation, the group decided to officially form the Shan Media Association to cooperate through sharing news sources and capacity building. The network aims to unify Shan language for better promotion and dissemination of Shan culture through media in Shan State, Chiang Mai, and Bangkok. The next step is to draft a constitution.



Donors

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CCFD – Terre Solidaire
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