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International Labour Organization

# PROJECT OVERVIEW AND PARTNERSHIPS

## COMBATING THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOUR IN SHRIMP AND SEAFOOD PROCESSING AREAS OF THAILAND

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## The project

The Thai fisheries industry is of vital importance to Thailand's economy. In terms of total catch, Thailand is one of the world's top ten fishing nations. According to the FAO , in 2010 Thailand ranked third (behind China and Norway) out of the top-ten exporters of fish and fisheries products, with a value of US\$7 billion (up from US\$4 billion in 2000). Tuna, shrimp and fish are the main fishery products exported.

Work in the fisheries sector is labour intensive, providing job opportunities not only for large numbers of Thai citizens, but also attracts many migrant workers from neighbouring countries, especially Myanmar, Lao PDR and Cambodia. Overall, it is estimated that the fisheries sector creates employment for more than 2 million workers in fishing, processing, and related economic sectors.

A 2012 ILO-IPEC study on child labour conducted by the project in 4 seafood producing provinces established an average child labour prevalence rate amongst 5-17 years olds to be 9.9%. In Samut Sakhon, one of the biggest seafood industry hubs in Thailand, the prevalence rate rose to 12.7%. The fact that 36.2% of economically active children aged 15-17 identified in this research project were employed in hazardous conditions reaffirms the strong need for improved protection of young workers.

The survey also uncovered child labour occurring in other industries, such as agriculture (rubber plantations, farming), services, child domestic work and assisting in small informal family processing or manufacturing businesses. Both Thai and migrant children were found in hazardous child labour conditions, with both boys and girls equally affected.

The ILO-IPEC project in Thailand aims to help create an industry that is free of child labour and forced labour and offers decent working conditions and opportunities in the future. It focuses on selected geographical hubs for shrimp and seafood processing such as Samut Sakhon, Samut Prakan, Surat Thani, Nakhon Si Thammarat and Songkhla.

This four-year initiative (2010-14) is funded by the United States Department of Labor (USDOL).

The objective of the project is to:

- Strengthen policy and implementation frameworks to protect the rights of Thai, migrant and stateless children in relation to labour, education, employment and social protection;
- Ensure enterprises throughout the shrimp industry supply chain comply with national labour laws and international labour standards, in particular those relating to child labour and forced labour, and to introduce good practices to improve working conditions; and
- Provide accessible education, social protection and livelihood services to migrant and Thai children and their families in targeted shrimp industry areas.

In partnership with various stakeholders, the project endeavours to produce the following outcomes:

- Establish systems to prevent child labour and forced labour in shrimp and seafood processing sector industries;
- Increase compliance with national labour laws;
- Augment the enterprise labour inspection processes in seafood and shrimp processing supply chain and increase registration rates;
- Direct education and livelihoods services provided to Thai and migrant communities in need;
- Improve protection and wellbeing for young workers aged 15-17;
- Better protection and welfare for migrant workers;
- Better regulation of recruitment practices;
- Better overall working conditions for all workers;
- Better communication and social dialogue at the enterprise level; and
- Facilitate multi-stakeholder engagement to improve working conditions in the shrimp sector.



MAP OF KEY SEAFOOD INDUSTRY AREAS IN THAILAND

## A. Key Areas of Work

### What is meant by child labour?

In the most recent ILO-IPEC Report “Marking progress against child labour - Global estimates and trends 2000-2012 (ILO-IPEC, 2013)” the Global number of children in child labour is estimated to be 168 million children. More than half of them, 85 million, are in hazardous work. Asia and the Pacific still has the largest numbers (almost 78 million or 9.3% of child population), but Sub-Saharan Africa continues to be the region with the highest incidence of child labour (59 million, over 21%). There are 13 million (8.8%) of children in child labour in Latin America and the Caribbean and in the Middle East and North Africa there are 9.2 million (8.4%).

Agriculture remains by far the most important sector where child labourers can be found (98 million, or 59%), but child labour is also found in services (54 million) and industry sectors (12 million) – mostly in the informal economy.

The ILO defined child labour as work performed by children under the legal minimum age, or the legal minimum age set for certain forms of work. These forms of work are defined by their hazardous nature or conditions, and are therefore considered unacceptable and thus employing children of legal working age in these sectors is prohibited. Any work which is mentally, physically or morally harmful to a child, or which interferes with a child's schooling and learning and thus depriving them from opportunities for fulfilling their future adult potential, is considered child labour. In its most extreme form, child labour can involve the enslavement of children, separation from families, exposure to serious hazards or illnesses from an early age, or exposure to illicit activities.

These are collectively referred to as the worst forms of child labour



## Hazardous Child Labour

### **What is meant by hazardous child labour?**

Not all forms of work that children do are considered child labour. ILO Convention No. 182 describes the worst forms of child labour (WFCL) to include work that, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children. This includes work that interferes with schooling, is excessively difficult, performed over long hours or takes place in a hazardous, dangerous and unhealthy environment. These poor safety and health conditions can result to children being injured, cause illness or even death.

### **Where does hazardous child labour occur?**

Hazardous child labour constitutes the largest category of the WFCL, occurring in sectors as diverse as agriculture, fisheries, mining, construction, manufacturing, the service industries and domestic service.

Hazardous child labour, particularly amongst children aged 15-17, is a pressing issue and often the result of inadequate measures taken to address occupational health and safety requirements for workers in general, and in particular those specifically required to protect young workers.

In Thailand both Thai and migrant workers are at risk of hazardous child labour. It is not uncommon among Thai and migrant children to overstate their age (either as above 15 or above 18) in order to work, migrant children and youth can thus find themselves employed in conditions suited only for adults. This includes working overtime or nightshifts. This type of situation may for example occur in small or large scale primary processing and packing factories in the seafood industry. Adequate human resource management and age verification systems are needed to make sure that when hiring the age of the workers is appropriately checked.

Children have a greater risk of ending up in hazardous child labour in informal and small size shrimp and seafood processing establishments due to

poor regulation and the lack of awareness of child labour protection requirements amongst employers.

The results of the most recent baseline (representative sample) surveys of children in the project's selected four provinces suggest that nearly half of working children aged 5-17 work in seafood-related industries, while the rest are employed in other sectors ( for the baseline survey results see [http://www.ilo.org/asia/whatwedo/publications/WCMS\\_222568/lang-en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/asia/whatwedo/publications/WCMS_222568/lang-en/index.htm)).

Children employed in hazardous work in all occupation groups amounted to 9.9% of all child labourers aged 5–17. This hazardous work was defined by unhealthy conditions and long hours. According to survey findings, the most common unhealthy working conditions were, in descending order: work with fire, heat or strong sunlight; damp, smelly and dirty workplaces; frequently working more than eight hours a day; dusty workplaces; using hazardous working tools; excessively hot or cold workplace environment; and working between 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. Only one child reported being forced to work.

Migrant children aged 5–17 were found to work mostly in shrimp processing jobs, while children found in fishery industries were dominated by Thai children. For migrant children, the lack of access to education left them little choice but to work. Most migrant children and their parents interviewed were not aware of their right to education in Thailand.

### **What is being done by the ILO and the Thai government?**

The ILO-IPEC team works with the Thai government, employers, industry associations, trade unions and civil society to combat hazardous child labour in Thailand in the following ways.

- Together with the Department of Labour Protection and Welfare (DLPW), ILO-IPEC has developed a set of recommendations on what constitutes hazardous child labour (HCL) for the shrimp and seafood processing industry in Thailand;

- A thematic study to define hazardous work in terms of standards of heat, height, weights and hours of work for boys and girls is also in being developed. This will help inform future revisions of the national notification of hazardous child labour (HCL);
- The DLPW is developing guidance materials with technical inputs from ILO-IPEC for employers and workers in the seafood industry;
- Advocacy campaigns are being developed to help disseminate appropriate messages to protect young people at work and encourage proper youth employment;
- Community level direct action is being carried out by NGO partners of the ILO-IPEC project with the aim of preventing children from entering hazardous child labour situations, accessing education and positively influencing employers to improve conditions for young workers.





# 1. Child labour monitoring

Establishing child labour monitoring (CLM) systems and processes at the national, provincial and local level is an important way to address child labour situations and is a useful tool for government agencies, communities, employers and workers to protect children from child labour, promote education and secure safe employment conditions for young workers of legal working age.

## What is it?

There are various ways of applying the principles of CLM, but typically it involves the development of a coordinated multi-sector monitoring and referral process that aims to cover all children living in a given geographical area. Its principal activities include regularly repeated direct observations to *identify* child labourers and to determine risks to which they are exposed, and then *referral* of these children to services, followed by *verification* that they have been removed and *tracking* afterwards to make sure that they have been provided with appropriate solutions to their situation.

Institutions involved include:

- National, Provincial and Local levels of Government (Labour, Education, Health and Social Services)
- Employers and Workers Organizations / Private Sector
- Community members and NGO's

## What is being done?

The ILO-IPEC project addressing child labour in the shrimp and seafood industry in Thailand works together with the DLPW to test and pilot CLM mechanisms based on previous CLM efforts in Thailand. The Research and Development Institute (RDI) and Khon Kaen University (KKU) are working together with the DLPW to help further testing and developing CLM in two project target provinces (Samut Sakhon and Songkhla) and generating lessons learned from CLM activities.

- CLM processes will be tested and undertaken in two main project areas with the aim of demonstrating how CLM as a multi-stakeholder project can effectively prevent child labour and withdraw children from hazardous work;
- Instituting CLM will also help mobilize and train community members to monitor child labour and link the monitoring activity to local government and official enforcement systems, especially the labour inspection, so that the information on child labour can be used effectively; and
- CLM process at the district and provincial levels are intended to also inform future data collection, monitoring and planning efforts in relation to the review process of *National Policy and Plan to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labour 2009 – 2014* and for developing a new policy for 2015-2020.



## 2. Labour Inspection

Labour inspection is an essential part of the labour administration system, carrying out the fundamental function of labour law enforcement and effective compliance.



In essence, labour inspection has a twofold nature. On the one hand, it supervises the enforcement of legal provisions, particularly with regard to workers' rights – including working and employment conditions, occupational safety and health, but also social security, migrant workers, vocational training, social security and other matters. On the other hand, labour inspection provides information and advice, as well as training to promote better understanding of labour legislation and prevention of work-related sickness, diseases and injuries.

This dual nature means that the labour inspection system plays a key role in ensuring fairness in the workplace and good governance in the world of work.

Labour inspectors also play an important role in preventing children from working too early, and also in addressing hazardous child labour by inspecting workplace and advising employers and workers about legislation concerning hazardous work.

Labour inspectors can use their legal powers in the workplace to ensure that:

- Employers and workers have proper knowledge and awareness about laws and regulations concerning child labour so they can effectively prevent underage children from being employed or participating in work;
- Children under legal age of employment found working are withdrawn from workplaces and referred to appropriate authorities who can help find solutions to their situation; and
- The health and safety of children who have reached the minimum legal age to work (15 years old) are fully protected in the workplace. Protection can be ensured through a combination of general improvements in workplace health and safety conditions and prohibiting children from carrying out hazardous tasks.

### **What is being done?**

ILO-IPEC works towards building the capacity of labour inspectorate and other enforcement agencies to take action against child labour, especially in respect to hazardous child labour and the identification of child labour situations. It is in this context that IPEC collaborates with the DLPW to enhance labour inspection to address child labour in the shrimp and seafood industry in Thailand.

- A review of the Labour inspection system has been undertaken jointly with DLPW;
- A labour inspection capacity building and training programme is being developed to assist labour inspectors effectively address child labour, forced labour and trafficking related issues;
- International good practices on labour inspection are made available and fed into labour inspection enhancement work through south-south cooperation; and
- Labour inspectors and OSH inspectors are provided with guidance materials and training on child labour and the ways to address it as a part of ILO-IPEC and DLPW joint efforts on developing guidelines on OSH, hazardous child labour and the good labour practices (GLP) programme in the shrimp and seafood industry.

### 3. Occupational safety and health (OSH)

The protection of workers against work-related sickness, disease and injury forms part of the historical mandate of the ILO. It is estimated that 2.2 million people die annually from work related accidents and diseases, with a further 270 million workers falling victim to nonfatal occupational injuries. This results in substantial human and economic costs to workers and their families, employers, and society at large.

ILO standards on occupational safety and health provide essential tools for governments, employers, and workers to establish safe practices for providing optimum safety at work. In 2003, the ILO adopted a global strategy to improve OSH which emphasised the development of a preventive safety and health culture.

Young workers in particular are at risk as they are still developing their skills and do not always have the maturity of adult workers to understand work related risks and hazards. They are less experienced and more vulnerable to exploitation, and are therefore more likely to be hurt or made ill from their job than adult workers.

#### **OSH and Hazardous Child Labour**

Globally, hazardous child labour constitutes the largest category of the WFCL, with an estimated **85 million** children aged 5-17 found in hazardous work working in dangerous conditions in sectors ranging from agriculture, mining, construction, manufacturing, service industries, hotels, bars, restaurants, fast food establishments, and domestic service. Worldwide, the ILO estimates that some 22,000 children are killed at work every year. The numbers of those injured or falling ill as a result of unsafe work are unknown.

Hazardous child labour is defined as work in dangerous or unhealthy conditions that may result in a child being killed, injured or made ill as a result of poor safety and health standards and working arrangements. Some injuries or ill health may result in permanent disability, while other health problems caused by child labour may not develop until the child is an adult.

When protected by legislation, appropriate OSH measures in the workplace and awareness of safe work practices, young workers are far less subject to hazardous work.

### **What is being done?**

The ILO-IPEC project is addressing the issue of OSH for young workers by working with the DLPW, fisheries industry, workers' organizations and NGO's active in the sector for better protection of young workers through the following means:

- Assessment of existing regulations, guidance on OSH and working conditions for young workers
- Recommendations on addressing hazardous child labour (HCL) in shrimp and seafood processing industry;
- Good labour practices guidelines on existing standards on working conditions, including recommendations for improved workplace policies and practices on child labour and OSH;
- Guidelines on safe work for youth (15-17) for DLPW staff and OSH professionals; and
- Research on HCL and working conditions.

It is foreseen that this technical work will be followed by awareness raising and training both for marine shrimp aquaculture farmers and shrimp and seafood processing industries on appropriate OSH practices and the prevention of hazardous child labour.

## 4. Promotion of good labour practices



The good labour practices (GLP) programme is a comprehensive fisheries sector improvement programme that combines the establishment of industry labour guidelines with a supportive training programme, with special attention given to unacceptable forms of work such as child labour and forced labour.

The GLP programme was initiated and developed through the collaborative efforts of the DLPW, the Department of Fisheries (DoF) and industry members. Trade unions and civil society groups in Thailand have also been involved in developing the programme. They play an important role in checking that the programme has a concrete impact on the lives of the workers and that the programme encourages participation from workers.

The GLP programme aims to ensuring that all actors in the shrimp and seafood processing sector and fishing supply chain have a heightened awareness of labour standards and laws relating to OSH, child labour, and are equipped to uphold and promote appropriate labour practices concerning child labour and forced labour not only in their company but also downstream in their supply chain.

Series of industry specific labour compliance and good practices guidelines for fishing boats, aquamarine farms, primary processing workplaces and processing/packing factories are being developed as part of the programme.

The GLP guidelines aim at promoting existing laws and regulation on child labour, forced labour, working conditions and generally promoting a culture

of compliance within the industry. They cover fundamental labour rights but also address issues such as compensation, recruitment and OSH.

GLP guidelines give special attention to addressing hazardous child labour and, considering high rates of migrant worker employment in the industry, migrant worker's rights and welfare.

### **Good Labour Practices (GLP) training programme**

The application of the GLP guidelines is promoted through demand-driven capacity building and training programmes aimed to assist individual businesses use the GLP guidelines to improving working conditions at the enterprise level.

The training is aimed to assist participating businesses address their specific problems and encourage workplace dialogue with workers to find solutions to workplace issues and to overall positively influence application of better labour standards industry-wide.

The programme is structured so that critical areas of labour rights issues in the shrimp and seafood processing industry supply chain are addressed. With this approach, the programme aims to ensure workplaces have the knowledge and resources to comply with Thai laws and international labour standards.

Special attention is given to child labour, forced labor and non-discrimination. Issues prevalent amongst migrant workers are also covered, including addressing and countering problems resulting from human trafficking, debt bondage and forced labour situations. Age verification and OSH management systems are also introduced as part of the training.

### **What does the programme aim to accomplish?**

- The GLP programme aims to help establish customized guidance for each fisheries industry sector, including fishing, aquamarine farms, primary processing and processing/packing factories;



- The programme promotes decent work opportunities for adults and youth in the industry and encourages good practices at work;
- The GLP guidelines include advice to employer and workers on minimum standards for compliance with Thai laws and regulations.
- The wide dissemination of GLP guidelines amongst central and local government officials, employers, trade unions, workers, NGOs and civil society groups ensures that all key industry players are equipped with the knowledge and awareness of laws and regulations on labour issues in the sector;
- References and tips on good practices are intended to encourage employers and workers to consider applying and investing in workplace practices that go beyond the strict minimum required by the law;
- The GLP training programme intends to go beyond mere information dissemination and provide, on a voluntary basis, facilitated workplace and enterprise level guidance and training aimed at bridging existing gaps in compliance and improving working conditions in a systematic manner;
- This allows for the effective translation of the principles of labour protection embedded in the GLP into practice.

## 5. Access to education

Effective application of the Education for All (EFA) policy is one of the best ways to address child labour and to invest in balanced development. Children have the right, regardless of their origin, to access education and training required to enjoy decent jobs in the future and provide valuable contributions to their society.



It is the view of ILO-IPEC that the objective of eliminating child labour and the objective of achieving education for all are closely related and that, if the international community's target of achieving universal primary education 2015 is to be fulfilled, then child labour must be addressed.

Despite efforts directed at the effective implementation of the EFA policy, barriers to relevant and quality education services for migrant children and Thai children in disadvantaged rural areas remain. In order for education to effectively reach these groups, clarity in policies, implementing rules and adequate resource allocation are required. Furthermore, it requires formal schools to be better equipped to cater to the needs of migrant children.

Education policy and legislation in Thailand provide for compulsory education to age 15 and the provision of free education for up to 12 years of schooling. In regards to the accessibility of education for migrant and stateless children, a Cabinet Resolution was issued in July 2005 which extended the right to formal schooling to all children in Thailand, regardless of their nationality or legal status.

**What is being done?**

Access to education refers to educational opportunities and inclusive education. The IPEC project in Thailand promotes and supports efforts to make educational opportunities available through providing both formal and non-formal education to children who stay outside of schooling and training, with special attention given to child workers or children at risk of child labour. This involves:

- Establishing a curriculum and training materials suited to children's needs;
- Teachers being aware of the learning and development needs and specific vulnerabilities of children;
- Having a learning environment free from discrimination and disciplinary punishments; and
- Delivery of learning which meets applicable educational requirements.

IPEC promotes education both in formal and non-formal settings as a strategy to prevent children from becoming child labourers and to rehabilitate former child workers.

At the national level IPEC works with the Ministry of Education through the Office of National Education Commission (OBEC) and the Office of National Education Council (ONEC) by advocating for effective implementation of EFA Policy and organising orientation and capacity building trainings for educators and schools.

The project collaborates with several NGOs to provide educational services to children from vulnerable Thai and migrant families in selected provinces. Services provided through IPEC partner NGOs such as the National Council for Child and Youth Development (NCYD), the Labour Rights Promotion Network Foundation (LPN), the Foundation for Child Development (FCD), the Raks Thai Foundation, and the Planned Parenthood Association of Thailand (PPAT) include:

- Developing or adapting training materials to suit the learning needs of children and youth;
- Providing transitional education for migrant children to prepare for entering Thai formal education system and mainstreaming children into formal schools;
- Organising literacy, training and life-skills development classes, including Sunday classes for working children; and

- Raising awareness on child labour, child rights and child protection among communities, children, parents, teachers and school managers.

Part of this work is to raise awareness among schools and local level education authorities on educational needs of the children staying outside of schooling and advocate for improved planning and education service delivery



## 6. Access to livelihood opportunities

There is a growing understanding that decent work for adults and youth of working age is a necessity to ensure that families do not rely on child labour for additional income. The underlying causes of child labour, poverty, exclusion from economic and social development and limited access to skills, social and financial services, need to be addressed in order to comprehensively and effectively combat it. Livelihoods improvement therefore, is an important component of a broader strategy to eliminate child labour.

### **What are livelihood services?**

A livelihood refers to the capabilities, material and social resources and activities required to provide means of living. For the purpose of the project, livelihood services for adults and children of legal working age, include, but are not limited to the following services:

- Education and training services which aim to provide the basic skills and knowledge necessary to access social and financial services available as well as vocational and higher education;
- Social capital services which aim to connect a participant with networks or groups for purposes including promoting sustainable livelihoods and reducing vulnerability to child labour; and
- Economic strengthening services which aim to increase the economic well-being of participants.

### **What is being done?**

In the provinces of Samut Sakhon, Surat Thani, Nakorn Si Thammarat, and Songkhla, the ILO-IPEC project, through partner NGOs such as the LPN, NCYD, FCD, Raks Thai and PPAT, help build the livelihoods of Thai and migrant communities vulnerable to child labour. In general, the project's livelihood interventions aim to increase the access of migrant workers to social protection services and the capability of vulnerable Thai families to increase their income and diversify their skills.

Specifically, livelihoods services for migrant families focus on:

- Improving migrant workers understanding of human and workers' rights and host country laws and regulations;
- Strengthening migrant's networks to address common challenges;
- Provision of legal services to address labour exploitation and abuse of migrant workers and facilitating access to justice;
- Increasing the access to basic health services for regular and irregular migrant workers and their children.

Livelihood services for vulnerable Thai families include supporting entrepreneurship and small business development among vulnerable families.



In addition, vulnerable Thai and migrant workers are supported through referral to vocational training, government employment services and training on OSH awareness. They are also provided with life-skills training on household accounting/savings, leadership skills, career development and etc.

Services related to improving the health care access of migrants and their children are provided by partner organisations. These services include:

- Training for parents on child care and development;
- Increasing awareness on reproductive health;
- Referral to health services;
- Organising mobile medical units to engage working children (aged 15-17 years).

## 7. Knowledgebase on child labour in the sector

The success of any project depends largely on the knowledgebase that it is founded upon; it is all but impossible to deliver sustainable impacts without accurate knowledge of the project environment, the stakeholders and the industry at large. Gathering this knowledge and ensuring it is accurate, neutral and up-to-date requires significant effort, particular in sectors where little pioneering research has been done before.

The project collaborates with local universities, and individual representatives of academia to ensure project actions are informed with most up-to-date and accurate knowledge, to build awareness, and to mobilize action amongst both the general public and industry stakeholders through sharing knowledge and information about child labour amongst industry.

The projects primary partners in knowledge creation are:

- The Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI) for Project Baseline information in Samut Sakhon and Surat Thani;
- The Prince of Songkla University (PSU) for Project Baseline information in Songkhla and Nakhon Si Thammarat;
- Dhurakij Pundit University (DPU), on establishment of monitoring and evaluation systems;
- Dhurakij Pundit University (DPU), on migrant children's surveys in Samut Sakhon; and
- The Research and Development Institute of KKU University on Child Labour Monitoring.

The ILO-IPEC project on addressing child labour in the shrimp and seafood industry in Thailand has generated a wealth of knowledge and data on child labour through first-hand research, industry analysis and reviews of existing information.

The project shares this information through various means, including research reports, factsheets and technical materials (i.e. technical notes, guidelines and training manuals). This knowledge is actively disseminated through ILO's existing knowledge sharing platforms and through other means, such as:

- ILO-IPEC website;
- Stakeholder and taskforce meetings;
- Trainings and capacity building events;
- Seminars and forums; and
- Technical meetings.

Information in these publications has proven invaluable in guiding both the project and stakeholders in combatting the worst forms of child labour. These knowledge outputs also provide sustainability to the project, as they will be used in various situations including future research by academics, students and policymakers engaging in evidence-based policymaking. The projects work in expanding the knowledgebase on child labour in Thailand ties into the larger scheme of ILO's work on knowledge – about which you can find more information here: <http://www.ilo.org/asia/info/library/lang-en/index.htm>



## B. PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships between governments, employers and workers are an essential part of how the ILO operates. The ILO is the only U.N. agency with tripartite representation; that is representation of government, employer, and workers. This structure makes the ILO a unique forum in which governments, social partners and economic actors from its **185 Member States** can freely and openly debate and elaborate labour standards and policies.

In terms of impacts on legislative frameworks, the economic environment and practical mechanisms such as labour inspection, the project's most significant partners are found within the Thai government and its various departments. Together with the DLPW, DoF and the MOE, the project is able to generate the much needed impact on the ground, alongside more long-term positive changes in the industry itself. The ILO-IPEC works together also with the Provincial Government's in its project areas as they constitute the main Government authority and vehicle to address labour issues at the local levels.

Employers' organizations play a critical role in addressing child labour and social dialogue processes, which can help to ensure that national social and economic objectives are properly and effectively formulated and enjoy wide support among the business community they represent. Without the participation and buy-in of the private sector, these changes and impacts would prove to be short lived. As such, the project actively engages with employer organization and various industry associations.

Likewise Trade Unions form important partners in addressing child labour. The project has developed a partnership with key Trade Union centres in Thailand so that workers viewpoints and voice can be effectively factored into project activities.

## Department of Labour Protection and Welfare (DLPW)

The Department of Labour Protection and Welfare, under the Ministry of Labour, is a central partner of ILO-IPEC in Thailand. DLPW has the mandate to establish and develop labour standards, monitor compliance with Thai labour laws, prevent and resolve labour disputes, protect workers from harm and provide guidelines on improvement of working conditions and the working environment.



The DLPW has several units that provide specialized services such as the Bureau of Labour Protection, whose mandate covers conditions of work; the Bureau of Labour Relations and the Bureau of Occupational Safety and Health; the Bureau of Industrial Relations and the Bureau of International Labour Standards. The Children and Women Workers and Labour Protection Network Group are responsible for issues concerning child labour.

The DLPW acts as the secretariat for various committees concerning child labour. The most important of these committees is the *National Committee on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour*, presided by the Minister of Labour. This committee was instrumental in developing the *National Policy and Plan to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labour 2009–2014*, which is the main policy framework currently in use to address child labour in Thailand.

### **DLPW's leading role in addressing child labour:**

The DLPW has established a working group on hazardous child labour, which has led the process of revising notification on hazardous child labour in Thailand. The DLPW also acts as a secretariat for the technical task force on forced labour in shrimp, fisheries and related industries and agriculture,

which is the main coordination and planning body concerning the ILO-IPEC project's work in Thailand.

The areas of work covered by the DLPW include:

- Research and guidance in addressing hazardous child labour in the shrimp and seafood processing industries;
- Labour inspection capacity building, emphasizing child labour and forced labour;
- “Safe work for Youth” campaigns;
- The good labour practices programme; and
- Child Labour Monitoring.

To learn more, please see <http://www.labour.go.th>.

## Department of Fisheries (DoF)



The Department of Fisheries (DoF) operates under the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives. Its mandate is the sustainable management of fisheries and the sustainable utilization of aquatic resources.

The DoF monitors shrimp and seafood processing industry processes for compliance with various standards such as the Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) and Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP). The DoF has also introduced several industry guidelines such as the Code of Conduct (CoC) in 1998 and Good Aquaculture Practice Standard (GAP) in 2000. The latter has been benchmarked successfully against the FAO Aquaculture Certification Guidelines.

Aside from more typical requirements such as animal health, food safety and environmental protection, these standards reflect areas concerning the protection and welfare of workers. The FAO guidelines that inform the CoC and GAP standards reference ILO conventions on child labour in their minimum substantive criteria, indicating the general need of compliance with national labour laws.

Considering the critical role that the DoF plays in the development and oversight of the fisheries industry in Thailand, it is an important partner of the ILO-IPEC in addressing to child labour and forced labour issues in the industry.

Key areas of the DoF's work concerning the protection and welfare of workers include:

- Increasing the registration and regulation of shrimp and seafood processing industries;
- Advocacy among fisheries industry members on how to address labour issues;

- Developing and promoting Good Labour Practices (GLP) programmes for farms, primary processing and shrimp and seafood producing factories; and
- Strengthening the capacity of DOF personnel to help address labour issues in the application of Good Aquaculture Practices and other DOF regulations and standards.

To learn more, please so <http://www.fisheries.go.th>.

## Ministry of Education (MOE)

The Ministry of Education's "National Education for All Plan of Action for the period 2002 – 2015" is the key Thai Government policy framework for the education sector.



The plan provides that "all individuals shall have equal rights and opportunities to receive basic education provided by the state for duration of at least twelve years. Education, provided on a nationwide basis, shall be of quality and free of charge". The plan mentions the special needs of disadvantaged groups including children without citizenship, those from ethnic minorities and children at risk of child labour among high risk group in need of special attention.

The Ministry of Education has the mandate to ensure that this policy is effectively implemented. It does so through the operation of different offices especially the Office of Basic Education Commission (OBEC) and Office of the Non-formal and Informal Education (NFE) for both formal and non-formal education services.

Formal education in Thailand is administered through the Education Service Area Office (ESAO) generally based at provincial level. It is responsible for the delivery of all formal education in terms of access to and quality of education, as well as monitoring and overseeing all public and private schools at district level.

Office of the Non-formal and Informal Education (NFE) oversees education for population over 15 years of age. Non-Formal Education in Thailand plays an important role for the out of school youth and adults, including migrant children.

The efforts to achieve Education For All (EFA) and the progressive elimination of child labour are linked. On the one hand, education is a key element in the prevention of child labour. Children with no access to quality education have little alternatives but to enter the labour market at too early an age where

they often are forced to work in dangerous and exploitative conditions. On the other hand, child labour is one of the main obstacles to achieving EFA, since children who are working full time cannot go to school.

Key areas of the MOE work to promote EFA include:

- Issue and revise laws and regulations including *the Cabinet Resolution on Education for Unregistered Persons (2005)* which allowed non-Thai and unregistered migrants to access the Thai education system; and *the Ministerial Regulation on the right of persons in providing basic education through learning centers (2011)* and *The Ministerial Regulation on the right of professional organizations in providing basic education through learning centers (2011)*– which provide for a more systematic management of education services in these centers with similar standards as in mainstream schools.
- Develop administrative procedure & guidance for schools to implement laws and regulations
- Ensure that migrant and non-national children can access free education by improving registration of children and linking this with corresponding budgetary allocations.
- Encourage children older than the legal minimum working age to attend non-formal education and life skills training.
- At provincial level, through ESAOs conduct awareness raising and training for education personnel to enhance their capacity to teach migrant children.
- Provide technical support to migrant learning centers.
- Collaborate with NGOs and other civil society organisations in removing children from hazardous or inappropriate work situations and enrolling them to school system. This can include awareness raising among migrant parents on importance of education, applying for 13-digit identity document from the Office of Local Administration and other enabling assistance to access education services.

To learn more, please see <http://www.moe.go.th>.

## Provincial Governments

The Provincial Government is responsible for providing social services and executing social and economic policies for the wellbeing of inhabitants within a given Province. The Provincial Government can request and draw budgets to implement various efforts from both central government and from its own resources. The Provincial Government through its different offices and departments is at the very forefront of addressing child labour and generally providing protection to workers.

At the provincial level, The Provincial Office of Labour (POL) and the Provincial Office of Labour Protection and Welfare (PLPW) are the responsible offices concerned with labour. They were designated in the *National Policy and Plan to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labour 2009–2014*, as the secretariat for the Provincial Operational Centers in Providing Assistance to Women and Child Workers (POC) which is a multidisciplinary committee that oversees the integration of child labour issues into the provincial development strategies. POC work to address child labour includes coordination among Provincial Government and other actors, advocacy and implementation of special projects and activities. POC is chaired by the Provincial Governor.

### **Provincial government's role in addressing child labour:**

Initiatives to address child labour can be demonstrated through the example of the Provincial Government of Samut Sakhon. It has established cooperation with ILO-IPEC, civil society and private sector, which has led to series of activities. Some areas of work covered by the Provincial Office include:

- Develop and assist in the implementation of the Provincial Master Plan on migrant workers in Samut Sakhon.



- Initiate a survey on number of migrant children in Samut Sakhon to be used as a baseline for social planning
- Develop and execute Provincial action plan on WFCL through POCs
- Establish child labour monitoring processes
- Establish a multidisciplinary provincial operations network (subcommittee) to address child labour issues.
- Work with the Provincial office of education to systematise education models developed to enhance access to education by migrant children

# Employers' confederation of Thailand (ECOT)



The Employers' Confederation of Thailand (ECOT) was established on 23 August, 1976. Today, the ECOT comprises of ten employers' associations and federations, including the Thai Construction Employers' Association, the Ship Owners Employers' Association of Thailand and the Steel Business Employers' Association.

ECOT also recognizes the membership of 48 ordinary and 909 affiliated members ranging from sector industry employers' associations to individual companies and corporations. ECOT is a member of the International Organization of Employers (IOE), and works closely with the ILO's Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP), a specialized unit within the ILO Secretariat. The Bureau for Employers' Activities has developed a set of guides for employers entitled "Eliminating Child Labour"

ECOT's mission is:

- To be an independent voice of Thai employers at national and international forums;
- To unify and protect the interest of employers by promoting a conducive business environment and to promote good labour relations to enhance the productivity, competitiveness and sustainability of Thai employers;
- To be an effective knowledge, training and information center for employers on all labour and social issues.

In the global fight against child labour, employers can and do play a fundamental role at different levels. At the workplace, they can refuse to hire children or, if child labour already occurs, they can remove the children from

workplaces, making sure this is done in a responsible manner. In the case of adolescents, they can reduce the risk from hazards at the workplace. At the political level, employers and employers' organizations can lobby for effective training and education systems. They can also help raise public awareness and change attitudes towards child labour. ECOT, as a representative employers' organization in Thailand, has had a long partnership with ILO-IPEC in promoting actions against child labour through advocacy, training and special events.

ECOT's role in addressing child labour is:

- To promote co-operation among businesses in various fields;
- To promote understanding and co-operation between the private sector operators and the government;
- To promote good labour relations; and
- To promote studies on private-sector activities and effective business management

Key areas of work:

- Advocacy against child labour and forced labour;
- Convening industry leaders' meetings on addressing key labour issues;
- Promoting good labour practices and a culture of safety and health for young workers; and
- Research and policy advocacy on advancement of national measures to combat child labour.

ECOT cooperates with national and international organisations, such as:

- International Organization of Employers (IOE)
- Confederation of Asia Pacific Employers
- Global Compact
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

For more information, please see <http://www.ecot.or.th/>.

# Thai Frozen Food Association (TFFA)



The Thai Frozen Foods Association (TFFA) is a private non-profit organization founded in 1968 under the Thai Trade Association Act. The TFFA was originally established as the Thai Marine Products Association, but in 1983 was renamed the Thai Fishery and Frozen Products Association, expanding to cover the frozen products industry.

The current name was adopted in 1994. The TFFA is steered by directors elected from its membership base, which consists of more than 200 companies involved in processing and exporting frozen goods.

## **The TFFA's mission**

The TFFA aims to enhance and increase the competitiveness of the Thai frozen food industry in a sustainable way, and to represent the industry at the national and international level. The TFFA continuously surveys and studies its members' opinions concerning their business and the industry to contribute positively to improving the sector for all.

The TFFA's role in promoting the Thai frozen seafood sector and its mandate to lobby and represent its members naturally bestow the TFFA and its members a central role in addressing child labour and forced labour issues in the industry.

TFFA policies, training and advisory services not only guide its members on compliance with national labour laws and international labour standards relating to child labour, forced labour and other important issues, but also build members' understanding of the importance of investing in workers' welfare. The TFFA, through its members, also plays an important role in guiding their smaller suppliers in addressing labour issues in accordance with laws and regulations.

**Key areas of work:**

Key areas of work conducted by the TFFA include advocacy and awareness raising on child labour and forced labour among members. This takes the following forms:

- Industry partnerships relating to the Good Labour Practices (GLP) programme;
- Information services to TFFA members;
- Strengthening registration of sub-contractors and assisting addressing labour issues; and
- CSR and community welfare programmes.

For more information, please see [www.thai-frozen.or.th](http://www.thai-frozen.or.th).

# Thai Food Processors Association (TFPA)



The Thai Food Processors Association (TFPA) was established in 1970 as a private non-profit organization designed to strengthen the food processing industry in Thailand. The TFPA currently serves nearly 200 members, ranging from small to large companies. The TFPA is run by a board of directors, elected for a two year-term from its members. The association has also played a support and advisory role in establishing both domestic food regulations and international food standards.

TFPA was established with the following key objectives:

- To promote and to develop the processed foods sector;
- To provide the highest quality of scientific assistance in support of member needs;
- To serve as a communication link between members and government agencies; and
- To act as a represent and speaker for the collective problems and obstacles in food processing industry.

The TFPA supports and assists its members solve problems and obstacles which can be tackled effectively. The TFPA provides information and exchanges views with government agencies regarding standard regulations when negotiating with importing countries. The ILO-IPEC project cooperates with the TFPA in several activities, including good labour practices trainings and world day against child labour.

For more information, please see [www.thaifood.org](http://www.thaifood.org).

## International Buyers

The international buyers have an important role to play in promoting responsible sourcing and ensuring the goods they purchase are produced in decent working conditions and comply with national laws. It is important that international businesses carry out risk-based analysis of their sources and take responsibility in managing their supply chains, including the sub-contracting arrangements and recruitment practices of manpower agencies and recruitment firms within their supply chains.

The ILO-IPEC project on engages with international buyers through buyers organizations, large multinational companies, smaller enterprises, import businesses and small individual speciality retailers.

Through engaging international buyers, the project aims to build awareness of child labour and forced labour-related issues. The project also aims to build awareness of labour issues within supply chains and advocate on various ways on how to address these problems.

International buyers can promote and lead efforts to promote good labour practices in the sector through industry improvement programmes such as the Good Labour Practices programme, developed for fisheries industries in in Thailand.

The ILO promotes the use of various international guidance instruments to promote responsible business practices including:

- The ILO Tripartite Declaration Concerning Multinational Enterprises;
- OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises;
- The UN Global Compact and UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights; and
- The ILO-IPEC managed Child Labour Platform (CLP). This platform specifically aims to provide advice and solutions for managing child labour related risks in supply chains.

## Trade Unions (TU)

Trade Unions in Thailand play an important role in addressing child labor, forced labour and combating discrimination at work, such as discrimination against migrant workers. In Thailand, the National Trade Union federations play a key role in advocating for stronger protection for workers. They have been instrumental in advancing and promoting legislative changes for better protection of workers and broader understanding and application of the fundamental principles and rights at work, including the children's rights and the elimination of child labour.

Sector specific trade unions, such as trade unions in agriculture and individual enterprise-level unions, have an equally important role in protecting workers rights, and through their functions at the workplace level, are well positioned to address workplace issues, including the prevention of child labour and protection of young workers.

The ILO has several fundamental conventions that guarantee the rights of workers to organise and to negotiate with employers through collective bargaining. These include the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87) and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98).

While Thailand has not ratified these two conventions, Thai trade unions, through the four national federations that ILO-IPEC works with have actively worked together over the years to promote the ratification of ILO C.87 and C.98. These partner trade unions are the Labour Congress of Thailand (LCT), the State Enterprises Workers' Relations Confederation (SERC), the Thai Trade Union Congress (TTUC) and the National Congress of Private Industrial Employees (NCPE).

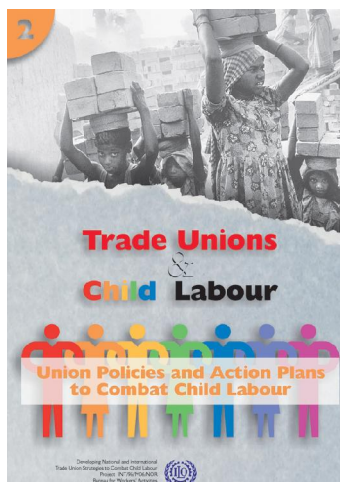
A specific Thai trade union action plan to enhance the protection of migrant workers and members of their families was drafted in June 2012 to guide trade unions activities in protecting migrant workers and their family members.



The ILO-IPEC also collaborates with various international workers organizations, including the International Union of Food, Agriculture, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers Associations (IUF) and other groups on collaborative efforts to improve labour rights in the fisheries sector and sharing information on emerging good practices regarding trade unions role in organizing workers and addressing child labour, forced labour and improving working conditions.

Key areas of work of the IPEC project with Thai trade unions involve:

- Advocacy for the ratification and application of international labour standards (ILS), trade union rights and action against child labour;
- Promoting good labour practices;
- Promoting youth empowerment in the trade unions programme;
- Access to justice programmes;
- Organizing informal economy workers; and
- Strengthening migrant workers' protection.



## Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

The ILO-IPEC project on addressing child labour in the shrimp and seafood industry in Thailand cooperates with several well-established Thai NGOs and civil society organizations that have a proven and unique ability to provide effective direct services to vulnerable Thai and migrant communities while at the same time having the necessary capacity to support policy making.

Working together with NGOs allows the project to provide direct services to children, families and community members that it otherwise would not be able to reach. It helps translate the learning from pilot interventions into better policies and laws concerning the elimination of child labour, the promotion of decent and safe employment for youth and access of vulnerable people and children to education and livelihood services.

The main NGO partners of this project are:

- The National Council for Youth Development (NCYD);
- The Labour Rights Promotion Network Foundation (LPN);
- The Foundation for Child Development (FCD);
- Raks Thai; and
- The Planned Parenthood Association of Thailand (PPAT)

The key areas of work these NGOs cover include:

- Improving access of primary education, non-formal education and health services to Thai and migrant children;
- Enhancing livelihood security through financial empowerment, community enterprise development and life skills;
- Promoting legal protection for working children and migrants;
- Promoting safe work for youth and addressing hazardous working conditions; and
- Awareness raising and advocacy on child labour and child protection.



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สมเด็จพระเทพรัตนราชสุดาฯ สยามบรมราชกุมารี  
National Council for Child and Youth Development under the  
Royal Patronage of H.R.H. Princess Mahachakri Sirindhorn



**The Planned Parenthood Association of Thailand (PPAT)**  
Under the Patronage of H.R.H. the Princess Mother

# FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

Mr. Tuomo Poutiainen  
Programme Manager  
Tel.: +662 288 1789  
Fax: +662 288 1019  
Email: [poutiainen@ilo.org](mailto:poutiainen@ilo.org)

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