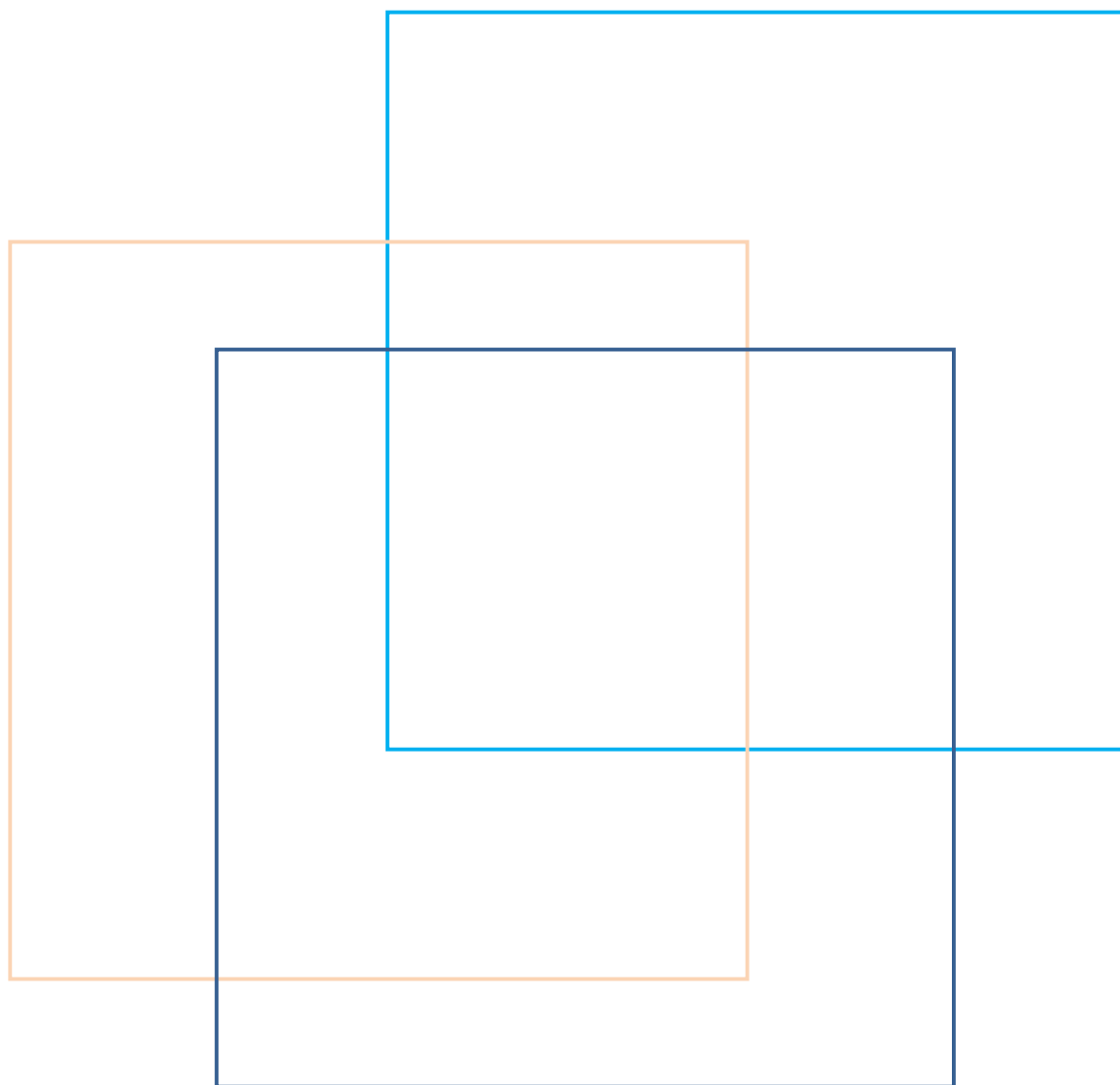




International
Labour
Organization

BASELINE SURVEYS ON CHILD LABOUR IN SELECTED AREAS IN THAILAND

(SAMUT SAKHON, SURAT THANI, SONGKHLA AND NAKHON SI THAMMARAT)



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS
ILO-IPEC/Thailand

SEPTEMBER 2013

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

I. Background

The ILO-IPEC Project THA/10/50/USA 'Combating the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Shrimp and Seafood Processing Areas in Thailand' (hereafter referred to as the project) started its operations in January 2011. The project has three immediate objectives, namely, (i) 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; (ii) to support enterprises across the shrimp supply chain comply with national labour laws, with special emphasis on child labour and forced labour, and institute good practices for improving working conditions; and (iii) provide area-based education, social protection and livelihood services to migrant and Thai children and their families in targeted shrimp and seafood industry areas.

There is substantial documentation of child labour in the shrimp production value chain provided by existing research studies and by the ILO-IPEC project "Support to National Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour" (WFCL Thailand Project THA/06/50/USA: September 2006 – March 2010). The nature of child labour as documented in these studies ranges from cases of forced labour and slavery-like conditions of children working alongside adults in shrimp processing factories in the major shrimp and seafood processing hub of Samut Sakhon province, to employment of children, both under legal working age and of working age, in conditions hazardous to their health and safety, such as work involving heavy lifting and long hours of work.

Child labour has been identified predominantly among migrant workers in shrimp and seafood processing in Samut Sakhon province; but it is also found among Thai children in the southern coastal province of Surat Thani, Songkhla, and Nakhon Si Thammarat where children are found engaged in marine shrimp aquaculture, fish sorting on the docks, small-scale family based fishing, seafood processing and more industrial shrimp and seafood processing enterprises. Children have also been witnessed engaging in other types of economic activities such as in agriculture, construction, service industries, and domestic service.

The factors contributing to child labour differ between migrant and Thai children. The shrimp industry is one of the labour-intensive export industries in Thailand that attract migrant workers from neighbouring Myanmar, Cambodia and Lao PDR. There is a high labour demand and Thai workers are often unwilling to take the typically low-paid and dirty work in the industry; while migrant workers are prepared to do work almost any work where they can earn more income than at home. To a great extent the industry has become reliant on migrant labour, but migrant families and their dependants are extremely vulnerable to exploitation and risk threats of deportation, extortion and labour abuse. In addition, barriers of access to school for migrant children coupled with low incomes of workers (current minimum wage is 300 Baht per day), pressurizes migrant families to allow their children to work. Among Thai communities, child labour has been thought to be more common among 15 to 17 year olds working in hazardous conditions than among children under 15 due to high coverage of education services to Thai children. Worst forms of child labour have been identified also in the fishing industry which by its nature can be dangerous to young workers.

Thailand lacks a national survey on child labour and comprehensive estimates on the prevalence of child labour in the shrimp and seafood industries in Thailand have not been available to date. Most previous studies have been based on convenience sampling rather than random sampling of the representative population and have had rather small number of respondents.

Therefore, to better define the location and nature of children's work in the shrimp and seafood industry, two baselines research studies were commissioned by ILO-IPEC Thailand in early 2012 as part of the preparations of the ILO-IPEC project work to help determine the geographical areas of intervention, the nature of the industry value chain and the prevalence of child labour within specific parts of the value chain and generally in the Provinces covered.

The major purposes for the baselines were:

- To use the information generated for project preparation to identify project sites and beneficiaries;
- To provide baseline information about the situation of child labour for monitoring the impact of project activities
- To contribute to the national knowledge base on child labour

The main aim of this research was to obtain a baseline understanding of the factors, causes and variables contributing towards the use of child labour in the industry, creating conditions that put children at risk of entering child labour in particular in the fisheries industry; and the socio-economic and labour market variables and conditions facing families and communities engaged in the industry.

II. The Methodology of the Baselines Studies

The 2012 ILO-IPEC baseline survey on child labour (hereafter 2012 BLS on CL) in the shrimp and seafood industry in selected areas in Thailand was conducted in the four project areas from February to August 2012. *Samut Sakhon, and the three Southern provinces - Surat Thani, Songkhla and Nakhon Si Thammarat* were chosen because of the preponderance of shrimp and seafood processing activity in them. In the household-based baseline survey, however, the researchers looked for all children aged 5–17 engaged in any economic activities.

The Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI) and the Prince of Songkla University (PSU) had been selected to conduct the 2012 BLS on CL and each surveyed two provinces. TDRI looked at working children (and or child labour) in Samut Sakhon and Surat Thani, while PSU conducted the survey in Songkhla and Nakhon Si Thammarat provinces.¹

TDRI and PSU compiled a literature review on the labour force involved including the use of child labour in shrimp farming, shrimp processing units and other main sectors of economic activity for children. Primary data was collected through a sample household-based survey, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. Each research institute used a slightly different methodology for the data collection but utilized uniform definitions concerning "children in employment" or "children engaged in economic activities" based on the international definitions on Statistics concerning child labour.²

¹ For more information please visit TDRI and PSU websites: <http://tdri.or.th/en/> and <http://www.en.psu.ac.th/>.

² <http://www.ilo.org/ipec/ChildlabourstatisticsSIMPOC/ICLSandchildlabour/lang--en/index.htm>

In **Samut Sakhon and Surat Thani**, the TDRI research team, with support from the National Statistical Office (NSO), surveyed every household located in the selected areas with the highest concentration of target population to locate those with economically active children. For the focus group discussions, selected informants entailed parents and guardians of economically active children. The informants for the in-depth interviews included representatives from the Government, the private sector and NGOs.

In **Nakhon si Thammarat and Songkhla**, after mapping the areas with the highest concentration of target population, the household survey was conducted by the PSU team in two steps. First, every household in the sample villages was listed to recruit those with economically active children (listing exercise). Then, households with economically active children were surveyed by interviewing the working children and their parents. In addition, in-depth interviews were conducted with representatives of Government and NGOs to obtain communities' views on the use of child labour.

Both teams surveyed a total of 12 districts in the four provinces to collect basic data on economic active activities of children aged 5-17. A total of 47,389 household members were covered with 8,327 children aged 5-17 in 7,396 households in the 111 sample villages covered at the time of the survey.

They went to every house in the sample areas looking for children and asking whether they go to school or work. The specific objectives of the research were to:

- § estimate the number of economically active children or children in employment;
- § estimate the number of child labourers;
- § estimate the number of households with economically active children; and
- § study causes, factors and variables pull children into economic activities.

Research instruments

The questionnaires, manuals and basic concepts, used in the study, were adopted from the ILO/IPEC-SIMPOC manuals on child labour statistics. The qualitative part of the survey should be based on the Rapid Assessment methodology developed jointly by ILO-IPEC and UNICEF³.

1) Listing form, Q1: The questionnaire for household listing was used for interviewing the head of the households in selected areas. The questionnaire also was used for listing the details of each household in selected areas to help locate households with children younger than 18 engaging in economic activities.

2) Enumeration forms, Q2-Q3: Q2: The questionnaire for economically active children was used for collecting details on age, sex, education, working conditions, working hours, illness, etc. Q3: The questionnaire for parent or guardian was used for collecting data on economically active children, including the household economy and attitudes towards child labour issues.

3) In-depth interview instructions, Q4-Q5: Data regarding the opinions of individuals and organizations related to the service and assistance of children engaged to economic activities were collected by in-depth interviews using forms Q4 for enterprise and Q5 for other organization and individuals (for PSU only).

³ For more information please visit: <http://www.ilo.org/ipecinfo/product/viewProduct.do?productId=1819> or <http://www.ilo.org/ipec/ChildlabourstatisticsSIMPOC/lang-en/index.htm>.

Lastly, the term working children refers to the more technical term “children in employment” or “children engaged in economic activities”. The term “child labour” refers to working children after considering age, weekly working hours, and whether or not engaged in hazardous work (in line with the framework for statistical identification of child labour 5-17 years old by the 18th ICLS Resolution on Statistics concerning child labour)⁴.

Map of Thailand



FINDINGS FROM THE COMBINED DATA

⁴ For more information please visit: http://www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/meetings-and-events/international-conference-of-labour-statisticians/WCMS_092024/lang-en/index.htm.

This summary presents the combined data findings of the two household surveys (by TDRI and PSU), with some comparison between the three southern provinces (Nakhon Si Thammarat, Songkhla and Surat

Thani) and Samut Sakhon.⁵ The following tabulations represent the data as based on the ILO standards for acceptable work, child labour and hazardous child labour.

1. NUMBERS OF ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE CHILDREN: A total of 8,327 children aged 5–17 lived in 7,396 households in the 111 sample villages at the time of the survey. Of them (table 1), 1,016 were considered as economically active. And of the children who were economically active, 822 of them were child labourers. Of the total child labourers, 368 were working in conditions considered hazardous (this includes both those working year round and during school holidays).

Table 1. Children who reported themselves as economically active

	Samut Sakhon	Southern Provinces*	Total
Total household members	18 612	28 777	47 389
Total children aged 5–17	2 324	6 003	8 327
Total economically active children aged 5–17	360	656	1 016
Total child labour	296	526	822
Child labour prevalence rate (% of total children)	12.70%	8.80%	9.90%
Child labour prevalence rate (% of economically active children)	82.20%	80.20%	80.90%
Child labour in hazardous work**	168	200	368
Child labour in hazardous work (% of total economically active children 5–17)	46.67%	30.49%	36.22%

Note: * Southern provinces include Surat Thani, Nakhon Si Thammarat and Songkhla

** This excludes the number of hazardous unpaid household service in the non-SNA boundary. Understanding the definition of child labour, hazardous child labour and general work of children is crucial for classification of child labourers in hazardous work. In this research, hazardous child labour was classified based on the recommendations given in ILO Convention No. 182 concerning Worst Forms of Child Labour.

2. NATIONALITY:

The researchers in Samut Sakhon Province were able to include migrant households in their survey; most of the migrant respondents were from Myanmar, and Mon was the largest ethnic group.

⁵ The difficulties in reaching the migrant populations and the differences in methodology used by each research team regarding migrants precluded the inclusion of migrants in the data for the southern provinces; only the data for Samut Sakhon reflects both Thai and migrant children.

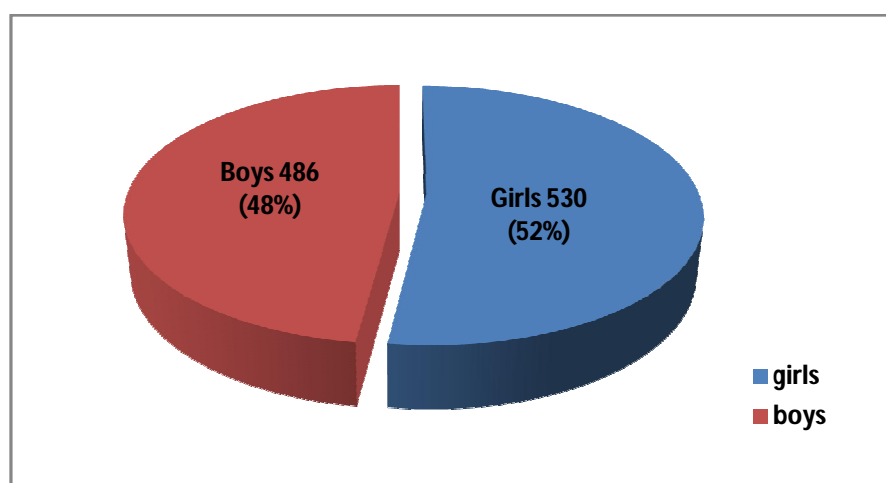
A total of 879 Thai children were found to be economically active in all four provincial research sites; of them, 695 were characterized as child labourers. And a total of 137 migrant children were found to be economically active (in Samut Sakhon Province); of them, 127 were characterized as child labourers.

3. AGE: Slightly more than half (594) of all the economically active children were 15–17 years old at the time of the survey (52 per cent). In Nakhon Si Thammarat and Songkhla Provinces, the average

age at which the surveyed children started working was 11 years and in Samut Sakhon and Surat Thani Provinces, it was 12 years. And the median age among children found working was 14 for girls and 10 for boys.

4. SEX: Overall, slightly more girls than boys were both economically active and in hazardous conditions. From the survey, more boys than girls were found working in Nakhon Si Thammarat and Songkhla, but more girls than boys in Samut Sakhon and Surat Thani Provinces.

Figure 1. Economically active children aged 5–17 by sex



5. EDUCATION AND WORKING STATUS: Most children (7,155) in all four research areas went to school and did not engage in work. Of the 1,016 children who were economically active, 672 worked while also keeping up with their schooling (in either a formal or informal setting), while 344 children worked only.

Table 2. Number of children aged 5-17 years old, by education and working status

Type of activity	Thai	Migrant	Total	%
Study	7 010	145	7 155	85.9
Study and work	655	17	672	8.1
Work only	221	123	344	4.1
Neither study nor work	99	57	156	1.9
Total	7 985	342	8 327	100

In Nakhon Si Thammarat and Songkhla, the number of working boys out of school at the time of the survey was larger than the number of working girls. In Samut Sakhon and Surat Thani, the number of working girls at younger ages (5–12 years old) was larger than the number of working boys in the same age range.

In addition to their job, most of the working girls also had to do household chores, whereas far fewer boys were expected to also help out at home.

Reasons for leaving school

Of the 145 young people in Nakhon Si Thammarat and Songkhla Provinces who responded when asked to choose from a list of nine reasons for leaving school, 77 (53 per cent) said they did not want to study, 59 (41 per cent) said they had to work to earn income, and 52 (40 per cent) said because they lacked money to continue a study. As well, 26 (18 per cent) said they had to help the family business. Other reasons are disability/illness (9), family did not allow (3), had a problem with the school (2), school too far from home (1) or other unexplained reason (15).

Of the 193 young people both Thai and Migrant in Samut Sakhon province, 23.29 per cent do not want to go to school because they have difficulty in adapting themselves to the new environment, followed by 12.85 per cent who have to move with their family. Of the 19 young people in Surat Thani province, 17.63 per cent said that they have to move with their family, followed by 12.63 per cent that have family problems.

Migrant children and education

Until 2005, migrant children were not allowed to enrol in any public school. Government policy in 2005 was liberalized, recognizing the right of all children to an education. In practice, however, many schools have remained inaccessible to migrant children for reasons that span from fear of families who are not legally residing in the country, to language barriers, to school's unwillingness to accommodate the needs of migrant students.

The TDRI research in Samut Sakhon, in which migrants were included in the household survey, found that migrant child labourers were more likely to have left school (in Thailand) to help their parents to smooth household income. Most migrant parents said they did not see the importance of education; they believed that working can brighten their children's future more than going to school.

6. REASON FOR WORKING: Most of the economically active children (Thai and migrant) stated they worked outside (of the household) to help increase the household income through helping their parents in the household business.

For the migrant children, the lack of access to education left them little choice but to work. Interviews with migrant children and parents of migrant children found that most were not aware of their right to an education in Thailand. The studies show that some of them were found living on their own – they had come to Thailand to work. Some said that a lack of work opportunities and/or natural disasters had left their family in a dire circumstance. Many of young workers (in Samut Sakhon) used an employment 'agent' to find them work and were thus indebted to them for their service fees.

7. HOUSEHOLD ECONOMY: According to the survey, the household income in Samut Sakhon and Surat Thani was in the range of THB 10,001 – 20,000 per month. Based on the 500 households surveyed in Nakhon Si Thammarat and Songkhla, the average household had two income-earning members and three dependants. A household earned on average THB 11,671 per month.

Is monthly income sufficient?

Based on the household surveys, the financial situation of households is divided into three categories:

Category 1: household expenses exceed income

Category 2: household income meets expenses but is insufficient for savings

Category 3: household income exceeds expenses and allows for savings.

The sample data for 1016 children engaged in economic activities was gathered (data was not available for 45 children). Most of them (747 children, or 73.52 per cent) were in a category 3 household in which income exceeded expenses, and allows for saving. Nearly one-fifth of the group lived in a category 2 household, with just enough to make ends meet (172 children, or 16.93 per cent). A small portion (52 children, or 5.12 per cent) lived in a household in which the expenses exceeded income.

Table 3. Household financial situation

Income vs. Expenses	Frequency	%
Expenses exceed income	52	5.12
Income meets expenses but is insufficient for savings	172	16.93
Income exceeds expense and allows for savings	747	73.52
Total	971	95.57
No response	45	4.43
Total	1 016	100.00

8. INDUSTRY: The use of child workers is typically found in small enterprises that do not require any high skills. Because the demand for unskilled labour is high in all four provinces, many enterprise employers turn to child workers to fill their gaps. Shrimp farm entrepreneurs who were interviewed, however, pointed out that because their investment is quite high (more than 10 million baht), they would not jeopardize the business by using inexperienced child workers.

Of all economically active children in the households surveyed in the four research areas (table 4), slightly more were engaged in work outside of the seafood industry, at 544 (or 54 per cent) in other industries and 472 (or 46 per cent) in seafood-related work.

Table 4. Number of all economically active children, by seafood or other industry

	Samut Sakhon	Southern Provinces	Total
Total children 5–17	2 324	6 003	8 327
Total economically active children 5–17	360	656	1 016
Economically active children in shrimp and seafood industry	126	346	472
Economically active children in other industries	234	310	544

Note: Southern provinces include Surat Thani, Nakhon Si Thammarat and Songkhla

Types of workplaces – seafood

Within the seafood-related work, a distinction in the types of workplaces emerged between the two primary research sites: more children were involved in processing-related work in Samut Sakhon due to the preponderance of industrial type enterprises located there. But in the three southern provinces, there are more shrimp farms compared to the other coastal regions in Thailand.

In Samut Sakhon, 35 per cent of the economically active children worked in the shrimp and seafood-related industries. Types of workplace included home-based primary processing (43 per cent), processing factories (12 per cent), followed by primary processing factories (7 per cent) and then frozen storage (7 per cent). The youngest economically active child in the shrimp industry was 14 years old and worked in a processing factory.

Types of workplaces – other industries in Nakhon Si Thammarat and Songkhla

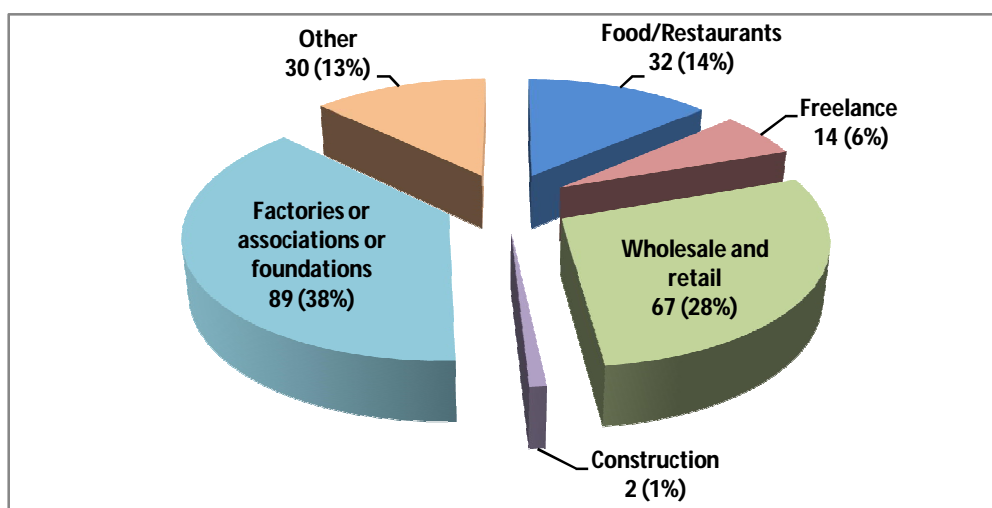
Findings regarding the 266 economically active children surveyed are as follows:

1. Wage labour: 68 children (11.5%) work in construction (carrying cement and bricks), red onion peeling, carrying palm fruit, carrying paddy rice, delivering gas tanks, driving, labelling, packaging, and other tasks requested by an employer.
2. Trade: 60 children (10.2%) work in their family-owned grocery stores, selling goods at markets, selling clothes, and selling meat.
3. Selling and serving food and drinks: 46 children (7.8%). The majority of children assist family food businesses. They serve, wait tables, and wash dishes.
4. Agriculture and livestock: 31 children (5.3%) work in vegetable picking, chili picking, raising ducks, goats and cows (feeding, replacing water), and carrying fertilizer.
5. Tradesman: 18 children (3.1%) work as tillers, assistants to mechanics, fitters and turners, welders, electricians, and painters.
6. Kitchen hands: 15 children (2.5%) work in cooking, preparing food, making desserts.
7. Others: 16 children (2.7%) work in cleaning, laundry and ironing, buying used goods, clerical work, security, and customer relations.
8. Agricultural products: 8 children (1.4%) work in palm sugar manufacturing, processing palm sugar blocks, and making salted eggs

9. Prohibited work for children: 4 children (0.7%) work in their family's poultry slaughterhouse, or in snooker halls (where gambling takes place).

Types of workplaces – other industry in Samut Sakhon and Surat Thani

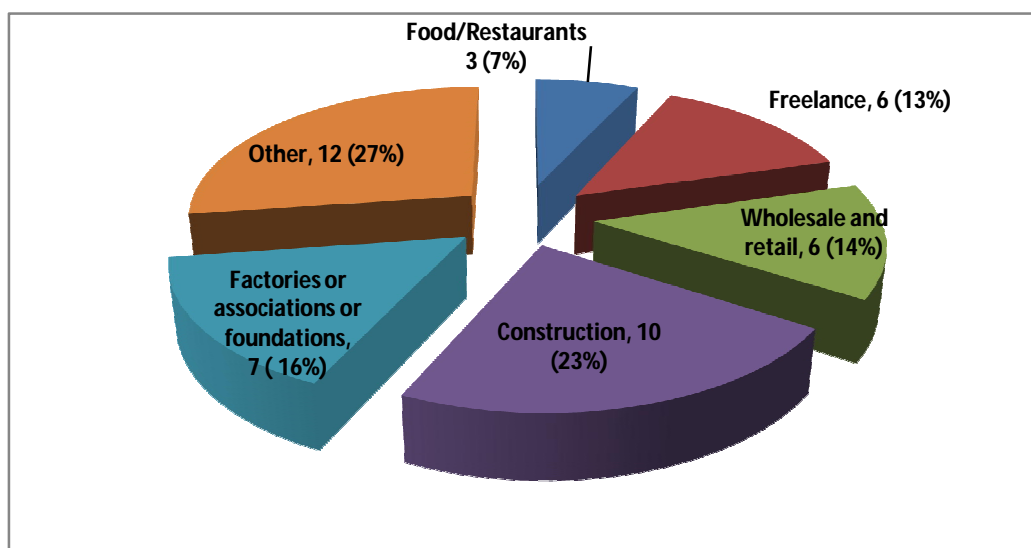
Figure2.1. Economically active children in Samut Sakhon working outside of the seafood industry



Source: TDRI

In Samut Sakhon, of the total 234 economically active children working in other industries, 38 per cent worked in factory and 28 per cent engaged in retail and wholesale jobs.

Figure2.2. Economically active children in Surat Thani working outside of the seafood industry



Source: TDRI

In Surat Thani, of the total 44 economically active children working outside of the seafood industry, 23 per cent engaged in a construction work and 16 per cent worked in factories.

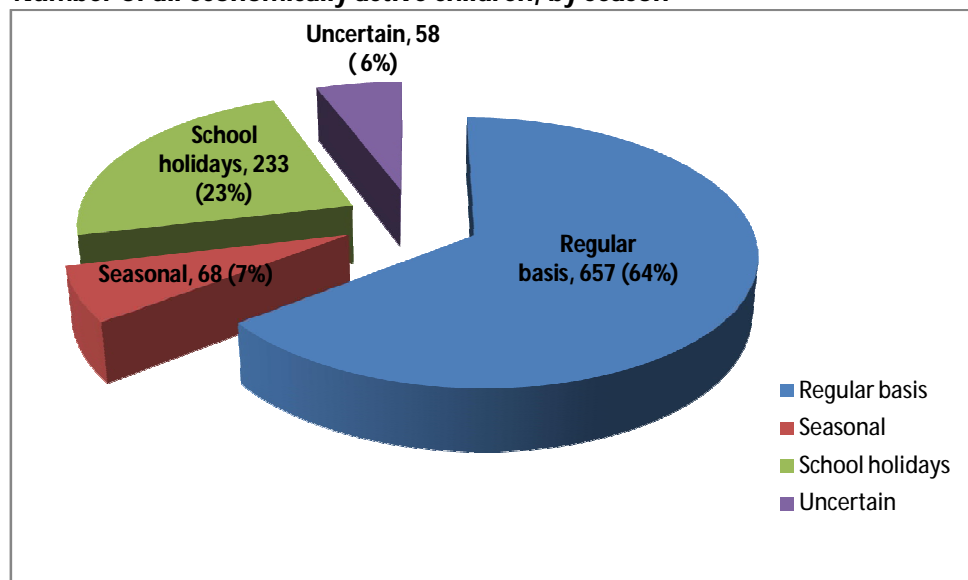
9. EMPLOYMENT STATUS: Overall, nearly half of the 1,007 economically active children were unpaid family workers, at 495. The same number of 495 children worked as wage labourers (employee type) across all types of industries. Of them, most were day labourers, with a smaller group of subcontractors who were paid for the volume of work they produced. Only 17 children were self-employed. The majority of the youngest workers, aged 5–12 years, helped in a family business; however, the trend has changed in a way that the numbers of them reduced while the numbers of wage labourers increased in the sample groups as the ages increased.

Table 5. Number of all economically active children's current employment status

Age group	Employment status			Total
	Employee	Self-employed	Unpaid family worker	
5-12 years	47	5	155	207
13-14 years	81	5	121	207
15-17 years	367	7	219	593
Total	495	17	495	1 007

10. SEASONAL WORK: Overall, 64 per cent of economically active children worked on a regular basis, while 23 per cent worked only during school breaks and 7 per cent worked in specific seasons. In the seafood industry, seasonal work relates to fishing and buying shrimp because of the monsoon season. These variations can be attributed to the natural growing and breeding cycles of agricultural products and seafood stocks as well as yearly monsoons. Many had to work after school and on weekends.

Figure3. Number of all economically active children, by season



Hours worked

Surveyed children had a difficulty in providing a composite total of hours worked weekly, because of several reasons: nearly all the work is informal with no employment contract; the most common is day labour and subcontract piece work, which is highly variable; coastal fishing is dependent on the weather and sea conditions; family businesses do not have fixed hours (applying to 50 per cent of the children surveyed); and some children's work duration depends on the nature of the work or a parent's request.

The researchers nevertheless made attempts to estimate the weekly hours of work.

In TDRI, the researchers found that the median weekly working hours for working children was 32.53 hours in Samut Sakhon. This means that half of them work at least 32.53 hours in a week.⁶ For working children aged 5-12 years old, most worked less than 15 hours per week. The survey found that most of them worked 3- 10 hours per week. For the working children aged 13 – 14 years old, most of them worked 40 hours per week or higher. For children age 15 – 17 year old, the household survey found that they worked more than 48 hours per week. The longest recorded working hours by children was 90 hours per week.

In PSU, the researchers found that the timing of work among children still in school fit into one of three groups: i) weekends (1–2 days); ii) every day before or after school and weekends; and iii) during school breaks, with similar hours to out-of-school working children. And among those children not in school and working, they too fit into one of three groups: i) irregular hours [58]; ii) every day [47]; and iii) six days a week [37].

The average working day in the Nakhon Si Thammarat and Songkhla research sites was six hours, with the range at one to 23 hours. But the long days may not all be filled with work activity: Those

⁶ This figure seems too high for types of work that is 'safe' for children. According to most national legislation linked to ILO Convention 138, working children aged 12/13-14 may be engaged in light work, that which is non-hazardous and lasts no more than 15 hours per week. In contrast, regular work entails work up to 40 hours per week.

who fish on their own may leave in the evening to set their fishing lines and then lie down while waiting to catch a fish returning the next morning. In a shrimp-buying business, the hours of work depend on the amount of shrimp caught. The children who worked in the family-owned snooker hall were there every day during school holidays, with one-hour breaks each day.

Working hours by week proved difficult to fairly estimate because some could not be quantified due to their irregularity. The little reporting of hours worked in the Nakhon Si Thammarat and Songkhla research sites reflected a great deal of variation, but the average across all age groups (and for a total of 437 persons) was less than 48 hours per week. The mean among those attending school was 27 hours, among those in non-formal/informal education it was 43 hours and among those not in school it was 43 hours (with the total at 30 hours).

Among [457] children reporting hours worked per week, 84 (18 per cent) worked more than the legally permissible 48 hours. Among the 132 children whose hours were difficult to quantify, [56 per cent] were wage labours and 38 per cent were family workers.

11. CHILDREN'S EARNINGS: Income was hard to quantify because of the uncertain nature of day labour and per-piece work as well as the fact that many of the surveyed/sampled children did not keep track of their income.

For example, in the South (Nakhon Si Thammarat and Songkhla), 30 children could not answer the questions on earnings at all. Thus, according to the rough estimates, about half of all working children earned less than THB 3,500 a month; only one fourth earned more than THB5,000 a month. Most [61 per cent] of the working Thai children helped out in the family business and received no payment. Slightly more than a third of the working Thai children were considered an employee and paid a wage. But as with most Thai workers, their wages were low: Half of the working children earned THB 3,500 a month or less; the average monthly income at the time of the survey was THB 3,632.

In Samut Sakhon, the researchers found that the average monthly earnings of working children at the time of the survey was THB 4,223.

Table 6. Average monthly income among working children, by employment sector

Sector	Songkhla and Nakhon Si Thammarat		Surat Thani		Samut Sakhon	
	Frequency	Mean	Frequency	Mean	Frequency	Mean
Shrimp and seafood industry	123	365	23	974	124	6035
Other	78	4054	44	2433	236	3270
Total	201	3632	67	2619	360	4223

Table 7. Framework for Statistical Identification of Child Labour 5-17 Years Old (System of National Account-SNA)

General production boundary							Total economically active children
Age group	System of National Accounts (SNA) boundary				Non-SNA boundary	Total child labour	
	Light work	Regular work	Worst forms of child labour (WFCL)				
	(non-WFCL + working hours fewer than 15 hours)	(non-WFCL + working hours fewer than 48 hours)	Hazardous work	Others			
Samut Sakhon							296
5–12	2	9	4	0	14	29	29
13–14	7	12	12	0	20	44	51
15–17	9	48	152	0	71	223	280
South (Surat Thani, Songkhla and Nakhon Si Thammarat)							526
5–12	46	57	26	0	54	183	183
13–14	33	33	40	0	53	126	159
15–17	27	70	134	0	83	217	314
Total child labour aged 5–17							822
5–12	48	66	30	0	68	212	212
13–14	40	45	52	0	73	170	210
15–17	36	118	286	0	154	440	594
Total							1 016
Percentage of child labour to surveyed children aged 5–17							9.87 %

Note: Denotes child labour as defined by the resolution concerning statistics of child labour (The 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians)

Denotes activities not considered child labour.

12. HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS:

According to ILO Convention No.182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, hazardous child labour is the work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to jeopardize/harm the health, safety and morals of children.⁷

⁷ For more information, please visit <http://www.ilo.org/ipec/facts/WorstFormsofChildLabour/lang--en/index.htm>

The Thai Labor Protection Act and subsequent ministerial regulations define job functions and environments which are considered hazardous due to potential physical or moral harm and sets a minimum age of 18 for hazardous work.

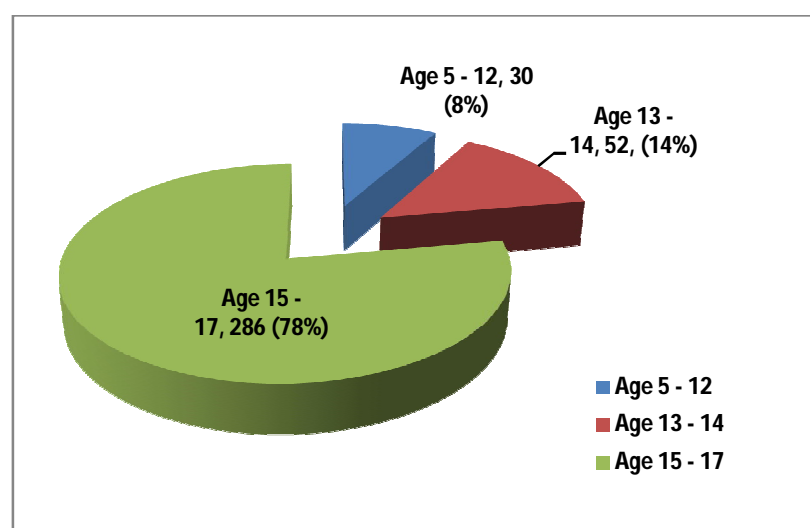
The researchers considered three main conditions to identify child labour: age, working hours and working conditions (and hazardous work i.e. lack of protective equipment, risk to injuries, night work, lifting heavy weights etc.).

The most common of the hazardous and unhealthy working conditions were: work with fire, heat or strong sunlight; damp, smelly and dirty workplaces; often working more than eight hours a day; dusty workplace; using hazardous working tools; too hot or too cold environment; and working from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m.

Using the international standards for statistical data collection (ILO), across all industries, the study found some children aged 5-17 engaged in hazardous work. Within the SNA boundary, 368 children are engaged in some type of hazardous work (36 per cent of economically active children aged 5-17 [1,016]). Among these children, 286 of them are 15-17 years old (78 per cent), 52 children are 13-14 years old (14 per cent) and 30 children are 5-12 years old (8 per cent). On the other hand,

within non-SNA boundary, hazardous unpaid family services constituted 29 per cent of the total number of economically active children. Among them, 23.05 per cent were 5-12 years, 24.75 per cent were 12-14 year and 52.2 per cent were 15 to 17 years.

Figure 4 Number of working children in hazardous work by age-group



III. Conclusion and Recommendations

Key Findings:

- Average child labour prevalence rate in the age group of 5-17 years in all Provinces under the survey was 9.9 per cent. In Samut Sakhon one of the biggest seafood industry hubs in Thailand the prevalence rate rose to 12.7 per cent.
- Slightly more than half (52 per cent) of all the economically active children were 15–17 years old at the time of the survey.
- From the economically active children in the age group of 5-17 years identified in the survey [1,016], 36.2 per cent were found in hazardous child labour, within the SNA boundary. Among those in hazardous child labour, 78 per cent were 15-17 years old, 14 per cent were 13-14 years old and 8 per cent were 5-12 years old, indicating a need for improved protection for young workers.
- Within non-SNA boundary, hazardous unpaid family services constituted 29 per cent of the total number of economically active children aged 5-17 years old [1,016]. Among them, 23.05 per cent were 5-12 years, 24.75 per cent were 12-14 year and 52.2 per cent were 15 to 17 years.
- Overall, nearly half of the 1,007 economically active children were unpaid family workers, at 495. The same amount of 495 children worked as wage labourers (employee type) across all types of industries.
- Both Thai and migrant children were found and both boys and girls are equally affected. From economically active children aged 5–17, 48 per cent were boys and 52 per cent girls.
- The median age among children found working was 14 for girls and 10 for boys.
- Most children 85.9 per cent in all four research areas went to school and did not engage in work. 8.1 per cent combined study and work, while 4.1 per cent children worked only and 1.9 per cent did not work or study.
- In Samut Sakhon Province where migrant households were included in the survey; most of the migrant respondents were from Myanmar, and Mon was the largest ethnic group.
- A total of 879 Thai children were found to be economically active in all four provincial research sites; of them, 695 were characterized as child labourers. And a total of 137 migrant children were found to be economically active (in Samut Sakhon Province); of them, 127 were characterized as child labourers (92.7 per cent).
- Of all economically active children 46 per cent were found in seafood-related work with slightly more 54 per cent engaged in other industries such as in agriculture (rubber plantations, farming), services, child domestic work and assisting in small informal family processing or manufacturing businesses. In Samut Sakhon 35 per cent was found to be working in seafood related industry.

- In the South (Nakhon Si Thammarat and Songkhla), among [457] children reporting hours worked per week, 84 (18 per cent) worked more than the legally permissible 48 hours.
- In the South (Nakhon Si Thammarat and Songkhla) half of the working children earned THB 3,500 a month or less; the average monthly income at the time of the survey was THB 3,632.
- In Samut Sakhon, the researchers found that the average monthly earnings of working children at the time of the survey was THB 4,223.

Recommendations:

The elimination of child labour in hazardous work remains a challenge in Thailand. There is a need to reinforce action in relation to responses to child labour with a continued focus on addressing hazardous child labour concerning shrimp and seafood processing industry sector and agriculture.

Considering high number of children found in informal economy and engaged in hazardous working conditions through family based work, efforts to reduce the number of these children are required to promote awareness about ill effects of child labour and to promote access to education and work towards greater involvement of community members in addressing child labour.

High number of economically active children found in hazardous work indicates needs for greater protection of young workers of legal working age (15-17 – years). To address hazardous child labour it is important to determine what constitutes hazardous work in specific economic sectors and stages of work and to engage employers, workers and community members in addressing the situation.

Considering the very high rate of economically active children within the migrant children identified by the survey), efforts should be made to develop specific measures and strategies to address child labour among migrant population. More information about child labour situation among the migrant population in Thailand is required.

There is a need to continue to build the general knowledge base on children's work and to establish national statistical data on child labour in Thailand. This is important for strengthening policy responses against child labour.

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Waiver

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