Development and Dynamics of the Informal Workers in Thailand: A Case Study of
Informal Workers Network

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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พัฒนาการและพลวัตของแรงงานนอกระบบในประเทศไทย: กรณีศึกษาภาคีเครือข่ายแรงงานนอกระบบ

นายธนโชติ อัศวโรจน์ไมตรี

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ธนโชติ อัศวโรจนไมตรี : พัฒนาการและพลวัตของแรงงานนอกระบบในประเทศไทย: กรณีศึกษาภาคีเครือข่ายแรงงานนอกระบบ (Development and Dynamics of the Informal Workers in Thailand: A Case Study of Informal Workers Network) อ.ที่ปรึกษาวิทยานิพนธ์หลัก: ดร. กนกรัตน์ เลิศชูสกุล, 142 หน้า.

วิทยานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้มีเป้าประสงค์ที่จะวิเคราะห์ขบวนการแรงงานนอกระบบที่ร่วมมือกับองค์กรพัฒนาเอกชน (NGO) ชื่อว่า HomeNet Thailand ซึ่งเป็นองค์กรที่ช่วยระดมเหล่าแรงงานนอกระบบเพื่อพัฒนาศักยภาพด้านทักษะการทำงานและความรู้ประกอบการทำงาน วิทยานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้ได้ใช้ทฤษฎีการระดมทรัพยากร (Resource Mobilization Theory) และทฤษฎีกระบวนการทางการเมือง (Political Process Theory) เพื่อศึกษาพัฒนาการ เงื่อนไข และข้อจำกัดของขบวนการแรงงานนอกระบบ วิทธยานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้ให้ความสนใจกับยุคสมัยรัฐบาลพลเรือนของ นางสาว ยิ่งลักษณ์ ชินวัตร (พ.ศ. ๒๕๕๔-๒๕๕๗) และรัฐบาลทหารของพลเอก ประยุทธ์ จันทร์โอชา (พ.ศ. ๒๕๕๗-ปัจจุบัน) วิทธยานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้ถูกแบ่งออกเป็น ห้าบท ในบทแรกกล่าวถึงบทนำและความสำคัญต่อระเบียบวิธีวิจัยที่ใช้การศึกษาจากเอกสารหลักฐานและการสัมภาษณ์ บทที่สองคือส่วนทบทวนวรรณกรรมและกรอบแนวคิดทฤษฎี โดยส่วนนี้จะกล่าวถึงข้อจำกัดในการศึกษาแรงงานนอกระบบจากงานศึกษาก่อนหน้าประกอบกับความเชื่อมโยงระหว่างงานวิจัยชิ้นนี้และกรอบแนวคิดที่เลือกใช้ บทที่สามคือกรณีศึกษาองค์กรพัฒนาเอกชน HomeNet และแรงงานนอกระบบเกี่ยวกับต้นกำเนิด พัฒนาการ ความเป็นระบบ และการระดมทรัพยากรผ่านกรอบทฤษฎีการระดมทรัพยากร บทที่สี่คือบทวิเคราะห์การเข้าถึงการเมืองของแรงงานนอกระบบภายใต้การปกครองที่ต่างกันสองรูปแบบ การศึกษาในบทนี้เจาะจงในเรื่องพลวัตและข้อจำกัดของแรงงานนอกระบบผ่านกรอบทฤษฎีกระบวนการทางการเมือง บทที่ห้าคือบทสรุปซึ่งเป็นบทวิเคราะห์ความสำเร็จและล้มเหลวของขบวนการแรงงานนอกระบบอันมีผลมาจากความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างการระดมทรัพย์กรของแรงงานนอกระบบและโครงสร้างการเมืองภายนอก วิทยานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้ได้มีข้อโต้แย้งถึงกรณีศึกษาข้างต้นว่าขบวนการแรงงานนอกระบบ สามารถเติบโตได้เนื่องจากเครือข่ายความสัมพันธ์ต่อกลุ่มช่วยเหลือที่มีมาก่อนการจัดตั้งขบวนการประกอบกับการเกื้อหนุนทางการเมืองจากฝ่ายรัฐบาลพลเรือนของยิ่งลักษณ์ชินวัตรโดยมุ่งหวังคะแนนความนิยม สองปัจจัยหลักนี้ได้นำพาการเติบโตและพัฒนาการมาสู่แรงงานในภาคเศรษฐกิจที่ไม่เป็นทางการ ขณะเดียวกันในช่วงรัฐบาลทหาร หากรัฐบาลทหารไม่ให้ความสนใจภาคเศรษฐกิจนี้แล้วก็สามารถทำให้การพัฒนาหยุดลงและการดำเนินการพัฒนาในภายภาคหน้าก็ดูจะเป็นเรื่องที่ยากขึ้น

สาขาวิชา การพัฒนาระหว่างประเทศ ลายมือชื่อนิสิต ....

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TANACHOT ASSAWAROTJANAMITRE: Development and Dynamics of the Informal Workers in Thailand: A Case Study of Informal Workers Network. ADVISOR: DR. KANOKRAT LERTCHOOSAKUL, 142 pp.

This thesis aims to analyze the informal worker movement that is associated with a labor NGO named HomeNet Thailand, which helped mobilize informal workers and strengthen their skills and knowledge. The core analysis of thesis follows *Resource Mobilization Theory* and *Political Process Theory* to analyze the informal workers' developments, conditions, and limitations. This thesis explores the Informal workers' situation during Yingluck Shinawatra's civilian government (2011-2014) and Prayut Chan-o-cha's miliatry government (2014-Present). The thesis consists of 5 parts. Firstly, an introduction elaborates the research methodology of *Archival Research* and *Interview* methods. Secondly, a literature review and theoretical framework show the limitations of prior research and connectivity between this research and the analytical frameworks. Thirdly, it studies HomeNet and its informal worker groups' origins, development, sytematization and mobilization via *Resource Mobilization Theory*. Fourthly, it analyzes HomeNet informal workers' political engagement under two different regimes, focusing on the dynamics and limitations within the group via *Political Process Theory*. Lastly, the conclusion elaborates how the relationship between the movement's resource mobilization and external political structures can determine the movement's success and failure. The thesis argues that with the pre-existing network and attempts to draw popularity by Yingluck's government from having civilians participated in politics led the informal sector to their further developments. While on the other hands, the military government – if not interest in informal sector – could halt the development progress of the sector.

Field of Study: International
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Student's Signature ....
Advisor's Signature ....

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CONTENTS

Part 1

Introduction: Research Background & Methodology

1. **Introduction**

1.1 Rationale: Problems and Issues of Interest

The term "informal sector" was coined to describe the "activities of the working poor who were not recognized, recorded, protected or regulated by the public authorities" (International Labor Organization, 1972). However, due to the rapid growth and expansion of the economy, particularly in developing countries, the informal sector nowadays includes not only the working poor, but also those who work as home-based workers, small-scale freelancers, and in small and medium-sized enterprises. Workers in this sector are not being monitored or taxed and often have unprotected status. Moreover, they generally do not receive social welfare benefits since they do not legally meet the requirements of having the status of workers. This phenomenon can commonly be seen in rapidly growing developing countries like those in South-East Asia; where labor protection and social welfare laws are flawed (International Labor Organization, 2002). Thailand is one example of a developing country in which the informal sector plays a crucial role in the economy and where informal workers commonly face the major labor-related

problems, namely, a lack of access to welfare and protection against working abuses

by employers (Sawangkul, 2010) and abuses of the rights to collective bargaining or

to form a union (Ativanichayapong, 2012). The website of the Foundation for Labor

and Employment Promotion[1] notes five significant problems for Thai informal

workers: 1) they are not receiving work safety and hygiene welfares 2) the labor laws

do not cover informal labor for the social security fund. 3) informal workers are not

corporate body, thus they cannot gain access to legal services which restricted by

laws 4) their level of association is low and cannot form a union, hence their

collective bargaining power is weak. 5) informal workers lack the opportunity to

develop their skills because there is no official body to support and administrate the

development of informal sector. Despite these negative factors in the informal

sector, it still represents a significant part of the larger economy from which the

nation profits. According to Sawangkul (2010), in 2001, the informal sector generated

45.6% of Thailand's GDP, which is remarkably high. In 2013, Thailand's National

Statistical Office recorded 25.1 million people as informal workers who were not

protected nor had the right to receive social welfare as do formal workers. It is

common for Thai home-based workers, most of whom are subcontracted, to face

such problems, as the labor laws do not cover the informal sector. Furthermore, the

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[1] Official site: http://homenetthailand.org/informal-worker/

Home-based Workers Protection Act has yet to be strictly enforced and few workers

know about its protections even though it was enacted in 2004.

The long-standing problems in the informal sector in Thailand have not been

recognized by the authorities and related social movements do not entirely cover

the issues. Therefore, attempts have been made by external organizations to assist

the informal sector such as the International Labor Organization's labor promotion

campaign. The International Labor Organization (ILO) launched an informal labor

network in 1992 to alleviate the problems of informal sector workers. This network

later flourished into a membership-based organization for Thai informal workers. It

aimed to promote the association of informal sector workers, foster their social

protection and welfare, and develop their capacity. Most of the campaigns

undertaken for informal workers' rights were driven by the organizations that support

them, such as HomeNet, StreetNet, and Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing

and Organizing (WIEGO). There is only limited data from the past decade showing the

movement of informal workers as being driven by informal workers themselves

without the help of other organizations (Ativanichayapong, 2012). In spite of the fact

that informal labor groups are characterized as unseen and portrayed as fragmented

and powerless, they have nonetheless recently cooperated with HomeNet (Thailand)

to establish a movement demanding social security welfare for informal sector

workers. This movement, named Informal Workers Network (ภาคีเครือข่ายแรงงานนอก

ระบบ)[2], ultimately compelled the government to re-write Article 40 of the Social

Security Act (1990). Henceforth, informal workers nowadays can register to join a

social security savings scheme that helps cover the cost of accidents and provides

disability support, death benefits, and retirement savings. This achievement, driven

by the cooperative efforts of informal labor groups and a non-governmental

organization (NGO), suggests that these labor groups may very well no longer be

powerless or ineffective as a social movement. Informal sector labor movements

have mostly been mobilized by NGOs such as HomeNet. It is challenging to study

whether the political context and organizational capacity of groups whose rights are

not codified in law might prove conducive to organize an effective movement, giving

informal workers opportunities to access a government-supported retirement and

social security scheme.

Due to the limited data on the informal labor movement in Thailand, this

research aims to study the factors in success of establishing the movement, and the

collective action and resource mobilization of informal labor groups. The research

also explores the political opportunities these informal labor groups have enjoyed

and which have enabled them to succeed to a certain degree in establishing a

movement. By collecting this information, the researcher expects to be able to

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[2] The network is also called "HomeNet Association Thailand" when presented in English by the NGO HomeNet Thailand itself to identify its collaboration between the worker groups and the organization which helped to create and empower the network.

clarify the characteristics of the Thai informal labor movement associated with

HomeNet and elaborate why it has been successful and why it has failed in certain

political structures. The dynamics and development of strategies used in the

movements will be studied to analyze the efficiency of informal workers' activities.

1.2 Historical Development of Thai Labor

Although the informal sector nowadays is considered separately from the

formal sector in terms of functions, problems, and systems, they both share a history

of struggle and bargaining with the state. In terms of political involvement, labor in

Thailand – both informal and formal–was evolving in the political sphere even

before the Siamese Revolution in 1932. This event changed the Thai system of

governance from an absolute monarchy to a constitutional monarchy. Thus, political

power and culture was shifted into a different dimension where the lower classes

started uniting for their own benefit. From the early to mid-19th century, Thailand

depended on Chinese workers called 'coolies' –used for heavy work such as

construction or transporting goods. They were either imported or migrants, while Thai

labor would work in services such as transportation, beauty shops, vending, or safer

industrial work (Thai workers were more likely to be seen in garment factories than in

rice mills or ice production). Generally, imported coolies were protected under

government regulation. As the Thai government did not assist Chinese workers with

funeral expenses, Chinese mutual-aid organizations (also known as 'Chinese

societies') sprung up to help Chinese workers with such costs (Skinner, 1957). Chinese

labor organizations, too, were established during this period to assist coolies or

fellow Chinese in Thailand. However, most were suppressed by the Thai authority in

1897. Secret societies (known as Ang-Yi) were designated illegal associations involved

in violence and smuggling. Without an organization to look after workers, many

conflicts occurred from disagreements between employers and workers. These

conflicts prepared the workers for the upcoming Siamese Revolution in 1932.

Many actions empowering and suppressing Thai labor occurred after the

Siamese Revolution. The situation looked promising for labor after the revolution;

however, the positive environment for labor lasted only about two decades before

workers were oppressed by the military government. During the period of the

Siamese Revolution, various labor groups, led by Thawat Rittidet, an ex-civil servant,

allied themselves with Pridi Phanomyong's revolutionary movement. These groups

thought that the master-servant system under the absolute monarchy could not

address grievances brought to their masters (Brown, 2004). In Brown's (2004) view,

Thai workers during that time were not autonomous but led by the elite. He argues

that Thai labor groups were not yet the powerful self-mobilized political forces

capable of acting in their own interests. In the aftermath of the Siamese Revolution,

an Anti-Communist Act of 1933 legitimized the arrest and prosecution of anyone

suspected of being a communist. The Act had a significant impact on the activities of

labor groups and their leaders. Many workers protested against the act. Ruangsutham

and Lasa (Ruangsutham & Lasa, 1986) report that from the revolution to the end of

World War II, both formal and informal workers in various sectors (excluding farmers

in the rural areas) regularly confronted their employers. After 1946, Thai state tried to

gain control over the Thai labor movement but failed. Chinese workers gained the

leadership of Thai labor groups, which succeeded in forming labor unions in various

industries in 1948 (Mabry, 1977). The government was left with little influence among

workers. The unions were successful in making demands on working conditions for

industrial workers. They were able to compel the government to enact laws setting

standard working conditions of eight hours per day, with over-time work receiving

extra compensation. Sakdina Chatkul na Ayuthaya (Chatrakul, 2012) contends that

after the transition from an absolute monarchy to a constitutional monarchy in 1932,

several developments occurred in the labor movement. Many labor groups formed

unions and associated with each other in solidarity. At that time, the labor

movement became perhaps the most important social movement in Thailand. It

consisted of not only registered workers, but also informal workers such as street

vendors, and even the unemployed too. However, later on, Thai workers became

less powerful than employers due to the dissolution of Thai labor unions in 1958 by

Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat. This was because labor unions, influenced by Chinese

leaders, were seen as a political risk to the ruling elites (ibid). The dissolution of the

unions resulted in approximately 75,000 workers scattering into smaller groups,

weakening their unity. The government's main purpose was to weaken the power of

labor and get certain labor groups to join the government side thus creating tension

among the labor groups and jeopardizing their unity. After Thai labor unions were

dissolved, informal workers became fragmented and disconnected.

During the 1970s, the Thai labor movement again became crucially involved

in politics between October 1973 and October 1976 after being oppressed for 15

years under the authoritarian regimes of General Sarit Thanarat and General Thanom

Kittikachorn (1958-1963 and 1963-1973 respectively). In March 1972, General Thanom

issued the Announcement of the Revolutionary Council No.103 which, for the first

time, allowed workers to form an association to bargain with their employers. The

Announcement was issued to ease conflicts between employers and employees.

External forces such as the International Labor Organization were also involved in

demanding that the Thai government respect labor rights (Ativanichayapong, 1999).

With this opportunity to form an association, workers used strikes in order to bargain

with employers. From 1973 to 1976 there were more than a thousand strikes and

factory lockouts. The minimum wage had been increased before the 6th October

1976 event in response to massive strikes. Prior to 6th October, Thai workers were

under severe restrictions and felt that they were prevented from participating in the

political sphere. In 1975 formal workers received the right to form a union under the

amended Labor Relations Act of1956 right after the cancellation of General Sarit

Thanarat's Announcement of the Coup d'etat Council in 1958. On the other hand,

informal workers were still unable to meet the requirements for establishing a union.

Theoretically, the law codified workers' rights, including the rights to assemble and

form an association. However, this law did not actually help workers regain political

power or even bargaining power vis-à-vis their employers. Instead, the Labor

Relations Act placed restrictions on labor, especially in regard to the rights to form an

association and collective bargaining. The law prevented labor unions from

combining with each other (private company labor unions could not unite or

integrate with state-owned enterprise labor unions, and one work place could not

have more than one union) (Kanjanadit, 2013). The Labor Relations Act also failed to

create a political space for informal sector workers because their working status was

not covered by the law. Hence, they were disconnected and unable officially to form

their own groups or even cooperate with other worker groups to legally bargain with

the state and employers. Due to these restrictions, workers decided to ally with

other social forces such as university students and farmers. Thai workers, farmers,

and students officially formed an alliance in 1975 to bargain with the government on

the issues of rice prices, lands reform, cooperatives, and the penalties for striking.

The alliance was dissolved and silenced after the 6th October massacre. The

movement was framed as communist and most of the surviving students, workers,

and farmers were arrested or fled to the jungle. The incident put an end to the short-lived era of labor movements and labor rights.

Thai workers faced further oppression of the right to strike on 28 February 1991 when the military government of the National Peace Keeping Council (NPKC) passed an amended Labor Relations Act B.E. 2518 (1975). This time, the conditions for strikes were made stricter and union advisors had to be registered with the state in order to take any political action. The NPKC took another step to restrict labor political powers on 15 April 1991. It enacted laws to dissolve the state enterprise unions and form a new 'associations of state enterprise officials' under government supervision (Mansamak, 2014). The dissolution of the state enterprise unions caused even more difficulties for the mobilization of labor groups. The tension caused by the dissolution later fuelled worker's dissatisfactory in the Black May event (a mass civilian mobilization to oppose the military regime led by General Suchinda Kraprayoon (April 1992 – May 1992) on 17-20 May 1992). In the aftermath of Black May, the situation for formal worker' and state enterprise workers improved in terms of bargaining power and union registration. However, informal workers (including farmers) were yet to be registered as workers with rights recognized by the state and society, which made informal workers unable to receive workers' welfare. The conclusion is that the labor movement in the past was strong for short periods before being broken up and restricted by military regimes. Only a few groups

engaged in essential production (e.g. workers at rice mills and electricity

transportation workers) actually had sufficient bargaining power to engage with the

government and employers. Smaller groups of workers, including informal workers

such as street vendors and taxi drivers, were associated with unions only in

supportive roles rather than mobilizing and advocating their own agendas.

During 1990s, a new kind of labor movement formed by workers emerged in

Thai society to voice their grievances to the public. In 1995, a network of social

movements formed the important social movement called the Assembly of the Poor

(สมัชชาคนจน). The movement included workers and members of poor communities

affected by government development projects. Many projects denied people the

rights to manage their own resources and created negative impacts on their

livelihoods (Assembly of the Poor, 1997). Informal workers from both rural and urban

areas were included as members. The collective goal was to give themselves a voice

in development policy-making by the government, thus opening a space for

minorities to participate in political sphere. However, because the informal sector is

so numerous and diverse, the Assembly of the Poor could not assist all informal

workers. The informal sector also had no specialized government agency assigned to

respond to their various needs. Because it was a large and highly diverse sector,

informal labor was fragmented and lacked unity (Sawangkul, 2010). There was also a

problem of law enforcement which obstructed informal workers' opportunities to

receive welfare. For example, the Home-based Workers Protection Act B.E. 2553 states that certain kinds of informal workers - home-based workers – could receive the right to protection of standard wages and safety measures, yet very few workers were aware of these laws and the laws themselves were not strictly enforced by officials (Ativanichayapong, 2012).

2. Research questions

This research aims to analyze the movement of informal workers and poses the question: "What factors had a significant effect on the mobilization and political activities of the informal labor movement?" This question includes the following sub-questions for analyzing the movement's components:

1) What resources did the informal workers use to mobilize and establish the movement?

2) What structural or immediate political or social conditions affected the success or failure of the movement?

3) How did external organizations and supporting allies (i.e., pro-labor NGOs) affect the success or failure of the movement?

3. Research objectives

The primary objective of this research is to analyze the factors that caused the success or failure of the development and political activities of the informal labor movement associated with HomeNet. The research poses the question of whether it is the organization, the group of people themselves, or the political conditions that most affected their success and thereby strengthened the labor movement. The research also aims to examine informal workers associated with HomeNet and ascertain whether the group is "fragile" and "powerless" as other informal labor groups have been labeled.

To a certain degree, informal worker groups under HomeNet's assistance have proven their ability to achieve political goals. For instance, they have advocated policies to support informal labor such as the amendment of Article 40 of the Social Security Act (revised in 1990), which resulted in giving 15 to 60-year-old informal workers access to a government-supported retirement savings scheme. Based on this achievement, this research also investigates the organizational capability of HomeNet Thailand in succeeding to empower informal workers.

The outcome of this research is expected to constitute valuable information that will be available for further in-depth analysis of the problems experienced by informal labor groups. It is also expected to present an analysis of why these groups

have been perceived as being powerless and fragmented in the political sphere. The

research itself will attempt to expand the body of knowledge about the informal

workers' movement, including its strengths, weaknesses, successes and failures as a

social movement. In addition, this research aspires to be helpful to informal labor

groups who wish to study and analyze the strategies of earlier movements in order

to develop more effective movement strategies.

3. Research scope

3.1 Time-frame

The study is limited to the certain periods of civil governments and a military

regime, namely Thaksin Shinawatra's civilian government (2001-2006), Abhisith

Vejjajiva's civilian government (2008-2011), Yingluck Shinawatra (2011-2014), and

General Prayut Chan-o-cha's military government (2014-2016[3]).

3.2 Research focus

This research will focus on informal labor groups that have been associated

with HomeNet Thailand. The reason for choosing these groups is that they have

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[3] Gen. Prayut's military regime prolongs up until present (2018) however, the research is aimed to
examine his regime specifically on its first two years.

established a network for informal workers and receive frequent assistance from the

organization in forming movements to make demands of state officials. The only

known academic work – which makes little mention of the informal labor movement

–that has studied how workers set up or propelled the movement or how they

functioned as a social movement is Chutimas Suksai's Research Report:

Development of Health Security for Informal Workers and their Families (2011). In

addition, there is evidence that many activities were conducted by HomeNet to assist

informal worker groups in mobilizing their movements, some of which are successful

and some unsustainable, making the organization best basis for research on the

connection and resource-sharing between informal worker groups and the NGO. Key

informants in the research will be selected informal sector workers in groups that

have taken part in movements involving HomeNet. The groups of informal workers

that have been studied are; clothing manufacturers, bronze crafters, homeworkers,

motorcycle taxi riders and street vendors.

3.3 Research area

The research is based exclusively in Bangkok, Thailand.

3.4 Research unit

The research unit of this study is primarily a social movement organization, called Informal Workers Network, which comprised of 5 different HomeNet's informal workers group following; 1) Pradit Trorakarn Community (the bronze crafters), 2) the homeworkers group, 3) Dignity Returns (the cloth manufactures), 4) the Motorcycle Taxi Association of Thailand, and 5) the street vendors of the Olympic Village. The research will explore each of these groups' histories and developments then, examine the movement as a whole.

4. Research methods

The research will focus on gathering records of informal labor movement activities relating to informal workers' issues. The key informants for structured and semi-structured interviews are workers, leaders/spokespersons, and organization staff (i.e. NGO workers) who have taken part in organizing and mobilizing movements for informal workers. Documentary research will gather data from other related works on the situation of informal labor (i.e. annual reports of problems and solutions), including texts from media sources such as news articles and newspaper columns as well as archival records. The following research methods will be employed:

4.1 Structured interviews

Structured interviews will be used mainly to collect essential or core data

and to outline answers to the major research question. This method aims to find

information about the current status and direction of the home workers/home-based

workers movements. The interview method allows the researcher to highlight the

importance of dialogue and orally related information, as well as focus interviewees

on particular issues that can later be elaborated in semi-structured interviews. The

core questions to be posed to the key informants are as follows:

1) How did the informal workers movement start?

2) What strategies did the informal workers movement use?

3) What resources did the informal workers movement use to mobilize?

4) How did allied networks affect the movement mobilization and activities?

4.2 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews are a follow-up method to structured interviews. It

is a means of collecting additional data related to the core information that is

needed to answer the research question. If the researcher and key informants focus

too much on the concretized essential information, information about what affects

decision making (e.g. indirect meanings, emotional aspects, etc.) may sometimes be

ignored or not articulated. Therefore, semi-structured interviews will raise

supplemental questions after the structured interview questions have been

answered. The semi-structured interviews aim to collect more nuanced data that

might affect the quality of elaboration on the target issues. Questions such as "What

did you feel about the group's unity after the establishment of the movement?" or

"Was there any sense of solidarity after the movement was established or after a

successful action?" will be followed after completing a dialogue about the

movement's origins.

4.3 Archival Research

Archival research is a text-based data collection method focusing on

important and official records dealing with the issues of interest. The researcher is

concerned that interview data alone might be insufficient to reach firm conclusions.

Therefore, the researcher's study of the movement of subcontracted workers'

groups will also collect and analyze records of data indicating how relevant

organizations and government officials have analyzed, described, or studied the

movement. Consideration of this archival data will help verify, falsify, or elucidate

the understanding of the situation of informal workers.

5. Thesis Structure

The thesis is divided into five parts. The first part will introduce the reader to the problem and issues within the Thai informal sector as well as the questions which this thesis will ask in relation to these issues. In addition to the thesis rationale, this part will show the historical development of Thai informal labor since political activity was shared with formal labor. This part will also outline the research methodology, questions, methods and directions.

The second part presents a literature review and theoretical framework which will give readers an overview of how the data will be analyzed. The researcher has chosen Resource Mobilization Theory and Political Process Theory with which to analyze collected data to answer the research questions.

The third part highlights the resources and alliances of HomeNet and its related informal worker groups associated with it. The data in this part will be analyzed through Resource Mobilization Theory. By this theory, the researcher aims to show how informal workers and their organizations helped empower each other and generate a movement.

The fourth part deals with recent political activities of the informal workers' movement with HomeNet assistance with respect to Section 40 of the Social Security Act. This part will elaborate on the activities carried out by the movement and

comparing their activities under the civilian Thaksin Shinawatra's government (2001-2006), Abhisith's Vejjajiva's government (2008-2011), Yingluck Shinawatra's government (2011-2014), and the military regime of Gen. Prayut Chan-o-cha (2014-Present). The political opportunities for informal workers in each polity are the key elements of study in this part. The data will be analyzed using Political Process Theory.

The fifth and final part of the thesis will present the answers to the research questions, based on the combined analysis of data from parts three and four. This part also includes future directions of researches and suggestions to informal workers under the current situation which related to their problems.
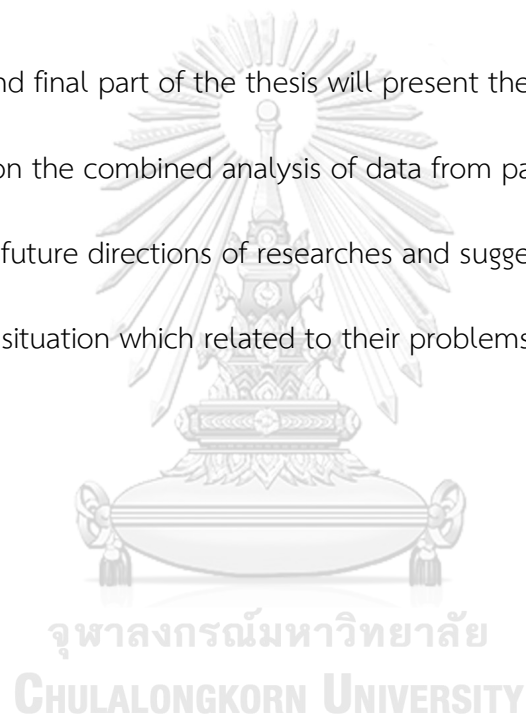
Part 2

Literature Review & Theoretical Framework

1. Literature Review

It is difficult to gain an in-depth understanding of the informal workers movement due to the limited data on the strategies, developments, and involved parties in the informal sector. Most studies on informal workers focus on the informal sector's problems and their solutions rather how the workers in the sector dealt with their problems. On the other hand, most government research on informal workers in Thailand has focused on informal sector statistics, management, and the common problems of informal workers. Almost no information on informal labor movements is given in those reports[4]. Other research, such as that of Ativanichayapong et al. (2012), Chatkul na Ayuthaya (2012), and Charoenlert and Ativanichayapong (2003), mention little about Thai informal labor movements and their lack of unity due to fragmentation. Their works conclude that the situation of informal workers is still difficult and they are thus unable to achieve their own political goals and unable to voice their own demands effectively. In addition to these academic works and official

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[4] Examples include: Thai reports and strategy papers, such as the Ministry of Labor in Association with the Thailand Development Research Institute, *Strategy to Manage Informal Labor B.E. 2555-2559.* Bangkok: Ministry of Labor, 2012; National Statistical Office, *Summary of Informal Labor B.E. 2557.* Bangkok: National Statistical Office, 2014.

reports, studies of informal labor in Thailand occasionally investigate its demographic aspects. Apart from showing only statistical data (such as the work of the Thai National Statistical Office), these demographic studies are interested in studying certain kinds of problems via the number of informal workers who share them (i.e., studying the working conditions of informal labor groups through statistical data) such as Thanawat Ruenwong (Ruenwong, 2009). This type of research is primarily descriptive. A comprehensive analysis of the complexity of external factors created by social and political interactions which affect the informal sector is still lacking.

Many international studies of informal labor have focused upon using a feminist approach to examine women's roles in the economy as a key character of the informal sector. Chen (2001) examines dynamics and developments in the informal sectors of developing nations in Asia, which affect the role of women. She states that global movements of informal workers and women in the informal sector began officially in the mid-1990s (Chen, 2001). Organizations like HomeNet – the association for home-based workers – and StreetNet – the association of street vendors – also helped the informal sector gain attention from academics with a feminist theme. After the campaigns of StreetNet and HomeNet were launched, the ILO decided to hold an annual conference on informal labor beginning in 1996 to work toward an international convention on home work. This event drew the attention of many NGOs, such as the United Nations Development Fund for Women

(UNIFEM) and the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA). These NGOs later launched advocacy campaigns to support women in the informal sector. In 1997, UNIFEM established a network to study women in the informal sector called Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO). According to studies conducted by these organizations directly involved with women in informal economic sector, it is common to see the empowerment and mobilization of informal workers explained within the context of feminism theories. The characteristics and dynamics of informal worker groups that are majority male (e.g. the motorcycle taxi group in Thailand) receive little or no explanation.

Studies of informal labor in Thailand, as mentioned above, often give details on demography, problems, and solutions. These studies often appear in the form of reports and statistical data rather than in-depth analytical academic papers. However, informal workers are not entirely forgotten in recent studies of Thai social movements. Informal workers participated in emergent political movements such as the United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship in 2010 to overthrow the Abhisit Vejjajiva's government (2008-2011); and the People's Democratic Reform Committee (PDRC) in 2013 to 2014. Thus, they were included in several accounts of these movements. However, studies of these movements do not characterize the informal sector as a whole nor give specific details of certain groups. They merely mentioned

informal workers[5] as components of the movements, mostly in New Social Movement Theory. Informal workers as a constituent of social movements are mentioned in terms of their current lifestyle, identity, culture, and human rights (Pichardo, 1997). We have less information on the agendas, developments, and political activities of informal workers. These sources do not yield enough in-depth data merely from using a New Social Movement Theory approach. In order to understand informal labor movements in details not found in many studies, this research uses concrete analytical approaches – Resource Mobilization Theory and Political Process Theory – to see what kind of activities they have been engaged in and how they have reacted to politics as a movement.

Domestic and international studies of informal sector movements attempt to understand the statistical, cultural, and political contexts such as WIEGO's Working Paper No.9 (2012), ILO's 'Decent Work and the informal economy' (2002), and Prapart's 'Politics on the Streets' (1998). While these studies mainly use statistics, aspects of feminism, and New Social Movement Theory to find the causes of and solutions to problems, this thesis aims to study a smaller target in a different direction. Many studies of labor movements, as mentioned above, prioritize cultural

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[5] Examples of Thai social movement studies using New Social Movement Theory and mentioning informal workers but with little analysis are; Pracha Hutanuwat, *Green Politics* (in Thai). Bangkok: Foundation for Children, 1998 and Prapart Pintobtang, *Politics on the Street: 99 Days of Assembly of The Poor and History of Street Protests in Thailand* (in Thai). Bangkok: Krirk University Research and Textbook Production Center.

and political contexts in the analysis of the development of movements. This research will take a different direction with resource mobilization, organizational management, and the political forces that affect the movements as core elements. The researcher believes that the management of resources and political opportunities are important factors in studying the activities of informal workers.

2. Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

The research aims to study the success and failure of the informal workers' movement. To emphasize their success and failure and the consequences, Resource Mobilization Theory was used to analyze the capabilities of informal workers and those who provide them with assistance as well as the accessibilities to resources and the types of resource; Political Process Theory is used to analyze political opportunities of the NGO and the group of workers.

2.1 Resource Mobilization Theory

Resource Mobilization Theory was initially developed by western academics during the 1960s to support a collective action approach for studying social movements (Olson, 1965, as cited in Buechler, Steven M., 2011). Olson (1965) paved

a newer way of understanding people who joined the movements through studying the group's grievances. Olson's concept supported the collective action approach because it explained why people pooled their resources to make a movement to jointly voice their grievances. However, he was yet to emphasize other elements concerning material resources or societal support which help creating a movement. Later, McCarthy and Zald developed Olson's work further by considering resource utilization as the key factor in determining the success or failure of a movement (McCarthy and Zald, 1977, as cited in Prapart Pintoptaeng, 2009). McCarthy and Zald coined resource mobilization theory to "emphasize[s] both societal support and constraint of social movement phenomena. It examines the variety of resources that must be mobilized, the linkages of social movements to other groups, the dependence of movements upon external support for success, and the tactics used by authorities to control or incorporate movements". In this sense, the approach focuses mainly on what economic and societal factors affect a movement, determining its success and failure. The theory also examines how people in the movement utilize resources and relationships to achieve their goals. The theory is as well developed to serve as a sociological framework for studying how social movements mobilize financial support, constituencies, media attention and allies, as well as how these resources are used to refine the organization's structure (Kendall, 2013). Prapas Pintoptaeng (2009) suggested that resource mobilization theory primarily focuses on demonstrating how movements start, how they movement

develop into powerful actors through utilizing resources, and which factors contribute to a movement's success or failure (Pintoptaeng, 2009). The depth of this theory also breaks down types of resources and means to access to resources in order to deliberately understand how they are used and exchange within and without the movement. Thus, this research will also examine whether the means to access to resources are 1) a self-production, 2) aggregation 3) co-optation /appropriation, and/or 4) patronage; while the types of resource will be broken down to 1) moral resources, 2) cultural resources, 3) human resources, 4) material resources, and 5) social-organizational resources (Doug McAdam, Bert Klandermans, Donatella della Porta, & Snow, 2013). The theory is therefore well-suited to this research that aims to analyze the origin, development, cooperation with other groups, and resource utilization of the informal workers associated with HomeNet.

HomeNet Thailand, which is officially known as the Foundation for Labor and Employment Promotion, is an NGO that has promoted the protection and development of home workers since 1992. Because it has taken part in big projects under the ILO to promote the social protection of home workers, HomeNet has been able to establish connections with well-known international organizations. It has then become well-known itself for providing assistance to home workers. Due to its reputation and broad connections, HomeNet may best be analyzed using Resource Mobilization Theory. Its fundraising, advocacy and support campaigns take place on

an international scale, meaning that the organization has a management plan for all resources and supporters including allies from other networks. With these many resources came from HomeNet to share with the informal workers, examining what are these resources and how informal workers gained access toward them in details should prove useful to this study.

In addition, Resource Mobilization Theory is useful in analyzing the informal worker groups under HomeNet Thailand because the theory views social movement organizations as firms. It suggests that members of the organization aim for certain goals and need to have plans to mobilize and manage their own resources in order to achieve the movement's goals. HomeNet's informal workers operate in membership-based organizations where the theory would provide a suitable framework within which to analyze their mobilization and expansion of resources in order to achieve the movement's goals.

2.2 Political Process Theory

Political Process Theory, also known as Political Opportunity Theory, focuses on the political system within society. The theory suggests that the political system creates opportunities for people to make demands according to their needs and to foster social change. The key indicators to analyze movement progression are the

degree of political pluralism, repression of groups of people, divisions within the elite, and enfranchisement within society (Cragun & Cragun, 2008). The theory contends that these four components of the political structure in the society can determine the success or failure of social movements. The approach itself emphasizes the political and social contexts rather than the organizational capacity highlighted in Resource Mobilization Theory. McAdam (1982) suggested one crucial factor in this theory is the political opportunity structure which determines the societal and institutional support to movements. The societal and institutional support could also determine a movement's success and failure (McAdam, 1982, as cited in Prapart Pintoptaeng, 2009).

The aspect of *political opportunity* was then developed further. Tarrow clarified the indicators of political opportunity structure into four broad categories; 1) degree of openness or closure of polity, 2) stability or instability of political alignments, 3) presence or absence of allies and support groups, 4) divisions within elites or, their tolerance or intolerance of protest (Tarrow, 1991, as cited in Prapart Pintoptaeng, 2009). Tarrow then developed his approach further in 1999. He added that there are two kinds of opportunities posed in the political opportunity structure: 1) *fundamental opportunity* which is solid and rigid such as the political system, 2) *immediate opportunity* which is more fluid and flexible such as the increase or decrease of political accessibility, clashes within the elites, or political repression.

Political process theory aims to fill in the gaps where resource mobilization theory left off. Its purpose is to understand the factors accounting for movement success or failure in more societal and political aspects. Application of the theory will enable research to include not only how the organization mobilizes and manages its resources to achieve victory, but also the complex context of political factors, such as political opportunities and counter-movement actors. In "Political Process in Revolutionary France, 1830-1832", Rule and Tilly use the theory to focus mainly on explaining the political issue of social insurgency (Rule and Tilly, 1975, as cited in Prapart Pintoptaeng, 2009), while McAdam added that the theory itself is interested in interpreting the process (the beginning, the dynamics, the development, and the decline) of social movements by considering the political context (McAdam, 1982, as cited in Prapart Pintoptaeng, 2009).

Similar to Resource Mobilization Theory, Political Process Theory also views the movement as a being comprised of a minority group in society that is unnoticed or discriminated against. However, Political Process Theory places greater interest in organizational capabilities rather than resource utilization alone. In the Thai context, it is especially important to take a close look at the political and organizational capabilities of the movement because the power relations issues – essential for the success of any political exercise – are embedded within social institutions.

In this research, Political Process Theory will fill in the gaps that Resource Mobilization Theory might overlook, namely the political and organizational capabilities of informal workers with respect to Thai politics. At the same time, studying the political and organizational aspects of informal workers may also serve to verify or falsify whether the group is fragile and powerless. In addition, this theory also helps identifying the opportunities to gain or lose the resources from the governmental decisions which are varied in different governments. These gain and loss of opportunities will be applied to the study of external organizations (i.e. the supporting NGOs) to seek more in-depth answer if the political opportunities affected the supporting groups that help the movement as well.

Political opportunity structure also helps framing the differences in political atmosphere between democratic and military governments. Thailand has faced the transition of power from the democratic Yingluck Shinawatr's government (2011-2014) to the Prayut Chan-o-cha's military government (2014-Present) as well as identifying the political differences within the civilian governments of Thaksin, Abhisith, and Yingluck. The coup d'état by the military junta led by Gen. Prayut Chan-o-cha critically affected the progress of HomeNet's informal workers on Article 40 of Social Security Act proposed under the Yingluck government. The military regime did not continue this. Therefore political process theory will help analyze this situation whether different governments and political structures significantly affect a

movement's progress. Thai political conflicts, whether public or covert, have been complex and tumultuous. Therefore an analysis of the target group's political opportunities in terms of degree of openness of polity, stability of political alignments, presence of support groups, and social tolerance of protest could greatly aid this research in identifying the factors that account for movement success or failure.

In addition to this theory, the research also tackles the theme Inclusive Political Processes which examines how much the polity is opened to the civilians then, comparing each government to see if the degree of political inclusiveness and exclusiveness of the different polities affect the movement's progression at all. The criteria of inclusive political processes, as coined by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), is majorly focused upon civil engagement, constitutional reform, electoral cycle, and equal participation from minorities (United Nations Development Programme, n/a).

Part 3

Resource Mobilization of Informal Workers and HomeNet

This part examines the significant factors that determine how the informal workers movement under HomeNet was successfully formed and what were the essential elements for its achievements. It analyzes informal workers' origins, developments, and dynamics through resource mobilization theory. The resource utilization of informal workers together with HomeNet will be analyzed. The main study on resource utilization focuses on the political experience, knowledge and expertise, and network of alliances and support groups that the workers and HomeNet had developed together. This part comprises four sections. First, an introduction to the background of the workers groups' and HomeNet organization examines the movement's resource gathering and utilization as well as its origins, development, dynamics and limitations. It is to be noted that there is also an organization directed by the government sector, called The National Coordinating Center for Informal Workers (ศูนย์ประสานงานแรงงานนอกระบบแห่งชาติ), which established in 2012. Some of its staffs were derived from HomeNet Thailand and its objectives are also aiming to promote and empower informal workers as well as aiding to their disputes. However, these two organizations work separately in which HomeNet is more independent and relies on its supporting networks both from national and international organizations to initiate a campaign or activities to

enhance informal workers' capabilities; while, on the other hands, The National Coordinating Center for Informal Workers acts more like a cooperative organization which helped coordinating between the governmental departments and the groups of informal workers to resolve the certain issues. The second shows the importance and significance of the network alliances with informal labor groups and HomeNet. These alliances not only support the activities of informal workers and HomeNet but also help share their political experience and knowledge to establish a movement. The third section examines the use of resources and networks to create a new informal workers movement for their own agenda. This newly formed movement was established based on the acquired experience and alliances analyzed in the previous section. The fourth section sums up the capabilities of resource utilization within the movement and its limitation to further development.

1. **Informal Labor Groups and HomeNet Organization**

HomeNet Thailand began operations in 1992 under the name of 'Homeworkers Network', initially launched by the International Labor Organization (ILO) as a Social Protection Promotion project. Its goals were to help enhance the work capabilities of homeworkers, and strengthen and mobilize homeworker groups. ILO project funding to the Homeworkers Network ceased in 1996. The network was

then operated by its former staff with the title of HomeNet Thailand or the Informal Workers Network. In 1998, the Homeworkers Study and Development Centre was established and managed by the network and its staff. The facility is used for workshops and meetings among members. The network, which already possessed the facility, then became established under the name of 'HomeNet Thailand', comprising homeworkers in the Central, Southern, Northern, and Northeastern parts of Thailand. By that year, the network registered an NGO branch named the 'Foundation for Labor and Employment Promotion' (which, however, is commonly known as HomeNet by informal workers). While the already existing network still focused on helping and developing the homeworkers under its care, the Foundation took another step in reaching out to the informal sector in order to support and solve domestic workers' issues, especially lawsuits. It should be noted that the foundation and the network were working separately; but as the network was still in the process of being registered as organization, it had to operate under the Foundation's name. Later in 2003, the network was officially registered as a membership-based organization under the name 'HomeNet Thailand Association'. The Association's members, facilities, and funds are shared with the Foundation and the Foundation acts as the Association's secretariat and advisory body.

In the years when HomeNet was only an ILO project, the organization gathered valuable members from different informal occupational groups. At present,

some groups have left or have become disorganized due to their inability to maintain themselves under economic crisis. However, there are still significant informal worker groups able to form themselves into a movement to negotiate with the state. These groups – namely the bronze crafters Pradit Torakarn Community, the homeworkers group under HomeNet, the clothing manufacturer Dignity Returns, the motorcycle association group, and the street vendors of the Olympic Village – have been helping each other to establish a movement, the Informal Workers Network, to negotiate with the state with the assistance of HomeNet. It is safe to argue that the movement was clearly benefited from HomeNet's human resources – the experienced staffs, material resources such as financial supports from both HomeNet itself and the alliances within its network, and the social-organizational resources (especially the infrastructures of HomeNet and social network that helped the informal workers to organize the movement themselves). These are the resources that HomeNet have gathered via co-optation its allies and gaining patronages from the big organizations in its network (such as the ILO and WIEGO) since 1995 when it was only a small network of ILO staffs. On the other hands, the informal workers whom are associated with HomeNet later aggregated those resources to create their own human resources and cultural resources – namely, attempts to bring various informal workers groups together, the know-how to run a membership-based organization, the experiences of political activities, and the mobilization of the movement.

As mentioned above, these groups shared their knowledge and experience, so it is important to elaborate on their background before we can analyze their capabilities and contributions to the movement. The following section explores the background of informal workers groups associated with HomeNet to establish a movement recently. The details of each group's origins, development, dynamics, and status before and after becoming HomeNet members will be described.

1.1 Pradit Torakarn Community (ชุมชนประดิษฐ์โทรการ)

The Pradit Torakarn Community is a home-based workers group that makes a living from crafting bronze objects. It started unofficially in 1953. The workers bought land in Soi Paholyothin 45 and 47 in Bangkok to form a community based on crafting bronze. The group possessed a fundamental resource of production, the land, and was thus strong enough to gradually reinforce their community without the burden of rental expenses. The community became officially recognized and registered by the state in 1989; they set up their own community workshop for bronze crafting in the year after and have continued up to present day. The community was one of the first home-based worker groups to which the former HomeNet network reached out while it was associated with the ILO in 1993. Therefore, by the time HomeNet arrived, the community had already established a savings cooperative in 1991 with the assistance of a rural development foundation and Chatuchak District. So the

community already knew how to manage resources as a membership-based organization.

This background prior to the contact with HomeNet indicates that the community understood the importance of the means of production which they used to develop their own community since the beginning. The network in association with the ILO invoked self-recognition as an informal labor group which later learned about their rights, available welfare, work hygiene, and safety. The group already possessed a unique experience and dynamics in political involvement before become involved with HomeNet and had already been associated with other labor groups. Somkid Duang-ngern, the representative of the community, said that community members would occasionally mobilize with other workers groups if they needed numbers (Duang-ngern, 2015). For example, he told the story of when he and his fellows had been in a street rally led by the State Railway Workers' Union of Thailand (SRUT) during the Black May incident in 1992. Although the community had some political experience, they never recognized or mobilized as informal workers. They would rather join forces with fellow workers rather fight for their own agenda as bronze-crafters. Nowadays the community is still developing as a member-based organization. Mr. Somkid said that the membership has been expanding gradually and the fund is also increasing.

It can be said that the Pradit Torakarn Community at present has possessed the cultural resources which are the ability to develop its political experience and understanding of political dynamics by itself through men and material aggregations from joining alliances before HomeNet arrived. The community has become even more experienced with the connection and knowledge from HomeNet. With cumulated material and human resources to create the community owns cultural resources as well as having the infrastructure, it is likely the reason why the Pradit Torakarn Community acts as the headquarters for HomeNet's informal workers movement with Mr. Somkid acting as the representative of the movement. The community, after able to hold on to its infrastructure, is able to self-produce the material resources (notably the community's saving which attract more members to invest in it thus, pulling in more human resource to the community). This marks the Pradit Torakarn Community as a successful informal labor group in mobilizing alliances, developing political experience and improving livelihoods all by themselves prior to contact with HomeNet. The community's leader has been made the representative of the movement due to its long-developed experience both in membership management and political involvement. With Mr. Somkid's long tenure as community representative, it can be argued that strong and experienced leadership has been significant in ensuring the group's developmental progress. Thus, the community became the distributer of resources among its network while enjoying a share of the human resources of other groups to commence activities.

<u>1.2 Dignity Returns – Solidarity Group (ดิกนิตี้ รีเทิร์นส์)</u>

Dignity Returns is a home-based workers group manufacturing clothing. Dignity Returns has been in association with HomeNet since 2009. The group representative is Mr. Manop Keawpaka. Dignity Returns was formerly established under the name of Solidarity Group (กลุ่มสมานฉันท์). The group was formed in 2004 from a collective of garment workers who had been unfairly laid off in the previous year. Around 700 people wished to join the group but unfortunately the group had no funding and so only 40 people were selected to be members. The group raised funds and founded its headquarters which served as its own clothing factory. Members also helped find suppliers and buyers as well as reach out for assistance from other NGOs or state officials.

Prior to its connection with HomeNet, the group had gained the help of trade unions in providing purchase orders and the Tonkla Institute (สถาบันต้นกล้า) in marketing. At that time the group had filed a lawsuit against an employer but failed when the statute of limitation expired. They achieved no progress in attempting to bring to justice those who had mistreated them due to inexperience and a lack of perseverance in pressing the issue. They also had other urgent matters to care of such as securing orders. Before HomeNet found them, they were lacked time, opportunity, and network support to progress in bargaining; also, their leader, Manop, was inexperienced in political activities. In term of political involvement, Dignity

Returns experienced some difficulties in collective bargaining prior to HomeNet involvement. In 2003, the year that workers were laid off, they had gathered in front of the Ministry of Labor but they were forced to leave the site and their grievances met with no response. Manop had asked for purchase orders from the Ministry but none were given and the group was never contacted. Dignity Returns started to be involved in political activities again after gaining connections with other national informal labor groups. Dignity Returns joined others in street rallies on labor-related holidays (May Day or International Women's Day) to demonstrate their need for welfare and working rights.

HomeNet found Dignity Returns in 2009 and offered the group helps in providing knowledge of rights and laws as well as trying to find more connections. Manop said that HomeNet has indeed been a great help in establishing connections among the national informal labor groups. It helps them mobilize resources through HomeNet assistance and started their interest in Article 40 of Social Security Act (Keawpaka, 2015). International connections helped Dignity Returns gain working opportunities and access to beneficial workshops while national connections that are mostly gained from HomeNet.

In this case, Dignity Returns had firstly failed to mobilize and demonstrate its needs to the state and public due to its inexperience of political activities and lack of knowledge about how to participate in political bargaining. This resulted in the

failure of their small movement between 2003 and 2007 (the period when the lawsuit was still active). Dignity Returns is one of the case which the workers attempted to mobilize human and material resources to create their own cultural resources to fight off their employers in the form of social movement. Dignity Returns were attempting to create its own social-network as a social-organizational resource to enhance its cultural resource. However, their self-producing resources were not enough to yield a strong and effective movement due to the lack of political experiences and organizational managing skills thus, without cooperation and patronage from powerful alliances, the self-production and self-aggregation of resources alone could not yield a fruitful social movement. HomeNet's arrival is considered to be a crucial turning point in their opportunity to participate in the political sphere and collective bargaining. HomeNet was a third party which facilitated workshops, time allocation, and networks of fellow informal workers. Thus, it can be argued that the fragmented group suffered from insufficient social-organizational and cultural resources such as facilities, knowledge, and networks had finally gained HomeNet's assistance to aggregate the needed resources for them for further developments.

1.3 Homeworkers (กลุ่มแม่บ้าน)

Homeworkers, including former homeworkers in earlier network initiated by the ILO, form the group that was assisted by HomeNet since the beginning. The

group now has Ms. Samorn Pasomboon (Pasomboon, 2016) as its representative.

However, the group was formed from members from 4 regions as an unofficial group

only in 2011, then becoming a registered membership-based organization in 2013.

This group is the group in the informal workers empowerment project by HomeNet in

which HomeNet aimed to empower the leaders of homeworker groups with

fundamental knowledge before launching and operating a membership-based

organization by themselves.

Just before HomeNet started the homeworkers' empowerment project in

2009, homeworkers had no unity and few of them would join political activities due

to the limitations and conditions surrounding their work. These limitations and

conditions inhibiting unity were differences in the type of workplace, working-periods,

day off, and employers' obstruction to participation in the movement or disclosure

of their working conditions. Under these circumstances, pooling resources is

extremely difficult when there is no individual who could take responsibility for

managing activities. HomeNet's project started in practice in 2009 where they

launched many meetings and workshops, and encouraged the development of

homeworker groups in the central, northern, and southern regions. In addition to

knowledge of topics advocated by HomeNet, these meetings allowed 184 informal

workers' leaders around Thailand, including homeworkers, to meet each other and

form an initial informal labor network. From 2009 to 2013, this network was

continuously assisted by HomeNet to strengthen and expand its membership along with preparations for registration as legal membership-based organization, which was successfully completed in 2013.

At present, the Foundation of Labor and Employment Promotion is acting as an NGO branch and assisting the membership-based organization called HomeNet Thailand Association. The association acts as the representative group for the informal workers network which, right after being legally registered, was recognized by the government as a formal interest group thus, making contact with state officials easier. It can be said that the homeworkers group started to recognize themselves as an interest group and possessed their own and shared cultural resources with HomeNet in 2010; and has since played a role in the political sphere. Membership has expanded to more than 3,000 people and contacts have been made with the officials by representatives of homeworkers following the stages set by HomeNet. The help of HomeNet in social-organizational resources – especially using social networks to spread the news and recruiting new members – has been significant for these homeworkers. Third party assistance in initiating the mobilization of human resources, material resources, and social-organizational resources is essential for those who lack opportunities to develop their own knowledge and skills. To the homeworkers group, HomeNet acted as a leading strategist and center for resource

gathering before the group was able stabilize its cultural resources, namely membership, direction, and goals.

1.4 Motorcycle Taxi Association of Thailand (สมาคมผู้ขับขี่รถจักรยานยนต์รับจ้างแห่งประเทศไทย)

The Motorcycle Taxi Association of Thailand, similar to the Pradit Torakarn Community, had its own political history before joining HomeNet. Some of their leaders had been publicly involved in Thai politics during Black May 1992 when General Chavalit Yongchaiyudh mobilized motorcycle taxi riders to aid his cause against the military leader, General Suchinda Kraprayoon. The motorcycle taxi group had been loosely organized prior to an official systematization by Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra. Thus, some of them had political experience and realized that they could rally to make their voice heard. Despite the Black May incident when some motorcycle taxi riders were mobilized by General Chavalit, this group significantly had been in direct contact with the government. The group started during the Thaksin administration. Thaksin's scheme to eradicate motorcycle taxi mafias and to formalize motorcycle taxi services unintentionally led to the foundation of Motorcycle Taxi Association. With prior experience and knowledge of resource utilization since the Black May incident, some motorcycle taxi groups, such as those in the Victory Monument and Lad Prao areas, had advantages for

developing themselves. They were able to make demands to the Thaksin Shinnawatra's government (2001-2006) for the benefits they wanted. These motorcycle taxi groups in specific areas already possess a central location, a billboard showing prices and rest areas for riders. The Motorcycle Taxi Association of Thailand started in March 2003 when Thaksin launched a campaign to eradicate the local mafias and distributed registered motorcycle taxi vests (dubbed *sua-win* (เสื้อ วิน)) to motorcycle taxi riders working under local mafias. Motorcycle taxi groups became more visible to the public and more influential in politics because of the formalization of motorcycle taxi services implemented by the Thaksin.

As their existence was facilitated by the Thaksin government, motorcycle taxi groups have always been closely affiliated to the red-shirt movement that supported Thaksin. It has been observed that the motorcycle taxi riders have joined almost every red shirt demonstration since the coup in 2006 that overthrew Thaksin. In 2011, a representative of the Motorcycle Taxi Association of Thailand said that most of the members missed ex-prime minister Thaksin and would await his returns ("Analyst said 'Moto-Taxis' Play More Than a Riding Service Role," 2011). It is also noted that motorcycle taxi riders in Bangkok, which were developed by the government itself, had a greater political role than any other informal worker group, because they know that they have the ability to disable the daily transportation and thus disrupt the economy. Claudio Sopranzetti's work (2013) states that 200,000

motorcycle taxi riders not only transport people but also deliver goods, food, and documents, which can have severe economic consequences if services are suddenly stopped (Sopranzetti, 2013).

With political experience, numbers, and the realization of how powerful they are, they are considered to have considerable negotiating power. There are similarities and differences in the development of the motorcycle taxi group and others. They are similar in benefitting from third-party assistance to start proper group development. However, the motorcycle taxi group had direct support from the state since the beginning. The resources and experience derived from the government made them one of the most influential informal worker groups. They had the knowledge of how to engage and work with the government and thus attracted other groups to share their interests. From around 2004 to 2006, the association was initially directed by Thaksin himself and the chosen motorcycle -taxi leaders had the opportunity to discuss with Thaksin's cabinet the development direction of motorcycle taxis in Bangkok. However, their political position has changed slightly due to the change in leadership and the end of Thaksin's policy of empowering the grassroots due to the overthrow and exile of Thaksin. Nevertheless, it is to be noted that before Thaksin went into exile, the motorcycle taxi group was rallying to fight the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) movement which aimed to overthrow Thaksin. This shows that the affiliation to the Thaksin government decreased after his

influence subsided after his exile. Afterward, it is clearly seen that the motorcycle taxi group adapted to the political atmosphere, since they know exactly what elements best serve their interests. Thus, a drive to revive a post-Thaksin government was not in their major interest, unlike developing into a strong civil society group based on what they had gained. Mr. Chalerm Changthongmadan (Changthongmadan, 2016), the present leader of the association, said that right now they are neither red shirts nor yellow shirts. They recognize themselves as 'orange shirts', the color of motorcycle taxi riders' vests, and have their own political agenda. It can be speculated that this change of political affiliation marks the beginning of unification with other informal labor groups, when they realized the importance of the network and helped strengthen it. This is a turning point making the motorcycle - taxi group independent and marking the start of their self-organization.

Chalerm said that the association was in contact with HomeNet in late 2013 when the homeworkers group asked for their assistance in street demonstrations on the Social Security Act. The association was later invited to a meeting held by HomeNet where they accessed information on laws and networks (mostly related to the Social Security Act which, because of their occupational status the association had been interested in). Although the motorcycle taxi group was strong and experienced in political activities, they did not have any ally to assist with a lawsuit. To further elaborate moto-taxis' possessions of resources, it is clear that the group

has already had a strong and plentiful human, material, cultural, and social-organizational resources gathered through times since Thaksin's era. For example, before HomeNet reached to them, they were already having large amount of members, political experiences, stable funding both from self-generated and governmental supports, and their own facilities and networks; and in addition, they even possessed moral resources through allying themselves with the past the Redshirt-affiliated governments which allowed them to gain direct access to policymakers and resources providers at that time. However, with the absence of their supporting governments, the moto-taxis group was left with a strong-established organization without variety of connections from other supporting external organizations (because they were relying mostly on the supporting governments and fellow workers). This means that HomeNet now could save them the time of processing a lawsuit and mobilizing resources and people. Although motorcycle taxi riders were not at first at a disadvantage from being less cooperative, gaining more allies meant that they could develop and share their resources further (as they have the most human resource among other groups). Chalerm also said that he sees HomeNet as the spearhead which can pave the way for easier contact with officials, as the officials with whom they had worked during Thaksin era were no longer in office due to the change of government. Because of their past affiliation with the Thaksin's government, the group is commonly seen as part of the red shirt movement, which makes the initial contact with the public and other administrations

more difficult. Thus, having HomeNet as a third party to help contact officials has proven to be an advantage to help them clear the impression of affiliation with the red shirt movement. This is also the reason why the motorcycle taxi group has tried to brand themselves as having no red shirt affiliation after Thaksin Shinawatra went into exile. Motocycle taxis were trying to rebrand their cultural image with the help of HomeNet. For instance, HomeNet is able to arrange meetings with state officials by letter and, according to Chalerm, these letters are more convincing than those of the Motorcycle Taxi Association. This shows that a past affiliation with Thaksin and the red shirts can be problematic when it comes to the credibility of the group.

With HomeNet using its name in confronting the public and officials, it seems that the group is sharing the interests of others and demonstrating the needs of civil society rather than pushing on its own agenda. HomeNet also takes part in arranging meetings for informal labor group leaders to exchange information and make plans for the movement. Because the motorcycle taxi group had longer experience in politics and cooperation with the state, it was warmly welcomed by other groups and become an influential force among HomeNet's allies. It is considered to be one of the more important supporting forces when the network needs to mobilize people and develop a political strategy. To summarize the moto-taxis group's capabilities, this group was actually possessing greater human and material resources as well as social-organizational and cultural resources than other groups because it

was directly nurtured by Thaksin's government itself. Thus, the group was already strong before meeting HomeNet. However, with the absence of moral resources that moto-taxis used to gain from the supporting government officials (namely, the Redshirt-affiliated governments), they are now trying to rebrand their image via joining HomeNet as a mark of their neutrality.

1.5 Street Vendors of Olympic Village (กลุ่มหาบเร่แผงลอยชุมชนหมู่บ้านนักกีฬา)

A representative of the Street Vendors group from the Olympic Village, Laem Thong, Bangkok, was invited by Ms. Samorn of the homeworker group to join the movement between 2014 and 2015. The group had been associated with HomeNet since 2011, received useful information on law-related issues and participated in HomeNet's activities and workshops.

The background of this street vendor group can be traced back to 1997 when the vendors' former location in the village market was expropriated by the National Housing Authority, who had told them that once the location had been remodeled, they could move back and restart their businesses. However, the National Housing Authority instead sold the property to a private company, Wise Kit Consultant[6]. This caused the former vendors to form a group to protest against both the National Housing Authority and the private company and to retake their location. The group

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[6] The company is now bankrupt and has ceased doing business.

asked for a location and compensation but has never received a satisfactory response as the Authority and the private company was passed responsibility to each other ("Fresh Market Vendors Grieve to National Housing Authority for letting Private Sector Exploited Vending Area," 2006). Violence occurred in 1998 and 1999 when the private company sent people to destroy the vendors' kiosks which had been set up on the private company's property. Lawsuits were filed against all sides. The vendors were charged with trespassing; the private company was charged with violence; and the National Housing Authority was charged for compensation for the vendors' loss. Two of the lawsuits have been settled, but the compensation issue has remained unresolved for almost 18 years until today. In 2007, the street vendor group started its own cooperative for open credit among the members of which there are now approximately 210.

To summarize, the street vendor group had already engaged in a lawsuit but lacked technical knowledge and allies to support them on the issue. Unfortunately, at that time they were gathering members to fight for justice, they had neither assistance nor an operational base to rely on. Although the group has experience in managing funds for members, their lack of knowledge, cultural and social-organizational resources, and external supports such as networks and alliances were enough to impede them from achieving justice through lawsuits. For them, the arrival

of HomeNet seems beneficial for the connections – especially those that can help with labor law – and access to information and skills through HomeNet's activities.

Although these informal workers who would later join HomeNet did not share the same problems and origins, they do share the need for third-party help in developing their knowledge and skills, whether the support comes from the state, private cooperation, or NGOs. This indicates the fragility and lack of power among informal workers in Thailand as they do not have their own social-organizational resources to mobilize other resources into a good use.. In addition, they also do not know what and how to develop their skills and knowledge. Most of the informal worker groups need HomeNet as a core social-organizational resources mobilizer and as a center for meetings and workshops in an initial phrase. While the motorcycle taxi group had received help from the government to mobilize human and material resources in the past which, ultimately succeeded in establishing their own cultural and social-organizational resources. With an exception of this case, the Pradit Torakarn Community was the only informal workers group that was able to produce, aggregate, and mobilize human and material resources to create cultural and organizational resources on their own. However, the networking and information on informal workers from HomeNet helped strengthening the community and made them into an influential group among other informal workers to share its community's resources among other groups. By combining what the community has

accomplished (especially the savings management skill and facilities) with the information and networking from HomeNet, Pradit Torakarn Commnunity became the spokesperson of informal workers in the Informal Workers Network.

2. HomeNet's Attempt to Mobilize Informal Workers Network and Alliances

Although informal workers under HomeNet organized activities and mobilized for political action by themselves, HomeNet is the one that should take credit for successfully bringing each informal workers group together. The historical development of HomeNet's attempts to mobilize informal workers will be analyzed here. Before informal workers mobilization succeeded, there were limitations on material, human, cultural and social-organizational resources – namely, funding, facilities, and networks of allies. Thus, it is essential to examine the pre-existing networks and HomeNet achievements before the informal workers formed a movement to fight for Article 40 of the Social Security Act in order to explore how the NGO had helped these workers mobilize resources and empowered them with knowledge and skills to successfully mobilize their own resources. This part elaborates how HomeNet had brought informal workers together; and how informal workers under HomeNet utilized resources and pre-existing networks to create a movement to achieve their goals.

Although HomeNet Association Thailand was initially created and supported by the ILO, after the ILO project ended, it was left with a network and small number of members and amount of funds. The network needed further support in order to maintain its operations. In 1996, HomeNet sought support from connections made since it was supported by the ILO – namely the Arom Pongpangan Foundation which helped on legal issues, and the Rockefeller Foundation on funding activities. These two allies are the examples of how HomeNet made co-optation and patronage with the external organizations to cumulate human and material resources. The network ultimately achieved its own facility with the initiation to develop its cultural and social-organizational resources in 1998. It then started gathering members across the country to aggregate more human and material resources. These comprised homeworkers and home-based workers from every part; north, northeast, south, and central Thailand. Most homeworker groups were not unified and widely dispersed which made it difficult to secure overall representation during the late 1990s. It can be said that there was actually no formal network for homeworkers and home-based workers at all, let alone the absence of representative figure to aggregate or produce any resource to achieve any collective activities. The Foundation had sought out other informal labor groups, mainly home-based workers (i.e. clothes makers, street vendors, and craftspeople). Later in 2003, the network registered as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) called the Foundation for Labor and Employment Promotion. It is now easier for the organization to cooperate with any legal

organization and attract more funding. Funding is circulated around the NGO branches and network to establish activities, pursue lawsuits, and support funds for membership. The Foundation also gained support from various NGOs and government offices such as the Thai Health Promotion Foundation (สำนักงานกองทุนสนับสนุนการสร้างเสริมสุขภาพ) and Central Office for Healthcare Information (สำนักสารสนเทศบริการสุขภาพ) for workers' safety and hygiene projects. This indicates the importance of the pre-existing network that HomeNet had aggregated, co-operated, and maintained in order to continue its mission after the ILO left. Before being officially registered as HomeNet Association Thailand, the network was not strong and did not possess sufficient important resources such as members, a headquarters, and funds. Thus, it was essential for the network to look for allies that could help them with their projects and funding. It took almost 7 years for the network to be ready in terms of members, facilities, and sustainable funding to establish its own organization and broaden its work. Since then, HomeNet made as many alliances and networks as possible. At this point, the network was already having rigid cultural and social-organizational resources which enable them to run a legal and legit campaign or workshop to empower its members. For instance, as becoming a registered NGO, it now has its own legitimate infrastructure, organizational templates (such as hierarchy and systematic member management), know-how to produce campaigns and workshops, and becoming a solid member of its existing network of alliances.

As mentioned from above that the NGO gained supports from external organizations both NGO fellows and government sector to become strong enough to establish its own rigid organization, it is best to examine what resources were given to the NGO and how these external organizations assist them. It is arguable that apart from formal funding that HomeNet gained from the ILO to use for empowering its network and members, it was also the direct funding from the government sector that helped HomeNet to prosper. For example, Thai Health Promotion Foundation (under the administration of Thaksin Shinawatra in 2004) launched a national project to develop agricultural informal workers' hygiene and quality of lives as well as making more policies to enhance the laws concerning informal sector (Thai Health Promotion Foundation, 2005). This gave rises to the direct funding for informal workers' skills and knowledge developments in the other sectors afterward which, HomeNet would gain its benefit from Thai Health Promotion Foundation's direct funding to develop informal workers' capabilities in 2011 under the government of Yingluck Shinawatra (Thai Health Promotion Foundation, 2011). The Informal Workers Network then started to form a movement during this time. In addition to Thai Health Promotion Foundation, governmental research institutes such as The Thailand Research Fund also helped strengthened informal sector indirectly via giving out research funds for informal sector's issues. As of present, The Thailand Research Fund's Occupational Health Research Project has sprung a total of 20 research which concern the informal workers' skills, work safety, and hygiene (The Thailand Research

Fund, n/a). Thus, many informal workers and communities benefited from having the researchers studied them while exchanging knowledge then, providing information to the government to develop the sector further. On the other hands, NGOs such as HomeNet also benefited from gaining research fund to study on their own field of expertise. Central Office for Healthcare Information, which is associated with Department of Local Administration (กรมส่งเสริมการปกครองท้องถิ่น), also played a major role in promoting occupational hygiene and work safety and giving information to those informal workers in the specific areas, especially in rural areas. Apart from governmental organizations, civil organizations such as Thai Labor Solidarity Committee (คณะกรรมการสมานฉันท์แรงงานไทย) which occasionally helps HomeNet and its informal workers by demonstrating their relevant and needed issues during special events such as on May Day. These are the examples of assistances from external organizations to the HomeNet which their connections were built from co-optation with chosen allies and patronage through times. The resources gained from these supports helped enhancing HomeNet's and its members' material resources which, ultimately allowed them to construct their own rigid cultural and organizational resources.

To further the connections with external organizations, the network (under the name HomeNet) and the Foundation had started reaching out to international organization after being registered as an organization. Their activities in cooperation

with international allies were mostly involved with promoting and learning the concepts of membership-based organizations. For a decade from 2003 to 2013, HomeNet and the Foundation branches had attracted and allied with renowned international organizations such as WIEGO, UNIFEM, SEWA, and the Federation of Dutch Labor (FNV). There were significant financial activities included UNIFEM and Federation of Dutch Labor funding for training in membership-based organization for informal workers in 2008-2009. These international external organizations would later prove to be essential sources of HomeNet's members' developments via their alliance co-optation and patronage to spring the opportunities to enhance informal workers' capabilities.

In addition to the governmental research institutes, academics, both national and international, are also HomeNet's importance allies. HomeNet Thailand and the Foundation for Labor and Employment Promotion appear in the archives of an estimated thirteen national universities. Seven of them are published by the organization and the Foundation, dealing with problems and solutions for labor in the sector. The sources also give updated information on homeworkers and informal workers in Thailand. The organization also publishes a periodical named the Journal of HomeNet Thailand. HomeNet and the Foundation are also important sources of academic papers written by academics or institutions. Most ILO publications on Thailand's informal workers or homeworkers involve HomeNet or the Foundation as

they were the first organizations to examine the informal sector in Thailand, sponsored by the ILO itself. Apart from the ILO, several renowned NGOs such as the Rockefeller Foundation and the Arom Pongphangan Foundation cooperate with HomeNet and the Foundation to conduct research and publish academic papers. HomeNet and the Foundation have also established a connection between national academics through cooperation with universities, to set up an internship program for university students. For example, in 2014, the international development program for master's degree students in the Faculty of Political Science of Chulalongkorn University (the Master of Arts in International Development Studies: MAIDS) arranged an internship with HomeNet Thailand in its Development Practicum class for students to learn and practice their development skills with the organization. Thus, new academics were introduced to the organization which, in turn, gained wider recognition. These external organizations that helped with knowledge improvements were in turn strengthening the cultural resources within HomeNet and its informal workers as they had been exchanging knowledge altogether.

With respect to domestic and national alliances, HomeNet gained most of its support through snowballing from one homeworker group to another and became well-known within the sector. One famous connection to HomeNet is the Thai Labor Solidarity Committee which mostly helps HomeNet in political activities and events. The reason HomeNet was able to attract social movements was because HomeNet

was seen as upholding the development of a certain sector and was directly funded by recognized organizations such as the ILO and WIEGO. By bringing in more members to its network, HomeNet is seen as credible to organizations for enforcing developmental projects in an area. The connections between international organizations also attracted domestic groups to HomeNet as these groups could also enter international networks. In return, these worker groups, in association with HomeNet, would gladly provide information essential for organizations' reports in the region.

It can be argued that HomeNet (just a network when ILO funding ended) started by gathering strength through aggregating its NGO networks as social-organizational and material resources by establishing connections and support funds for projects from development organizations. Its strength to empower informal workers mostly came from pre-existing and new networks of allies which open up more opportunities to gain support from various sectors. It took several years for these actions to sustain the network with enough funds and members to launch its own membership-based organization. However, this proved to be a good way to start an NGO with initially insufficient resources as it steadily grew in financial support, members, and activities. The connections that HomeNet initially made led to further opportunities to add more members within the network. Thus, HomeNet has profited from connections established ever since 1992. These connections themselves are

now helping to empower members in the network through workshops and cooperation among other international organizations. Members of HomeNet have also gained knowledge and some financial support derived from the projects that HomeNet implemented. At present, informal workers associated with HomeNet receive considerable social-organizational and cultural resources to develop members such as skills, information and connections from the early networks established by HomeNet. It is seen here that the most valuable resources that HomeNet puts to use mainly revolve around human resources and societal support. It focuses on reaching out to and bringing together workers group and using the issues from each group to conduct workshops or seminars to attract funding from third parties and allies. Since becoming officially established as a membership-based organization in 2003 under the name of HomeNet Thailand Association, members of HomeNet are entitled to use the association's venue and facilities, and contribute or give input to the operations of the association. Members also enjoy funeral grants organized by the Association which the money came directly from group's aggregation. Members are also allowed to participate and vote in the assembly meeting (only ordinary members can vote or request an extraordinary assembly meeting). In return, members are expected to support and promote the organization, and participate in organization activities. These resources later help informal workers in making the decision to establish a movement for their own issues with the government. It can be said that most resources shared from HomeNet had

successfully helped developing the informal workers to the point that they can aggregate human, material, and cultural resources all by themselves later.

Not only networks and connections help a social movement decide to take action; it also takes the skills and knowledge of the members of a movement to develop activities and actions for political causes. In the case of HomeNet and its fellow informal workers, these skills and knowledge have been assembled from a long-standing network of allies. The networks have given opportunities for informal workers to grow. Surprisingly, the campaigns set up by HomeNet and its network since 1996 also brought homeworkers together through workshops and seminars. Ultimately, they became the initial force to create a network for informal workers.

After ILO support ended in 1996, HomeNet started as a network to assist homeworkers around Thailand. Its earliest staff members were well-trained by the ILO, enabling them to direct the network without many difficulties. These staff members already possessed some cultural resources and knew how to manage funding and evaluate projects as well as cooperate with other organizations. The network's activities were adopted from the ILO project and continued with meetings, seminars and workshops for homeworkers to learn, develop and share their experience. These actions would strengthen their organizational cultures, human resources, and bound with the supporting allies onward. While helping homeworkers to develop their experience, the network also helped identify domestic problems

and solve exploitation through lawsuits. Many informal workers occasionally have problems with employers involving working conditions, work hours, wages, and sudden lay-offs. HomeNet proved to be a trustworthy coordinator and political or legal guide among the informal workers who were associated with it. The network also gained support from the Arom Pongpangan Foundation to assist in legal issues since it was supported by the ILO. The Dignity Returns clothing-manufacturers are reported to have received assistance with several lawsuits against their former employer who suddenly closed down the factory without giving compensation to the workers. In the meantime, homeworkers were also helped in disputes with their employers around working hours, minimum wages, and work safety. These examples show HomeNet's involvement in legal help for workers. According to the organization's goals, HomeNet does not do all the work involved with lawsuits but rather has the workers study the case and the problems. This helps members to gain basic knowledge of how to pursue lawsuits. Such strategies of empowerment would prove valuable for informal workers who would later know how to mobilize resources and allies themselves.

After being established as a membership-based organization in 2013, HomeNet took another step in political involvement. It set up venues for informal workers to be represented in talks with government officials and their involved stakeholders. It can be seen that during 1996-2013 HomeNet was in an initial phrase;

which aimed to unify and strengthen homeworkers in order to have them as the core members of a to-be-established organization. During this period, HomeNet decided to co-opt with renowned allies and gained patronage to develop their own human, material, cultural, and social-organizational resources; which later using these resources to empower its targeted informal workers. It succeeded in 2013 and HomeNet Thailand was able to move to the next step of empowering informal workers. The process of establishing a membership-based organization involved having members participate in the international workshops and conferences. Making its members acquainted with political activities meant that HomeNet also created human resources for mobilizing social movements to carry out its development projects. HomeNet would also benefit from having its members manage their resources themselves, lessening the burden on staff. These decisions also aimed to have the informal workers possess enough experiences in order to self-produce and aggregate their own human, material, cultural, and social organizational resources. In addition, they would also gain moral resources from attending to the renowned external organizations' activities such as international ones like WIEGO's or ILO's workshops.

From 2003 to 2013, HomeNet developed its members though activities with its international allies, namely WIEGO, UNIFEM, SEWA, and the Federation of Dutch Labor (FNV). Significant activities included UNIFEM and Federation of Dutch Labor

funding for training in membership-based organizations for informal workers in 2008-2009. The activities resulted in a follow-up project by HomeNet itself to empower and train network leaders and members in each region in the concepts of organization, legal and policy advocacy, gender issues, access to public resources, group management, and coordination with state officials and other non-state organizations. Between 2009 and 2010, strategic meetings organized by HomeNet and the Federation of Dutch Labor, and funded by WIEGO, gathered informal worker representatives and leaders from all regions in Thailand. The meeting helped participants to learn about membership management and important issues in the informal sector in Thailand, such as general network management and the Social Security Act. The campaign to join the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) in March 2010 included six Thai homeworker representatives (four from HomeNet Thailand and two from the Foundation for Labor and Employment Promotion). It inspired them to launch a development project for HomeNet Thailand to become an effective and sustainable membership-based organization. The members who participated at the SEWA Academy gained knowledge of how to organize and run membership-based organizations for the poor. The campaign at the SEWA Academy resulted in a follow-up workshop with the Foundation for Labor and Employment Promotion and HomeNet Thailand. They succeeded in outlining the membership-based organization's goals and mission. After three years of drafting the goals and mission to create a membership-based organization, the HomeNet Thailand

Association was successfully established in 2013. Its major tasks are to promote and advocate informal worker networks, laws and policies for social protection, and members' economic capacity. It also aims to develop welfare support for its members along with supporting and conserving local wisdom, resources, and the environment. Ever since then, the Foundation for Labor and Employment Promotion has continued to advocate on evidence-based research and coordinate with international and regional networks. It also acts as a regional coordinator for HomeNet Thailand to cooperate with HomeNet Asia while the association is responsible for domestic informal workers' issues.

Here we can state that most of HomeNet's capacity to empower and develop informal workers comes from its well-established network of allies since its beginning in 1992. However, it was not only these connections that brought HomeNet from being just a network left by the ILO project; it also took management and advocacy skills from the staff to bring support, connections, and unity to the network. These skills were gained via co-opting the renowned alliances as well as having patronage from big funders which, ultimately strengthen HomeNet's capabilities. Its strategy of developing itself before expanding and then empowering its members has proven to be effective in recent events where informal workers have shown the ability to mobilize resources and seek further allies for themselves. The resources from both HomeNet itself and some informal worker groups, including

knowledge and skills, have been pooled for the organization's developments. HomeNet would give monetary support to most activities while large communities, such as the Pradit Torakarn Community, share their facilities with fellow members for workshops and meetings. At present, the HomeNet Thailand Association has more than 5,000 members and aims to recruit more members on a national scale through creating more activities for its members and other related worker groups. It is fair to argue that HomeNet's resources utilization strategy was to; firstly aggregating its own resources via co-optation and patronage from stronger alliances in the networks then, finally passing these resources to the informal workers in order to have them possessed the abilities to self-produce and aggregate human and material resources. Thus, ultimately the informal workers would then use those resources to construct their own cultural and social-organizational resources as seen in the form of the Informal Workers Network movement.

3. Pre-existing Networks and Resources to Establish New Movement

After successfully establishing their own membership-based organization, informal workers associated with HomeNet used of the allies, skills and knowledge they had acquired to develop their own movement. The movement's goal is to press welfare and protection issues with the military government. The joint-

cooperation of the motorcycle taxi group, street vendors, and allies in other sectors, formed an informal labor movement in 2010 to push for an amendment to the Social Security Act. The movement was spearheaded by homeworkers associated with HomeNet. It had begun quietly during the Abhisit government as an attempt to demonstrate that the compensation for working accidents, death and disability, and retirement funds were not enough to cover informal workers' needs. At that time, the movement was loosely comprised of the homeworkers group, Dignity Returns, and Pradit Torakarn Community. They came out and stated their own needs individually. This initial movement to amend the Social Security Act was not full of tension. However, demonstrations were more frequent as the political situation was not in turmoil. Up until now, the movement has gathered more members to push the issue with the government along with the former allies from the time of the Abhisit government. With the newly elected Yingluck Shinawatra government in 2011, this small informal workers movement was still active and pushing forward the issues of welfare and compensation. It was very beneficial for the informal workers movement that the Yingluck government's welfare policies matched the movement's calls to amend the Social Security Act. An attempt to enhance informal worker's welfare was announced on 5th October, 2012, at the Rama Gardens Hotel, which was seen as showing that the government had a true interest in the informal sector, opening an opportunity for informal workers to participate in interest articulation. On that day, the Yingluck government promised that they would look to

expand health insurance for informal workers under the 30 Baht Scheme, promote and develop skills of informal workers, permit access to relevant welfare services and funds, and establish retirement funds for retired and/or elderly informal workers. What pleased the movement most was the offer of retirement funds, as the retirement funds for informal workers under the Social Security Act B.E. 2533 were too low. After the announcement – in which the government promised to develop a welfare system for the informal sector – leaders of several informal workers groups, including NGOs such as HomeNet, were invited for meetings to discuss the issues and develop the policies. This invitation introduced informal workers who were members of HomeNet to political activities. They later absorbed and gained experiences of political participation., The accumulated experience from this period was to be later utilized in their next movement against General Prayut's military government in late 2014 and subsequently.

The network of allies pressing for amendment of the Social Security Act expanded further after 2014. At that time, informal workers were considering the need for more voices to pressure the military government who had discontinued Yingluck's informal workers' welfare development project. The network also developed the issues of interest after becoming involved with other movements. There had been a related movement to amend the Social Security Act named the *Social Security for Workers Network* (เครือข่ายประกันสังคมคนทำงาน) before the informal

workers with HomeNet pressed welfare issues. This movement was formed by labor organizations and organizations for developing private companies' labor on September 2014 to express their grievances for reforming the Social Security Act to the National Legislative Assembly. HomeNet's informal workers supported the movement and studied from it how to demonstrate on issues related to their interests, especially the Social Security Act. After becoming engaged with the movement on related issues, the informal labor network continued to study the issues and plan the movement to represent themselves. They also tried to recruit more allies as they thought that one key to the success of a movement is the number of people participating. After several months of participating and observing the Social Security for Workers Network movement, informal workers in the network eventually officially formed a movement to pressure the government on these issues on 25 March 2015. The movement comprised of informal worker groups under the name of the Informal Workers Network. The network comprised the Pradit Torakarn Community, Dignity Returns, the Motocycle Taxi Association, homeworkers, and the street vendors of the Olympic Village. They also developed their own topics of interest as their network started to expand with other groups. Before 2014 during the Yingluck government when the network did not include the motorcycle taxi group and the street vendors, the movement wanted the welfare and protections in Article 40 of the Social Security Act to contain conditions equal to those in Articles 33 and 39. It was the demand which they had been promised by the Yingluck government in

2012 as Article 40 should cover disability, death, maternity leave, retirement, and child support. However, after forming a new movement with further allies within the sector, they realized that it is not enough to gain parity for the subsidies and compensation funds for the informal sector but rather the saving systems and welfare distribution within the informal sector should be re-designed due the different conditions of each group of informal workers (focusing mainly on differences in income and working time). Right now, the representative of the Pradit Torakarn Community, Mr. Somkid Duang-ngern, leads the informal workers movement associated with HomeNet Thailand to press on the issue of Social Security Funds. Mr. Somkid was picked to lead because of his long experience in managerial skills and political activities and because he is a well-respected elder in his community. It can be seen that the network of informal workers allows its members to share much of the resources owned by HomeNet along with expanding their opportunities to pool individual resources for their own issues. The more resources and connections mean the more the network can perform in development and political activities. They also know that experienced leaders such as Mr.Somkid can make the network seem more reliable with his success in establishing connections and management within his community. These traits of the Association of Informal Workers Network attract other groups to unite with them; in turn, the network and HomeNet will gain advantages from combined groups to conduct further research and development within the informal sector

4. Summarizing the Capabilities of HomeNet and Informal Workers to Mobilize

Resources

From the presentations earlier in this part, we can argue that informal workers as members of HomeNet have used resources and networks from HomeNet's pre-existing resources, plus some of their own, to establish a movement to demonstrate their needs. Informal workers utilized the networks of allies previously gained by HomeNet to start a small movement themselves. HomeNet and its informal workers were success in mobilizing their own human, material, cultural, and social-organizational resources from their reliable network of alliances. During their times of resources aggregation, their decisions in co-optation and patronage with renowned external organizational also provided them with lump of moral resources which invoked the enthusiasm to self-development among HomeNet's member.

All in all, HomeNet and the Foundation have secured for themselves a handful of resources in human resources, martial resources, and societal support from academia. However, it is clear that HomeNet and the Foundation do not gain much support from the government in their early years or attention from the main-stream media. Thus, they have limitations in launching bigger campaigns to attract the masses on their own. They still rely on their alliances to help them develop their members. However, it is a good sign to see that they have engaged with and have

their members practiced in the use of social networks which is a convenient modern platform for communication thus, enhancing their own human, cultural, and social-organizational resources. HomeNet also has a keen vision for creating a network with reliable representatives such as Mr.Somkid, who is experienced and well-respected. Yet, when considering that HomeNet and the Foundation have a history of two decades, the organizations have made slower than expected progress in their issues of concern in the informal sector in Thailand. The problems and issues concerning the sector have changed through time and HomeNet needs to keep up more closely with the many rapid changes, such as the digital economy and communication. It is undeniable that major successes of HomeNet and its informal workers rely much on the alliances and networks of support that they have recruited. HomeNet is pursuing on the course to develop its member capacity so that the organization's capabilities can be expanded much more though having most of the members active. They also aim for the members to become more resourceful so that they can conduct and develop their membership-based organization on their own in the future. Nevertheless, expanding and gaining more allies does not always mean success of political activities because of the political obstructions that still persist.

The events before 2014 indicated that one of factors that led to the movement's success in recruiting allies and being welcomed by officials is certainly the strong connections to other respected organizations and its status as a legitimate

organization that can represent the collective of informal workers. These connections with other networks and organizations – even after 2014 – also help the informal worker network to develop and enhance the details of their work on issues of interest , and eventually encourage them to make demonstrations themselves. However, the success of cooperating with the government through utilizing resources and experience did not last long due to the change of government from Yingluck's democratic government to Prayut's military government in early 2014. It was not because the movement had been weakened or dissolved that made it less successful after 2014. In fact, the movement was gaining more powerful allies such as the motorcycle taxi group and raised even more pressure on the government than during the Yingluck period. What made the movement less successful was that the degree of freedom under the military government was low and what HomeNet's informal workers decided to react upon this situation. This political situation at that time will be analyzed by Political Process Theory in the next part. In addition, the next part will also elaborate on the limitations on the ability of HomeNet and its members to utilize their resources for political causes under the military regime.

Part 4

Political Opportunities and Development of HomeNet's Informal

Workers Movement

The previous part examined the capabilities and resource utilization of HomeNet's informal workers movement in which its successes in both development and empowerment came from well-established and strong connections of networks. This proved to be fruitful during Yingluck's civilian government but not under Prayut's military government. Although the movement already possessed political experience, allies, and resources to engage with governments, success and failure are due to differences in the political structure of each government that affects the movement's political participation. In order to answer the research question whether political or social conditions and allies affect the success or failure of the movement, this part explores how the movement was able to access the political channel and used political opportunity to engage with the government more easily with a civilian government than a military one. This part will study the political structures in a certain period. In different political structures, the resources of informal workers were used differently to achieve political goals. The elements of political structure which influenced the movement's activities will be analyzed through Political Opportunity Theory to answer whether structural or immediate political or social conditions

affected the success or failure of the movement as well as how allies and support groups were essential to the movement's success. In addition, this part also examine the political inclusiveness and exclusiveness between three civilian governments and a military government to see if these elements had affected or obstruct the growth of the movement and its political opportunities.

The chapter is divided into 3 major sections. The first and second section portray the political opportunity structures in two different types of government – the elected governments which are Thaksin's government, Abhisith's government and Yingluck's government that was said to advocate democracy, and Prayut's non-elected military government that was said to aim for peace, stability, and political reform. The reason to examine Thaksin's government because many of Yingluck's supporters were Thaksin's legacy; and Yingluck's government was also one of the Thaksin-affiliated governments which were tremendously affected by the anti-Thaksin protesters. In addition, the majority of Thaksin's supporters and the massive political conflicts sprung from between the anti-Thaksin groups and Pro-Thaksin supporters resulted in the low stability for Yingluck's polity. On the other hands, Abhisith's government was the civilian polity which attempted to favor the people and allowed some demonstrations in the hope of prolonging its period despite coming to power via being selected by the political elites rather than winning the election. These two parts analyze two main issues: 1) the stability and degree of political openness or

closure of the governments; 2) the significance of supportive alliances to the movement (including those of the elites) and how they react toward the movement, which can assist or obstruct the movement's activities. The last section analyzes the political opportunities in different governments. It looks at how different political opportunity structures under two governments – namely, Yingluck's and Prayut's governments which the Informal Workers Network had come to mobilize and act – affected the movement's decision whether it would choose to continue fighting or step back and become passive player in Thai politics. These political opportunities presented in different governments also differentiate the nature of informal workers' alliances, making their supportive roles become more active or absent under the certain government.

1. Civilian Governments and Political Opportunities for Informal Workers

1.1 Thaksin's Government: A Background to Yingluck's Politics and Political

Opportunities for Informal Workers

Thailand had been fully administrated under elected government led by Thaksin Shinawatr during 2001 to 2006 before Thai Politics has been thrown into the clashes between Thaksin's supporters and anti-Thaksin groups (namely Political

demonstrations by the United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship (UDD) movement or the Red Shirt; and People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) movement or the Yellow Shirt and the People's Democratic Reform Committee (PDRC) movement). He was also the leader of Thai Rak Thai Party. During his government, Thaksin and his party were popular in the northeastern and northern parts of Thailand and various progressive groups of people (O'Brien, 2010). His introduction of universal health care and rural poverty reduction policies attracted most people in the lower classes, the largest group in the country (ibid). He also gained vast support for his economic policies in which he was able to repay the debts to the International Monetary Fund two years ahead of schedule; by his rural poverty reduction policies, the northeast's income had risen by 46% from 2001 to 2006 (Office of The National Economic and Social Development Board, 2007). However, despite his popularity, Thaksin's downfall started in 2005 when Sondhi Limthongkul, the founder of The Manager newspaper – who later became the leader of the right-wing movement, PAD, to oust Thaksin – accused him of corruption, restricting press freedom, and boycotted elections. Sondhi saw an opportunity to attack Thaksin when Thaksin presided over a merit-making ceremony in the Temple of the Emerald Buddha (*dubbed as Wat Phra Kaew*) in April 2005, which only royals were expected conduct ("Thai Protesters Denounce Thaksin's Royal Remarks," 2009). Hence, Thaksin and his fellows were accused by Sondhi through his newspaper (ibid) as usurpers who wished to take power away from the monarch. Thaksin was also faced the accusations of corruption

of the sale of the Shinawatra family's share of Shin Corporation (ShinCorp) to Temasek Holdings; human rights abuses from war on drugs scheme; and mismanagement of the south which led to more severe conflicts. Sondhi gathered up to an estimated 150,000 protesters in April 2006 at Sanam Luang, Bangkok. At the boiling point of the mass dissatisfactory. Thaksin announced dissolution of the House on 24 February 2006 and called for a general election in April 2006 ("Democracy Put to The Ultimate Test," 2006). Anti-Thaksin demonstrations did not stop after the general election was called and there was a demand for royal intervention, requesting King Bhumibol Adulyadej to appoint a new Prime Minister. The King did not respond to the demand, and the general election on 3 April 2006 resulted in Thaksin's Thai Rak Thai party wining 66% of popular vote due to the major opposition parties boycotted the election and fielded no candidates. However, Thaksin did not assume the position of Prime Minister but accepted only to become a caretaker Prime Minister until a successor was selected by parliament. His reason for not assuming the Prime Minister position was that he wanted to reduce the political tension since there was the election boycott and his winning reduced electoral legitimacy ("Thai PM Thaksin Says to Step Down," 2006). The PAD continued its demonstrations to the point of political crisis and on 19 September 2006 a coup d'état led by Gen Sonthi Boonyaratglin overthrew Thaksin while he was attending the United Nations General Assembly in New York. Thus, the Thaksin era was ended but the political conflicts continued as the anti-Thaksin protesters would not stop

until Thaksin's political legacy was eradicated and the pro-Thaksin would continue to fight for him and his party ("Who's Who in Thailand's Anti-Government Forces?," 2013).

After the coup in 2006, Thaksin went into voluntary exile in 2008 to escape a conviction for corruption ("Former Thai PM Thaksin Found Guilty of Corruption," 2008). However, Thaksin's legacy continued in the form of the People's Power Party, which was made up of the MPs and member of the Thai Rak Thai party, which had been dissolved by the courts ("Thaksin Ally Victory 'Undermined'," 2008). The People's Power Party won 233 of 480 seats in the general election in 2007 under the leadership of Samak Sundaravej who became Prime Minister (January 2008 – September 2008) (ibid). From May 2008, Samak faced protests by the PAD yet again due to his relationship with Thaksin ("Thai Minister to Stay Despite Protests," 2008) and the Phra Vihear issue. The PAD occupied Government House and clashed with anti-PAD protesters. During the ongoing PAD demonstrations, Samak was removed on 9 September 2008 after being convicted of conflict of interest. On 17 September 2008, Somchai Wongsawat was selected as the Prime Minister (September 2008 – December 2008) by the National Assembly, receiving 298 votes, more than the 163 votes for Abhisit Vejjajiva from the opposing Democrat Party. Somchai and his party also faced the PAD demonstrators whose protests were getting more confrontational. On 17 October 2008 Thailand's anti-corruption body found Somchai guilty of

neglecting his duties while working in the justice department eight years previously ("New Thai Prime Minister Faces Investigation," 2008). The PAD seized Suvarnabhumi International Airport on 25 November 2008 and occupied it for 9 days, causing political and economic crisis. Somchai and his cabinet, along with the People's Power Party, were removed from office on 2 December 2008 after Yongyuth Tiyapairat, the party's deputy chair, was found guilty by a court of electoral fraud. The party was dissolved and PAD ceased its demonstrations, claiming they had been victorious. However, the third incarnation of Thaksin's Thai Rak Thai party was founded under the name of the Pheu Thai Party on 20 September 2008 before the dissolution of the People's Power Party. Most of People's Power Party MPs defected to the Pheu Thai Party and continued Thaksin's legacy. Abhisit Vejjajiva from the Democrat Party was endorsed by King Bhumibol Adulyadej as Prime Minister of Thailand on 17 December 2008 after a vote by MPs that was allegedly engineered by the military. Abhisit and his government then faced protests from the remnants of the pro-Thaksin People's Power Party. Political demonstrations by the UDD, led by the Red Shirts movement, and subsequent unrest occurred in Thailand from March to April 2009 against the government of Abhisit Vejjajiva, demanding that Abhisit resign from the Premiership. It also demanded that Prem Tinsulanonda, Surayud Chulanont, and Chanchai Likhitjittha resign from the Privy Council (as these were accused by Thaksin of being the masterminds behind the 2006 coup) ("Thai Police Issue Warrants for 14 Protest Leaders," 2009). The UDD rallied up to 100,000

demonstrators in support of Thaksin on 8 April 2009 at Government House and Royal Plaza. On 11 April, the UDD shifted its demonstration to Pattaya, forcing the cancellation of Fourth East Asia Summit and causing Abhisit to declare a State of Emergency in Pattaya and Chonburi province. The demonstration returned to Bangkok and raised political tensions by occupying a number of main streets around the Victory Monument and Din Daeng. On 13 April 2009 Abhisit retaliated with military force, injuring over 120 people in the unrest with at least 6 protesters killed. The protest ended on 14 April when many protest leaders voluntarily gave themselves in to police. When the protest ended, the government provided free transport to take the rest of the protesters home. Nevertheless, the UDD staged a demonstration again in 2010. This time, the UDD announced that it would rally against Abhisit's government on 14 March and would not stop until parliament was dissolved and new elections held (ibid). On 14 March 2010, protesters gathered in Bangkok and started rallying through the main streets. The UDD occupied a shopping district at Ratchaprasong from early April to 19 May 2010. The fights between protesters and soldiers started on 9 April and culminated in 19 May with an estimated 94people were killed – including a foreign photographer, Fabio Polenghi, and a foreign journalist, Hiro Muramoto – and around 2,000 people were injured ("Army Pressure Ends Thai Protest," 2009). Banks and commercial and government buildings were set on fire during the latter part of the clash. After the violence ended

with the arrest of the UDD leaders, Abhisit then called parliamentary elections for 3 July 2011.

Despite the severe political conflicts and violence occurred during late Thaksin's reign, his government during his first term was praised for being an ideal democratic government during that time. During Thaksin's government, his Thai Rak Thai party cooperated with more than 20 factions in society including powerful economic and social forces such as the taxis, motorcycle taxis, farmers, and the police as well as local governors (Nelson, 2013). His success in gaining popularity through reaching out to various groups and allowing civil participation solidly entrenched his government from the opposition and hostile groups. His policies to add and strengthen social welfare made his government gained tremendous amount of supporters from many different factions, especially from the rural groups which the number of gained supporters is massive. In term of informal worker's inclusiveness during his period of government, there was not an actual attempt to develop informal sector's welfare. Thaksin rather pinpointed his targeted occupational groups (which were mostly the informal workers) such as farmers, taxi drivers, and motorcycle taxis. As mentioned that Thaksin had his desired target groups, he also chose to invest his time and political materials in these groups as he have them discussed and planned in further policy makings. These actions made Thanksin beloved by massive amounts of informal workers, which majorly taxi

drivers, the motorcycle taxi, and farmers. For examples, motorcycle taxi riders had

been supported by Thaksin's government in 2003 to eliminate the motorcycle taxi

mafias; in return, the government provided opportunities for these motorcycle taxis

to participate in policy discussions on their concerns. Later in the 2010 political crisis,

Thaksin's effort of making an alliance with motorcycle -taxi riders paid off when they

became major supporters. In addition to providing strong numeral force in social

protest, the motorcycle taxis also acted as a resource for transporting pro-Thaksin

demonstrators. In his late second term, Thaksin aimed to initiate the development of

informal sector's social security on 23 March 2005 ("New Government and the

Expanding of Social Security to Informal Labor," 2007), however, the plan had never

been carried out due to the political conflicts which caused the parliament to be

dissolved on February 2006.

It can be argued that the inclusiveness, which Thaksin decided to have their

targeted groups participated in policy making, had affected the development of

informal labor movements in Thailand. There were visible evidences of civic

engagement and institutional development embedded within Thaksin's policies. For

instance, with his helps to the motorcycle taxis and the farmers, these people would

later spring own interest groups which are already affiliated with the politics. Thus,

making these groups of informal workers later become the forces or supporters of

social movements. Many farmers have joined Assembly of the Poor to push their

issues toward the society. While on the other hands, the motorcycle taxis who had already established The Motorcycle Taxis Association of Thailand and many of its members had been involving with the pro-Thaksin political movements (Sopranzetti, 2013). As for the motorcycle taxis, they are seen among the HomeNet's informal workers as a strong ally who has deeper political experiences and members. They were later asked to join HomeNet's informal workers' movement to develop the social welfare for informal sector in 2013. With these political dynamics of individual informal worker groups who had been sprung from the act of Thaksin's government, it can also be argued that Thaksin's political openness and aims for popularity via reaching out to different occupational groups had later created the political experienced informal worker groups. These groups would later help the development of informal sector via joining and assisting the movements that concerns their interests, thus making the informal sector viable to politics even though the governmental supporters (for instance, the Thaksin's affiliated governments) are gone. It is also to be noted that, during Thaksin's government, there were not many governmental-related external organizations such as The Thailand Research Fund and Thai Health Promotion Foundation to support the informal workers, there were already some NGOs like HomeNet and Arompongprangan Foundation to help with the issues. Furthermore, Selected informal worker groups at that time were directly assisted by the governmental elites themselves.

Although Thaksin was exiled and would likely never to return to Thailand after the PAD movement incident, his political legacy left many remnants inside Thailand's political sphere. His followers and party members later sprung the reincarnated Thai Rak Thai parties – namely People's Power Party and Phue Thai Party. The parties followed Thaksin's policies and still grasped onto Thaksin's supporter's hearts. His supporters become an opposition to anti-Thaksin groups which created the political turmoil between the Red Shirt and the Yellow Shirt. As a result of having massive amount of supporters, Thaksin-affiliated parties won the general elections (2006 for People's Power Party and 2011 for Phue Thai Party). Despite having to deal with anti-Thaksin movements, Yingluck Shinawatr's Phue Thai Party was less obstructed by the oppositions during the earlier years. Unlike People's Power Party government which had to deal with massive protestors since it came into power, Yingluck's government had more progression upon attempting to develop informal sector due to being able to administrate in almost full 4-year-term. However, unlike Thaksin's government, Yingluck's government was not as strong Thaksin's as well as some of Thaksin supporters were disenchanted to support the Red Shirt and left off political sphere. Yingluck's government would have to strengthen the confidences of pre-existing supporters and build more alliances while trying to survive the tension from anti-Thaksin groups.

1.2 Abhisith's Civilian Government's Interim Period: Political Opportunities which
Formulated the Growth of the Informal Workers Movements

Abhisith's government had come into power via being voted from the
parliament after the long period of Thaksin's affiliated governments had faced the
rapid transitions due to the fierce protests of the PAD movement. Abhisith
premiership started on 17 December 2008 amidst the political conflicts which, the
opposition forces (i.e. the Redshirts movement) attempted to oust the government
intensely by the reason of not being a legitimate polity that come from majority
votes. Despite being a selected government, Abhisith's polity was still counted as the
civilian government that has some elements of democratic system and political
inclusiveness within it. For example, Abhisith's government allowed political
demonstrations to some degrees in which the government was only deciding to
suppress the Redshirts movement with forces in 2010 due to the long period of the
central-commercial/economic districts shutdown.

It can be seen as the government was trying to gain the legitimacy through
democratic means to prove itself to the people as well. Thus, Abhisith's government
was allowing political participation to some degrees. For instance, the government
allowed political grievances and demonstrations to allocate the demands made by
specific groups then, trying to gain favors by solving those problems. A significant
example of the informal workers' cases was that this allowance of political

demonstrations had given an initial formation to the HomeNet's Informal Workers Network (as mentioned in Part 3). At that time, the network was loosely organized and came out individually to demand better compensations and welfares upon working accidents, death and disability, and retirement funds issues which, all of these topics concerned that amendment of Social Security Act's Article 40. This political atmosphere opened the opportunity for various informal workers to seek out and form the allies in order to establish joint movements for the specific goals. In this case, Social Security for Workers Network and HomeNet's Informal Workers network were ones of the many informal workers groups and some formal workers groups to started forming movements to demonstrate their collective demands during Abhisith's government and become fully established movements to push forward their demands during Yingluck's government in the year after her succession to Abhisith's government.

It is also arguable that Abhisith's government, despite being a selected government, was aware of their stability due to the lack of legitimacy from majority voters thus, the government decided to follow the democratic theme of administration which opened to the inclusiveness of civil engagements. Like Redshirt-affiliated governments, Abhisith saw that reaching out to specific groups of people would in turn give him some opportunities to win people's hearts and gain their trusts thus, prolonging his polity and clearing the name of being illegitimate oligarchy

government. Informal workers were one of those people that Abhisith attempted to engage with to exchanges the favors. By 7 December 2010, Abhisith, the Minister of Commerce, the Minister of Energy, the Ministry of Finance, assistant secretary of Ministry of Interior, and the commissioner of police department had set up a stage to listen to the demands of informal sector's welfare developments from Mr. Sangsit Piriyarangsan, the president of the Informal Labor and Informal Economy Party (คณะทำงานแรงงานนอกระบบและเศรษฐกิจนอกระบบ) ("Abhisith Listen to Informal Labor Presentation," 2010). Mr. Sangsit then made the requests of six major focuses which concerned; 1) Taxi drivers, 2) Motorcycle taxi drivers, 3) Street vendors, 4) Night-time workers, 5) Accessibility to Social Security, and 6) the accessibility to open credits of informal workers ("Breakdown "Mark's" Populism, Ordering Labor to be in the system on 17 DEC," 2010). In the following year of 2011, Abhisith had made a public engagement via video conference many provincial governors which he made a discussion to launch the Social Security Act – Article 40 in to the larger scale, so he claimed that many grassroots should benefit with his scheme ("Prime Minister Video Conference for Informal Workers' Self-Insurance," 2011).

Despite attempting to reach out to gain favors from the people via democratic means, Abhisith's government suffered from the violence of the opposition's political movement – the Redshirts. The frequently political crackdowns which occurred in the commercial and business districts from April to May 2010 had

led the government into the tough situation to control the politics and society.

Ultimately, the conflict resulted in the violence and the government was pressured

to issue the general election date as soon as possible. Thus, bringing an end to

selected civilian government that tried to stabilize itself and the politics by trying to

be political inclusive in some degrees. It is undeniable that, during Abhisith's period,

there was a political allowance to some groups of people which resulted as the

opportunity to informal workers to form their network of alliances. If Abhisith would

otherwise decide to suppress public demonstrations in the first place, the Informal

Workers Network would less likely have been fully formulated and mobilized to

become successful during Yingluck's government.

1.3 Yingluck's Government Background; Stability; and Political Openness

Despite being a legitimate successor to Abhisith's government via winning

general election from majority voters, politics during Yingluck Shinawatra's

government was in conflict and turmoil. The political problems and disputes of the

Yingluck government were rooted from Thaksin's era which evoked the massive anti-

Thaksin groups that would affect the survivability of his political legacy, the

reincarnated parties.

The Pheu Thai Party, yet another Thaksin affiliated party, won the general

election of 2011 and nominated Yingluck Shinawatra as Prime Minister ("Yingluck

Shinawatra Set to be Thailand's First Female Premier," 2011). The Yingluck government was seen as a puppet government for Thaksin as the government consisted of many Thai Rak Thai and People's Power Party members and Yingluck herself is the sister of Thaksin ("Yingluck Shinawatra, The 'Puppet' Hanging by a Thread in Thailand," 2013). Anti-Thaksin critics were also displeased as one UDD leader, Nattawut Saikua, became Deputy Minister of Agriculture. The right wing, especially former PAD members, formed the new movement called the People's Democratic Reform Committee (PDRC) in 2013 and started attacking the government and demanding that Thaksin's influence on Thai politics be eradicated forever ("Suthep Targets 'Thaksin regime' Again," 2013). Yingluck attempted to set up the election again on February 2014, but was boycotted by PDRC. Polling stations were disrupted and occupied by the anti-election groups. Yingluck decided to dissolve parliament and call early elections in the face of anti-government protests. Although the parliament had been dissolved, the movement did not think that they have achieved their goal of removing Thaksin's influence. They demanded the creation of an unelected People's Council to oversee political reform (Galache, 2014). The protests were getting larger and occupied many sites in Bangkok, until in May 2014 the military decided to stage a coup d'état led by Gen Prayut Chan-o-cha. This ended Yingluck's red shirt-affiliated government and put the country under military control.

Due to the persistent protests from both anti- and pro-Thaksin sides since 2006, Yingluck's government faced a situation of low political stability[7] . By the end of the Yingluck government, followed by the coup political turmoil saw the PDRC persistently shutting down central Bangkok intersections and government offices for seven months from October 2013 till May 2014. The negative value of the Political Stability Index shows that the Yingluck government faced a risk of political protest, violence, and overthrow. Yingluck's government attempted to be open and reached out to many groups in order to stabilize her government via her policies.

'Foster reconciliation and harmony among people in the nation and restore democracy' was listed in the *Urgent Policies to be Implemented in the First Year* by the Yingluck government to stabilize Thailand's political situation; A rise in the minimum wage to 300 baht per day was also included in the urgent policies directed to the working class nationwide ("16 Urgent Policies passed by Cabinet within a year," 2012). In addition to This, Yingluck's policy on labor including the development of social security benefits and labor in all ranges of skills: '*Increase social security*

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[7] The Political Stability ranges from -2.5 (weak) to 2.5 (strong). The Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism Index measures perceptions of the likelihood that the government will be destabilized or overthrown by unconstitutional or violent means, including politically-motivated violence and terrorism. The index is an average of several other indices from the Economist Intelligence Unit, the World Economic Forum, and Political Risk Services, among others. The World Bank provides data for Thailand from 1996 to 2015. The average value for Thailand during that period was -0.7 points with a minimum of -1.43 points in 2010 and a maximum of 0.53 points in 1998. (The Global Economy, n/a)

benefits so those under the scheme could adequately access healthcare, as well as improve and expand the coverage of the scheme to entice informal sector workers to join the scheme.'; and '*Upgrade non-skilled labor to semi-skilled labor and semi-skilled labor to skilled labor through cooperation between the public and private sectors, with the aim of making Thailand a country that utilizes a wholly skilled labor force.'* (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, 2011). These two policies would later give rise to the informal workers' social security policy and opened the participation for this sector to cooperate with the government to develop their own welfare policy.

As mentioned above in this part, to the fact that the government's stability was low and was at risk to being overthrown, the phenomenon was relevant to the attempts of the government to open the political sphere for civil participation and secure more popularity. For the Pheu Thai Party to achieve the popularity which Thaksin had enjoyed, recruiting supporters and factions is considered essential. Thaksin's policies were a guideline for Yingluck's government to follow if it was to become successful with majority support as Thaksin was successfully allied himself with more than 20 factions nationwide (Nelson, 2013).

The Pheu Thai Party followed Thaksin's policy of attempting to ally with many groups in society. However, the choice of groups to participate in the political open space was partially selective at that time. For instance, informal workers were

chosen to be one of the groups of interest to the government in its political openness. In 2012, the Yingluck government aimed to enhance funding for the informal sector. Prior to that, NGOs such as HomeNet had voicing their demands to amend the Social Security Act since 2010. An attempt to enhance informal worker's welfare was announced on 5th October 2012 at the Rama Gardens Hotel ("Yingluck Emphasizes Informal Sector Employment Must Fix and Develop in the National Informal Labour Conference," 2012). On that day, the Yingluck government promised that they would look to promote and develop skills for informal workers, permit access to relevant welfare services and funds, and establish retirement funds for retired and/or elder informal workers. What pleased the movement most was the change regarding retirement funds since the previous funds for informal workers under the Social Security Act B.E. 2533 were too low. This marked an access to a political opportunity for informal workers to participate with interest articulation ("'Pu Prime Minister' Ready for Taking Care of Informal Workers' Living Quality," 2012). After the announcement, several leaders of informal workers groups, including relevant NGOs such as HomeNet and the Thai Labor Solidarity Committee (TLSC), were invited for meetings to discuss the issues and develop the policies ("Yingluck Emphasizes Informal Sector Employment Must Fix and Develop in the National Informal Labour Conference," 2012). This invitation introduced informal workers who were members of HomeNet to political participation and cooperation.

HomeNet's members, who had set up the meeting to discuss the demands, sent their leader, Mr. Somkid Duang-Ngern and HomeNet officials to talk with government officials. Mr. Somkid said he and his fellows were satisfied enough to have the government hear what they had to say (Duang-ngern, 2015). He also added that it was a good start to develop the sector in the right way, with both the civilian and government sides joining forces to improve society (ibid). Although Mr. Somkid did not disclose his political alignment, he said that he supported the Yingluck government's decision to listen to public opinion and allow some degree of cooperation. He pointed out that there was no reason not to support this kind of openness. He said that the informal workers gained direct benefits from being part of policy-making and enjoyed the freedom to participate in Thai politics.

The reactions from HomeNet's members confirmed the benefit of the Yingluck government's direction in policy making. This helped strengthening her polity with wider range of supports from new allies. However, despite her attempts to solidify the government's stability via creating a new network of alliances, her government faced social outrage from PDRC protesters because she tried to pass an amnesty bill which would allow the return of Thaksin Shinawatra. The amnesty bill, in addition to her infamous rice scheme, ignited public dissatisfaction and caused the PDRC to set up its demonstration stages in the central Bangkok until those affiliated with the Red Shirts were removed from Thailand. The prolonged protest was getting

severe until May 2014 when a coup d'état led by Gen. Prayut Chan-o-cha took control over Thai politics.

Although there were the clashes between anti-Yingluck (PDRC) and pro-Yingluck (UDD) forces prior the coup, newly created allies such as informal workers did not join the groups defending the Yingluck government. Mr. Somkid said that they – the informal workers – know what they should and should not support (Duang-ngern, 2015). In his viewpoint, allowing political participation was good but it was necessary for any government to win the people's heart. However, the amnesty bill was seen as a selfish act of the government (ibid). Thus, HomeNet's members decided not to get involved with the clashes between the Yingluck government's supporters and opponents. When asked if Mr. Somkid was afraid that the progress of their demands would be halted if Yingluck were to be overthrown, he said that he hoped the project of informal sector development will continue whatever the government's alignment because the demands and discussions had been done; and the next government would only need to finish the already-ongoing project (ibid). Nevertheless, when the military coup overthrew Yingluck, the project was discontinued because the military government's aims were different form Yingluck's. So the development of the informal sector in Thailand would have to wait for further opportunities.

To summarize, Yingluck's policy started out by following Thaksin's strategy of making allies and reached out to newer groups in society. In her calculation, informal workers were chosen and enjoyed cooperation with the state. The civilian government's need to further raise its popularity for political competition, opening a space for civil participation became a method of bringing in new allies for the government thus strengthening its stability. Thus, the degree of political inclusion was at high level, especially in the terms of civic engagement and attempts of constitutional reform to develop specific sectors. However, because informal workers were just new allies and the outcome of cooperation was never achieved, informal workers (represented by HomeNet's membership-based group) remained neutral in the clash between the government's opponents and supporters.

1.4 Empowering Informal Workers through Alliances and Support Groups

As mentioned earlier, allies and support groups played important roles in helping to develop informal workers in Thailand. In HomeNet's case, NGO supports greatly affected the movement's successes during Yingluck's government. To further elaborate on the effect of NGO involvement, HomeNet was picked as one of the informal workers groups to cooperate with the government to develop the welfare system because they were already formed and operating as a group and were more reliable due to the connections with respected international organizations such as

UNIFEM, WIEGO, and the ILO. Through the course of HomeNet's development, it was portrayed as an ally of these respected organizations which later strengthened their credibility with government officials.

The allies of informal workers – as in the Yingluck period – comprised not only NGOs and civil society groups but also government officials. As one of the target groups that the Yingluck government wanted to reach out to, informal workers thus were favored by some of the political elite involved with policy concerning the informal sector, namely officials in the Ministry of Labor and Social Security Office who were acquainted with workers and civil participation. On 5 February 2013, Mr. Arthit Isamo of the Ministry of Labor reported that there were almost 30 million informal workers who wanted to use the National Savings Fund and he would immediately request Prime Minister Yingluck to start the project as soon as possible at the upcoming meeting on informal sector issues on 14 February 2013 (Ministry of Labor, 2015). Thus, the event gave rises to many governmental projects that concerned the informal sector's developments (as discussed in Part 3 in terms of governmental external organizations' supports). For instance, Thai Health Promotion Foundation had consecutively gained funding for informal sector work-safety and hygienic development projects since Abhisith's government and gain further supports in Yingluck's government. On the other hands, a research institute like The Thailand Research Fund also gained further monetary supports to concentrate on more works

upon informal sector in a broad areas (The Thailand Research Fund, before Abhisith's government, had a focus on specific informal sector such as farmers rather than studying informal sector as a whole) Prior to this, there had been tension between informal workers and the government because the government was accused of delaying the National Savings Fund because it was a project of the former Abhisit government; thus Yingluck officials do not want to carry on the opposition's work ("Informal Workers Seek Court: Pu / Kittirat Postponed National Saving Funds," 2013). Nevertheless, the quarrel between informal workers and the government had subsided as the National Savings Fund became available in 2014 which, Yingluck ultimately decided to continue the former government's promise. It can be said that this act of sharing political privilege with certain groups in participating in policy making was based on the mutual interests of the government and the workers. They both needed trustworthy allies. The government needed more votes to prolong the polity in democratic politics while, on the other hand, workers would cooperate with the government in discussing governmental plans. Through this participation, the government gained insightful data to pin-point the problems and the workers' demands came closer to reality. It can also be argued that the Yingluck government tried to follow the Thaksin government strategy of allowing political participation because Thaksin created powerful allies by reaching out to help particular groups. As Thaksin's deed had become fruitful in the past when the motorcycle taxis rallied

and helped supporting him during political conflicts, Yingluck's government was likely to follow his steps in seeking for similar supports from civilians.

It can be argued that the informal workers movement had developed thus far because of the help gained directly from the government. However, prior to making effective contact with the government, they had acquired skills and knowledge from several alliances referred to in the previous part. Thus, it can be argued that HomeNet was the one of many groups that the Yingluck government chose to partner because of their trustworthy network of alliances, resources, and skills which were gathered through years of development. When the informal worker groups had succeed in creating an official organization, combined with the political openness under a democratic polity, the development of the informal sector and the informal workers movement could flourish in democratic politics. In comparison between Yingluck's government, Abhisith's government and Thaksin's government, it is clear that the governments affected greatly in the initiation informal workers development; especially the degree of political inclusion which allowed civic engagement in developing their own sector had resulted in the formation of the Informal Workers Network and become a full-fledge movement in Abhisith's government and Yingluck's government respectively. While on the other hands, having democratic atmosphere and political openness allowed informal workers to

establish interests groups or join forces with each other. Thus the governments were able to strengthen informal sector both directly and indirectly.

2. Prayut Government and Political Constraints on Informal Workers

General Prayut Chan-o-cha's regime came into power in 2014 after overthrowing the Yingluck government through a coup d'état. Prayut's military regime came to power at a crisis of political conflict where the PDRC had been protesting for almost half a year to oust Yingluck and eradicate Thaksin's political heritage. The new government's main objective was to restore the nation's security and peace (Fernquest, 2016). Although informal workers were hoping that the government would carry forward Yingluck's project of informal sector development, the military government discontinued the project along with other projects launched by the Yingluck government. The military government claimed that peace and security were the most important issues when they came to power. All other projects were put on hold or discarded. In addition to the differences goals of the military government, Prayut suspected that Yingluck's projects were corrupt and 'too populist' ("'Big Tu' Said to Have Overcome 'Thaksin-Yinglucks' For Long," 2017).

2.1 Government's Legitimacy and Atmosphere of Political Control

Military governments which come from coups d'état have a different legitimacy from civilian governments. In this case, Prayut's military government had no need to play their political game in a democratic way to retain their right to stay in power. As politics during the Yingluck government was in turmoil and the protests in 2014 disrupted major business districts in Bangkok, the coup was legitimated for reasons of peace keeping and internal security. Plus, it was the protesters themselves who demanded military intervention to resolve the long-lasting conflicts between the right wing and Thaksin's influence (Phakdeewanich, 2017). Henceforth, Prayut's military government in the first year was very strongly backed by the masses which supported the PDRC and anti-Thaksin side. Although the entire country did not back the military government, Yingluck's supporters and protest leaders were watched by the authorities while some were arrested. In addition to arresting protesters after the coup, the military government enacted Thailand's 2014 Interim Constitution, whose Section 44 gives junta leader and Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha absolute power to give any order deemed necessary to "strengthen public unity and harmony" or to prevent any act that undermines public peace ("What You Need to Know About Article 44 of Thailand's Interim Constitution," 2015). The Section gives General Prayut absolute authority to use any means against anyone deemed to threaten national security and who conducts demonstrations. Since then, Thailand had been in an

atmosphere of political silence. During the military government, especially the first year, social movements and political activities were prohibited. In 2014 the authorities shut down many academic seminars on political and democratic issues and went further to arrest the event organizers. For instance, an event entitled *Democracy Classroom: Fall of Foreign Dictator* at Bangkok's Thammasat University was halted and four academics and three students who hosted the event were arrested even though the topic did not directly concern Thailand' (Culzac, 2014). Despite raids of this kind, some political and academic events concerning internal security issues were secretly or privately arranged. However, these events were monitored by military officials who were sent to observe and record any suspicious discussion threatening military rule. Many human rights organizations including Human Rights Watch and the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), condemned the government for its oppressive actions (ibid). Yet the military government did not seem susceptible to any criticism and was prepared do anything to keep peace and order. With power and legitimacy to use forces to keep peace at hands, the degree of political inclusion in Prayut's government is relatively low as it did not allow civic engagement although having an attempt to have a political institutional reform. Furthermore, the insecure date of election (which continually postponed) indicated that the government's political inclusion degree was also low in terms of promoting and functioning the electoral cycle.

General Prayut's government earned further legitimacy to stay in power in August 2016 when the draft of a military-backed constitution was approved in a public referendum with 61 percent of votes in favor (Lefevre & Thepgumpanat, 2016). This event entrenched military polity even more, giving the military government further legitimacy to use the infamous Section 44 to keep peace and order despite the cries from civilians for freedom of expression (ibid). The referendum also showed that military supporters, for two years, had endured partial authoritarian rule despite oppressing the oppositions to the government (such as arresting 'vote no' campaigners and interference with public business. On the other hand, the government was keeping politics and public administration out of the hands of the public (although there are 16 'selected civilians' seated in administrative positions – 2 deputy PMs and 14 ministers). Thai people tolerated political control in which neutral and anti-Thaksin groups hoped for political reform before a general election soon after the referendum passed. However, some of right-wing politicians, such as Abhisith, started questioning the actions of military government's administrations. As public demonstrations and movements are prohibited, some groups of people, such as workers and farmers, started to present open letters to the government to voice their grievances and problems.

HomeNet's informal workers were negatively affected by political control. After the demise of their project to develop a welfare system under the Yingluck

government, informal workers did not gain much attention during Prayut's military government. They were not seen as a main policy priority – which revolved around keeping peace and order – in government's first year. With demonstrations and public gathering to voice the demands restricted, HomeNet's informal workers decided to push their issue in a more passive and softer way, by submitting open letters. Although the military junta accepted the letters, they did not respond to, or rather ignored most of the issues. Open letters to amend the Social Savings Fund under the Social Security Act were presented to the government by the informal workers in 2014 but the issue was yet to be solved in 2016. HomeNet and its informal workers' representatives reported that they could now only issue open letters to the government and wait for the response. They also reported that the problems are hardly taken into consideration by the government. With informal sector problems seen as secondary matters to internal security, it is now harder for them to get the government's attention in a political atmosphere where the political control is maintained through the use of Section 44.

Nevertheless, the military government did take the informal sector's welfare issues into consideration after some months in charge. In August 2014, the government tried to restructure the savings system for informal workers by allowing their money to be saved in the National Savings Fund. Eventually, it succeeded implementing the policy in early March 2015 ("Informal Workers Rejoice. The Cabinet

Approves National Savings Fund; The State Donates Additional Funds," 2015). In November 2014, prior to the National Savings Fund policy, the government established a 'Social Welfare Board' chooses a committee to oversee the informal sector's welfare issues. However, the action was critiqued as lacking transparency and decided in a very top-down manner ("Informal Workers Pointed NCPO Using Article 44 to Set Up 'Social Welfare Board' Has Cut Down Opportunities for Transparency-Governance," 2015). Despite of all the schemes to help informal workers, Mr.Somkid, HomeNet's informal workers' representative reported that policies were all top-down and had never been discussed with the informal workers. He also said that the government did not mention that those who wish to save their money in National Savings Fund would have to re-direct their existing savings account from the Social Security Fund, meaning they cannot have two saving accounts and thus, have to forfeit the savings benefits that had accumulated for years.

From an overall viewpoint, it can be argued that political control during the military reign disrupted the progress in informal sector welfare development which had been achieved under the prior government. On the other hand, the military government had not continued the work of the previous government. It can be anticipated that the government may not agree to provide welfare to the informal sector yet as they were inquiring to revoke the Universal Healthcare system. The

military junta still initiated a policy supporting informal workers through its own top-down decision-making. It can be seen that after being in power for a while, the military government tried to stabilize its polity by bringing up the social development plans that had been halted or cancelled during transition between governments in order to gain public favor. However, the attempt to develop the informal sector's welfare system via top-down policy-making did not please HomeNet's members. Due to restrictions on public expression, informal workers could only submit letters of grievance despite their dissatisfaction with the discontinuation of the Yingluck project and political control. HomeNet's representative, Mr. Somkid, said that they would wait for the situation to calm down while trying to speak for informal workers in a peaceful way. He also added that it was not wise for them to choose to demonstrate during a time of political turbulence. HomeNet's informal workers did not want to appear hostile toward the authorities or enemies to the junta's viewpoint.

2.2 Absence of Support Groups and Allies

It appears that the support groups and international allies of HomeNet's informal workers were absent during the military government. Although their partnership in conducting workshops, international seminars, and activities to empower workers were yet to be disrupted by the emergence of a military government, these allies has no interest in dealing with internal politics. For example,

in 2015, HomeNet was still in partnership with WIEGO and engaged in a 'Network Platform' project to widen their network of allies further. Yet WIEGO did not mention anything about the military regime or oppression despite having finished research on Bangkok's informal workers early that year (WIEGO, 2015). On the other hand, some of HomeNet's partners – namely the international organizations such as the ILO – denounced the military junta because the government voted against the ILO Forced Labor protocol on 16 June 2014 (Connell, 2014). However, the denunciation over the Forced Labor Protocol by international organizations appeared to be only indirectly relevant to HomeNet's problem with the discontinuation of the Yingluck's project.

As political elites were not informal workers' and NGOs' ally anymore, the consequences also befell to the governmental external organizations that were supporting informal sector as well. HomeNet reported that rights after the discontinuance of Yingluck's informal sector development projects, Thai Health Promotion Foundation's workshops and project to empower informal workers were significantly decreased. Furthermore in late 2014, The Thailand Research Fund did not initiate any follow-up research after its Occupational Health Research Project had finished. It is indicated that during the first year of military government, many of funding to allocate to informal sector developments were put on hold or even cut off due to the discontinuance of former government's projects.

Domestic allies of informal workers such as the Thai Labor Solidarity Committee also fell victim to Section 44. By using Section 44, the military junta forced the existing Social Security Board to resign in 2015, which left vacant many civilian positions including those of members of the Thai Labor Solidarity Committee ("Thai Labor Solidarity Committee Demand NCPO Reconsiders Using Article 44 to Restructure Social Security Board," 2015). Thus, the independence of the Social Security Board from governmental control was disrupted. Under civilian governments, these strong alliances usually conducted events concerning labor issues on related holidays, such as May Day, and informal workers occasionally joined them, bonding their networks and sharing views (Pasomboon, 2016). When events like these were halted by the military junta for years, the bonding among labor groups gradually decayed. Mr. Somkid said that there are still connections among the leaders of labor groups, but members at the moment find it very hard time to organize events together in public. Hence, labor allies went separate ways (Duang-ngern, 2015).

Apart from HomeNet's networks of allies weakened by the effects of Section 44, their members had their own issues apart from submitting collective grievances to the government. Mr. Somkid's community had a new learning facility installed by Bangkok Metropolitan Administration. HomeNet's homeworkers and street vendors groups said that they would focus on their work since the situation is not suitable for any public group activities. The motorcycle taxi groups were fighting their new
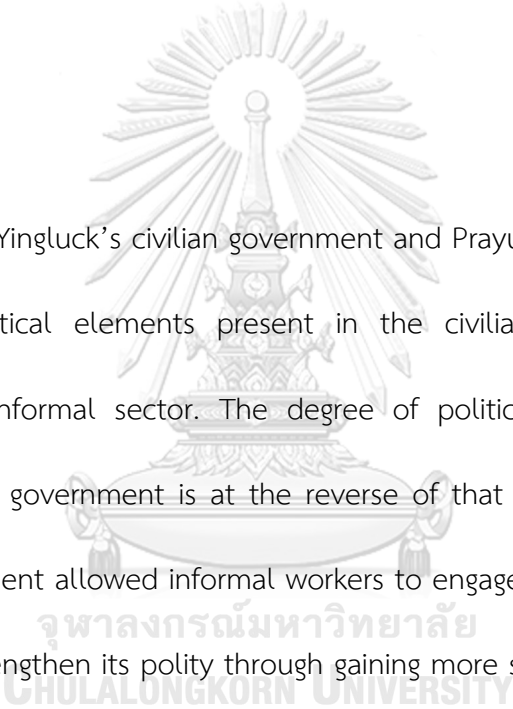
competitors, namely the Uber taxi and GrabTaxi services. Hence, the members of HomeNet were dormant, letting their representative, Mr. Somkid, speak for their groups in a non-hostile way.

Since the networks have been weakened and the political situation posed a threat to anyone who incited conflict, HomeNet's members decided take a rest and deal with their own matters while having the group active in a softer way. It can be argued that HomeNet itself aware that if it is seen as being hostile toward the government, it could be harmed as they already know that working together is more beneficial than assaulting each other. Assuming the government and HomeNet are now neutral to each other, it seems that HomeNet has decided to look forward to cooperating with the military government, or any government, in the future.

Nevertheless, HomeNet and its informal workers had suffered from the loss of governmental supports and inactivity of alliances caused by changes in political structure. The sudden shift from Yingluck's prioritizing popularity via reaching out the newer groups to Prayut's political stabilization has made Thai politics become harder for civilians to participate. Hence, not only HomeNet and its informal workers become harder for their voices to reach the government but their alliances would also need to be dormant unless they would risk their life and become government's suspects of political conflict invokers. Although Prayut's government may later do the top-down policy making to develop the social security for informal workers, the

informal workers still not benefit from this kind of action. They cannot know their estimate time when will the government should make and enforce the plans; and they do not know whether their needs and priority would be truly recognize by the government as they have no say in the Prayut's government's policy making.

3. Conclusion

Comparing Yingluck's civilian government and Prayut's military government, it is clear that political elements present in the civilian government favor the development of informal sector. The degree of political inclusion in Yingluck's democratic civilian government is at the reverse of that Prayut's government was. Yingluck's government allowed informal workers to engage in policy-making because of the need to strengthen its polity through gaining more support groups. In addition to the opportunity to engage with the government, informal workers also enjoyed the political openness under a democratic polity as they could hold demonstrations, paving the way for further cooperation. This atmosphere is often present in Thailand with civilian governments. For instance, informal workers did demonstrate and raise their issues with the Abhisit government. On the other hand, Prayut's military government does not give civilians the right to engage in politics. Nevertheless, although the military government turned down Yingluck's informal sector welfare

development project, it still takes the informal sector's matters into consideration in their own top-down way.

In addition to the differences between each government in treating informal workers, another element that marked the success of informal workers mobilizations under civilian governments was the support groups and allies. These are also affected by the different political structures under each government. In Yingluck's – and even in Abhisit's – political openness and more relaxed government control allowed informal workers to voice their demands loud enough to gain the government's attention. Political openness also allowed public demonstrations and events which, for informal workers was a good channel for mobilizing with stronger allies. Thus, the informal workers can network more and gain further opportunities to share and exchange knowledge and skills with other groups. These allies and supporters who have assisted HomeNet and its informal workers empowered the workers to the point that they showed promise of self-development activities. Eventually they drew the government officials' attention to look their problems and situation. Thanksin's, Abhisith's, and Yingluck's governments shared the same practice in their policy to develop the informal sector which they gave the allowance to political engagement and funding from the governmental organizations to the informal workers. In contrast, political control in Prayut's military government silenced the workers' voices in favor of national and internal security. This forced the

informal workers and their networks to be remain dormant in politics as they did not want to be hostile to such a powerful government which has full authority in almost every administration matter. Because of the restriction on politics, HomeNet's informal workers chose to deal with their own groups' business during this time of political control.

This part concludes that despite the capability of movements discussed in the earlier part, political control and openness are significant factors in determining the success or failure of the movement. Openness in political engagement allows not only informal workers to demonstrate their needs and problems but also gives them opportunities to engage with the political elite, thus further strengthening their knowledge and skills. Furthermore, the policy to develop the informal workers had opened various opportunities for external organizations to cooperate with the governments to gain supporting fund to start their own developmental projects. In addition to these benefits, political openness also allows networks of allies to be formed through public events. HomeNet's informal workers are an example of a successful mobilization of a movement via the effect of political openness. They gained knowledge and skills from engaging with other groups in different sectors in addition to HomeNet's staff and projects. That was a critical time for gather the many resources needed to strengthen their membership-based organization into what it is today.

Part 5

Thesis Conclusion & Way Forwards

This final part of thesis summarizes all the findings, answers the research questions, and suggests further studies and the way forwards of informal sector development issues. There are two main sections. The first gives the answers to all the research questions which are broken down in detail into three subsections corresponding to the three research questions. The second section suggests further research on the informal sector in Thailand. In addition, this section will also look into the situation of informal workers in Thailand and suggest ways forwards for their further development.

1. Research Findings

1.1 Resources Used for Successful Informal Workers Mobilization

The first question asks of which resources were used in creating the informal workers movement. The answer is deliberately explained in the third where pre-existing resources – namely human resources – and networks of connections are the significant factors to determine the movement's success. In addition, the forth part of the thesis also adds the insight explaining that the polity with political openness

allows the viability of resources mobilization and formation of the movement. In this section, summary will be explained in the more theoretical approach of *Resource Mobilization Theory* combined with an aspect of the political opportunities present during civilian governments.

However, before analyzing the resource mobilization of HomeNet's informal workers, there are things to be clarified. Firstly, The HomeNet's Informal Worker Movement was first-handed initiated and mobilized by the passionate informal workers rather than the HomeNet's staffs. Staffs' main objective was not to create a social movement but rather to empower and promote informal workers with skills, knowledge, and connections along with promoting informal labor protection laws and policies (Foundation for Labour and Employment Promotion, n/a). However, the empowering campaigns had ultimately resulted into a group of informal workers that were armed with enough knowledge and connections to start its own movement. Secondly, much of the success in establishing an informal workers movement, especially during Yingluck's civilian government, came from HomeNet's pre-existing resources. Informal workers used their experience, knowledge and network connections gained from HomeNet to establish their own movement. These were not resources purposely gathered to create a movement but rather borrowed and shared between HomeNet and its members; thus, the informal workers saw an opportunity to make use of these resources to create a movement. In short, the mobilized resources – namely funding, constituencies, and allies – are the resources shared between the informal workers and HomeNet. Hence, strengthening the movement that contained members of HomeNet with shared resources was

simultaneously strengthening HomeNet as it was indeed enabling its informal workers with political experience.

The first resource to be analyzed is finance. As mentioned, the resources used to establish the movement to push forward welfare issues were shared from HomeNet, so financial support was circulated among both HomeNet and informal workers. However, money in starting and mobilizing the movement was expended informally (there was no actual record of spending such as invoices) and the amounts cannot be discovered; hence this section will only analyze where the money came from and how the informal workers used it. Most of the support came from voluntary subsidies from each member. It started with the Pradit Torakran Community which initiated a meeting of HomeNet's informal workers to discuss welfare development in the informal sector. After the meeting, the informal workers decided to press this issue forward to the government; Pradit Torakarn Community provided the monetary support to do so. The reason Mr. Somkid, the Pradit Torakarn Community representative, decided to provide monetary support was because the community already had considerable community savings (which had started since before joining HomeNet) and that he was chosen to be the leader-representative of HomeNet's informal workers. Henceforth, other groups, except the motorcycle taxi drivers, would start their own savings groups to start the movement. HomeNet was not involved officially in the financial allocation and management to establish a movement, but instead provided a base of operations, coordination, and socio-political knowledge to engage with the government, as it had earlier. It can be stated that finances were managed based on the pre-existing experience and financial resources of the Pradit Torakarn Community along with HomeNet's support in

enhancing the knowledge of informal workers in managing a membership-based organization. Thus, financial support was systematically allocated among groups and donated to their representative. This system helped members and leaders to check the cash flows and accountability more easily.

The second set of resources which dramatically helped the HomeNet's informal workers to establish the movement to enhance informal sector welfare was support from allies and constituencies. The term 'constituencies' here refers to groups of people who support, or are likely to support, a particular person, product, suggestion, organization, etc. As shown in the third part of the thesis, HomeNet had already created networks of alliances among various sectors such as NGOs and academia. In addition, during civilian governments, informal workers had enjoyed considerable support from government officials themselves. For instance, Thaksin's government supported the motorcycle taxis group and ultimately turned them into a powerful political force while Yingluck's government attempted to have informal workers participate in the political sphere in order to develop the welfare system for the informal sector. To this extent, by the time HomeNet's informal workers decided that they would participate in the political sphere, they already possessed networks of experienced allies to help them with the movement. Thus, pre-existing human resources with the support from various sectors, especially from the government sector, allowed the HomeNet's informal worker movement to flourish.

Another element that concerns the movement's success is the use of information technology. Both HomeNet's staff and members agreed that the emergence of information technology, which is now more user-friendly and accessible, helped bind them together to form the movement. While various

informal workers from different occupational groups found it hard to establish a formal official meeting to conduct activities due to the differences in workplace, working hours, and free time, information technology helped them share information, and made discussion easier. By 2013, all HomeNet's informal worker representatives from each group were able to access online information-sharing applications such as Facebook and Line. Thus, communication became easier despite differences in availability as they were able to receive and share information anywhere and at any time. They felt it was easier to keep in touch with the staff and their fellow informal workers. With good group management and a new mode of easier communication, the informal worker's movement developed at a smoother pace.

When these resources were ready, permission for political participation from civilian governments helped informal workers to utilize to their full potentiality the resources they had mobilized and gathered. It should be noted that there are slight differences between the choices of the civilian governments of Thaksin and Yingluck as their target groups. Firstly, Thaksin chose the motorcycle taxis not because they are well-established but rather because he wanted to eradicate the motorcycle taxi mafia while allying himself with a new group that had the potential to grow. On the other hand, Yingluck chose HomeNet members due to their readiness to further the development of informal sector where she saw that she could use their potential. Hence, she would get both informal workers' cooperation as well as a proper solution to the issue at the same time.

To conclude the answer to the first research question, the resources which affected the success of informal worker's movement in this case are certainly the pre-existing resources – namely the networks created since the formation of

HomeNet, experienced and well-educated members strengthened by the civilian governments and HomeNet itself, and the shared funds and facilities from HomeNet. With the availability of these resources combined with political openness, the movement was in fact being strengthened from inside and outside, and made flourishing progress.

1.2 The Effects on the Movement of Changes in Political or Social

Conditions/Structure

To answer the second research question, 'What structural or immediate political or social conditions affected the success or failure of the movement?', it has to be ascertained whether the change from a civilian government to a military government obstructed the progress of HomeNet's informal workers' attempts to develop an informal sector welfare system with government support. As discussed in part four, the movement could not progress beyond what was achieved during the Yingluck government due to a lack of interest by the military government. Furthermore, collective bargaining would violate the ban on political gatherings enacted via the use of Section 44 of the Interim Constitution. Hence, the change in political structure from a politics overseen by a civilian government to one dictated by a military government closed down the political opportunity to participate of some groups of civilians (however some civilians are still able to participate in a military governed political sphere such as the selected MPs which is discussed in part four). To elaborate this phenomenon in the Political Process Theory, it is best to analyze how the changes in political systems affected the movement's progress via the theory's key indicators; the degree of political pluralism, repression of groups of

people, divisions within the elite, and enfranchisement within society. Hence, these four following key elements will be used to summarize the answer for this research question.

Firstly, it is clear that the change from Yingluck's civilian government to Prayut's military government significantly decreased the degree of political pluralism in Thai politics. As discussed in part four, the nature, objectives, and legitimacies of power of these two governments are different. The Yingluck government distributed political power and influence among the population to some degree in order to preserve its legitimacy within the democratic political system. Hence, the democratic political system ensured that the elected should return favors to the voters in exchange for the government's grasp of power. On the other hand, the political system run by the military government is a closed system. Political power, in a military administration is not distributed among the population to balance the political system but is rather distributed to selected individuals who entrench the military polity and help promote its legitimacy. Thus, the degree of political pluralism is significantly lowered in a military-governed political system in which the informal workers movement is not able to demonstrate collectively any demand due to the ban on political gatherings in this closed political system.

Secondly, HomeNet's informal workers movement exercised considerable political restraint toward the military government. As reported by Mr. Somkid, the movement's representative, they had no problem with the change of government and would wait for a response from the new government. Furthermore, Mr. Somkid also said that HomeNet's informal workers did not wish to be hostile toward the military government which could obstruct the opportunity to cooperate in the

future. Hence, they would choose a peaceful way of submitting open letters to voice their issues although it was less likely to receive a response. This tolerance from informal workers put the movement on hold through less aggressive political engagement in this closed political system.

Thirdly, it is difficult to indicate whether the division among elites (in various sectors) significantly affected the movement's success or failure; however, it was clear that the political elite – namely, the government officials themselves – had important roles in supporting or obstructing the movement's progress. For instance, the Thaksin and Yingluck governments decided to send their Ministry of Labor officers to look after some groups of informal workers while Prayut's military government chose to proceed with top-down policies which did not provide a pin-point solution. In addition, Tarrow's stability of political alignment approach (Tarrow, 1991, as cited in Prapart Pintoptaeng, 2009) can be used to help analyze Thailand's political alignment and whether the elite affected the progress of social movements. Taking a look at Thailand's massive social movements in past decades, political alignments in Thailand have constantly been fights between two sides, namely the progressive Thaksin-affiliated side and the conservative middle-to-higher class side. Although the progressive side is vast in numbers and won majorities in general elections in these past decades, the conservative side mostly comprises the higher-educated middle class, the social elite, royalty, and the military, which has the means to conduct coups. During the past decades of political conflicts between these two sides, there was rarely an occurrence of the mass of people shifting their political alignment to the opposition; thus, it can be said that Thailand's political alignments during the decades of conflicts were stable in which they were constantly

fighting each other to gain political power. The shift of political power between the two sides often occurred through elections which the progressives won and gained power, which was then seized in coups conducted by the conservative side, until the next election which the progressive side would likely win again, followed by another conservative coup (dubbed "The Vicious Cycle of Politics"). With political power rapidly switching between two sides, each side's political elite played a significant part in mobilizing the masses to support them. For instance, the Thaksin-affiliated civilian groups would gain support from overthrown civilian government representatives and mobilize to protest against the non-elected government as seen during the Red Shirt protests against the Abhisit government. On the other hand, the royalist and social elite supported conservative middle-class groups to protest against Thaksin-affiliated governments, such as when the PDRC occupied central Bangkok and mobilized a mass of people to call for a military coup. Therefore, these political elites were arguably supporting the emergence of the social movements allied to their sides. However, during the Prayut military government, some government officials from the Yingluck government – including Yingluck herself – were exiled or arrested. Hence, the alignment of the progressive side was made unstable by the absence of its political elite and oppression by the military. Ultimately, civilian groups which are not favored by the military government found it hard or impossible to establish a successful movement.

Finally, the degrees of enfranchisement affected the movement's progress. For instance, the civilian governments' political openness created an opportunity for people to voice their needs without restriction while the political closure under the military government makes public demonstrations, even without violence, more

difficult and riskier with regard to arrest. It is arguable that the degrees of enfranchisement arose from the nature of the governments which differed in their goals and objectives. It can be summarized that a government which allows political participation in the system would have a higher degree of enfranchisement due to its obligation to the people to preserve its legitimacy. Civilian governments, therefore, would likely to open opportunities for social movements to emerge in society.

1.3 Support from External Organizations and Allies that Affected the Movement's Progress

The third research question asks "How did external organizations and supporting allies affect the success or failure of the movement?" The question was answered the analysis of existing and absent allies in parts three and four. This showed that, firstly, the supporting external organizations connected via HomeNet opened opportunities for informal workers to increase members and learn from their sharable resources and information; and secondly, the supporting allies, especially the political elite discussed above and strong fellow informal worker groups such as motorcycle taxis, helped the movement prosper and flourish. External organizations – domestic, international, and governmental units – subsidized their resources to informal sector developments in various ways. International organizations like WIEGO and ILO gave the informal workers and their affiliated NGOs the accessibility to network as well as project funding and workshops to empower informal workers. Strong alliances such as Thai Labor Solidarity Committee helped the Informal Workers Network to learn about movement's progression as well as helping to demonstrate their ally's demands occasionally, which made the informal sector

more recognizable. Governmental organizations, as they are directed by the governments themselves, were also a significant factor to allow the growth of informal workers. The monetary supports and research projects that came from the concerned governments hasten the developmental progress via the subsidizing of monetary supports to the NGOs and involved governmental units. However, the degree of supports from governmental organizations is determined by the governments' directions as well. For an obvious comparison, civilian governments (Thaksin's, Abhisith's, and Yingluck's), which planned to gain political supports from informal workers, had allocated their funding to the involving organizations to helped promote and develop the sector. Thus, both NGOs and informal workers were benefitted from such policies. On the other hands, as Prayut's military government were focusing on the peace-keeping issues, there was no follow up to the civic developmental projects which resulted into the discontinuance to supports such NGOs or cut down the governmental organizations funding in informal workers' development projects. It can be summarized that the support of external organizations led HomeNet's informal workers to their current development while other supporting allies helped the movement to grasp political opportunities and achieve its goal.

1.4 Findings Summary

The conclusion of this research lies upon the connection between successful resource mobilization and the openness of the political system which enables well-managed informal workers to develop themselves and seize opportunities to make

successful contact with the government. HomeNet's informal workers movement proves that the two elements for becoming a successful movement to deal with the government are: firstly, resources gathered through time, especially human resources and connections, strengthened the growth of informal workers and armed them with experience and knowledge to conduct further political action; secondly, an opening in the political system which allowed informal workers, prepared through a process of gradual development, to achieve the establishment of a movement that the government saw as reliable enough to cooperate with. Thus, the HomeNet informal workers movement became the chosen target of the government's informal sector development plan. This finding indicates dependency on the political system and the will to cooperate by the government sector in order to meet the demands requested by the movement. In other words, the informal workers, with supportive alliances, broad connections, considerable resources, and good group management, can develop their own capabilities and partial savings as informal worker groups. However, if they wish to develop the informal sector's welfare as a whole, they need cooperation from government authorities otherwise the development progress will be undone.

2. Way Forward

In this final section of the research, a series of suggestions for further research on the informal sector and informal worker's development will be briefly discussed. This section also contains the current state of Thailand's informal sector welfare

development and the situation under the third year of the Prayut military government. Thus, the section will be broken down into two separate subtopics: first, a brief account of the welfare status of the Thai informal sector in 2017 and the anticipated path for informal workers' development during the current political environment; second, suggested discussions for further non-quantitative research on the Thai informal sector.

2.1 The Current Status of Thai Informal Sector Welfare Development and the Future of Informal Workers

As of 2017, there were attempts to develop the informal sector welfare system by the military government which concerned quality of life, sufficient income, proper health care, and life security. In April, the government announced that they would consider amending Article 40 of Social Security Act which aimed to raise the compensation for death, disability, or unemployment by a quarter or two by the upcoming National Labor Day (May Day) ("Cheers to Informal Labor! Government Anticipates Increasing Welfare as May Day's Gift," 2017) The government also announced that they were looking into three major developments: firstly, widening skill development to as many informal jobs as possible; secondly, completion of a draft of the Informal Labor Protection Act within the year; and finally, the creation of a wider connection between the state and informal sector for easier integration into the welfare system (Suvetwethin, 2017). Government officials succeeded in having the Informal Labor Network as a signing party of cooperation with the 2nd Strategic Plan of Developing and Managing Informal Labor (B.E. 2560-2564). The Strategic Plan consists of the abovementioned three developmental foci as announced in April.

However, in November, a group of informal workers' representatives demanded a meeting with the Ministry of Labor to update the progress on promises issued, which they found out were delayed and all demands may not be granted ("Informal Workers Hurray! Welfare Laws to be Reviewed by the Cabinet," 2017). The only ongoing development was waiting for the cabinet to approve the amendment of Social Security Act Article 40 (which the government said that they aimed to update by May). This delay without constant updates shows that either the military government did not take the matter seriously enough or the procedure is no faster than that of the civilian government. The informal labor representatives also reported that the grievances of National Saving Funds restructuring were yet to be reviewed and no there was also no response.

As the opportunity was closed off for the informal workers to develop the welfare system with the government, it is suggested that the informal workers should gather resources, skills, and knowledge in the meantime. For instance, like HomeNet, which gathered and strengthened informal workers for decades, informal workers can choose to establish more and stronger networks of allies for the upcoming elected government. Thus, they will be well armed with human resources and allies to participate in the future politically open system. An alternative plan for the informal workers during this period of political closure would be to loosely organize members to wait for the future political outcry. This suggestion is based on the dissatisfaction with the military government among broader society ("Poll Shows Three Years of Government, People Less Satisfied in Every Fields," 2017). Thus, if the government still keeps people oppressed, there is likely to be an opening for public

demonstrations which will allow the informal workers to combine their forces into a social movement.

In addition to advice to strengthen their forces during an era of political non-participation, there are two possible ways for informal workers to develop. Firstly, as of 2017, many occupational groups are yet to establish their own group's savings, thus, these groups would be incapable of securing their quality of life when their jobs or health break down. One can take a small step from gathering and managing savings for emergency purposes such as with Pradit Torakarn Community or using funds to enhance skills and resources or pave the way to a mercantile opportunity such as with Dignity Returns. Secondly, it is now important for all jobs to have connections and networks, especially jobs without state or union assurance of welfare and work security, like informal workers. As discussed in the thesis, networks of allies significantly helped develop HomeNet's informal workers. Thus, it is best for each group to establish its own connections internally and with other groups. A further suggestion to this network creation for lagging informal worker groups is to make use of modern information technology. Like HomeNet's informal workers, they can establish an official channel of communication concerning job-related and community issues via online chat systems. This mitigates the problem of unavailability due to differences in working hours, free time, and types of job. The last point to add about the use of information technology is online promotion and advocacy. It is strongly suggested that both informal workers in HomeNet and other groups develop the use of social network platforms further than sharing events and activities. Pradit Torakarn Community and the Motorcycle Taxis Association, for example, have dedicated members to moderate online content, including their own

original contents to promote, discuss, or survey issues of interest to them and achievements – not just sharing news about completed activities. Some groups such as Dignity Returns have good potential in online advocacy but fail to moderate or keep the content up-to-date due to the lack of a dedicated member who is proficient in information technology. For instance, the Facebook page of Dignity Returns has very sporadic content. Its latest post was ion July 2017 and the immediately preceding one was in November 2015. As people today increasingly consume information via online platforms and social media, the inability to use online media is a missed opportunity and an obstacle to growth. Lacking online advocacy also means that it is harder to reach out to new audiences and makes groups seem less reliable compared to other more active groups. This is strongly recommended for any informal labor group that is involved in trading and services because people are now using e-commerce and buying goods online more than ever. In addition, investing in online content helps decreasing the cost of storefront sales and allows low-capitalized groups to save money to develop their businesses.

2.2 Further Research on Informal Labor Issues

As discussed in part two, the literature review, most informal sector research takes the form of wider and broader quantitative research while qualitative research follows the New Social Movement approach. But at present, the problem of unity among informal workers is still present, which concerns the lack of networks of allies and inability to join together as a whole due to the differences in types of jobs and working hours. With many types of informal labor present, there would be as many limitations for each group of informal workers to join together. Therefore, it is

recommended that there should be qualitative research studying how each informal labor group is operating. It can be both analyses of their ways of life and their groups' capabilities to see their limitations of self-development and integration into the system and networks of allies. If these aspects are widely and commonly researched, a plan for developing the informal sector as a whole should become clearer and yield further possible directions.

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APPENDIX

VITA

Mr. Tanachot Assawarotjanamitre is a Thai nationality who was born in Bangkok, Thailand on 23 July 1991. He studied in the Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University (2010-2013), which he received a bachelor of arts in Political Science, majoring Sociology and Anthropology in 2013. He had been an internship trainee at Ministry of Tourism and Sports as Bureau of Prevention and Assistance in Tourist Fraud staff. He has published an article named "The Thai Informal Worker Movement Under the Military Government" for the 5th International Conference on International Relations and Development (ICIRD 2017): Paradoxes of Human Security - Democracy, Rights, and Conflicts - held on 23 to 24 June 2017 at Faculty of Political Science, Thammasat University, Thailand.