

THE LIVES, WORKING CONDITIONS AND INSECURITIES OF FRONTIER  
WORKERS BETWEEN CAMBODIA AND THAILAND AT THE POIPET-  
ARANYAPRATHET BORDER CROSSING

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ปัจจุบันนี้ในการขนส่งสินค้าระหว่างไทยและกัมพูชาใช้การว่าจ้างแรงงานทั้งชาย หญิง และเด็กจำนวนมาก ในการวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพที่ผสมผสานแผนที่สังคมและทฤษฎีเครือข่าย ผู้วิจัยพยายามจะพัฒนาความเข้าใจที่ดีขึ้นสำหรับภาวะเป็นอยู่ที่ซับซ้อนนี้ กรณีศึกษาให้ภาพของคนหาบเร่ขายของในปอยเปต คนส่งสินค้า การปฏิบัติของแรงงาน และสภาพเคลื่อนย้ายตามชายแดนชั่วคราวของแรงงานชายขอบ งานวิจัยได้วิเคราะห์ถึงความ เป็นจริงและสร้างกรอบสถานการณ์ของความมั่นคงทั้งส่วนตัวและทางเศรษฐกิจ ระบบโยกย้ายและกระบวนการปกป้องแรงงานสำหรับคนหาบเร่และคนส่งสินค้า อีกทั้งยังหมายรวมถึงภาพรวมของเศรษฐกิจและสังคมของประสบการณ์จริง และอุปสรรคระหว่างวันที่คนหาบเร่และคนส่งสินค้าเผชิญในฉนวนเศรษฐกิจอันยุ่งเหยิงแห่งนี้

การค้นพบสำคัญของงานวิจัยแสดงให้เห็นว่าคนหาบเร่และคนส่งสินค้าในทุกช่วงวัยแสดงถึงชุมชนแรงงานในปอยเปตที่ต้องเผชิญกับความไม่มั่นคงทั้งส่วนบุคคลและเศรษฐกิจ ผลสรุปงานวิจัยชี้ให้เห็นว่าความไม่มั่นคงทางส่วนบุคคลเศรษฐกิจนั้นเกิดจากสถานการณ์อันซับซ้อน ความไม่มั่นคงนี้เชื่อมโยงกับการขึ้นอยู่กั จำนวนประชากรแรงงานที่มีมาก แต่จำกัดในทางเครือข่ายหรือความช่วยเหลือทางสังคม รวมถึงการทำงานในเขตเศรษฐกิจพิเศษระหว่างสองประเทศ และการใช้แรงงานในภาคนอกระบบที่ขาดกฎเกณฑ์ด้านชั่วโมงงาน ด้านจำนวนน้ำหนักและขนาดของหาบเร่ และด้านเงินเดือน แรงงานเด็กก็เป็นอีกปัจจัยหนึ่งที่น่าควรคำนึงในการวิจัยนี้ ที่ได้นำเสนอถึงความไม่มั่นคงทางบุคคลที่เหมือนกับกลุ่มอื่น และสำหรับกลุ่มเด็กและเยาวชนนี้ถือเป็นกลุ่มเสี่ยงกว่ากลุ่มอื่น

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ลายมือชื่อผู้คิด.....  
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# # 5381006824: MAJOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

KEYWORDS: HUMAN SECURITY/MIGRATION/NETWORK

THEORY/FRONTIER/CASE STUDY

JENNIFER MAUREEN FINNEGAN: THE LIVES, WORKING CONDITIONS  
AND INSECURITIES OF FRONTIER WORKERS BETWEEN CAMBODIA  
AND THAILAND AT THE POIPET-ARANYAPRATHET BORDER  
CROSSING. ADVISOR: ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR VIRA SOMBOON, Ph.D.,  
CO-ADVISOR: PROFESSOR SUPANG CHANTAVANICH, Ph.D., 134 pp.

There are hundreds of men, women and children employed to transport commercial goods between Thailand and Cambodia. Through qualitative research, social mapping, and network theory we try to develop a better understanding of this complex livelihood. This case study paints a picture of Poipet's cart pullers and porters and the labour practices and the short-term cross-border migration situation of frontier workers. The research examines their reality and frames their situation in terms of personal and economic security, migration and labour protection mechanisms for cart pullers and porters. This research couples an overview of a complex socio-economic picture with the first-hand experiences and daily challenges that cart pullers and porters face at this bustling economic corridor.

Key findings from this study indicate that cart pullers and porters of all ages, including children, youth and adults represent a migrant community living in Poipet that experience vulnerabilities related to personal and economic security. Research conclusions illustrate the personal and economic insecurity issues are due to a complex situation linked to belonging to a high migrant population with limited social networks and support, and working within the Special Economic Zone (SEZ) between Thailand and Cambodia. Current bilateral and regional agreements promote manual cross-border labour, but this informal labour lacks regulation and labour protection mechanisms. Practical solutions are needed to address personal and economic insecurities and improve the lives of child, youth and adult cart pullers and porters working at the frontier.

Field of Study: <u>International Development</u>	Student's Signature: .....
<u>Studies</u>	Advisor's Signature: .....
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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ANT	Actor Network Theory
BIG-C	Border Issues Group for Children Network
CDRI	Cambodia Development Research Institute
CEA	Cambodia Economic Association
CMDG	Cambodia Millennium Development Goal
CRC	Convention of the Rights of the Child
CTCO	Cambodia-Thailand Coordination Office
GMS	Greater Mekong Sub-region
GO	Government Organisation
HDR	Human Development Report
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
IDEA	Independent Democracy of Informal Economy Association
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IO	International Organisation
IOM	International Organisation on Migration
IPEC	International Program on the Elimination of Child Labour
IRC	Inter-ministerial Resettlement Committee
NGO	Non-government Organisation
NFE	Non-formal Education
NPA	National Plan of Action
MOL	Ministry of Labour
MOEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
SEC	Southern Economic Corridor
SES	Socio-economic Status
SEZ	Special Economic Zone
TICW	Trafficking in Children and Women Program
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
UNFPA	UN Population Fund
UNTFHS	UN Trust Fund for Human Security
UNIAP	UN Inter-agency Project on Human Trafficking
WFCL	Worst Forms of Child Labour

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of Study

There are hundreds of men, women and children employed to transport commercial goods between Thailand and Cambodia. Through qualitative research, social mapping and network theory we try to develop a better understanding of this complex livelihood. This study attempts to paint a picture of the lives and livelihoods of Poipet's cart pullers and porters by examining labour practices, risks and insecurities that short-term cross-border migrants face. This paper examines their economic reality and security, the practice of short-term cross-border migration and the labour protection these frontier workers enjoy.

Since the early 1990's, broad cooperative efforts among countries in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) have resulted in increased trade between Cambodia and Thailand. Since this once volatile border has opened up to become a major economic corridor, more attention has been paid to labour and international migration between these two countries. During this time of economic prosperity, policies have been developed to turn "battlefields into marketplaces" (French, 2002: 444). The Poipet, Cambodia – Aranyaprathet, Thailand international border crossing (from here referred to as the Poipet border or Poipet border crossing) has, in turn, become the busiest economic pipeline between Cambodia and Thailand with thousands of people crossing the border on a daily basis.

Poipet, located in Banteay Meanchey Province is a key destination and transit point (United Nations Inter-agency Project on Human Trafficking [UNIAP], 2010a: 21:



online; UNIAP, 2010b: 2: online) linking Western Cambodia with Eastern Thailand via the transnational GMS highway system.<sup>·</sup> The portion of the highway that runs directly through Poipet is part of the Southern Economic Corridor (SEC) and runs from Southern Viet Nam, through Northern Cambodia and into Eastern Thailand. Development of road and rail infrastructure and increased market policies between the GMS countries has spurred internal and international migration. In addition, because of its close proximity to the Rong Kleu Market in Aranyaprathet, Thailand, the city of Poipet has become a center for cross-border trade.

## 1.2. Statement of Problem

While research publications and projects that focused on the Poipet border are informative and provide context for the situation of the frontier, they lack detailed and observed data and an applied theoretical framework specifically related to frontier workers. None of the research and data collected has focused on short-term cross-border migration with an emphasis on cart pullers and porters working at the Poipet border. Most national and international migration data coming out of Cambodia tell the same story: migrants tend to be young, poor, migrate with little capital due to similar push/pull factors and experience exploitation; but data has not represented frontier workers (UNIAP, 2010b: 2; Cambodia Development Research Institute [CDRI], 2007: 7: online; Maltoni, 2007: 3: online).

While laws and international agreements do exist to regulate cross-border labour migration (international migration) the short-term cross-border work done by frontier workers has not been defined and does not fit into a national migration category within laws or policies. Further, short-term cross-border manual labour commonly conducted at Poipet falls is often overlooked in terms of policies and protection due to the informal

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<sup>·</sup> Figure 3.2 for Poipet location map and Figure 3.3 for GMS trans-national highway system map.

<sup>·</sup> Refer to Chapter 2, Section 2.3 for in-depth list and description of laws, policies and agreements.

nature the work. As a result, many frontier workers face problems and hardship on both sides of the border. In addition, rich data is completely absent from research involving frontier work in general and cart pullers and porters in particular.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

Three research questions were posed at the onset of the study. The main research question:

- What are the major security concerns frontier workers face, how are the lives of cart pullers and porters impacted by personal and economic security conditions, and how can the lives of cart pullers and porters be made more secure?

And two sub-questions:

- What social and livelihood realities exist for cart pullers and porters, are those realities supported by labour migration policies and laws, and do these policies and laws offer them protection?
- What are the informal support networks used by the cart pullers for security?

### **1.4 Research Objectives**

This research project has four key objectives.

- To describe the effects of personal and economic security, migration and the cross-border transport of goods through the daily interactions of cart pullers;
- To understand how labour and migration policies affect the lives and facilitate work at the Aranyaprathet-Poipet border, particularly by studying cart pullers and porters who cross the border on a daily basis;
- To map and examine social relationships, networks and everyday labour practices among cart pullers and porters; and

- To contribute to academic and practical research pools on migration, human security and child labour by using cart pullers and porters as a case study.

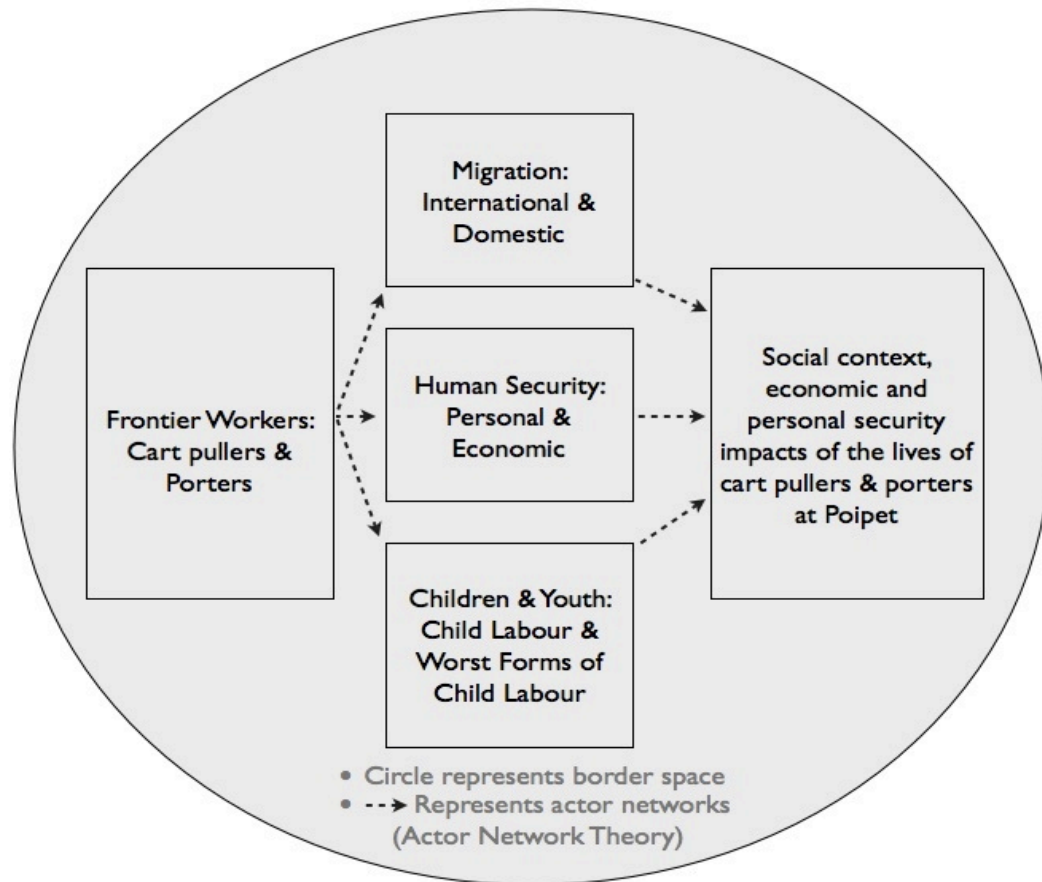
### **1.5 Hypothesis**

Frontier workers maneuver between gaps in existing policies and laws on both sides of the borders on a daily basis or maneuver around the existing policies or laws that do little to address their specific needs for protections.

### **1.6 Research Concepts**

Key concepts used to understand this research are domestic and international migration, frontier workers, border space, child labour, economic and personal security from the human security framework, and network theory.

Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework



## 1.6.1 Migration

The International Organisation on Migration (IOM) defines migration as "the movement of a person or group of persons from one geographical unit to another across an administrative or political border, with the intention of settling indefinitely or temporarily in a place other than their place of origin" (n.d.: online). There is also an important distinction to be made between domestic and international migration though the term migrant is used to describe a person or people that have moved either domestically or internationally.

### 1.6.1.1 Domestic Migration

Internal migrants remain inside their own country, but may cross through provinces or states within the geographical country border line. It may also be referred to as national or domestic migration.

### **1.6.1.2 International Migration**

International migration is when a person migrates through a geographical country borderline. It may also be referred to as cross-border migration.

### **1.6.2 Frontier Workers**

There is no standardised definition of the term “frontier worker” for labour practice. The ILO has identified different interpretations and definitions by country. For example Antigua, Barbuda, Granada, Guyana, Malawi do not recognise the concept of frontier workers, while Germany and Malaysia recognise the concept but define it differently (ILO, n.d.a.: online). Thailand and Cambodia have not defined the term *frontier worker* within national legislation. However, Thailand and Cambodia have signed the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families. Although not yet ratified by Thailand and Cambodia, the term frontier worker is defined by the Convention as a migrant worker who retains his or her habitual residence in a neighbouring State to which he or she normally returns every day or at least once a week (Article 2).

### **1.6.3 Border Space**

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· Frontier workers according to Germany: a person who while maintaining his domicile in the frontier region of a given country, is employed as a wage-earner in the frontier region of a neighboring country and returns to his place of domicile at least once a week". Frontier workers according to Malaysia: although it has no legal definition, Malaysia interprets the term to mean persons crossing national frontiers with temporary permits or visas to work and re-crossing the frontiers after each day's work or after a short period of work, e.g., one week or one month continuously.

Cross-border development moves in a direction of urbanisation and helps to facilitate economic and large-scale infrastructure development at a regional level (Pitch Pongsawat, “Border Partial Citizenship, Border Towns, and Thai-Myanmar Cross-Border Development: Case Studies at the Thai Border Towns,” Ph.D. Dissertation, City and Regional Planning, University of California, Berkeley, 2007: 22). According to Pongsawat, this “can be a challenge and strategic opportunity for governments to pursue national wealth, security, and international cooperation, especially at urban and regional policy levels” (Pongsawat, 2007:22). The concept of the border as an economic space provides the link for workers to cross and work between two countries and, in addition, border spaces may cater to a variety of activities that may be legal or illegal depending on the side of national space (Pongsawat, 2007: 3).

#### **1.6.4 Children, Youth and Child Labour**

Cart pulling and portering is work done by adult, youth and child workers. With children as a portion of the cart puller and porter population, it is important to discuss the concepts of child and child labour according to national and international standards and policy. Because this form of labour is conducted across an international border, child labour polices and definitions need to be applied to Cambodia and Thailand.

Child is defined as anyone under the age of 18 (CRC Article 1) and youth are defined as those between the ages of 15-24 (UN General Assembly (1995), cited in United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 2009a: 7: online). Cambodia and Thailand both ratified the CRC in 1992, giving both countries an obligation to protect the rights of children in each respective country. According to the ILO, Cambodia ratified the Worst Forms of Child Labour, Convention No. 182 in 2006, and Thailand ratified the same Convention in 2001. Article 2 of Convention No. 182 defines child to be anyone under the age of 18. Within this convention there are numerous articles that pertain to work done by frontier workers, many under the age of 18, out of school and transporting

legal and illegal goods across international borders (International Labour Organisation (ILO), Convention No. 182, 1999: online). The ILO defines child labour as work that denies them childhood, potential growth, dignity, and that which is harmful to their physical and mental development (ILO, n.d.b.: online). Child labour refers to difficult, dangerous or excessive work and also that which obliges the child to leave school (ILO, n.d.b.: online). While the ILO does focus on the elimination of child labour, it is important to differentiate between child labour and a child who may be helping with family business or earning pocket money after school, the latter falling outside of the definition of child labour.

### **1.6.5 Human Security**

Researching the risks and insecurities that frontier workers face at the Poipet border is a key focus area, therefore a human security framework was used to collect and analyse data. First developed in 1994 by the UNDP, seven areas of human security were identified (UNDP: 24).<sup>·</sup> The Commission on Human Security's definition of human security is "to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment. Human security means protecting fundamental freedoms— freedoms that are the essence of life. It means protecting people from critical (severe) and pervasive (widespread) threats and situations. It means using processes that build on people's strengths and aspirations. It means creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity" (CHS, 2003: 4: online). To ensure human security, a broad range of interconnected issues (multi-sectoral) needs to be considered while keeping security "people-centered" (United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS), 2009: 7: online). For the purpose of this research study, two

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<sup>·</sup> In the UNDP Human Security concept the seven forms of security are: Economic, Food, Health, Environment, Personal, Community, & Political Security (UNDP, 1994: 24: online).

forms of human security were used to help provide information on frontier workers at Poipet, those are: personal and economic security (UNDP, 1994: 24: online).

#### **1.6.5.1 Personal Security**

Personal security is characterized by protections against violence and lack of basic freedoms (UNDP, 2009b: 43: online) and the lack of threats that include: Physical violence, crime, terrorism, domestic violence and child labour (UNTFHS, 2009: 7: online). At Poipet, the concept of personal security was used to guide questions to discover if and how frontier workers deal with instances of crime, drugs, violence at work, on the street, or at home, or abuse. The research will describe how cart pullers and porters understand and address personal security in the daily performance of their cross-border work.

#### **1.6.5.2 Economic Security**

The other form of human security used in this study is economic security. According to the UNDP, economic security is defined as “freedom from want” (UNDP, 2009b: 7: online) and main threats to economic security are persistent poverty and unemployment (UNTFHS, 2009: 7: online). The foundation of economic security demonstrates that people should have remunerative, safe and stable work (UNDP, 2009b: 7: online). This research helps to develop a more detailed concept of economic security specific to cart pullers and porters and will explore whether their income meets or exceeds basic needs; if there is job security and fair wages for the work; and whether persons with disabilities have access to this form of work. In addition, the concept of economic security is represented at a macro-level in that national economic conditions and cross-border trade are stable and provide a consistent and adequate flow of employment. To uncover personal and economic security, elements of cross border civil



rights were researched, which provided an in-depth understanding of the security situation for Cambodian frontier workers on both sides of this border.

### 1.6.6 Network Theory

Network theory posits that population movement happens through hearsay, word of mouth, or going to join family in the new location (Massey, 1994: 728), which is highly representative of situations at the Poipet border. Poipet's population consists of a high migrant population. Many new migrants come to Poipet because they have a friend or relative working there or they have heard about job availability through social networks. Applying network theory enhances the qualitative and rich data recorded from cart pullers and porters through the recording of instances of chain migration, risks they experience, obligations as a result of networks, and any familial decisions related to network and migration, such as family members joining. Along these lines, Actor Network Theory (ANT) (Michael, 1996: 52) places the individual or group in a network of exchanges.

Figure 1.2 Diagram of Cart Puller and Porter Network

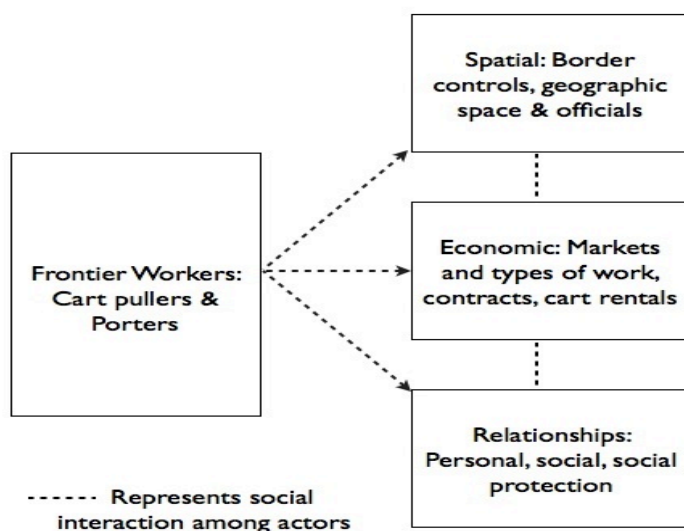


Figure 1.2 demonstrates that cart pullers and porters interact with three key networks at the border. Within each network, exchanges take place that provide information to understand frontier networks. The first network involved is represented through spatial elements, which include the cross border space and control systems, such as customs or obtaining a stamp or pass to cross the border. As cart pullers and porters cross the geographic boundaries from Cambodia into Thailand, they interact with a network specific to this area. The second network involves economic aspects including things such as negotiating and renting a cart or dolly in order to perform the work, working with market stalls to acquire goods to be transported across the border or using the cart to scavenge recyclable items in order to earn money. The third network includes relationships that help to provide cart pullers and porters with a sense of personal or social security and protection. This may include other cart pullers and porters they get to know socially as well as any labour associations that may provide assistance to frontier workers.

Mapping and examining the networks used during short-term cross-border migration not only contributes to a better understanding of the economy, national and international laws and policies, but provides a unique vantage point for an exploration of the lives of cart pullers and porters at the border. Analysis of personal networks provides a deeper understanding of frontier work in terms of migration, their livelihoods, labour practices and personal and economic security.

## **1.7 Methodology and Research Design**

Research was conducted through qualitative methodologies and fieldwork that took place over a total of five visits to Poipet. From a number of different categories of, interview subjects four sets of key respondent interviews took place along with

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· Appendix A: Stakeholder Profiles.

· Appendix B: Questionnaires.

community observations. This was supported by secondary data and expert interviews from the ILO, IOM, NGO advisors, attendance at a Border Issues Group for Children (BIG-C) Network meeting, and meetings with cross-border government officials working at the Poipet-Aranyaprathet border.

Mixed methods were used to collect data for this case study. These methods include the use of both exploratory and explanatory methods to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. Findings are based on a combination of primary and secondary research and the triangulation of data. Both approaches were heavily informed by the relationships required to connect to not only the reality of border life, but to frontier workers themselves. A translator/interpreter was hired to accompany and translate all meetings, interviews and documentation.

Data was collected directly from frontier workers through a combination of a focus group, direct observation and the delivery of structured, semi-structured, formal and informal interviews and questionnaires. The focus group was centered on a mapping exercise to determine where cart pullers and porters were physically going and who they were interacting with day-to-day. The focus group format consisted of open-ended discussion questions. Questionnaires were flexible and participants were encouraged to expand and describe their answers. Topics for both included elements of demography, social networks, migration, economic aspects of their lives and work, working conditions in terms of safety and risks, and future goals of participants and their families.

Corollary information was gathered from those in daily contact with frontier workers and included officials, civil society, and international organizations operating on both sides of the border. Through fieldwork, data concerning social interactions and the everyday life of crossing the Poipet border was recorded and analysed against existing

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\* Some interview quotes are paraphrased but are taken directly from translated fieldnotes.

data and triangulation of information to form a description of the lives of cart pullers and porters working at Cambodia's frontier. The aim of the fieldwork was to "write about a way of life" (McNeill, 1991: 64) which involves a description of culture and lifestyle, and which aims to represent the research group accurately through a case study within a historically situated timeframe (Van Maanen, 1995: 9; Yin, 2009). It is through these methods that the data paints a vivid picture of what frontier workers are experiencing.

Two local child-focused NGOs that work on the Poipet border (one located in Aranyaprathet, Thailand and one located in Poipet, Cambodia) were key informants in helping to identify issues and topics related to cart pullers and porters' lives, risks and insecurities. All child-focused interview questionnaires were structured and developed with input and recommendations from NGO staff to be aligned with their programming interests and ethical standards. The initial questioning of cart pullers accessed through NGOs was therefore fully structured and approved by NGOs. In addition, a selective survey sample was conducted to reach children outside of NGO programming which used the same questions. This ensured parity in results and effectively broadened the research sample.

Structured interviews were conducted with Cambodia-Thailand Coordination Officials (CTCO), the Poipet Transit Center (PTC), and the Independent Democracy of Informal Economy Association (IDEA), and the Deputy Chief of O'Chov District, which are all government institutions and representatives. Semi-structured open-ended interview questions were developed to inform on normative practices and how short-term cross-border labour protection mechanisms are understood and enacted at the border.

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<sup>1</sup> Lower-level border guards were also approached for questioning using informal but structured interview questions, but discussions with border guards were denied on four different accounts. It was suggested formal authorisation be requested through officials in Phnom Penh and through the Provincial District Office, however requests to both went unanswered. The aim of questioning immigration officials and border guard officials was to get a general understanding of the situation of cart pullers and porters from their perspective, and to self-identify what laws and regulations cart pullers and porters must access in

Observations and geographical and social mapping were recorded and used to flesh out the networks and economic relationships involved in cross-border work. The research gains particular resonance when establishing meaningful relationships between people and space. These social and spatial interactions between cart pullers and porters, officials, the border and the markets offer a greater insight into the lives of cart pullers and porters at the Poipet border.

Secondary sources include published, peer-reviewed academic books and articles; field-based books and articles such as publications from international organisations, civil society, government and archival documentation; and published (paper or web) news articles.

### **1.7.1 Research Sample**

In total there were 25 cart pullers and porters between the ages of 10-50 years that participated in the research. Also, 60 non-cart pulling or portering children and youth between the ages of 10-17 participated. From this group 25/60 children and youth only work, that is they are not enrolled in any formal education (FE) or non-formal education (NFE) program), 17/60 work part-time, either before or after the NFE program and 18/60 children and youth that also attend the NFE program do not work. In total, 85 people between the ages of 10 and 50 took part in the study.

In order to gain an understanding of the sex and age distribution of cart pullers and porters, three key groups were targeted to obtain an accurate representation of cart puller and porters working at Poipet. The first group included only cart pullers and

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order to conduct their cross-border work. Due to the lack of collaboration with officials, recently published secondary data was used to fill gaps.

porters. This group was observed to be working and targeted based on doing the work of cart pulling or portering. The second group included only children and youth that were thought to be economically active (earning money) in a variety of types of labour including umbrella holding, scavenging, begging, and cart pulling and portering. The aim of including this group was to determine how pervasive child labour was in cart pulling and portering as compared to other forms of labour performed by children. And the third group was a selection of children enrolled in NGO Goutte d'Eau – Damnok Toek's non-formal education (NFE) program. Prior to starting in the NFE program, all children had been economically active, working on the streets of Poipet doing a variety of jobs for income, including umbrella holding, scavenging, begging, cart pulling and portering. The aim of talking to the NFE students was to see how many were cart pullers or porters and how many remained working once they were in school. A breakdown of these the samples prior to compilation is described below.

#### **1.7.1.1 Street Survey Sample**

Participants from the street survey sample were selected based on the type of work they were actively engaged in. As a result, the entire sample represents those working as cart pullers and porters. They were approached on the Poipet side of the border, given information on the study, and asked to participate in the survey/interview. The selection was based on the type of work they were observed to be doing and not on the basis of age or sex. These interviews took place over two days between 1500h and 1800h in Poipet.

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· The aim of the Goutte d'Eau – Damnok Toek NFE school program is to help youth get caught up with formal studies and either prepare them for integration into formal government schools in grade 6, or provide education in a vocation they express interest in. Students attend the NFE on a half-day basis so they are still able to contribute economically to their family income.

· Refer to Table 1.1

In total, 17 cart pullers and porters were interviewed and all were domestic migrant workers. The majority of cart pullers and porters were male, from this sample 10 were over the age of 18, all were over 35 years of age with the exception of 2 male child cart pullers between 10-14 and 2 male youth between 15-18. From this sample there were 3 female cart pullers, all were over the age of 35 years. All of the cart pullers and porters from this group worked individually, with the exception of 1 married couple.

Based on daily observations and discussions with other informants including cart and dolly rental shop owners and the Independent Democracy of Informal Economy Association (IDEA), which represents informal labourers including many cart pullers and porters, the breakdown by age and sex in the research sample is representative of the gender and age bias of cart pullers and porters at Poipet.

#### **1.7.1.2 Street Child/Youth Survey Sample**

The street child/youth survey sample was developed and conducted with the support and facilitation of Poipet-based NGO Goutte d'Eau - Damnok Toek Advisors and Outreach staff. The NGO identified areas in Poipet where working children and youth gather near the end of their working day, and recommended the times to approach children, as they socialize waiting for peers and family members to join them before walking home in a group or sharing a tuk-tuk home. The children for this survey and questionnaire were thought to be economically active and were approached over the course of 3 days, two evenings between 1900h and 2200, and one morning between

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· Independent Democracy of Informal Economy Association (IDEA) was established in Phnom Penh in 2007 and opened in Poipet in 2008. They act as a labour union for the informal economies at Poipet. Type of jobs that are represented by IDEA include cart pulling and portering, motorbike taxi, car taxi, food vendors, karaoke and beer promotion workers. Membership costs 20 THB per month and in return IDEA offers mediation and dispute support at the border or with market owners, health insurance for workers, and social networks through 'monthly talks' that IDEA holds at the Poipet office, which is located less than 100 meters from the Poipet border crossing.

· Refer to Table 1.2

10:00-1300h. Children that looked between approximately 9 – 18 years of age of either sex were targeted, given information about the study, and asked to participate.

In total 31 children took part in the survey and questionnaire, of these 6/31 children and youth did cart pulling or portering work. Of these 6, two children between the ages of 10-14, one boy and one girl child were cart pullers. Among youth between the ages of 15 and 18, four were cart pullers and porters, one of whom was female. No subjects over the age of 18 were part of this sample. Based on daily observations of the Poipet border crossing and cart pullers and porters, this ratio appears accurate. There are significantly more adults doing this type of work, but the same work is also performed by children and youths. Many of the children reported that they rent carts, but according to cart rental shop owners they do not rent to children.

The remaining 25/31 children and youth that took part in the survey worked between the Poipet and Aranyaprathet border doing a number of types of jobs. The most common jobs for younger children included begging and scavenging, but with increased age, there was an increase in the variety of jobs performed by youth including umbrella holding, food seller, landscaping, shoe repair, and car or motorbike parker.

### **1.7.1.3 NFE Child/Youth Survey Sample**

The sample for this group consisted of children and youth. The survey was developed and conducted with the support of Poipet-based NGO Goutte d'Eau - Damnok Toek Director and Outreach staff. All respondents from this sample attended the NGO NFE program. These interviews took place over two afternoons while children attended school. The first day of interviews consisted of all students in attendance in grades 4 and 6, while the second day of interviews consisted of students from grade 3. The aim of conducting interviews with this group was twofold. First, to get a number of how many

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· Refer to Table 1.3



cart pulling or portering children and youth attended the NFE program, and second, to establish a number of how many children and youth continue to work once they are enrolled in the program.

From this group of children and youth, 2/37 were cart pullers, including one 17-year old male and one 16-year old female. Both of these youths attended grade 3 of the NFE program, both were required by their families to work and contribute economically to their households and both worked alongside other cart-pulling family members.

Some of the remaining children from this sample included 17/37 children and youth. These 17 children and youth were economically active, but not working as cart pullers or porters. Comparable to the previous group of economically active but non-cart pulling or portering jobs, ages ranged between 11 and 17 and they did similar types of work. The younger children tended to report doing more scavenging and begging, while older children reported a wider variety of types of work, including umbrella holding, selling fruit, and shoe repair and shoe-shining.

The remaining 18/37 children and youth reported not working while they attended the NFE program. This excluded chores and helping parents with a non-hazardous family business, such as food vending and tailoring.

#### **1.7.1.4 Summary of Total Cart Puller and Porter Sample**

While this study investigates elements of child labour, the focus of the case study is cart pullers and porters of all ages and both sexes. A summary of the total number of cart pullers and porters gathered from the above three samples is provided below.

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· Refer to Table 1.4

Cart pullers and porters were found in all three samples, including the street survey sample, the street child/youth survey sample, and the NFE child/youth survey sample. In total 25 cart pullers and porters were identified from conducting interviews and discussions with 85 possible cart pullers and porters. There are considerably fewer children than adults engaging in cart pulling and portering. In this study, the majority of cart pullers and porters were adults above the age of 18, 13/25 were adult cart pullers and porters. Of adult cart pullers and porters, 10 were male and 3 were female. 8/25 were youth, between the ages of 15-18, and of those 6 were male and 2 were female. 4/25 cart pullers and porters were children between the ages of 10-14. From child cart pullers and porters, 3 were male and 1 was female. In terms of gender data indicates that more males than females perform this work. This is in-line with previous studies conducted on cart pullers and porters and in matches IDEA's figures and data on cart pullers working at Poipet.

### **1.8 Research Ethics**

Research subjects were accessed with the cooperation of established organisations already in the field. Full disclosure, consent and permissions (parental/guardian) were obtained prior to data collection. Research participants provided names upon introduction, but their names were not recorded. Methods were informed by the goals and ethical practices of NGOs, who were gracious in sharing their time, energy and knowledge. Cart pullers and porters were accessed before and after working-hours so their daily work was not interrupted and a small gift for their time was offered. All surveys and research questions were submitted to research supervisors and NGO staff for approval.

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\* Research gifts included soap, string bracelet or a pin/button, approximately 0.25-1.00 US\$ value per item.

## **1.9 Scope of Study**

Primary data collection took place from 15 June to 01 August 2011 at the Rong Kleu Market in Aranyaprathet, Thailand and the Municipality of Poipet, Cambodia. Secondary data collection began in December 2010 and two preliminary observation visits to the research site location took place in February and April 2011. Collation and analysis of data in support of findings was ongoing throughout data collection and throughout August and September 2011.

## **1.10 Limitations**

Despite the valuable insights primary qualitative research can provide, it is not without its limitations in practice. Notably these limitations included a near complete reliance on a translator and interpreter for collection of all primary and some secondary data. To ensure accuracy in translation and interpretation, a native Khmer speaker working on migration, human rights and child labour programming at the Poipet border was hired to produce and work closely on all translation and interpretation of data and written documentation. A second and understandable limitation relates to research gathering on issues of human security. Though the research clearly points to fundamental human security issues, it does not provide a full picture of the seven forms of human security described by the UNDP, including economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, community security, personal security and economic security (1994: 24: online). Instead the methodology was limited to two human security forms: economic and personal security.

It should also be acknowledged that the collection of robust primary data would benefit from more extensive observations and field research. Due to time constraints within the structure of the Chulalongkorn MAIDS program, primary data collection was conducted over an 8-week time frame and represents a snapshot in time; the data

collection timeline does not take seasonal changes in work and workers into consideration. Though the snapshot I was able to assemble is valuable, it is still only a snapshot representing one point in time. Despite the short turn-around for data collection and analysis, it is necessary and important baseline information that, like much good research does, raises more questions than it could ever answer and is a rich mine for further study of the frontier workers at the Poipet border.

### **1.11 Significance of Research**

At the moment there is little documentation on economic and personal security for informal labour workers at the Poipet border. While the ultimate aim of this research is to inform practical plans and initiatives to end labour exploitation to ensure human security and to better understand the situation of short-term cross-border migration at Poipet, I have two broader hopes for my research contributions. First, I hope this research will draw attention to some of the exploitive practices frontier workers contend with and create solid footing for awareness and prevention activities aimed to help vulnerable migrant workers. Second, I hope this research can be used to encourage development organisations and policy-makers in Cambodia and Thailand to turn attention to the frontier workers while focusing on regional economic activities at border areas. While my conclusions are my own, what emerged through documentation of discussions at the Poipet border is an unvarnished and first-hand story of anxiety over personal and economic security. The recording and documentation of experiences and daily practices through largely qualitative methods and data analysis help to inform IOs, civil society and policy makers on how to address livelihood needs and protection mechanisms that ensure personal and economic security for frontier workers at the Poipet border.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Existing data on cross-border migration through the Poipet International Border is concentrated on long-term international migration of men, women and children. The study of international migration as it relates to short-term cross-border migration, such as frontier workers, has largely neglected the study of adults and has instead been studied through the lens of child labour and child vulnerability. This chapter provides a review of existing research, IO and NGO reports, and gaps in knowledge related to frontier workers, specifically on spatial elements of the Poipet border, laws and policy, domestic and international migration, economic and personal security, and child labour.

#### **2.2. Border Space**

Past research has demonstrated the importance of spatial elements of border areas. In describing border areas, Pongsawat points out that the concept of frontier is complex and ambiguous:

Frontier generally represents either a border of a region lying astride the boundary (a line representing the legal limit of a state), or refers to a concept of a marginal or peripheral zone. In other words, there are two diverse views. The first one is the "border area" defined as the territory next to a fixed frontier line around which significant socioeconomic effects due to the existence of a border are felt (the border line). The second one is the view of the "frontier limit" (the contact zone) in which the border is seen less as a demarcation line but as an external limit

which may be mobile over time (Remigio Ratti, 1993, cited in Pitch Pongsawat, “Border Partial Citizenship, Border Towns, and Thai-Myanmar Cross-Border Development: Case Studies at the Thai Border Towns,” Ph.D. Dissertation, City and Regional Planning, Graduate Division, University of California, Berkeley, 2007: 25).

While data was not collected from the Poipet-Aranyaprathet border, Pongsawat demonstrates similarities between borders within the GMS and describes the functional significance of border spaces in relation to economic development and border regulations (Pongsawat, 2007: 22). Pongsawat notes that the development of many border areas within the Southeast Asia region have developed on a “massive and rapid scale” and that the border as an economic space provides the link for workers to cross and work between two countries, and these spaces may cater to a variety of activities that may be legal or illegal depending on the side of national space (Pongsawat, 2007: 3).

The Poipet, Cambodia and Aranyaprathet border can be referred to as a “border region” according to Wu’s definition and analysis of border development (Chung-Tong Wu, 2001, in Pongsawat: 28). A border region is characterized by the following features: In terms of economic relations there are few controls; institutional frameworks are few or limiting; enterprises most common are small, individual enterprises or spontaneous development; infrastructure networks result in bottlenecks due to strict and slow and inefficient border controls; migration is strictly controlled; and extremely high differences in the cost of labour is prevalent between borders (Pongsawat, 2007: 28). These are all represented at the Poipet border.

### **2.3 Laws and Policy on Labour and Migration**

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\* Three types of border development include (1) Border regions; (2) Cross-border regions; (3) Trans-border regions. Refer to Table 2.1 for chart depicting differences between all three types (Chung-Tong Wu, 2001, in Pongsawat: 28).

Laws, policies and bilateral agreements between Cambodia and Thailand are an important factor when researching the lives of border workers because they act as key guidelines and protection mechanisms. Over the last 30 years, a considerable amount of research has been conducted on the development of international agreements on migrant recruitment frameworks (Vungsiriphisal Premjai et al. 2010: 15) and GMS anti-human trafficking projects and protection mechanisms (COMMIT, 2004: online). Many international agreements, frameworks and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) have been developed.

### **2.3.1 Labour and Migration Policy in Cambodia**

In the 2010-2011 Annual Development Review, CDRI took a critical stance on the situation of labour migration in Cambodia. The review covers elements of labour migration, poverty and rural development, information on Cambodia's SEZs and documents policy challenges that undermine migration policies. The report's gap analysis critiqued challenges and concerns regarding several labour migration policies, including needed efforts in the following areas: "[the] development of a sound labour migration policy, a legal framework, and effective management of labour migration; the adoption of a rights-based approach to prevention of and protection against abusive migration practices; and mainstreaming labour migration issues within the national development agenda" (Hing, V., et al, 2011: 100: online).

Cambodia ratified all 8 International Labour Organisation Conventions including the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, No. 87 (1948); Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, No. 98 (1949); Forced Labour Convention, No. 29 (1939); Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, No. 105 (1957); Equal Remuneration Convention, No. 100 (1951); Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, No. 111 (1958); Minimum Age Convention, No. 138 (1973); and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, No. 182 (1999).

In national legislation, the Cambodian Labour Law (1997) outlines employer-worker legal rules and responsibilities. Within the Labour Law, Sub-Decree 57 on Sending of Khmer Workers to Work Abroad (1995) was developed and has been reported to be “the most important national legislation for the management of labour migration” (Chantavanich, 2008: 16: Online). Most Articles in Sub-Decree 57 outline processes and procedures for sending workers abroad, and the main objectives are to improve the living standards and vocation skills of Cambodians, generating income through remittances, and easing unemployment within the domestic labour market (Chantavanich, 2008: 16: Online). To supplement this, Sub-decree 70 on the Creation of Manpower Training and Overseas Sending Board (MTOSB) was implemented in 2006 with the aim of developing a public recruitment system whereby the focus of the Board was to recruit, train, send and manage Cambodian workers abroad (Chantavanich, 2008: 17: Online). Prakas<sup>1</sup> 012/2007 was the Creation of a Labour Migration Taskforce (2007), which was tasked with formulating and implementing coordination and assistance in the area of labour migration, under the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MOLVT) (ILO 2008a: 17: online).

The Cambodian Law on Investment of the Kingdom of Cambodia (2003) also relates to the situation at the Poipet border. The law outlines import and export regulations, investment guidelines, and guidelines and processes for leasing of land for business development. Under this law, there is the Sub-decree 148 on the Establishment and Management of the Special Economic Zone (2005). The Sub-decree, which outlines procedures, management structures and duties, import and export regulations, guidelines for the hiring of labour force to work at these establishments, and business incentives (Chapters 2-6).

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<sup>1</sup> According to the Cambodian Labour Law, Prakas is defined as Ministerial Orders that supplement Cambodian laws (Article 9).



Other Ministerial Orders include Prakas No. 108 on the Education of HIV/AIDS, Safe Migration and Labour Rights of Cambodian Workers Abroad (2006). This Order primarily focuses on awareness of health issues, HIV/AIDS, and other sexually transmitted diseases for Cambodian migrants and their families. In terms of process, Sub-decree 68/2009 was developed to reduce times and cost associated with obtaining passports (Vutha, 2011: 95: online). More recently, the Sub-decree on the Management of the Sending of Cambodian Workers Abroad Through Private Recruitment Agencies (2011). Other Cambodian legislation relating to labour and migration include the Cambodian Law on Immigration (1994), which outlines who is and is not a resident or alien to Cambodia.

Cambodian laws and policies have been developed for the protection of Cambodian citizens within Cambodia and to assist and protect citizens when seeking work outside of national boundaries. However, despite numerous efforts by the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) and international organisations (IOs), institutional implementations on the national frameworks outlined above have been critiqued as “sporadic and limited” (Ministry of Labour (MOL), 2010: 17). CDRI notes cross-border migration is relatively new in Cambodia, and that labour policies were developed only recently, and therefore still lack coherence and full understanding (Hing, V., et al, 2011: 83: online). They go on to say that the frameworks lack comprehensive protection mechanisms for migrant workers and the functional reintegration systems for migrant workers, and there is a “lack of clear responsibilities and coordination, a shortfall of resources, and low capacity are also common in institutions responsible for managing labour migration...[i]n a situation where institutional and policy frameworks are still weak and migration is rapidly increasing, there are substantial loopholes and opportunities for unscrupulous job brokers and employers to take advantage of migrant workers” (Hing, V., et al, 2011: 83: online). Further, they also report that many of the general industrial policies Cambodia has put in place lack transparency and accountability.

### **2.3.2 Labour and Migration Policy in Thailand**

Three legal Acts outline Thai labour regulations. The first, Thai Labour Protection Act (1998), establishes minimum rights for workers in Thailand including working hours, leave, overtime, holiday. Second, the Immigration Law (1979), outlines entry rules and punishments for breaching the law. Third, the Thai Alien workers Act (2008), which came into force recently. Key changes related to this Act are expected to focus on defining shortage occupations open to migrant workers, the creation of a deportation fund, collection of levies from employers of migrant workers, the set-up of committees to review employment and appeals of migrants, and to increase government powers of inspection and arrest (UNIAP, 2010a: 28: online). In 2007, the Guideline of Procedures of Formal Recruitment was set to establish standards of conduct among officials and assist employers that wish to hire migrant labourers through formal channels (Chantavanich, 2008: 14: online).

Thai laws and policies have been developed for the protection of migrant workers entering Thailand to ensure such things as a minimum salary, standardised number of working hours, safe working conditions and reduced exploitation. It is important to note the recent changes that have taken place within the Thai Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act (TIP) (2008), which now has a broadened definition of those trafficked to include men, as the old anti-trafficking law (1997) included only women and children.

### **2.3.3 Regional and Bilateral Labour and Migration Policy**

The most important agreement managing external labour migration is the MOU between Cambodia and Thailand on Cooperation in the Employment of Workers (2003). The MOU was developed to ensure proper procedures, effective repatriation, and the prevention of illegal workers and border crossing, and protection of workers (Article 1:

1). It covers formal recruitment to Thailand from Cambodia by informing Cambodia of details on available jobs and contractual elements of the processes involved to move from Cambodia to work in Thailand (Chantavanich, 2008: 13: online). The MOU also outlines the use of a 2-year Border Pass that is valid only Thailand, which permits Cambodians to enter directly to a work site, as antidote to illegal/informal migration. An additional bilateral agreement related to international migration is the MOU between Cambodia and Thailand on Bilateral Cooperation for Eliminating Trafficking in Children and Women and Assisting Victims of Trafficking (2003).

At a regional level, the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers (2007) is not only a key framework between Thailand and Cambodia, but also within the region. The declaration acknowledges the need to adopt migration policies that address abuse and violence against migrant workers, and stipulates obligations including worker protection, information, training, education, justice and social welfare for both sending and receiving countries (Hing, V., 2011: 97: online; (Chantavanich, 2008, p. 14: online). While not legally binding, the Adoption of the Bangkok Declaration on Irregular Migration (The Bangkok Declaration) (1999) outlines requirements for cooperation, information sharing, technical and financial assistance, legislature, awareness-raising, repatriation, and treatment of migrant workers (Hing, V., et al, 2011: 97: online).

Cambodian and Thai laws, policies and bilateral agreements were developed to act as guidelines and offer rules, regulations and mechanisms for workers, employers and governments. Bilateral agreements and migration-related laws were developed to enhance cooperation on mutually negative trans-border issues such as human trafficking, human smuggling and illegal entry of migrants into Thailand. Neither Cambodia nor Thailand has ratified the Convention on the Protection of Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (MOL, 2010: 21, 17). It would be prudent to initiate the provision national and international protection mechanisms to cross-border workers.

## 2.4 Migration

The 2008 Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) Census collected statistics on the migration situation in Cambodia from between 1998 to 2008, and it includes analysis of internal and external migration. According to the Census, nearly  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the population have never moved from their respective place of enumeration, which means approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$ , or 3,552,535 people were considered to have migrated, either domestically or internationally.

The International Organisation on Migration (IOM) has been present in Cambodia for many years. Their three areas of migration-related focus are: (1) The Migration Health Program, which aims at enhancing health among mobile populations; (2) The Regulating Migration Program, which aims to increase capacity among the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) to regulate migration, especially in terms of trafficking; and (3) the Facilitation Migration program, which involves the campaigns on safe labour migration and safe migration, HIV/AIDS education, and life skills for outbound migrant workers and their families (IOM 2011: online). While there is a chance that some frontier workers may benefit from IOM's domestic migration programming on health and safe migration, missing is a definitive link between IOM programming and frontier workers, the IOM in Thailand does not have a specific program on the receipt of frontier workers. In addition to IOM's programming, the United Nations Inter-agency Project on Human Trafficking (UNIAP) has had a Phnom Penh, Cambodia-based national office since the year 2000. The role of UNIAP is to coordinate with UN agencies and the GMS governments on issues pertaining to human trafficking. Such issues are intrinsically linked to domestic and international migration. Similarly, data specifically related to frontier workers is absent.

### 2.4.1 International Migration

Many of the people working along the Cambodia-Thai frontier cross the international border daily. However, much of the research pertaining to international migration is only peripherally related to the kind of short-term cross-border migration pervasive at the Poipet border.

Thailand continues to be a destination country for many Cambodian migrants in search of work due to Thailand's economic development and labour market (UNIAP, 2010a: 21: online). The Poipet International Border is also a primary location for the return of many illegal or undocumented migrant Cambodian workers found in Thailand and is described as the "busiest" Thai-Cambodia international checkpoint (UNIAP, 2010a: 21: online). In 2008, IOM estimated 248,000 Cambodian migrants in Thailand (IOM, 2010a: 23: online). In the same year, Cambodian immigration authorities estimated that 130,000 were deported from Thailand. Of those deported, a majority totaling 77% were processed through the Poipet International Border (UNIAP, 2010a: 36: online).

In Cambodia there are over 200 organisations involved in anti-human trafficking projects (IOM, 2008: 17: online). Many programs and most documentation coming out of the Poipet border area commonly relates to anti-human trafficking programs and the cross-border labour exploitation of women, children and men into Thailand, the GMS, and to further countries within Southeast Asia, such as Malaysia for long-term migration (UNIAP, 2009a: online; UNIAP, 2009b: online; UNIAP, 2010a: online). Those populations that fall under international trafficking and repatriation programming do receive support at the Poipet-Aranyaprathet border. For example, on the Thai-side of the border UNICEF supports a drop-in center operated by World Vision Thailand. Through the Assistance Support and Protection for Migrant and Trafficked Women and Children (ASAP) program, the Center provides assistance and education to women and children.

Many women and children that receive services were sex workers or have been sexually abused, and accessed services as they were processed for repatriation after having been trafficked in Thailand (Few, 2006: online). There was no documentation on prevalence of Cambodian frontier workers accessing any services while working on the Thai-side of the border.

The 2010 report titled “Analyzing the impact of remittances from Cambodian Migrant Workers in Thailand on Local Communities in Cambodia” discussed the idea of “circular” or “cyclical” migration as a “desirable pattern for both sending and receiving counties” (IOM, 2010a: 17: online). The idea of cyclical migration is that “younger, able-bodied workers should be encouraged to move temporarily to the host country, where they can earn money and gain skills and knowhow, and then return and contribute to the development of their own communities” (IOM, 2010a: 17: online). In the case of Cambodia, most Cambodian migrant workers are highly represented in low-skilled jobs, and according to Maltoni, “[i]n terms of brain gain, Cambodia is on the losing side” (Maltoni, 2006: 51: online). A similar situation can be seen among migrant workers in Poipet as well. Most have low social status and are employed doing low-paying and low-skilled jobs where any skills they may acquire will not be of use in their communities, nor do they reside in a host country or make higher international wages. As a result, information on frontier workers is significantly underrepresented in terms of cross-border research or program data available.

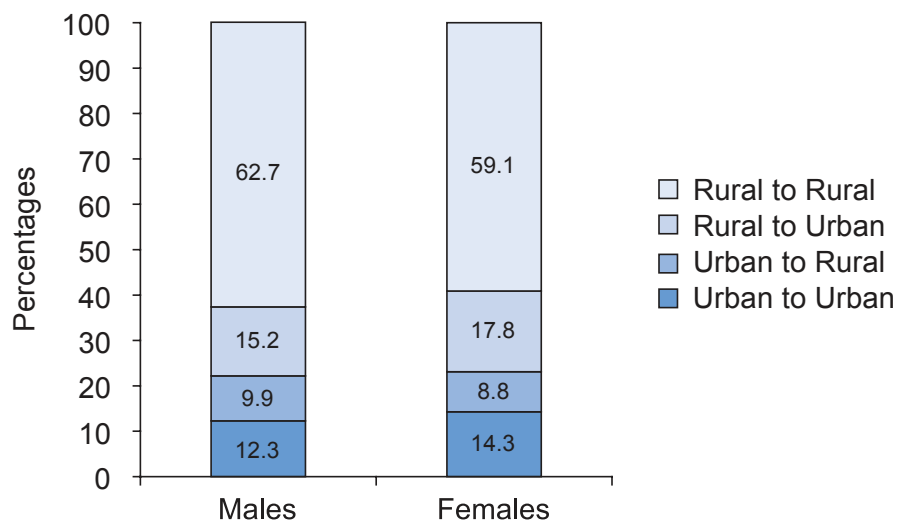
#### **2.4.2 Domestic Migration**

Despite the significant number of international agreements and substantial IO and NGO programming focused on international migration, it is widely recognised that the majority of migration in Cambodia takes place within national borders (Crassard, 2008: 1: online; Maltoni, 2007: 3: online; RGC, 2008: 97). According to the Cambodian Census

3,457,228 people, or 26% of Cambodia's population have migrated domestically and slightly more than half are female (RGC, 2008: 99).

General migration trends indicate a bias toward rural-to-urban migration. Within Cambodia, this phenomenon has been well documented. For example, a recent study on the topic of internal youth migration was conducted by CDRI in 2007. The report discussed social and economic factors that promoted rural to urban migration within Cambodia over the past 40 years and used Rational Economic Theory, Two-Sector Theory, and Balanced Growth Theory/ Asymmetric Development Theory to analyse data (CDRI, 2007: 12: online). The study researched poor migrant workers, largely youth and young adults (between 15-24) that tended to migrate through informal channels. The study included migrant workers that work as cart pullers, but focused on broad migration trends, not on details pertaining to frontier workers living at the Poipet border (CDRI, 2007: 1, 15: online). Likewise, the UNDP states, “[y]oung men and women leave rural communities for urban employment...” (UNDP, 2009a: 6: online). Contradicting those assumptions, it was documented that most internal migration represents rural to rural migration, at 61% of those migrating (Morris, 2007: 78: online). Morris noted that 85% of Cambodia's population lived in rural areas and only 1/5 of those accounted for rural-urban migration (Morris, 2007: 78: online).

Chart 2.1 Percent distribution of recent domestic migration based on previous residence by migration stream and sex.



Source: Cambodia Inter-Censal Population Survey Results of Spatial Distribution and Migratory Movements, 2005, cited in Morris, 2007: 78: online.

While Morris' data was recorded from 2004-2007, a more recent publication supports this trend. The 2008 Cambodian Census supports rates of high rural to rural migration recording over 50%, while rural to urban migration was represented at 27% (100). In addition, a recent IOM publication indicates high rates of internal rural migration to the border areas in Cambodia (IOM, 2008: 12: online). When discussing rural-to-urban or rural-to-rural migration in Cambodia, there is significant ambiguity surrounding definitions of what defines rural and what constitutes urban.

### 2.4.3 Factors Driving Migration

Influences on migration decisions are commonly referred to as push and pull factors. Push factors are the reasons that drive people to leave home and pull factors are those that attract them to a new location, either domestically or internationally (IOM, 2004: 49: online). The Municipality of Poipet is a popular destination point for domestic migration and a key transit point for international migration.



Common push factors that encourage migration in Cambodia include landlessness, lack of income, chronic poverty and job shortage, environmental pushes such as flood or drought, or high debt (Maltoni (2006) cited in Hing, V., 2011: 90: online; IOM, 2010a: 23: online; UNIAP, 2010b: 1: online). Pull factors include demand for cheap labour and economic disparity, both of which are prominent reasons for cross-border migration (Hing, V., 2011: 91: online). Common factors influencing the decision to move to the Poipet border often represent a mix of these, including its proximity to Thailand. Research has indicated that the dominant driving forces for international migration in Cambodia tend to be push factors: many Cambodians have few options for work, have decreasing amounts of land, and are poor, leaving them little option but to move in search of work (IOM, 2010a: 23: online).

#### **2.4.4 Labour Migration**

Within the GMS, Cambodia is considered to be a “labour export country,” or sending country, while Thailand is considered a receiving country as they receive more migrant workers than they send (IOM, 2010a: 14: online). Significant amounts of published data and research have focused on the mechanisms of labour migration and labour protection mechanisms for the receipt of cross-border labour migrants into Thailand. Past conclusions about labour migration tended to be negative and argued that only receiving countries benefitted from hiring cheap international labour while source countries lost domestic productive output and consumption or that migration turned local communities into ghost-towns due to families following the decision to migrate (IOM, 2010a: 14: online). Recently, however, labour migration has been given a more positive spin largely due to a better understanding of the remittance practices of foreign workers. As remittances can become a large percentage of GDP, this income has contributed to improved lives in terms of alleviating poverty and developing human capital by

improvements on education, health, welfare and housing of remittance-receiving families migrate (IOM, 2010a: 14: online).

There is considerable documentation describing migration and remittances from Cambodians working in Thailand. Many migrants leave family members behind as they move in search of work, and send money back to them. There are, however, differences in numbers surrounding the amount of money represented from remittances. Documented by IOM in 2010, the World Bank (2006) indicated that Cambodia received 298 million US\$ (4.1% of the GDP), while the UNDP Human Development Report (2009) indicated Cambodia received 353 million US\$, and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) (2009) reported Cambodia received 559 million US\$ (7.8% of the GDP) (IOM, 2010a: 21: online). Despite these differences, remittances are unquestionably an important factor for Cambodia's GDP. Generally, in order for migrant workers to make enough money to remit, the migration flows are transnational. Most of the available data on Cambodian remittances comes from long-term international migrant workers in Thailand and not from domestic migrants and frontier workers.

#### **2.4.5 Regular and Irregular Migration**

Regular migrants are those that move internationally through legal and formal channels, whereas irregular migration are those migrating through informal channels which may include entry or work within a country without authorisation or those that entered through formal means but changed work status without authorisation (Huguet, 2011).

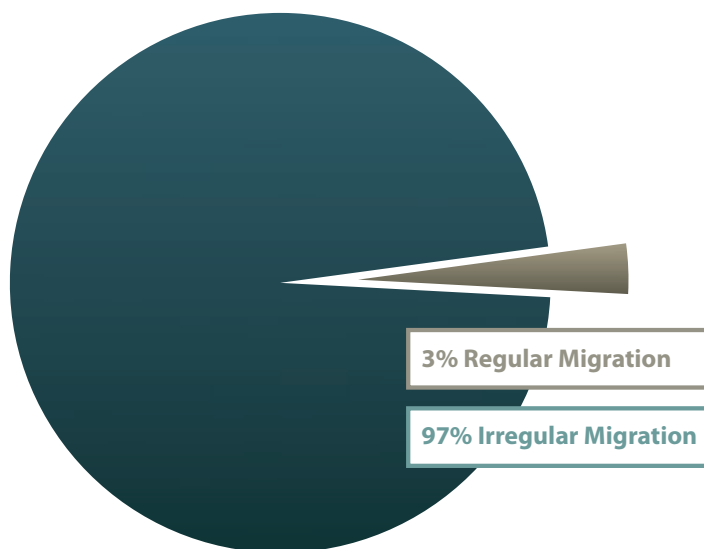
For Cambodians, key destinations for international migration include Thailand, Malaysia and South Korea, but Thailand receives the largest number of Cambodian workers. According to IOM and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the stock number of migrants in Thailand in 2008 was 248,000 and it is estimated to be 316,000 by 2018.

(IOM 2010a: 23: online). In 2005, there were 104,789 registered Cambodian labour migrants living in Thailand (IOM, 2008: 13: online). Past research by IOM indicated that unregistered Cambodian migrants in Thailand were thought to be at least double the registered number, and that most migration within the Mekong region occurs through informal channels (2010a: 23: online). As noted, not all Cambodian's moved to Thailand, but Thailand is the key destination point for Cambodia. Therefore, a considerable amount of undocumented migration is thought to happen through the Thai-Cambodia border.

Research of regular and irregular migration conducted at and about the Poipet border has also tended to focus on longer-term cross-border migration. From Cambodia to Thailand, maneuvering through official channels for regular migration has been known to be highly bureaucratic, very expensive, and have long processing times. Whereas using brokers and established unofficial routes for irregular migration has been known to be fast, less expensive and less bureaucratic. Some jobs like agricultural labourers, seafarers and domestic workers can exist for both types of migration but irregular migrant workers are more vulnerable to exploitation due to a lack of documentation, change of formal work status or formal migration processes.

Chart 2.1 represents figures of migrant populations in Thailand in 2008. During that time, there were over 180,000 migrants in Thailand and over 95% of them were irregular migrants.

Chart 2.2 Regular v. Irregular Cambodian migrants to Thailand



Source: Adapted from Chan, 2009, cited in Hing, V., et al, 2011: 89: online.

According to CDRI, it is not uncommon for irregular migrant workers in Thailand to be “deprived of their basic rights and are at risk of arrest and...punishment (Hing,V. et al, 2011: 89). Key drivers for irregular labour migration from Cambodia into Thailand is the geographical proximity through the border, demand for migrant workers, often in low-skilled sectors and the perception of higher wages at destination point, agents to assist people to migrate and the lack of formal channels (Hing,V. et al, 2011: 89); Huguet, 2011).

There is a significant research gap on migration data relating to formal and non-formal migration among short-term (daily) cross-border labourers and along Cambodia’s frontier, such as the work conducted by cart pullers and porters. In addition, clear definitions of how frontier workers are placed within a migration framework are lacking in existing research, thus data on short-term formal and non-formal migration at the frontier is needed. At Poipet, many frontier workers that do cart pulling and portering cross the international border with legal documents and a system *is* in place that allows cart pullers and porters to cross multiple times daily. Yet this type of work is not

recognised formally within Thai and Cambodian policies and goes unmanaged and unregulated because it is categorised within the informal labour sector.

## **2.5 Human Security**

The concept and terminology of human security was first developed and described by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in the 1994 Human Development Report (HDR) (UNDP, 1994: online). Two concepts inherent within human security are *freedom from fear* and *freedom from want* that fall within the seven areas of human security; and the seven realms of human security are (1) economic security; (2) personal security; (3) health security; (4) environmental security; (5) community security; (6) political security; and (7) food security (UNDP, 1994: 24: online). Four key characteristics of the concept were identified by UNDP: first, human security is a universal concern; second, human security components are corresponding and interdependent; third, human security is easier to ensure through prevention rather than intervention later; and fourth, it is people-centered (1994: 22-23: online). Gasper (2008) adds three additional elements to also include, a focus on basic needs, insistence on basic rights, and freedoms (8). For the purpose of this study, two areas were selected to aid in the analysis of the lives of frontier workers at Poipet: economic and personal security.

### **2.5.1 Personal and Economic Security**

There is a significant gap in data that explicitly researches personal and economic security of adult frontier workers along the Poipet border. The gap closes slightly when looking at research and IO and NGO reporting on child labour, as it relates to frontier work. Many IO and NGO programming reports address elements of economic and personal security among child labourers working at Cambodia's frontier, however, child labour-focused research has not been collected or analysed through the human security

framework or for the purpose of studying frontier workers. *Refer to Section 2.6 in this chapter for in-depth review of literature on children working at Poipet.*

Literature that has contributed to an understanding of the concept of economic security at Poipet includes studies conducted by the Cambodia Development Research Institute (CDRI) and the Cambodian Economic Association (CEA). CDRI developed research on the cross-border economy between Thailand and Cambodia in 2005 (online). This study focused on regional integration and economic policies between Cambodia and Thailand. Within this study, CDRI used Poipet as a selected case study to demonstrate that trade between Cambodia and Thailand took place for over 20 years prior to open-market policies and agreements. In 2007, the CEA conducted an economic review that analysed disparity and inequality between the rich and the poor in Cambodia. The report found that inequality was largely due to market and government failures (17: online), and in terms of cross-border labour migration it concluded that the working conditions among irregular cross-border migrant workers was hard and dangerous work (25: online). The report was unique in that it addressed short and long-range cross-border migration but claims that short-range migrants “usually work on the Thai border in [the] agriculture sector” (26: online), thus not recognising the hundreds of cart pullers and porters that work in the urban markets along the border. In spite of that, cart pullers and porters are representative of irregular migrant workers that migrated domestically to Poipet and along with agricultural workers; they work in hard and dangerous working conditions.

## **2.6 Children and Youth in Poipet**

Cambodia and Thailand both ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1992. According to the CRC, a child is defined as anyone under the age of 18 (Article 1). The UN defines youth defined as those between 15-24 (UN General Assembly (1995) in UNDP, 2009a: 7: online). In Cambodia there are different definitions of child and youth. Cambodia’s Youth Department at the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MOEYS)

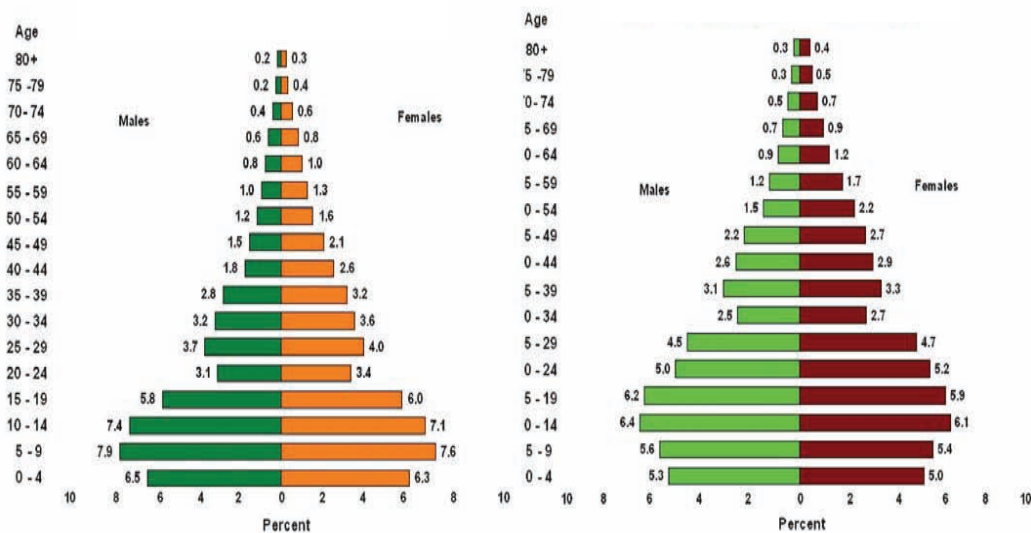
defines youth more expansively, as those between 14 and 30. For the purpose of this research, youth will be defined according to UNDP, between the ages of 15-24 (2009a: 7: online).

### **2.6.1 Child and Youth Demographic**

Cambodia's relatively recent genocidal history has resulted in a demographically young population by global standards. In 2009 nearly 36% of the population fell between the ages of 10-24 (UNDP, 2009a: 1: online). With high rates of migration and young people headed towards border locations, many observers and practitioners stress the target of children in programming to reduce risk and exploitation as the most important factor in creating a safe, healthy environment for people at Poipet. This focus has yielded considerable research on children and youth working at the Poipet border but little data on adults. As demonstrated in the chart below by the bulge in the younger ages indicated, in 2008 the 30 and under population is highly represented.

Chart 2.3 Age Pyramid of Cambodia

Figure illustrates the age distribution in Cambodia between males and females from 1998 (left) and 2008 (right).



Source: Cambodia Census 2008: 35: online.

The majority of children in Banteay Meanchey Province, both male and female, attend primary school but the situation changes once they reach their teenage years, according to NCDD (2009b: 33: online). Within Poipet, 12% of children between the ages of 12-14 did not attend lower-secondary school in 2008. This percentage jumps to 26% of teens between the ages of 15-17, with a slightly higher female representation (2009b: 33: online). There are high literacy rates among youth but these rates do not take into account many of the children and youth that live in poverty on the streets of Poipet. This group is often unable to attend school due to the financial constraints of their families and a responsibility to contribute to a household income. Within Cambodia, youth that enter the labour market tend to have a low level of education: 45% attain primary education and 30% completed lower secondary level (Kem, S., 2011: 111: online). Thus, high numbers of low-skilled, under-educated people are entering the workforce. This perpetuates the need for and a cycle of labour migration in low-skilled jobs that entices youth.



## **2.6.2 Economically Active Children, Child Labour and Worst Forms of Child Labour**

The UNDP Situation Analysis of Youth in Cambodia contends that not only is Cambodia's youth labour force rate one of the highest in the region but large numbers of employed youth are entering the labour force as a result of the baby boom in the 1980s (2009a: 55).

Some important distinctions should be made between the concepts of working children, child labour and the worst forms of child labour (WFCL). According to the ILO Promoting Employment in Cambodia: Analysis and Options report:

Economically active children supply labour for the production of economic goods and services...this includes: (i) all production and processing of primary products whether for the market, for barter or for own consumption; (ii) the production of all other goods and services for the market; and (iii) in the case of households that produce such goods and services for the market, the corresponding production for their own consumption (Morris, 2007: 64: online).

Economic generation differs from the idea of chores or helping ones family out with babysitting, cleaning or cooking – all non-economic activities.

Child Labour<sup>1</sup> is a narrower concept than economically active and excludes all those under 12 years and older and who are working only a few hours a week in permitted light work, and those aged 15 and older whose work is not classified as “hazardous” (Morris, 2007: 63: online). Hazardous work is work performed by children that by its nature or type, leads to adverse effects on the child's safety, physical or mental

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<sup>1</sup> Child Labour is based on the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) which represents the most comprehensive and authoritative international definition of minimum age for admission to employment or work, implying economic activity (Morris, 2007: 63: online).

health, and moral development (Morris, 2007: 63: online). Worst forms of child labour (WFCL) fall under the category of hazardous work. There are sixteen forms of WFCL of which portering is included.

The Cambodian Labour Law maintains a minimum age for employment of 15 years but the absolute minimum working age in Cambodia is 12 years; that is, the law permits children between the ages of 12-14 to engage in light, unhazardous work that does not interfere with school attendance. Article 177 of the Cambodian Labour Law states that the minimum age for types of work that are hazardous to health, lack safety or morality is 18 years of age (RGC, 1997, Section 8). Cart pulling and portering are considered to be hazardous for children and is categorized as a WFCL; therefore those cart pullers and porters under the age of 15 fall into this category. In reality, a grey-area exists for those between the ages of 16-18, according to age definitions and the Cambodian Labour Law, cart pulling and portering is illegal for anyone under the age of 18 due to its harmful nature.

Due to a mismatch between skills required for jobs, the education youth have been equipped with, and the nature of market labour demands, young people find it hard to get decent employment (Kem, S., 2011: 111: online). What this means for youth entering the labour market is that they are unskilled or not qualified due to a lack of skills training, poor education quality and low education attainment. Yet, according to the 2001 Child Labour Survey, 52% of 7-14 year olds in Cambodia were economically active (Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MOLVT), 2010, cited in CDRI, 2010b:

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· According to ILO, the sixteen sectors of hazardous child labour include: portering, domestic work, waste scavenging and rubbish picking, rubber plantations, tobacco plantations, fishing, enterprises, sea product processing, stone and granite breaking, rock quarrying and stone collection, gem and coal mining, restaurants and begging (Morris, 2007: 72: online).

· When referring to children's work in terms of portering and cart pulling at Poipet, the terms can be used interchangeably. A dolly, which is used for portering, is called a "chaly cart" or small cart. At the Poipet border the work is the same, only a dolly/chaly cart is smaller and more children tend to use this due to their small physical size.

110: online), while there are approximately 300,000 people joining the labour force into a deficit of jobs available (Kem, S., 2011: 111: online).

### **2.6.3 IO and NGO Child-Focused Programs at Poipet**

Many IOs and NGOs present at the Poipet border are child-focused programs that aim to reduce child labour and various forms of exploitation among children. Reports from these programs have also been used to identify gaps in practical actions, policies and laws. Many of the Poipet-based NGOs have been supported by various IOs, such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (Le Mouellic, 2009) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) (CDRI, 2007: online) to implement their programs and to conduct research on child migrant worker vulnerabilities. NGOs Goutte d'Eau – Damnok Toek, based in Poipet, Cambodia, and Friends International, based in Aranyaprathet, Thailand, are two organisations that implement child-focused programs. These organisations primarily target street children and their combined programming efforts aim to eliminate hazardous work for children, especially worst forms of child labour (WFCL). To this end, the NGO programs consist of many activities including, outreach services performed by NGO staff who frequent areas common to working street children and provide water, promote education, and offer health and first aid services to those in need; non-formal education for children which provides them with an opportunity to catch up in school and integrate into a government formal education program at the grade 6 level; recovery and reintegration services for trafficked-repatriated children which houses boy and girl children and provides psycho-social support; and income generation for children and their families which helps provide families with income so children are not engaged in hazardous types of work and may attend school (Le Mouellic, 2009: 2; Friends International Thailand: online). There are a number of other NGOs in Poipet that implement similar types of programs, many of which are

supported by GOs and IOs.<sup>7</sup> NGOs publish activity and annual reports for donors and the public.

Since 2000, the ILO has supported the RGC National Plan of Action on the Elimination of the Worst of Child Labour (ILO-IPEC TICW project) (ILO, 2005: vi: online). From 2006-2008, the ILO also had the Trafficking in Children and Women Program (TICW) program aimed to build the knowledge base of women and children. Currently, the project is in phase 2 with the stated goal of eliminating child labour by 2015 (CMDG), and ending the WFCL by 2016. Efforts by the ILO/IPEC have made significant strides in the reduction of child cart-pullers and porters in terms of collaboration among civil society government and raising awareness about harmful forms of child labour. Messaging from this program is not only seen on large illustrated billboards along the highway, on posters inside the immigration offices but is also heard on loudspeakers at the border crossing and through IO, GO, and NGO programming. In spite of this, it was estimated that 3000 children were working as porters at the Poipet International Border (ILO, 2008: 8).

## **2.7 Conclusion**

Literature on migration and human security is only peripherally linked to frontier work at the Poipet border. To date, documentation has failed to adequately and clearly categorize irregular forms of labour at the frontier like cart pulling and portering, into regular or irregular migration. In terms of NGO and IO programs, data is largely representative of long-term cross-border migration, human trafficking and child labour issues.

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<sup>7</sup> Numerous NGOs are based within the Municipality of Poipet and offer such services, all with a focus of children (under 18), a few include Cambodia Hope Organisation (CHO), Don Bosco Foundation, Samaritan's Purse, and World Vision.

IO and NGO reports can also be used to identify gaps in practical actions and policy and laws related to cross-border migration, as it relates to cart pullers and porters in particular. From existing data, links were drawn to demonstrate elements of economic and personal security of adult frontier workers, and significant research has been conducted on frontier work as it relates to child labour. However, none reflect specificity toward cart pulling and portering child labourers. Despite this, additional links have been made to consider personal and economic security, the migration situation for children and youth, as well as vulnerabilities that are particular to child cart pullers and porters at Poipet.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **POIPET, THE FRONTIER**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Cambodia and Thailand share a long and porous border. Linking Eastern Thailand with Northwest Cambodia is the Poipet – Aranyaprathet border crossing. Linking the two countries is a newly developed trans-border highway and a busy marketplace that draws migrant workers for labour. This chapter will provide an understanding of the area, the policy and practice of urban development in Poipet, the types of economic activity most prevalent at Poipet, and discuss how those relate and influence the lives of frontier workers at Poipet.

#### **3.2 Area Profile**

Poipet is located in Banteay Meanchey Province in Northwestern Cambodia, and borders with Aranyaprathet, Sakaeo Province in Eastern Thailand. The border is linked by a trans-border highway and a railroad through Poipet to Aranyaprathet will be operational by 2013. The location of the research, Poipet, Banteay Meanchey Province is indicated on the map below.

Figure 3.1 Map of Cambodia



Source: UN, 2004: online

The following map is an area map of the Municipality of Poipet. Areas identified on the map were key areas where research was conducted. The Municipality of Poipet is divided into 24 neighbourhoods. For the purpose of this research, however, 8 neighbourhoods were focused areas for obtaining primary data. Moving from the border gate out towards Psar Kandal, areas marked as K1, K2, Kbal Koh and Palilai 1 are within one kilometer of the border gate and are the most densely populated areas in

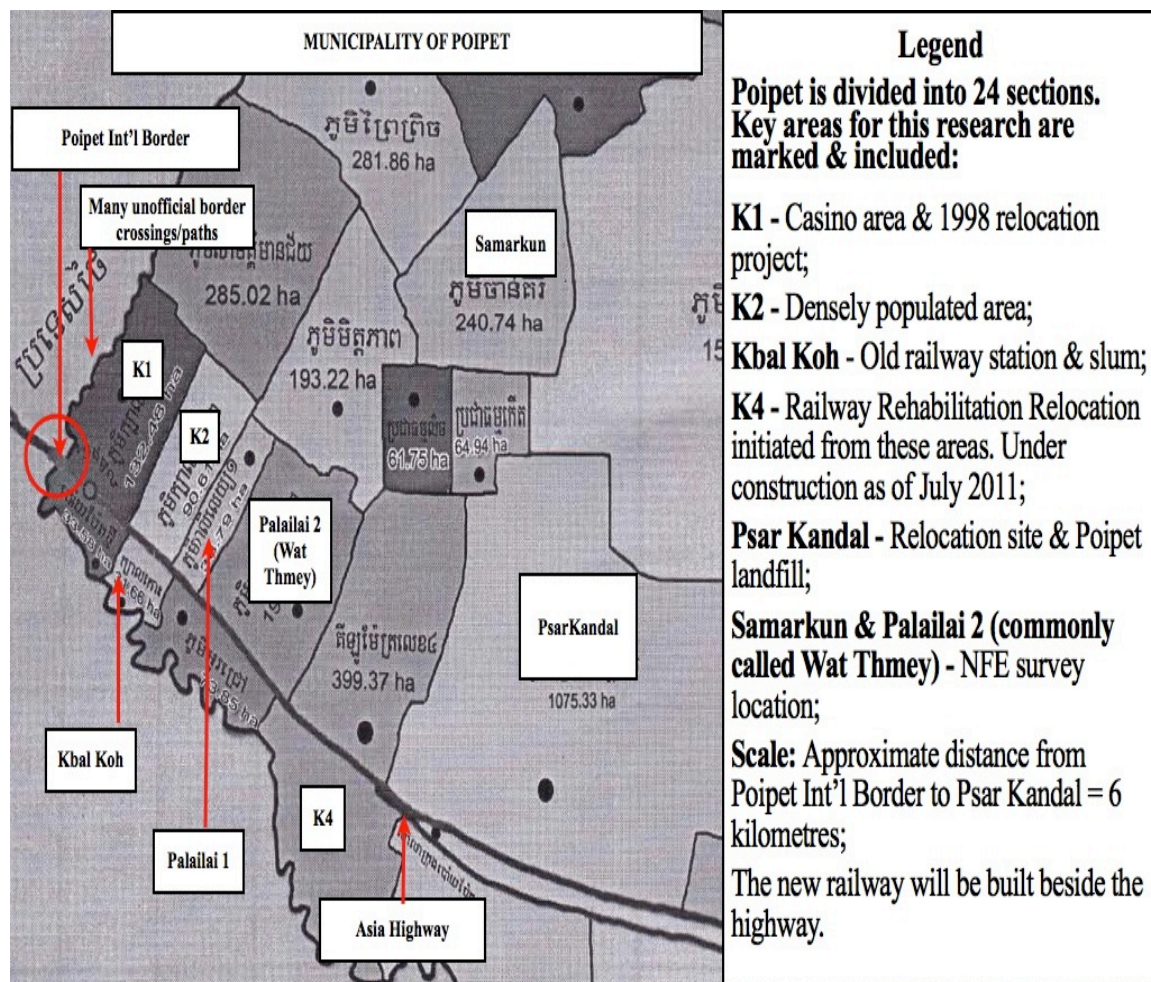
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The 24 neighbourhoods were translated as “sections” or “villages” within Poipet (Interview, 30 July 2011). There are no obvious markers of different sections within Poipet, the local communities know the areas by name, but for all intents and purposes these sections within Poipet were the same as neighbourhoods. Each neighbourhood is indicated by line demarcation on the Municipality of Poipet map, and specific and relevant sections for this study have been marked in English, see Figure 3.2.

Poipet. At Palailai 2 the population spreads out more and by K4, Samarkun and Psar Kandal, one feels as if they have entered rural Cambodia.

Figure 3.2 Map of Municipality of Poipet

Area map of Poipet, O'Chrov District, Banteay Meanchey Province, Cambodia.



Source: Poipet Transit Center, 2011

### 3.3 Migrant Demography at Poipet

Last recorded in 2008 by the Royal Government of Cambodia's National Committee for Sub-national Democratic Development (NCDD), the population in



Banteay Meanchey Province grew by nearly 20%, from 691,345 persons in 2007 to 843,306 persons in 2008 (NCDD, 2009a: 15: online). In total the number of rural families outnumbered the number of urban by 107,842 and 37,337 respectively (RGC Census 2008:167: online). Growth patterns are due to domestic migration from rural to urban or border areas. Rural to urban migration patterns are widely attributed to common push and pull factors such as family financial crisis, lack of work, lack of land and flooding, which influence domestic and international migration (Maltoni, 2007: 2: online; UNIAP, 2010a: 21, 58: online). In 2008, there were 220,614 people recorded as migrants and 96% of them represented domestic migration (Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) Census, 2008: 242: online).

A similar pattern develops in Poipet. According to the District Data Book, the population of Poipet grew by 19,954 between 2007 to 2008 for a total recorded population of 110,973 in 2008; this jump of 22% from the year before saw a corresponding growth in the number of families as well (NCDD, 2009b: 11: online). In 2008 the NCDD reported that of people that moved to Poipet, 4946 (2796 female) migrated to Poipet on a permanent basis, whereas 5148 people (2501 female) were reported to be staying in Poipet on a temporary basis (2009b: 43: online).<sup>·</sup> Comparatively, there appeared to be a relatively small out-migration number of 754 people (383 female). Although the in-migration numbers from both government sources differ in the total number of persons migrating into Poipet, the trend is a high in-migration to Poipet. Additionally, the majority of these in-migrants were categorized by the NCDD as migrating into “uncertain jobs” (NCDD, 2009b: 11: online). This data confirms high numbers of migrants residing at Poipet with a high level of job uncertainty and also

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<sup>·</sup> Note the numbers indicated by the NCDD Data Book and the Cambodian Census do not total the same amount for in-migration to Poipet. According to the NCDD Data Book there were 19,954 in-migrants versus the Cambodian Census, which represents a total of 10,094 in-migrants to Poipet. This difference is likely due to differences in changing classification and border areas of Poipet. The reclassification of Poipet commune to the Municipality of Poipet now includes coverage of what was two communes (Poipet and Nimit). The change was formally announced by the RGC Ministry of Interior (MOI) in 2008, but data collected for these reports may not reflect the change.

suggests that many do not plan to not stay at the border long term. This paints a picture of a demographic with high flows of temporary rural migration to the border and a population in search of work in a larger, more urban environment.

The age distribution of Poipet is broken into four categories, those between the ages of 0-5, 6-17, 18-60, and those over 61 years of age. Since the category of those between 18-60 years is so large, it is not surprising that this age range makes up most of the population, at 51%. 33% of the population falls between the ages of 6-17, while 13% of the population is 0-5, and only 3% of the population is over 61 (NCDD, 2009b: 11: online).

### **3.4 Urban Development at Poipet**

Urban development and the perception of job availability have attracted many migrants to Poipet. Policies that support and promote infrastructure development are largely the result of Cambodia's rise from years of civil unrest and the opening of the economy and making commitments to improve the country. Many of the country's development plans put in place since the early 1990s were formulated with the support of the United Nations (UN). For the RGC and the UN, areas of focus were economic growth and poverty reduction, health, education, social protection and governance (UN n.d.). Regionally, Cambodia's place within the GMS as an emerging economy also had significant bearing on the policies affecting infrastructure development within ASEAN (ASEAN, 2009: online).

The Poipet border is an urban economic space that provides a link for workers to cross and work between two countries and creates a market niche that has allowed for the growth of a particular kind of short-term cross-border work. It is important to understand

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· Four ASEAN projects that aim to integrate the region's infrastructure are: ASEAN Power Grid, Trans-ASEAN Gas Pipeline; ASEAN Highway Network; and Singapore-Kunming Rail Link Projects.

the relationship of the border space to the markets in order to fully comprehend the situation of frontier workers. According to the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Border Towns Urban Development Project in 1997, trade at the Poipet-Aranyaprathet border was highly important to the economy. Trade volume is estimated to be 120-150 million Baht/month (4-5 million US\$) (3). As is common with other borders in this region, the Cambodia-Thailand border has developed to accommodate cross-border trade and an influx of populations to the border area.

The growth in Poipet's population has been particularly bolstered by three of the municipality's prominent infrastructure developments over the past two decades. First, prior to the opening of the border in the 1990's there was little road infrastructure development. Now, the road is fully developed and links internationally through Viet Nam – Cambodia – Thailand and is referred to as the Southern Economic Corridor (SEC). The second major infrastructure project initiated was the RGC/ADB Railway Rehabilitation Project in Cambodia. The repair of the railway throughout Cambodia is near complete with only the last section of construction to be done in Poipet. This last section of railway will link the railroads of Cambodia and Thailand and is currently underway. The third prominent development focus at Poipet has been city planning priorities on initiatives that try to serve it's role as a financial corridor and to serve the growing population of poor migrants: the modern development of Poipet as a Special Economic Zone (SEZ).

### **3.4.1 Road & Railway Development through Poipet**

Among the ASEAN priorities was the development of the transnational highway system and an MOU on the Development of the ASEAN Highway Network Project was

signed in 1999. The location of Poipet in relation to major road infrastructure development has made the city a transit point for long-haul truck drivers traveling within the region, providing an ideal location for interconnectivity between countries. For over twenty years there has been the promotion of transnational economic cooperation and trade that suggest that economics could overpower political differences between the two countries, which could result in mutual economic benefits. This has been a significant contributing factor to the infrastructure development of the transnational highways system and railway lines. The economic corridors link the entire region; from Cambodia, Poipet is the last stop before entering Thailand.

Figure 3.3 illustrates the interconnectivity of the GMS. The red line indicates the SEC that joins Cambodia to Thailand and Viet Nam. The section of highway that runs through Poipet is also the same location for the development of the ADB/RGC Railway Rehabilitation Project, which will also link rail lines between the two countries.

Figure 3.3 Map of Southern Economic Corridor (SEC) – Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) Interconnectivity

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\* ADB refers to the highway system as Economic Corridors, thus, the network is referred to as Mekong Economic Corridors (MEC), and the highway through Poipet is referred to as the Southern Economic Corridor (SEC).



Source: ADB 2011a: online

In 1992, the GMS, with support from the ADB, launched the GMS Economic Cooperation Program aimed at enhancing economic relations (ADB, 2011b: online). The transnational highways were promoted as expecting to “transform migratory patterns and

have important social, economic and health implications for affected countries” (IOM, 2010b: 96: online); this concept has primarily focused on positive economic affects as a result of the transnational highway system. Infrastructure aspects of the ADB program are: transport infrastructure and transport and trade facilitation with the support of bilateral MOUs. The SEC has been developed directly through Poipet, and is a main route into Thailand, for goods, last stop services and migration with connections throughout the Mekong. All of the Mekong Economic Corridors (MECs) represent the dominant attitude toward sub-regional market integration. From an economic viewpoint, the corridors allow for increased trade and economic movement for all – including landlocked GMS counties.

The RGC, the Australian Government, and the ADB also initiated the repair of the northern railway system in Cambodia. The Railway Rehabilitation Project (ADB 2010a: online) is a response to the destruction of Cambodia’s railway during civil strife 30 years ago. Initiated in July of 2008, the completed railway will link from Singapore through to China, with a completion date scheduled for 2013 (ADB, 2011c: 184: online). The section of railway at Poipet will link directly into Aranyaprathet, Thailand via a new cargo border crossing located within 1-4 kilometers of the current Poipet International Border. The new cargo route will further facilitate direct transportation and trade between the two countries and throughout the region. Development of the railway aims to make Cambodia a “true-subregional transport hub,” which suggests the spurring of new job opportunities in manufacturing and transportation services (ADB, 2010a: online). As a result, increased cross-border trade between Cambodia and Thailand is expected, as is demand within Cambodia for Thai goods. There is little doubt that the railroad and cargo route would result in further economic development and increased migration into Poipet

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\* The ADB GMS Program Primary Sectors include: transport, energy, telecommunications, environment, human resource development, tourism, trade facilitation, private sector investment and agriculture (ADB 2011b: online).

\* MOU Of the Planning and Construction of the GMS Information Superhighway Network, between Telecommunications from Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam (2004); GMS Trans-border Agreement (2005).

through job creation and the expansion of national and international markets. There has been much speculation among the population at Poipet about these developments.

Many cart pullers, porters and cart rental shop owners have a different impression of such infrastructure. Among those interviewed, questions about new cargo and rail routes sparked discussions around the fears and concerns that new routes would create less need for manual labour. During interviews with cart and dolly rental shop owners on 28 June 2011, one cart rental shop owner exclaimed:

“We heard that there will be a new cargo route over there [indicated South, where the new railway will be built] and carts will have to take the new border crossing. It is too far to travel when now we are located at the border. We will lose this job in the near future once the cargo route is finished because maybe trucks will also be able to move through there. We have also heard a rumour there is a plan to stop cart pushing altogether, and then how will I rent my carts out?”

A lively discussion ensued among a group of five cart and dolly shop owners when the topic of railway development plans emerged. After much back-and-forth among one another about rumours they had heard regarding the cargo route, one cart rental shop owner declared, “there is not a long future for cart renting. We will lose business [to] the train and trucks.” The group of cart rental shop owners nodded in agreement of his comment.

Among cart pullers and porters, only the older cart pullers seemed concerned about the cargo route, but they also shared the same fears and concerns as the cart rental shop owners. One male cart puller in his 40s was drawn into a worried exchange with another cart puller. The interviewee claimed the end of cart pulling would happen soon because he had heard that trucks would carry the loads through both borders [referring to the cargo/train crossing and the current Poipet International Border]. He further

described that cart pulling is hard labour and not healthy, and that was part of the reason why officials wanted to stop this kind of work. A cart puller bystander (observing the interview) jumped into the conversation and argued,

“There is no way that would happen. Rumours of stopping this business is result of the relocation [because of construction], but officials would not be able to handle the high rates of unemployment if cart pulling and portering no longer existed between Poipet and Aranyaprathet” (Interview, 4 July 2011).

The Cambodia-Thai Coordination Office (CTCO), located in the Municipality of Poipet was established in 1995 through cross-border agreements between Cambodia and Thailand. Each of Cambodia’s 7 border provinces has a CTCO. Officials from the CTCO support expectations of increased trade from large-scale transport infrastructure development. Confirmation of an additional cargo route were provided in an interview with CTCO on 30 July 2011,

“The development of a cargo route nearby, passing from Cambodia to Thailand, is not a rumour; I confirm that is true. We want to improve our economy through trade with Thailand so the plan is to open 3 borders from this area in the future. The problem is we do not know when because the process is slow. In Poipet we have many people waiting to begin construction [labourers] and conduct more trade-labour with Thailand, but we must wait for Thailand. We want to improve our economy, which will help give more people jobs through construction and then hiring staff to oversee a new international border gate, such as border guards. At Poipet one way to create jobs is to create more [specialized] border crossings.”

CTCO also confirmed that there was no plan to stop cart pulling because it would result in high rates of unemployment (Interview, 30 July 2011).



It is interesting that there was so much discussion around the idea of losing one's job due to additional border crossings because the law supports the use of cross-border manual labour (RGC, 2005, Chapter 6, Article 11) and cross-border agreements limit vehicles crossing the border for the facilitation of moving goods through the border, which ensures the use of manual labour. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Cambodia and Thailand on the Facilitation of cross-border transport of goods and people (2005) outlined in the procedures, including the regulation of vehicles involved for the transport of goods, which states that a vehicle registered in the country of either of the Party to the MOU are not permitted to transport cargo into the other Party's territory. The MOU specifically states that cargo is to be manually transferred from the exporting vehicle to a vehicle registered in the Country of Entry (MOU, 2005, Attachment 1: 3). At Poipet, the transfer of goods works both ways, from Cambodia to Thailand and Thailand to Cambodia. For each, manual labourers, cart pullers and porters, are Cambodian.

### **3.4.2 Housing Infrastructure**

Many of the cart pullers and porter respondents for this research are affected by construction of the railway project at Poipet. Plans have the railway running directly through the largest slum area in Poipet (Kbal Koh on Figure 3.2) and home to a large number of migrant labourers. Resettlement planning was initiated in June 2010 and at the time of writing (August 2011), construction and the relocation process had been initiated for Poipet. An exact completion date for the Poipet link has not been set, but the aim is to have a fully functional railway through Poipet by 2013.

According to ADB, 942 households in the Municipality of Poipet are scheduled for relocation and assurances of support have been made (ADB, 2010c: 10: online). The resettlement process has been undertaken in consultation with those affected, grievance mechanisms were put in place, and those relocated will receive cash or housing/land

entitlements in designated areas (ADB, 2010b: online). Social services have also been planned for the relocation site, including a school and hospital. During two months of research fieldwork in Poipet (June and July 2011), two site visits to the proposed relocation site took place (Location Psar Kandal on Figure 3.2).

The first visit to the relocation site was prompted by an expressed concern by NGO staff over the location of the site. Information provided from NGOs and those directly involved in the relocation expressed potential negative impacts for many of the cart pullers and porters that reside in the slum area in Poipet. First and foremost was an increased distance between the relocation site and the border. The relocation distance is 5 kilometers further from the border where many of the relocated migrants work. Second, concerned NGO staff pointed out that the relocation site is less than 1 kilometer from the Poipet Landfill; thus in addition to moving people further from their livelihood, they are moving people into an unhealthy environment. And third, the Inter-ministerial Resettlement Committee (IRC) claims that only 584 families are scheduled for relocation with support, which is a difference of 358 families (Interview, 29 July 2011). Those currently involved in the process of relocation further expressed concerns centered on the lack of organisation between the IRC and those affected, and an expressed skepticism in the RGC's commitment and support to the project. Skepticism was largely based on experiences from government-supported relocation project in 1998 for the development of casinos. The 1998 relocation project caused conflict between the powerful rich and the relocated poor over land in location K1 over the building of casinos at the border (Interview, 04 August 2011).

Initially, the first visit to the relocation site was meant for observation, but new residents were keen to discuss both positive and problematic issues around the relocation and as a result, two separate informal, spontaneous question and answer sessions took place. To gain a better understanding of the situation at the site, questions asked were

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· Refer to K1 on Figure 3.2 Map of Poipet for area location.

related to the processes involved and the quality of the area in terms of whether social services will be provided and whether the land and housing is what they had expected. A few people that stopped building their homes to join the walk and talk through the relocation site explained,

“The process has not been very organised, some people still do not know how much money they will get for the relocation. If we have a problem, there is nobody we can talk to, we were hoping you could give us information, that is why we came to talk to you....overall we are happy with the size of land because some of us lived in smaller areas with no toilet, here we our own piece of land and our own toilet. But it is so far from our work [the border]. However, the biggest problem is the low quality of infrastructure, the pipes [pointing to sewage/drainage pipes] are too small for how many people will live here, we think this will be a problem in the future” (Interview, 10 July 2011).

One man offered to give a tour of newly constructed home, where he lived with his wife, mother and two children.<sup>·</sup> While providing a tour, he explained,

“I live with my wife, mother and two small children. My wife works at the border. We were lucky to live so close to the railway because we qualified for the relocation. Here we have our own house and land and a toilet. We are happy here” (Interview, 10 July 2011).

Overall, however, occupants for the railway relocation project expressed excitement and happiness about the new location and described it as clean and spacious. They also expressed happiness to own their own piece of land. Noteworthy to mention, no respondents expressed concern about the location of their new home within the relocation project being next to the landfill.

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<sup>·</sup> Refer to Appendix C for photograph of relocation site and family house.

The second visit was to observe changes in development only and no interviews took place. Within a one-month time frame, considerable development on the relocation site had begun which included housing, plumbing (toilets and drainage pipes), electricity and the installation of a few small shops.

Other infrastructure upgrades in more populated areas of Poipet include paved roads, power, sewage systems, and buildings including modernized housing. According to the RGC Census, housing infrastructure is categorised by the type of roof: thatched, zinc/fibro, and concrete. From 2006 to 2008, the percentage of houses with thatched roofs decreased nearly 10%, while seeing a correlated increase in the next level of roof, zinc/fibro. This may be seen as an indicator of increased wealth, however over the past three years there was no increase in more expensive concrete-styled housing. Most homes in Poipet have electricity, in 2009 83.4% homes had electricity while 11.9% used battery lighting, and 84.3 % of families had a television set (NCDD 2009b: 33: online).

### **3.4.3 Business Infrastructure**

There are significant differences in terms of priority areas in terms of buildings and infrastructure development at the border. In more developed areas, including the economic zones, many of the businesses are foreign owned, such as the casino area in Poipet. The differences between these two areas are striking. For instance the casino area received pavement and landscaping while one block away many of the local population live on garbage-strewn dirt roads where it is difficult to tell slum from non-slum.<sup>7</sup> In addition, border areas often cater to a variety of activities that may be legal or illegal depending on which national space the activities occur in. For example, at Poipet activities such as gambling are highly prevalent. Gambling is illegal in Thailand but legal and pervasive on the Cambodia side of the border (Pitch Pongsawat, “Border Partial

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<sup>7</sup> Appendix D: Photographs displaying difference development.

Citizenship, Border Towns, and Thai-Myanmar Cross-Border Development: Case Studies at the Thai Border Towns,” Ph.D. Dissertation, City and Regional Planning, Graduate Division, University of California, Berkeley, 2007: 3).

Poipet, with a population of 110,973 people, has 8 casinos (Lintner, 2003: online). Compared to the Capital of Cambodia, the city of Phnom Penh with a population of 13,395,682 has an imposed limit of 1casino (RGC Ministry of Planning, 2009: ix). There is a high demand for the casinos at Poipet because of its proximity to Thailand and the area has had significant development and social impacts at Poipet. Strategically built between the Thailand and Cambodia border, the locations of the casinos enable people exiting Thailand to enter what has become known as the *no-mans land*. The casinos are located before the Cambodia checkpoint, allowing those entering Cambodia from Thailand to not technically cross into Cambodia in order to gamble.

As a result, the space between border gates (Cambodian land) sees a substantial influx of people taking part in these activities. According to a local Thai reporter, 90% of the gamblers at Poipet are Thai (Lintner, 2003: online). For Thais, the location of Poipet in relation to Thailand has made the city a destination for gambling. These liminal border development strategies and policies also allows for Thai citizens to go and conduct kinds of business that are increasingly difficult to do at home (French, 2002: 460).

### **3.5 Types of Economic Activity at Poipet**

There are three main types of economic activity that contribute to economic development at Poipet: first, infrastructure development and construction; second, the popular casino and entertainment industry that has been developed in Poipet; and third, cross-border markets and trade.

The market between Thailand and Cambodia plays a significant role in the short-term cross-border migration that takes place at Poipet. This market area has become one of the main SEZ between Thailand and Cambodia and this shift in fortunes is a result of Cambodia's recent independence and through the onset of market liberalisation in the late 80s. In 2005, the RGC signed the Sub-decree 148 on the Establishment and Management of Special Economic Zone, which outlines procedures, management structures and duties, import and export regulations, labour force guidelines, and incentives (Chapters 2-6). Some investment incentives for developers include exemptions from tax on profits for 9 years, exemptions from duties or taxes on equipment and construction materials for infrastructure construction, and land concessions obtained from the State (RGC, 2005, Chapter 4, Article 6 and 7).

According to the Sub-decree, the SEZ space is cordoned off by a fence and controlled by specified hours of operation for the premises. Further restrictions exist in that the majority of the labour force within the SEZ must be a Cambodian citizen, and businesses must operate in accordance to the Cambodian Labour Law. There is a 10% cap on the number of foreign managers, technicians or experts that can be employed, while those workers may be accompanied by spouse or dependents. In Poipet, the SEZ provides thousands of jobs to migrant labourers within the cross-border market. The SEZ is home to 8 foreign-owned casinos employing over 10,000 people (Shaftel and Ana, 2003: online). The casinos are one of the factors contributing to the drawing-in of migrant workers for the perception of many opportunities to work for businesses and establishments catering to the thriving entertainment industry that caters to Thai customers. However, little economic benefit has been reported due to foreign ownership of the casinos, and hotel/casino supplies are brought in from Thailand (CHO, 2011: online). As previously mentioned, the hotel and casino industry have been known to encourage unsavoury types of entertainment, such as gambling and prostitution. In addition, many of the most common jobs at the Poipet border including cart pullers and porters operate in support of the informal economy. Many of these jobs require people

with low skills training and little education to fill the positions, and require workers to cross the international border. Poipet is largely home to domestic migrants, many of whom live and work in precarious situations; they are unskilled, uneducated, they are desperate for employment/income and have migrated without job certainty to a more urban area within Cambodia's borders – Poipet.

### **3.5.1 Cart Pullers and Porters**

Cambodia and Thailand agreed to set the same border hours and harmonize procedures to help facilitate cross-border movement. Due to cross-border vehicle procedures outlined in the MOU between Cambodia and Thailand on the Facilitation of Trans-Border Transport of Goods through Poipet, manual labour is the primary way to move import and export goods through the border, (2005, Section C.1.v: online). Therefore, cart pullers and porters are highly represented at Poipet and due to cross-border agreements to hire Cambodians, they facilitate a thriving trading market within the informal market economy.

For manual labourers like cart pullers and porters, the most important skill required is physical strength. In addition to the low-skill and education levels required to pull carts or porter, the fact that there are no start-up fees associated with the work draws in domestic migrants, carts and dollies are available for rent throughout Poipet and the Rong Kleu Market (Thailand). Carts and dollies vary in size and this variety allows for nearly anyone to perform the work, including adult, children, and people with disabilities.

#### **3.5.1.1 Carts and Dollies**

To facilitate the movement of goods across borders, labourers use two main types of carts and dollies.

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· Refer to Appendix E for photographs of carts and Appendix E for photographs of dollies.

Cart pullers pull wooden carts, which are generally used for carrying dry goods such as packaged food, materials or garments, and fresh foods such as fruits and vegetables. Some cart pullers do not use the cart for the cross-border transport of goods, but use the cart for collecting recyclable items that they can sell (scavenge). The second type of cart is larger, metal-framed cart. Weaved through the metal frame is a synthetic waterproof material. The metal carts are usually used for the transport of wet goods, such as fish and insects.

There are two types of dollies that porters use to facilitate their work. Like the carts, dollies can be wood or metal. The relationship between material and size is opposite however. Wooden dollies tend to be larger and used to carry larger, heavier loads. Metal dollies are smaller, easier to maneuver, and are often used to transport garments and tourist suitcases.

### **3.5.1.2 Working Routes**

As both countries agreed, the Poipet International Border operates between 07:30 and 20:00 hours. Daily crossing frontier workers are required to return to the Cambodia-side of the border by 20:00 hours. Commonly, cart pullers and porters use the main border crossing as their primary route. When interviewing cart pullers and porters, they identified 4 main working routes between Poipet and the Rong Kleu Market in Aranyaprathet, Thailand.

The first was from Poipet, Cambodia to the Rong Kleu Market in Aranyaprathet, Thailand. Types of goods moving from Cambodia into Thailand are often raw materials, natural resources, and garments. This route also finds cart pullers and porters moving across the border with an empty cart to fill it with items from the Thai Market. On 29 June 2011 in a focus group interview, one cart puller that worked this route, described the process:



“At about 6 in the morning I get up and go to get the cart [it is stored at the cart rental shop on a daily basis] and then get in line at the border. I do not have to talk to any officials before the gate. We wait in line until we can pass through the first guard, and then sometimes have to wait between the borders because Thailand is not open yet. Between the borders is where I pay 10 THB to cross into Thailand [cart pullers must show an Immigration Card and pay 10 THB to obtain a ticket each time they cross from Cambodia to Thailand]. [Once across the border]...for me, I go to the same shop to carry goods back into Cambodia.

On my way back, sometimes I am stopped by Thai Officials and they check items in the cart. Sometimes I have to pay customs and sometimes not. Other times I have to pay a fee but I don't know why, sometimes 10 baht, 40 baht or 100 baht...up to them, I don't know. If the officials are already busy with a cart, we will not get stopped. Then, in Cambodia, I deliver the cartload to the shop owner or to a car, where it is transported to Sisophon [capital city of Banteay Meanchey Province].”

The second route was from the Rong Kleu Market in Thailand to Poipet. Generally the types of items moving from the Thai Market into Cambodia include packaged and canned foods, toys, bottled or canned beverages and fresh fruits and vegetables. In a focus group discussion on 29 June 2011 another cart puller explained his route,

“For me I have to cross the border illegally and work all night in the Thai Market [Rong Kleu Market]. I start my day at 01:00 or 02:00 and I finish at 09:00 or 10:00. It is risky because I have to take the small crossing from here [Poipet], then I rent the cart from the Thai Market, and then I work all night collecting the items

for my cart. [Type of good transported was missing from transcript]. At 07:00 I wait to cross from Thailand to Poipet, and then I cross and deliver the cartload.”

When asked to expand on his experience crossing the border illegally, he further explained,

“We are not supposed to stay overnight in the Thai Market, we cannot go into Thailand after the border closes [22:00], so I have to take the illegal way across. Everyone knows we also need to work on that side, too, but they [border guards] don’t allow us to take the big road [official crossing] after hours. I think it is more dangerous, because if I am caught it is against the law.”

This cart puller explained he did not have to hide from border officials and that officials had seen him in Aranyaprathet at night, though he also indicated he had not been caught. Many Cambodians do work cross-border even at night and outside of the official hours despite this being a clear violation of the law.

The third route identified by cart pullers and porters not regular cross-border work. In an interview on 28 June 2011, a married couple that pulled a single cart explained,

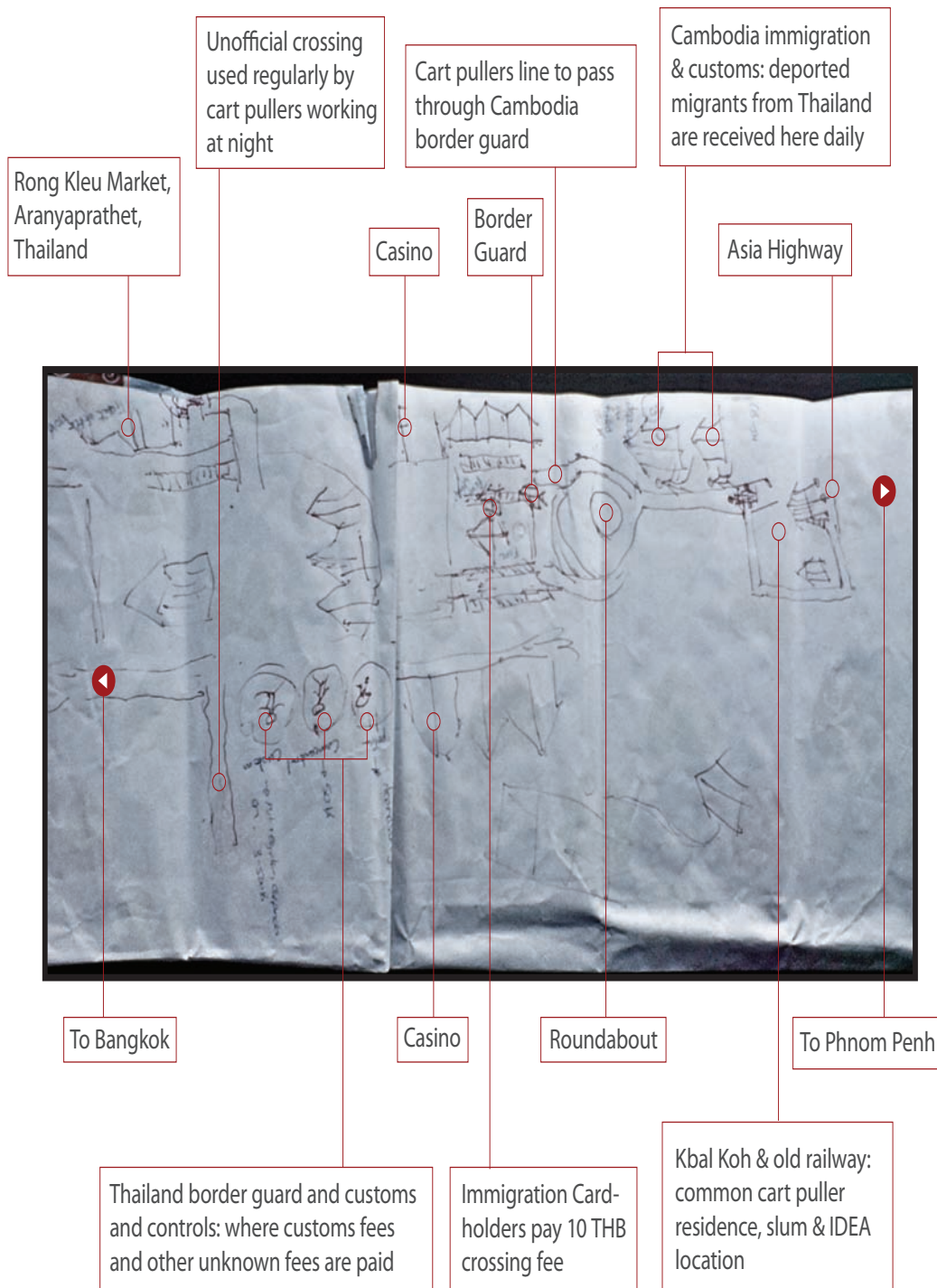
“We do not usually go to the Thai Market because you have to pay to go across the border and we can do our work here [Poipet]. We do not often carry items from the market, but sometimes within Poipet we do [from the Poipet market to shops keepers]. Usually we use the cart to collect things like plastic or things we can sell [scavenge].”

While accompanying NGO Friend’s International Thailand’s outreach staff on one of their daily outreach activities where they provided information on the NGOs

services and first aid to street children working in the Thai Market, they indicated a fourth route. NGO staff explained that many Cambodian cart pullers and porters also work solely in the Rong Kleu Market. According to them, many Cambodians will cross into Rong Kleu using a small, unofficial crossings, rent a cart and use it for scavenging larger, recyclable items but do not carry goods across the border (22 June 2011).

The map in Figure 3.4 was hand-drawn by 3 cart pullers that took part in a focus group discussion on 28 June 2011. The cart pullers were asked to draw where they go in a day and explain key areas, such as where they live, where they make payments and identify key border areas. The map demonstrates the route taken from their home location (Kbal Koh/old railway slum area), down the highway and across the border into the Rong Kleu Market.

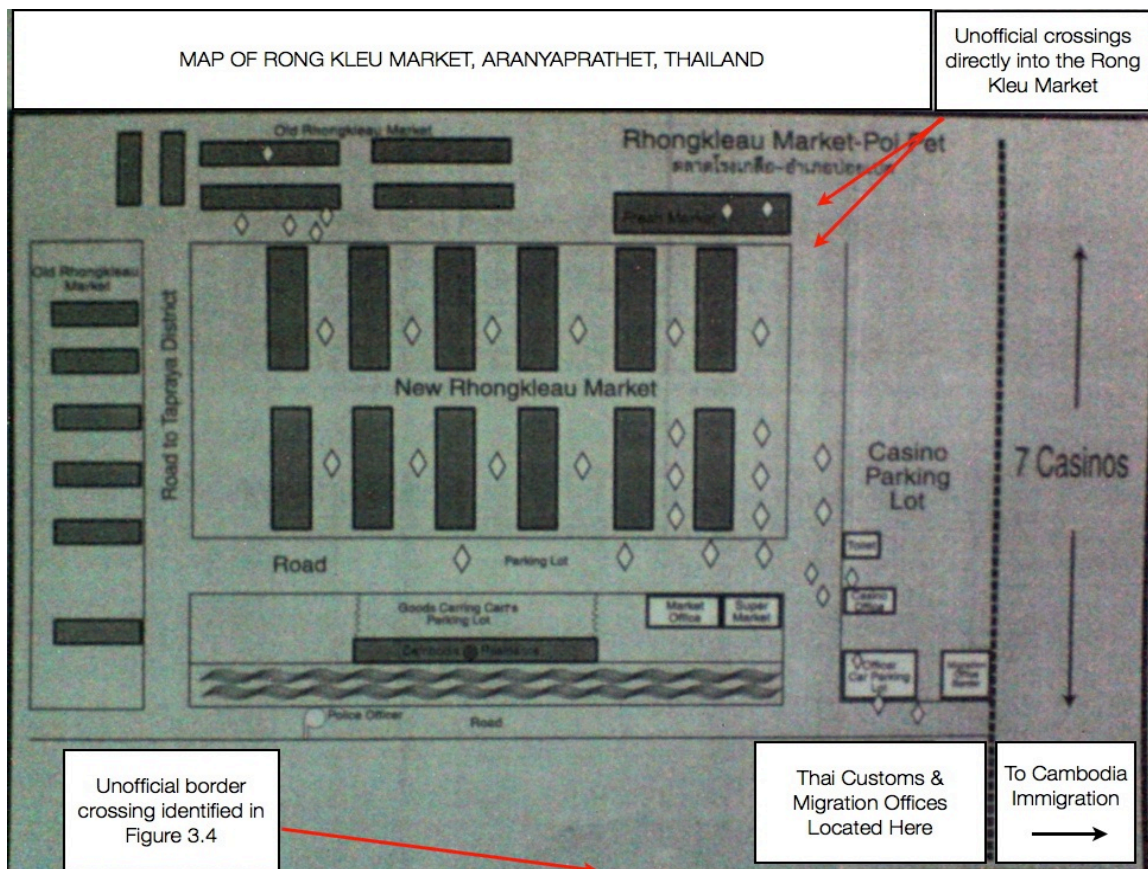
Figure 3.4 Hand-drawn Map of the Poipet Border Area



Source: Appendix A, Respondents FG15, 16, 17.

Figure 3.5 shows the Rong Kleu Market in Aranyaprathet, Thailand. The bottom right on the map indicates the border area. Note that there is less than 100 meters between the border and the market. Three unofficial border crossings commonly used by Cambodians are identified on the map. The upper right hand corner indicates two unofficial border crossings that were identified during a meeting and tour of the Rong Kleu Market with NGO Friend's International Thailand. The bottom of the map indicates a third unofficial crossing, the same unofficial crossing identified on Figure 3.4. Note, when crossing from Thailand into Cambodia, one does not need to pass through Cambodian Immigration to enter into the Casino area. Likewise, Cambodians do not need to enter Thai space to work at Casino facilities, but do to cross into Rong Kleu Market.

Figure 3.5 Map of Rong Kleu Market



Source: Adapted from Kannika, et al. 2003: 15

### 3.6 Cross-border Facilitation

The Poipet and Rong Kleu Market at Aranyaprathet represents a common situation for cross-border migration processes coming out of Cambodia; that is, market demands from Thailand require cheap labour from Cambodia. Sub-decree 148 on The Establishment and Management of the Special Economic Zone and the Agreement on the Facilitation of Cross-border Transport of Goods and People both promote the use of cross-border manual labour by limiting the number of vehicles allowed to transport goods and people and by having legislation encouraging businesses hire Cambodian workers.

· Note there are currently 8 casinos not 7, as indicated on Figure 3.5.

### 3.6.1. Border Identification and Documentation

Cart pullers and porters generally cross the Poipet International border several times per day. Cambodian nationals can cross officially into Thailand using one of three different passes. The first is a passport, which allows Cambodians to enter into, and move freely throughout Thailand - but not to work. The following two cross-border documents represent passes used by frontier workers at Poipet. The two categories are defined by the type of work they do, where they are moving within the destination country and how long they reside in the destination country.

For frontier workers working within Sakaeo and Prachinburi Provinces in Thailand (bordering provinces to Banteay Meanchey), the Border Pass may be used. The Border Pass is common for those doing agricultural or domestic work and who reside in Thailand for up to 7 days at a time. The initial cost is 400 THB for Poipet residents and 800 THB for migrants (13 – 27 US\$), plus 70 THB (2.30 USD) each crossing and it is valid for 2 years. By definition, according to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and their Family Members, this group is categorised as frontier workers (Article 1).

The other pass used by frontier workers is an Immigration Card issued to Thais and Cambodians through Sakaeo Province, Thailand. For Cambodians crossing, the Immigration Card allows entry into the Thai Market (Rong Kleu Market, Aranyaprathet, Sakaeo Province), located directly opposite the Poipet border crossing or into Poipet. For Thais crossing, the Immigration Card allows entry into Poipet. In each respective country, people can cross the border daily for work. The initial cost for the pass is 220 THB (7.20 US\$) with an additional cost of 10 THB (0.33 US\$) per crossing and is valid for 6 months. Those crossing on the Immigration Card must return to the Cambodia side by 22:00h daily (when the border closes). This card is prevalent with Cambodian frontier

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· Appendix G: Types of Passes: Passport, Border Pass and Immigration Card.

workers who cross the border daily including cart pullers and porters. Those crossing on this card are also defined as frontier workers by the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and their Family Members (Article 1).

### **3.7 Conclusion**

Situated on the border of Thailand and Cambodia, Poipet has received focused attention on cross-border market development and large road and rail infrastructure projects. Cross-border agreements and legislation, such as the Sub-decree on the Establishment and Management of the SEZ and the MOU on the Facilitation of Cross-border Transport of Goods and People, have created a high-level of functionality around the type of labour that is prevalent at Poipet. Legislation instructing companies to hire a 90% Cambodian workforce coupled with agreements limiting the number of motorized vehicles to transport goods through the border have created a functional relationship, which has drawn in many people with limited skills or education to find work in these economies.

Development at Poipet has had both positive and negative effects. Positive impacts include the application of international standards on situations related to relocation and financial housing allocation by ADB on the Railway Relocation Project. Negatively, standards are often undermined by corruption, lack of staff capacity, lack of responsibility and accountability among staff, and lack of coordination (Vutha, 2011: 83: online).

While infrastructure development has affected Cambodia's economic standing and regional participation with neighbouring countries in a positive way, the poor, under-educated, low-skilled labourers are negatively affected if policies and protection mechanisms are not in place or enforced. Cambodian migrant workers seek work across the border while Thai policies promote systems to offer unenforced protections that



entice foreign workers into Thailand. In the situation of short-term cross-border work, neither Thai nor Cambodian laws specifically identify this work nor do laws offer protections to workers. While many cart pullers are documented with an Immigration Card and follow the procedures at the border gate, specific protection mechanisms such as fees and payments owed to border officials and standardised wages are not in place.

The Poipet border has the impression of lawlessness largely due to inefficient planning and poor governance. Development projects and lax regulations at Poipet have contributed to the thriving gambling, prostitution and karaoke industries prevalent there. These industries attract many people from Thailand to cross the border and participate while Cambodians are drawn to Poipet in search of work, often in these industries. The draw for Cambodians is the hope of making a better life and the potential economic gains in the cross-border market, entertainment and transportation economies. Often new migrants find something else – dominating news headlines for Poipet are violence, rape, theft, muggings, drug and alcohol use and abuse, and human and drug trafficking (Phnom Penh Post, 2011: online).

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **CASE FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS: INTERACTIONS, RISKS AND INSECURITIES**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

A high number of low-skilled and undereducated domestic migrants reside in Poipet. Pushed from their rural homeland, they have relocated to an urban center to escape unemployment, landlessness, poverty, and a lack of economic opportunity in pursuit of the promise of work at the border. This chapter begins with a discussion on social impressions of Poipet and common types of labour, the approach used to capture data, and moves to a discussion on the findings with regards to integration into urban environments, social networks and support systems they create, and the risks and insecurities inherent to the cart pullers and porters of Poipet.

#### **4.2 General Perceptions of Poipet**

Poipet is touted as the “wild west” of Cambodia (Chalk, 2009: online). While it is a bustling economic corridor, it is also known for being seedy, dirty, and dangerous and it is often recommended that people crossing the border into Cambodia at Poipet leave as quickly as possible (Lonely Planet, 2009: online). Areas that have received focused attention on urban development and landscaping include the SEZs and foreign-owned investment areas, such as casinos; these areas are well manicured and clean. Areas that have received little or no attention include the high-density areas that are most commonly populated by migrant communities. This stark difference has resulted in a significant social dichotomy and, it becomes difficult to tell which areas are slums and which are not. Overall, the main road linking the two official border crossings at Poipet is busy and

often described as chaotic. Thousands of cart pullers and porters muscle their way through the dusty, dirty border area while border crossers are swarmed by beggars, child scavengers and children holding umbrellas, offering to shield crossers from rain or sun—for a fee.

#### **4.3 Impressions of Types of Work Among Migrant Communities at Poipet**

Through focus group discussions and interviews with respondents and key informants, it was generally agreed that cart pulling and portering rank as ‘the best of the worst’ work at Poipet. Interviews asked whether respondents liked their job, what they would prefer doing and what jobs were worse. More in-depth questions involved whether cart pullers and porters want to continue in this line of work, what jobs they would rather be doing, and whether they would like to see their children do this work. Many of the responses were in the form of long answers and discussions and, when ranked, pulling cart and portering were seen as preferable to other kinds of low-skilled labour:

1. Cart pulling and portering (most desired);
2. Scavenging and umbrella holding; and
3. Begging (least desired).

During an interview with the Manager of the Independent Democracy of Informal Economy Association (IDEA) on 28 June 2011, he explained,

“Cart pulling is not a good job, nobody *wants* to be a cart puller. It is difficult work, so hard I have seen grown men break down and cry. The border officials treat them very badly, sometimes [they are] kicked, and have to pay 100 TBH for

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· Refer to Appendix B, Questions W4, 5, SC11, SC11a, SC12, SC12a.

· Refer to Appendix B, Questions FGA1, FGA2, FGF4.

unknown reasons. Sometimes cart pullers only make 100 THB, so sometimes they lose money” (Interview).

Some younger respondents initially expressed disagreement with this assessment, however. During an interview on 4 July 2011, a 14 year old male cart explained he had been pulling a cart for nearly one year and explained,

“When I was younger I used to beg and scavenge around Poipet and the Thai Market. Now I work pulling cart and I like it better because I work when I want, and I can make more money.”

But when probed to consider other types of work would like, he smiled shyly and was quick to say,

“Pulling cart is hard work, it is heavy...not good. I think being a motorbike driver (taxi) or work as a motorbike repairman would be better” (Interview).

One cannot pass through the border without seeing cart pullers and porters, scavengers, umbrella holders and beggars. These jobs are attractive to frontier workers because they require little start-up investment, anyone can do them including unskilled, low-educated, and young people, and there was a level of independence and freedom expressed. During a focus group discussion on 29 June 2011, a 48-year old male participant gave his take on the types of jobs available at Poipet. The other two focus group participants nodded in agreement,

“This work is not so bad because there is not much that I can do here; I am old and I have no education.”

When asked questions about aspirations or *if* he had another option to do another kind of work at Poipet, he replied,

“If I could do another type of work I would like to drive a taxi or a motorbike [motorbike taxi]. Driving [taxi] is much easier, and not too hard, unlike cart pulling. The problem is we do not make enough money to pay our daily needs, how can I buy a motorbike and become a motorbike taxi driver? I can’t even buy a cart and a cart costs much less than a motorbike” (Interview).

While this cart puller reports that his job is “not so bad,” it is notable that it is considered more acceptable because of his lack of available options. This was a common feeling among cart pullers and porters. While many cart puller and porter respondents expressed interest and even a preference to do another type of work like motorbike taxi or mobile vending shops, they were unable to pursue this due to the considerable economic constraints and start-up costs associated. Further evidence of this social stigma can be found in what hopes the cart pullers and porters had for their own families. No adult cart pullers and porters expressed a wish for their children to grow up and do this type of labour and only 2 of the 60 child scavenger workers interviewed expressed a desire to become a cart puller.<sup>7</sup>

#### **4.4 Poipet Cart Puller and Porter Demography**

To establish an overall sense of who pulls carts in Poipet, the Independent Democracy of Informal Economy Association (IDEA) was approached to provide information and statistics on some of the informal labour present at Poipet. IDEA is a member of the Cambodian Labour Confederation, and their mandate is to improve cooperation between government, employers and employees while offering services and protection for people working in informal economies. Information provided by IDEA was

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<sup>7</sup> Appendix B, Research Questions SA9.

instrumental in painting a general picture of the cart puller and porter community in Poipet.

In two meetings with Mr Mang Puthy, Manager of IDEA, on 28 and 29 June 2011, the role of IDEA was explained to be:

“IDEA offers services to a variety of informal labourers. It was established on 4 September 2007 in Phnom Penh, and in 2008 opened an office in Poipet. The types of people we want to include in the Association are those who are not working in formalized types of jobs, like beer promotion girls, karaoke girls, 3-wheeler motor-taxi, other taxis and cart pullers.

[Guided conversation to cart pullers] For cart pullers, membership costs 20 THB per month (0.66 US\$) and it includes mediation services with officials, if there is a problem at the border; this happens a lot because of disagreement of fees, sometimes they have to pay police 100 THB and they do not know the reason: we can help. In addition, the fee includes health insurance to the labourer [pooled monthly among members, and does not cover family members], monthly meetings for talking with staff and other members, sometimes there are talks with activists. There is some kind of worker protection for members.”

According to IDEA’s figures, as of July 2011 there were 839 members of IDEA in the following informal types of work:

- Cart pullers: 355, roughly 90% are male;
- Motorbike: 381, most are men, approximately 1 woman;
- Taxi driver: 21, most men, approximately 2 women;
- Sellers: 29, most women;
- Beer Promotion/Karaoke: 45, all women;

- 3 wheel motorbike taxi: 8, all men.

When interviewed, many cart pullers described a tough financial situation and did not make enough money to meet their daily needs. Identified as a possible reason for the low number of cart puller memberships, this was discussed with IDEA. IDEA responded by simply stating the 20 THB fee was not too much considering the benefits they offered. According to IDEA, when new members have explained the fees are too high, IDEA provides a breakdown: it is less than 1 THB per day. In addition, IDEA promotes their location as a benefit, because the office is located in the most densely populated area in Poipet, only a few minutes from the border and they have full-time staff available for those in need. However, for how good the benefits appeared to be, it was striking how few cart pullers and porters had heard of the Association. Of all cart puller and porters interviewed, the only 3/25 that were aware of and had membership to IDEA were those cart pullers organised by IDEA for the focus group discussion; all other respondents had not heard of the Association. Cart pullers and porters could benefit greatly by joining IDEA for the medical insurance and mediation services.

IDEA estimates the number of cart pullers and porters working in Poipet to be more than double the size of their membership, but they had no information pertaining to child cart pullers or porters, due to the illegal nature of child labour. According to IDEA, children do not work in this industry, however observations and NGO reports on child labour and IO research data suggest a different reality.

#### **4.5 Migrant Cart Pullers and Porters Living and Working at Poipet**

The state has failed many rural Cambodians and that failure has created circumstances that have pressured many to move in search of an environment where their limited skills and lack of education are not insurmountable barriers to finding work. Poipet is known in Cambodia for having jobs available in the Thai-Cambodia SEZ for

low-skilled and undereducated people. Rapid urban transformations contribute to the perception of wealth at the border. This perception is reinforced by a lack of overt poverty where casinos and large infrastructure development projects push the poor and slum-dwellers out of sight. Urban policies and planning marginalise the growing migrant populations, and economic security is increasingly difficult to obtain combined with the social stigmas attached to frontier work, creates a population denied opportunities for social integration.

Poipet has drawn to itself a disproportionate number of rural migrants when compared to the pre-economic boom. Much of Poipet's population is low-skilled and undereducated, a mix of migrants drawn to Poipet in search of work rather than a place to live and settle and many migrants report going to Poipet with the intent to only stay for a short period of time. Despite this aspiration, the dream of making enough to return to rural life wealthier than when they left often withers over. Thus intentions are often in direct conflict with the realities of migration, employment and economic insecurity, contributing to a collective difficulty with assimilation and the building strong social networks (CDRI, 2007: 9: online).

#### **4.5.1 Cart Pullers and Porters' Social and Community Integration**

Questions about how cart pullers and porters relate to others were central to the research and provide indicators of social connectivity and personal security among migrant populations residing at Poipet.

One of research questions related specifically to social bonds and community integration. When cart pullers and porters were asked whom they socialized with, what they did in their off time and who they interacted with, most described superficial interactions regarding their work, which included rental shop and market owners, other

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· Appendix B, Questions FGN1 - FGN7.



cart pullers and officials. In an interview that took place on 29 June 2011, one cart puller revealed,

“I do not know anyone here except family. We live near here [indicated slum] and we work all the time to provide for the family. In my day I get [rent] the cart and then go to work, sometimes there is chitchat among others while we wait in line at the border. I do my work and then I come home.”

In terms of social lives after work, male cart pullers and porters indicated they enjoyed relaxing with a drink, but their descriptions did not indicate that they were social:

“There is not much for me to do when I finish work. Sometimes I finish work early, if there are no more loads to make that day. So I come home, sometimes I have a small [alcoholic] drink alone after work” (Interview, 4 July 2011).

Women cart pullers and porters spent off-work hours looking after the family through cooking and childcare. On 28 June 2011, a 43-year-old female cart puller explained what she did in her free time:

“I only work. My husband is sick so he does not work a lot, and I have 4 children to support, they are 2, 3, 12, 17 and I am pregnant with one more. My oldest child works in the garments industry and between us, we have to support the family. I start to work in the morning, I collect items in the Poipet market [old railway] all day and then I go home; that is all.”

Younger groups of respondents between the ages of 12 and 18 reported working or school as primary activities in their lives and taking up much of their free time.<sup>·</sup> When asked what they do after school, children indicated they work or help their families work; and when asked what they do after or before work, they stated they were in school. Five children that were not enrolled in any form of formal or non-formal education program reported doing multiple jobs, depending on what was available to them that day.<sup>·</sup> Multiple forms of work included cart pulling, car parking, umbrella holding, and scavenging. During an interview on 7 July 2011 with one child (non-cart puller or porter) from the Goutte d-Eau – Damnok Toek NFE program, a 14-year-old boy, whose job outside of school was to scavenge, provided insight to his extracurricular activities:

“My work is to scavenge and I go to school in the afternoon [from 13:30-16:15]. In the mornings, before school, I have to go to work [scavenge]. Then after school I go home. Sometimes after school and on weekends I will join my friends and go to the Thai Market [Rong Kleu Market] and we scavenge there; we take the small crossing behind K1 [unofficial border].”

All economically active children expressed their income was required and they were encouraged to work by their family members. All respondents, regardless of age, worked to help support their families. There were a few people that expressed high debt as the reason they worked. On 9 July 2011, a 12-year-old male cart puller who worked alongside his mother for the past two years, described his situation:

“I attend government school [formal education system] but I also have to work. When I am not in school my mother and I work together because we have to work together to pay back debt for the farm that is in pawn. I want to help my mother,

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<sup>·</sup> This could demonstrate a flaw in the design of research questions, as questions for youth and children were structured around school and work, therefore they were not specifically asked ‘what do you do for fun,’ which may have elicited different, less guided answers.

<sup>·</sup> Appendix B, Questions C1, 14, 15, 23 & 25.

so I work hard. After work at night we come here [roundabout in Poipet] and wait for others, then we [other children who have also gathered at the roundabout] talk and play before we go home.”

In addition to supporting the family, one child explained that his job supported his studies, then contradicted himself moments later stating that he no longer attended school.

To gain a better understanding of respondent’s migration situations and the role migration plays in their level of social integration, questions regarding domestic migration, whether their families migrated with them, and where they live in Poipet were also asked. Based on feedback from all cart pullers and porters, 25/25 migrated to Poipet from other areas within Banteay Meanchey province or from other provinces in Cambodia, and all but one cart puller had family members in Poipet. Many of the cart pullers and porters resided in some of the most densely populated areas in Poipet (Refer to areas K1 and K2 on Figure 3.2).

On one rainy day, one 50-year-old male cart puller spoke of the close living quarters in the slum area, the mainly migrant population, and its impact on community:

“I came to Poipet from Prey Veng Province 7 years ago and my wife and children live here too. We do not know many people and many people move away quickly. We live here [indicated slum area]. It is too close [compact] and dirty. There is no pavement, so when it rains there is too much mud. There are few toilets, so the ground is soiled. Nobody is responsible for the unsafe and unsanitary conditions here” (Interview, 29 June 2011).

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· Appendix B, Questions D2, F2, FGN5, SFD19.

Although many migrants live in close proximity to one another, this does not seem to facilitate any close relationships to others. A family of 5 cart pullers provided some insight on this issue. They were interviewed while they took a mid-day break on 4 July 2011, and were content to engage in an in-depth discussion about their lives and work. The family included two adults, ages 42 and 43, along with their 3 children, two boys ages 14 and 17, and a 3-year old girl.

“The two older ones [boys aged 14 and 17] go to school, but before and after school they help us with work. We always work as a family, because it is not safe for the children to be alone at home [slum area]. We prefer to work together because there is nobody to watch over the children.”

Findings concerning social cohesion and community ties among cart pullers and porters tended to show a lack of community-mindedness, group solidarity, and a lack of social consciousness. There was a degree of dependence, in that they were forced to depend on the market for food and labour, but many respondents appeared had a sense of individualistic-minded goals without social support. These factors influence social relationships among one another. Without these built relationships and communities, the social experience tends to be isolated and lack of a sense of community security.

## **4.5.2 Cart Puller and Porter Risk & Security**

### **4.5.2.1 Personal Security**

To uncover a level of risk and security experienced by cart pullers and porters, questions aimed at revealing if and how they dealt with any kind of violence or abuse while conducting their work. Findings described how cart pullers and porters

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· The 3-year old child was not included as a worker within the study.

experienced, understood and addressed issues of personal security in their every day, cross-border work.

Questions pertaining to personal security included perceived levels of safety and on-the-job personal security in their work. The majority, 19/25, cart pullers and porters self-rated their work as “safe,” while 6/25 indicated they have experienced “dangerous” conditions. Self-identified types of danger included the impact of the intensely heavy work on their bodies; health issues due to the poor environment (lung & breathing difficulties); and the personal security risks arising from a lack of knowledge of Thai language, laws, and the fees on both sides of the border. 23/25 of cart pullers and porters expressed having a “good” or “ok” relationship with border officials with the condition they obey laws and do not hide goods in their cart. One cart puller described this condition,

“It is a good relationship with them [border officials] they let us cross the border in a certain way and we must follow the rules [referring to lining up, displaying Immigration Card and paying the 10 THB fee]. Sometimes some cart pullers will hide items in the bottom of the cart that have high customs fees [certain packaged items transported from Thailand into Cambodia], if this is found they get into big trouble [asked to describe “trouble”...I don’t do that, so I don’t know what exactly happens to them, probably pay [unofficial] fees [in addition to customs]” (Interview, 3 July 2011).

As many migrants at Poipet have few social ties and have already taken the risk to move once, they more likely to move again and less averse to the risks associated with an additional move. Residing along the border, being poor, uneducated and desperate for work are factors that contribute to increased vulnerability to physical violence and crime. According to UNIAP, most cases of human trafficking occur along the major highways

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· Appendix B, Questions W1-7, C1-3, R1-3, & FGW1.

(2010a: xviii) and the perception of economic opportunity in Thailand compared with the lack of opportunities in Cambodia put frontier workers at risk of trafficking and exploitation, particularly young frontier workers. To further demonstrate this, Goutte d'Eau – Damnok Toek Program Advisor states “[e]xtreme poverty has led Poipet to evolve into a hotbed of social ills at all imaginable levels: trafficking of persons, the commercial and sexual exploitation of children, substance abuse, prostitution, domestic violence, rampant HIV-AIDS, land-grabbing and encroaching, smuggling, and corruption at all levels are part of everyday life in Poipet (Le Mouellic, 2009: 8).

CTCO confirmed that many cart pullers and porters are at risk of arrest and official deportation for two reasons. First, because many frontier workers that cross using the Immigration Card do not return. CTCO estimates that up to 200 people per day cross into the Rong Kleu Market using the Immigration Card and 10 THB ticket and do not return. CTCO reported that many migrants are crossing using the cheapest way to legally get across the border (in comparison to the Border Pass, which costs 70 THB per crossing), with the intention on not returning into Cambodia that same day, as is required with the Immigration Card. As for cart pullers and porters crossing, CTCO reported that many attempt to save the 10 THB crossing fee and opt to sleep in the Rong Kleu Market. Their illegal status, lack of documentation, lack of knowledge of Thai language and laws, and desperation for work puts many cart pullers and porters at risk (Interview, 30 July 2011).

A high level of personal safety was indicated by child cart pullers and porters, between the ages of 10 and 14 years, when asked about safety and risks involved in their work. These questions surrounded the idea of if and how anyone has tried to stop them from working, which border crossing they use (official or unofficial) and why, and whether they think cart pulling and portering is dangerous to them. Many children indicated there was safety in numbers, and stated, “it is safe; I work with my friends” or

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· Appendix B Questions SP/C15-18.

“I do not work alone.” Felt safety existed because of children’s social networks and the idea that there was safety in numbers. All four of the cart pullers and porters between the ages of 10 – 14 worked with family members or friends, or have had family members help maneuver the cart through the border gates due to their age (under age/child labour workers).

On the other hand, youth cart pullers and porters aged 15 and older that worked alone and without the support of friends or family indicated less personal security. This finding is not surprising due to a gap in policy coverage for youth: While under the CRC, anyone under the age of 18 should be protected from economic exploitation and performing any type of hazardous work (Article 32). The reality for youth at Poipet is that their economic contributions to the family income is both expected and needed. Many youths reported having a poor relationship with border guards and officials. Grievances stem from incidents where officials would try to stop youths from working due to their age with little sympathy for the pressures they felt from a family that required their income.

During one interview with a 14-year-old male cart puller, he described his relationship with border officials:

“I don’t consider my relationship with authorities good because they dismiss me and send me back to Cambodia. They don’t allow me to cross because I am too young. Some authorities are kind because they sympathise because I have no choice but to work; I have to work, so I need to cross the border...Sometimes I have to get help from my mother in order to get my cart across past the authorities” (Interview, 4 July 2011).

To determine a relationship between a sense of personal security and hours worked, respondents were asked to describe their working hours and the conditions in

which they work. Obtaining this information provided insight on cart pullers and porters' sense of freedom and control over one's own time. Generally working hours for cart pullers and porters were reported as consistent with the hours of the border, which opens daily from 07:30 – 20:00h. For hours worked most cart pullers reported that their hours were too long to be working in the extreme heat. Linking elements of personal and economic security were questions about salary, how they were paid (daily, weekly, per cartload) and whether they were satisfied with the amount they were paid. Among respondents there was an overwhelming response that they do not feel like they have a choice or other options. Indicated by 15/25 cart pullers and porters on questions of hours worked, a type of loads (heavy or light/type of goods), general safety, and rate of pay, the reply was often, "There is no choice for me. I have no experience and no education; this is the only work I can do...no choice" (Interview, 28 June 2011).

There were no reported instances of work-related physical abuse among cart pullers and porters from any age. Further, few reported instances where they felt personal insecurity. However, feedback from cart pullers and porters is far from suggesting a high level of personal security. Many cart pullers and porters expressed a lack of options to engage in any other type of job or to work shorter hours. Although many cart pullers and porters appear to be resigned to doing this work, a lack of choice was clearly expressed when answering questions concerning personal security and safety, this indicates a level of personal security to be missing.

#### **4.5.2.2 Economic Security**

Collecting information on economic security among cart pullers and porters aimed at the exploration of whether income meets or exceeds the basic needs of an individual or family, if job security and fair wages for the work exist, and whether people

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· Appendix B, Questions W3-4, SC4-5.

· Appendix B, Questions 1-2, C3, R1-2.



with disabilities have access to this form of work. When asked to rate issues related to economic security, cart pullers and porters reported that their daily wages did not meet their basic needs to support themselves and their families. All cart puller family sizes ranged from 4 – 8 people and the daily wage reported was between 100 – 300 baht per day (3 – 10 US\$). Cart pullers and porters of all ages indicated that it was not a regular or predictable wage and that most days they did not make the upper range; 300 THB was the exception. According to one male cart puller in his 40s, he explained:

“Usually I make about 100 or 200 baht a day. After I pay fees [customs and 10 THB pass] I take home less. Sometimes I don’t make enough [to cover daily expenses].” He explained smiling, “Occasionally I make about 300 baht, and I hope for days like that, but usually not” (Interview, 4 July 2011).

When all 25 cart puller and porter participants were asked questions about their salary in comparison to covering the cost of their daily requirements, 10 adult cart pullers said they did not make enough money to support their families, which was the largest factor in urging children to work and contribute economically. 12 child and youth cart pullers said they contribute to the family income but that there is not always enough money to pay bills or buy enough food. While 3 cart pullers indicated they make enough money. It is interesting to note that the 3 cart pullers that indicated that they made enough money were older (40+) and their family income consisted of two or more adult earners.

A majority of cart pullers and porters explained that many of their daily expenses could not be met. 19/25 of cart pullers indicated that some days they did not even make enough money to cover daily fees associated with cart rentals. Wooden carts rent for

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· Appendix B, Questions E1-4.

· Seasonal factors may influence items sold at the market and wage. Due to this research as a snapshot in time, seasonal factors relating to wage are not taken into consideration.

approximately 25-40 THB (0.83-1.33US\$) per day, which is negotiable depending on the size and quality of the cart. When cart and dolly rental shop owners were interviewed, they confirmed this. In one late afternoon interview with a cart rental owner she explained,

“Sometimes they [cart pullers] have to negotiate too much when they pay. I don’t want to know how much [money] they make, it is too low I think. Sometimes there is a problem with the payment – they can’t pay and need to wait 1 week or 2 weeks for payment, and by then the price seems much more; sometimes I have to give a discount. Occasionally when someone has not made enough money for a long time they abandon the cart far away [within 1 kilometer of the border and cart-shop], but then I know I will not rent a cart to them again. They will need to find another shop to rent [from]” (Interview, 28 June 2011).

Other cart and dolly rental shop owners indicated that many times cart pullers and porters would not return the cart or would in some way cheat the rental shop due to an inability to pay the cart or dolly rental fees.

Additional economic insecurity was attributed to the unexplained fees required by officials on both sides of the border.<sup>7</sup> All cart pullers and porters reported problems understanding the fees owed to customs officials for certain items being carried across the border. While it was well understood that fees were paid on certain items such as packaged goods from Thailand, the amount to be paid was not standardized or predictable. One cart puller explained this situation:

“When I cross the border and authorities ask for more money, I try not to pay but sometimes I have to. If they ask me for 50 baht, I will try to pay less, maybe 10

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<sup>7</sup> Appendix B, Questions P2-3.

baht. Sometimes they threaten to confiscate the cart but then you just get held [detained] until you pay some fee” (Interview, 4 July 2011).

Another cart puller expressed a situation where he was carrying used stereo speakers across the border, which he planned to sell in Cambodia. However, officials from both sides of the border demanded so much money for taking the electronic equipment across the border, his profit from a full day of cross border movement and negotiations resulted in a 10 THB (0.33 US\$) profit) (29 June 2011). Stories like this were common and added to the very clear impression that there was no shared understanding of what constituted legitimate and non-legitimate fees.

People with disabilities also work as cross-border labourers. Many carts are designed for hand-cycle to accommodate the high numbers of people with disabilities suffered from landmines, a tragic reminder of past conflicts in Cambodia. Within this study, one cart puller with a physical disability was interviewed. While he worked, he took part in the interview and excitedly explained:

“I am disabled, see [pointed to his amputated leg]. I am still able to work long hours [07:00-19:00h]; I have the cart that I use with my arms. For me, because of my disability the 10 THB fee is waived, so I can cross the border without paying! Sometimes officials on both sides of the border ask for extra fees. In Cambodia they demand for a small fee and the Thai officials demand for a bigger fee, sometimes I cannot pay” (Interview, 28 June 2011).

According to this man, his missing leg did not hinder his work. And, from an economic perspective, as indicated by this cart puller, his disability was an advantage because he was not required to pay the 10 THB crossing fee. On the other hand, he was required to pay another person to help push his cart when the load size was sometimes too heavy for him to hand-wheel. His cart load the day of his interview stood as an

example. He had to pay the salary of another man to help him with a cartload of grasshoppers packed in ice headed through the border to the Rong Kleu Market.

#### **4.5.2.3 Child and Youth Security at Poipet**

The ILO considers cart pulling and portering a Worst Form of Child Labour (WFFCL). What appears to be working against meeting goals to end child labour and the WFCL are high rates of child labour and low rates of formal education among youth. Within Poipet there are numerous NGOs with a mandate to eliminate child labour and encourage formal or non-formal education on a part time basis.

All twelve of the child and youth cart pullers and porters between the ages of 10-17 said they began working because their parents or family needed them to contribute economically to a household income. Officials' efforts to stop child labour and WFCL have been thwarted as child workers reported pleading with officials to allow them to work and if the guards do not sympathise and allow them to continue working, they turn to a family member to help them and their cart across the border. In an in-depth interview with the Deputy Chief of O'Chrov District on 2 July 2011, an optimistic viewpoint was given,

“There are many organisations working to end child labour and the worst forms of child labour in Poipet. The network [Border Issues Group for Children (BIG-C)] has been working towards ending child labour in Poipet by 2012 and end the worst forms of child labour in Poipet and all of Cambodia by 2016. We made a bigger challenge for us at Poipet, because it is a big issue here.

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· Appendix G depicts cart puller with a disability and his helper.

· Appendix B, Questions SC4, 5, 10, 11.

It is difficult to monitor the situation at the border, and we try to create awareness to parents of children, border officials by [NGO] programming, posters [and billboards] and through loudspeaker at the border, because parents send their children to work in these hazardous forms of labour, and officials let them cross; this has to change. The problem is that many children and youth do not have parents or they have single parents and the child is required to work. Although we may not make the 2012 goal to end child labour at Poipet, we will try. And if we don't make it, we will try again for 2013 (Deputy Chief O'Chrov District and President of Civil Society Network Against Child Labour (CNSACL), Interview, 2 July 2011).

The Manager of the Poipet Transit Centre (PTC) in Poipet, agreed that the situation was difficult and complex,

“Child labour is effectively being stopped, or reduced significantly, through the main road [official border], but it has not stopped children and youth from using smaller crossings, this is also a problem. When you go to the back of the market [Rong Kleu Market] you see many children working, it is difficult because the bosses know the law but they need the child labour rate, so they break the law and benefit by earning a higher income when they hire children. Nobody goes far into the back of the market, so the problem is not targeted there” (Interview, 27 June 2011).

Many of the child cart pullers and porters recognize that they receive family encouragement to work. This is evident in the practice of family members providing help getting children and youth cart pullers and porters past border guard officials that try to stop them from working. In an attempt to avoid scrutiny when stopped by officials, many underage children show a piece of fake identification indicating they are 16 years old. Other common ways for child workers to get around laws include to using an unofficial

border crossing, or renting a cart or dolly when already across the border inside the Rong Kleu Market (Interview, 20 July 2011).

#### **4.6 Cart Puller and Porter Networks**

Traditionally the idea of community relates to a population, place or location, which is often a shared space with people in similar socio-economic statuses, and often described as having ‘a sense of community’ or closeness with others. Communities can also offer a level of protection. Within the living areas common to cart pullers and porters, many observed commonalities could be found. Most have migrated from elsewhere for many of the same reasons, most have the same style of housing, most make roughly the same amount of money, and most work in the same types of jobs. However, these commonalities do not necessarily create feelings of cohesion and in fact, may do the opposite. As many cart pullers and porters plan on only short-term stays at Poipet, it is treated as a temporary living space. This prevents efforts to develop a sense of community, the creation of social bonds, and investment into their lives at this location. Instead, relationships are built around their needs to function effectively as frontier workers. Located next to the slum area where many informal workers reside, IDEA could be a prominent actor in terms of creating a work-related community among migrant frontier workers in general, and cart pullers and porters in particular. Aside from three respondents IDEA gathered to participate in this study, no other cart puller or porter knew of the Association.

During a focus group discussion, three male cart pullers in their 40s discussed relationships necessary to do their work rather than build community. They indicated that good relationships and pre-arranged cartloads with market owners were important to cart pullers and porters. One stated,

“If I can deliver the items safely and quickly that is good for me, they will continue to hire me to transport the goods” (Interview, 29 June 2011).

According to this group, establishing a relationship meant a stable income, plus the market owner was more likely to pay known cart pullers and porters more to ensure the security of the goods being transported. In addition, they took the security of the cartload very seriously, as it was a key factor in maintaining work relationships, which would result in steady work. When asked about referring work to another cart puller, if he was too busy with his regular loads, there was a momentary silence, and then one man calmly explained,

“I cannot pass up the opportunity to work or give someone else a job. I would find a way to do the job myself, I would not refer someone else” (3 cart pullers from Focus Group Discussion (FGD), 29 June 2011).

To a certain extent, this represents a need for cart pullers to be more individualistic as they cannot afford to share possible extra work. However, in terms of safety, members from this focus group did express a level of community among one another, stating that if they witnessed another cart puller having a problem with officials on the Cambodian side of the border they may try and offer help or assistance. Offering help or assistance was specific to the Cambodian side and it was agreed that they would not offer help or assistance to another cart puller or porter on the Thai side of the border due to vague understanding of language, rules and laws that may cause problems for them.

#### **4.7 Conclusion**

Economic insecurity appears to be the largest concern among cart pullers. Pushed to Poipet with economic aspirations, cart pullers and porters find themselves struggling

within new urban environments. Contributing to this, many cart pullers and porters came to Poipet on a temporary basis, therefore developing meaningful relationships does not appear to be a concern. In addition, pulling carts and portering is considered one of the lowest-rated and least desired types of work; therefore one may not take great pride in their work or developing social or work networks.

High levels of work-related personal security were reported by children. Youth did however describe more risk than adults though this was primarily related to border officials preventing them from working due to their age. All child and youth cart pullers and porters reported starting work because their parents or family needed the income. Families in need of additional economic support urge children to work. At the same time, adult respondents identified risks that included health problems related to pollution and too heavy workloads for children, issues of corruption, undocumented status and deportation – all of these were self-identified as dangers to this work. Contradicting this, most cart pullers and porters considered their work to be safe. In addition to this, other social aspects at Poipet negatively influence children's lives. High instances of drug abuse among children and human trafficking are prevalent at the Poipet border.

Cross-border regulations pertaining to child labour and standardised fees are not enforced. Often regulations are undermined by corruption, which allow for officials “turn[ing] a blind eye” to important issues like illegal crossing (Titthara and Roy, 2009: 1: online) and charging unexplained fees. In the end, the poor feel the brunt of ill-planned and/or poorly executed policies by working in dirty, dangerous and demeaning jobs (Maltoni, 200: 2: online, & CDRI, 2007: 9: online), experiencing exploitation (UNIAP, 2010a: online), or experiencing abuse from officials (Shaftel and Ana, 2003: online). These factors, along with a high migrant and transient populations do not contribute to the creation a sense of community and security at Poipet.



## **CHAPTER V**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

As demonstrated by this research on the Poipet frontier, there are many factors influencing the lives of cart pullers and porters at Poipet. This chapter will review the initial research questions and the case, provide a summary of findings and recommendations, and conclude the thesis with an overall summary.

#### **5.2 Case Study in Review**

Three questions were posed at the outset of this paper. The main research question was what are the major security concerns frontier workers face, how are the lives of cart pullers and porters impacted by personal and economic security conditions, and how can the lives of cart pullers and porters be made more secure? The two sub-questions supporting the research were: what social and livelihood realities exist for cart pullers and porters, are those realities supported by labour migration policies and laws, and do these policies and laws offer them protection? And what are the informal support networks used by the cart pullers for security?

The main objectives of this research were to describe the effects of personal and economic security, migration and the cross-border transport of goods through the daily interactions of cart pullers; to understand how labour and migration policies affect the lives and facilitate work at the Aranyaprathet-Poipet border, particularly by studying cart pullers and porters who cross the border on a daily basis; to describe the effects of

personal and economic security, migration and the cross-border transport of goods through the daily interactions of cart pullers; and to map and examine social relationships, networks and everyday labour practices among cart pullers and porters; and to contribute to academic and practical research pools on migration, human security and child labour by using cart pullers and porters as a case study.

This information helps to develop a more complete picture of real-life conditions and, labour practices surrounding short-term cross-border workers at Poipet. Aided by literature review, data was collected through qualitative methods and describe the lives of frontier workers at Poipet through a case study on cart pullers and porters.

### **5.3 Summary of Findings**

Cart pullers and porters at the Poipet border have low levels of education, they are poor, and many have migrated domestically to the Poipet border and limited social support networks exist among community and through institutions. Cart pullers and porters are viewed as inferior, and frequent cases of extortion and corruption have been reported. Cart pullers and porters do not explicitly express personal insecurity, however the lack of choice does indicate this. High rates of economic insecurity were found, which is the leading factor in sending children and youth to work in hazardous forms of labour.

#### **5.3.1 Networks**

Frontier workers at Poipet are largely domestic migrants who also migrate internationally on a short-term basis while conducting their daily work between Poipet and Aranyaprathet. This case study found that all cart pullers and porters had migrated domestically with the aim of staying in Poipet temporarily to make enough money to return to their home location. Findings also show that over time, frontier workers become

detached from their origin/home, and although not intended, many stay at the frontier for extended periods of time for two reasons. The first reason they stay is because they do not make enough money to save, and second, even if dissatisfied with their income levels, they at least have employment in Poipet.

When living in Poipet many cart pullers and porters experience a lack of social integration and inclusion within their new environment. They tend to remain disconnected for long periods of time while living in Poipet. Limited social ties can be attributed to the transient nature of the migrant population at Poipet. In addition to weak social integration and social inclusion, there is also a weak sense of community responsibility. Cart pullers and porters also expressed that ownership and responsibility over one's community area was rare, and institutional support mechanisms minimal.

### **5.3.2 Policy**

The MOU on the Facilitation of Cross-border Transportation of Goods and People (2005), which outlines transport and manual labour regulations for the transport of goods, and Sub-decree 148 on the Establishment and Management of the Special Economic Zone (2005), which outlines that 90% of a business' labour force within SEZs must be from Cambodia. These two policies have the most direct impact on the day-to-day lives of cart pullers and porters at Poipet.

The informal labour, such as cart pulling and portering was described to be work that is conducted by “ the working poor who put in long hours for low incomes and yet were not recognized, recorded, protected or regulated by public authorities (ILO, 2002, cited in Morris: 47: online). There are no specific guidelines or regulations for short-term cross-border labour migration and work within national policies in either Thailand or Cambodia. The nearest thing to a formal policy controls Border Pass or Immigration Card permits which regulate length of stay and distance of movement within Thailand.

### 5.3.3 Child and Youth Labour

In Poipet, child labour has been studied as a practice unto itself rather than using the same approach and standards applied to the study of labour among adult workers. This is necessary due to the different laws, policies, and IO and NGO programming focuses that have been applied specifically to children. The role of civil society at Poipet has influenced positive change in terms of ending the WFCL at the border. These concerted joint efforts by IOs, NGOs, GOs and officials have been developed to keep children from working in hazardous forms of labour like cart pulling and portering at the Poipet border.

Officials, community members, and cart pullers and porters demonstrated an awareness of laws and programming efforts aimed to prevent WFCL and border guards were reported to make attempts to enforce the law and stop child and youth cart pullers from working. Children engaged in these kinds of labour would, however, either plead for sympathy and understanding in attempts to persuade officials to turn a blind eye; or obtain parental and family help to maneuver the cart across the border.

Formal and non-formal education programs have been designed to support part-time learning, which is in accordance to the CRC (Article 28) and the Cambodian Labour Law (Article 177, 4b). However, most jobs that are available and accessible to children at Poipet fall into the WFCL categories. Jobs commonly available to children include cart pulling and portering, scavenging and begging – all lines of employment that would leave child frontier workers more vulnerable due to the hazards inherent to these types of work. In addition, higher numbers of children cross the international border into Thailand illegally through unofficial border crossings and without documentation. Most have limited education and speak little, if any, Thai. This puts children at further risk of deportation, abuse, extortion, or the more extreme risk of trafficking.

## **5.4 Recommendations**

The focus on infrastructure and regional market development and cross-border business and trade between Cambodia and Thailand have been supported and promoted by regional and bilateral agreements. This support is evident in the development of the SEZ and has worked to the benefit of many businesses along the Poipet border. These efforts have also resulted in a powerful draw for Cambodians with limited education to migrate for low-skilled labour jobs, such as cart pulling and portering. However, considerable and well-entrenched problems persist for migrant frontier workers at Poipet. Based on findings within the areas of migration, networks, human security and child labour specific to cart pullers and porters at Poipet, the following 5 recommendations are suggested.

### **5.4.1 Increased Regulation on Manual Labour at Poipet**

Regulation of cross-cross border manual labour at Poipet is imperative. First, there is a need to develop a mutually acceptable definition of 'frontier work' between Cambodia and Thailand with explicit descriptions of the types of work frontier workers would perform. Second, it is necessary to establish a base-line salary for cross-border workers within the SEZ.

#### **5.4.1.1 Definition of Frontier Work**

A definition of frontier work should be incorporated into national legislation in Cambodia and Thailand. This definition should be developed and agreed-upon by both countries to ensure harmonization in both definition and in practices that would regulate this underserved category of labourer. This mutually agreed-to definition is crucial since frontier work is by nature cross-border work. The definition should be explicit in how it

articulates the following: harmonized definition between both countries; typology of jobs; procedures on cross-border passes (Border Pass and/or Immigration Card); procedures outlining destination locations and boundaries.

#### **5.4.1.2 Manual Labour Base-line Salary**

Outlined in Chapter 6, titled “Labor Force” in Sub-decree 148, on the Establishment and Management of the Special Economic Zone (2005), 90% of the labour force working within SEZs must be a Cambodian citizen. Companies operating within the SEZ must also follow the labour standards outlined in the Cambodian Labour Law (1997). At the border, the MOU on the Facilitation of Cross-border Transportation of Goods and People (2005) has been enacted, which outlines regulation on limited vehicle transport and the promotion of manual labour for the transport of goods across the border. Missing from all three policies are regulations related to wage insecurities identified by cart pullers and porters at Poipet.

Based on research findings, a need for increased economic security was determined. It is recommended that the large and predominantly international companies moving goods across the border be required to pay standardized salaries. There is a large number of manual labourers participating in the cross-border manual transport of these goods. There should be exploration of a base level or minimum salary regulation, which should then be prescribed to ensure economic security among cart pullers and porters working at Poipet.

#### **5.4.2 Increased Social Networks for Migrant Labourers at Poipet**

Based on findings, it is clear that the increase of social networks is a way to increase personal and economic security among cart pullers and porters. First, increased membership of cart pullers and porter to IDEA. And second, increased collaboration

between IDEA with IOs and GOs that currently implement projects among vulnerable populations at Poipet.

#### **5.4.2.1 Increased membership to Independent Democracy of Informal Economy Association (IDEA) for personal and economic security**

An increased network connecting actors in the informal labour economy at Poipet would provide existing migrant workers and newcomers with work-related services and protection mechanisms, as well as expand communities of cart pullers and porters socially. Located less than 100 meters from the border, IDEA offers informal labourers and migrant workers social support, mediation and dispute services and health insurance for 20 THB per month. Increased levels of personal and economic security were widely reported among cart pullers and porters who held memberships with IDEA. Currently, less than half of cart pullers and porters working at Poipet are members of IDEA. Focused recruiting and expansion of membership in IDEA would yield a broader and more diverse membership, create a more informed labour base, and extend and improve the reach and flow of information between cart pullers and porters.

#### **5.4.2.2 IO, GO and IDEA Collaboration**

Increased partnership opportunities between IOs, GOs and IDEA should be explored and developed. Currently IO and GO development programs focus attention on the reduction of vulnerabilities among child and youth workers at Poipet. IDEA offers mediation support, social networking opportunities and insurance to cart pullers and porters. Joint efforts to promote services offered by IDEA, through development programming, would broaden member scope and, in turn, benefit families socially and economically; thus positively affecting children and youth living and working at Poipet.

### **5.4.3 Exploration of Customs and Fees Regulation**

In part, economic insecurity can be attributed to unexplained fees in the day-to-day routines of the work of cart pullers and porters. Findings also indicate an overwhelming lack of information on the official fees cart pullers and porters were responsible for paying when crossing the border. It is therefore recommended that further exploration of legitimate and non-legitimate fees needs to be conducted in order to provide better information on fees charged at the border to those responsible for paying the fees – the cart pullers and porters. The gaps in knowledge currently include: (1) who gets charged; (2) what items are being charged; and (3) amount charged per type of good. This information should be relayed to cross-border manual labourers.

### **5.4.4 Identification of Child-Friendly Labour and Regulations at Poipet**

It is recommended that safe forms of labour for children and youth be identified by building on the Cambodian legislation on child and youth labourers that protects children from harmful types of work.<sup>1</sup> Efforts should be made to expand this legislation in order to protect the high number of child and youth labourers working at Poipet.<sup>2</sup> At Poipet, the predominant form of work is manual-labour related, largely due to laws and policies surrounding cross-border trade, development of SEZs, and restriction of vehicles to move goods across the border.<sup>3</sup> As cart pulling and portering exist as informal and unregulated forms of work, they are considered to be hazardous for children and are categorized as a WFCL.

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<sup>1</sup> The absolute minimum age to begin light forms of work is set between 12-14 years of age; while, the Cambodian Labour Law set the minimum age for employment at 15. To perform hazardous types of work, defined by the ILO, the minimum age is 18.

<sup>2</sup> 2008 the ILO reported that approximately 11,100 children continue to work in WFCL at Poipet; of those 3000 were estimated to be working in cross-border portering (ILO: v).

<sup>3</sup> Sub-decree No. 148 on the Establishment and Management of the Special Economic Zone (2005) and the MOU on the Facilitation of Cross-border Transport of Goods and People (2005).



The identification of safe forms of labour for children between the ages of 12-15 and youth between the ages of 15-18 should include regulations for the following: First, the size of cart or dolly the child handles should be manageable for a 12-15 year old child; second, the weight of the approved sized cart or dolly should not exceed a certain weight (dependent on ILO standards of “light” and “hazardous” forms of work); third, base-salaries should be established for child and youth workers; and fourth, mechanism to promote and regulate child-friendly work while children and youth attend a minimum attendance of school on a part-time basis. For example, children and youth that display their school ID or a ‘Children’s Immigration Card’ receive the benefit to work;

Government and border guards should also have responsibilities to ensure safety of children and monitor the situation by providing water stations at the border for workers. As well, performing random cart-weight check and random market checks to ensure market owners follow established guidelines. To initiate the identification of child-friendly labour, market incentives could be developed. These incentives would be aimed at market owners to hire children under this scheme, perhaps by providing child-friendly certification, CSR, or monetary incentives.

#### **5.4.5 Further Research**

There are many knowledge gaps in critical research of frontier workers that work between Cambodia and Thailand due to a lack of research or development programs directed at short-term cross-border migrant labourers. These gaps present rich opportunities for building a more complete understanding of both a way of life and a system that informs policies that could reduce and limit exploitation of this group of underserved labourers. Two additional research focuses have been identified for further study.

First, it would be beneficial to conduct a comparative study between two types of frontier labour who employ differing border-crossing practices. One useful comparison could be made between cart pullers that using the Immigration Card to cross the international border daily, and agricultural workers using the Border Pass to cross the international border for up to 7 days. The comparison should strive to map differences and similarities between these groups.

Second, a longitudinal study on domestic migration from rural to border locations would help to understand the situation of migration that relate to the situation of frontier workers working through the Poipet-Aranyaprathet border.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

The lives of cart pullers and porters could be enhanced and made more secure if policies had clear definitions and outlined regulation on short-term cross-border work, which is so common for frontier workers at Poipet. Policies should be developed and leveraged to acknowledge and improve this tenuous way of life. Economic and personal security risks do exist for cart pullers and porters at the Poipet border. Personal insecurity and vulnerabilities were more common to children and youth than were expressed by adults, but all age groups experience significant economic insecurity and instability.

Through policy regulation, exploration of fees regulation, and increased networks and protection mechanisms through IOs and IDEA, cart pullers and porters would experience significant improvement in their quality of life as it relates to personal and economic security.

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## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A Stakeholder Profile

Code   Org.	# of people	Age	Sex	Occupation	Origin	Method
<b>Government Officials (GO)</b>						
Deputy Chief O'Chrov District	1			Deputy Chief O'Chrov District; Community Monitor; President of Civil Society Network Against Child Labour (CNSACL)		1 semi structured interview
CTCO	4			Major General, Colonel, Admin, & Comms		Semi structured interview, discussion
PTC	2			Director		Semi structured interview
IRC	1			Inter-ministerial Rep.		Semi structured interview & discussion
IDEA	2			Manager, Assistant		1 unstructured and 1 semi structured interview
PTC/BVST	1			Field Coordinator		Multiple informal semi/unstructured interviews & E-mail
<b>Non-government Organisations (NGO) &amp; International Organisations (IO)</b>						
Friends Int'l TH				Aran Manager, Programming staff		Multiple semi/unstructured interviews
Goutte d'Eau – Damnok Toek				Program Advisor, Programming Staff		Multiple semi/unstructured interviews
HRW	1			Deputy Director Asia Division		Discussion, method information
ILO CB	1			Field Coordinator		1 semi structured interview, email
ILO Regional	1			Combat Labour Exploitation Expert		Interview, informal discussion
IOM Regional & Thailand	2			Program Manager		E-mail
UNIAP	1			CB Country Office		Unstructured, informal discussion
<b>Academic</b>						
Chulalongkorn				Professor		Interview, informal discussion
<b>Cart &amp; Dolly Shop Owners in Poipet</b>						
Cart/Dolly Shops	7					Semi-structured interview

<b>GROUP 1 – STREET RESPONDENT, Cart puller and Porter (Total 17 Cart pullers Interviewed)</b>						
S1	1	43	F	Cart puller	Takao	Semi-structured interview
S2	2	48	M	Cart puller	Kg Thom	married
S3	-	48	F	Cart puller	Kg Thom	
S4	1	36	M	Hand-Cart/Disable	Kandal	
S5	1	45	M	Cart	Svey Rieng	Physical disability
S6	1	17	M	Cart	Kampot	
S7	1	31	M	Cart	Sisiphan, BM	
S8	1	38	M	Cart	Prey Vang	
S9	1	37	M	Cart	-- Not BM--	
S10	1	14	M	Cart	Takeo	
S11	4	42	F	Cart	Prosat	Family: Semi structured interview, in-depth discussions.
S12	-	43	M	Cart	Same	
S13	-	14	M	Cart/help	Same	
S14	-	17	M	Cart/help	Same	
FG15	3	48	M	Cart	Battambang	FGD: Semi-structured interviews, discussion, community tour, mapping
FG16	-	43	M	Cart	Prey Vang	
FG17	-	50	M	Cart	Prey Vang	
<b>GROUP 2 – STREET RESPONDENT, Children (Total 31 Children Interviewed)</b>						
C1		14	M	Cart, scavenge, car parker	--	
C2		12	M	Beggar		
C3		15	F	Scavenge		
C4		13	M	Scavenge		
C5		13	F	Beggar		
C6		11	F	Scavenge		
C7		17	M	Service/Waiter		
C8		15	F	Food seller		
C9		14	F	Umbrella		
C10		12	F	Beggar		
C11		17	F	Landscape		
C12		13	F	--		
C13		17	F	Umbrella, scavenge		
C14		17	F	Shoe seller/repair		
C15		10	M	Beggar, Scavenge		
C16		10	M	Scavenge		
C17		13	F	Scavenge		
C18		14	M	Cart		
C19		9	F	Scavenge		
C20		14	M	Scavenge		
C21		12	M	Cart		

C22		14	F	Cart, scavenge, umbrella		
C23		14	F	Umbrella		
C24		8	F	Beggar		
C25		15	M	Cart, Umbrella		
C26		14	M	Scavenge		
C27		17	M	Scavenge		
C28		13	M	Scavenge		
C29		15	F	Cart		
C30		15	M	Shoe polisher		
C31		14	M	Scavenge		
Notes: 6/31 Child cart pullers						
<b>GROUP 3 – NFE STUDENTS, grades 4, 5, 6 (Goutte d’Eau) (Total 37 Students Interviewed)</b>						
NFE1		16	F	Cart		Ed level: Grade 4
NFE2		17	M	Cart		Ed level: Grade 3
NFE18	Among 18 children not economically active					
NFE17	Among 17 children economically active but are not cart pullers or porters					
Notes: 35/37 do not porter or pull cart; 18/37 Not Economically Active: do not work (excluding chores, helping family); 17/37 Economically Active: do other forms of work for money, same types as listed above.						

## APPENDIX B Questionnaires

Location	
Time	
Introduction to research provided	
Permission from respondent to participate acquired	
Code	Question
<b>Group 1: Street Respondent</b>	
<b>Demographic</b>	
D1	What is your age?
D2	Where are you from?
D3	Male/Female
D4	What languages do you speak?
D5	Do you need to know or understand Thai?
<b>Family Demographic</b>	
F1	How long have you lived in Poipet?
F2	Where does your family live?
F3	How many members in your family (including self)?
F4	Do they work?
F5	What is your husband/wife's job?
F6	What is your child's job?
F7	How old are your children?
<b>Economic Security</b>	
E1	How much money do you make per day?
E2	How much money do you make per load?
E3	Do you make enough to support your family? (Does your family make enough)
E4	How much would you need for it to be enough? What for?
E5	Do you send money to relatives/family in --[D2]-- province/location?
<b>Personal Security/Working Conditions</b>	
W1	Are you a member of IDEA?
W2	Do you own/rent your cart/dolly?
W3	What time do you start/finish work?
W4	How long have you been a cart puller/porter?
W5	What kind of work did you do before this? Why did you change?
W6	Do you consider your work to be dangerous?
W7	Do you feel safe doing your work?
<b>Cross Border Work</b>	
C1	Where do you collect your cartload?
C2	Where do you take your cartload?
C3	Do you take the same things each day? Why/how does that work?
<b>Process/Policy</b>	
P1	Type of card/pass? (6 month immigration card?)
P2	Do you have to pay to cross the border?
P3	Are there other fees? (CB side, TH side)
<b>Security/Self-Rate: 1 Very good; 2 Fair; 3 Not good at all</b>	
R1	How do you describe your pay?

R2	How do you describe the hours your work?
R3	How do you describe relationship with authorities?
<b>Additional Questions among Focus Group</b>	
<b>Demographic</b>	
FGD1	How many times have you moved in the last year?
<b>Family Demographic</b>	
FGF2	What do your children do (do they work with them?)
FGF3	Are children in school? F or NF?
FGF4	What do you want/hope your children to be?
<b>Economic</b>	
FGE1	Do you work for the same people every day?
FGE2	How are you paid? (By load/weight/item?)
FGE3	Do some items pay better than others?
FGE4	Can you take items and resell?
<b>Personal Security/Working conditions</b>	
FGW1	If you see another cart puller in trouble at the border, what do you do?
<b>Personal Security/Cross Border Work</b>	
FGC1	Have you witnessed any kind of abuse? (experience?)
FGC2	Do you use official/unofficial crossing?
FGC3	Why do/don't you use official/unofficial crossing?
<b>Process/Policy</b>	
FGP1	Do you have a passport and/or BP and/or IP?
<b>Social /Networks</b>	
FGN1	Do you get a break in your day?
FGN2	What do you do in your free time? What do you do for fun/relax?
FGN3	Who do you relax with? (friends, family, children, partner, alone...)
FGN4	How did you hear of this work?
FGN5	Where do you live (cart pullers)/Do you live in the same community?
FGN6	Do you know one another?
FGN/P7	Do you help/look out for one another?
<b>Aspiration</b>	
FGA1	Do you want to continue cart pushing? If no, what else?
FGA2	Would you like your children to be a cart pusher?
<b>FG Activities</b>	
FG(1) Mapping exercise: participants drew map of Poipet and the border and identified where they go, who they interact with, where/who they pay, from start to finish.	
FG(2) Tour of 1 living area (slum).	
<b>Group 2: Street Respondent, Children (Code C)</b>	
<b>Section I (all children)</b>	
SD1	Sex
SD2	Age
SD3	Type of work?
SC4	How long have you been doing this work?
SC5	How did you choose/start doing this work?
SC6	How long do you work/hours per day/start-finish
SC7	How much do you make per day/week?



SFD8	What work do your parents do?
SA9	What do you want to be when you grow up?
<b>Section II – Working children in cart pulling and portering</b>	
SC10	Why do you do cart pulling/portering?
SC11	Do you like this job?
SC11a	What do/don't you like?
SC12	Is this your only job?
SC12a	What other work?
SP/C13	Do you own or rent cart/dolly on Thai or Cambodia side?
SC14	Do you go to school? If yes, where/what type? If no, why
SP/C15	Which crossing do you use? (official v. unofficial) Why?
SP/C16	Does anyone try to stop you from working? If yes, how? If yes, what do you do?
SP/C17	Is this work safe or dangerous for you?
SP/C18	Do you cross with the cart or dolly? If no, why?
SFD19	Do you live with your family? Where (indicate location)
<b>Additional Questions for NFE Children</b>	
<b>Section I – Same as Above</b>	
<b>Section II</b>	
NFP/C1	Did you attend school before this program?
<b>Cart Rental Shop Owners</b>	
O1	How long have you had this business?
O2	How many carts/dollies do you have? How many do you rent per day/week/month?
O3	How does rental work (Rented per day/week/month; Returned daily?) How long do they keep it/store it here?
O4	Is your business affiliated with market shops?
O5	Do carts/dollies go missing? What kinds of problems occur?
O6	Who rents carts (men, women, children)?
O7	Is this a secure job for you? (long term/short term)
O8	Do you know the people you rent to?

## APPENDIX C Relocation Site



Photo taken 10 July 2011

Note: Top photo: Rows of toilet and water pump facilities in place. Construction of 1 house per toilet, and shared water pumps;

Bottom photo: Family in their newly built house at the relocation site.

Refer to Figure 3.2 Map of Poipet, area location K1.

**APPENDIX D Different Levels of Urban Development in Poipet**

Photos taken 24 April 2011, 29 June 2011 and 17 July 2011.

Note: Left: 1 photo of developed casino area;

Right: 3 photos of less developed areas in Poipet. From top to bottom: Area K1, Kbal Koh (slum), K2.

Refer to Figure 3.2 Map of Poipet.

**APPENDIX E Cart**

Photos taken: 25 June 2011, 24 July 2011.

Note: Top photo: Wooden cart; Bottom photo: metal-framed cart.

**APPENDIX F Dolly**

Photos taken 24 April 2011, 26 June 2011.

Note: Left photo: Metal dolly; Right photo: wooden dolly.

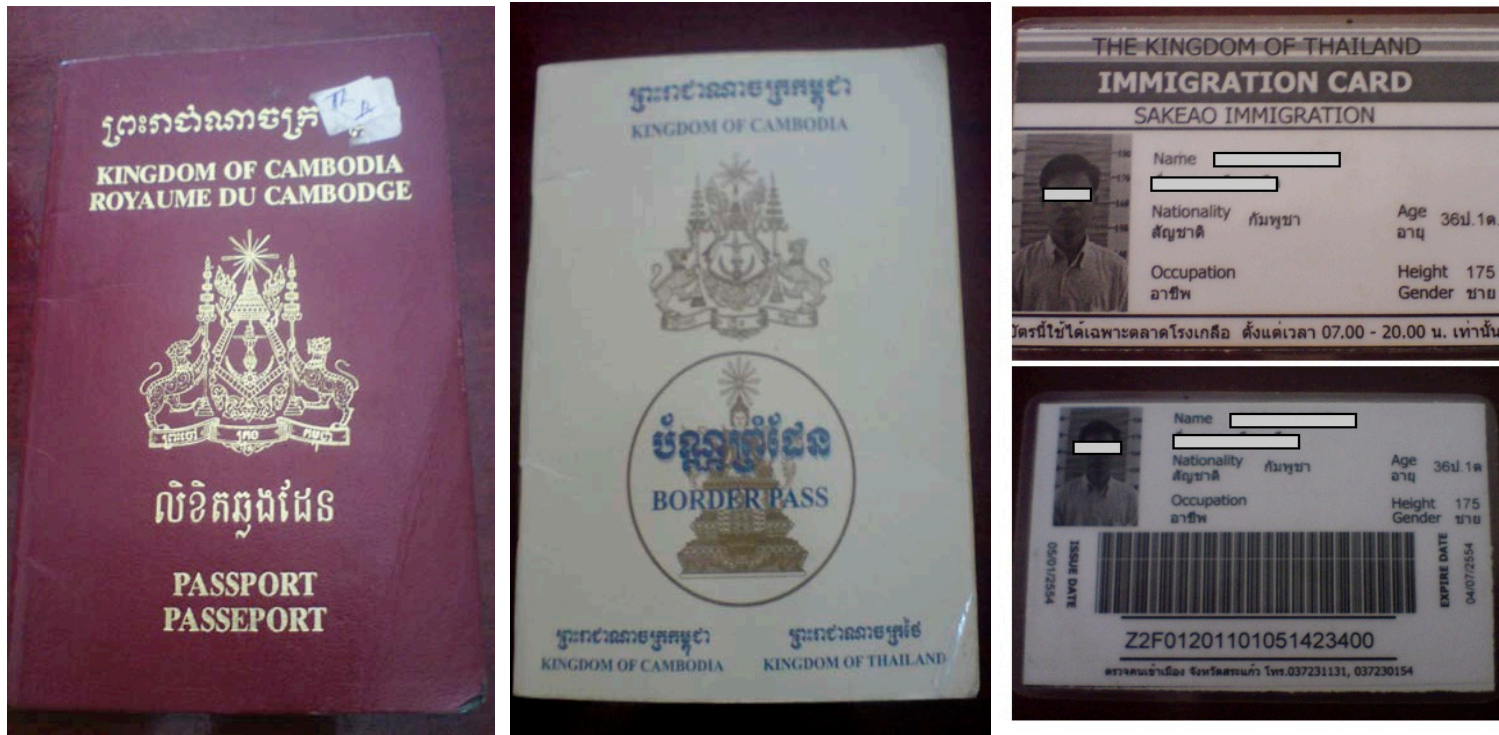
## APPENDIX G Carts for People with Disabilities



Photo taken: 28 June 2011

Note: Left photo: Cart puller with an amputated left leg loading his cart with helper;  
Right photo: Cart puller with disability using hand-wheel (sitting at the front of the cart),  
and his helper pushing the cart from behind.

**APPENDIX H International Border Passes**



Note: From left to right:  
 Cambodian passport;  
 Cambodian border pass which allows crossing into Sakaeo and Prachinburi Provinces, Thailand up to 7 days at a time;  
 Cambodian Immigration card (Top: Front of Card; Bottom: Back of Card), allows crossing into Rong Kleu Market, Aranyaprathet, Thailand daily between 07:00-22:00 daily.

**Table 1.1 Street Survey Sample**

N=17 | Cart Pullers = 17

	Age 10-14	Age 15-18	Age 18+
Male	2	2	10
Female	-	-	3

Note:

Participants from the street survey sample were selected based on the type of work they were actively engaged in; all were cart pullers or porters. Table 1.1 indicates a breakdown of this the sample prior to data compilation.



**Table 1.2 Street Child/Youth Survey Sample**

N=31 | Cart Pullers = 6

	Age 10-14	Age 15-18	Age 18+
Male Cart Pullers	1	3	0
Female Cart Pullers	1	1	0
Male: Other labour	8	3	0
Female: Other labour	9	5	0

Note:

Table 1.2 indicates the second sample group prior to data compilation. Targeted were children and youth that were thought to be economically active (earning money) in a variety of types of labour including umbrella holding, scavenging, begging, and cart pulling and portering.

**Table 1.3 NFE Child/Youth Survey Sample**

N=37 | Cart Pullers = 2

	Age 10-14	Age 15-18	Age 18+
Male Cart Pullers	0	1	0
Female Cart Pullers	0	1	0

Economically active children (non-cart pullers or porters) 17/37

Non-economically active children (excluding chores, helping at home) 18/37

Note:

Table 1.3 indicates the third sample of cart pullers prior to data compilation. Targeted were children enrolled in NGO Goutte d'Eau – Damnok Toek's non-formal education (NFE) program. In total 37 children were interviewed, of these 2 were cart pullers. 17 children worked doing jobs such as, scavenging, umbrella holding, shoeshine and begging. 18/37 children did not work.

**Table 1.4 Total Cart Puller and Porter Sample Breakdown**

Cart Pullers = 25

	Age 10-14	Age 15-18	Age 18+
Male Cart Pullers	3	6	10
Female Cart Pullers	1	2	3

Note:

Table 1.2 indicates the total breakdown by age and sex of all cart puller and porter respondents from all three sample groups, including: Street Survey Sample; Street Child/Youth Survey Sample; NFE Child/Youth Survey Sample.

**Table 2.1 Typology of Border Region Development**

	<b>Border Regions</b>	<b>Cross-border Regions</b>	<b>Trans-border Regions</b>
<b>Economic Relations</b>	Few and strictly controlled	Dependent relations	Symbiotic
<b>Institutional/Government Frameworks</b>	1. Few 2. Emerging but one-sided development	Emerging consultative mechanism	Cooperative institutions
<b>Types of Enterprises</b>	1. Individuals or small enterprises 2. Spontaneous development	Enterprises large or small acting on their own – largely contractual relationships – join ventures	Enterprises networks; technology transfer or sharing networks
<b>State of Infrastructure Networks</b>	1. Bottlenecks due to strict and cumbersome border controls 2. (as above)	Consultative planning - border controls still important	Joint Planning of infrastructure networks
<b>Migration</b>	1. Strictly controlled (frontier) 2. (as above)	Controlled migration (shoppers who commute): University students who also commute	Simplified procedures and relatively free movement
<b>Difference in Labor Costs</b>	1. Extremely High 2. High	1. High 2. Diminishing	Little or none
<b>Examples</b>	1. Russia-China-N. Korea (Tumen) 2. Thailand-China-Burma-Lao	1. Poland-Germany 2. Hongkong-Shenzhen	European Union (planned)

Source: Adapted from Wu (1998 and 2001) in Pitch Pongsawat, “Border Partial Citizenship, Border Towns, and Thai-Myanmar Cross Border Development: Case Studies at the Thai Border Towns,” Ph.D. Dissertation, City and Regional Planning, University of California, Berkeley, 2007: 28.

## **BIOGRAPHY**

Jennifer Finnegan was born in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. She obtained an Undergraduate Degree in Anthropology and Sociology from the University of Alberta (2006), a Graduate Diploma in International Development and Project Management from Humber College in Ontario (Hons) (2008), and will graduate with a Master's of Arts in International Development, Political Science from Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand (2011).

She has worked with Non Government Organisations (NGOs) in Haiti and Southeast Asia on programming in health, gender, education and human rights, and with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) on human rights and anti-trafficking programming in Cambodia, Thailand and Viet Nam.